Faculty Resource Guide

The University is committed to providing inclusive learning environments. Equal access can often be achieved through course design. However, barriers to learning or assessment may still exist for students with disabilities in your course. Accommodation strategies recommended by the Disability Support Services (DSS) office will facilitate access for your students. Please see www.unco.edu/dss for Universal Design of Instruction (UDI) strategies to enhance the accessibility of your course design.

The Disability Support Services office collaborates with the University in its commitment to recognize disability as a valued aspect of diversity and to embrace access to the University of Northern Colorado community as a matter of equity and inclusion. The office provides the University with resources, education, and direct services to design a more welcoming and inclusive environment. Disability Support Services values a positive student-centered approach to academic accommodation characterized by self-advocacy, equity, student learning and universal design of instruction.

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The Application Process for Accommodations
Students requesting accommodation or disability resources can meet with a staff member at the DSS office. Based on the student's self-report and documentation of disability provided by a medical professional, mental health provider or an educational plan from a school district, a student accommodation plan is developed and the students receives an Accommodation Letter.

Faculty Notification
Students provide their instructors with the accommodation letter from DSS outlining the academic accommodations for which they have been approved. It is the student's responsibility to provide this letter to the instructor and discuss their accommodation plan.

Students and professors are encouraged to discuss the accommodations in advance so that accommodations may be in place at the beginning of the semester. *The professor may not ask about the specific disability or why they are working with Disability Support Services.*

The accommodations shall be put in place once the professor receives the accommodation letter; regardless of the point in time during the semester. Although it is recommended students give the accommodation letter to professors at the beginning of each semester, letters may be given to a professor at any point during the semester as there is no time limit or requirement as to when a student can provide their professor with a letter.

Students may receive temporary accommodations for a specified period of time. These are granted in cases where updated documentation may be necessary and for acute injuries such as a broken arm, concussion, surgery, etc. when accommodations are necessary in the classroom.

If a professor or TA is unsure of how to provide an accommodation listed, please contact our office. DSS can assist to ensure the student is receiving their accommodations in an appropriate and timely manner. If a student requests an accommodation that is not listed on their accommodation letter, feel free to contact our office at (970) 351-2289 to discuss the request.

When reviewing the accommodation letter received from a student, please make sure it has the following features:

- A date within the current academic year
- A signature from the Director of DSS
- On a temporary accommodation letter, please make sure the current semester is listed.

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UNIVERSITY OF
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Disability Support Services

Sample Accommodation Letter
Confidential Course Accommodation Form

Name: DSS Student Name   Bear# XXX-XXX-123   Date: August 22, 2016

The University is committed to providing inclusive learning environments. Equal access can often be achieved through course design. However, barriers to learning or assessment may still exist for a student with a disability in your course. The following accommodations have been approved to facilitate access for the student. Please see www.unco.edu/dss for Universal Design of Instruction (UDI) strategies to enhance the accessibility of your course design.

- Test/quiz accommodation for class and labs, including extended time, quiet setting, reader, and/or use of computer. Extended time is 1 ½ times the allotted class testing time and applies to all exams, online courses, quizzes and pop quizzes. Submit test to DSS **at least one day prior to test date** to allow time for testing arrangements.

- Provide assistance in obtaining a **volunteer** note-taker in the classroom. It is possible that the student may not require a note-taker in every class. An active request is made when the student indicates to the professor that this accommodation is necessary for said class. In addition, the green note-taker request forms should be attached to this letter. **Please do not single out the student who needs the notes** when requesting a note-taker from the class. **The student is expected to attend class to receive notes,** please notify our office if the student is not attending classes regularly.

Your cooperation in providing equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities is critical and greatly valued. Please call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Ann Murphy, Director
Disability Support Services

Confidential
The information is provided by the Disability Support Services for the purpose of educational planning. We appreciate the respect for the student's confidentiality and your understanding that state and federal

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laws prohibit the release of this information to any other person or agency or for use in any manner for any other purpose. Students with disabilities are eligible for appropriate services stipulated under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Disability Support Services has received all necessary documentation that substantiates the student's need for academic accommodations.

Common Classroom Accommodations

Accommodations listed on a student's accommodation letter have been deemed appropriate by Disability Support Services staff based on a meeting with the student and upon review of documentation. Accommodations typically seen on an accommodation letter are described below in more detail.

- **Extended Time on Exams:** Students with disabilities may require extra time to complete exams and quizzes. This accommodation applies to both in-class and online tests, quizzes, and pop quizzes. Extended time is granted based on documentation and is typically in the amount of time and a half. Extended time allows the student to be tested based on mastery of skill and not speed. Access the following link for instructions to extend an online Canvas Exam.

