

Teaching Students with Disabilities (Page 1 of 28)



Scenario (Page 2 of 28)

Consider this scenario:

One of your students comes up to you the day before the midterm exam. In anguish, he tells you that test-taking has always been difficult because he has a learning disability; he finds he needs more time than most students to process information. He asks if he could have extended time to take the exam. You have no reason to doubt this student, and you recall that he did have trouble with other in-class reading exercises. This student has also shown interest and enthusiasm for the subject matter and has demonstrated that he is a capable student.

How do you respond? Two answers are correct.

? Give the student extra time; it's clear he's not trying to take advantage of the situation.

Incorrect. Only if the student presents a Letter of Accommodation from the Disabled Students' Program (DSP), which specifies the particular academic accommodation the student requires, should an instructor provide the accommodation. Instructors have the discretion to make adjustments for any student with extenuating circumstances, with or without a disability, but without a letter from DSP, what they are doing is not a disability accommodation. This module of

the Online Ethics Course will explain the accommodation process at UC Berkeley and the reasons you should not offer impromptu academic accommodations to students.

 **Ask the student if he has applied to the Disabled Students' Program for services and has received a Letter of Accommodation.**

Correct. If the student has a Letter of Accommodation issued by the Disabled Students' Program (DSP), seek a copy from the Instructor of Record. If the student has not yet gone to DSP, direct him to go there to apply and have an intake appointment. Note: on such short notice DSP will not be able to advise about appropriate accommodations for the exam when a student has not yet applied for DSP services.

 **Speak to the Instructor of Record about accommodating this student.**

Correct. If the student has been authorized by the Disabled Students' Program (DSP) to receive an accommodation, the Instructor of Record should have received a Letter of Accommodation from the DSP specifying the required accommodation. Be proactive and make sure you know early in the semester which of your students have disability accommodations.

This module will explain how to respond to the academic needs of students with disabilities.

Preview of Module 3 (Page 3 of 28)

In this module, **Teaching Students with Disabilities**, you will examine the following topics:

- relevant policy and law;
- accepted terminology;
- UC Berkeley statistics;
- the Disabled Students' Program (DSP);
- academic accommodations;
- tips for teaching students with disabilities;
- enhancing learning through Universal Design; and
- campus resources.

Learning Objectives

After exploring these topics, it is hoped that you will be able to take steps and find resources to meet the following objectives:

- identify appropriate steps to take to find out if you have students for whom the Disabled Students' Program has issued a Letter of Accommodation;
 - respond appropriately if a student tells you that they have a disability and needs an accommodation;
 - explain to a colleague Berkeley's policies and procedures for determining whether a student needs an accommodation, what that accommodation should be, and how you and the Instructor of Record become informed about this determination;
 - state the reasons you are not the appropriate person to decide whether a student needs an accommodation, and why you should not devise accommodations of your own;
 - work toward a classroom environment based on the concept of Universal Design for Instruction, which will minimize difficulties for students with and without disabilities, enabling all students to participate fully in the learning process; and
 - identify the resources on campus that can address questions you may have about teaching students with disabilities.
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Relevant Policy and Law (Page 4 of 28)

In Module Two of this course, you were briefly introduced to the federal laws that inform campus policies regarding inclusion of students with disabilities. These are explained in more detail below.

Both federal and state legislation stipulate that students with disabilities may not, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination in any academic service, program, or activity offered by the University.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973



This federal landmark legislation prohibits discrimination against students with disabilities in any post-secondary educational institution receiving federal funding. This legislation specifically addresses admissions and recruitment; treatment of students in general; and academic adjustments, now commonly referred to as “accommodations.”

See [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#); [OCR: Protecting Students with Disabilities \(Section 504\)](#).

The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008, Title II

The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by state and local governments and by private entities that serve the public.

See the [Americans with Disabilities Act, Title II](#).

California State Disability Laws

There are also several state laws that protect the rights of persons with disabilities. These are listed at [Disability Laws and Regulations](#) on the California Department of Rehabilitation website.

UC Policy on Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability

(Page 5 of 28)

The federal and state legislation are reflected in the UC systemwide policy that addresses non-discrimination on the basis of disability. Sections 140.00 through 149.00 of the University of California Policies Applying to Campus Activities, Organizations, and Students lay out the “Guidelines Applying to Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability.”

University policy ensures that all students with disabilities have equal access to educational opportunities at UC Berkeley, and states:

Academic requirements should be modified, as necessary and appropriate, to ensure that they do not discriminate or have the effect of discriminating, on the basis of disability, against qualified applicants or students with disabilities. [1]

These laws and policies support the University’s commitment to construct an inclusive learning environment.

Additional campuswide guidelines can be accessed on the [DSP’s Policies & Guidelines](#) page.

[1] University of California, [Policies Applying to Campus Activities, Organizations, and Students](#); “[Guidelines Applying to Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability](#),” Section 143.31, “Modification of Academic Requirements.”

