



Staff and Faculty Accessibility Services Resource Handbook

“While they were saying among themselves it cannot be done,
it was done”

Helen Keller



Dear staff and faculty,

West Georgia Technical College is committed to providing accessible, high quality technical education to all students who may benefit from our programs and services. Since our doors opened in 1966, our school's faculty and staff have been dedicated to assisting all students in the realization of their educational goals and career aspirations. We believe that the best learning environment is one that takes into account various obstacles and challenges that may impede a student from reaching his or her personal and educational goals. The student challenged by physical, emotional, or learning limitations can be at greatest risk for success. Through WGTC's Accessibility Services program, accommodations and classroom modifications can be arranged to meet the unique needs of our students.

I strongly encourage you to read this manual and refer to it periodically in order to become familiar with the numerous resources and support services available to the students needing individualized assistance. I ask your cooperation and assistance in implementing accommodations to our students so that they may reach their full potential. It is also imperative that we ensure our compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

If you need additional resources to successfully work with students requiring accommodations, I will be happy to provide assistance at any time during the semester. Please also use this guide in referring students who may benefit from the program.

Sincerely,

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What is a Disability?

A “person with a disability” is anyone with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as caring for one’s self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. In addition to those persons who have visible disabilities – persons who are blind, deaf or use a wheelchair – the definition includes people with a whole range of invisible disabilities. These include psychological problems, learning disabilities, or chronic health impairments. A person is considered to be a person with a disability if he or she has a disability, has a record of a disability, or is regarded as having a disability.



The Impact of the ADA on Schools

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 is the civil rights guarantee for persons with disabilities in the United States. It provides protection from discrimination for individuals on the basis of disability. The ADA extends civil rights protections for people with disabilities to employment in the public and private sectors, transportation, public accommodations, services provided by state and local government, and telecommunication

relay services. Documentation of the disability is required. Section 504 of the 1973 Rehab Act and 1990 ADA states: “No otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall solely by reason of his/her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity of public entity.”

Faculty and Staff Implications

Faculty and staff are responsive to the individual needs of all students. However, students with disabilities may have additional needs that must be addressed early on. Often, persons with disabilities prefer faculty and staff to focus on their individuality and unique strengths, rather than their disability. Therefore, the need for services often go undisclosed and academic achievement becomes compromised. Instructors are encouraged to issue a statement to new students, inviting them to discuss academic needs as they pertain to a disability. The student is the best source of information regarding necessary accommodations. While it is the student’s responsibility to request special accommodations, a faculty member can make a student more likely to disclose a disability by inquiring about special needs. Faculty may encourage a student to seek assistance from the Accessibility Services Coordinator in order to implement requested accommodations, if they perceive that a student may benefit from them. An example of such a statement issued to the class: “If there is any student in this class who has need for test-taking or notetaking accommodations, I encourage you to meet with our Accessibility Services Coordinator, and myself to discuss adaptations that can be implemented during the semester.”

The Language of Disabilities

People with disabilities prefer you focus on their individuality. The term “handicapped” is falling into disuse and should be avoided. The terms “able-bodied”, “physically challenged” and “differently-abled” are also discouraged. The following are some recommendations for language that respects the preferences of people with disabilities:

◆ **Avoid using the article “the” with an adjective to describe people with disabilities.**

The preferred usage is “people with disabilities” which stresses the essential humanity of individuals and avoids objectification. The term “disabled people” is also acceptable, but note that this term still defines people as disabled first, and people second.

NOT

the deaf
the visually impaired
the disabled

BUT

people who are deaf (or hearing impaired)
people who are visually impaired
people with disabilities

◆ **If it is appropriate to refer to a person’s disability, choose the correct terminology for the specific disability.**

Instead of

People **who are** ...blind, visually impaired, deaf, hearing impaired, mentally retarded, non-disabled, physically disabled.

Use

People **who have** cerebral palsy, Down’s syndrome, mental illness, paraplegia, quadriplegia, seizure disorder, specific learning disability, speech impairment.

◆ **Be careful not to imply people with disabilities are to be pitied, feared or ignored, or they are somehow more heroic, courageous, patient or “special” than others. Never use the term “normal” in contrast.**

NOT

Trina held her own while
swimming with normal children

BUT

Trina qualified for her
“Swimmer” certificate last week.

◆ **A person in a wheelchair is a “wheelchair user” or “uses a wheelchair.”**

Avoid terms that define the disability as a limitation, such as “confined to a wheelchair.” Or “wheelchair bound.” A wheelchair liberates; it doesn’t confine.

◆ **Avoid using the terms “victim” or “suffered” to refer to a person who has or has had a disease or disability. This term dehumanizes the person and emphasizes powerlessness.**