- **Distraction-Reduced Environment:** Some students with disabilities request a reduced distraction environment to take their exams because of how their disability impacts them. This does not guarantee an environment free from all distraction, but provides an environment with fewer distractions than the classroom environment.

- **Reader for Exams:** Some students with disabilities may require that the exam questions in an audio format. DSS will convert the exam to an audio format. On occasion, a DSS staff member may provide reader services to the student and will read the questions verbatim to the student.

- **Scribe or Use of a Computer for Exams:** Some students with disabilities will be allowed to use a computer or scribe for essay or short answer exams. This allows the student to avoid physical fatigue and to provide legible answers to the exam questions. Students use DSS computers that have access to word processing programs and assistive technology software but no internet (unless required for the exam or quiz).

- **Peer Note-taker:** Students needing note-taking assistance are to work with DSS and the professor to receive a copy of notes from another student taking the class. This accommodation ensures that a student is receiving adequate class notes. Providing access to professor notes or copies of PowerPoints through Blackboard benefits all students in class and is encouraged as a part of Universal Design. In most courses, the Peer Note-taker is required to take notes on a laptop to ensure clearly readable notes in a digital format. Note-Taking Program ; How to request a note-taker.

- **Use of Laptop in class for Note-taking:** A student's disability may inhibit the ability to take notes by hand or as rapidly as the course instruction progresses. Some students are granted the opportunity to use a laptop to take notes in their classrooms. This allows faster note-taking and keeping pace with the rest of the class. Students are advised to use the laptop for the sole purpose of taking notes, and should not engage in any inappropriate behavior such as checking their email, browsing through social websites, or surfing the web.

- **Sign Language Interpreters and Other Deaf/Hard of Hearing Services:** It is common for students who are Deaf or hard of hearing to have a sign language interpreter or transcription services set up in their classrooms. Typically, the interpreter sits or stands in the front of the room so the student can see the instructor, the interpreter, and access to visual information. Please follow the link below for more information on interpreters and other Deaf/Hard of Hearing services in the classroom. Classroom Strategies for teaching students who are deaf/hard of hearing.

- **Modified Attendance Agreement:** Students are expected to follow the attendance policy established by the instructor in each class; however, some students with disabilities may be approved for a Modified Attendance Agreement due to a documented disability. Generally, these students have disabilities which are chronic, episodic or varying in nature, and may cause difficulties with regular class attendance. This may include conditions requiring on-going or specialized medical treatment Modified Attendance Agreement Guidelines for Faculty.

- **Recording Class Sessions:** Some students benefit from recording a class lecture to re-listen to the class at a later time. This audio format is allowed when the student provides proper notification to the instructor on the Accommodation Letter. It is the student's responsibility to provide their own recording device. If the instructor feels uncomfortable about recorded lecture due the nature of the course content, the instructor should contact DSS as soon as possible.

- **Preferential Seating:** Some students may request assistance in obtaining accessible or preferred seating in the classroom. Reasons for preferential seating vary, but may include needing to sit close to the instructor or board to access information more easily, seating next to the door or exit, seating in front of an interpreter, wheelchair accessible seating, or seating in the back of the room in case standing breaks are necessary.

- **Allowing Students to Leave or Move about the Classroom:** Sitting or standing in the same position for an extended period of time may exacerbate a student's disability. Other students may need to leave the classroom to attend to disability-related needs. Students are asked to situate themselves in the classroom in a manner that would be the least distracting should breaks or the ability to leave the classroom be a part of their

accommodation. It may be beneficial for the instructor and the student to discuss seating options and timing of breaks ahead of time.

Testing Procedures

The student is to comply with DSS test procedures as outlined on the Test Procedures Form and the Testing Authorization Form (Blue Sheet) Testing Authorization Form. Should the student have any questions, they will need to call DSS to talk to a staff member. If the student elects to take the exam at the DSS office, the student is required to provide the professor the Blue Sheet at least 3 days prior to an exam. The student shall also provide three days' notice to DSS in order to have the accommodations (reader, scribe, audio format, space etc.) in place during the time of their exam.

The student must schedule the test with DSS at the same time, or overlapping, the time the class is scheduled to take the exam. If the student cannot take the exam at the same time without conflicting with other classes due to the extended time allowed, the student must get an alternate testing time approved by the professor prior to exam day.

Student Responsibility

Once registered to receive services from DSS, each semester, the student is also responsible for:
- Requesting course materials in alternative format, ASL Interpreters, and note-taking services as applicable and notifying our office if services are not being provided when appropriate.
- Monitoring his/her own academic progress
- Complying with test procedures and Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Maintaining contact with DSS staff member

Working with Students with Disabilities in the Classroom

Effective Communication: Effective communication is one of the key components of working with students with disabilities. Requesting accommodations and identifying as a student with a disability can be a stress producing event. Having open lines of communication can assist in decreasing a student's stress.

Person-First Language: It is important to use "person-first" language when speaking with a student with a disability or when referring to a student with a disability. In person-first language, the person is recognized first and the disability second, i.e. "a student with a disability." By using person-first language, you will emphasize the student's disability is only a small part of who they are and not a defining personal characteristic.

Hidden Disabilities: In addition to using person-first language, it is important to be aware that you will work with a student who has a hidden disability more often than with those whose

disability is visibly apparent. Being aware of students with hidden disabilities and being sensitive to disability related issues can make the classroom a more inviting and encouraging place for all students. Keep in mind that engaged and attentive listening skills are simple and effective ways to increase positive communication not only with students with disabilities, but with all students in your classes.

In addition to these general ideas about communication with students, there are also some specific communication topics that might be relevant to communicating with particular students. Contact DSS with questions.

Sign Language Interpreters and Other Deaf/Hard of Hearing Services: Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing will most likely access sign language interpreters or transcription services in the classroom. An interpreter will sit or stand in the front of the room so the student can see the instructor, the interpreter, and access to visual information. Please ensure your YouTube clips, DVDs, and any audio clips are closed captioned. Contact DSS at (970) 351-2289 for assistance with captioning. Follow the link below to learn more strategies to provide access to students with hearing loss. **Classroom Strategies for Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing**

Captioning Audio Material:
For assistance determining if your materials have captions, please see our Captioning Quick Start Guide, available on our website: www.unco.edu/dss/captioningrequests.html.
If you have a request from a student in your course for Captioning or Transcription, please complete the online Captioned Materials Request Form.
For larger files, please upload them to the DSS SharePoint site at: https://share.unco.edu/DSS. Choose "Captioning Requests" from the left side menu and then choose "Add document." Please give "Full Access" when sharing file.
DSS can send off the following file types to be captioned:
DVDs (please allow 4-6 weeks for processing), .FLV, .MOV, .MP4, .MP3, YouTube Clips (in some cases). If the file type is not listed above, we cannot accept it. (i.e. web links other than YouTube, VHS tapes, and cassette tapes). For more information about captioning, please see the UNC Captioning Policy UNC Accessible Captioning Media Policy .

Facilitating Lip Reading:
In some cases, a student with a disability may require assistance due to a documented disability that interferes with communication in the classroom. In order for verbal or spoken language to be most accessible for this student, it would be helpful for the instructor or presenters to face the class while speaking to allow the student to utilize lip-reading skills. It is not necessary to speak slower or in an exaggerated way but speaking clearly is helpful. If the instructor turns his/her head away from the class and speaks toward a white board or projection screen, the student will lose the ability to read his/her lips. Also, keep in mind whether or not there are any obstructions around your face or mouth that may make lip-reading and understanding

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information difficult. It is the student's responsibility to make sure they understand the information presented in class, but these steps will assist the student in gaining greater access to verbal communication.

Students who are blind or have low vision: You might also work with students who are blind or have low vision. Below are some simple tips to effectively communicate and interact with students who are blind or have low vision.

> **Introduce yourself:** When you enter a room or join in a conversation with a student who is blind or has low vision, introduce yourself.
> **Notify when you leave:** If you leave the classroom or the immediate area, let the student know that you are stepping away, realizing that if you leave suddenly without saying so, the student will not be aware that you are no longer there.
> **Doors:** If possible, leave doors all the way open, or completely closed. It is harder for students who are blind or have low vision to navigate around a half opened door.
> **Directions:** Be as specific as possible with directions. For example, "We are going seven steps to the right and down 9 stairs", instead of "We are going over there".
> **Phrases:** It's okay to say things like "See you later", "It's good to see you again", or other phrases that imply sightedness! Follow the link below for further information on working with students who are blind or have low vision. **Strategies for Teaching Students who have Blindness/Low Vision**

Emergency Situations:
There may be a time students with a particular disability like epilepsy, fainting, or hemophilia experience an emergency situation while in your class. These situations may require actions such as calling UNC Police or calling the student's support person. Below is an example of the accommodation statement that would appear on the student's accommodation letter and explaining what action you should take in the event of an emergency in your class.