Accepted Terminology: ‘Disability’ vs. ‘Handicap’ (Page 6 of 28)

The language of disability has undergone changes over time in response to ever-emerging scholarship from the field of disability studies as well as from the perspectives of social justice and disability advocacy. Further influences on the language of disability flow from concepts of universal design, which emphasize universal access through intentional design and barrier removal, thus moving toward equality of experience for all individuals and removing distinctions and stigmas of disability.



When discussing issues pertaining to students with disabilities, the currently accepted terms “person with a disability” (“person-first”) and “disabled person” (“disability-first”) mean different things to different people. Person-first language has been used extensively since the second half of the 20th century and is seen in the phrases “persons with disabilities” or “students with disabilities.” More recently, disability rights advocates and disability studies scholars have endorsed use of disability-first language when referring to a group of persons who live with physical or psychological disabilities, using the term “disabled persons” with pride and ownership and recognizing that disability is a social construct. Some individuals prefer people-first and others prefer disability-first language. If in doubt, ask the individual. [1]

The term “handicap” is no longer accepted terminology for reasons explained in the ADA legislation:

As with racial and ethnic epithets, the choice of terms to apply to a person with a disability is overlaid with stereotypes, patronizing attitudes, and other emotional connotations. Many individuals with disabilities, and organizations representing such individuals, object to the use of such terms as “handicapped person” or “the handicapped.” [2]

Further, the word "handicap" refers to an obstacle or barrier, and those who subscribe to the social justice or environmentally-constructed models of disability assert that disabilities in and of themselves are not barriers and are value-neutral individual characteristics. Rather, it is the environment (physical, philosophical, political) that presents barriers to individuals with disabilities. To the extent that a person is then disabled, that person is disabled by elements of their external environment, rather than by their self-possessed disability.

Sources

[1] [Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education](#), Disability Resources and Services Standards and Guidelines.

[2] Americans with Disabilities Act Title II, [Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability in State and Local Government Services](#), 35.104 Definitions.

Berkeley as Trailblazer (Page 7 of 28)

The University is proud of its history as one of the first universities in the country to offer services for students with disabilities. The campus's Disabled Students' Program was established in 1970. More on the [history of the Disabled Students' Program](#) appears on the DSP website.



Left: Don Galloway, manager of blind services, and Ed Roberts, executive director of the fledgling Center for Independent Living on the Berkeley Campus, in 1974. Photo: The Disability Rights and Independent Living Movement

The City of Berkeley has also blazed a trail for inclusion of people with disabilities. One of the world's first Centers for Independent Living was founded in Berkeley in 1972, and Berkeley was the first city to create extensive wheelchair-friendly travel routes by installing curb cuts.

The programs and services made available by the University and the Center for Independent Living have resulted in a community that is attractive to and supportive of individuals with disabilities. In 2007, the National Organization on Disability named Berkeley

“the most accessible city in the United States” because it had the first universally designed

affordable housing development, free and reduced-fare taxi services, and emergency attendant care and transportation.

The City of Berkeley is home to the Ed Roberts Campus, a center dedicated to fostering collaboration among several disability organizations. Further information appears at the [Ed Roberts Campus website](#).

UC Berkeley Statistics: Undergraduate and Graduate Students Served by the Disabled Students' Program (Page 8 of 28)

Many students have multiple disabilities. The numbers shown in the table reflect only the students' self-reported **primary** disabilities during the Spring 2019 semester.

Type of Disability	Number Served
Deaf and Hard of Hearing	46
Blind and Visual Impairments	46
Mobility Impairments	77
Learning Disabilities	319
Attention Deficit Disorder	617
Chronic Health Conditions	386
Psychological Disabilities	1820
Acquired/Traumatic Brain Injury	150
Temporary Disability	172

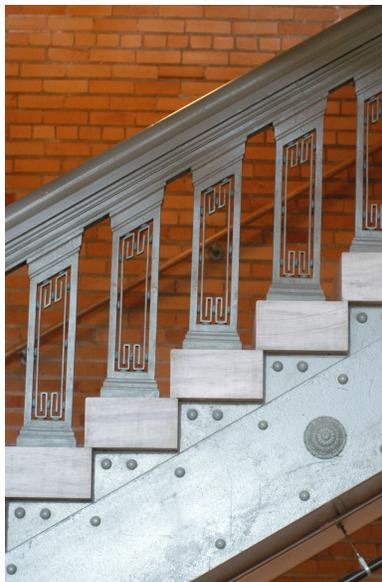
Autism/Aspergers Syndrome	55
Speech/Communication Disability	7
Total number of Undergraduate and Graduate Students served by UC Berkeley's DSP	3695

DSP serves about 8.0% of the total UC Berkeley student body.

Source: UC Berkeley Disabled Students' Program.

Apparent and Non-apparent Disabilities (Page 9 of 28)

As the foregoing chart demonstrates, you may encounter a range of disabilities among your students during your work as a GSI.



