Mission:
Disability Programs and Services provides access to academic and co-curricular programs through reasonable accommodations and student-centered assistance.

In addition, Disability Programs and Services is available as a resource to faculty, staff and community agencies to provide education, consultation and guidance regarding disability issues. Our office is the main source of advocacy for students with disabilities in the development of the university’s policies, procedures, programs and curriculum.

Goals:
Support the university’s effort to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Provide access to educational opportunity with services and advocacy which integrate the students with disabilities into the university community.

Provide reasonable academic accommodations based on review and evaluation of documentation of disability presented by students.

Empower students toward self-advocacy.

Advise and refer students to appropriate resources.

Consult with faculty, staff and students regarding disability issues.

Provide exam proctoring for students with documented need for this service.

Act as a liaison to outside agencies and community groups.

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Eligibility for Services

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, otherwise qualified individuals with disabilities are guaranteed certain protections and rights of equal access to programs and services. Documentation establishing the presence of a disability and explaining the nature and degree to which the disability affects major life activities including learning is essential for Disability Programs and Services staff to accurately assess a condition and determine what accommodations would most effectively facilitate student learning. Students with disabilities must therefore provide appropriate documentation indicating the presence of a disability that substantially limits a major life activity.

All documentation guidelines can be found on the Disability Programs and Services website at http://disability.nku.edu under “how to register”.

504/ADA Mandates

Section 504 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibit discrimination against students with disabilities who are otherwise qualified, and that when appropriate, such students must be provided reasonable accommodations. At the postsecondary educational level, a student with a disability is considered otherwise qualified is he/she meets the academic and technical standards requisite for admission or participation in the institution's educational program or activity.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act states: “No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States….shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal Financial Assistance.”

Title II of the ADA states: “A public entity shall make reasonable modification in policies or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the public entity can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity.”

Our efforts are to ensure that we are in compliance with the law and at the same time providing a level playing field in which our student can compete, succeed, and thrive. We are always available to assist instructors of students with disabilities in making sure that their efforts are also consistent with the law.
Arranging for Accommodations

Students who complete the registration process and qualify for reasonable accommodations must submit class schedules each semester in order to receive accommodation letters. Accommodations letters provide the instructor with the necessary information in order to ensure that the approved reasonable accommodations will be implemented. Students are highly encouraged to give accommodation letters directly to their instructors during a time in which he/she can speak with the instructor regarding accommodation arrangements. Please be aware that some students may simply email you the accommodation letter instead of handing it to you. In this situation, communication via email should transpire between yourself and the student to ensure that accommodations will be implemented.

Academic Adjustments

The following are guidelines for typical academic accommodations available to students with disabilities. The Disability Programs and Services Office determine the appropriateness of any given accommodation prior to implementation by instructors.

Exam Proctoring

Exam proctoring is a service provided by the Testing Services Office (TS) at Northern Kentucky University to assist faculty with providing reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Students eligible for exam proctoring will be given a letter from our office supporting the need for the specific accommodations. The student should present this letter to the faculty member as soon as possible to begin the exam scheduling process.

Faculty members can provide the approved exam accommodations in their department if they so choose or send the exam (test, quiz, etc.) to Testing Services for proctoring. Testing Services is available for the exam proctor accommodation, Monday through Friday 8:15 am – 4:15 pm. Some extended hours may be available on an “as needed” basis. Faculty should contact TS if they have questions about this process.

Faculty Responsibilities

- Discuss with the student any exam accommodation concerns you both may have regarding the class.
• Schedule with the student the time the exam is to be taken and where it will be administered. Faculty can accommodate the exam in his/her own department or use the Testing Services exam proctoring resources.
• If you use the exam proctoring service please visit the Testing Services web page at http://testing.nku.edu, under “NKU Accommodated Classroom Exams” in order to submit the test(s).

Student Responsibilities

• Present your accommodation letter to each faculty member in a way that provides the ability to communicate any concerns you both may have regarding the class and/or test proctoring.
• Remind the faculty member of the exam accommodation at least one class period (48 hours) before the exam.
• Keep scheduled exam time, be prompt, and bring necessary exam taking supplies.
• Maintain security of exam. Discussion of the exam with other students before taking the exam or giving information to other students regarding the exam is cheating. An exam should be taken as close as possible to the time and day that the class is taking the exam.

Testing Services Responsibilities

• Secure all exam material and keep it in a confidential and protected file.
• Coordinate and supervise the administration of the exam proctoring service.
• Return completed exam to the faculty member in a timely manner.

Volunteer Note Takers

Students with disabilities are granted the accommodation of a supplemental note taker based on the review of their documentation. The following are responsibilities of the student, instructor and Disability Programs and Services in cases where a volunteer note taker is an approved accommodation.

Faculty Responsibilities

• Please help the student find a volunteer note taker within your class.
• Please use your discretion and do not directly use the name of the student while making this request for purposes of confidentiality.
• A general announcement in the class or a note on the board/blackboard seeking a qualified volunteer who would be willing to share notes would be appropriate.
• If a volunteer note taker is not available, the instructor may provide the student a copy of lecture/class notes as an alternate means of providing this accommodation.
Student Responsibilities

- Student may not use an in-class note taker as a substitute for class attendance or participation.
- The note taker is not required to provide notes for classes that the student misses or for the portion of the class the student does not attend.

Disability Programs and Services Responsibilities

- The Disability Programs and Services Office (DPS) will ensure the documentation and verification of disability for the student is correct.
- DPS Staff will provide carbonless paper for note takers upon request.
- DPS will provide volunteer note takers with a certificate of appreciation upon request.

