



**Information to Assist Faculty
in Accommodating Students with Disabilities
(Instructor's Handbook)**

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Information to Assist Faculty in Accommodating Students with Disabilities

The University of Windsor strives to provide a welcoming and supporting environment for students with disabilities. Faculty play an important role in fostering this environment that enables students with disabilities to realize their potential.

This document was created to provide faculty with essential information about policies and procedures for accommodating students with disabilities in the classroom. We hope that you will find this information useful.

Institutional Obligations - Shared Responsibility

Post-secondary institutions are required to take a proactive approach in addressing disability related issues and in establishing policies and programs that are inclusive for students with disabilities. All members of the University of Windsor community have a shared responsibility to accommodate students with disabilities whose needs have been duly assessed by Student Disability Services. Academic accommodations play an important role in creating an equitable environment where respect for the dignity of the persons with disabilities and respect for confidentiality are realized. The University of Windsor's current Special Needs Policy (Senate Policy S2) is intended to reflect the University's response to the legislative requirements of Ontario Human Rights Code and the Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms.

It is the responsibility of the University not only to accommodate students with disabilities, but to ensure the specific rights and entitlements which are guaranteed by the [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#) (Section 15), the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#) (Section 17, Subsections 1-4), the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act ([AODA - Bill 118](#)), and University of Windsor Senate Policy S2: [Special Needs Policy](#).

In fulfilling the obligation to accommodate student with disabilities, it is recognized that the needs of each student with a disability must be individually assessed to determine the appropriate accommodations. Not all students with the same disability will have the same needs, and the accommodations available to each student are highly individualized and specific to that student. The University has a responsibility (through Student Disability Services) to notify faculty of the specific accommodations to which a student with a disability is entitled, and to work with faculty to ensure that the rights of the student are met and that the integrity of the course remains intact.

Academic Accommodations for Students With Disabilities

Background

Academic accommodation refers to educational practices, systems and support mechanisms designed to accommodate functional challenges posed by an individual's disability. The purpose of accommodation is to allow students to perform the essential requirements of their courses or programs. At no time does academic accommodation undermine or compromise the learning objectives that are established by the academic authorities of the University.

Principles

1. The University of Windsor is committed to providing access to the educational experience and accommodation to the point of undue hardship in order to promote academic accessibility for individuals with identified and duly assessed disabilities. The University encourages applications from students with those disabilities within the meaning of the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#), including visual, hearing, communication and mobility impairments and learning and other non-visible disabilities.
2. The University of Windsor affirms its commitment to the physical accessibility of the campus, and to the assessment of academic accommodation for students with disabilities in order to meet its responsibility among the province's educational institutions in implementing accessibility.
3. Student Disability Services (SDS) is the designated unit at the University of Windsor for assisting the campus community in integrating persons with disabilities into all aspects of the University's academic and community life. SDS provides assessment of academic accommodation, advises students on strategies to open a dialogue with instructors, and acts as consultant, facilitator, coordinator and advocate in this area for all members of the University community.
4. The University promotes efforts to accommodate students with disabilities so that they can meet the learning objectives of courses they are taking and be fairly evaluated in their performance.

Policies

5. In order to secure appropriate academic accommodation, students with disabilities are responsible for identifying their individual needs to Student Disability Services in such a manner as to facilitate an appropriate response from the University.
6. Academic accommodation is assessed and provided on an individual basis. Limitations that are traditionally attributed to a particular disabling condition cannot, and should not, be generalized. The University is committed to maintaining confidentiality to the greatest extent possible when providing academic accommodation and related support services to students.
7. Students with disabilities who request academic accommodation must provide Student Disability Services with relevant professional supporting documentation as determined by the University, generally from a regulated health professional practitioner (e.g., a physician, psychiatrist, clinical psychologist). The documentation must include a statement that the individual has an ongoing, recognized disability that requires academic accommodation. Students with learning disabilities must provide a summary of the results of a complete psycho-educational assessment conducted by an appropriate registered psychologist. All documentation must be current.

8. Once students with disabilities identify their individual needs for academic accommodation, SDS staff members assess the appropriateness of the student's requests, and then formally recommend appropriate means of academic accommodation by means of a "Letter of Accommodation".

9. A student with a "Letter of Accommodation" should meet with each of their instructors as soon as possible to discuss the academic accommodations recommended and to reach an agreement on an appropriate accommodation for that course. The instructor may contact Student Disability Services for further consultation as needed.

