

# Disability Support Services

Graduate Program Director/Staff Retreat2016

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[www.uab.edu/dss](http://www.uab.edu/dss)



# Goals for today:

- Awareness of the presence and purpose of Disability Support Services
- Understanding of your responsibilities under disability compliance mandates
- Recognition of the need for collaboration between the faculty/staff member, DSS staff, and the student

# The Purpose of DSS

- Ensure accessibility for students with disabilities
- Prevent discrimination of students with disabilities

# The DSS Process

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# How DSS Determines Eligibility for Services and Accommodations

- Students are required to self-identify
- Complete an application
- Submit complete documentation
- Meet with a counselor for one-on-one intake
- Complete Accommodation Conference  
(School of Medicine students complete the Accommodation Conference within SOM Student Services)

# Accommodations Must Be Reasonable

- Accommodations may be reasonable in one setting (classroom), but unreasonable in another (clinical)

Example: “Extended time”

(written test vs. demonstrating time-sensitive surgical competency)

- Refer to your program’s essential functions and technical standards

# Examples of Accommodations

- Extended time on exams
- Reduced distraction testing environment
- Peer notetaker
- Reasonable amount of disability-related absences
- Access to assistive technology
- Permission to take short breaks
- Permission to use an audio recorder
- Books in alternative format
- Sign language interpreting/captioning services

# Testing Accommodations

- Common testing accommodations:
  - Extended time
  - Reduced distraction testing environment
  - Access to assistive technology
  - Reader or scribe
- Collaboration between student and instructor
- DSS available to proctor exams
  - Test Security



# Responding to Student Requests (FACULTY)

- **Student Responsibilities for *Requesting* Accommodations:**
  - 1.) Send accommodation notice to instructor via Student Portal
  - 2.) Schedule appointment to meet with instructor to discuss accommodations
- **Faculty Responsibilities for *Responding* to Accommodation Requests:**
  - 1.) Receive accommodation notice via email titled “DSS Accommodation Notice”
  - 2.) Confirm receipt of accommodation notice via Faculty Portal
  - 3.) Meet with student to discuss accommodations
- **Other Important Notes:**
  - Students within School of Medicine do not use Student Portal to send notices
  - Students can request accommodations at any point in a semester
  - Accommodation requests must be provided to instructor in a reasonable amount of time (i.e. not reasonable to request an accommodation DURING a test)
  - If a student requests an accommodation or modification, they are expected to go through DSS



# Universal Design for Instruction

An approach for teaching that involves:

- Proactive design
- The use of inclusive instructional strategies that create environments usable by all people without the need for adaptation.
- Flexible, customizable delivery of content rather than a, “one-size, fits-all” approach
- UDI not only benefits students with disabilities
  - Example: Closed Captioned Video

# Recommendations

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# Confidentiality

- What information is considered confidential?
  - ALL disability-related information, including a student's diagnosis or type of disability
  - NEVER ask a student to tell you their disability
  - Refrain from discussing a student's DSS status with others
- The impact of stigma
  - May delay a student accessing services
  - Fear of being called out or treated differently

# Syllabus Statement

- Recommended for ALL courses
- Clarifies your expectations and the student's responsibilities for requesting accommodations
- Review this statement verbally with the class

# Essential Requirements and Over-accommodating

- Students with disabilities should be held to the same standards as all other students
- Over-accommodating yields consequences for both the student and the university
- Importance of professional judgment
- Predetermined decision vs. individualized assessment
- Consult with DSS if accommodations conflict with essential requirements

# Service vs. Assistance Animals

## Service animal

- any dog trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability
- generally allowed access in all facilities and programs that are open to the public (not an accommodation)

## Assistance animal

- any animal recommended by a professional to provide emotional support to individuals with disabilities
- permitted in university housing per the FHA, may be permitted in the classroom as an approved accommodation

What are you allowed to ask?

1. Is this dog a service animal that is required because of a disability?
2. What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?

# Resources and Conclusion

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# Referring Students to DSS and other Resources

- What if you suspect a student has a disability?
  - Offer behavioral observations, such as examples from writing, exams, or attention in class
  - Ask the student if he or she can explain the difficulties
  - Refer to DSS as well as other campus resources
- Disruptive students
  - May or may not be disability related
  - Speak with student privately
  - Refer appropriately

# CONTACT DSS!

Please reach out to DSS with any questions or concerns you may have.

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(relocating to the Hill Student Center late Fall 2016)