NOT

victim of aids or aids sufferer
polio victim

BUT

person with aids
had polio

Etiquette

1. Offer assistance as you would to anyone else, for example, to push a wheelchair or to guide a person who is blind. The person will indicate whether or not the help is needed, and “no, thank you” must be respected. Most people who are disabled will not hesitate to ask for needed help and will be specific as to how it should be given; for example, a person who is blind usually prefers to take your proffered arm.
2. Noticing an obvious limitation is not rude; however, asking personal questions about it is inappropriate.
3. Always talk directly to the person rather than to others who may be accompanying him or her. Never talk about a person who is disabled to the person he or she is with as if the person does not exist. This includes an interpreter for a person who is deaf or hearing impaired.
4. Do not be concerned if you use the words “walking” or “running” when talking to a person who uses a wheelchair, or “do you see,” when talking to a person who is blind. People with disabilities use these words themselves and think nothing of it.
5. Do not avoid using words like blind or deaf when associating with people with these disabilities. People with disabilities are aware of their disabilities and do not need to be shielded from the facts.
6. When talking to a person who uses a wheelchair for any length of time, it is better to sit down in order to be at the same eye level. It is very tiring for a person to look up for a long time.
7. Be sensitive to architectural barriers in your facility. Be aware of federal and state laws that may apply to eliminating architectural barriers in your establishment. Everyone must be concerned and alert to this very real problem.
8. Remember that if a person does not turn around in response to a call, it may be that he or she is deaf or hard of hearing. A light tap on the shoulder to get a person’s attention makes sense.
9. Never gesture about a person who is blind to someone else who may be present. This will inevitably be picked up and make the person who is blind feel that you are “talking behind his or her back.”
10. Lip reading by persons who are deaf or hard of hearing can be aided by being sure that the light is on your face and not behind you, and by taking all obstructions such as pipes, cigarettes or gum out of your mouth, keeping the lips flexible and speaking slowly. Additional communication could include body language, pantomime and gestures of all kinds and written communication if necessary.

Accessibility Services

Students with individualized needs are encouraged to identify accommodations they will require at the time of application to WGTC, so arrangements can be made prior to the semester. As part of the accommodations process, the student submits official documentation (psychological or medical reports drafted within the past three years) describing the disability and required accommodations that seem reasonable to implement. The student is encouraged to read the *Accessibility Services Handbook* that describes support services offered by WGTC. From the supporting documentation, a *WGTC Classroom Accommodation Form* will be developed by the Accessibility Services Coordinator. This form will reflect required accommodations that “level the playing field” to aid the student in reaching standards and requirements of his or her courses. As an instructor, you may be asked to modify the delivery of the material without compromising the course requirements. The information in this booklet can serve as a resource when working with students who may experience difficulties in the classroom due to a disability. When an instructor receives a *WGTC Classroom Accommodation Form* he/she will discuss the accommodations with the student: 1) read and sign the form, 2) make a copy for the student and your files, and 3) send the original copy to the Accessibility Services Coordinator for placement in the student’s file.



If an instructor has questions about the accommodation(s) listed, please meet with the Accessibility Services Coordinator to discuss how these modifications are to be implemented without compromising the course content. The accommodations the college provides are not an option; rather state and federal guidelines mandate them. Accessibility Services relies on faculty and staff for support in providing accommodations for enrolled students. The Accessibility Services Coordinator is available to help in any way possible, such as reading or administering tests, copying or enlarging notes, or arranging for a scribe. Also, the Accessibility Services Coordinator is here to respond to concerns you may have at any time during the semester. It is helpful if you can keep the Accessibility Services Coordinator informed of the student’s progress at least midpoint during the semester.

Many students falter during the semester, yet some students show signs of having more than the usual difficulties. Faculty is encouraged to seek a referral for a student regularly failing to complete assignments, miss class on a regular basis, lose concentration during class, or exhibit other signs of difficulties. Some students wish to “try out” postsecondary studies without identifying learning or other limitations. Often, interventions that include specific accommodations must be made mid-semester for the student to experience success in the classroom.

WGTC Helping Students Succeed Referral Form

If faculty suspect a student is having problems in class or is facing a personal problem that interferes with his or her academic progress, they are encouraged to use a *West Georgia Technical College Accessibility Services Referral Form* which is located in *Knightsare*, to refer that student to academic coaching or to the TEAMS system. A staff member will meet with the student to talk about his or her concerns and discuss supportive measures. Faculty members may be present to discuss academic concerns and measures of intervention. This booklet will provide assistance in identifying common characteristics of various learning disabilities and teaching strategies.



An Overview: Teaching Students Needing Individualized Assistance

Students bring a unique set of strengths and experiences to technical colleges and students with disabilities are no exception. While many learn in different ways, their differences do not imply inferior capacities. There is no need to dilute curriculum or to reduce course requirements for students with limitations. However, special accommodations may be needed as well as modifications in the way information is presented and in methods of testing and evaluation to provide an equal opportunity for the student. Faculty will be aided in these efforts by drawing upon the students' own prior learning experiences, using available institute and departmental resources, and collaborating with support services staff.

Suggestions for Helping Students to Succeed in the Classroom

- ◆ Have the detailed course syllabus available at the first class session.
- ◆ Course syllabi should include a statement regarding arrangements for special accommodations for students with individualized assistance.
- ◆ **If classroom accommodations are requested, it is the student's responsibility to present the *Classroom Accommodation Form* to each instructor at the beginning of the term. Faculty is encouraged to discuss those accommodations with the student.**

Curriculum and Instructional Modifications

- ◆ Start each lecture with an outline of material to be covered during class session. At the conclusion of the class, briefly summarize key points.
- ◆ Speak directly to students and use gestures and natural expressions to reinforce meanings and concepts.
- ◆ Present new or technical vocabulary on the dry erase board or overhead, or use a handout. Use terms in context to convey greater meaning.
- ◆ Give assignments both orally and in writing to avoid confusion.
- ◆ Announce reading assignments well in advance for students using taped materials. It takes as long as six weeks to get a book tape-recorded.
- ◆ Facilitate note-taking by allowing students the use of recorders and note takers.
- ◆ Based on student need, allow priority seating in class, particularly when using audio-visual equipment such as overheads, VCRs or DVDs.
- ◆ Consider using a textbook with an accompanying study guide.
- ◆ Encourage students to use all campus resources and services.
- ◆ Be flexible in terms of assignments, tests, etc., depending on the needs of the students.
- ◆ Remember to incorporate all modalities of learning.