Some disabilities may be apparent, such as some disabilities involving mobility, vision, hearing, or speech. Other disabilities may not be apparent. These include learning disabilities and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD); Autism Spectrum; psychological disabilities such as depression, anxiety, and bipolar disorder; and chronic illnesses and chronic pain conditions such as diabetes, AIDS, anemia, and carpal tunnel syndrome.

In addition, while pregnancy is not in itself a disability, being pregnant can lead to disabling conditions such as carpal tunnel and other health complications. Pregnant students, as well as students unable to fit in standard pupil seats, may require special table and chair arrangements.

When a student requires accommodations due to a pregnancy-related disability, the Disabled Students' Program (DSP) will be able to work with the student to determine the accommodations required for the student to have equal access to the student's academic program. When a student who is pregnant does not have a disability but requires academic accommodations due to pregnancy, the [campus Title IX office](#) can provide assistance.

The Disabled Students' Program (DSP) (Page 10 of 28)

The Disabled Students' Program (DSP) promotes an inclusive environment for students with disabilities. It equips students with appropriate accommodations and services to achieve their individual academic goals. The staff at DSP are dedicated to supporting students and collaborating with the campus community to remove barriers to educational access and embrace the University's values of equity and inclusion. They believe that an accessible environment universally benefits everyone.

— [Mission of the Disabled Students' Program](#)

The Disabled Students' Program (DSP) assists with accommodating students with disabilities by:

- verifying students' disabilities based on documentation
- determining appropriate academic accommodations that are specific to individual students and to individual courses (neither Instructors of Record nor GSIs are to make such determinations)
- referring students with disabilities to available support resources on campus
- referring instructors and students to disability-related technologies and services

The Disabled Students' Program provides support to students with documented disabilities currently enrolled in UC Berkeley undergraduate and graduate courses. DSP serves students who “have documented physical, medical, and/or psychological conditions” and for whom “[p]rofessionals have verified that the students need individualized services..., the absence of which would cause severe disadvantages for the students.” The disabilities may be visible or non-visible, permanent or temporary.

The DSP staff includes Disability Specialists and teams providing Auxiliary Services including alternative media, note taking, CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation) captioning, and exam proctoring.

GSI's encounter the work of these specialists through Letters of Accommodation that students present to their instructors detailing the academic accommodations required for students to participate on an equal basis in their course work. Any questions or concerns regarding these letters should be addressed to the Disability Specialist who wrote the letter. An overview of the accommodation process follows.

Academic Accommodations (Page 11 of 28)

Overview of the Accommodation Process

1. A student is aware or has become aware that the intersection of the impact of their new or existing disability and the academic environment at Cal is creating or may create barriers to equal access and participation in their academic program, and decides to seek accommodations at UC Berkeley.
2. The student visits the DSP website and completes a brief online application that starts the student's file with the Disabled Students' Program. All of the student's disability information will be held in a database that is separate from their academic and advising records. At the time the student completes the online application, the student can upload their disability documentation, and they are assigned a Disability Specialist.
3. If the student does not yet have documentation from a professional who is qualified to diagnose and assess the impact of their disability, they must meet with an appropriate medical provider for evaluation and documentation, which they can then provide to DSP. If they have questions about this process, they can schedule an informational appointment with their assigned Disability Specialist for assistance.
4. Once the student has applied online and submitted appropriate disability documentation, the student schedules an intake appointment and meets with their assigned Disability Specialist. The Disability Specialist will have reviewed the student's disability documentation in advance of the appointment, and during the appointment, the Disability Specialist and the student will engage in the interactive process to identify possible barriers that the student may encounter due to the impact of their disability in the context of the learning environments in which they will be participating. Appropriate accommodations will then be identified and approved in order to remove or mitigate these barriers while allowing for the standards of the student's academic program to be maintained.
5. After the student is approved by a Disability Specialist for accommodations and services in the intake appointment, the student can request Letters of Accommodation and auxiliary services online. Students need to request their letters each semester for each course in which they want to utilize their accommodations. No letter can be issued by

DSP until a student has signed in to their online DSP account and requested that DSP issue the letter.

6. The student's instructors (the faculty members or their chosen proxies) are then given online access to the student's Letters of Accommodation. The instructors must read the letter and implement the approved accommodations for the student. If an instructor has a question or concern about an approved accommodation, they should follow up with the Disability Specialist who signed the student's letter to address their question or concern.
7. Students who have concerns about the implementation of their accommodations should also follow up with their assigned Disability Specialist.

Note: It is never appropriate for a faculty member or GSI to ask a student with disabilities to share disability documentation, medical records, or any other specific information about their disability identity. If you need confirmation of a student's need for a specific accommodation, such as a disability-related absence, you should contact the Disability Specialist listed on the student's Letter of Accommodation. DSP can request and review documentation as needed.

Source

Disabled Students' Program, [Application Process](#); [Frequently Asked Questions — Faculty](#).