Implementation

10. Members of faculty and instructional staff, supported by administrative staff, share the University's responsibility under the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#) for academic accommodation of students with disabilities. This policy encourages dialogue between instructors and students as to how the needs of individuals can be accommodated within the terms of legislation and current University guidelines in the area. All such dealings require mutual understanding and respect from the parties involved in the accommodation process.

11. Student Disability Services is responsible for coordinating the provision of comprehensive and professional services necessary to respond to the needs of students with disabilities. It is responsible for assessing the needs for academic accommodation of students with disabilities through assessments that are carried out on an individual basis, in accordance with related legislation, and on the basis of relevant professional/medical documentation, information gathered from the student, and evaluation by SDS staff.

The Role of Student Disability Services

Student Disability Services (SDS) is responsible for the coordination of academic accommodations and support services for students with disabilities registered at the University of Windsor. Some of our functions include:

- Evaluating the appropriateness of student documentation provided by qualified health practitioners
- Evaluating accommodation requests or needs on an individual basis while maintaining academic standards
- Liaising with faculty, departments, and other student services to ensure that students' needs are met
- Facilitating the resolution of problems or misunderstandings as they arise between students and faculty/departments
- Providing information about disabilities, policies and procedures pertaining to students with disabilities to faculty and the University community
- Providing a variety of support services for students with disabilities such as one-on-one learning support, note taking, adaptive equipment loans, sign language interpretation, screening and referral for LD/ADHD assessment, referral for counselling, etc.

Identification to Student Disability Services for Accommodation

Students are responsible for identifying their needs for disability-related accommodation to Student Disability Services by booking an intake appointment with an SDS Advisor, and bringing appropriate documentation to the first meeting.

All documentation must be current and provided by a regulated health practitioner (e.g. physician, a medical specialist, psychiatrist, psychologist).

Documentation must include a statement:

- a) that the individual has an ongoing diagnosed disability, and
- b) that the functional limitations of the disability warrant academic accommodation.

Students with learning disabilities must provide a written report from a comprehensive psycho-educational assessment conducted by a registered clinical psychologist that formally diagnoses a specific learning disability. For more information about documentation requirements for learning disabilities and other disabilities, please visit the Documentation of Disability page.

During the intake appointment, the SDS Advisor will review the appropriateness of documentation, discuss possible accommodations, and establish an accommodation protocol. Factors taken into consideration when establishing an accommodation protocol are the specific impact of the student's disability on academic functioning, the degree of the impact, the extent in which the documentation supports the requests, and whether the accommodation will significantly compromise the essential requirements and/or academic integrity of the course or program.

Referral

Many students arrive at university with disabilities that may have gone undiagnosed. If you suspect that a student is having academic difficulties because of an undiagnosed disability, please encourage him or her to contact Student Disability Services for an interview and screening.

Confidentiality

Student Disability Services has a human rights obligation to maintain confidentiality. Some students may feel at ease discussing the nature of their disability and need for accommodations with their instructors while others may not. If a student feels comfortable disclosing, s/he has a right to do so; however, SDS staff have an obligation to not disclose information without the student's specific written permission. As an instructor, you also have an obligation to respect the confidentiality of students with disabilities who are receiving academic accommodations. Students with disabilities, especially those with non-visible disabilities (e.g. learning disabilities, psychiatric, medical disabilities) may feel apprehensive about being identified in front of their peers because of the negative social stigma attached to their disability. SDS Advisors recommend to students that they discuss their needs and concerns during their instructors' scheduled office hours in order to ensure privacy.

Students' Responsibilities in Arranging for Test/Exam Accommodations

1. Early each term, students must meet with their SDS Advisor to discuss accommodation needs, get their "Letters of Accommodation", and submit their Test/Examination schedule for the semester.
2. At the beginning of each term, students are responsible for initiating contact with you to discuss their accommodation needs as specified in their "Letter of Accommodation", and to obtain your signature. It is a common practice for instructors to include a statement in their course outlines inviting students with disabilities to identify their needs for accommodation. We recommend that students meet their instructors during scheduled office hours so they can discuss their needs in a safe and confidential space.
3. Student must return their signed "Letters of Accommodation to Student Disability Services by published deadlines (available on the SDS website), in order to receive accommodation for formally scheduled exams. Students who are authorized to write tests/exams with Student Disability Services are also required to submit a completed exam schedule to the SDS Exam Coordinator by published deadlines. It is the responsibility of the student to formally schedule all tests/exams which are being written with SDS (including re-scheduled exams).
4. Students are responsible for confirming that accommodation arrangements have been made with the Exam Coordinator in Student Disability Services. Instructors will receive an e-mail reminder from the Exam Coordinator several days in advance of the exam, confirming that a student in your class is in fact writing the exam with SDS.

