



GRAMBLING STATE UNIVERSITY

**STUDENT COUNSELING SERVICES
PRESENTS
TRAINING ON DISABILITY
SERVICES**

Welcome GSU STAFF/FACULTY

- **WHETHER WE REALIZE IT OR NOT, WE ALL ENCOUNTER INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES IN OUR DAILY LIVES.SOME OF THESE DISABILITIES WILL BE APPARENT;WHILE MANY OTHERS WILL LESS VISIBLE.**
- **THIS TRAINING IS AN INTERACTIVE FORMAT TO HELP THE GSU CAMPUS/COMMUNITY TO BETTER UNDERSTAND LIMITATIONS THAT EXIST FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE DISABILITIES THAT ALTER THEIR DAILY LIFE ACTIVITIES SUCH AS LEARNING, SEEING, HEARING, OR FUNCTIONING SOCIALLY.**
- **IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMOVE THE HIDDEN BARRIERS THAT STILL EXISTS. AT GSU, WE WANT TO CREATE AN INCLUSIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT TO EMPOWER AND SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.**

DID YOU KNOW FACTS REGARDING INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

- Disability is the one minority anyone can join at anytime.
- College students with disabilities are twice as likely to drop out of college that students who do not have a disability.
- There are 48.9 million Americans with a disability and that's 19.4 of the U.S. population.(1 out of 5 Americans)
- The rate of disabilities in minorities varies from the lowest of 9.9% to the highest at 21.9%.
- African Americans have the highest proportion of severe disabilities.(12.2)

Have you thought..

- What is a disability?
- Why is it important to provide reasonable accommodations for an individual with disabilities?
- What is a hidden disability?
- What does the law state about an individual who has a disability?
- How will this training help me with understand issues about an individual with disabilities?
- Who is the ADA ?

Teaser

An example of a disability is a student having a sprain ankle and not being able to complete a homework assignment in history.

True or False

Requests for reasonable accommodations do have to be in writing.

True or False

What is a disability?

- A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities; a record of such impairment, or; being regarded as having such impairment.

Major life activities are: “those basic activities that the average person in the general population can perform with little or no difficulty.”

Examples of major life activities

- Caring for oneself
- Walking
- Performing manual tasks
- Seeing
- Hearing
- Speaking
- Breathing
- Learning
- Working

The analysis of whether an individual has a disability is made on a case-by case basis; there is no “one size fits all” definition of disability. Often, this determination is made by medical experts.

Hidden Disability

What is a hidden disability?

Hidden disability is a catch-all phrase that simply means that a person's impairment or condition is not obviously apparent or visible. So it is quite possible that you have students in your teaching group who are disabled but who you may not immediately recognize as such. But you may only discover that one of your students has a hidden disability once you get to know them better. This could be because they may have decided not to disclose their disability to you or to the institution, possibly for fear of discrimination. Or they may not consider that their impairment or condition is a disability and so may not have been in contact with the disability service. If a hidden disability has been identified, staff or faculty may refer the student to contact the Student Counseling Center to discuss services that are available.

Qualified Individual With A Disability

Substantially Limiting Disabilities

- To be protected under the ADA an individual must be a member of the “protected class” of individuals known as a “qualified individual with a disability”. A critical element to determining whether an individual has a disability as defined by the ADA is whether the existing impairment is substantially limiting.
- The term “substantially limits” means either:
- The individual is unable to perform a major life activity that the average person in the general population can perform.
- The individual is significantly restricted as to the condition, manner or duration under which an individual can perform a particular major life activity as compared to the condition, manner or duration under which the average person in the general population can perform the same major activity.

Substantially Limiting: Examples

- Example 1: A person with a sprained ankle may be limited in her ability to walk for a period of one to several days. Although this is a major inconvenience, it is not considered substantially limiting under the ADA because she is expected to fully recover from this injury.
- .Example 2: A person who has a broken ankle that does not heal correctly that limits his ability to walk for more than several blocks for the next year or so may have a disability. The extent of such an injury is often decided by medical experts.
- .Example 3: A person who has lost a foot would be substantially limited for the rest of her life in the ability to walk, as compared to the general population.

Most laypeople would agree that the person in Example 1 does not have a physical impairment that substantially limits a major life activity. However, Example 2 leaves some room for disagreement and such issues are often decided by medical experts.

