

# FALL 2019 NEWSLETTER

*"The collaboration efforts between DSS and faculty for promoting an accessible academic experience have had a great impact on the UAB students' experience. These critical partnerships between all academic entities and DSS have played a critical role in creating a transformational experience for our students. By thinking proactively about creating an accessible learning environment, UAB is demonstrating its commitment to serving students with disabilities and providing access for all. I would like to thank the UAB faculty for the commitment to accessibility on our campus."*

**- Dr. John Jones, Vice President for Student Affairs**



*The Spring 2019 honorees are Dr. Vladimir Parpura, and Amy W. Evans*

## **Faculty receive honors for their commitment to disability support**

Disability Support Services has awarded two university employees for their work in supporting students with disabilities on campus. Each year, select faculty and staff are recognized by students and DSS staff for their exceptional efforts toward providing accommodations and helping to foster an inclusive campus. The Spring 2019 winners are Vladimir Parpura, M.D., Ph.D., a professor in the Department of Neurobiology in the School of Medicine, and Amy W. Evans, executive director of Administrative Operations in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Parpura received the Outstanding Faculty Award. He was nominated by one of his students who highlighted the ways in which he supports and challenges students with disabilities. "Dr. Parpura is my next example as to how I should conduct myself in society. His humility and respect for people are things I will strive to have as I become a professional. I am truly glad to have met Dr. Parpura as he has and will continue to be a great influence on my life," one of Parpura's students stated.

Parpura promotes an inclusive classroom environment by catering to diverse learning styles. His student reported, "Dr. Parpura is not only just a great professor he is genuine and an amazing person. He provides multiple ways as to which material is presented as well as different learning opportunities. For instance, he used lecture-style and hands-on teaching throughout the course in the lab and in the classroom."

DSS's second honor, the Outstanding Recognition Award, went to Evans. She was integral in ensuring all faculty and staff members within the College of Arts and Sciences participate in DSS's online training, an effort that was mandated by the CAS's Dean Robert E. Palazzo, Ph.D.

"Amy spent significant time over the last academic year collaborating with DSS to ensure the College of Arts and Sciences was actively involved in supporting students with disabilities at UAB. Amy coordinated with the DSS office to schedule training sessions for new faculty as well as department chairs. Amy was also integral in helping implement Dean Palazzo's mandate for all College of Arts and Sciences faculty and staff to complete the online DSS training," a DSS staff member reported.

DSS, through student nominations, selects faculty and staff members to honor each semester who have gone above and beyond to support students with disabilities on campus.

## DSS staff updates

DSS would like to congratulate Allie Reeves on her promotion to Accommodation Services Coordinator. Allie will continue managing testing within the DSS office; however, her additional duties will now include conducting informational and registration meetings with prospective and registered DSS students, co-planning, presenting and tabling for events, as well as adding a supportive role in the area of accessible technology. We are grateful for Allie and her contributions as she was the first full-time testing coordinator for DSS and has spent the last three years establishing the infrastructure to effectively manage DSS testing services which ensure access and directly benefits students and faculty at UAB. Congratulations Allie!



*Allie Reeves, Accommodation Services Coordinator*



Jalan Witherspoon, Assisive  
Technology Coordinator

Jalan Witherspoon joined the DSS team this fall as the new Assisive Technology Coordinator. Jalan graduated from Auburn University where she was a graduate student in the Rehabilitation Counseling program and a graduate assistant within the Office of Inclusion and Diversity. While in graduate school, Jalan completed internships at the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, Summer Quest Transition for blind/low vision students, and Easter Seals of Central Alabama. She also developed and conducted the Diverse over Divide program targeting graduate and undergraduate students in discussing and developing relationships through critical topics with regard to diversity and inclusion.

Prior to graduate school, Jalan earned a Bachelor of Science in Rehabilitation and Disability Studies at Auburn. During her time there, Jalan volunteered with various

organizations such as the Full Life Ahead Camp, Alabama Head Injury Foundation, Autism Smiles and Project Uplift.

Jalan's role at UAB is to serve as a departmental and institutional advisor to meet technology needs of students with disabilities, as well as provide guidance and education for the development and support of accessible academic courses, faculty training and other areas of electronic accessibility university-wide. Jalan is excited about her role and hopes to be a valuable resource to students with disabilities at UAB! Jalan can be reached at 205-995-6402 and [withersj@uab.edu](mailto:withersj@uab.edu).

*"The University of Alabama at Birmingham is committed to providing a quality educational experience for all of our students. UAB is enriched by the diversity of the student population and disability is a component of that diversity. Faculty are critically important to facilitating a quality learning experience and to ensuring that students with disabilities have every opportunity for success."*

**- Dr. Pam Benoit, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs**



## Captioning in Canvas:

*Here are some things you should know!*

There are two types of video captioning available in Canvas: machine and professional. Machine captioning is around 80 percent accurate and can be edited to increase accuracy. Please note that machine captioning does not meet the needs of students who are approved for video captioning as a DSS accommodation.

Professional captioning is more

accurate and can be requested via the [UAB Disability Support Services request form](#). Professional captioning is strongly recommended by DSS for all course videos and is the required method of captioning when a student in the course is approved for captioning as an academic accommodation.

## Hot Topics:

**Did you know there are accommodations available to students for extended time on in-class assignments?**

DSS currently has 130 students who are approved for the accommodation “extended time on in-class assignments.” This accommodation generally applies to shorter, time-limited class assignments, rather than assignments that are open for several days or weeks. The accommodation

applies to lecture-style courses as well as online courses. DSS encourages faculty members to meet with students who are approved for this accommodation early in the semester to ensure the instructor and the student are on the same page about how the accommodation will apply. Please contact DSS if you have any questions about implementing DSS students’ approved accommodations.



# 2019 FALL EVENTS



## Are you ready for some football?!

DSS's annual Wheelchair Flag Football game, hosted in partnership with the Lakeshore Foundation, will be held on October 14 at 6 p.m. at the University Recreation Center. All faculty, staff, and students are invited to attend!

## Stop by a table

DSS will be tabling weekly in academic buildings and residence

halls throughout the fall semester in order to increase visibility on campus and share information about programs and services. Be sure to stop by a table to speak with DSS representatives to learn more about what the DSS office is offering for students, faculty and staff at UAB.

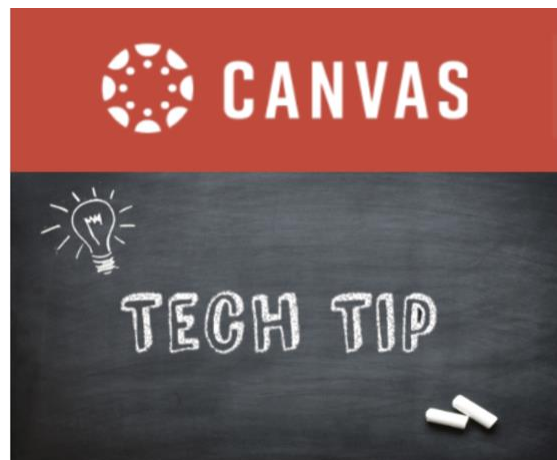
## Study skills workshops scheduled

DSS is hosting several study skills workshops aimed at providing students with skills that fit their learning style, recommendations for communicating with faculty, and suggestions on creating a study plan for the semester. The sessions will be held in the Hill Student Center on Sept. 13, Oct. 11, Nov. 15 and Dec. 6, 2019. Please encourage any of your DSS students who may be interested to attend.

## Learn more about what Canvas has to offer

DSS would like to thank Jerad Watson, Instructional Technologist in the Division of eLearning and Professional Studies, for providing answers to frequently asked questions about using Canvas.

