

Faculty and Staff Handbook

Working with Students with Disabilities

2013-2014

A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S

It is with gratitude that Disability Support Services acknowledges **President Thomas Krise** and the University's administration for their support in preparing a handbook for faculty and staff which provides assistance, guidance, and tips for working with students with disabilities. **Dr. Laura Majovski**, Vice President and Dean for Student Life, is designated as liaison to the President's Office to further facilitate compliance with the federal laws. Appreciation and thanks are extended to **Valarie Zeeck** of Gordon, Thomas, Honeywell, Malanca, Peterson & Daheim, for her continued legal expertise in the development of this handbook.

We also thank the faculty, staff and students for their continued cooperation in assisting students with disabilities at Pacific Lutheran University. We especially commend the students with disabilities who share their successful strategies to assist others.

**Staff, Disability Support Services
Pacific Lutheran University**

Overview

Since the enactment of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and its 2009 amendments, academically qualified disabled people are entering college, diligently studying, successfully graduating, and pursuing productive careers.

Perception is the forerunner of attitude and is often the biggest disability to students attending college. Success for a student with a disability lies on a continuum from being viewed as “beating the disability” to being seen as someone “unable to succeed” because of the disability – someone, therefore, to pity. The truth lies somewhere in the middle for most students with disabilities attending Pacific Lutheran University. Achievement, rather than limits to achievement, needs to be recognized, which is what success in college is all about for both disabled and able-bodied students.

Although equality of opportunity will not guarantee equality of results, it will give students with disabilities the opportunity to live up to their potential for success or failure. It is the stated philosophy of this University to provide an environment of equal access and opportunity for students with disabilities that in turn may lead to their independence.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act expanded opportunities in education and employment for people with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act, through Title III - Public Accommodations, further expands those opportunities. Continued advances in technology, rehabilitation medicine, treatment practices, and increasingly enlightened public attitudes have made it possible for more people with disabilities to function and feel productive as citizens.

The number of people with disabilities, estimated at 43 million in 1990 when the Americans with Disabilities Act became law, has continued to increase as medical advances have provided more opportunities to save, prolong, and enhance the quality of life from birth defects, debilitating injury, and disease. An advantageous combination of opportunity, technology, treatment, and attitude adjustment have enabled people with disabilities to overcome functional limitations and pave a less obstructed path to pursue educational and employment opportunities. Therefore, experience is the key to successful rehabilitation, access to opportunity, and the inherent rewards of personal independence, productive employment, and social responsibility.

*Source: Americans with Disabilities Act Preamble.

Accessibility in the truest sense means more than physical accessibility. It may include such assistive aids as Braille, large print, Realtime captioning, adequate signage, and the like. Pacific Lutheran University has made significant progress in the elimination of architectural barriers to become physically accessible to disabled students. Pacific Lutheran University has acquired adaptive equipment and expanded support services to increase access to the opportunities available at PLU. In recent years there has been an increased awareness of and sensitivity to the needs, abilities, and potential of students with disabilities in the post-secondary environment.

Our faculty and staff play a crucial role in providing quality educational opportunities for our students with disabilities. Although the removal of architectural barriers is a prerequisite, what happens once disabled students reach the classroom and the way in which faculty and staff interact with them are the most important influences. The partnership between faculty, staff and students creates equal access to learning.

I. WHAT THE LAW REQUIRES TO EQUALIZE OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEARNING

A. AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990 (ADA)

This Act states that ‘no individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations or any place of public accommodation...’ and further ‘...an individual with a disability shall not be denied the opportunity to participate in such programs or activities that are not separate or different.’

The ADA then defines discrimination as (1) eligibility criteria that tends to screen out an individual with disabilities from fully and equally enjoying goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages or accommodations unless such criteria can be shown to be necessary; (2) failure to make reasonable modifications in policies, practices or procedures which are necessary to accommodate individuals with disabilities unless making such modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages or accommodations; (3) failure to insure individuals with disabilities are provided with auxiliary aids and services necessary to access and enjoy goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages or accommodations unless to do so would fundamentally alter the nature of the same; (4) failure to remove architectural barriers and communication barriers used in transporting individuals where removal is readily achievable; and (5) if removal of a barrier is not readily achievable, a failure to offer alternative methods which are achievable.

B. WHAT IS REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION?

Reasonable accommodation in higher education refers to an “otherwise qualified” disabled student’s ability to fulfill course requirements in the classroom when faculty and staff provide equal access to learning.

Examples of reasonable accommodation are:

- ◆ Providing alternative ways to fulfill course requirements.
- ◆ Using innovative teaching techniques.
- ◆ Providing supervised tutorial assistance and use of technology.
- ◆ Tailoring requirements to individual needs.
- ◆ Adapting tests to assure measurement of a student's knowledge, not the disability.

Students with impaired sensory, manual, language or processing skills must be allowed to use educational auxiliary aids. Such aids may include audio text, readers, Realtime captioning, note takers, tape recorders, adaptive classroom equipment and other similar services or equipment. Institutions cannot impose rules limiting the use of such aids in the classroom.

Modification of academic requirements may be necessary to accommodate qualified students with disabilities. Modification, if necessary or appropriate, may include changes in the length of time permitted for completion of degree requirements, substitution of specific required courses, and adaptations in the manner courses are conducted or learning is demonstrated. Requirements essential to the program of instruction or related to licensing requirements are not regarded as discriminatory.

Examinations and Courses - Any person who offers examinations or courses related to applications, licensing, certification or credentialing for secondary or post-secondary education, professional, or trade purposes shall offer such examinations or courses in a place and manner accessible to persons with disabilities or offer alternative accessible arrangements for such individuals.

The above list includes selected aspects of Section 504 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Title III. Disability Support Services can supply additional details.

II. HOW WE ARE RESPONDING TO THE LAW

A. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS AND ACCESS AT PLU

PLU is committed to providing equal opportunities in higher education to academically qualified students with disabilities who demonstrate a reasonable expectation of college success. Students with disabilities attending this University are integrated as completely as possible into the University community. PLU does not offer a specialized curriculum for students with disabilities nor does it guarantee success. The University seeks input from students to assess individual needs after which it determines what resources are available for meeting those needs.

The professional staff and faculty strongly encourage students with disabilities to be involved in both academic and extracurricular activities -- because these kinds of involvements will help prepare students with disabilities for success after college by giving them a well-rounded background.

B. SUGGESTED METHODS TO PROVIDE REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Faculty and staff need to be concerned about offering “reasonable” accommodations. PLU has a history of working successfully with students with disabilities and a commitment to continue to do so.

Students are expected to take an assertive role in talking with faculty and staff members about their disability, adaptation and accommodation needs. The groundwork is laid for establishing a good partnership when the faculty member makes the initial overture during the first class session to encourage students to make an appointment to discuss disability needs. Open and comfortable lines of communication are essential and the key to smooth problem solving of adaptation and accommodation issues.

When talking to the student, encourage an exchange of ideas and information by establishing open, honest communication. Indicate a willingness to be partners in this process. Statements and questions might include the following:

- ◆ I have not had a student with a disability or this particular disability in my class before. I know so little about it; tell me about your disability, and let’s plan accommodations that will enable you to have full and fair access to this course.
- ◆ Let’s talk about your abilities and disabilities as they relate to this course.
- ◆ What class adaptations have been most successful for you in the past?
- ◆ Are there medical and safety concerns we need to consider?
- ◆ What has worked best for you when you take tests?

It is the student’s responsibility to disclose disabilities and request accommodations. The faculty and staff are responsible to listen and make recommendations as to the type of reasonable accommodation that is available to the student. Students with less obvious disabilities may choose not to disclose or discuss their disabilities. If students do not make a request for accommodation, the faculty and staff have no further obligation to provide accommodation. The responsibility at PLU is satisfied when you have made known your willingness to provide reasonable accommodations.