Rationale for Accommodations

Extended time – slow processing speed or dyslexia; time to implement coping strategies

Room Isolation – reduce distractions and anxiety; allow for verbal mediation

Taped texts – inefficient decoding, but good comprehension; listening comprehension significantly superior to reading comprehension; need multimodal input

Note-taker – poor auditory processing and listening comprehension; written language deficits; motor/handwriting problems

Reader to read back essays- poor visual proofing/editing, but good auditory processing

Graph paper for calculation- poor spatial organization

Use of calculator – understands concepts, but errors in calculation; short term memory deficits or a condition of dyscalculia

Taped exams- severe reading deficits, but good listening comprehension

Voice-activated word processor – severe written language deficits with good oral skills; or limited use of upper body mobility

Access to steps or formulas- severe memory deficits, but demonstrated understanding concepts

Alternative testing methods- severe deficits related to regular test format with evidence that alternative format will allow demonstration of the knowledge of course content

Common Accommodations

The following are some of the most common examples of accommodations available to WGTC students. However, if you have a question about the accommodation(s) or the assistive technology that will be used by the student, please contact Disability Resources.

- Testing Accommodations
- Preferred Seating
- Electronic textbooks
- ZOOMTEXT Magnify/Read
- Equipment Modification
- Matias 500 Keyboard
- Note Taker Assistance
- Enlarged Print
- Scribe
- Williams FM Sound System
- Adaptive Equipment
- Caption Mic Voice Recognition System
- Taped Lectures
- Book and Page Holders

In Class Teaching Strategies

- Select course material early so that materials can be audio taped or enlarged.
- Make the syllabus short assignment sheets, lecture notes, outlines, and reading lists available for distribution on disk, hard copy, or through email.
- Face the class when speaking. Repeat discussion questions or important information.
- Use concrete, visual examples. Present new information in small chunks.
- Write key phrases and lecture outlines on the board or overhead projector. Have these as reproducible hard copies for students who have difficulty taking notes.
- Initiate group projects in which a person with a learning or physical disability can be (discretely) teamed with other students to enhance individual abilities.
- Arrange lab and computer equipment so it is easily accessible.
- Give both oral and written instructions for projects and assignments. Give only one or two directions at a time and be specific. Ask the student to put directions in his or her own words and repeat them back to you.
- Be sure that exams test the essential skills or knowledge needed for the course or field of study. Provide study guides or drill sheets if applicable. Review test material in advance.
- Consider allowing students to turn in exams or project materials via disk or email, if appropriate. Or, allow alternate formats to meet course requirements: oral testing and oral presentations in place of written tests and papers.
- Allow extra time and/or an isolated environment for a student to complete tests and final projects if the student is easily distracted.
- Allow students with fine motor or written language deficiencies the opportunity to use a word processor with grammar and spell check.
- Break up large, semester-long assignments into weekly assignments with deadlines.
- Inform the student and Accessibility Services Coordinator when the student is falling behind or failing the course.
- Consider using Tegrity this is very helpful for students needing a note taker and none are available.

**Provide successful experiences and positive reinforcement. Capitalize on a student's strengths.
Focus on the ability, rather than the disability**

Recognizing Learning Styles



VISUAL LEARNING

Clues for Learning Preference

- Needs to see it to know it
- Strong sense of color
- May have artistic ability
- Overreaction to sound and noise
- Trouble following lectures at times
- Misinterpretation of words

Learning Tips

- Use of graphics to reinforce learning – films, slides, illustrations, diagrams
- Use of color coding to organize notes and subjects
- Use of written directions or maps
- Use of flow charts and diagrams in notes
- Visualize spelling of words or facts to be memorized

AUDITORY LEARNING

Clues for Learning Preference

- Prefers to get information by listening
- Needs to hear it to remember it
- Difficulty in following written directions
- Difficulty in reading silently
- Difficulty in writing and spelling
- Difficulty in reading body language and facial expressions

Learning Tips

- Use books on tape for textbook reading
- Request oral, not written, examinations
- Learn by interviewing or by participating in group discussions
- Test questions or directions read aloud
- Taped classroom lectures and notes
- Make use of study groups



KINESTHETIC LEARNING

Clues for Learning Preference

- Prefers hands-on learning
- Can assemble parts without reading directions or blue-prints
- Difficulty sitting still
- Learning is enhanced when physical activity is involved in the process
- May be very well coordinated and have athletic ability

Learning Tips

- Experiential learning, ex: making models, doing lab work, role playing exercises
- Requires frequent breaks in study periods
- May trace letters/words to learn spelling and to remember facts
- Use of computer to reinforce learning via sense of touch and hands-on activity
- Memorizing or drilling while walking or exercising
- Expressing abilities through dance, drama, sports and martial arts
- Speak aloud and use hand gestures to remember material



Common Characteristics of Learning Disabilities

Faculty members may experience periods of frustration when working with students who appear unmotivated or disinterested in class. A majority of these students are of average intelligence and motivated, but may require alterations in the delivery of subject matter. These students have a disorder known as a *learning disability*; a disorder that affects the manner in which individuals with average or above average intelligence take in, retain, and express information. While a learning disability cannot be “cured” it can be circumvented through instructional intervention and compensatory strategies.

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a specific disorder of both children and adults that consists of difficulty with attention, impulse control, decision-making, and distractibility. Both LD and ADD/ADHD are considered learning disabilities.