Accommodations: Responsibilities of the Disabled Students' Program (Page 12 of 28)

When students request services from the Disabled Students' Program (DSP), Disability Specialists have the responsibility to review the students' documentation and (1) confirm whether the student has a disability and (2) determine whether the impact of the student's disability in the context of the academic environment may cause the student to encounter barriers to equal access. In making this determination, the Specialists follow a process that is consistent with established University of California system practices. This process includes interactive interviews with the student as well as a review of documentation provided by physicians and other clinicians (e.g., clinical psychologists, audiologists, or optometrists).

When a Disability Specialist finds that a student with a disability may encounter barriers to access in the academic environment, the Disability Specialist works with the student to determine the specific program modifications, auxiliary services, and academic adjustments needed to remove or mitigate those barriers. These services and adjustments are referred to as "academic accommodations," and may include any of the following:

- program modifications, for example a reduced course load
- auxiliary services, such as note takers or laboratory assistants

- academic adjustments or modifications in instructional methods, such as early provision of course materials so they can be reproduced in alternative media, specialized exam conditions, or specific disability-related considerations for absences
- policy changes or exceptions

Accommodations vary from student to student; people with different disabilities often need different accommodations, and two people with the same disability may be affected in different ways or pursuing majors with different academic tasks and therefore may need different kinds of accommodations.

Once the necessary academic accommodations are determined, the Disability Specialist sends notice of a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) to the student's course instructors (the faculty members) and/or designated proxies, describing the necessary academic accommodations that may involve the instructor or department.

Contact Information for the Disabled Students' Program

260 César Chávez Student Center, #4250

University of California, Berkeley

510-642-0518

dsp@berkeley.edu

<http://dsp.berkeley.edu>

Source

Disabled Students' Program, [Resources for Faculty](#)

Accommodations: Responsibilities of the Student (Page 13 of 28)

Students have the responsibility to apply for services with the Disabled Students' Program (DSP). Students can do this by going to the DSP website. They must also provide documentation of their disability-related need for an academic accommodation.

Once DSP has determined that a student has such a need, the student is provided the ability to request a Letter of Accommodation, addressed to the Instructor of Record in each of the student's courses, that describes the needed accommodations.

Students then need to make sure that their Instructors of Record receive the Letter of Accommodation outlining their specific accommodations.

For a variety of reasons, students may not present Letters of Accommodation at the beginning of an academic term.

- A student may not have been diagnosed as having a disability prior to entering Cal. Consequently, if a student begins to experience learning barriers, it may take several months to get an appointment to meet with a medical professional to provide a diagnosis leading to eligibility for academic accommodations. Thus the student may provide a Letter of Accommodation to an instructor at any time during an academic term.
- Students choose to self-identify as having a disability at different points of their lives. It is not unusual for students to want to begin the semester “like other students” and not identify as disabled until after their first exam or project. Once they realize they require academic accommodations, they come to DSP. This partly explains why there may be a rise in DSP accommodation requirements after mid-semester or prior to finals.

Students may present a Letter of Accommodation at any time during the semester and their accommodation must be implemented within a reasonable amount of time.

Source

Disabled Students’ Program, [Resources for Faculty](#).

Accommodations: Responsibilities of Instructors (Page 14 of 28)

Instructors of Record must read the Letter of Accommodation and share it as necessary with any GSIs who interact with the student. The Instructor of Record may delegate to GSIs the provision of the required accommodations. Faculty and GSIs should follow up with a student's Disability Specialist regarding any questions concerning accommodations that may come up (if, for example, it does not appear feasible to provide the accommodation). Faculty and GSIs should not provide disability accommodations in the absence of a Letter of Accommodation. GSIs are encouraged to be proactive in requesting Letters of Accommodation from faculty.

Reading the Letter of Accommodation

Letters of Accommodation are made available to faculty members through the AIM (Accessible Information Management) Faculty Portal on the DSP website, and the link to review their students’ letters is provided in an email to the faculty member. The faculty member can give

GSI proxy access to a student's letter. The portal also provides information on additional resources for instructors, such as how to obtain assistance for exam proctoring.

[Directions for accessing students' accommodation information in AIM](#) are available on the DSP website. Students may also print hard copies of their letters and deliver those to their instructors, whether faculty or GSIs. Be sure to keep the Instructor of Record informed of any request for accommodation that comes directly to you. Seek their input on how to provide the accommodation before acting.

A student may be diagnosed with a disability and authorized for DSP services midway through the semester or even later. In this event, of course, the student cannot provide the Instructor of Record or you with a Letter of Accommodation early in the semester, even though you and the Instructor of Record have invited them to do so in your syllabus or in oral announcements to the class. Instructors do not have the authority to set up a deadline after which a student is no longer entitled to request or obtain an academic accommodation.

Providing the Required Accommodations

The GSIs and the faculty member are responsible to become familiar with and to execute fully the accommodations listed in the letter, and to keep the student's disability-related information confidential.

Letters of Accommodation are not retroactive. Faculty and GSIs are not responsible for providing accommodations until they receive a Letter of Accommodation.

If an academic instructor or department fails to properly implement a Letter of Accommodation, a complaint may be filed.

