Dear Faculty and Staff:

Thank you for taking the time to review the Students with Disabilities Services Faculty and Staff Guide. In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, The Americans with Disabilities Act and the ADA Amendments, The University of South Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Creating an accessible environment is a collaborative process that involves the Office of Students with Disabilities Services, USF students and all faculty and staff at USF. USF students who utilize accommodations routinely share stories about the positive impact a faculty or staff member had on the accommodations process. Please use the contents of this guide to assist you in learning more about your role in the accommodations process at USF. SDS is available to assist you at 813-974-4309 or via our web site at www.sds.usf.edu. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Deb McCarthy
Director, Students with Disabilities Services
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Updated October 2011
About the SDS Office

Vision:
Promoting self-advocacy, accessible education, and appreciation of varied abilities at USF.

Mission:
Students with Disabilities Services promotes effective self-advocacy and accessible academic learning for students with disabilities. By utilizing best practices in the field and education and outreach to the USF community, SDS fosters access for students, and attitudes that reflect both an awareness of disability issues and universal design principles.

Values:
Students with Disabilities Services values a positive student-centered approach to academic accommodations characterized by self-advocacy, student learning, equal access and universal design.

Location and Hours:

Students with Disabilities Services (SDS) at the USF Tampa campus is located in the Student Services building (SVC), room 1133, across from the Registrar’s Office.

OFFICE HOURS
Monday-Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, except by appointment

TESTING HOURS:
Fall and Spring
Mon, Tue, Fri 8:00 am to 5:00 pm
Wed, Thur 8:00 am to 7:00 pm

Summer
Monday-Friday 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Hours may vary at peak times

Students with Disabilities Services
University of South Florida
4202 E. Fowler Avenue SVC 1133
Tampa, FL 33620
(813) 974-4309
(813) 974-7337 (fax)

SA-SDS-Information@usf.edu
www.sds.usf.edu
As a welcoming and supportive university, the faculty and administration at USF strive to ensure students with disabilities participate in all aspects of university life.

It is the policy and practice of the University of South Florida to comply fully with the requirements of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the ADA Amendments Act of 2009, and all other federal and State laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability. The ADA was designed to extend 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. Even before the passage of the ADA, USF was covered by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, sections 503 and 504, which mandated that programs and services be accessible to people with disabilities.

Disabilities covered by legislation include (but are not limited to) AIDS, blindness, cancer, cerebral palsy, diabetes, epilepsy, head injuries, hearing disabilities, specific learning disabilities, loss of limb(s), multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, emotional disabilities, speech disabilities, spinal cord injuries, and vision disabilities.

Under the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the University of South Florida may not discriminate in the recruitment, admission, educational process, or treatment of students. Students who have self-identified, provided documentation of disability, and requested reasonable accommodations are entitled to receive approved modifications of programs, appropriate academic adjustments, or auxiliary aids that enable them to participate in and benefit from all educational programs and activities.

The University’s ADA policy may be found at http://generalcounsel.usf.edu in the “Policies and Procedures” section.

As an institution of higher education, the University of South Florida may not:

- Limit the number of students with disabilities admitted
- Use admission tests or criteria that inadequately measure the academic level of students with visual, hearing or other disabilities because provisions were not made for them
- Exclude a student with a disability from any course of study solely on the basis of his/her disability
- Counsel students with disabilities towards a more restrictive career than students without disabilities, unless such counsel is based on strict licensing or certification requirements in the profession
- Measure student achievement using modes that adversely discriminate against students with disabilities
- Institute prohibitive rules that may adversely affect the performance of students with disabilities

SDS thanks you for your assistance in creating a barrier-free learning environment for students at the University of South Florida.
Student Responsibilities

It is the student’s responsibility to identify himself or herself to Students with Disabilities Services and to provide documentation of a disability. All accommodations are approved on a case-by-case basis.

The Application Process:

APPLICATION

The Application for Accommodations and Services form is available at www.sds.usf.edu (under the “Forms” link). A completed application will not be processed until documentation is received.

DOCUMENTATION

Students seeking support services from Students with Disabilities Services (SDS) on the basis of a previously diagnosed disability must submit documentation that verifies their eligibility under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the ADA Amendments Act.

Complete documentation guidelines are available at www.sds.usf.edu in the “Prospective Students” section. All documentation submitted is considered confidential.