III. METHODS WHICH ASSIST IN ACHIEVING OUR GOALS

A. UNDERSTANDING OUR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Though few generalizations can be made about students with disabilities, it can be stated that they are more like able-bodied students than unlike them. Being disabled is not the common denominator for achieving success or failure. Family backgrounds and environmental influences are the predominant sources of differences and will override the disability-related issues. In other words, within our college student population with disabilities there are bright, talented, motivated, well-adjusted, positive, enthusiastic, socially adept students who are goal-oriented and academically prepared. These same qualities and attitudes are found among our able-bodied students. On the other hand, there are “average” disabled and able-bodied students who have less distinctive levels of talent, motivation, positive outlooks, enthusiasm, social skills, and so forth.

An important point to remember is that unless the disability is rather new, students with disabilities coming to PLU have generally adapted to, adjusted to, and compensated for the disabling elements in their lives. Those with congenital disabilities have, from the beginning, accommodated their lifestyles and managed daily independent living, knowing no other way of life.

Personal inconveniences and additional financial obligations are created by most disabilities. More time and effort as well as varying degrees of dependency upon other people (attendants, readers, note takers, and the like) and social systems are required to accomplish routine daily activities.

The most devastating barriers for students with disabilities to overcome are the attitudinal barriers erected by other people. It is not uncommon to hear students with disabilities say that overcoming the limiting attitudes of those who are uninformed about disability is far more difficult to adjust to than the disability itself.

The following may help faculty and staff communicate a positive attitude:

- ◆ Learning about disabilities will help overcome removal of misconceptions.
- ◆ Meeting a student with disabilities for the first time may be uncomfortable. Relax and do not hesitate to engage in an honest and open conversation about the student's disability as it relates to classroom expectations.
- ◆ Interacting out of interest and care is preferable to interacting out of obligation, fear, guilt, or pity.
- ◆ When trying to be helpful, ask questions about a student's specific needs for assistance rather than presuming the answers.
- ◆ A student's disability is not contagious; do not be afraid to get close.
- ◆ Students with disabilities must have the opportunity to define their own interests and activities.

- ◆ Everyone has a disability of some sort. Some disabilities are more apparent than others.
- ◆ Offering assistance before providing it gives the student with disabilities the option of accepting.
- ◆ Students with disabilities should be viewed as individuals rather than as “they,” “those,” “them,” or “the disabled,” or by the name of the disability, for example, “the blind.”
- ◆ Talking directly to a person with a disability is preferable to trying to talk through another person. Questions such as “does he or she want to...” should be avoided.
- ◆ Words like "cripple" and "affliction" and such phrases as “victim of...” are not appropriate. Correct substitutes are “Paul has a learning disability, “Mandy is quadriplegic as a result of an accident, “ and “John has cerebral palsy.”
- ◆ A person in a wheelchair is a “wheelchair user,” not “confined to a wheelchair.”
- ◆ Students with vision impairments may use a “dog guide.” The dog guide is a working animal, highly disciplined and trained to help the vision-impaired handler move from destination to destination. The primary responsibility of the dog guide is the handler. The dog is working as long as it is in harness. Petting and talking to the dog are distracting.
- ◆ Avoid placing your perceptual limitations on the student. The combination of personal motivation and technological assistance can make for career and life options believed unobtainable until recently.
- ◆ Students with disabilities may be eligible for priority class scheduling, which permits planning classes in the same building or nearby whenever possible. Timely travel between classes is a concern.
- ◆ By law, students with disabilities are entitled to classroom and test adaptation and accommodation. The Director of Disability Support Services is a trained professional available to help faculty members and staff determine appropriate methods for adaptation and accommodation.

Effective communication begins when faculty and staff demonstrate sensitivity toward disabled students and are knowledgeable about their disabilities. Understanding is the key to effective listening and providing reasonable accommodations when working with the students.

B. DEVELOPING A COMFORT ZONE

It is not uncommon for faculty and staff members to be uncertain and apprehensive about the best approach to working with disabled students in the classroom. Most have had little or no formal training and little experience in teaching students with disabilities. Many of the tips set forth above are tools which can be used to develop an individual's comfort zone. Communication is the key to attaining a level of comfort and is achieved through personal repeated experiences. This is the first step in overcoming prejudices, biases and developing a high level of sensitivity. By practicing the above suggestions you will find it easier to develop a partnership with students with disabilities, make classroom accommodations and take appropriate adaptive actions.

C. CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT: ACCOMMODATIONS AND ADAPTATIONS

Thoughts about the Classroom Environment: Eligibility for Accommodations and Adaptations

A disability does not automatically preclude a student's participation in certain activities or classes, such as a student with a visual impairment from a music class, or a student who is quadriplegic from a physical education class, as certain modifications and adaptations may be utilized.

The classroom environment should give students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in discussions and activities. Such an environment should be encouraged even if the disability creates difficulties at the outset.

Since each student is unique, faculty members should not assume that all persons with a similar disability have the same needs or that solutions to their problems will always be similar.

When a student's disability prevents him or her from fulfilling a course requirement through conventional procedures, thoughtful consideration should be given to alternatives, keeping in mind that academic standards must be maintained. Innovative and flexible solutions may include extended deadlines, use of word processing equipment, or taped responses in class or on examinations.

Faculty and staff members need to invite students with disabilities to make known the special considerations or arrangements they need to meet course requirements.

Asking students who may need accommodations to contact you (by way of the class syllabus and a statement to the class) will help create an atmosphere of mutual understanding and a positive approach to solving the matters at hand -- the beginning of the partnership. It is this recognition of the student by you that fosters positive communication and mutual understanding of reasonable accommodation. Disability Support Services will inform you that a student with a disability will be in your class only if that student requests such notification.

An ideal way to encourage students with disabilities to discuss needed accommodations is to include the following statement on the course syllabus and to repeat it during the

first class meeting. ***If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. My office location and hours are....***

PLU encourages students with disabilities to practice self-advocacy. Anything that faculty and staff members can do to aid this process enhances mutual understanding, communication, and goal attainment. It may be necessary, however, to approach students with disabilities if they have not approached you about needing accommodations and it is obvious that they are having difficulties with the course requirements.

Although the need for accommodations for students with some disabilities may be obvious (e.g., students with spinal cord injuries and blind students), the need of others, such as students with learning disabilities, may not be so clearcut. The responsibility for determining a student's eligibility for accommodations rests with the Director of Disability Support Services. You may reasonably request that a student secure a letter from this office. Similarly, the determination of the nature of adaptations and accommodations may be worked out with the above personnel.

Test Adaptation and Administration

Students with disabilities are entitled by law to alternative testing arrangements that offer optimum testing conditions. The University's responsibility is to respond to a request for test adaptation and to assure the measurement of a student's academic achievement, not the functional limitations caused by a student's disability.

Faculty members may wish to handle their own adaptive testing. Primary consideration should be given to arranging a test so as to measure the student's acquired knowledge of the subject matter. To create a fair testing situation for students with disabilities you may need to consider some or all of the following:

- ◆ an accessible test site
- ◆ special equipment
- ◆ readers (human or screen readers)
- ◆ scribes
- ◆ large-print copies of tests
- ◆ sufficient uninterrupted time
- ◆ quiet test environment

The Director of Disability Support Services is the official designee to verify disabling conditions. This office will help determine the appropriateness of test adaptation requests, verify exam procedures, and help facilitate adaptations if needed. Faculty members are strongly encouraged to contact either of the aforementioned personnel if questions arise as we are all partners in coming up with positive solutions for all involved.

Extended Testing Time – What is appropriate?

There are situations in which a reasonable test adaptation dictates extended time so that the student can complete a test. For many students with disabilities, taking tests within the normal time (50 minutes) will not result in a fair evaluation. The rule of thumb for adequate extended time is time and a half (75 minutes). For instance, students with dexterity problems are not able to write quickly; some -- but not all -- blind and visually impaired students will need tests read to them. Students with learning disabilities may experience severe test anxiety and often require extended time for their knowledge to be measured fairly.

