DSS welcomes you to the beginning of a new year and a new semester! This edition of the newsletter provides you with updates regarding DSS Faculty & Staff Training and the DSS Existing & Emerging Technologies Committee, an invitation to DSS’ community week and disability awareness events, disability compliance updates, resources for working with disruptive students, and the DSS faculty and staff award recipients. This edition also includes an additional section titled “Working Collaboratively with DSS” which features segments on test proctoring and captioning videos (see pages 2 and 3). As always, we welcome any suggestions you have about topics you would like to see covered in the newsletter, or requests for additional resources. You may contact our newsletter Editor, Brittany Gregg, at bmgregg@uab.edu with any comments, suggestions, or requests. We wish you a wonderful semester. Go Blazers!

Welcome back!

January 2015

DSS Faculty & Staff Training Update

As of December 2014, 2743 faculty and staff have completed the online DSS Faculty and Staff Training which was mandated by Provost Lucas in September 2014. The purpose of the training course is to provide education on working with students with disabilities and to promote a more accessible, inclusive campus for UAB’s students with disabilities. DSS appreciates the institution’s recognition of its responsibility to provide equal access for students with disabilities, and is proud of the commitment of UAB’s faculty and staff toward this initiative. If you have not yet completed this training, it is available online through the UAB Faculty & Staff Learning System (www.uab.edu/learningsystem/, search “DSS”). Please contact DSS if you have any questions regarding this training.
Providing accommodations to students with disabilities requires effective collaboration among the student, the faculty/staff member, and DSS. This section focuses on ways to collaborate regarding test proctoring and captioning videos.

### Part I: Test proctoring

Instructors are not required to use DSS proctoring services if they are able to provide testing accommodations within the department. Before scheduling a testing appointment at DSS, it is the responsibility of the student to discuss their accommodations with instructors to determine whether testing accommodations need to be received at DSS. If instructors cannot provide testing accommodations to the student, then the student may request to test at DSS. The table below highlights DSS testing policies, including the responsibilities of students, faculty/staff, and DSS in order to ensure successful proctoring of exams. Questions may be directed to DSS Office Manager, Rachel King (rking060@uab.edu), who coordinates test proctoring at DSS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approval to test at DSS</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>DSS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss accommodations with instructor then send Proctor Approval Request.</td>
<td>Respond to Proctor Approval Requests.</td>
<td>Verify that a Proctor Approval Request is on file for the course.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheduling exams</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>DSS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schedule at least 2 business days in advance. Expected to schedule exam at the same time as the class unless instructor approval obtained.</td>
<td>Communicate regarding approval to take exam at a different time than the class when scheduling conflicts are involved.</td>
<td>Respond promptly to students’ requests to schedule exams.</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Receiving exams</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>DSS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remind instructor several days ahead of time that you will be testing at DSS.</td>
<td>Send exams and any necessary information to DSS preferably 2 business days in advance.</td>
<td>Ensure that exams are secured in a locked cabinet; destroy electronic versions of exams.</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proctoring exams</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>DSS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abide by DSS testing policies, including policies regarding items not allowed in testing rooms, such as cell phones.</td>
<td>Be available via phone to answer questions from students testing at DSS.</td>
<td>Proctor exam in a secure and monitored location while ensuring accommodations are received.</td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>Delivering completed exams</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>DSS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N / A</td>
<td>Provide correct information regarding where the exam should be returned. Sign upon receiving the exam.</td>
<td>Deliver completed exams as soon as possible; goal is to have exams delivered within 24 hours of completion.</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Testing policies violation</th>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>DSS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students found with unauthorized materials in testing room will not be allowed to continue the exam and the instructor will be notified.</td>
<td>Respond to the infraction based on the policies outlined in the syllabus or by your department regarding student conduct.</td>
<td>Thoroughly document the incident and respond accordingly, either by reviewing testing policies with the student, or informing the instructor in the event of academic misconduct.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part II: Making captioning a priority

Faculty and staff who have recently completed the DSS training are familiar with the campus-wide initiative to apply principles of universal design to teaching. One component of this initiative is that all faculty and staff have been encouraged to make captioning a priority. As a principle of universal design, captioning benefits students who are deaf or hard of hearing, students who use English as a second language, students with varying learning style preferences, etc. While the expectation is not to backtrack and caption all media you have previously used when teaching, it is an expectation going forward that accessibility be considered on the front end of course design and development. Concerns have been raised regarding resources for captioning, such as tools demonstrating how faculty and staff can caption their own videos, and financial resources to cover the costs of having videos captioned by an outside source. DSS would like to address these concerns, and provide resources for working collaboratively to create a more accessible learning environment for all students.