The majority of our students exhibit common characteristics defined as learning disabilities, which can encompass many information-processing problems. This condition has only been identified in the past 25 years, and often goes undiagnosed. It is not always an intellectual deficiency, although it can be perceived as such. Generally speaking, the person with a learning disability has average to above average intelligence.

Persons diagnosed with learning disabilities fail to receive information accurately or fail to perceive subtle information. The inability to correctly interpret sensory input can also impair concentration, attention, organization, memory, spatial orientation, and social relations. Unfortunately, these symptoms often are perceived as indications of below average intelligence, lack of motivation, or the inability to try. Some have experienced a lifetime of frustration and academic failure. Students with diagnosed learning disorders may present symptoms that could affect verbal and motor skill performance.

Reading Skills

1. Slow reading rate or difficulty in modifying rate.
2. Poor comprehension and retention of material.
3. Difficulty identifying important points and themes.
4. Poor mastery of phonics, confusion of similar words,
5. Difficulty integrating new vocabulary.



Written Language Skills

1. Difficulty with sentence structure (incomplete sentences, run-ons, poor use of grammar, missing inflectional endings, etc.) and proof-reading ability.
2. Frequent spelling errors (omissions, substitutions, and transpositions).
3. Inability to copy correctly from a book or the blackboard.
4. Slow or laborious writing.
5. Poor penmanship (poorly-formed letters, incorrect use of capitalization, large handwriting)
6. Difficulty planning a topic and organizing thoughts on paper.
7. Compositions are often limited in length and written on an elementary level.

Oral Language Skills

1. Inability to concentrate on and comprehend oral language.
2. Difficulty in orally expressing ideas which he or she seems to understand.
3. Written expression is better than oral expression.
4. Difficulties speaking grammatically correct English.
5. Cannot tell a story in proper sequence.
6. Difficulties in following oral directions.

Mathematical Skills

1. Incomplete mastery of basic facts and mathematical tables.
2. Reverse numbers (123 to 321 or 231).
3. Confuse operational symbols, especially “+” and “x”.
4. Copies problems incorrectly from one line to another.
5. Difficulty recalling the sequence of operational processes.
6. Inability to understand and retain abstract concepts.
7. Difficulty comprehending word problems.
8. Reasoning and computation deficits.



Attention and Concentration Skills

1. Easily distracted by outside stimuli; hyperactive and excessive movements.
2. Trouble focusing and sustaining attention on academic tasks.
3. Difficulty in juggling multiple tasks demands.
4. Fluctuating attention span during lectures.
5. Short term memory difficulties.

Organization and Study Skills

1. Time and stress management difficulties.
2. Slow to start and complete tasks; unable to estimate task time requirements.
3. Repeated inability, on a day-to-day basis, to recall what has been taught.
4. Difficulty following oral and/or written directions.
5. Lack of overall organization in written notes and compositions.
6. Demonstrates short attention span during lectures.
7. Difficulty in prioritizing tasks.
8. Often loses handouts and assignments.
9. Attends class without books or essentials.

Social Skills

1. Difficulty reading facial expressions, body language, and social cues.
2. Problems interpreting subtle messages and voice tone, such as sarcasm.
3. Confusion in spatial orientation. May stand very close to an individual during a conversation, interfering in social space.
4. Eye contact is inappropriate during conversation. Eye contact is not maintained adequately, or individual has a tendency to stare.
5. Experiences disorientation of time. Has difficulty telling time and estimating time passage. As a result, is often late for appointments, class, and other commitments.
6. May interpret remarks literally, rather than figuratively, as intended.

Teaching Students with Learning Deficits

As soon as possible, privately discuss with the student his/her strengths and limitations. Also discuss learning obstacles, areas of difficulties, and what accommodations would contribute toward a student's success. It is helpful to determine the student's ability to participate in classroom activities as well as the student's expectations of the class. While many students with learning disabilities are highly articulate, some have severe difficulty in talking, responding, or reading/presenting with an audience or before a group. Because of perceptual deficiencies, some students are slow to grasp social cues and respond appropriately. They may lack social skills, or have difficulty sustaining focused attention.

WGTC provides free evaluation through the Regents' Center for Learning Disorders (RCLD) for students who believe they have an undiagnosed learning disability or an evaluation that is older than three years.

Instructor Strategies

- Provide a list of vocabulary or write it on the board; read material aloud that is written on the board or contained in handouts during lectures. Lecture outlines may be helpful; information presented orally hinders the student's ability to follow the sequence and organization of a lecture.
- Refrain from asking students with reading disabilities to read aloud in class.
- Provide study guides and chapter outlines that cue them to key points.
- Repeat and summarize segments of each presentation and review in its entirety.
- Repeat or re-word complicated directions. Be concise where possible. Write it down
- Avoid overly complicated language or tricky wording in exam questions.
- For students with perceptual deficits, avoid using Scantron answer sheets, or provide an alternative method of response for that student to include writing on the test itself.
- Provide a word bank in an exam for "fill-in-the-blank" questions. Consider recognition tests (t/f or multiple-choice) as opposed to recall tests and essays. Students with perceptual impairment will have difficulty with matching test formats.
- Consider alternative or supplementary assignments for evaluation purposes.
- Avoid testing over material just presented. Time is needed to assimilate knowledge.