Following Up on Accommodation-Related Questions

If you have a question about the academic accommodations authorized in the Letter of Accommodation, first consult with the Instructor of Record for clarification, and/or with the student, to more fully understand the accommodation requirement. If you meet with the student, do so privately, away from others, to discuss both the required accommodation and the academic requirements of the course.

If questions still remain, you or the Instructor of Record may contact the Disability Specialist who signed the Letter of Accommodation (the "Specialist of Note") for clarification or to discuss any issues that arise about the authorized academic accommodations.

If you and the Instructor of Record have difficulty providing the accommodations listed in the letter, or if you or the Instructor of Record believe there is a good reason not to implement the accommodations, you should have the Instructor of Record contact the Specialist of Note. If the

Instructor of Record and Disability Specialist reach an impasse in their discussion about an accommodation, then the Director of DSP will help negotiate a solution.

When a time-sensitive issue arises and the instructor has not yet received a student's Letter of Accommodation, the instructor should tell the student to be sure they have requested their letter online and to contact their Disability Specialist immediately if they have done so and their letter is still not available in the student's AIM portal. However, if the student has not yet applied for DSP services, as in the opening scenario in which a student approaches the GSI for accommodation the day before an exam, DSP will not be able to advise about appropriate accommodations. The student must apply for accommodations online and complete an intake appointment with DSP as soon as possible.

Without a Letter of Accommodation, you should not provide any academic adjustments or considerations to the student that you would not normally provide to any other student who does not have a Letter of Accommodation.

Not Improvising Accommodations

It is important to remember that only DSP is authorized to determine academic accommodations that are required on the basis of a student's disability. Campus policy does not permit either the Instructor of Record or the GSI to make these determinations or implement disability accommodations without written authorization from DSP in the form of a Letter of Accommodation. The reason for this is that the University must both prevent discrimination against students and ensure the academic integrity of its educational programs. Unauthorized accommodations may result in failure to appropriately accommodate a student with a disability, or they might compromise academic standards if students are treated differently without a legitimate reason.

Sources

Disabled Students' Program, [Resources for Faculty](#); [Faculty FAQs](#); [DSP Complaint Resolution Process](#)

Scenario (Page 15 of 28)

Check your understanding:

A student requests an academic accommodation. He tells you that he has applied for accommodations through DSP, but does not yet have a Letter of Accommodation.

What is the best course of action in this case?

? Make the accommodation anyway, knowing that the letter will arrive.

Incorrect. In the absence of a Letter of Accommodation, you should talk to the Instructor of Record about how to proceed.

? Refuse accommodation until the letter is produced.

No, simple refusal is not adequate. Your response must inform the student of the next step forward in obtaining an accommodation. In this case the next step is for you to speak with the Instructor of Record about checking the status of the student's Letter and for you to tell the student to be sure that they have requested their letter online, and to contact their Disability Specialist directly if they have questions about the status of their letter. If the student has not completed an intake appointment with DSP, the student should be encouraged to complete the application and eligibility process with DSP.

? Talk to the Instructor of Record about checking the status of the student's Letter of Accommodation.

Correct. You should also ask the student to be sure that they have requested their Letter of Accommodation online and to contact their Disability Specialist directly if they have any questions about requesting their letter. If the student has not completed an intake appointment with DSP, the student should be encouraged to complete the application and eligibility process with DSP.

Maintaining Student Privacy (Page 16 of 28)

The University seeks to protect the privacy of students with disabilities whenever possible, unless a DSP-approved accommodation cannot be implemented without disclosure of the fact that the student has a disability. For example, communicating via a sign language interpreter in class or even going in and out of the Disabled Students' Program (DSP) may suggest to others that an individual has a disability.



Under no circumstances does the University disclose to a student's classmates or the instructor the diagnosis or treatment of a student's medical condition or disability. The Instructor of Record and the GSI each have a responsibility to maintain student privacy with respect to the student's

disability and, when possible, to the academic accommodations provided to the student. Avoid inadvertent disclosure of disability status through email or other communication.

The Instructor of Record should keep information related to a student's Letter of Accommodation in a secure place; both the Instructor of Record and the GSI should refrain from discussing a student's disability status and necessary accommodations within hearing distance of students or others who have no educational "need to know."

People who have an educational "need to know" include university instructors and staff members who, in the exercise of their regular duties, need the information to serve the student appropriately. A CART captioner provided by DSP, for example, has an educational "need to know" about the accommodation being provided.

Source

Disabled Students' Program, [Resources for Faculty](#).

Frequently Asked Questions about Academic Accommodations

(Page 17 of 28)



Aren't these accommodations discriminatory against students without disabilities?

Students receiving academic accommodations have the same responsibilities and need to meet the same academic standards as any other UC Berkeley student. Accommodations are not intended to give students with disabilities an unfair advantage, but rather to remove barriers that prevent them from having equal access to an academic program and from demonstrating what they have learned. Federal and state legislation were implemented to ensure that these barriers would be removed. Students receive accommodations for which the students have a demonstrated disability-related academic need.

How do I arrange for additional time or a space for test-taking for a student with disabilities?

