Accommodations and Learning Outcomes

The following article is a review of Vol. 21 Issue 12 of Disability Compliance for Higher Education, written by Joan Hope Ph. D.

Most often, faculty receive DSS accommodation letters and proceed with providing accommodations with routine. Occasionally, faculty will encounter an accommodation that seems odd or even contradictory to the course. In these situations we would encourage faculty to reach out and discuss concerns with us but we also want faculty to consider developing clearly defined learning objectives.

In review of learning objectives, it is important to consider each one with an inclusive lens and minimizing unnecessary bias. An example might be assessing whether an existing course objective to speak is necessary or the ability to communicate is more appropriate. Many students with disabilities can communicate effectively but might not be able to speak. Viewing courses with differing perspectives can often uncover requirements that do not reflect learning outcomes.

If you are developing or have developed learning outcomes for your courses, consider having DSS review them. As UAB continues to improve access for all, we see collaboration with faculty as an essential element.

New Staff

Ashleigh Johnson is the new Office Manager for DSS and will be working with students through the application process as well as responding to any general needs. She is coming from the Transfer Center where she recruited and oriented students to UAB. She brings great knowledge and positive outlook to DSS. Contact Ashleigh at asjohnso@uab.edu.

Allie Messier is the new testing coordinator for the Disability Support Services Office. Allie will be working with faculty and students to ensure that students receive testing accommodations. Allie will be your contact to schedule an exam, answering questions about testing questions, etc. Contact Allie at amessier@uab.edu.
Annual DSS Survey Findings

DSS would like to thank faculty who took time to complete our annual survey. While the responses indicated overall positive experiences with DSS we would like to let you know of a few things you identified as an area of growth and how we plan on improving.

**Concern:** Several responders noted that they would like accommodation letters to identify only the actual accommodations the student is requesting.

**Solution:** DSS is implementing a new database that will allow students to select their approved accommodations in which they are requesting for each course. This should help with minimizing discussion about accommodations that are not relevant in your course or that the student is not asking for in the course.

**Concern:** The survey revealed a desire by faculty for more hands on training that may be tailored to their course or type of course.

**Solution:** DSS actively seeks opportunity to engage with faculty. We would love to meet individually or attend a departmental meeting. DSS is not limited as a resource for students but to faculty as well. Call or email our office and we will have a DSS staff member attend!

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**LOOK FOR CHANGES COMING TO DSS**

We are excited to announce two big changes coming to DSS over the coming months!

We will be relocating to the Hill Student Center 4th Floor. Our office space is currently under construction and we anticipate moving later in the fall.

We also are implementing a new online portal that will improve communication, testing, and overall management of our students and their accommodations.

We will notify the UAB community about both of these changes.

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**Quick Stats**

Have you attended a DSS training?

**Yes 68%**

I have found the DSS staff to be helpful in responding to my questions or requests.

**Strongly Agree 57%**

**Agree 30%**

I include a statement on my syllabi informing students about the process of requesting accommodations.

**Yes 94%**

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“What does your machine do?” That’s the most common question that CART provider Anna Cline has to answer every day. Computer aided real-time transcription (CART) is simply live captioning for the hearing impaired, and the stenography machine is the conversation piece.

Cline earned her 2-year Associates Degree in real-time reporting with a specialization in broadcast captioning from Gadsden State. She currently works for UAB where she spent the majority of her last 10 years (other schools include Samford and Jacksonville State).

After a long day, Cline (wife and mother of one) sits down to talk about the greatest misconception of her job. “It’s that I learn a lot,” she replies with a sweet but sarcastic smile. It’s natural to assume she absorbs every lecture she transcribes, but her focus is always on the job. She can empathize with the hearing impaired students, especially when dealing with thick accents and not speaking up; which make it difficult for her to catch small details. She brushes her brown curls off her shoulder and says, “It’s hard work, but worth it, and I love it.”

If you ask her son, Levi, about mom’s work, he’ll reply with, “That is so cool.” He’s right. Cline insists the “coolest” aspects of the job are flexibility and working with students from the other side of the world. There’s also a lot of laughs – particularly when professors make certain gestures and mess with their lesson to try and throw her off her game. Yet, she never falters. Her favorite compliment ever received was that she was “the best.” And it couldn’t be more true. Her dedication to the students is evident in everything she does.

Cline’s mother, Tina, inspired her career path when she brought home an old-style word processor. Tina’s fast typing skills “amazed” Cline, who used to visualize herself typing in her sleep. Her mother couldn’t be more proud of her daughter’s career, but she’s not surprised. According to her, from a very early age Cline often chose friends that were ignored. “She was very self-sufficient and wanted to help others; she’s like gold to me.”

Cline stills has a lot of work to do, after supporting students all day she goes home to work on transcription edits. She believes: “If you work hard and do what you’re supposed to do, the blessings will pour in.” Lucky for all the people depending on her, Cline’s learned that lesson well. She is no ordinary hero.

Written by Tammy Blue
UAB Student

Article was originally posted on
www.readtheleaf.com

UAB currently has 10 students utilizing a captioning in class.