SUBMISSION

The application form and documentation can be submitted by one of the following methods:

- Drop off at SVC1133 (Tampa Campus)
- Fax to (813) 974-7337
- Email to an SDS staff member. See our website for contact information.
- Mail to:
  Students with Disabilities Services
  4202 East Fowler Avenue, SVC 1133
  Tampa, FL 33620-6923

Faculty Notification

Each semester, students registered with SDS must download their Memoranda of Accommodations from the accessSDS web portal, available at www.sds.usf.edu. Students then provide their instructors with a Memorandum of Accommodations from SDS, outlining the academic accommodations for which they have been approved. It is the student’s responsibility to deliver this memorandum and discuss their accommodation needs with their instructor.

See the opposite page for a sample Memo of Accommodations.

Testing

If using SDS testing space, it is the student’s responsibility to comply with test booking procedures and confirm testing times.

SCHEDULING AN EXAM

The student must complete an exam request for each individual exam via the AccessSDS link available on SDS home page: www.sds.usf.edu. Exam requests must be submitted at least five business days in advance. The student should remind the instructor of any testing accommodations in advance of each exam.

RESCHEDULING AN EXAM

Students are not authorized to make any changes to their scheduled exam without the consent of their instructor. If a testing date or time is modified, the instructor must update his or her exam information in the instructor portion of AccessSDS or send an email to SA-SDS-Exams@usf.edu at least 3 (three) working days prior to the change.

Other Services

Once registered to receive services from SDS, each semester the student is also responsible for:

- Requesting course materials in alternative format, ASL Interpreters, CART services, and note taker services as applicable.
- Monitoring his/her own academic progress
- Maintaining contact with his/her coordinator
This student presented Students with Disabilities Services (SDS) with documentation of a disability which significantly impacts academic performance. SDS staff reviewed the documentation of the disability and found that the documentation meets established guidelines for accommodations. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act require that the University of South Florida provide reasonable classroom accommodations to otherwise qualified students who have documented disabilities. Some accommodations may be addressed directly by you with the student. Other accommodations may require the assistance of SDS staff. The student will work with you and the SDS office to implement the stated accommodations as authorized by the professionals in SDS. Please note, all accommodations information is considered to be confidential. This student's accommodations include:

- Double time for all in-class or timed on-line exams, quizzes and labs unless speed is the factor being tested,
- Reduced distraction environment for examinations and quizzes
- Services of a note taker from students in the class; student may request instructor's assistance in identifying a note taker.
- Attendance may be an issue; the Attendance Clarification Form must be completed, signed and returned to SDS to be officially recognized, and will be in effect as of the date of the instructor's signature. The student's coordinator can serve as an additional resource to discuss this form.
- Permission to leave labs, class or exams for short breaks to attend to medical or disability needs

In the event that the student requests additional accommodation(s) which are not listed here, please contact the SDS administrator listed above or Deborah McCarthy, Director of Students with Disabilities Services at (813) 974-4309 or dmccarthy@admin.usf.edu. SDS thanks you for your assistance in creating barrier-free learning environments for students with disabilities at The University of South Florida.

*** CONFIDENTIAL ***
Instructor Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of faculty to work in conjunction with SDS to provide approved accommodations and support services, in a fair and timely manner, to students with disabilities.

Be proactive in encouraging students with disabilities to approach you early in the semester by placing a statement on your syllabus such as the one provided below, and being available for conversation with students during office hours or scheduled appointments.

Follow individual student’s leads in discussing their disabilities. Some students may be very open about the nature of their difficulties, while others may be less comfortable. Generally, the best approach is to focus your conversation and questions on how to best provide the approved accommodations within the context of your course.

Sample Syllabus Statement:
SDS recommends that professors make the following announcement at the first class meeting and/or include a statement on the syllabus informing students of the available services. For example,

“Students in need of academic accommodations for a disability may consult with the office of Students with Disabilities Services to arrange appropriate accommodations. Students are required to give reasonable notice prior to requesting an accommodation.”

PLEASE NOTE:

1. Accommodations may be requested at any point in the semester.

2. Accommodations are not retroactive.

3. Like all students, students with disabilities earn their grades. Do not over-accommodate by inflating grades based on effort. Grade the performance of a student with disabilities as you would all other students.