**How do I extend time on a timed exam for a student without**





### **interrupting their testing process?**

*Instructors can give extra time to a particular student(s) before and even during the exam by moderating the Canvas Quiz. Follow the directions below.*

1. Access the Quiz in Canvas and click Moderate This Quiz.
2. You can then search for the desired students and check the box beside their names.
3. Click the pencil icon that says Change Extensions for Selected Students at the bottom.
4. You can then enter the amount of Extra time the student(s) should get in addition to the already allotted time.
5. Click Save.

[Click here for detailed instructions and screenshots.](#)

### **How do I change the due date or exam availability dates for a particular student?**

*Instructors can assign a different due date or exam availability dates for desired students without impacting the rest of the class by adding another Assign Card. Follow the directions below.*

1. Access the Quiz in Canvas click the Edit Pencil the top right and scroll down to the bottom of the Quiz Details page.
2. Click +Add underneath the Assign Card to add another Assign Card.
3. Type the names of the desired students you are wanting to modify the dates for.
4. Type in the Desired Due Date, Available from the date (when students can access the exam), and Until date(when the exam will no longer be available).
5. Click Save.

*Note: this same process can be completed for all types of Canvas Assignments*

[Click here for detailed instructions and screenshots.](#)

### **How do I create an active syllabus on canvas rather than just text?**

*The Syllabus feature in Canvas has two parts. Top and bottom. Click the Syllabus tab in the course navigation then click the "Edit Pencil" at the top right to add your syllabus.*

*The top section allows the instructor to provide text and link files. We recommend having a short summary of important information from your syllabus such as your contact information and grading policies then [providing a link to your full syllabus in PDF format.](#)*

*The bottom portion is automatically generated based on Assignments and Events created in the Canvas course. This portion is important as it allows students to see on the Canvas calendar what assignments they should be working on and their due dates.*

*In order to populate this section of the syllabus, instructors must add assignments or events to the Canvas course and publish them.*

*Having both the top and bottom sections completed creates what is called a Dynamic Syllabus.*

[Click here for detailed instructions on how to create a Dynamic Syllabus in Canvas.](#)

### **How can I get assistance and/or training in Canvas?**

*UAB's Division of eLearning and Professional Studies offers various workshops in collaboration with the Center of Teaching and Learning. One-on-one or group training sessions are also available for instructors by contacting Jerad Watson, [jmwatson@uab.edu](mailto:jmwatson@uab.edu). These sessions can be in-person or virtual (via a Zoom meeting).*



## **Legal Roundup**

**Case: Letter to Drake University, No. 05-17-2039 (OCR 04/28/17)**

Student was enrolled in Drake University's Doctor of Pharmacy program and was also registered as a student with a disability and was approved for academic adjustments by the university. The Doctor of Pharmacy program required four years of classes, during which students were required to

maintain a grade of "C" or higher in all courses. Students were expected to complete their didactic course work within the first three years of the program but could extend the coursework into a fourth year when necessary. Students who did not meet these requirements were dropped from the program.

During his second year of classes, Student was granted approval to withdraw from a required course and reduce his course load for his remaining time in the program. Student was notified that this modified schedule would make it more difficult for him to complete all required courses within the four-year time limit. Student subsequently received a grade of "F" for one of his required courses. The student requested an exception to the program's four-year time limit policy but was denied. The university contends that the student's disability status was not taken into consideration when determining whether an exception to policy would be appropriate. The university requested to enter into a resolution agreement prior to the conclusion of OCR's investigation.

**Resolution:** The university must revise its academic adjustment policies to require the interactive process when a student with a disability requests a policy modification as a disability accommodation. The university must notify students, faculty, and staff of this policy change, and train faculty on the revised policies. The university must also engage in the interactive process with the student to consider his policy modification request. Should the university

grant the student's request, the university must remove the grade of "F" from the student's transcript.