The Director of Disability Support Services will work with faculty members and students to establish what is a fair amount of time if needed. Faculty members will find that, most often, students will not use all the additional time allotted. Having the extended time will, however, allay the fear of not being able to complete the test and the result will be a more equitable testing environment for the student.

RESOURCE SECTION

I. VISION IMPAIRMENTS

Vision impairments can result from a variety of causes, including congenital conditions, injury, eye disease, and brain trauma, or as the result of such other conditions as diabetes and multiple sclerosis. A person is considered **legally blind** if his or her corrected vision is no better than 20/200, meaning seeing at twenty feet what others see at two hundred feet or having peripheral fields (side vision) of no more than 20 degrees diameter or 10 degrees radius. A person is considered **vision impaired** when corrected vision is no better than 20/70.

Eighty to ninety percent legally blind people have some measurable vision or light perception. A student who is legally blind may retain a great amount of vision. Many legally blind students are able to read with special glasses, and a few can even drive. It is also important to note that some legally blind students have 20/20 vision. Although these students have perfect central vision, they have narrow field or side vision and see things as though they are looking through a tube or straw. They often use dog guides or canes when they travel. Some blind students with only central vision loss do not require a dog guide or cane. They are able to see large objects but have great difficulty reading or threading a needle. The term "blindness" should be reserved for people with complete loss of sight. "**Visually impaired**" is the better term used to refer to people with various gradations of vision.

Few PLU students have been totally blind, but the adaptations and accommodations needed by blind people can be applied to most students with vision impairments. Most vision-impaired students use a combination of adaptations for class participation and learning needs, including readers, Braille, books on CD's, and optical scanning devices such as the Kurzweil program and a print enlarger.

A. BLIND STUDENTS

By the time blind students reach college (unless they are newly blind), they have probably mastered techniques for dealing with certain kinds of visual materials. Most blind students use a combination of methods, including readers, recorded books and lectures and, sometimes, Brailled materials. Students may use raised-line drawings of diagrams, charts, and illustrations, relief maps, and three-dimensional models of physical organs, shapes, and microscopic organisms. Technology has made available other aids for blind people, including talking calculators, speech-time compressors, talking computer terminals, Braille printers, paperless Braille machines, and reading machines that convert printed material into synthetic voice. PLU does have some of this kind of technology available; however, there may be other sources for students to pursue in order to obtain these high-tech aids.

Not all totally blind students can or wish to read Braille; in fact, some medical conditions may preclude that skill. The most common example of this situation is a person with diabetes who may have reduced sensation in the fingertips as a result of poor circulation. Even students who have good Braille skills are usually confronted with a shortage of materials produced in Braille. Brailled textbooks, if available, are expensive and voluminous. Because there are so few sources of Braille books, getting a college textbook put into Braille is a lengthy and expensive process. Therefore, most visually impaired college students use recorded textbooks or computer disks.

The primary sources of recorded books are such voluntary agencies as Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic in Princeton, New Jersey, the Library of Congress, which has affiliates in each state, and Disability Support Services' taped textbooks and/or burned CD's. Readers may be used separately or in conjunction with audio texts.

Some blind students who read Braille prefer to take their own notes in class using a portable Braille. Some blind students will get copies of notes from classmates and have their readers record the notes for them. Other blind students record the lecture and later transcribe notes from the tape into Braille. It is easier for some blind students to study from a tactile copy rather than from recordings, though some blind students are able to develop strong auditory compensatory skills over a period of time. Either way, the process of reading and study requires considerably more time for a blind student than a sighted student.

Disability Support Services on 3rd Floor of the University Center, ext. 7206, attempts to have textbooks reproduced in a timely manner. Some texts are sent to outside vendors to be burned onto a CD. Early notification of needs is essential to provide this type of accommodation. Since only required portions of texts are reproduced, faculty are asked to submit copies of their syllabus to the DSS office well in advance of assignment deadlines.

For various reasons, some faculty members may be concerned about their lectures being recorded. It should be noted that federal regulations allow this procedure as a reasonable accommodation for students who would otherwise be hindered from having adequate access to the lecture information. The Director of Disability Support Services can provide a policy statement of agreement on recorded lectures that clarifies the

purpose and limits the use of tape recordings. (See the policy agreement at the end of this section).

When a visually impaired student is present in the classroom, it is helpful for the faculty member to verbalize as much as possible and to provide tactile experiences when possible. Such phrases as “The sum of this plus that is this” and “The lungs are here and the diaphragm here” are meaningless to blind students. In the first example, the faculty member can just as easily say, “The sum of four plus seven is eleven.” Blind students get the same information as the sighted students. In the second example, the faculty member may be pointing to a model or to the body itself. In this instance, the professor can “personalize” the locations of the lungs and diaphragm by asking class members to locate them by touch on their own bodies. Such solutions will not always be possible; however, if the faculty member is sensitized not to use strictly visual examples, both blind students and the rest of the class will benefit.

Test adaptation is another concern for blind students. Students will usually have a preference for taking tests. These preferences often involve either a reader or a taped test. The student will either type the answers or dictate them to a proctor to record. If the professor is able to send the student a copy of the test via e-mail, the student can transcribe the test into Braille. Some may prefer to Braille their answers first and then read them for a scribe to record in longhand. Whatever method is proposed, the student and faculty member should agree early in the semester about how the student's academic work will be evaluated.

Some blind students use service dogs that are specifically trained and usually well disciplined. Most of the time the service dog will lie quietly under or beside the desk. The greatest disruption a faculty member or staff might expect may be an occasional yawn, stretch, or low moan at the sound of a siren. It is important to remember that the dog is responsible for guiding its owner and should not be distracted from the duty while in harness (and therefore working), as tempting as it might be to pet a service dog.

Courses that are extremely visual by nature, unless they are considered essential to a major, can sometimes be handled by substituting other courses. However, it should not be assumed immediately that such substitution will be necessary. Conversations between the student and faculty member can sometimes lead to new and exciting instructional techniques that may benefit the entire class. For example, it is often thought that a blind student cannot take an art course. However, the blind student should have an opportunity to become familiar with the world's great art. A classmate or reader who is particularly talented at describing visual images can assist the blind student as a visual interpreter or translator. It is not impossible for a blind student to have an understanding of what the *Mona Lisa* looks like, because the painting can be described, and there are poems written about it that may be used as teaching aids to give more insight into an understanding of the work. Miniature models of great works of sculpture can be displayed and touched in the classroom. Many modern museums have tactile galleries and special guided tours for people with visual impairments. The point is that certain disabilities do not automatically preclude participation in certain activities or classes. Students, faculty, and advisers must be careful not to lower expectations solely on the basis of disability.

If classes involve field trips, discuss any special needs with the blind student. Most often, the blind student's only need will be a sighted guide who may be another class member.

B. PARTIALLY SIGHTED STUDENTS (VISION IMPAIRED)

Partially sighted students meet the challenge of gaining access to printed information in much the same way as blind students except for using Braille. They use audio texts, readers, raised-line drawings, and other equipment. In addition, some use large-print materials, or other magnifying devices. Partially sighted students may also use large-print typing elements for papers. Some will be able to take their own notes in class by printing large letters with a felt-tip pen. Others will record lectures for later use.

Several difficulties confront the partially sighted student that do not affect the blind student. For instance, the partially sighted student is sometimes viewed by people as "faking it." People may have difficulty believing that partially sighted students need adaptive aids or printed materials because most of these students do not use white canes for travel and are able to get around like everyone else. Also, depending on the nature of the vision loss, these students may not be able to read other people's cues, so they sometimes appear expressionless and seem uninterested when quite the opposite might be true.