Memo of Accommodations
SDS verifies the need for a student’s accommodations on the Memo of Accommodations that the student presents to a faculty member. Please allow SDS to manage all medical documentation on behalf of the instructor and the student.

Upon receipt of an SDS Memorandum of Accommodations (see sample, page 7) from a student, please make yourself available for a confidential meeting with the student to discuss accommodations. SDS staff can serve as a resource if you have questions. See page 10 for more details on common course accommodations.

Faculty do not have the right to refuse to provide required accommodations as outlined on an official SDS memo of accommodations or to request to review a student’s documentation. However, faculty members do have input and should work with students to determine how accommodations should be provided in a particular class. An accommodation should not alter the fundamental nature of a course or program.

Note Taking
If a student requests assistance locating a note taker, please make the following announcement to the class. Instructors may also include this statement in a syllabus or on blackboard.

“For reasons of a disability, a fellow student has requested assistance with note taking. If you are willing to provide a copy of your notes to me so that these notes may be used by a student with a disability, please contact me.”

Students with Disabilities Services can verify volunteer hours for note takers, or students may list their volunteer work as a note taker on their USF Co-Curricular Transcript. Please contact SDS for more information.

The knowledge of a disability should be treated in a confidential manner by the instructor. Identifying a student to peers or making comments about a student’s disability in class violates the student’s right to privacy.
Exams and Quizzes

USF faculty are free to administer accommodated exams to students with disabilities at a time and location that is mutually determined by the faculty member and the student. Testing accommodations typically relate to the time limit and the testing environment; SDS can consult on appropriate accommodations as needed.

Students receiving accommodations do not have to utilize SDS testing rooms. If however, the faculty member or the student prefers to use SDS testing rooms, please follow the steps below:

- Five business days before a scheduled accommodated exam at SDS, the instructor of record will receive an email with a link to AccessSDS. Here you will be asked to: confirm when the exam is to take place in the classroom, provide authorizations for materials allowed in the testing room, and indicate exam arrival and delivery methods.
- Deliver testing materials to SDS at least one workday prior to scheduled examination/quiz.
- Completed exams are returned to instructors by email or fax, or an instructor/department designee may pick them up from SVC1133.
- Confirm receipt of emailed or faxed examination materials in a timely manner.

Every effort will be made to schedule exams for the same date and time as the exam in the classroom. However, due to space and staff availability, a student may be scheduled for a different time. No student will be scheduled for a different date without instructor permission.

RESCHEDULING AN EXAM
If a testing date or time is modified, you must update your exam information in the instructor link to AccessSDS or send an email to SA-SDS-Exams@usf.edu at least 3 (three) working days prior to the change. If changes need to be made within less than 3 days, please contact SDS directly at (813) 974-4309.

Frequently Asked Questions

What should a faculty member do if they suspect a student has a disability?
The faculty member should approach the student privately to discuss his/her concerns and recommend that the student call SDS to request a consultation. It is usually best to focus on the difficulties you’ve observed rather than to suggest that the student has a disability. SDS can assist the student by recommending testing, providing accommodations (with appropriate documentation), or references to other USF resources.

What if a student requests an accommodation without a letter from SDS?
Instructors should refer a student to SDS if the student has requested accommodations but does not have a memo of accommodations. It is helpful for students to know ahead of time about the documentation and intake process.

Does the “extended time” accommodation apply to homework and other assignments?
If a student is approved for extended time, this only applies to examinations and assignments to be completed in class or as a timed online exam, unless otherwise specified on the accommodations letter.

Who should faculty contact if they are unsure of how to provide an accommodation?
Please contact Students with Disabilities Services at (813) 974-4309. If you have questions regarding a specific Memo of Accommodations, a student’s coordinator will be listed in the “From” section.

Can you tell me some general principles I can apply to design my class to be more accessible?
Yes, please see pages 12-13 to learn principles of universal design and to see some helpful instructional tips.
Common Course Accommodations

The types of course and testing accommodations that faculty may see on authorized letters from SDS are explained in more detail below. With the exception of approved accommodations, students with disabilities should be treated the same as students without disabilities. The purpose of academic accommodations is to provide equal opportunity and access. They are not meant to provide an unfair advantage or to guarantee academic success. If you ever have concerns about how the approved accommodation might affect the integrity of your course, please contact the appropriate SDS coordinator or director.