⇒ DSS is available to assist with the captioning of videos for students registered with DSS who are currently enrolled in your course. You may request captioning services for DSS students currently enrolled in your course by completing the online Captioning Request Form: http://www.uab.edu/faculty/images/documents/dss/captioning-and-transcript-request-form.pdf. DSS requires a minimum of two weeks to complete captioning of a full-length video, so faculty and staff are encouraged to submit all videos needing captions during the first week of the term, if not before. Questions regarding captioning should be directed to DSS Assistive Technology Specialist, Carter Naftel, naftcelg@uab.edu.

⇒ If a student registered with DSS will be utilizing an interpreter or captionist in your course, you will receive an email from DSS containing information about these accommodations and tips on what to expect. This email will also include a reminder about using captioned videos in the course in order to ensure accessibility.

⇒ Examples of considering accessibility on the front end include: choosing videos that already have captions, contacting the publisher to request a captioned version of the media content, and creating a transcript of recorded lectures to make available to all students.

⇒ UAB offers the following resources for faculty and staff to learn more about the principles of universal design and how to caption videos:
  - Center for Teaching and Learning: www.uab.edu/ctl
  - DSS Faculty and Staff Site: www.uab.edu/dss/faculty
  - Self-Assessment Tool: www.uab.edu/faculty/teaching/dss/creating-an-accessible-course
  - e-Learning and Professional Studies: Samira Laouzi at 975-2961 or mamia38@uab.edu
  - Canvas Success Site: www.uab.edu/online/canvas

⇒ Faculty and staff who have concerns regarding the cost of captioning videos are encouraged to consult with their department chair regarding the department’s plan for creating accessible course materials. Additional DIY resources unaffiliated with UAB include:
  - University of Minnesota: http://accessibility.umn.edu/
  - Camtasia: www.techsmith.com/camtasia.html
  - Amara: www.amara.org
  - Captioning for YouTube: https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/2734796?hl=en
Tips for working to address disruptive behavior

The following has been summarized from the January 2014 edition of Disability Compliance for Higher Education.

Is the disruptive behavior related to a disability? First, it is important to note that a student who is causing a disruption may or may not have a disability. Examples of disruptive behavior that could be disability-related include vocalizations, nervous tics, speaking impulsively, or challenges with volume control. The behavior could be an indicator of disability or a level of stress for which the student needs additional support, so it’s important to know how to work with the student and appropriate ways to address disruptive behavior.

What do I do if a student is causing disruptions? The student may not even be aware that he or she is causing a disruption, and the disruption is likely unintentional.

- First, check to see whether the student is registered with DSS (see infographic below). Arrange a time to talk with the student privately to address the disruptive behavior, being careful to keep the conversation focused on the observed behavior and not the student’s specific disability.

- When meeting with the student, identify the specific behavior that is disruptive and why, then collaborate with the student to reach a solution. For example, you and the student may agree on a signal that will be used to indicate to the student that he or she is being disruptive. Feel free to encourage the student to offer additional solutions on how you can work together.

- If the disruptive behavior constitutes a conduct violation, the situation should be handled according to university policy. At UAB, conduct violations or questions regarding student conduct are addressed through Student Engagement. Regardless of whether a disability is present, all students are expected to follow UAB’s Non-Academic Conduct Policy.

Student is registered with DSS

- If you have received an accommodation notice, you have confirmation that the student is registered with DSS.
- Reach out to DSS to notify a staff member of the disruptive behavior you have observed and consult regarding appropriate solutions. DSS may offer to meet with the student and can also provide some suggestions on how to address the behavior.

Student is NOT registered with DSS

- If you have not received an accommodation notice, it is safe to assume that the student is either not registered with DSS or has opted not to utilize accommodations in your course.
- If the student is not registered with DSS and you suspect the student may have a disability, it would be appropriate to refer him or her to DSS for additional assistance.
TUESDAY, JANUARY 27th at 6 PM

WHEELCHAIR FLAG FOOTBALL GAME

Campus Recreation Center, Court 1

DSS has partnered with UAB Campus Recreation and Lakeshore Foundation to sponsor a wheelchair flag football game as part of UAB Community Week!

Watch UAB students, faculty, and staff take on Lakeshore Foundation’s Wheelchair Flag Football Team
Game starts at 6pm, with activities and contests taking place before, during, and after the game

Wheelchairs will be provided

To request disability-related accommodations for attending this event, please contact DSS (dss@uab.edu or 934-4205).
Disability Awareness: Events

Take the Chill Out!
Join us for Hot Chocolate on the Green

Friday, February 13th

11:30am - 1:30pm

Sponsored by Disability Support Services with special guests

Hand in Paw ANIMAL-ASSISTED THERAPY
Avoiding the appearance of disability discrimination in the admissions process

The following summary is based on an article from Vol. 19, Issue 12 of Disability Compliance for Higher Education, written by Michael Masinter, Esq, a professor of law who writes and litigates about disability and civil rights.

