Students Requesting Accommodation

The proportion of undergraduate students designated as learning disabled or as having ADD/ADHD has almost doubled in the last decade, and it is nearly eight times what it was in the 1980s. Here is some guidance you may find helpful in ensuring the equal access to qualified students that Endicott College instructors must provide, in order to help qualified students with disabilities, as mandated by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disability Amendment Act of 2008.

What does Accommodation mean?

Under the Federal Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, all educational institutions must provide services and accommodations for students with qualified disabilities so that classes, examinations and activities are accessible. This includes not only access and accommodation for those with physical disabilities, but also for those with learning and emotional disabilities and chronic health conditions.

How will I know if one of my Students has a Qualifying Disability?

Because of privacy law, the college cannot inform you directly that one of your students has a qualifying disability. The students must take the responsibility of notification on themselves. However, all students who qualify for extended time testing are provided with a letter from the Center for Teaching and Learning that notifies the faculty of the existence of the disability and the opportunity for extended time. Students with other qualifying disabilities (for example, those requiring note takers or those with chronic health conditions) might not have a letter, but they are registered with the Center for Teaching and Learning. You can verify the existence of a qualifying disability and discuss appropriate accommodations by calling the Center for Teaching and Learning at extension 2290.

What is Extended Time Testing? What do I need to do?

Students with a qualifying disability are allowed double-time for exams. For example, a student will be allowed two hours to complete a one hour exam. Extended time tests are administered in designated and monitored quiet rooms in the Center for Teaching and Learning. Students who qualify for extended time must provide you their letter from the Center for Teaching and Learning five days before their first exam. They must also notify you of their desire for extended time at least five days before every subsequent exam. Students are not required to use extended time for every exam but, as long as they have followed the notification procedure, they must be accommodated whenever they request it. It is the student's responsibility to schedule the extended time testing with the Center for Teaching and

Learning. Every effort will be made to schedule the exam during or as close as possible to the scheduled in-class exam time. Faculty should deliver the exam to Barbara Pierimachi (LIB 201, ext 2290) in the Center for Teaching and Learning at least 24 hours before the scheduled exam. This should be done in person to avoid the possibility of lost or delayed exams via email or campus mail. Please include any special instructions for the administration of the exam (use of notes or calculators, open-book, etc). You should retrieve the exam personally.

What about Online and/or Computer-based Exams?

The Center for Teaching and Learning can work with computer-based exams. The extended time testing rooms are equipped with WIFI. Generally, students will take the exam on their own laptop computers. If the students do not have access to a laptop, they must notify Center for Teaching and Learning and arrangements can be made to provide one. If the exam requires special log-ins or passwords, please provide those to the student and/or Barbara Pierimachi. Also be sure to enable the exam and appropriately adjust the access time for the time period during which the student is taking the exam.

Do I have to give Extended Time for Assignments?

You are not required to allow for extended time on assignments done outside of class. If the student requests extra time, discuss the problem with them individually. You may make any accommodation you deem fair for the student and the rest of the class.

How can I be sure the Student really has a Disability?

Students can only receive services and accommodation for documented disabilities. Students must provide Center for Teaching and Learning with documentation from a licensed professional. All documentation is reviewed by the ADA coordinator and kept on file in the Center for Teaching and Learning office.

Beyond Learning Disabilities, what other Qualifying Disabilities might I encounter?

Students come to college with a variety of disabilities. For the most part, you will not be able to identify them or their disability. The College cannot notify you of the disabilities of your students. The students must inform you of any challenges they may face. These disabilities may include, chronic gastro-intestinal conditions, such as Crohn's disease, IBS, or Celiac, which may impact their attendance in class. Other conditions are emotional/psychological, such as depression, bi-polar disorder, anxiety disorder or social anxiety disorder which may impact their attention level, attendance or ability to fully participate in class. Neurological and developmental issues, such as Asperger Syndrome, ADHD and processing disorders, may also impact their attention level, attendance or ability to participate. In all cases, the students must provide the Center for Teaching and Learning with documentation of their disability. You may contact the Center for Teaching and Learning for advice on reasonable accommodation.

My student is an SSP Student. What does that mean?

SSP (or the Student Support Program) is a service open to all Endicott students. SSP provides 2 hours a week of professional tutoring to all SSP students, along with other services designed to help them acquire the skills for success. Not all SSP students have qualifying disabilities; therefore, not all SSP students need accommodation. All students in SSP are assigned a professional tutor. You will be notified via campus mail that one of your students is an SSP student. Feel free to contact the SSP tutor and/or the SSP Coordinator, Kathy Bloomfield (ext. 2096), at any time with questions and/or concerns.

I think a student might have a Disability. What can I do?

If you feel comfortable with the student, you can approach the student individually and ask if this is a possibility. Even if the student has a documented disability they may not want to talk about it. In other cases, students may have a documented or known disability but has not submitted the documentation to the Center for Teaching and Learning. Please encourage them to do so. If the student is unaware of a possible disability but wants to investigate further, refer the student to the Center for Teaching and Learning. The Center for Teaching and Learning will work with the student and can make referrals to licensed professionals for testing and diagnosis. If you suspect an emotional/psychological problem, refer the student to the Counseling Center. In all cases, confidentiality must be maintained.

Is there anything else I can/should do for students?

College can be difficult for any student. Students with extra challenges of disability can face an even more difficult time. As a faculty member you can assist the student in finding the resources available, encourage the use of these services, provide reasonable accommodation and respect for confidentiality. Mostly you can be sensitive to their needs, flexible in your approach and hold the students to high academic standards.

For more information, please contact: Kathy Bloomfield, Associate Director, Center for Teaching and Learning, 978-232-2096, kbloomfi@endicott.edu

Bibliography

- Vickers, M. (March 2010). *Accommodating College Students with Learning Disabilities: ADD, ADHD, and Dyslexia.* Pope Center Series on Higher Education. http://www.popecenter.org/acrobat/vickers-mar2010.pdf