Additional Information for instructors can be viewed on the [Test and Exam Information page of the SDS website](#).

Other Services Available from Student Disability Services

In addition to the provision/coordination of [classroom and testing accommodations](#), Student Disability Services provides a variety of services and supports to students with documented disabilities (including: learning disabilities, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, acquired brain injuries, vision, hearing and mobility impairments, chronic medical conditions and psychiatric issues), who have registered with SDS. These services and supports are intended to facilitate the inclusion of students with disabilities fully into the fabric of the University of Windsor, and to help minimize the impact of a disability on individual learning and academic performance. We welcome invitations from faculty to work collaboratively toward the goal of academic equity, and are available to serve as a resource for faculty who may want additional information about our shared mandate.

Available SDS Services include:

Faculty Presentations: Student Disability Services Advisors are available to deliver presentations to faculties across campus. Presentations provide an overview of the role of SDS, an exploration of the principles of accommodation, and discussion of the responsibilities of faculty, SDS staff and students with disabilities in the facilitation of academic accommodations. In addition, the presentations highlight best practices for working with students who have disabilities, and explore strategies for effectively working together to help remove barriers and improve equitable access to learning. Presentations are designed to foster discussion of issues instructors may encounter when working with students with disabilities, and identify practical strategies can be used to ensure that the duty to accommodate is fulfilled and the academic integrity of the institution is maintained.

Advising: Student Disability Services Advisors provide one-on-one support and facilitate necessary [academic accommodations](#) which may help to minimize the impact of a disability on learning and academic performance. In addition, SDS Advisors assist students adjust to the demands of university life by developing the skills and strategies necessary for academic success. Advisors also work with students to develop independence and self-advocacy skills and provide input on how to develop networks of support by utilizing other student and academic support services available throughout campus.

Learning Strategist: The SDS Learning Strategist works with students to assist them in understanding their psycho-educational assessments, and to then develop strategies for improving memory, note taking, reading, studying and exam taking in order to enhance academic performance and meet educational goals. Collaboration between the Learning Strategist and student is encouraged so as to assist students with learning disabilities identify their needs and prioritize their academic goals. Students are encouraged to connect the strategies utilized during LS sessions to their existing learning styles and personal patterns of cognitive strengths and weaknesses. The Learning Strategist is also available to consult with faculty to ensure that the diverse learning needs of students are met.

LD and ADHD Coaching: The LD and ADHD Coaches works with students with learning disabilities and/or attention deficit disorders to improve time management and organizational skills. In addition, the coaches work with students to develop motivation, set appropriate and realistic goals, improve follow through, and prepare for tests and exams. Students with learning disabilities can also work specifically with the LD Coach to learn academic strategies and techniques designed to maximize their learning potential.

Assistive Technology Consultation and Equipment Loan: Assistive technology is meant to enable students with disabilities to compensate for educational barriers imposed by a disability. SDS Advisors work with students to help determine which assistive technologies may be the most beneficial in minimizing the impact of a disability. An Assistive Technologist and Technical Consultant are available to discuss technology needs with students and the types of technology which may best enhance individual learning and performance. Training for effective utilization of various types of software, including [Dragon Naturally Speaking](#), is also available. Technology is available in the [Learning Annex](#) to students registered with SDS and, for short-term loan, through the Student Disability Services office. Equipment available for loan includes tape and digital recorders, FM systems and PDA's.

Text Conversion to Alternate Format: Students registered with SDS may require that books and articles be transcribed into various types of alternate format as part of their accommodations. Types of alternate format include (but are not limited to): tape, Braille and PDF. Once a request for alternate format has been made by a student's Advisor, the information is passed on to [Document Imaging](#) who must be provided with proof of purchase before converting the requested material. The process to convert texts can take several weeks, therefore, students are encouraged to meet with Advisors and determine accommodations as early as possible.

Students Experiencing Difficulty

A student experiencing difficulty is one who encounters major obstacles to the successful completion of their academic program. While it is typical for students to experience university as a time of significant stress and change, it can become so severe that it poses a threat to academic progress. Faculty and staff are often in a position to identify students experiencing difficulty and can provide the early intervention that is critical in preventing students from leaving school or demonstrating behaviour that may escalate.

The following guidelines outline various types of students experiencing difficulty, when professional assistance may be appropriate and beneficial, how to make a referral, seek consultation or contact emergency services as needed.

Signs that a Student may be at Risk:

While the following indicators are important when evaluating a student's need for assistance, it is important to consider everything known about the student in order to avoid over-interpretation of what may be an isolated incident.