Suggested Accommodations

- ❑ Note taker or scribe
- ❑ Audio-taped class lectures
- ❑ Extra time on exams in distraction-free environment (time and one-half)
- ❑ Alternative testing formats, such as oral testing or reading; use of scribe
- ❑ Visual, aural, and tactile instructional demonstrations
- ❑ Peer tutoring or mentoring opportunities
- ❑ Computer equipped with voice output, spell check, grammar check
- ❑ Option of written assignments completed on a word processor
- ❑ Lecture outlines and summary of key concepts/technical terms on hard copy
- ❑ Alternative assignment completion: oral reports in place of written reports
- ❑ Break down assignments into sections and allow extra time for completion
- ❑ Audio textbooks
- ❑ Allow extra time for long reading assignments for a student with a reading disability
- ❑ Use of a standard, non-programmable calculator whenever possible

Teaching Students with Hearing Impairments

Students with hearing impairment may use a variety of communication strategies, depending on hearing loss, to include a sign language interpreter, oral interpreter, lip reading, and/or assistive listening devices. In the classroom, deaf or hearing-impaired students will benefit from sitting in the front row, directly in front of the instructor. Avoid standing in front of window or other light sources. The glare from behind makes it difficult to read lips and facial expressions. An unobstructed line of vision is necessary for students who use interpreters and for those who rely on lip reading and visual cues. If an interpreter is used, the student's view should include the interpreter and the instructor. The interpreter is there to facilitate communication; they do not function as a classroom aide or tutor. Please do not engage the interpreter in discussion during class work. At each WGTC campus, we have the Sorenson Communications Relay System which enables faculty and staff to converse with a student with a hearing disability via an interpreter over a telephone line.

Instructor Strategies

- Speak to the student, not the interpreter. Recognize the processing time that the interpreter takes to translate a message from its original language into another language. This will cause a delay in the student's receiving information.
- If the student reads lips, speak clearly and more slowly than usual.
- Provide an outline or summary of the materials or lecture you will be giving.
- Repeat questions and remarks made by other students. If sitting in front, the hearing impaired student may not be aware that a question has been asked or by whom.
- Use visual aids, power point presentations, and the dry erase board.
- When possible, supply lecture notes and class outlines, printed transcripts of audio and audio-visual materials.
- Communicate in writing to the student when conveying important information.
- Request a volunteer notetaker to share notes during the semester.
- Provide your email address for communication purposes.
- Close the classroom door to eliminate outside distractions and amplification of background noise. Hearing aids tend to amplify all sounds.
- Be cognizant of the procedural statements made while handing out papers, organizing a project, etc. The student may not be able to follow all steps if presented at once. Make sure student understands what must be done and in what order.
- Use hands-on models, charts, and graphs to illustrate your points.
- **When ordering new video/DVD materials, please order closed captioning.**

Suggested Accommodations for Hearing Impairment

- ❑ Sign Language Interpreter
- ❑ Caption Mic, Voice Recognition System, CART (Remote Interpreting)
- ❑ Notetaker
- ❑ Closed caption films, online videos, and use of visual aids
- ❑ Printed transcripts of audio and audio-visual materials
- ❑ Written directions for assignments and lab instructions
- ❑ Demonstration summaries and outlines
- ❑ Tele-Loop Infrared or FM Transmitter System
- ❑ Use of Georgia Relay services to communicate with student via phone

Teaching Students with Visual Impairments

Visual impairment covers a wide range of visual acuity. Many people considered legally blind, in fact, have some vision capabilities. Others, who have low vision, may rely on residual vision with the use of adaptive equipment. People who are completely blind may rely on visual memory, depending on when they lost their vision. An instructor is notified prior to the beginning of the semester if a visually impaired student is enrolled, so advance preparations can be made for that student. Disability Resources can make enlarged copies.

Instructor Strategies

- Allow lectures to be tape-recorded.
- Provide enlarged copies of the syllabus, notes to be distributed and other materials.
- Face the class when speaking.
- Supply ample notice of large research or other projects in which a student will need assistance from peers or others in gathering material.
- Write larger than normal when using the dry erase board. Use block letters.
- Enlarge type on PowerPoint presentations or overhead materials.
- Supply materials that must be enlarged to the Disability Resources to include all outlines, directions, supplemental materials, and exams at least one week in advance.
- Allow the student test taking accommodations to include a test with enlarged print, reader, a scribe, or access to special equipment (OVAC magnifier).
- Emphasize important information verbally.
- Allow extra time for testing and assignments.
- Be cognizant of chairs, desks, trash cans, and other items that might block access.
- Provide reading lists or textbook assignments in advance so reading material can be taped or ordered from the Alternative Media Accessibility Center. The student is responsible for his or her own account to this service. Some books can be sent in a word format and enlarged or put on CD and “read” by ZoomText reading software.
- Allow alternative testing measures when using Scantron answer sheets for an exam.

Suggested Accommodations

- ❑ Seating near front and center of class
- ❑ Large print handouts
- ❑ Braille or large print keyboard labels
- ❑ Large print text books
- ❑ Audio tape or electronic text books from the Alternative Media Accessibility Center
- ❑ Class lectures and assignments in audio format
- ❑ ZoomText software to read or enlarge text, images, and graphics on computer screen
- ❑ Enlarged, oral, or audio taped examinations
- ❑ Adaptive equipment to include magnifying anti-glare screen filters
- ❑ Readers and/or scribes
- ❑ SARA Device which is located in the campus library

Teaching Students with Physical Disabilities

A wide range of conditions may limit mobility and/or limb function. Among the most common include permanent disorders such as spinal cord injury or traumatic brain injury, musculoskeletal or orthopedic impairment, partial or total paralysis, limb amputation, nerve injury, arthritis, fibromyalgia, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, back injury, sciatica, or cerebral palsy. Some students might be impaired by cardiac or respiratory illness or other chronic illness to include cancer, AIDS, or diabetes. Conditions such as these may impair the strength, speed, coordination, dexterity and endurance necessary for body mobility. While the degree of disability varies from student to student, many have difficulty getting to or from class, participating in class activities, and completing assignments given outside the class. Flexibility in applying some class rules is helpful.