One partially sighted student commented that after having been observed playing Frisbee by one of her instructors, she was sure the instructor would no longer believe she was partially sighted. As she explained, she had more peripheral than central vision and is able to see a red Frisbee. If any other color of Frisbee were used, she could not see it well enough to play. It is difficult for a fully sighted person to understand that playing Frisbee and reading a printed page present different visual requirements. In fact, some partially sighted students are able to obtain driver's licenses. Another difficulty that some partially sighted students experience has a more subtle effect and can be troublesome – the psychological response that large printing evokes in a sighted reader. Such handwritten communications tend to give the reader the idea that "a child has written this" and may lead to the conclusion that a student with this kind of handwriting is immature or child-like and that the written communication is less than sophisticated. An assumption is sometimes made that when the student uses large type, he or she is merely trying to make a paper appear longer when a term paper of a specific length is required. Stating the number of words required instead of the number of pages obviates this problem.

Potential problems can be obviated if the student and faculty member discuss the student's needs early in the semester. While the **professional evaluation** of disabilities is considered by PLU to be a Medical Treatment Record, records pertaining to the **academic accommodations** provided by PLU are considered to be Educational Records (and not Medical Treatment Records) as defined in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 ("FERPA"). Records regarding **academic accommodations** may be utilized in the same manner and under the same conditions as other Educational Records. The Director of Disability Support Services maintains Medical Treatment Records. If you have questions about a student's classroom accommodations, please contact the DSS Director.

It is usually beneficial for partially sighted students to make use of what vision they have unless it is not recommended medically (after eye surgery or during an active inflammation). Sitting in front of the room, having large print on the chalkboard, or using enlarged print on an overhead projector may assist a partially sighted student. Overheads can also be reproduced on copy machines. However, the capacity to read printed materials depends greatly on such conditions as the degree of contrast, brightness, and color. For example, red ink is difficult for many partially sighted students to read. It is preferable that the student and faculty member discuss what methods, techniques, or devices may be used to maximum advantage.

It is important to remember that there is a wide range of abilities among partially sighted students. Some can benefit from good sources of light, others are hindered by bright light. Some visual impairments may fluctuate from time to time, as those of persons who have multiple sclerosis often do, others remain constant. Some partially sighted students can use printed materials longer than others; some may be able to read for hours, others can tolerate only a few minutes before the strain causes their vision and mental alertness to deteriorate.

Most partially sighted students will require some adaptation for taking tests. Such adaptations may include a large-print test, a reader, a scribe, or a tape recorder. Many visually impaired students cannot see well enough to use a computerized answer sheet and will need to write answers on a separate sheet for someone else to record on the answer sheet. Partially sighted students will usually need extra time on their tests, especially if they are reading the tests themselves. The Director of Disability Support Services can help faculty members plan appropriate instructional test accommodations.

Tips for Positive Communication

- ◆ Include the following statement in the course syllabus and repeat it during the first class meeting: ***If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. My office location and hours are...***
- ◆ Introduce yourself and anyone else who might be present when speaking to a student with a vision impairment.
- ◆ Use a normal voice level when speaking; remember a vision-impaired student has sight problems, not a hearing loss.
- ◆ Speak directly to the vision-impaired student and address him or her by name.
- ◆ Do not hesitate to use such words as *see* or *look*; students with vision impairments use these terms also.
- ◆ When walking with a visually impaired student, allow him or her to take your arm just above the elbow. Walk in a natural manner and pace.

- ◆ A dog guide is trained as a working animal and should not be petted or spoken to without the permission of the handler. A general rule of thumb is that the dog is working while in harness.
- ◆ When offering a seat to a vision-impaired student, place the student's hand on the back or arm of the seat. This gives the student a frame of reference to seat himself or herself.
- ◆ Do not hesitate to ask a student what adaptations, if any, are required in the classroom. The student is the "expert" about his or her particular needs.
- ◆ *Letters of Accommodation should only be discussed with the student or Director of Disability Support Services . Please be discrete when having discussions regarding disability information which is protected under FERPA. Disclosure is on a 'need to know basis.'* For information on FERPA, please see PLU's FERPA policy at www.plu.edu/print/handbook/conduct/FERPA.html.

Suggested Classroom Accommodations

- ◆ Discuss necessary classroom accommodations and testing adaptations early in the semester (within the first couple of class days).
- ◆ Contact the Director of Disability Support Services to verify a student's vision impairment and request for accommodations and adaptation information if there is a question about eligibility.
- ◆ It may take a few weeks to get audio textbooks. Please forward your syllabus to the DSS office as soon as possible and any changes that may occur throughout the semester.
- ◆ Be open to students recording your lectures; agreement forms are available from The DSS office, ext. 7206 (University Center, Suite 300).
- ◆ Provide appropriate written and verbal descriptions to accompany any visual aids, diagrams, films, or videos that you might use in class.
- ◆ As you are writing on the chalkboard or discussing a diagram, verbalize what you are writing. When using technical terms, remember to spell them out or give descriptions if appropriate.
- ◆ Try to speak directly to the class, remembering that turning your head away can muffle sound; body language and gestures cannot be seen.
- ◆ Appropriate seating is important for the vision-impaired student since the student cannot see visual cues, he or she needs to be seated in a position to receive verbal cues.
- ◆ Service dogs are trained and well behaved. You do not need to worry that they will disturb your class.
- ◆ Service dogs will need special consideration when you plan laboratory exercises and field trips.

Test Adaptation and Administration

- ◆ Adapted testing procedures generally include the use of readers, scribes, word processors, large-print magnifying equipment, and tape-recorded exams.
- ◆ The DSS Director is available for consultation and assistance in test administration.
- ◆ Tests can be administered by having the questions read to the student by a reader.
- ◆ Allow extra time for test taking in a separate, quiet setting.
- ◆ Use the DSS Office to administer and proctor tests. Discuss testing arrangements with the staff early in the semester to assure that the process will be smooth when it is actually time to schedule and administer tests. Faculty need to fill out a proctoring card to accompany the test. These cards are enclosed in the Letter of Accommodation and are available on the DSS website.

Pacific Lutheran University Recorded Lecture Policy Agreement

Students with disabilities who are unable to take or read notes have the right to record class lectures for their personal study only.* Lectures recorded for this purpose may not be shared with other students without the consent of the lecturer. Recorded lectures may not be used in any way against the faculty member, the lecturers, or students whose classroom comments are taped as a part of the class activity. Information contained in the recorded lecture is protected under federal copyright laws and may not be published or quoted without the express consent of the lecturer and without giving proper identity and credit to the lecturer.

Pledge: I have read and understand the above policy on recorded lectures at Pacific Lutheran University, and I pledge to abide by the above policy with regard to any lectures I record while enrolled as a student in Pacific Lutheran University.

Student Signature

Date

Witness

*84.44 of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (P.L.93-112, amended P.L. 93-516)

I. MOBILITY AND DEXTERITY

Most mobility limitations result from a broad range of neuromuscular and orthopedic disabilities that produce wide variations in the nature and extent of the remaining physical functions. Do not generalize with regard to specific limitations of persons with these kinds of disabilities. Functional abilities vary widely not only among the disabilities, but also among students with the same disability. General conditions affecting the degree of limitation may include age at onset, progression rate, disorder, level and extent of injury, and response to treatment. Some disabilities are progressive (as in muscular dystrophy); others are not. Limitations associated with some disabilities fluctuate with periods of remission and exacerbation (as in multiple sclerosis and arthritis), some may remain constant (as in spina bifida), and others may improve with time and therapy.

The student with the disability is the best source of information regarding the disability and accompanying specific limitations. The Director of Disability Support Services can also give you information about various disabilities.

Although it is difficult to generalize about classroom needs of students with physical disabilities, the major limitations affecting college participation generally involve mobility, hand dexterity, and, possibly, vocalization.