1. Stated Need for Help – The content of what is being said is as important as how the need is being expressed and it is important to be aware of tone of voice, gestures and expressions
2. Marked Changes in Mood or Behaviour – Actions inconsistent with a student's typical behaviour may indicate psychological distress such as: withdrawal from social interaction and academic work, disruptive behaviour, noticeable changes in energy level and personal hygiene, spells of crying, outbursts and irritability
3. Difficulties Communicating and/or Distortions of Reality – Irrational conversation, disjointed thoughts or speech, hallucinations, disturbing material in academic assignments and/or bizarre behaviours may be indicative of severe psychological problems
4. Significant Changes in Personal or Cultural Relationships and Identity – A traumatic change which impacts an individual's personal relationship and issues of personal, sexual and cultural identity may result in increased stress and conflict
5. Experience of Violence – The effects of abuse and assault may be accompanied by extreme stress and conflict resulting in the need for counselling or other appropriate service
6. Health Concerns – Acute and chronic health issues may impact a student's progress, their ability to fully engage in the university experience and their ability to cope
7. Academic Difficulties – Students experiencing excessive pressure to succeed and fear of academic failure may find assistance beneficial to their decision-making process
8. Learning Skills Issues – Difficulties keeping up with course work, inadequate preparation for exams, incapacitating anxiety or problems with concentration are all issues that require attention and referral to appropriate campus services

If you are not sure how to approach a student who may be experiencing difficulty or how to handle a situation that has the potential to escalate, seek consultation. Resource for consultation on campus

include the [Student Counselling Centre](#) (ext 4616), Student Disability Services (ext 3288), or [Student Health Services](#) (X 7002) .

How to Intervene with a Student Experiencing Difficulty:

If you determine it is necessary and appropriate to approach a student of concern, the following suggestions might make the interaction more comfortable for you and helpful to the student.

Listen to the student and give them private, undivided attention. Often, a few minutes of effective listening is sufficient to help a student feel heard and empowered to make appropriate decisions

Acknowledge the student's concerns and try to communicate by reflecting back the essential message of what the student has shared with you.

Express Concern without generalizing or making assumptions about the student and their behaviour.

Offer Hope and reassure the student that resources to help are available to them. The purpose of offering hope is to provide enough so that the student is able to consult a professional or other appropriate person and not to minimize or solve the student's problems.

Situations that Require Immediate Referral:

- Specific References to Suicide
- Harm to Others (verbal and non-verbal threats; intimidating behaviour; violent acts and criminal harassment)
- Drug and Alcohol Abuse
- Disordered Eating

Steps for Making a Referral:

When it is necessary to make a referral, it is important to emphasize that help is necessary and available and that seeking such help is a sign of courage, good judgment and appropriate decision making.

- Being direct and letting the student know your concerns and recommending clearly and simply that they access assistance
- Informing the student that campus services are free and that counselling is confidential
- Suggesting the student make an appointment if they appear receptive to receiving help
- Preparing the student for what they might expect should they choose to follow-up on your suggestion

Except in emergencies the option must be left open for the student to accept or refuse the referral. In an emergency (if the student appears to be at imminent risk or is exhibiting threatening behaviour) contact Campus Police (x 4444) if the student is on campus, and Windsor Police if the student is off-campus.

How to approach the student:

- Listen carefully to the student as they describe their situation
- Ask the student clarifying questions
- Offer the student your best suggestions and encourage them to choose the options they wish to pursue
- If the student appears defensive, point out that seeking assistance is not a sign of failure, give alternatives, leave assistance as an option to be considered later, follow-up with the student
- If the student is reluctant, offer to make initial contact yourself or sit with the student as they do so; offer to accompany the student to an appointment
- Research available, suitable materials and resources
- Ask if you are not sure that a particular resource or referral would be appropriate
- Ask colleagues for help as needed

Setting Healthy Limits:

When assisting students experiencing difficulty, it is important to know your own limits and to not extend yourself beyond your comfort level. If problems are beyond your scope, it is important to consult with your colleagues and other campus resources as part of your own self-care.

Resources for Instructors

Information About Universal Instructional Design

Universal Instructional Design (UID) (also known as Universal Design for Learning or Universal Design of Instruction) represents a set of emerging initiatives, principles, guidelines, and projects that promote and work toward inclusive and equitable access to learning. Diversity of learners in today's classrooms requires flexibility and resourcefulness of the curriculum, teaching methods, and classroom set-up. UID initiatives work toward concrete solutions that would meet such demands through the development and delivery of learner-centered models and approaches to learning.