Physical transfer to classrooms is a major concern of students with physical disabilities, though the WGTC campuses aren't large. Students who use wheelchairs, braces, crutches, canes, or prostheses have difficulty moving within the time constraints imposed by class schedules. Occasional tardiness may be unavoidable. Inclement weather also may pose a factor in timeliness for the student who uses a wheelchair or crutches. Some students suffer from conditions in which weather affects the illness.

Instructor Strategies

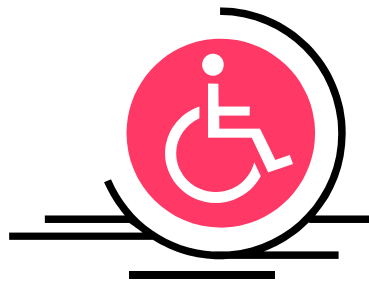
Consider the accessibility factor early in the semester. Contact the Accessibility Services Coordinator if room modifications must be made. Some rooms contain fixed seating. A separate desk and/or orthopedic chair can be provided to accommodate the student. In most cases, the student makes arrangements for alternate seating in advance.

- Be familiar with the building's emergency evacuation plan and ensure that each student can get to safety in an emergency situation. Be aware of immediate exits as well as the building shelter site designated for unpredictable weather.
- Computer or lab stations too high or too low for student access with a wheel chair or orthopedic chair can be modified. Adjustable/portable desks also are available.
- Students with health impairments may require more frequent or longer breaks. Keep in mind that medications and the disability itself may cause periods of great fatigue.
- Consider pairing a student with hand use limitations with a partner during lab.
- Allow writing assignments to be completed out of class so that a student may use a scribe or voice-recognition software.
- Give the student the option for oral testing, testing with a scribe, or other means of testing, with extended time.

Suggested Accommodations for Mobility

- ❑ Note taker or scribe; tape recorded lectures
- ❑ Lab or classroom assistant
- ❑ Automatic entrance doors
- ❑ Wheelchair accessible labs, classrooms, and restrooms
- ❑ Adjustable tables and ergonomically correct chairs
- ❑ Computer equipped with special input device, such as voice recognition, alternative (large key) or ergonomic keyboard
- ❑ Auxiliary computer aids such as footrest, supportive arm rests, monitor glare visors
- ❑ Frequent breaks during longer class periods
- ❑ Use of email for communication and assignment submission via attachments
- ❑ Use of voice recognition software to complete assignments
- ❑ Use of flexibility in establishing rules for tardiness and absenteeism
- ❑ Specialized mouse and track balls

Some courses and classrooms present obstacles to the full participation of students with physical disabilities. In seating such students, every effort should be made to integrate them into the class. Assigning students to a doorway, a side aisle or the back of the room should be avoided. Even apparently insurmountable barriers such as fixed seating may be overcome by arranging for a chair to be unbolted and removed to make room for a wheelchair. In case of an emergency, students with mobility issues should be the first to be helped to safety.



Suggested Accommodations for Health Impairment

- ❑ Assignments made in electronic format; use of email to facilitate communication
- ❑ Flexible and/or extended exam times and assignment deadlines
- ❑ Note taker or tape-recorded lecture
- ❑ Longer or more frequent classroom breaks
- ❑ Orthopedic chairs and adjustable desks
- ❑ Use of flexibility in establishing rules for tardiness and absenteeism
- ❑ Extra time to complete assignments

Teaching Students with Psychological Impairments

Emotional disturbances may not affect learning to the degree of another disability, but have a significant impact on education. Psychological dysfunction may manifest itself in negative behaviors such as class disruptiveness, belligerence, apathy, or even conduct that borders on violence. Difficult as it is, students with emotional disturbances have no more control over their disability than do students with learning or physical disabilities.

Among the most common psychological disorders is depression, schizophrenia, anxiety, bi-polar, and obsessive-compulsive disorder. Many students also suffer from personality disorders in which social cues and social skills have not been mastered. While some of these conditions may be temporary in response to a life crisis, other conditions are life-long afflictions that can be treated with prescription medication and therapy. It should be pointed out that with many drug therapies; side effects are often contrary to the learning environment, producing drowsiness, disorientation, and body weakness.

The most common treatable psychological conditions include *depression* and *anxiety*. While many persons occasionally feel the blues or experience episodes of nervousness, chronic conditions are experienced almost daily. Depression exhibits itself in the form of hopelessness, sadness, apathy, disinterest, lethargy, irritability, fatigue, and impaired concentration. In its extreme form, it may provoke thoughts of or attempts at suicide. Persons suffering from depression often drastically change their eating, sleeping, and living habits. This in turn intensifies the symptoms. Anxiety is often due to unrelenting stress. While mild anxiety has been shown to improve learning – receptors are heightened to take in information – severe anxiety impedes the learning process. Anxiety may reduce concentration, distort perceptions, and hinder attentiveness. Symptoms may include withdrawal, excessive talking, excitedness, jerky physical movements, heart palpitations, panic attacks, hyperventilation, and faintness.

As with any disability, modifications should be made on an individual basis. Most strategies mentioned in this booklet also will pertain to students with psychological impairment. If the student's behavior causes disruption in the classroom that affects others or your course of instruction, intervention may be necessary.

