

# ADVISING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

## FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES

- If a student discloses a disability, please **refer them to the SAS office** if they have not requested accommodations.
- Ensure students are using **appropriate resources and support services**. Walk students over to the Center for Academic Services, as needed.
- Helping students select courses that **highlight their strengths**.
- **Encouraging students** to be self-advocates by taking charge of their education. Students need to be proactive in scheduling exams, frequent checks with faculty, and frequent reflection on their educational progress.



## COMMON STUDENT CHALLENGES

- **Students in higher-education must disclose a disability to the SAS office to receive accommodations in the classroom.** In high school, students were often not involved in the disability process. They may be unaware of the SAS Office and its purpose.
- **This is often the first time students are expected to be aware of their quality-of-life needs** (social inclusion, mental health counseling, deciding to take medication, gaining independence from parents/guardians).
- **Selecting appropriate courses.** Students may need to think about reading/writing demands, potential barriers in online classes, and teaching styles.
- **Developing a schedule to meet their needs.** Students may need to think about sleeping schedules, medication schedules, and a potential need for breaks between classes.

# THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND FOR CLASS REGISTRATION

- **The number of credits and academic level of course.** First year students should be only taking 100 or 200 level courses and a course load of 12 - 16 credits. Students with disabilities may need additional support to create feasible schedules that will minimize the impact of their disabilities. For example, a student with a reading disorder should not be taking 16 credits of reading-intensive courses.
- **Class structure/style** (lecture, discussion, small groups, presentations, etc.) If a class does not align with the student's preference, ensure that you talk through some of the barriers that may be presented. For example, a student with a panic disorder may need additional support with an oral communication course.
- **Course time/length.** Think about the impact of medication at different parts of the day. Additionally, think about attention span when looking at MWF courses versus TTH courses. For example, it may not be appropriate for individuals who experience sleep disturbances to have an 8:00 am class. Some students with ADHD medication need to take a second dose around lunch time, and may do better in a class later in the day when the medication is in full effect.
- **Brain Breaks.** Some individuals with disabilities may experience cognitive fatigue throughout the day. Some students prefer to take all of their classes back-to-back or allow for an hour break between courses.
- **Potential Absences.** If a student requires an accommodation for 2x's the typical attendance policy, advise the student to communicate with the faculty member prior to registration to ensure their accommodation would not modify the most fundamental aspects of the course. Alternative attendance could be accomplished via Zoom, allowing the student to a different lab section based on symptoms during the day, etc.

**ANY ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS MAY BE DIRECTED TO THE STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY (SAS) OFFICE.**

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