A. MOBILITY LIMITATIONS

Access and timely travel are the major concerns of students who use wheelchairs, crutches, canes, walkers, braces, or other mobility aids. These students must learn the routes across campus that do not present barriers (stairs, curbs, narrow walkways, heavy doors). Since a ten-minute break between classes is barely sufficient for able-bodied students, we cannot expect students with mobility limitations to be able to move from building to building so quickly. Most mobility-impaired students try to consider travel time in planning class schedules, but they are not always able to avoid tight schedules. Therefore, when they have classes in sequence, they frequently may be a few minutes late or, on occasion, may need to leave early. Inclement weather, circuitous routes, crowded walkways and corridors, and long waits for elevators may contribute to the problem. If a student's lateness becomes chronic, it is appropriate to discuss the situation and seek solutions that may include better planning on the part of the student. Students with disabilities may be eligible for **priority class scheduling**. This service gives eligible students the opportunity to plan class schedules so as to minimize travel time and distance between classes.

If the class involves field work or field trips, care should be taken in selecting the site to ensure that the faculty is accessible enough for the mobility-impaired student to participate and benefit from the experience. **Most of these students will not require academic classroom accommodations except related to their seating arrangements and the assistance of note takers in class.** Almost all students with dexterity problems will engage classmates as note takers.

Persons with mobility limitations may prefer to sit near the classroom entrance to avoid additional walking or the difficulty of moving through crowded aisles with crutches, canes, or walkers. Students who use wheelchairs will need adequate floor space in the front, on the side, or in the rear of the room so that they can park without blocking the flow of traffic. Some students who use wheelchairs, depending on their disabilities, may be able to walk short distances and may prefer to get out of their wheelchairs and use regular desks during lectures. Students remaining in their wheelchairs may require special desks or tables that comfortably accommodate them. The Director of Disability Support Services will help make arrangements for such furniture. Using a wheelchair only part of the time does not mean that a person is “faking” a disability. It usually is a means to conserve energy or move about more quickly. Some students who normally use a mobility aid other than a wheelchair may use a wheelchair sometimes because of weather conditions or medical flare-ups.

Classes taught in laboratory settings usually require some modification of the workstations for wheelchair users. The amount of under-counter space, working reach, and aisle widths are the primary concerns. Working directly with the student is the best way to alter the workstation. Some wheelchair users may be able to use regular workstations if they can transfer from the wheelchair to another seat at the workstation. Sometimes a special workstation can be set up at an accessible table.

B. HAND AND ARM DEXTERITY PROBLEMS

Students may have hand and arm dexterity problems alone (carpal tunnel syndrome where the nerve in the wrist is compressed) or in conjunction with mobility limitations (spinal cord injury, quadriplegia). Generally speaking, hand dexterity problems have greater impact on academic functioning than mobility limitations, but again, the specific limitation will depend on the type and severity of the disability.

Some students with hand dexterity impairments are able to write to some degree; others cannot write at all. Those who do their own writing usually require additional time to do so. Students with hand and arm impairments often record class lectures or have note takers. Some can type their own papers by using regular or adapted keyboards or keyguards; others use typists. Unless tests are all objective with answers that can simply be marked or circled, most will require special test accommodations in the form of extra time or the use of a scribe or a computer.

Students with hand and arm impairments should be allowed and encouraged to participate to the fullest extent possible in laboratory classes. If the lab objective is to learn a procedural process and resulting reaction, as in a chemistry experiment, the objective can usually be achieved if the student has an aide or is paired with a classmate who can carry out step-by-step instructions given by the student (type of test tube to use, what chemical to add when and where, and how to dispose of used chemicals). In this way, the student is actively involved and will learn everything except how to physically manipulate the chemicals.

C. MOTOR COORDINATION PROBLEMS

Poor gross motor (large muscle) coordination can result in clumsiness – knocking over things, bumping into people. Participation in many sports is difficult. Poor fine motor (small muscle) coordination can result in poor handwriting and difficulty manipulating small objects. Visual motor coordination problems make it difficult for the hands or feet to obey visual commands in such activities as copying from the board, cutting a pattern, typing, or writing. Auditory motor problems interfere with following spoken directions or listening and taking notes at the same time.

Tips for Positive Communication

- ◆ Include the following statement on the course syllabus and repeat it during the first class meeting: ***If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. My office location and hours are....***
- ◆ Students with mobility limitations will ask for assistance when they need it. Do not assume that assistance is needed.
- ◆ When conversing with someone in a wheelchair, sit so that you are at that person's eye level whenever possible.
- ◆ Leaning on a wheelchair is tantamount to leaning on a person's shoulder – it is an invasion of personal space.
- ◆ When discussing a student's disability and accommodation and adaptation needs, talk only about needs that are relevant to the successful completion of course work.
- ◆ *Letters of Accommodation should only be discussed with the student or Director of Disability Support Services.* Please be discrete when having discussions regarding disability information which is protected under FERPA. Disclosure is on a 'need to know basis.' For information on FERPA, please see PLU's FERPA policy at www.plu.edu/print/handbook/conduct/FERPA.html.
- ◆ Refer to a person in a wheelchair as a "wheelchair user," not as "confined" to a wheelchair. Most people using wheelchairs transfer to furniture, automobiles, etc., using wheelchairs only as means of movement from one point to another.
- ◆ If a student's speech is affected by the disability and difficult to understand, do not hesitate to ask the student to repeat.

Suggested Classroom Accommodations

- ◆ Support the use of note takers and taped lectures; recording agreements are available from the DSS office, University Center, Suite 300.
- ◆ Restructure laboratory experiences to include the use of a partner for students with hand and arm dexterity problems. The partner can perform the active parts of the assignment at the direction of the disabled student.
- ◆ Work with students to arrange for appropriate time for completion of class assignments.
- ◆ Allow adequate time for testing.
- ◆ Be realistic in seeking solutions when a student is late to class. Although inclement weather, circuitous routes, elevator problems, and crowds are contributing causes, chronic lateness is not acceptable and needs to be discussed with the student.
- ◆ Allow for adequate break time during class if the class meets for an extended period so that the student can attend to such physical needs as stretching, medication, and restroom use.

III. LEARNING-DISABLED STUDENTS (ALTERNATE LEARNERS)

“Having a brain that cannot express itself is an incredible frustration.”

---Student with expressive language disability

A learning disability (LD) is a problem in the way that a person's brain processes information. Simply stated, a learning disability is an information processing problem. LD's are considered “hidden disabilities” because a person with a learning disability shows no visible signs of being disabled. LD is a condition to be understood and managed. The most common learning disabilities include dyslexia, a severe difficulty with reading, dyscalculia, a severe difficulty with math, and dysgraphia, a severe difficulty with written expression.

Although there are no known causes of many learning disabilities, some learning disabilities are acquired, such as a result of a traumatic brain injury. These students have had to adjust to imposed limitations that were not present pre-injury. Researchers agree that most learning disabilities are not caused by visual, hearing, or motor disability, mental retardation, cultural disadvantage, or emotional disturbance. Generally, students with learning disabilities have the capacity to learn and perform at or above their age levels. However, learning is affected by perception and integration difficulties. A person must gather, integrate, and express information in adaptive ways. Students may compensate for lack of these abilities by developing alternative learning methods. Learning disabilities can be the most challenging of all the disability groups in the University setting. However great the challenge for University personnel, it cannot equal the challenge that the achieving a college education presents for a student with a learning disability. The reason for this challenge is that the kinds of cognitive deficits

found in people with learning disabilities involve skills that represent the essence of what higher education is all about – absorbing information through reading, listening, and observing, remembering, processing, organizing, analyzing, synthesizing, and applying information, communicating information through the written and spoken word, and being evaluated primarily through the written language on the ability to use all of these skills. Yet, in spite of their deficits and the difficulties encountered by learning-disabled students, many of these students are able to succeed, and many have succeeded far beyond the minimum level of just “getting by.” We all have strengths and weaknesses in our learning styles. Students with learning disabilities, like visually impaired students, simply need alternative ways to learn.