Instructor Strategies

- Record instances of classroom disruption. Discuss inappropriate behavior in private with the student. Be direct and provide examples. Outline guidelines for appropriate behavior. Give concrete examples of appropriate behavior when possible.
- Refer the student, if necessary, to the Accessibility Services Coordinator for more intensive intervention.
- If the student becomes abusive or violent, or his or her actions appear threatening, contact security or the Vice President of Academic Affairs immediately.

Teaching Students with Seizure Disorders

Some students who attend WGTC suffer a seizure disorder due to epilepsy, head injury, or other medical condition. Unfortunately, students are sometimes reluctant to disclose their condition because of the perceived stigma surrounding the disorder. Since there are many misconceptions about seizure disorders and how to respond to a person experiencing a seizure, information on what to do is outlined below. Students prone to seizures often take preventative medication that can cause fatigue, memory and concentration difficulties. There are three distinct types of seizures:

Petit Mal or “little” seizure is characterized by staring or eye blinking; a trance-like state that may last only a few seconds or minutes. It begins without warning with a dimming of consciousness. Often, the seizure will not be noticed due to its short duration.

Psychomotor seizures range from mild to severe. Symptoms of the seizure include staring, mental confusion, uncoordinated or random movements, incoherent speech, and behavior outbursts. Usually there is immediate recovery from the seizure that lasts from two minutes to one-half hour. The student may have no recall of the seizure, but may feel fatigued, disoriented, and slightly nauseated afterward.

Grand Mal (Tonic-Clonic Seizure) seizures may be moderate to severe and is manifested in twitching and/or jerking limb movements, muscle contractions, and other motions. The student may experience unconsciousness or fatigue following the seizure.

What To Do In The Event of a Seizure

- Keep calm. The individual is unaware of what is transpiring, although students and faculty can become easily alarmed.
- Help the student to the floor so he or she does not fall and become injured.
- Do not try to immobilize or restrict the student’s body movements.
- Do not force anything between the teeth. There is no truth to the myth that the person will swallow his or her tongue.
- Do turn the student’s head to the side to aid breathing. At times, vomiting will occur. Turning the head to the side will keep the student from choking.
- Move aside any objects that might injure the student during the seizure.
- Allow the student’s work dog (if one is present) to remain with him or her during and following the seizure.
- Ask all student bystanders to leave the area, because embarrassing things may occur. For instance, the student may become incontinent.
- Complete an incident report
- Refer to student’s accommodation form and follow all instructions necessary

The student most likely will be tired or disoriented following the seizure. If the student appears to require immediate medical attention, call 911. You may also call the student’s emergency contact number to summon a designated friend or family member.

Teaching Students with Other Disabilities

There are many other conditions that may interfere with a student's academic functioning. Some of their symptoms and the types of intervention required may **resemble those covered elsewhere in this manual**. One additional accommodation may require **flexible attendance requirements** due to health. The general principles set forth in the *Overview* section apply.

Chronic Health Illnesses

Section 504 protects the civil rights of individuals who are qualified to participate and who have chronic health illnesses such as, but not limited to the following:

- HIV/AIDS
- Asthma
- Cancer
- Cardiac Diseases
- Hepatitis
- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
- Arthritis
- Diabetes
- Renal Failure
- Drug and alcohol addiction

Speech Impairments

There are many reasons for having difficulty with speech. Deafness, cerebral palsy, stroke, head injury, physical malformation of speech mechanisms and general speech impairment are just a few. It is not unusual in stressful situations for someone's speech to become harder to understand. Many persons with difficulty in speech find themselves in situations where people treat them as if they are drunk, retarded or mentally ill. They are accustomed to being avoided, ignored, and even hung up on by phone. Accessibility for persons with difficulty in speech lies within your power. Your understanding, patience and communication skills are as important to someone with speech that is difficult to understand as a ramp or a grab bar is to someone who uses a wheelchair.

Instructor Strategies

- If you do not understand what the person is saying, bring it to his/her attention immediately and ask how the two of you may better communicate.
- If it is a stressful situation, try to stay calm. If you are in a public area with many distractions, consider moving to a quiet or private location.
- Consider writing as an alternative means of communication (e-mail).
- If no solution to the communication problem can be worked out with you and the person, consider asking if there is someone who could translate or interpret what he/she is saying.

Things to Avoid:

- Do not pretend to understand them when you really do not.
- Do not become impatient or exasperated with the communication.
- Do not finish people's sentences for them.

Rights and Responsibilities

The College, The Student, The Faculty

Faculty Implications

Several judicial decisions have stated that faculty members may be held personally responsible for compliance under federal statutes and regulations. In *Howe v. Hull*, 873 F. Supp. 72, 77 (N.D. Ohio 1994) (Howard, Lawton & Associates, 1995) the decision held “an individual may be subject to personal liability under the ADA.” The court further outlined the circumstances as being “where (a) he or she is in a position of authority; (b) he or she has both the power and discretion to perform potentially discriminatory acts; and (c) the discriminatory acts are the result of the exercise of the individual’s own discretion, as opposed to the implementation of institutional policy or the mandates of superiors.”

One of the roles of the Accessibility Services Coordinator is to support faculty by collaborating to provide academic adjustments and to advise the faculty of their obligations and their rights.