If no department or college resources are available or if the student has complex exam accommodations (such as a need for assistive technology, a room alone, or 300% time), go to [DSP's Proctoring](#) page and follow the directions provided to request proctoring assistance. The DSP Proctoring Office will be moving its request process on to DSP's new AIM platform during the Fall 2021 semester, and directions and updates will be provided on the Proctoring page as the rollout of this new process progresses. Requests normally need to be made at least two weeks in advance during the semester and much earlier for final exams.

What if my classroom is not wheelchair accessible and a student who uses a wheelchair has enrolled in my section?

If you have a student who uses a wheelchair and the classroom is not wheelchair accessible, inform the Instructor of Record and have the Classroom Scheduler in your department arrange for a different room. If the department has questions, please contact [Disability Access & Compliance](#) at access@berkeley.edu, 510-643-6456. You should also contact the Disability Specialist who signed off on the student's Letter of Accommodation.

What if we are going on a field trip and I have a student who uses a motorized wheelchair, or I have other access questions?

First, plan to have any department-sponsored off-campus transportation options for students include wheelchair accessibility. You are encouraged to check with the student about their preferences. You should also check with the DSP Specialist of Note, who is your primary contact. Also, [Disability Access & Compliance](#) at access@berkeley.edu, will be able to provide further guidance and support.

Teaching Students with Disabilities (Page 18 of 28)

The next several pages provide suggestions and best practices to ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to educational opportunities and materials in your classroom, lab, or studio.

- Steps at the Beginning of the Semester
 - Textbooks, Readers, and Handouts
 - Classroom Presentations
 - Fair Evaluation of Learning
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Steps at the Beginning of the Semester (Page 19 of 28)

The Instructor of Record and GSI should communicate with each other about any students with disabilities who are enrolled in the course and the accommodations that have been authorized for them by the Disabled Students' Program.

Ask the Instructor of Record if you can have proxy access to the online Letters of Accommodation so that you can check to make sure you are providing the required accommodations throughout the semester.

Announce at the beginning of the semester to your entire class that students who need disability accommodations or consideration or adjustments for any reason, or who have concerns about their ability to equally access and participate in your course should contact you or the Instructor of Record as soon as possible. Do not single anyone out, and be sure not to reveal confidential information about a student's status or the nature of the disability to other students or anyone who does not have an educational "need to know."

Include the following statement in all course and section syllabi, both hard copies and those on your course website:

UC Berkeley is committed to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student body. If you anticipate or experience any barriers to learning in this course, please feel welcome to discuss your concerns with me.

If you have a disability, or think you may have a disability, you can work with the Disabled Students' Program (DSP) to request an official accommodation. The Disabled Students' Program (DSP) is the campus office responsible for authorizing disability-related academic accommodations, in cooperation with the students themselves and their instructors. You can find more information about DSP, including contact information and the application process here: dsp.berkeley.edu. If you have already been approved for accommodations through DSP, please meet with me so we can develop an implementation plan together.

Students who need academic accommodations or have questions about their accommodations should contact DSP, located at 260 César Chávez Student Center.

Students may call 510-642-0518 (voice), 510-642-6376 (TTY), or email dsp@berkeley.edu.

Sometimes students are not aware that before an instructor can offer disability accommodations, DSP must authorize them. If students have not yet contacted DSP for assessment of their need for accommodations and a Letter of Accommodation, advise them to do so immediately. While there is no official deadline to request accommodations, some accommodations may take time to arrange.

Textbooks, Readers, and Handouts (Page 20 of 28)

Many students, as part of their academic accommodations, require course materials in alternative formats such as Braille, large print, or digital. Faculty members are responsible for identifying instructional materials for their courses (such as textbooks) at least seven weeks in advance of the semester so that DSP has time to convert them as necessary. According to University policy, timely submission of textbook adoptions enables the University to meet its legal requirement to provide students with disabilities an equal educational opportunity to learn course subject matter, to participate actively in classroom discussions, and to meet assignment deadlines.

For materials generated during the semester, a basic step in making materials accessible is posting only word-searchable documents on the course website (for example text-based PDFs, not image PDFs). Word-processed documents can be made more easily navigable using simple formatting guidelines. For more information, see the following topics on DSP's [Creating Accessible Content](#) web page:

- Look for Library Resources First
- Create Quality Scans
- Video: Best Practices for Creating Accessible Content
- Video: How to Use SensusAccess (to produce accessible PDFs)

Text reproductions in readers should be of good quality so they can be read easily by students with visual impairments or learning disabilities, and also so they can be converted or enlarged effectively.

Sources

Disabled Students' Program, [Creating Accessible Content](#), [Accessibility Responsibilities](#)

Classroom Presentations (Page 21 of 28)

Here are some examples of ways to ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to course content and materials:

- While writing information on the chalkboard, instructors might read aloud what they are writing in order to benefit students who have visual disabilities. In addition, you might consider typing up or taking a clear digital photo of the information written on the

chalkboard and distributing it after class to students. This can be helpful to all students, not only those who cannot read the board easily.