UID follows in the footsteps of Universal Design in architecture that resulted in, now standard, accessibility features such as ramps, automatic doors, switches, curb cuts, etc. Even though designed to accommodate persons with physical disabilities, increased accessibility also proved beneficial in numerous ways to other populations. By the same token, UID works to make learning accessible and to accommodate every student regardless of his or her learning style, preferences, or deficits. Once again, even though initially envisioned to allow persons with sensory and learning disabilities equitable access to education, UID applications will most certainly provide all learners with better tools and opportunities for learning.

Universal in UID does not stand for the one-size-fits-all model. Quite contrary, UID acknowledges and values the unique learning strengths and weaknesses each student brings into the classroom. In simple terms, UID's main principle is flexibility of curriculum, course design and delivery, and teaching and evaluation methods. As an integral component of UID, technology is used to allow for such flexibility in all stages of the learning process: acquisition of information, engagement with the material, and expression of knowledge.

This flexibility is already applied on an individual basis by creative teachers cognizant of the learner diversity in their classroom. In this sense, UID principles have long been in use, but more and more this approach to teaching and learning surfaces as a necessity rather than an individual choice. In addition to a large number of students with physical deficits, a rapidly growing population of students identified with learning disabilities presents a challenge to our educational system on many levels. Currently, this challenge is being met through individual classroom and exam accommodations and one-on-one learning support.

UID strives to incorporate the principles behind accommodations and learning support as a standard component of the curriculum and classroom. This perspective is largely supported through the development of new technologies that allow for creativity in teaching methods, alternative means of presentation, and choices for equally effective assessment in the classroom.

Online UID Resources:

Universal Instructional Design at the University of Guelph: www.tss.uoguelph.ca/uid

[Classroom Observation Checklist](#) - PDF format.

[The Seven Questions Toward UID](#) - PDF format.

Centre for applied Special Technology (CAST) - Teaching Every Student in the Digital Age: Universal Design for Learning www.cast.org/teachingeverystudent/ideas/tes/

[University of New Hampshire - Faculty Resources](http://www.unh.edu/disabilityservices/facultyresources.html): www.unh.edu/disabilityservices/facultyresources.html

Including topics such as How-to make your website accessible; How to meet technological needs of students with disabilities; and Fifty-seven teaching methods.

[Queen's University - Accommodation and Instruction Strategies for Instructors](http://library.queensu.ca/websrs/faculty_guide-Strategies.html):
http://library.queensu.ca/websrs/faculty_guide-Strategies.html.

Terminology for Discussing Essential Course Requirements

These guidelines were adopted from a document produced by the Inter-University Disability Issues Association (I-DIA) to assist disability service professionals in determining essential requirements when recommending reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities at their institutions. The following sections are particularly relevant for university instructors.

Reasonable Accommodations

Refer to modifications or adjustments to a course, program, service, activity, or facility that provide a qualified individual with a disability an equal opportunity to obtain the same benefit, or to attain the same level of achievement or to enjoy equal benefits and privileges as those available to a similarly situated individual without a disability. Postsecondary institutions are obligated to make reasonable accommodations only to the known limitations of otherwise qualified individuals with disabilities. They are not obligated to provide accommodations that would fundamentally alter the essential components of a course of study.

Essential Requirements

"Essential requirements" is a specific term used in human rights legislation, referring to the bona fide requirements of a task or program that cannot be altered without compromising the fundamental nature of the task or program. Determining what is an essential requirement and what is not is critical in distinguishing requirements that cannot be accommodated from what can and should be altered.

According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission (2003):

Terms that have been used [to describe essential requirements] include indispensable, vital, and very important. Thus, a requirement should not lightly be considered to be essential, but should be carefully scrutinized. This includes course requirements and standards. For example, ***it may likely be an essential requirement that a student master core aspects of a course curriculum. It is much less likely that it will be an essential requirement to demonstrate the mastery in a particular format, unless mastery of that format (e.g. oral communication) is also a vital requirement of the program.*** In contrast, non-essential duties would not detract from the main purpose of the course or program if they were not done or done in a different manner. (p.62)

"Essential" can therefore be defined by two factors:

1. the skill must be demonstrated to meet the objectives of the course; and
2. the skill must be demonstrated in a prescribed manner.