Classroom Accommodations

♦ Access to Overheads or Power Point Presentations
Students with disabilities may request that an instructor make course materials displayed on overhead projectors or Power Point slides available for review. Instructors are not required to create new materials. Instead, instructors might post the materials using Blackboard software, make copies of the materials and distribute these copies to students or place copies of the material on reserve in a library. Students will work with instructor(s) to determine an appropriate time frame for viewing materials.

♦ Alternative Text
Students may require course materials in alternate formats. Common alternate formats include enlarged texts, recorded texts, electronic texts or brailled course materials. SDS works with the student and the professor to provide an appropriate format for the student. Because alternative text production is sometimes a time consuming process, an SDS staff member may ask an instructor for information about course materials several weeks (or months) in advance.

♦ Braille
While most course materials can be made available to students with visual impairments in electronic or audio formats, it may be necessary to provide key passages, handouts or diagrams in Braille. SDS can provide limited Brailing services and/or refer a student to appropriate resources.

♦ Copies of Class Notes
Students needing note-taking assistance may approach an SDS Coordinator for suggestions regarding how to acquire a copy of course notes. While students may ask a professor or TA for a copy of the instructor’s notes, the note taking accommodation ensures that a student will receive a copy of notes from a fellow student. If a student approved for note taking accommodations and the instructor are experiencing difficulties in obtaining notes, it is the student’s responsibility to contact SDS.

♦ Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services
Students seeking assistance with interpreters, captioning or CART (computer aided real time transcription) services should contact the Coordinator of Services for Students who are deaf and hard of hearing.

♦ Missing Class Due to a Disability
Students with disabilities may be more prone to missing class due to medication concerns, chronic illness, transportation issues, mobility difficulties or other disability related circumstances. SDS coordinators will meet with students to discuss the potential implications of missing class (i.e. missed notes, greater difficulty in understanding the material); flexibility does not mean that attendance policies do not apply. The instructor and the student determine the specifics of a flexible attendance policy, using the Attendance Clarification Form provided by SDS as a guide. If the student or instructor wishes, the student’s SDS administrator can serve as an additional resource to discuss this form and/or options related to accommodation issues.

♦ Permission to Leave or Move About in Class
For some students with disabilities, sitting for long periods of time and/or remaining in the same position for the duration of a class period can exacerbate symptoms of the disability. Similarly, some students may need to leave class for brief periods to attend to medications or other medical needs. SDS encourages these students to move around or leave class in the least disruptive manner possible. Students should discuss seating arrangements and the timing of breaks with their instructors.

♦ Permission to Record Classes
Students with disabilities may request permission to record class lectures and discussions. Recording class materials in audio or video format is allowed when the student provides notification of the accommodation to the instructor. The student must provide his/her own recording device and may discuss with the instructor the best placement of the recording device. SDS can serve as a resource for questions regarding the recording accommodation.
Preferential Seating
Students with disabilities may request an instructor’s assistance in obtaining appropriate classroom seating. While reasons for accessible seating vary widely, common disability-related requests include seating near the front of the room, seating near the board or overhead projector, seating near an interpreter or microphone, seating near (or away) from windows, seating near the door and seating on the entry-level of a multi-level classroom. SDS staff can assist with any modifications to classroom furniture, that are necessary due to an accessible seating request.

Use of a Laptop for Taking Notes
Students who, because of a disability, have difficulty taking notes by hand may request permission to use a laptop in class. Laptops allow for greater speed in taking notes and thus may allow a student to keep pace with others in the class.

Testing Accommodations

Extended Time
Students with disabilities may require additional time for taking tests and completing work in class. Unless efficiency or speed is the essential skill that is being assessed, students may be allowed additional time for all exams, in-class quizzes, in-class writing assignments and labs. Based on the documentation submitted to SDS, extended time is typically approved in increments of either one and one half or double the allotted time. The extended time accommodation does not apply to take home exams. Extended time ensures that a student’s performance is reflective of his/her mastery of material rather than the speed at which a student performs.

Readers for Exams
Some students with disabilities may require having exam questions read to them. Often, SDS employs a variety of computer software programs that utilize text-to-speech capability and can “read” the exam aloud to a student. If necessary, an SDS employee will read the exam aloud to a student.