Faculty has the Right to:

- Maintain the academic standards set by West Georgia Technical College
- Request a copy of the *WGTC Classroom Accommodation Form* and/or ask the student to complete the accommodation process before providing accommodations every semester
- Ask a student to meet with them to discuss the student’s need for reasonable accommodations academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids
- Consult with student, the Accessibility Services Coordinator, about the selection of equally effective and appropriate accommodations, adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids
- Deny a request for accommodation if the student has not been approved for such accommodation after consulting with the Accessibility Services Coordinator
- Expect all students to follow the College’s code of conduct
- Refuse to provide an accommodation, academic adjustment, and /or auxiliary aid that is inappropriate or unreasonable because they may:
 - constitute a substantial change or alteration to an essential element of a course or program

Classroom Behavior

All West Georgia Technical College students must adhere to the Student Code of Conduct regardless of whether they have a disability. Infractions of this code should be directed to the Vice President of Student Affairs. If the student has been identified as a student with a disability, this information should be provided to the Dean and/or Vice President to facilitate collaboration with the Accessibility Services Coordinator

Faculty has the Responsibility to:

- Inform students with disabilities of WGTC procedures for accommodating students
- Ensure that college courses, programs, services, activities and facilities, when viewed in their entirety, are offered in the most integrated and appropriate settings
- Refer students when necessary to the Accessibility Services Coordinator
- Provide handouts, video tapes, and information in accessible formats upon request
- Work with Accessibility Services to recruit note-takers and readers
- Make yourself available to students to discuss accommodations, clarify information, recommend ways to secure tutors, etc.
- Evaluate students on their abilities, not their disabilities

- Provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations, academic adjustments, and auxiliary aids for students with disabilities upon timely request by the student as indicated on the *WGTC Classroom Accommodation Form*
- Allow student to tape record lectures for the purpose of note-taking
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality of records and communication concerning students with disabilities except when disclosure is required by law or authorized by the student either verbally or via Special Needs Student Data Sheet which is maintained in the Accessibility Services Coordinator's office
- Provide book requirements and other class materials in a timely manner to allow for them to be tape recorded or reproduced in some other alternate format

Students with disabilities have the Right to:

- Equal access to courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities available through the College,
- Reasonable, appropriate, and effective accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids determined on an individual basis,
- Appropriate confidentiality of all information pertaining to his/her disability with the choice of whom to disclose their disability to except as required by law,
- College information available in accessible formats.

Students with disabilities have the Responsibility to:

- Meet the College's qualifications and essential technical, academic, and institutional standards to include College's code of conduct
- Identify themselves in a timely manner as an individual with a disability when seeking an accommodation
- As required meet with the Accessibility Services Coordinator to review the effectiveness of the accommodations and assistive technology
- Provide the Accessibility Services Coordinator official documentation (no more than three years old) from an appropriate source that verifies the nature of the disability functional limitations, and the need for specific accommodations
- Follow specific procedures for obtaining reasonable and appropriate accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids
- Use accommodations appropriately

The Accessibility Services Coordinator has the Right to:

- Maintain the College's academic standards
- Discuss a student's need for reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids with the professional source of his/her documentation with the student's verbal or signed consent authorizing such discussion
- Select among equally effective and appropriate accommodations, adjustments, and auxiliary aids in consultation with student with disabilities
- Deny requests for accommodation if the documentation does not identify a specific disability, the documentation fails to verify the need for the requested service, the documentation is older than three years, or the documentation is not provided in a timely manner
- Refuse to provide an accommodation, academic adjustment, and/or auxiliary aid that is/are inappropriate or unreasonable because they may:

Appendix

WGTC Classroom Accommodation Form

WGTC Accessibility Services Support Form – located in Knightshare



WEST GEORGIA TECHNICAL COLLEGE
CLASSROOM ACCOMMODATION FORM

TO: *Mr. John Doe*

SEMESTER: *Summer 201216*

COURSE: *RDG0098*

STUDENT: *Mary Doe*

CLASS TIME: *T & R 5:30-7:50*

STUDENT ID: *00000000*

Our goal is to produce independent students with an equal educational opportunity as non-disabled students. In order to instruct and evaluate this student without penalty for his/her disability, the following modifications/accommodations are requested in your class:

REQUIRED CLASSROOM ACCOMMODATIONS

- Extended time for online work and homework/projects/tests/exams (extended time is time and a half unless otherwise noted)
Extended time is not allowed for course criteria that require time as part of the competency-i.e. typing-- student must still adhere to an amended time line i.e.: project due at midterm, project extended time could be from 3 days- up to one week- but still is due on a time line developed by instructor and the student and/or counselor if needed. Print due dates for extended time for student
- Testing in secluded area
- Reader for examinations
- Preferential seating in the front of the classroom
- Note-taker with the use of a carbonless notebook which student has in her possession
- Use of audio cassette player for recording lectures

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

FACULTY ACCOMMODATION RESPONSE

Please review information, make a copy, and return one copy to Accessibility Services Provider.

I have reviewed accommodations with the student, and can provide them in my instructional activities. Please contact the Accessibility Services Provider if you have a question about these accommodations and/or need assistance in implementing them.

Use the below section to add comments which you may have concerning the recommended accommodations. Any suggestions for modifications must be documented below. As the instructor, you know the atmosphere, competencies, and expectations of your class, therefore, please specify all modifications needed. However, understand that the needs of this student must be met and the accommodations must be implemented. Thank you!

FACULTY'S COMMENTS:

STUDENT SIGNATURE:

DISABILITY SERVICE PROVIDER:

DATE:

DATE:

FACULTY SIGNATURE:

DATE:

DATE REVIEWED W/STUDENT OR DISABILITY PROVIDER:

