

IDEAS FOR ACCOMMODATING PERSONS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN POSTSECONDARY TRAINING AND COLLEGE

Preface

Transition from high school to postsecondary training can be a critical time for young adults with learning disabilities. As they leave the high school setting, many young adults with learning disabilities are entering vocational training settings or the college environment. Within these environments, these young adults might be in need of accommodations to help them succeed in their training/education.

KEY TERMS USED TO DESCRIBE A SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES

▼ **Specific Learning Disability** - a disorder in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, write, spell or to do mathematical calculations; individual has average to above average intelligence.

▼ **Dyslexia** - has deficits in visual, auditory, or motor process which interfere with reading and reading comprehension; might have difficulties with learning to translate printed words into spoken words with ease.

▼ **Dysgraphia** - has deficit in writing; may include lack of organization, clarity, unity, fragmentation of written concepts, mechanical errors, reversals, transpositions, and omissions of letters or words; spelling may be poor, handwriting may be illegible, and written ideas may be disorganized and incomprehensible.

▼ **Dyscalculia** - has deficit with numbers or remembering facts over a long period of time; might have spatial problems and difficulty aligning numbers into proper columns; might have reversal of numbers and difficulty in mathematical operations.

▼ **Dyspraxia** – has problems with messages from the brain being properly transmitted to the body; though the muscles are not paralyzed or weak, they have problems working well together; might cause speech problems as well as poor posture, poor sense of directions &/or difficulty with actions such as throwing and catching.

▼ **Auditory Perceptual Deficit** – has difficulty in receiving accurate information from the sense of hearing; there is no problem with their hearing, just in how the brain interprets what they hear; might have problems with understanding and

remembering oral instructions, differentiate between similar sounds, or hearing one sound over a background noise.

▼ **Visual Perceptual Deficit** - has difficulties receiving and/or processing accurate information from their sense of sight; might have a problem picking out an object from a background of other objects or seeing things in correct order.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR CLASSROOM

For lecture setting:

- ▼ tape recorders or micro tape players
- ▼ note takers
- ▼ hard copies of notes provided by the instructor or other student
- ▼ outlines, double spaced, with key words provided by the lecturer or note taker
- ▼ all printed materials - double-spaced and with larger print
- ▼ notes on disks
- ▼ lap top computer for note taking
- ▼ spelling masters (some have voice synthesizers)
- ▼ calculators (some have voice synthesizers)
- ▼ books on tape or CD
- ▼ printed materials may be scanned into the computer and screen reading software can be utilized (JAWS or Kurzweil, available in the library)

For reading and writing activities:

- ▼ reading programs, such as JAWS or Kurzweil (available in the library)
- ▼ Soundproof by Humanware which is designed for professionals with LD
- ▼ Recording for the Blind (books or textbooks on tape)
- ▼ electronic dictionaries/spelling checkers (some may have voice synthesizers)

▼ highlighters (to remember important facts or to color pairs of numbers a different color - might reduce chance of error in copying a long series of numbers)

For test-taking:

▼ quiet environment

▼ extended time

▼ test on the computer

▼ reader, scribe or oral tests

▼ double-spaced, with large print

▼ index cards, blank paper, and/or ruler (help keep place on line)

▼ tape recorder (to hear what is on the test &/or to dictate answers)

▼ use of a proctor to rephrase test questions that are not clear to the student

Others:

▼ substitute a course for a required course, e.g., American Sign Language substituted for a foreign language for students with language learning disorders