Reduced Distraction Environment
Students with disabilities may be approved for and request a separate “reduced distraction” testing space. This space may be a conference room, unused classroom, or instructor’s office. This accommodation is not a guarantee of a “distraction free” testing space, but rather a quieter space where students have fewer distractions from fellow test-takers and are thus better able to maintain focus.

Use of a Calculator for Exams
This accommodation allows students to use a calculator as long as the calculator is unable to perform the functions that are being tested. This accommodation typically allows for the use of four-function calculator so that students who understand the concepts will not be penalized for errors in basic calculations. Instructors will approve the calculator to be used by the student.

Use of a Computer for Essay Exams
Some students with disabilities will be approved for and request a computer for essay exams. Using a computer allows these students the opportunity to avoid physical fatigue and/or to provide legible, better-organized answers to essays. Students making such a request may use a computer in the SDS office or a personal computer that is pre-approved by the instructor. Computers in the SDS office allow for word processing and assistive technology programs without Internet access. First preference for SDS computers is awarded to students who need assistive technology assistance.

Use of Spell Check for Exams
This accommodation allows students to use a dictionary or spell check device during exams so that they will not be penalized for basic spelling and grammar errors when they are otherwise able to provide accurate responses to the questions be asked.

The accommodations listed above include typical accommodations approved by SDS staff. However, there are times when a student’s documentation supports a more individualized accommodation. These accommodations would be determined and approved by the SDS coordinator.
Universal Design for Instruction

Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

—Ron Mace

The intent of universal design is to simplify life for everyone by making products, communications, and the built environment more usable by as many people as possible at little or no extra cost. Universal design benefits people of all ages and abilities.

Applying universal design concepts in course planning ensures full access to the content for most students and minimizes the need for special accommodations. Universal design prevents the need for “retro-fitting” teaching methods when a student in the class discloses a disability.

Principles of Universal Design

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<th>Definition</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PRINCIPLE 1: Equitable use</strong></td>
<td>The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.</td>
<td>A course website is designed so that it is accessible to everyone, including students who are blind and using text-to-speech software.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRINCIPLE 2: Flexibility in use</strong></td>
<td>The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.</td>
<td>A museum, visited as a field trip for a course, allows each student to choose to read or listen to a description of the contents of display cases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRINCIPLE 3: Simple and intuitive use</strong></td>
<td>Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user’s experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.</td>
<td>Control buttons on science equipment are labeled with text and symbols that are simple and intuitive to understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRINCIPLE 4: Perceptible information</strong></td>
<td>The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user’s sensory abilities.</td>
<td>A video presentation projected in a course includes captions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRINCIPLE 5: Tolerance for error</strong></td>
<td>The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.</td>
<td>Educational software provides guidance and background information when the student makes an inappropriate response.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRINCIPLE 6: Low physical effort</strong></td>
<td>The design can be used efficiently, comfortably, and with a minimum of fatigue.</td>
<td>Doors to a lecture hall open automatically for people with a wide variety of physical characteristics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRINCIPLE 7: Size and space for approach and use</strong></td>
<td>Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of the user’s body size, posture, or mobility.</td>
<td>A flexible classroom has adequate workspace for students who are left- or right-handed and for those who need to work from a standing or seated position.</td>
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1 Adapted from Universal Design of Instruction (UDI): Definition, Principles, Guidelines, and Examples
Enhancing Course Accessibility

The following strategies are suggested to enhance the accessibility of course design, instruction, and materials. If you have any questions or would like more information regarding strategies for a specific disability, please contact Students with Disabilities Services.

Textbooks and Printed Course Material

- Make the syllabus available prior to the first day of class to allow students to begin their reading early or obtain alternative materials in time for the start of classes.
- If the textbook has a study guide or computer tutorial, suggest that students use it.
- Double-space all materials and choose a clear, easy to read font.
- If you will be posting PDFs on Blackboard, make sure they can be read by screen-reader programs. See the Faculty section of the SDS website to learn how to make an accessible PDF.

In Class

- Provide copies of transparencies or slides.
- Face the class as much as possible and speak clearly and audibly.

FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE BLIND/LOW-VISION:
- Reserve front seats for low-vision students. Make sure seats are not near or facing windows. Glare from the lights can make it difficult for a student to see the instructor or whiteboard. Verbalize the content printed on transparencies or on the chalkboard.

FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE DEAF/HARD-OF-HEARING
- Avoid covering your mouth or standing with a light behind you when you speak.
- Keep a minimum amount of lighting on when presenting audiovisual information so the instructor or interpreter can be seen at all times. It is helpful to supply students using interpreters with a written explanation of a demonstration in advance.
- Videotapes or movies should be open- or closed-captioned. If they are not, the student should be provided with notes or a summary. See page 15 for more information on captioning.
- Use classroom microphone systems designed to amplify the instructor’s voice.

Attendance

- Provide flexibility in attendance requirements in case of hospitalization/crisis, as long as it does not impact course requirements.
- Consider incompletes or late withdrawals rather than failure in the event of prolonged illness-related absences.

Written Assignments

- Consider alternative or supplementary assignments to evaluate students’ mastery of the course material.
- Critique early drafts of written assignments.
- Provide examples of “good” writing for the course and discipline. Give feedback in writing that students can incorporate into future assignments.

Evaluation

- Provide alternatives to scantron answer sheets.
- Consider allowing the student to respond orally to exam questions.
- Consider alternative test designs, such as essay, multiple choice or short answer.
- Consider the nature of errors. It may be appropriate to given partial credit for work shown even when the final answer is incorrect due to such minor errors as transposed numbers.

Labs, Field trips, and Transportation

- When instructors intend to hold a class in a new location or go on a field trip, they should verify that the site is accessible. If the University is providing transportation for the field trip, the transportation must be accessible.
- Some students will require assistance manipulating tools, laboratory equipment and/or chemicals. An assistant or lab partner, who functions merely as the student’s hands or legs, also may be needed. Contact SDS if this is needed.
- Help to educate non-disabled students who may not realize that most people who need disabled parking are not wheelchair users.
People First Language

Positive language empowers. When writing or speaking about people with disabilities, it is important to put the person first. Group designations such as “the blind,” “the retarded” or “the disabled” are inappropriate because they do not reflect the individuality, equality or dignity of people with disabilities. Further, words like “normal person” imply that the person with a disability isn’t normal, whereas “person without a disability” is descriptive but not negative.

Some examples of people first language include:

Use: Person with a disability
Not: Disabled person; handicapped

Use: Person who uses a wheelchair
Not: Confined or restricted to a wheelchair

Use: Person who has cerebral palsy
Not: CP victim

Use: Person who is hard-of-hearing
Not: Suffers a hearing loss

Use: Person with a physical disability
Not: Crippled, lame, deformed

Use: Person who is successful, productive
Not: Has overcome his/her disability

Communication Tips

• Treat the individual with dignity, respect and courtesy.

• Permit students the time they require to express themselves without unsolicited aid in filling in gaps in their speech. Don’t be reluctant to ask the student to repeat a statement if you do not understand.

• If a guide dog is used, do not pet or distract the dog in any way while it is on duty.

• If you offer assistance, wait until the offer is accepted. Then listen to or ask for instructions. Do not insist if your offer is rejected.

• If guiding a person who is blind or visually impaired, allow them to take your arm. He or she will typically walk half a step behind you to anticipate curbs or steps.

• If an interpreter is present, speak to the person who has come to see you, not to the interpreter. Maintain eye contact with the person, not the interpreter.

• When addressing a person who uses a wheelchair, never lean on the person’s wheelchair. The chair is a part of the body space of the person who uses it.

• When talking to a person in a wheelchair or with mobility concerns for more than a few minutes, sit down in order to place yourself at the person’s eye level.

• There is no need to refrain from using common expressions such as “It’s nice to see you” or “Did you hear about that?” that may relate to a person’s disability.

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1 Adapted from the Office of Disability Employment Policy, “Communicating With and About People with Disabilities,” http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/fact/comucate.htm
What is captioning?

DVDs, streaming video on the web, and films can be valuable course content, but it is important to make sure these teaching tools will be accessible by all students, including those who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. Captioning involves synchronizing text with audio content of a video presentation.

Legislation and greater awareness of individual needs has resulted in increasing numbers of video presentations available with captions. However, not all videos contain captions. To find out if a video is captioned, look for the closed captioning “CC” symbol on the box, or for the phrase “subtitles for the deaf and hard-of-hearing.” These are similar to subtitles used for foreign films, but also include information such as sound effects, speaker identification, and other essential nonspeech features.

Why is captioning important?

It doesn’t matter if your video is only a short clip, if the information is also in the textbook, or if the information won’t be on the test—all students should have full access to course materials, including students who are deaf or hard of hearing.

If you are having difficulty locating captioned materials, call Students with Disability Services to discuss resources and strategies for making your materials accessible. If you are not able to get a captioned version of the media, it might be necessary to provide a transcript or to use a sign language interpreter during the presentation. Students might need extra time to process this information, because they cannot watch the video or film and also read the text or follow the interpretation at the same time. Captioning has the advantage of presenting both video and text together.

Where can I find captioned AV materials?

Described and Captioned Media Program
http://www.dcmp.org

Harkle
(search engine for captioned video and media)
http://www.harkle.com/

National Center for Accessible Media
http://ncam.wgbh.org/

PBS Nova
http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/programs/

Project Read On
www.projectreadon.com

YouTube
http://www.youtube.com
Did you know you can search for YouTube videos with captions? To limit the results of a YouTube search to only videos with closed-captions, perform a search and then click on the “Type” drop-down menu and choose “Closed Captions.”

You can also contact the company that has produced a video to see if a captioned copy is available for purchase.
Online Accommodations

It is expected that the “classroom environment” will be accessible to all students, including those with a disability. Thus, the online classroom must also be designed with accessibility in mind.

Questions to consider when designing an online course

Review your class syllabus considering how students with various disabilities will be able to experience the learning activities and requirements you have planned.

Then identify areas that pose potential problems for one or more populations of learners with disabilities. Information Technology and Students with Disabilities Services are available to serve as a resource if you have any questions or need assistance.

Providing students with accommodated exams on Blackboard

Some students with disabilities may require additional time for taking tests within the on-line environment. Typically this applies to timed exams that are taken through Blackboard where the student may log-in and access test material away from the classroom. In such instances, it is possible to provide the extended time accommodation to students using simple tools readily available in the Blackboard environment.

For a step-by-step guide on how to provide extended-time tests on Blackboard, please visit the Faculty section of the SDS website.

When designing your course website and content

- Establish a consistent organization/flow for the course.
- Eliminate any unused menu items or areas.
- Avoid extensive layering of activities, such as folders within folders.
- Minimize the need to scroll wherever possible.
- Use a consistent color theme to group points and avoid excess color.
- Select graphics that won’t distract from the learning environment.
- Include “alternative” text when embedding images or multimedia.
- Provide captioning for videos and other media.
- Offer PowerPoint presentations in HTML format so they are accessible to screen readers, and provide scripts for narrated PowerPoints.
- Post high-quality PDF documents that are able to be read using screen reader software.
- Before requiring students to visit outside websites, check to make sure they are also accessible.
USF System Contacts

The University of South Florida has several offices that can assist with Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act compliance and reasonable accommodations. Please note that you must apply for academic accommodations at each USF location you will be taking classes at.

USF - Tampa Campus

**For Employees**
Ms. Eve Underhill, Assistant Director
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3343 Winter Lake Road LTB2116
Lakeland, FL 33803
(863) 667-7035
eunderhi@poly.usf.edu

**For Students**
Susan Hurley
Students with Disabilities Services
3343 Winter Lake Road LMC8025
Lakeland, FL 33803
(863) 667-7046
www.poly.usf.edu/DisabiltyServices.html

**For Public Events/Services**
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USF Sarasota-Manatee

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www.sarasota.usf.edu/Students/Disability

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USF St. Petersburg

**For Students**
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mcdowell@stpt.usf.edu
www.stpete.usf.edu/disability/

**For Public Events/Services**
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www.stpt.usf.edu/advancement

**For Employees**
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USF Polytechnic (Lakeland)

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www.sds.usf.edu

**For Public Events/Services**
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(813) 974-8616
dowens@usf.edu
www.usf.edu/ea

**For Employees**
Human Resources-Employee Relations
4202 E. Fowler Avenue, SVC 2172
Tampa, FL 33620
(813) 974-5396
www.usf.edu/HR

The University of South Florida has several offices that can assist with Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act compliance and reasonable accommodations. Please note that you must apply for academic accommodations at each USF location you will be taking classes at.