- It is possible that (Student's Name) may experience a (Type of Episode) episode during the semester. If this occurs and you have concerns about (Student's Name) health and safety, UNC protocol is to contact campus police for assistance at 351-2245. This student also requested that (Support Person) is contacted at (xxx) xxx-xxx if they experience a (Type of Episode) episode. You can assist in assuring their safety during an episode by monitoring their surroundings. Please respect the student's privacy and disallow attempts by others to take pictures or violate her right to privacy in any way. If a (Type of Episode) episode should occur, in the moments or days after, please make every effort to re-integrate the Student into the classroom setting.

Interacting with Service Animals:
In the course of your career at UNC, you might interact with a student who uses a service animal. It is important to remember to address the student before acknowledging the service animal. Do not pet the service animal while it is working for the student.

A Service Animal must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the Service Animal's work or the individual's disability prevents using these devices. If so, the individual must maintain control of the Service Animal through voice, signal, or other effective controls. The Service Animal must be under the control of the animal's handler, must be housebroken, and may be prohibited in certain locations because of health and safety restrictions (e.g. where the animal may be in danger, or where their use may compromise the integrity of research).

There is a distinction between a Service Animal and an Emotional Support Animals (ESAs). Emotional Support Animals are not allowed in the classroom. If you have any questions regarding the presence of an animal in your class, please contact DSS at (970) 351-2289.

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Universal Design of Instruction

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Faculty that embraces the goals of Universal Design of Instruction (UDI) can help all students become active learners engaging in the course and the content. This section intends to identify strategies for key areas of your courses that can be incorporated into the classroom to help create an environment that addresses the needs of all students, with or without disabilities.

Faculty Best Practices
- Maintaining high expectations
- Maintaining a positive attitude
- Holding online office hours
- Inviting students to speak with them about their learning issue

Practice Brief: Humphrey, M., Woods, L., & Huglin, L. (2011). Increasing faculty awareness of students with disabilities: A two-pronged approach. *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability*, 24(3), 255–261.

Syllabus Statement:
Faculty should include the following statement on their syllabus:

Current Statement Fall 2016: Any student requesting disability accommodation for this class must inform the instructor and give appropriate notice. Students are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services at (970) 351-2289 to certify documentation of disability and to ensure appropriate accommodations are implemented in a timely manner.

New Revision for Fall 2017: Disability Resources: It is the policy and practice of the University of Northern Colorado to create inclusive learning environments. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that present barriers to your inclusion or to an accurate assessment of your achievement (e.g. time-limited exams, inaccessible web content, use of videos without captions), please communicate this with your professor and contact Disability Support Services (DSS) to request accommodations. Office: (970) 351-2289, Michener Library

L-80. Students can learn more about the accommodation process at
http://www.unco.edu/disability-support-services/

Universal Design of Instruction:
Principles and Guidelines to Benefit All Learners
(Do-It, University of Washington, Seattle)

1. **Class Climate**
   Adopt practices that reflect high values with respect to both diversity and inclusion.

2. **Interaction**
   Encourage regular and effective interactions between students and instructors and ensure that communication methods are accessible to all participants.

3. **Physical Environments and Products**
   Ensure that facilities, activities, materials and equipment are physically accessible to and usable by all students, and that all potential student characteristics are addressed in safety considerations.

4. **Delivery Methods**
   Use multiple instructional methods that are accessible to all learners. This might include lecture, hands-on activities, internet-based, educational software, field work.

5. **Information Resources and Technology**
   Ensure that course materials, notes and other information resources are engaging, flexible and accessible for all students. Choose captioned materials, provide early syllabus, and allow time for DSS to create alternative format.

6. **Feedback**
   Provide specific feedback on a regular basis. Allow students to turn in parts of large projects for review.

7. **Assessment**
   Regularly access student progress using multiple accessible methods and tools, and adjust instruction accordingly. Grade group performance as well as individual achievement.

8. **Accommodation**
   Plan ahead for accommodations for students whose needs are not met by instructional design. This may include allowing time for DSS to create an alternate format (audio, Braille, large print), adjust to change in classroom locations, attain interpreting services or captioning.

http://www.washington.edu/doit/ Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and

Technology. (n.d.). Retrieved July 24, 2016, from http://www.washington.edu/doit/

PowerPoints, Professor Notes: Sharing Information with All
Posting your PowerPoints or notes on Blackboard or online benefits all students. A student has the ability to access lecture materials in advance of class, read them over, and print them out with the ability to prepare in advance for your lecture. Reading over the Power Point prior to class helps a student focus their attention on the material and may generate questions during class time. Students gain understanding of the content and main topics you will present during class.