A student with a learning disability has a weakness in one or more of the following:

- ◆ understanding what is read
- ◆ listening effectively because there is difficulty distinguishing among similar sounds, symbols, or objects
- ◆ comprehending mathematical concepts
- ◆ retaining information
- ◆ expressing thoughts through writing
- ◆ spelling correctly
- ◆ expressing thoughts through speaking
- ◆ maintaining a level of academic performance relative to cognitive evaluations

The following descriptions of problems in specific learning processes are summarized as:

- A. Visual Perception Problems:** Though students with these problems may have perfect eyesight, they may see letters incorrectly or in reverse order; may fail to see some letters, words, or even whole paragraphs; may confuse letters and symbols that are similar (*b* and *d*, *g* and *q*), may omit ends of words; may jumble spaces between words, or may misinterpret facial expressions that convey boredom, approval, skepticism, or the end of a conversation.
- B. Auditory Perception Problems:** Even with normal hearing, students with learning disabilities may have difficulty differentiating between similar sounds (hear “crashed the car” for “washed the car” or “ninety minutes” for “nineteen minutes”); may be acutely sensitive to background noises and unable to screen out traffic, rustling of paper, whispers, etc., when listening to a lecture or conversation or taking an exam; or may be unable to catch the subtleties in different tones of voice (e.g., with anger, sarcasm, questioning).
- C. Spatial Perception Problems:** Students with these difficulties may be unable to judge distances, differentiate between left and right, or follow directions. They can get lost in familiar territory.
- D. Memory Problems:** Some students with LD have difficulty retrieving information stored by the brain. They typically have more problems with short-term memory than with long-term memory. They often search endlessly to find words, names, dates, and thoughts that seem lost inside their heads.

E. Sequencing Problems: Students with sequencing problems may have difficulty with the order and arrangement of letters and numbers (spelling and mathematics), following step-by-step outlining, choosing priorities, organizing notes, and keeping track of important materials. They may also experience more general difficulties in understanding the structure of a lecture or reading passage or in seeing the relationship of main ideas to subordinate ideas. Some students with sequencing problems find their own methods of organization. Their minds may work better when they are free to think non-sequentially or to follow the flow of their own thoughts. Some develop original ways of arriving at conclusions. Others benefit greatly from learning how to structure task and how to set up orderly systems for self-management.

Having a learning disability does not mean being unable to learn. It does mean that the person will have to use adaptive methods to process information so that learning can be accomplished. A learning disability exists when information is absorbed through the senses but inaccurately transmitted to the brain or inappropriately expressed. Students with LD must receive and transmit information in forms that work best for them.

Few learning-disabled college students will have deficits in all these abilities. College students with LD vary widely in the extent to which they experience these problems. Most students who enter college with LD have developed varying degrees of compensatory skills and have learned copying strategies that enable them to circumvent or at least manage some of their deficits. A word processor and an electronic dictionary are excellent personal examples of the tools students may use. All students have preferred learning styles that work best for them, and students with LD are no different. Many students with LD develop unconventional methods of learning out of necessity, because traditional methods may not work effectively for them. Tutoring in spelling and math are usually required. Students with learning disabilities can generally learn better when as many senses as possible are used in the teaching and learning process – visual, auditory, and tactile.

It is not uncommon to find students with LD who are very creative or talented in music, poetry, art, dance, athletics, mechanics, computer programming, or other subjects. Too often, however, their special skills and talents are overshadowed by their struggle with traditional academics. When their special abilities are recognized and encouraged, the satisfaction derived from these skills may ease their frustration with academics and motivate them to capitalize on their strengths instead of focusing on their deficits.

Some students go to great lengths to hide their problems for fear that they will be regarded as mentally “disabili-typed” and illiterate. The ones who are more likely to succeed in the college environment are those who understand and come to terms with their disabilities, confront them openly, take advantage of the resources that can help them, and recognize and capitalize on their strengths.

Tips for Positive Communication

- ◆ Include the following statement on the course syllabus and repeat it during the first class meeting: *If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. My office location and hours are....*
- ◆ Stress the importance of good study habits and effective time management. If you need assistance, contact Academic Assistance, Library 124, ext. 7518
- ◆ *Letters of Accommodation should only be discussed with the student or Director of Disability Support Services.* Please be discrete when having discussions regarding disability information which is protected under FERPA. Disclosure is on a 'need to know basis.' For information on FERPA, please see PLU's FERPA policy at www.plu.edu/print/handbook/conduct/FERPA.html.
- ◆ Give timely feedback to the student; errors need to be corrected as soon as practical.
- ◆ Give praise when merited; it builds confidence.
- ◆ Discuss with the student learning strategies, which have worked well for them. Do not hesitate to ask a student what adaptations, if any, are required in the classroom. The student is a valuable resource regarding his or her particular needs.

Suggested Classroom Accommodations

Specific accommodations will need to be individually tailored because students with LD will vary depending on their types and degrees of learning difficulty. Usually, a combination of adaptive methods is the best approach. Many adaptations used for students with LD are the same as for some other disabilities.

- ◆ Be open to students recording lectures; agreement forms are available from the DSS Director in the University Center, 3rd Floor.
- ◆ Encourage and support the use of word processing equipment that will help students with LD compose, edit, and spell more accurately.
- ◆ Use as many senses as possible when presenting subject matter; it enhances the many ways in which students learn. (Varied approaches are good for all students).
- ◆ Concepts can be strengthened by using input: sounds, smells and visual aids.
- ◆ Use the chalkboard, handouts, videos, group discussions, role playing, overhead projectors, Power Point, etc.
- ◆ Prepare handouts and review technical terms used in your class.

- ◆ Point out the organizational items in textbooks, e.g., chapter summaries, sub-headings, graphic design, charts, maps, and indices.
- ◆ Give all assignments and course expectations in written and oral form.
- ◆ Incorporate “hands on” and lab experiences when they are appropriate.
- ◆ Consult with the student, the DSS Director or the Director of Academic Assistance when assistance is needed in solving problems.
- ◆ Suggest that students get classmates to take notes.
- ◆ Allow learning-disabled students to sit in the front row.
- ◆ Give students a clear and concise syllabus, listing tests and assignments with due dates noted.
- ◆ Use demonstrations and hands-on experiences.
- ◆ Break down difficult concepts into steps or parts.
- ◆ Outline the day’s lecture on the board.
- ◆ Give a brief review of the material presented and emphasize key points.
- ◆ Include a time for questions and answers.
- ◆ Give students study questions for exams that demonstrate the format as well as the content of the test and an explanation of what constitutes a good answer.
- ◆ Encourage all students to take advantage of Academic Assistance tutoring.
- ◆ Suggest that students use proofreaders.
- ◆ Extend the time allowed to complete assignments when appropriate.
- ◆ Make alternative assignments in some cases.
- ◆

Test Adaptation and Administration

- ◆ Provide large-print test if needed.
- ◆ Allow extra time for test taking (usually time and one-half).
- ◆ Arrange for individual proctoring of tests in quiet, separate room.
- ◆ Consider oral tests.
- ◆ Permit the use of dictionaries or spell check and thesauruses with word processors for writing assignments.
- ◆ Go over exams with students.
- ◆ Permit the use of calculators for math tests.
- ◆ Explain directions more fully.

IV. HEARING IMPAIRMENTS

Hearing impairment is a broad term that refers to hearing losses of varying degrees from hard-of-hearing to total deafness. The major challenge facing students with hearing impairments is communication. Hearing-impaired students vary widely in their communication skills. Among the conditions that affect the development of communication skills of persons with hearing impairments are personality, intelligence, nature and degree of deafness, degree and type of residual hearing, degree of benefit derived from amplification by hearing aid, environmental factors, and age of onset. Age of onset plays a crucial role in the development of language. Persons with pre-lingual hearing loss (present at birth or occurring before the acquisition of language and the development of speech patterns) are more functionally disabled than those who lose some degree of hearing after the development of language and speech.

Since the majority of learning is acquired orally, many students with hearing problems have both experiential and language deficiencies. Because they do not hear environmental noises and day-to-day conversations, hearing-impaired children miss a great deal of crucial information usually learned incidentally by non-hearing-impaired children. Although students can overcome some of these problems to varying degrees through great investments of time, energy, and effort by parents and educators, such deficiencies continue to be fairly common within the hearing-impaired population.

Most students with hearing impairments use a variety of communication methods. The most frequently used method is a combination of speech reading (lip-reading) and residual hearing, which is often amplified by hearing aids. It is important to note, however, that speech reading is only a partial solution, since experts estimate that only about 30 to 40 percent of spoken English is distinguishable on the lips even by the best speech readers under the most favorable conditions.

Many students with hearing impairments can and do speak. Most deaf students have normal speech organs and have learned to use them through speech therapy. Some deaf students cannot monitor or automatically control the tone and volume of their speech, so their speech may be initially difficult to understand. Understanding improves, as one becomes more familiar with the deaf student's speech patterns.

Hearing-impaired students who communicate with speech and speech reading, as opposed to communicating manually with sign language, are referred to as "oral." The incidence of oral and manual communication varies with regional philosophical differences on the issue.

Hearing-impaired students who communicate manually usually use American Sign Language (ASL). In ASL, thoughts are expressed through a combination of hand and arm movements, positions, and gestures. The intensity and repetition of the movements and facial expression are also important elements of manual communication. Finger-spelling is an element of sign language that is used when there is no equivalent sign for a particular English word or concept. Finger-spelling consists of finger and hand positions for each letter in the alphabet. This alphabet is called the

American Manual Alphabet. Faculty should be aware that American Sign Language is not the exact equivalent of the English language. Rather, ASL is a concept-based shorthand method of communication, and its syntax is quite different from English. As a result, many deaf students who are skilled in ASL have not mastered the grammatical subtleties of English, which is their second language.

Students who have manual communication skills may use an interpreter with them in the classroom to help them understand what is being said. There are two types of interpreters: oral and manual. The oral interpreter “mouths” what is being said, and the manual interpreter uses sign language. The two methods are often combined. Because class formats are so varied, it is recommended that the faculty member, interpreter, and student arrange a conference early in the semester to discuss any special arrangements that are needed.

The interpreter and hearing-impaired student usually sits in the front of the classroom. Sign language can be a distraction at first to the class and the professor; however, the initial curiosity of the class soon wanes and the professor adapts easily to the interpreter’s presence. Interpreters who are certified by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf subscribe to a strict code of ethics that require confidentiality of private communications and honesty in interpretation or transliteration.

Most hearing-impaired students can be evaluated in the same way as other students. Many deaf students prefer to read tests themselves. Interpreters may also need to relay questions to the faculty member for clarification.

Assumptions should not automatically be made about a hearing-impaired student’s ability to participate in certain types of classes. Hearing-impaired students may be able to learn much about music styles, techniques, and rhythms by observing a visual display of the music on an oscilloscope or similar apparatus or by feeling the vibrations of the music. Some hearing-impaired students will have enough residual hearing so that amplification through hearing aids, earphones, public address systems, or personal FM transmitter/receiver units will allow participation. It is always best to discuss with the student the requirements of a class and to determine if there are ways that the materials can be modified so that the student can participate in what may become an exciting learning experience for all concerned.

“Realtime Captioning” technology has also proven helpful for deaf and hard of hearing individuals in the classroom. Students may find it facilitating to be able to see what is discussed in class immediately on the computer monitor and aided by the stenographer or a student who types in questions for the professor. In addition to reviewing the closed captions, the student receives a print out of the entire lecture versus abbreviated notes from a peer notetaker when using an interpreter. The choice of interpreters or Realtime captioners will vary among students.

Tips for Positive Communication

- ◆ Include the following statement on the course syllabus and repeat it during the first class meeting: ***If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. My office location and hours are....***
- ◆ Attract the attention of the hearing-impaired student before speaking with a cue such as a tap on the shoulder or a wave.
- ◆ Face the person while talking (try to avoid facing the board while speaking).
- ◆ Speak clearly and naturally without exaggerating lip movements or volume.
- ◆ Avoid standing in front of a light source like a window – the glare from behind makes it difficult to read lips.
- ◆ Do not chew gum or otherwise obstruct the area around your mouth with your hands or other objects that interfere with speech reading. (Be aware that facial hair can inhibit speech reading.)
- ◆ Hearing impaired students may choose to interview professors prior to registering for class in order to ascertain if there are obstructions to lip reading, such as a strong accent or facial hair.
- ◆ *Letters of Accommodation should only be discussed with the student or Director of Disability Support Services. Please be discrete when having discussions regarding disability information which is protected under FERPA. Disclosure is on a 'need to know basis.'* For information on FERPA, please see PLU's FERPA policy at www.plu.edu/print/handbook/conduct/FERPA.html.

Test Adaptation and Administration

- ◆ Oral test administration with the aid of the Realtime captioner or interpreter.
- ◆ Extended time for taking tests in a quiet place.

Suggested Classroom Accommodations

- ◆ Seat hearing impaired students where there is an unobstructed view of the professor.
- ◆ Try to repeat comments and questions asked by other students who are not in the range of vision of the hearing-impaired student.
- ◆ Use visual media such as Power Point as much as possible – they

are effective tools.

- ◆ Provide a script or outline of slides, films, or videotaped materials. Media Services, located in the library, can assist with setting up for closed captioning if the film has been coded for captioning.
- ◆ Prepare a brief course outline, a syllabus, and a list of learning objectives for the class ahead of time.
- ◆ Supply a list of technical terminology or specialized vocabulary to the Realtime captioning stenographer or interpreter and the hearing-impaired student before the lecture.
- ◆ Assure the conveyance to hearing-impaired students of important information like class cancellations, class relocation, assignments, and tests by stating the details in writing in a hand-out and on the board.
- ◆ Be prepared to reword sentences when a hearing-impaired student does not understand what is being said. (Persons with hearing impairments, like most of us, are not eager to draw undue attention to themselves; therefore, they may smile an acknowledgment when in fact they have not understood.)
- ◆ Be objective when evaluating written materials from hearing-impaired students. Advise students to seek tutoring assistance from Academic Assistance when they have grammar and syntax problems and are unable to express themselves fluently.
- ◆ Direct your remarks to the hearing-impaired student, not to the tutor/note taker, interpreter or Realtime stenographer. The student should have the option of watching both the speaker and the Realtime stenographer or interpreter.

V. SPEECH IMPAIRMENTS

Speech impairments may have many causes – hearing loss, illness, injury, and congenital or psychological conditions. Speech impairments are found alone and in combination with other disabilities.

Speech impairments range from problems with articulation or voice strength to an inability to speak at all. Unless the impairment is recent, students with speech impairments generally have had some speech therapy. Among the more common speech impairments are stuttering, chronic hoarseness, difficulty in evoking an appropriate word or term, and esophageal speech (resulting from a laryngectomy).

Many speech-impaired students are reluctant to participate in activities that require speaking. Even if the student has adjusted well to a speech impairment, new situations may enhance past anxieties. Self-expression should be encouraged, however, pressure to speak is not likely to be helpful. Speaking in front of a group can be an agonizing experience for a speech-impaired student.

Various communication aids are available for students who cannot speak. Students who are able to type may use portable electronic aids that produce computer printouts, display words on LED screens, or have synthesized audio output. Students whose disability prevents signing, writing, or typing may use electronic voice-synthesizing equipment that has a keyboard activated by a head pointer or mouth wand. Communication aids may be the following:

- ◆ laptop computer with LED display and printer
- ◆ laptop voice synthesized computer
- ◆ pointing to common words and phrases such as yes and no
- ◆ another student in the class assigned to speak for the student

Tips for Positive Communication

The ability to understand impaired speech improves with continued exposure and listening, as does the ability to understand a foreign accent.

- ◆ Include the following statement on the course syllabus and repeat it during the first class meeting: ***If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me. My office location and hours are....***
- ◆ Be patient and listen.
- ◆ Do not provide words or finish sentences for a person who stutters or speaks with difficulty; let the person complete his or her thoughts.
- ◆ Give students with communication disabilities the opportunity to participate in class discussions as much as possible, even if extra time is necessary.
- ◆ If the course requires oral communication and the student is unable to communicate orally, arrange for alternative methods, such as written communication that might be shared with the class; some students will, on occasion, use laptop speech synthesizers for communication in class.
- ◆ Encourage participation, but do not require a student with a communication difficulty to speak in front of the class.
- ◆ Allow students who are unable to communicate orally to use a word processor, sign board, or Realtime stenographer in class.
- ◆ If you do not understand what is being said do not pretend to know; tell the student you do not understand and allow him or her to repeat the communication.
- ◆ *Letters of Accommodation should only be discussed with the student or Director of Disability Support Services.* Please be discrete when having discussions regarding disability information which is protected under FERPA. Disclosure is on a 'need to know basis.' For information on FERPA, please see PLU's FERPA policy at www.plu.edu/print/handbook/conduct/FERPA.html.

Suggested Classroom Accommodations

- ◆ Let the student participate through written assignments or responses to specific questions that are read to the class by the reader.
- ◆

Test Adaptation and Administration

The faculty member can set the tone that encourages appropriate self-expression. Depending upon the severity of the impairment, various adapted methods of evaluation used by students with other disabilities are appropriate for a student with a speech impairment.

Students with speech impairments seldom require the test adaptations that students with other disabilities need; however, the following considerations are important:

Written assignments or responses to specific questions that can be shared with the class by someone else reading them aloud are an alternative to oral presentations.

For students who choose to participate orally, faculty and class members should be patient, offering encouragement and an opportunity to develop self-confidence in a challenging situation.

VI. OTHER DISABILITIES

Many disabilities are not readily apparent. The more prevalent “hidden” disabilities include seizure disorders, diabetes, cardiac conditions, allergies, kidney conditions, chronic back pain, and several musculoskeletal and connective tissue disorders.

The academic support services, test adaptations, special equipment and devices, and other accommodations offered to students with disabilities in the specific categories discussed earlier in this book are also available to students with hidden disabilities.

Some students with hidden disabilities may be reluctant to talk to faculty and staff members about their special needs.

Tips for Positive Communication

- ◆ It is the student’s responsibility to inform faculty and staff members of the special accommodation and adaptation needs they require. It is strongly advised that faculty members make the initial overture at the first class meeting to encourage students with disabilities to talk with them. Include the following statement on the course syllabus and repeat it during the first class meeting: ***If you need course***

adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. My office location and hours are....

- ◆ Variations in a student's performance caused by medication may present problems that require appropriate modifications.
- ◆ If a faculty or staff member has valid questions about the effect of the medications a student is taking, it is appropriate to discuss these issues with the student.
- ◆ **Keep all information confidential.**

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

A. HANDLING EMERGENCIES

There may be an occasion when a student's condition needs immediate intervention in the classroom. The most likely examples are seizures, diabetic shock (insulin reaction), and heart attacks. Should such a situation arise, **immediately call Campus Safety, ext. 7911**. Give the building name, room number, and description of the emergency. Although an ambulance is usually not needed for most seizure incidents and insulin reactions, Campus Safety may transport the student to the Health Services for additional treatment and observation until the crisis is under control.

B. INTERVENTION TECHNIQUES

Until emergency medical personnel are on the scene, there are some intervention techniques that should be started. For heart attacks, CPR treatment should be started immediately if the person is not breathing. Such emergencies are rare, but it is best to be prepared, remain calm, and know what to do if and when the need arises.

C. EPILEPSY – FIRST AID FOR SEIZURES

1. Remain calm. Students will assume the same emotional reaction as the faculty or staff member. The seizure is painless to the person who is experiencing it.
2. Do not try to restrain the person. There is nothing you can do to stop a seizure once it has begun; it must run its course.
3. Clear the area around the person so that he or she does not injure him/herself on hard or sharp objects. Try not to interfere with movements in any way.
4. Do not force anything between the teeth.
5. It is not generally necessary to call a doctor unless the attack is followed almost immediately by another major seizure, or the seizure lasts more than about ten

minutes.

6. When the seizure is over, let the person rest if he or she needs to.
7. Turn the incident into a learning experience for the class. Explain that the condition is not contagious and that it is nothing to be afraid of.

D. BUILDING EVACUATION

Pacific Lutheran University calls to the attention of all disabled students the fact that no one else can look out for their well-being as well as they can themselves. Therefore, students with disabilities need to be responsible for studying and remembering the important parts of each building they are in, including exits, phone locations, and elevator procedures. Students with visual and mobility impairments have been asked to give permission for the Emergency Building Coordinator (EBC) in each building to have copies of their schedules in case an emergency occurs during the time they are in the EBC's area of responsibility.

Students need to assume responsibility for asking several persons in their classes to assist them if emergency evacuation becomes necessary. Students in wheelchairs have been given instructions to select "buddies" from the classroom and instruct the buddies to accompany them out of the building or to stay with them at an enclosed stairwell if they cannot exit the building and elevators do not function during fires. Faculty members who have students in their classes who might have problems leaving the building during emergencies should discuss procedures ahead of time.

1. STUDENTS WITH MOBILITY LIMITATIONS

One of the biggest concerns in building evacuation is for students with mobility limitations: elevators should not be used during a fire alarm. If there is no immediate danger (obvious smoke or fire) move the student with mobility limitations to a fire-rated (enclosed) stairwell until emergency personnel determine the nature of the situation. Officials may then decide that no evacuation is necessary, or they may remove the student by carrying the disabled student out of the building using special techniques and evacuation chairs.

Students with mobility impairments have been asked to designate a "buddy" to remain with them while the faculty member, staff member or residence hall staff person meets emergency personnel and tells them where the student is. It is extremely important that the student not be moved unnecessarily or improperly due to the risk of causing physical injury.

Naturally if there is imminent danger and evacuation cannot be delayed, the student with a disability should be carried or helped from the building in the best and fastest manner. The disabled student is the best authority as to how to be moved out of the building. A person may be carried using a two-person lock-arm position or may sit in a sturdy chair, preferably one with arms. The best procedure is to let professional emergency personnel perform the evacuation of these students.

2. VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENTS

Most visually impaired persons will be familiar with the immediate area they are in. In the event of an emergency, tell the student specifically how and where to exit. Have the student take your elbow and escort him or her (this is the preferred method when acting as a “sighted guide”). As you walk, tell the person where you are and advise him or her of any obstacles. When you have reached safety, orient the person to where he or she is and ask if any further assistance is needed.

3. HEARING-IMPAIRED STUDENTS

Visual (strobe) emergency alarms are being installed in buildings as they are being renovated since persons with impaired hearing may not perceive audio emergency alarms. If no visual alarm is present, an alternative warning technique is required. Two methods of warning are the following:

- ◆ Write a note telling what the emergency is and the nearest evacuation route. (Example: “Fire – go out rear door to right and down. Now!”)
- ◆ Turn the light switch on and off to gain attention, then indicate through gestures or in writing what is happening and what to do. It may be prudent to escort the hearing-impaired student as you leave the building.
- ◆ Once evacuated, the hearing-impaired person will need to be kept informed, by visual means, of additional procedures or status updates.

4. ADDITIONAL EVACUATION CONSIDERATIONS

- ◆ Wheelchairs have many movable or weak parts that were not constructed to withstand the stress of lifting (e.g., the seat bar, foot plates, moveable arm rests).
- ◆ Some students in wheelchairs may have electric respirators attached. These persons should be given priority assistance if smoke or fumes are present.
- ◆ Some students have no strength in the upper trunk or neck; support the neck.
- ◆ If the wheelchair is left behind, remove it from the stairwell and leave it where it does not block others.
- ◆ Remove the batteries from a power wheelchair before attempting to transport it. Make sure that the footrests are locked and the motor is off.
- ◆ If a seatbelt is available, secure the student in the chair.
- ◆ If you are carrying a student several flights, a relay team may be needed.

If you have any questions regarding evacuations please call Campus Safety at 535-7441 or for emergencies, 535-7911.