- When using audiotapes, slides, or presentation software such as PowerPoint or Keynote, instructors might also provide the same material in different, more accessible forms such as a text version. It is also helpful to make slides available to the class through bCourses.
- When showing a video that has closed captioning, make sure that the closed captioning feature is turned on.
- Students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing may be assisted in the class or Zoom session by an interpreter or CART provider (real-time captioning). When working with a student and an interpreter, look at and speak to the student rather than the interpreter or CART provider. For more information see [Faculty and Staff Realtime Captioning FAQs](#)
- GSIs should note that automated closed captioning available through such providers as Google slides or YouTube does not meet the standard required for an academic accommodation. If you have questions concerning captioning while online, please reach out to dsp-captioning@berkeley.edu.
- If a student in your class has an approved accommodation for captioning, instructors can find directions for submitting captioning requests (of media used in the class or recorded Zoom sessions) to DSP by visiting the [Faculty and Staff AIM Communication Services FAQs page](#)
- For students with visual disabilities in your classes, read aloud any content that is written out in your slides and describe the important figures and visual aids in your presentation.

Fair Evaluation of Learning (Page 22 of 28)

Once you have provided accommodations, you should grade the work of a student with a disability as you would grade the work of any other student.

When students have received accommodations, there is no need to “give them a break” by being “lenient.”

Conversely, to grade students more harshly because they have had the “advantage” of extra exam time or other instructional modifications would nullify the effect of the accommodations.

Remember, the benefit of accommodations is that they remove barriers to equal access in the learning environment.

Keep in mind that you should not compromise the academic quality of your course by giving passing grades to students who have failed to demonstrate the required level of understanding or performance competency.

Source

Enhancing Learning through Universal Design (Page 23 of 28)

There is growing awareness that students with disabilities are not a separate category of learners but are among many different types of learners who do not necessarily have equal access to traditional pedagogies. There is a movement underway in post-secondary education to design instruction that will benefit and be accessible to **all** students by addressing their learning diversity, including the diversity represented by students with disabilities.

What is Universal Design?

Universal Design has been defined as “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” (DO-IT: Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology, [Universal Design vs. Accommodation](#)). First apparent in the design of buildings, public spaces, and products, Universal Design has been hailed because it is cost-effective, seeks one integrated solution to diverse problems, and addresses the needs of many people without stigmatizing any group.

Examples of Universal Design

In architectural design, the automatic door-opener, often used in residential garages as well as supermarkets and department stores, solves an access problem for people with and without disabilities. In public spaces, curb cuts, originally designed for people who use wheelchairs, are equally popular with people pulling luggage carts or pushing baby strollers, skateboarders, people with canes, and other pedestrians with and without disabilities. In product design, cookware with thick, soft handles works well for people with arthritis but also appeals to cooks without disabilities. In educational settings, students with a variety of disabilities use voice-activated software — but so do many people who appreciate the convenience and ease of dictating their thoughts rather than typing them.



Applying Universal Design to Teaching and Learning

The next page will introduce you to the principles of **Universal Design for Instruction (UDI)**. In combination with suggestions you have received in the earlier modules of this course, this approach provides ideas for GSIs to foster inclusive classrooms and to become more effective teachers.

Side-note: A related approach, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), provides a more elaborate framework for organizing learning experiences in such a way that students have multiple options for participating in and demonstrating their learning. Because curricular design of courses is up to the Instructor of Record, we do not present UDL here. However, the framework can also be applied to making lesson plans for some GSI-led sections. GSIs wishing to dig deeper into UDL can find comprehensive information at the website [UDL on Campus: Universal Design for Learning in Higher Education](#).

Universal Design for Instruction (UDI) (Page 24 of 28)

Effective postsecondary instructors try to meet the needs of diverse learners: not just students with disabilities, but also students without disabilities who — for a wide variety of reasons — may experience difficulty learning in traditional academic environments. Using the UDI model, instructors can design instruction that benefits most of the students in their courses; they need not spend a disproportionate amount of time addressing the needs of just one group.

The following table provides a listing of the Nine Principles of Universal Design for Instruction, as well as a definition and example for each principle. While each of the examples demonstrates

an application of the principle, the examples are not necessarily universal in reflecting all of the nine principles, but illustrate the intent of the principle under consideration.

[Download PDF version](#)

Principle	Definition	Example(s)
Principle 1: Equitable use	Instruction is designed to be useful to and accessible by people with diverse abilities. Provides the same means of use for all students; identical whenever possible, equivalent when not.	Provision of class notes on line. Comprehensive notes can be accessed in the same manner by all students, regardless of hearing ability, English proficiency, learning or attention disorders, or note taking skill level. With an electronic format, students can utilize whatever individual assistive technology is needed to read, hear, or study the class notes.
Principle 2: Flexibility in use	Instruction is designed to accommodate a wide range of individual abilities.	Use of varied instructional methods (lecture with a visual outline, group activities, use of stories, or web- or board-based discussions) to provide different ways of learning and experiencing knowledge.
Principle 3: Simple and intuitive	Instruction is designed in a straightforward and predictable manner, regardless of the student's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.	Provision of a grading rubric that clearly lays out expectations for exam performance, papers, or projects; a syllabus with comprehensive and accurate information; or a handbook guiding students through difficult homework assignments.