The case of Sjostrand vs. The Ohio State University serves as an example of a dilemma previously faced by admissions committees here at UAB, and one which DSS has received inquiries regarding. What happens when a student discloses disability during an admissions interview? More importantly, what are appropriate responses from members of an admissions committee? What are the implications of inappropriate responses? Michael Masinter provides insight into the implications of the Ohio State University case and how the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act apply to admissions procedures.

Details of the case: An otherwise qualified applicant disclosed an invisible medical disability on her application and during her interview for the university’s school psychology doctoral program. Faculty participating in the interview asked the applicant how she planned to manage a stressful graduate program given her disability, and she responded that it would not be a problem. The applicant was denied admission to the program. Upon inquiring for an explanation of the school’s decision, she was told that she was not a good fit for the program. Further inquiry led to the student contacting the program director for an explanation. When her call was finally returned after two weeks, little additional explanation was offered. University officials exchanged several internal emails before writing to the applicant that her interests were better matched to another program. The applicant sued, and the suit was initially dismissed when the judge granted summary judgment, but this decision was reversed by the appeals court, who believed there was sufficient evidence for a jury to determine that the program made a decision based on the applicant’s disability.

Findings: The appeals court found that questioning the applicant about her disability was significant to the case because questions of this nature indicated a concern for the applicant’s disability rather than her goodness of fit for the program. The program’s response to the applicant’s inquiries was also found to suggest possible disability discrimination – the two-week delay in responding to the applicant, vague explanations regarding denial to the program, and the exchange of internal emails were viewed as attempts by the university to create an appearance of nondiscrimination. Further investigation of the program’s academic records revealed that a nondisabled applicant with lower grades and a lower GRE score was admitted to the program, thus reinforcing possible disability discrimination.

Implications: This case provides several implications for working with students during the admissions process.

1. Section 504 regulations regarding pre-admission disability-related inquiries apply. Even if the applicant self-discloses disability, admissions committees should redirect the conversation. Masinter writes, “Disability-related questions directed to a self-disclosing applicant can create an inference of disability discrimination. Even when asked innocently, they have no place in an admissions interview.”

2. Be able to clearly explain reasons for denial to a school or program that are linked to objective admission criteria or essential program requirements. “Clear and reasonably specific, prompt responses are less likely to be vulnerable to attack as pretextual, and therefore are more likely to benefit from the deference that courts commonly give to academic judgments.”

If you have questions or concerns regarding a student’s disclosure of disability during the admissions process, please contact DSS at 205.934.4205 or dss@uab.edu.
DSS Fall 2014 Outstanding Faculty and Staff Awards

Each semester, we ask students who are registered with DSS to nominate a faculty member who promotes an inclusive classroom, values diverse learning styles and abilities, and believes in supporting and challenging all students. The DSS Fall 2014 Outstanding Faculty Award is presented to Steven Roberts in the Department of Music. Dr. Roberts was described by the nominator as a faculty member who goes above and beyond for his students, always offering support and demonstrating concern for his students’ health and well-being. Congratulations Dr. Roberts!

Each semester, DSS also recognizes a faculty or staff member who has exceeded all requirements and expectations in helping students remove any barriers which would prevent them from being successful at UAB. This year we are excited to honor two recipients for their efforts in making UAB more accessible for all students.

The DSS Fall 2014 Outstanding Staff Award is presented to the Alys Stephens Performing Arts Center for continuously striving to create an accessible environment for patrons of all abilities. Their proactive approach to creating accessible programs by seamlessly integrating various types of accessible audio and video technology and resources has continued to impress the DSS staff. The Alys Stephens Center staff works closely with the DSS staff prior to events to facilitate accommodations. It is efforts such as these that make the Alys Stephens Performing Arts Center staff deserving of this award. Congratulations to the Alys Stephens Center!

The DSS Fall 2014 Outstanding Staff Award is also presented to the UAB Department of Theater. In collaboration with the Alys Stephens Center, this department has been integral in creating an accessible environment for patrons with disabilities - specifically, students with hearing impairments. When DSS reaches out to coordinate captioning or interpreting services for students, the department is always quick to respond and assist in any way needed. Specifically, we would like to recognize Mel Christian for her assistance and timely responses with accommodation requests, even when she was out of the office. Congratulations, and thank you for all you do to make UAB accessible for students!

Accessibility Considerations

The DSS Existing & Emerging Technologies Committee (EETC) continues to meet quarterly to ensure accessibility of technologies utilized at UAB in an effort to comply with the university’s obligation to provide equal access to all technology-based services, activities and information. The next committee meeting is scheduled for January 26, 2015. Updates from the committee can be found on the DSS website: www.uab.edu/dss by clicking on “DSS Technologies Committee” on the right side of the page.