In Example 3, most laypeople would agree that she has a physical impairment that substantially limits her ability to walk (walking is a major life activity – we will discuss major life activities later in this section).

American Disabilities Act

- The Americans with Disabilities Act, or ADA, was developed due to the concern that certain individuals with disabilities were being discriminated against in areas of employment and public accommodations.
- President George Bush signed the ADA into law in 1990 and the compliance date for affected entities was 1992. The ADA impacts employment, public accommodations, state and local governments, telecommunications, and other aspects of American industry and government.
- Further, the fundamental nature of the ADA is to remove barriers and obstacles that prevent otherwise qualified individual that have a disability from performing at their potential.

ADA & the Law

Why is important for me to understand the law regarding the American Disabilities Act?

The law states under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibits disability discrimination by public entities, whether or not they receive federal financial assistance.

The Department of Justice can file lawsuits in federal court to enforce the ADA, and courts may order compensatory damages and back pay to remedy discrimination if the Department prevails. Under Title III of the ADA, the Department of Justice may also obtain civil penalties of up to \$55,000 for the first violation and \$110,000 for any subsequent violation.

Mental Disabilities

Individuals with mental health or psychiatric disabilities may be protected under the ADA.. The ADA protects qualified individuals with a mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, or who have a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such impairments.

Under the ADA "mental impairment" includes "any mental or psychological disorder", such as:

- Mental retardation
- Organic brain syndrome
- Specific learning disabilities
- Emotional or mental illness

Examples of "emotional or mental illnesses- disorders include:

- Major depression
- Bipolar disorder
- Anxiety disorders (which include panic disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder)
- Schizophrenia
- Personality Disorders

Reasonable Accommodations

Why make reasonable accommodations for students?

“Reasonable accommodations” removes barriers for individuals with disabilities.

The duty to provide reasonable accommodations is fundamental to the ADA because of the nature of discrimination faced by individuals with disabilities. Further, it is the law and the university could be penalized if there has been discrimination cited.

This is why as faculty and staff here at GSU, we can help remove these obstacles and barriers by understanding what the law states regarding students with disabilities.

Types of potential academic accommodations

For students with disabilities, academic accommodations may include adaptations in the way specific courses are conducted, the use of auxiliary equipment and support staff, and modifications in academic requirements. A college or university has both the diversity of resources and the flexibility to select the specific aids or services it provides, as long as they are effective. Such aids and services should be selected in consultation with student who will use them.

Here are suggestions that should be considered when using reasonable accommodations for students:

Syllabus Statement

- All instructors are encouraged to include in their syllabus a statement inviting students with disabilities to meet with them in a confidential environment to discuss making arrangements for accommodations. There are several reasons why this syllabus statement is critical. This statement both normalizes the accommodation process and helps to create a positive and welcoming environment for students with disabilities. Also, the statement creates a collaborative vehicle for making legally mandated accommodations and serves as a reminder to students who need the accommodations that these arrangements need to be made.
- .The following is an example of a syllabus disability statement that can be used or adapted for your course syllabi:
- *.Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 318-274-3277 at the Foster-Johnson Building West Wing to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.*

Classroom Accommodations

- **Preferential seating**

Seating in front, by door, helps reduce audio/visual distractions

- **Accompanier**

Having someone (another student, or a counseling staff member) to go with a student to class and sometimes stay in class with the student.

- **Assigned classmate as volunteer assistant**

Similar to an accompanier, an assistant may help take notes or provide informal support.

- **Beverages permitted in class**

Helps alleviate dry mouth or tiredness caused by medications.

Lecture accommodations

- **Pre-arranged breaks**

Helps student anticipate and manage anxiety, stress, or extreme restlessness caused by medication.

- **Tape Recorder**

Alleviates pressure of note taking, freeing student to attend and participate more fully in class.

- **Note taker**

Having someone in class to take notes alleviates of having to capture all the information; allows students to fully concentrate on lecture information the anxiety of attending class interferes with effective note taking.

- **Photocopy of another's notes**

If note takers are not available, then securing from another student helps free him or her to attend and participate more fully in class

Examination Accommodations

- **Change in test format**

Altering an exam from a multiple choice format to an essay format may help students demonstrate their knowledge more effectively and with much less interference from anxiety or a learning disability.