Undue Hardship

According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission (2003):

Educators must provide accommodation, up to the point of undue hardship, to enable students to meet the essential requirements. (p.62)

[It is therefore important to disability service professional to understand that] it is not discriminatory to refuse an [accommodation] because a person is incapable of fulfilling the essential requirements. . . . However, a person will only be considered incapable if the needs of the person cannot be accommodated without undue hardship. (p.10)

In the *Policy and Guidelines on Disability and the Duty to Accommodate* (2001) the Ontario Human Rights Commission prescribes three factors when considering undue hardship:

1. Cost

Quantifiable, [based on the operating budget of the institution, not the individual OSD]; Substantial such that it would alter the essential nature of the enterprise, or so significant that they would substantially affect its viability. (p.30)

2. Outside Sources of Funding

Make use of outside resources in order to meet the duty to accommodate and must first do so before claiming undue hardship. (p.33)

3. Health and Safety

[The institution] would need to demonstrate that the [health and safety] standard is reasonably necessary and that accommodation cannot be accomplished without incurring undue hardship. (p. 34)

The Ontario Human Rights Commission (2003) noted that:

There may be situations where a student [appears to pose] a health and safety risk to him or herself that would amount to an undue hardship, or an otherwise appropriate accommodation is impossible to implement in the particular circumstances. However, it is important that education providers not rush to such a conclusion. Further training for staff, or further supports for the student may resolve the issue. [The threshold for undue hardship is high] and therefore the accommodation process must be fully explored, to the point of undue hardship. (p.70)

Where there is a dispute regarding a proposed accommodation, and [the university/faculty/field supervisor] alleges undue hardship, the onus is on the [university/faculty/field supervisor] to demonstrate it. It is not the responsibility of a student seeking accommodation to prove that a proposed accommodation would not cause undue hardship. (p.58-59).

Questions to Consider When Determining Essential Course Requirements

It is important that instructors identify the essential requirements (or components) in their course and/or program. If an instructor is clear about what is being taught, and why it must be done a certain way, it is much easier to find creative solutions to the needs of students with disabilities.

The following open-ended questions have been drawn from various documents relating to essential requirements. The purpose of these questions is to clearly define the essential elements of the course and to establish a non-discriminatory baseline by which to evaluate course content and the expectations required of all students. Phrasing variations have been provided to account for different communication styles, backgrounds and knowledge bases.

Learning Objectives

1. What is the purpose of this course? (Scott and Maniltz, 2000, p. 35).
2. Would elimination of the skills/knowledge/attitude alter the learning objectives of this course/program? (Blacklock, 2001).
3. Is the competency integral to the learning of this course? (Wales, 1997)
4. Are the skills/knowledge/attitudes an integral part of the learning objectives of the course? (Blacklock, 2001).
5. Does the ability or skill necessarily need to be performed in a prescribed manner? Why?
6. Was this course created to teach any of the skills/knowledge/attitudes? (Blacklock, 2001)
7. Would these accommodations require a fundamental alteration in the nature of the program, service, or activity? (Blacklock, 2001)
8. What is the purpose of the program?
9. What are the outcome variables that are absolutely required of all participants? Why?
 - o What academic skills can be demonstrated? How?
 - o What percentage of subject area knowledge must be mastered?
 - o What specific knowledge, principles or concepts must be mastered?
10. What methods of instruction are non-negotiable and absolutely necessary? Why?
11. What methods of assessing outcome variables are absolutely necessary? Why?

Alternate Method

12. Is there only one way for the skills/knowledge/attitudes to be demonstrated? (Blacklock, 2001)

13. Is there an alternative way to do the same work?

14. Academic Adjustment: Substituting Exam Methods

Is the exam methodology specifically designed to test the particular course material? (Hicks, Morley, 2000, p.27).

Undue Hardship/Consequences if Accommodated

15. Would there be any significant* consequences if this skill were performed at varying levels of competency?

- Does it put the student or others in danger?
- Does it make a difference to the field acquisition of unique approaches or philosophies?
- Does it make a big difference to the student's life or future? (Wales, 1997)

16. Would there be any significant consequences if the skills/knowledge/attitudes were not learned? (Blacklock, 2001)

17. Will accommodating the individual needs pose a risk to personal or public safety?

Skill Analysis

18. Will the student have to transfer the skill to different settings? (i.e., Field placement) (Wales, 1997)

19. Does the student have to be physically able to perform this skill [themselves]? (Wales, 1997)

20. Does the student need to be cognitively able to perform the skills/knowledge/attitudes themselves? (Blacklock, 2001)

21. What are the acceptable levels of performance on these measures? Why?

22. What pre-existing abilities or skills must all participating students possess?

23. Is there a minimal level of proficiency in these abilities?

Disability Information and Online Resources

PHYSICAL

Ontario Federation for Cerebral Palsy: www.ofcp.on.ca
Ontario March of Dimes: www.marchofdimes.ca
Canadian Paraplegic Association Ontario: www.cpaont.org
Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada: www.mssociety.ca
Spina Bifida Association: www.sbaa.org
Arthritis Society: www.arthritis.ca