Assistive Listening Devices

A student who is deaf or hard of hearing may require use of an Assistive Listening Device (ALD). Examples of ALD’s would be hearing aids or FM systems.

Many students who use hearing aids effectively have a difficult time following information presented in large college classrooms. In the classroom, the instructor’s voice is competing with background noise, room echo, and distance. Therefore, the intelligibility of the instructor’s voice is degraded by the poor room acoustics as well as the hearing loss. The ALD works with a hearing aid to increase the range of its effectiveness. Most ALD’s use a microphone/transmitter positioned close to the instructor’s mouth to send the instructor’s voice through radio waves or by a cable to a receiver worn by the student. By placing the microphone close to the instructor’s mouth, ALDs can provide clear sound directly to the student over distance, eliminate echoes, and reduce surrounding noises.

Helpful tips for working with students who have ALD’s:

- Discuss in which situations the ALD will be used and how to use it.
- Provide the option for the student to sit in the front row (this is recommended). Face the student when speaking. Although the student can hear at a greater distance with the ALD’s, she/he may rely heavily on visual cues to aid understanding. If using a microphone, make sure it does not block your mouth.
• Speak in a normal tone of voice with the microphone approximately 5-6 inches from your mouth. Your voice will be amplified, but remember that no hearing aid will allow your student to hear exactly as he/she would without the presence of a hearing loss.
• Perform a listening check with the equipment each time it is used.
• If Audio/Video equipment is used, the student may need the ALD to better hear the audio output.
• A personal hearing aid works best within a 6-10 foot radius. Beyond that, other background noise will interfere. It is important to be aware of this range for direct instruction and group activities.
• An FM system usually transmits for a distance of approximately 30-200 feet. The clarity of the signal and the amount of information received depend on the student’s loss and ability to process the information he/she hears.
• For in-class discussions, the instructor should repeat audience questions or comments into the microphone so these transmit over the FM system.

Sign Language Interpreting/Captioning

A student who is deaf or hard of hearing may require use of a sign language interpreter or a remote captionist to participate in class. The use of an interpreter(s) or a captionist in the classroom is to help provide effective communication between the student with a disability and instructor along with other students in the class.

Helpful tips for working with students who utilize an interpreter(s) or captionist

• Ensure there is an available seat for the student to sit in front so they can have view of the instructor, board, and interpreter. For students who use captioning please be sure they have seating access close to an electrical outlet.
• Look and speak directly to the student not the interpreter. This may be difficult at first because human tendency is to look to the voice, but remember that the words you hear are the student’s words.
• The interpreter/captionist is not responsible for the student, only the communication access.
• Speak at a normal pace and tone.
• Make sure there is adequate lighting so the student can see the interpreter.
• If there needs to be a meeting outside of class with the student it is the student’s responsibility to contact the interpreter/captioning coordinator with Disability Programs and Services to schedule an interpreter for the meeting.
If you have a student who receives interpreting or remote captioning you will be contacted at the beginning of the semester from our Interpreter/Captioning Coordinator.

### Closed Captioning

If you have a student with a disability in your class who receives closed captioning as an accommodation you must ensure that there is closed captioning available for all videos shown. TV Carts with CC instructions are available from IT. If you have a recurring need for the carts, Disability Programs and Services is glad to help coordinate with IT to make sure your equipment is available. If you have videos that are not captioned, Interlibrary Loan Services can assist with getting updated videos with captioning. Short video clips or streaming video will need to have a transcript of the dialogue created. If there is no closed caption or transcript available for the video in which you wish to show you must contact Disability Programs and Services’ Interpreter Coordinator at 859-572-5401 before showing.

### Accessible Classroom

In some cases provisions may need to be made to classroom space for students with physical disabilities. If a student needs an accessible work space, it is the student’s responsibility to turn his/her class schedule in to the Superintendent of Custodial Services. If the instructor and/or the student is having difficulties in attaining an accessible workspace please contact Disability Programs and Services, as we will help ensure the timeliness of the accommodation.

### Assistive Technology and Software

Disability Services initially provides training for students with disabilities who use assistive technology and software. Assistive technology and software are located in various spaces across campus. For a complete listing of assistive technology locations please contact our office at 859/572-5401. Below are descriptions of some of the types of software and hardware available across campus:
Computer Screen Magnification Software

A screen magnifier is software that interfaces with a computer's graphical output to present enlarged screen content. It is a type of assistive technology suitable for visually impaired individuals with some functional vision. The screen magnification software is capable of magnifying the screen up to 36 times and it also allows the student to choose which part of the screen is magnified.

Screen Reader Software

A screen reader is a software application that attempts to identify and interpret what is being displayed on the computer screen. It is often referred to as text-to-speech software.

Voice Recognition Software

Voice recognition software allows students to “type” hands free. The student is able to dictate and have their speech transcribed as written text.

The Office of Disability Services also has other equipment and software available to students such as: a closed circuit TV magnifier, Braille keyboard, enhanced mice, and adjustable height tables.
Student Confidentiality

The Disability Programs and Services Office is committed to ensuring that all information regarding a student, including information obtained in diagnostic and medical reports, is maintained as required by law and confidentiality requirements. The Disability Programs and Services Office does not reveal the details of the disability diagnosis of any student registered with the office. Instructors are cautioned against identifying students with disabilities unnecessarily to their peers or other colleagues without the student’s consent.

Contact Information

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