- **Permit use of computer software programs or other technological assistance**

Writing may be difficult due to physical and visual impairments and complications from mental health.

- **Extended time**

Allowing a specific extra amount of time, to be negotiated before the exam, allows the student to focus on the exam content instead of the clock, and lessens the chance that anxiety or physical/visual impairments will interfere with the student's performance.

- **Segmented**

Dividing an exam up into parts and allowing student to take them in two or three sessions over 1-2 days helps reduce the effect of fatigue and focus on one section at a time.

- **Permit exams to be individually proctored**

A non-distracting, quiet setting helps reduce interference from other symptoms or medication side effects.

Assignment accommodations

- **Substitute assignments**

Written exercises or other out-of-class exercise may be necessary for a student with a psychiatric and physical disabilities to best demonstrate their grasp of the required knowledge

- **Advance notice of assignments**

Helps a student anticipate and plan time, energy, and workload, and arrange for any support or academic adjustments.

- **Use alternative forms for students to demonstrate course mastery**

A student may be better able to demonstrate his or her knowledge in ways that don't require lots of writing (e.g., a narrative tape instead of a written journal) or time pressure (an essay exam rather than only multiple choice, or an extra paper if the student has not performed well on the exam due to his or her disability).

- **Textbooks on tape**

May help a student whose vision or concentration interferes with their reading ability.

Examples of Reasonable Accommodations

Case Illustrations for Classroom Environments

- Jennifer was enrolled in a beginning computer class. Due to her schizophrenia she had difficulty focusing in class. Her thoughts would wander from the teacher and suddenly she would feel lost in class. Because of this she would continually interrupt the class to ask the teacher questions.
- She was beginning to feel as if her teacher and classmates were angry at her for the disruption.
- *Jennifer's teacher allowed her to bring in a tape recorder to tape the class lectures. She was also assigned a "buddy", a classmate who would sit next to her during class to point out what they were focusing on if Jennifer became lost. The teacher also made herself available to Jennifer each week at a certain time for questions. Jennifer also increased her time in the computer lab at the school.*

Examples of Reasonable Accommodations

- Joe was attending a major metropolitan university.
- The parking lot for the university does not provide adequate handicap parking and there is a distance from the building where his classes are taking place. Because Joe is wheelchair bounded, he is getting to class late. Once he arrived in the building it would take him several minutes to get on the elevator and to get to class. Joe is generally very flustered during his class because of this. Joe was contemplating quitting school.
- *Joe approached the Students with Disabilities Office and was able to bring this issue to the attention of Disabilities Coordinator. Joe was able to get a parking pass which allowed him to park closer to the building where his classes were held. Further, the university allocated more handicap parking spaces to ensure no other students with disabilities were having the same issues as well.*

Administrative accommodations

Our goal with training staff and faculty is to ensure that the following can be addressed;

- **Provide orientation to campus and administrative procedures.**
Increasing a student's familiarity with an environment and the system help him or her to feel more confident and allows the student to plan, strategize, anticipate trouble spots, and know where to go for assistance.
- **Provide assistance with registration/financial aid.**
Helping a student cut through red tape and coaching them thorough the intricate but critical process of financial aid eliminates a potentially debilitating amount of stress and hassle.
- **General Provisions Provided**
Psychiatric symptoms and physical impairments can physically and emotionally prevent a student from crossing the campus by wheelchair or climbing several sets of stairs or sustaining energy for a day of classes, when they would otherwise be capable of attending class. These supports make the environment more accessible and “-friendly,” and are usually cheap and easy to obtain.

Disability Services Offered:

- Transitional Counseling
- Stress management
- Self esteem
- Cultural Adjustments
- Healthy Choices
- Crisis Intervention
- Test Anxiety
- Grief
- Serenity/Relaxation Services

Maximize the use of current and existing campus support services for students who have disabilities. Please contact us here at Student Counseling Services to identify and consult regarding questions regarding students who have disabilities.

Disability Services Coordinator- Rhonda Adams-Ext 2776

Thanks for participating!

- Please click [here](#) to record your participation and create your course participation certificate.
- Click here for the [Disability Services Handbook \(PDF\)](#)