SENSORY

Hearing

Canadian Hearing Society (CHS): www.chs.ca
Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA): www.chha.ca

Vision

Canadian National Institute of the Blind (CNIB): www.cnib.ca
Canadian Council of the Blind: www.ccbnational.net
National Eye Institute: www.nei.nih.gov

PSYCHIATRIC

Anxiety Disorders

American Psychiatric Association - Healthy minds: www.healthyminds.org
Canadian Mental Health Association - Mental Health Education Resource Centre (MHERC): www.mherc.mb.ca
McMaster University Medical Centre - Anxiety Disorders Clinic: macanxiety.com
National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH): nimh.nih.gov
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH): www.camh.net

Bipolar Disorder

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA): www.cmha.ca
American Psychiatric Association - Healthy minds: www.healthyminds.org
National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH): nimh.nih.gov
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH): www.camh.net

Depression

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA): www.cmha.ca
American Psychiatric Association - Healthy minds: www.healthyminds.org
National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH): nimh.nih.gov
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH): www.camh.net

Eating Disorders

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA): www.cmha.ca
American Psychiatric Association - Healthy minds: www.healthyminds.org
National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH): nimh.nih.gov

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA): www.cmha.ca
American Psychiatric Association - Healthy minds: www.healthyminds.org
Obsessive Compulsive Foundation (OCF): www.ocfoundation.org

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH): nimh.nih.gov
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH): www.camh.net

Personality Disorders

Canadian Mental Health Association - Mental Health Education Resource Centre (MHERC):
www.mherc.mb.ca
National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH): nimh.nih.gov

Phobias and Panic Disorder

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA): www.cmha.ca
American Psychiatric Association - Healthy minds: www.healthyminds.org
Social Phobia/Social Anxiety Association (SP/SAA): www.socialphobia.org
National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH): nimh.nih.gov

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH): www.camh.net

Schizophrenia

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA): www.cmha.ca
Schizophrenia Society of Ontario (SSO): www.schizophrenia.on.ca
National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH): nimh.nih.gov
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH): www.camh.net

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA): www.cmha.ca
American Psychiatric Association - Healthy minds: www.healthyminds.org

MEDICAL

Crohn's Disease: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crohn's_disease
Canadian Diabetes Association: www.diabetes.ca
Canadian Cancer Society (Ontario): www.cancer.ca
WebMD - Common Health Topics A-Z: www.webmd.com
Medicine Plus: medlineplus.gov

LEARNING

The Learning Puzzle: www.thelearningpuzzle.net
LD Online: www.ldonline.org
Learning Disabilities Association of Canada (LDAC): www.ldac-taac.ca
Council for Learning Disabilities: www.cldinternational.org

Nonverbal LD

LD Online: www.ldonline.org/indepth/nonverbal
Nonverbal Learning Disorders Association (NLDA): www.nlda.org
Nonverbal Learning Disabilities - Bourke: www.nld-bprouke.ca
Nonverbal Learning Disabilities on the Web: www.nldontheweb.org

ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA): www.cmha.ca
LD Online: www.ldonline.org/adhdbasics
National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH): nimh.nih.gov
ADHD Canada: www.adhdcanada.com
Hallowell Centre - Resources: www.drhallowell.com
Dr. Russell A. Barkley,- ADHD Facts: www.russellbarkley.org/adhd-facts.htm

Syllabus Statement

Accommodation Statement for Course Outline: Faculty are invited to include the following statement in their course outlines, as a means for ensuring that students (particularly new ones) are aware of the process for self-identification and accommodation. There is no obligation on the part of faculty to accommodate students who have not registered with Student Disability Services.

"Students with disabilities who require academic accommodations in this course must contact an Advisor in Student Disability Services (SDS) to complete SDS Registration and receive the necessary Letters of Accommodation. After registering with Student Disability Services, make an appointment to meet and discuss your needs with me in order to make the necessary arrangements as early in the term as possible. Please note that there are deadlines for the submission of documentation and completed forms to Student Disability Services, which are available on their website: www.uwindsor.ca/disability"

Test/Examination Arrangements

Students have sole responsibility for filing their exam schedule with SDS prior to published deadlines for the semester. Students who write tests/exams with Student Disability Services (SDS) will typically write at the same time as the rest of your class. Students who need to reschedule exams for any reason may only do so with your authorization and signature, and it is their responsibility to notify SDS of any schedule changes on a completed [Change of Examination Request](#) form.