Posting your content online is the first step to make the material usable for individuals who utilize screen readers or computer magnifiers as accommodations. Screen readers allow students who are blind or have low vision to access your written material and maintain their independence and confidentiality. Student with disabilities that impact reading can also use a screen reader to access your notes and articles you might post during the semester.

Some students with disabilities benefit from recording lectures. This provides the ability to re-listen to valuable content, to improve understanding, and to use as study materials for upcoming exams. Recorded lecture is an approved accommodation for some students and will be indicated on their accommodation letter. However, all students can benefit from this strategy to improve their notes and their knowledge of the course materials.

Testing: Determine What Skill You Are Testing
In some cases, the amount of time given to students to complete an exam is determined by concrete factors. In these cases, part of the test itself is the ability to perform certain skills in timed situations. However, for the majority of cases, the time frame given to students is determined by the length of class, not as part of the exam or based on the needs of students.

Any student who feels they are constrained to complete a complicated exam in a limited amount of time may experience stress that can impact their performance. For students with disabilities, stress related to the time constraint may be further complicated by the disability, symptoms of the disability, or related medications making it difficult to demonstrate their actual knowledge. While extended time is often an accommodation for students with disabilities, faculty can also help support DSS by taking into consideration the importance of time to the overall exam and the success of the student in the course. Is it more important the student can demonstrate a skill in a defined amount of time, or that they are able to demonstrate the breadth of their knowledge in more detail with more time provided?

Reading Materials: Alternate Format & Online Accessibility
An important part of any course is the selection of books and other reading materials. While careful selection of these materials is the responsibility of the faculty, it is also part of the faculty's responsibility to do so in a timely manner. All students will need to either make

arrangements to visit the UNC bookstore or order their books online, which means the materials will not be immediately available to them.

For students with disabilities who desire their books in alternate format, timeliness is especially important because they must not only order their books in advance, but also submit them to DSS to be processed into an accessible format. Requests for these materials to DSS are processed in the order they are received, and we encourage our students to submit requests as soon as possible. Processing written material into audio could take several weeks.

Faculty can help support DSS by submitting their book lists to the UNC bookstore as early as possible, allowing DSS to process requests prior to the beginning of the semester.

Saving a Document to a Readable PDF to allow Access
Students also request alternate formats for reading assignments and articles. Faculty can support DSS by checking that their materials are accessible prior to posting them for student use. Posting accessible documents can help all students who may wish to use assistive technology while maintaining their independence. A key factor to check for when determining the accessibility of an online document is whether it is a text file or an image file, and/or whether students will be able to copy and paste from the document. Check out Page 2 of the following link to learn how to save reading assignments or articles as an accessible PDF. [Creating an Accessible (Readable) Document](#). Call DSS at (970) 351-2289 for assistance.

Resources for Further Investigation
www.projectshift-refocus.org Project Shift, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education (PR Award # P333A080082-09) Refocus. (n.d.). Retrieved July 24, 2016, from http://www.projectshift-refocus.org/

http://www.washington.edu/doit/ Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology. (n.d.). Retrieved July 24, 2016, from http://www.washington.edu/doit/

Disability Support Services Faculty/Staff Resource Guide, University of Northern Colorado

Humphrey, M., Woods, L., & Huglin, L. (2011). Increasing faculty awareness of students with disabilities: A two-pronged approach. *Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability*, **24**(3), 255–261.

Compliance with Civil Rights Legislation and Federal Policies:
In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, The Americans with Disabilities Act and the ADA Amendments Act, the University of Northern Colorado is committed to providing appropriate accommodations to students with disabilities.

It is the policy and practice of the University to comply fully with these requirements and all other laws, both federal and state, and regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability. The ADA was designed to provide civil rights protection to people with disabilities.

Title II of the ADA mandates that government agencies make their programs and services accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities.

Under Title II of the ADA, The University may not discriminate in the recruitment, admission, educational process, or treatment of students. Students who have self-identified, provided appropriate documentation of disability, and requested reasonable accommodations are entitled to receive approved accommodations and/or auxiliary aids that enable them to participate in and benefit from all educational programs and activities.

As an institution of Higher Education, the University of Northern Colorado may not:
- Limit the number of students with disabilities admitted
- Use admission tests or criteria that ineffectively measure the academic level of students with visual, hearing or other disabilities because accommodations were not made for them
- Exclude a student with a disability from any course or major solely on the basis of their disability
- Advise students with disabilities towards a more restrictive career than students without disabilities
- Measure student outcomes and achievement using modes that discriminate against students with disabilities
- Institute rules that may adversely affect the performance of students with disabilities

Disability Support Services
Michener Library
Lower Level L-80