Once an exam has been scheduled with SDS, instructors are requested to assist in the accommodation process in the following ways:

- Deliver a copy of the exam **at least 24 hours** prior to the scheduled test/exam.
- If adaptive technology (e.g. audio format, enlarged) is required, deliver the test/exam **48 hours prior to** the scheduled test/exam
- If a student requires the use of text-to-voice technology (e.g. Kurzweil, JAWS, Zoom Text), email the exam file as a Microsoft Word document to the Exam Coordinator in order to avoid the need to scan the exam.
- Ensure that an [Exam Receipt](#) form is attached to the front of the envelope with the exam.
- Fully complete the information under '*Must Be Completed by Instructor*'.

PLEASE NOTE:

- Tests and examinations arranged by Student Disability Services are usually written in Student Disability Services, Dillon Hall, Room 117, although other rooms on campus may be used during the final exam period.
- 3-4 days prior to scheduled test/exams, an email will be send to the instructor and a copy to the secretary including course information and names of students scheduled to write the test/exam
- Trained proctors supervise tests and exams written in our testing facility. Proctors must attend a mandatory training session held every fall semester and are very familiar with University of Windsor Examination Policies
- Student Disability Services encourage instructors to visit the students at the test/exam site in case the students have any questions. Students are advised that if they are unclear about a question, and if the instructor is unable to visit, they should note their concern on the test paper, and answer based on their interpretation of the question.
- Once the test/exams have been completed, the instructor or someone authorized from the department will be responsible for picking up the exam between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:30 pm. Remember that a majority of these students receive extra time so the ending time of the test/exam will be different from the rest of the class.

If you have any questions regarding the administration of exam in SDS, feel free to contact the Exam Coordinator (ext 3463) or by email: exam@uwindsor.ca

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why am I not informed of the nature of a student's disability and the reasons for requesting accommodation?

A: Student Disability Services cannot divulge specific information regarding a student's disability because of a human rights obligation to maintain confidentiality. Students are not obligated to disclose specific information about their disability. From our experience, we find that most students will freely disclose to their instructors; however, there are some who are uncomfortable doing so.

Q: A student came to me with a "Letter of Accommodation". What am I supposed to do with it?

A: As an instructor, it is important that you be "in the loop" regarding the accommodations which are being provided to the student. The student may require classroom accommodations which you are entitled to know about, or for which we may be requesting minimal assistance. If you have questions or concerns about specific accommodation recommendations, you are encouraged to contact the SDS Advisor indicated on the Letter of Accommodation. The letter is simply for your information, however you will be asked by the student to sign an acknowledgement that the letter was delivered to you.

Q: If only some students are getting these accommodations, how is this fair to other students?

A: The rationale for academic accommodation is based on the concept of "equity". This means levelling the playing field so that students with disabilities can compete on an equal footing with their non-disabled peers. Therefore, equity necessitates differential treatment. Sometimes, people confuse equity with "equality", which refers to non-discriminatory (hence similar) treatment on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, creed, religion, sex orientation or disability. Academic accommodation is intended to allow students to compete equitably, without sacrificing essential course requirements.

Q: If a student requests an accommodation that is not specified on his or her Letter of Accommodation for my course, what should I do?

A: If it is a request that you feel does not compromise the academic standards of your course and that you can easily accommodate, as the instructor, you have the right to grant it. However, it is recommended that you check with the SDS Advisor indicated on the Letter of Accommodation to verify that the student has appropriate documentation to support such a request.

Q: Do I need to modify my typical grading process for someone with a disability?

A: You may be asked to consider allowing students to provide evidence of what they have learned in different but equally challenging formats (i.e. oral, instead of in written form, or vice versa). The opportunity to write tests and examinations outside of the regular format is a fairly typical accommodation granted to students with disabilities. However, the completed work should be treated no differently from those of other students in your class and the essential elements of the course should not be compromised.

Q: I received a Letter of Accommodation which states that the student is allowed to make audio recordings of my lectures. Must I comply?

A: The University of Windsor has developed a policy ([Senate Policy A4: Policy on Audio-Recording of Lectures by Students with Disabilities](#)), which clearly spells out the student's responsibilities while acknowledging the rights and intellectual property of faculty. Students who receive this accommodation are required to sign a policy agreement which limits their use of the recorded material and clearly outlines the rights of the instructor. If you think that specific circumstances in your lecture indicate against the use of recording devices, you are encouraged to contact the SDS Advisor indicated on the Letter of Accommodation, who may assist in finding an alternative accommodation that meets the student's needs and fulfills the University's duty to accommodate.

[Policy on Audio-Recording of Lectures by Students with Disabilities \(pdf\)](#) 