<p>Principle 4: Perceptible information</p>	<p>Instruction is designed so that necessary information is communicated effectively to the student, regardless of ambient conditions or the student’s sensory abilities.</p>	<p>Selection of textbooks, reading material, and other instructional supports in digital format or online so students with diverse needs (e.g., vision, learning, attention, English as a Second Language) can access materials through traditional hard copy or with the use of various technological supports (e.g., screen reader, text enlarger, online dictionary).</p>
<p>Principle 5: Tolerance for error</p>	<p>Instruction anticipates variation in individual student learning pace and prerequisite skills.</p>	<p>Structuring a long-term course project so that students have the option of turning in individual project components separately for constructive feedback and for integration into the final product; provision of online “practice” exercises that supplement classroom instruction.</p>
<p>Principle 6: Low physical effort</p>	<p>Instruction is designed to minimize nonessential physical effort in order to allow maximum attention to learning. <i>Note:</i> This principle does not apply when physical effort is integral to essential requirements of a course.</p>	<p>Allow students to use a word processor for writing and editing papers or essay exams. This facilitates editing the document without the additional physical exertion of rewriting portions of text (helpful for students with fine motor or handwriting difficulties or extreme organization weaknesses, while providing options for those who are more adept and comfortable composing on the computer).</p>

<p>Principle 7: Size and space for approach and use</p>	<p>Instruction is designed with consideration for appropriate size and space for approach, reach, manipulations, and use regardless of a student’s body size, posture, mobility, and communication needs.</p>	<p>In small class settings, use of a circular seating arrangement to allow students to see and face speakers during discussion — important for students with attention deficit disorder or who are deaf or hard of hearing.</p>
<p>Principle 8: A community of learners</p>	<p>The instructional environment promotes interaction and communication among students and between students and faculty.</p>	<p>Fostering communication among students in and out of class by structuring study groups, discussion groups, email lists, or chat rooms; making a personal connection with students and incorporating motivational strategies to encourage student performance through learning students’ names or individually acknowledging excellent performance.</p>
<p>Principle 9: Instructional climate</p>	<p>Instruction is designed to be welcoming and inclusive. High expectations are espoused for all students.</p>	<p>A statement in the class syllabus affirming the need for class members to respect diversity in order to establish the expectation of tolerance as well as encourage students to discuss any special learning needs with the instructor; highlight diverse thinkers who have made significant contributions to the field; or share innovative approaches developed by students in the class.</p>

Which elements of the Nine Principles for Universal Design would you consider incorporating into your teaching?

Source

Shaw, S., Scott, S., and McGuire, J. “Universal Design for Instruction: A New Paradigm for Adult Instruction in Postsecondary Education.” Remedial and Special Education 24:6 (Nov./Dec. 2003): 369–79..

GSI with Disabilities (Page 25 of 28)

If you are a graduate student with a disability, the Disabled Students' Program (DSP) is available to assist you in determining and accessing the academic accommodations you require to have equal access to all stages of your degree program. The Disabled Students' Program has a Disability Specialist whose primary responsibility is to work with graduate students with disabilities and to work with stakeholders on UC Berkeley's campus to ensure that graduate students with disabilities have equal access to their degree programs.

The Disabled Students' Program, however, does not determine or provide workplace accommodations. If you are a GSI with a disability and you require reasonable accommodations in the workplace, you should request needed accommodations from your workplace supervisor.

The following resources can assist GSIs with disabilities in pursuing workplace accommodations:

University Health Services Be Well At Work: Faculty/Staff Disability Management

<https://uhs.berkeley.edu/bewellatwork/disability-management>

University Health Services Be Well At Work: Faculty/Staff Disability Management: Reasonable Accommodation

<https://uhs.berkeley.edu/facstaff/disability-management/reasonable-accommodation>

Berkeley Human Resources: Reasonable Accommodation and the Interactive Process

<https://hr.berkeley.edu/policies/policies-procedures/ppsm/berkeley-procedures/accommodation>

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

<https://askjan.org/>

Teaching Students with Disabilities in a Remote Environment

(Page 26 of 28)

Students with disabilities need additional accommodations for participation when you teach remotely. If you are unsure as to how to provide accommodations for a student, please feel free to reach out to the student's assigned DSP Disability Specialist, whose email is provided at the end of the student's accommodation letter, for assistance. All online content must be accessible to the DSP students in your course when posted. DSP will continue to partner with instructors to ensure students' disability accommodations are provided.

For information about captioning, course capture, note-taking, remote exams, and making online materials accessible for students with disabilities, please see [DSP, LOAs, and Accommodations for Your Students](#).

Module 3 Campus Resources (Page 27 of 28)

The information below is included in the [Annotated Campus Resource List](#).

Disabled Students' Program (DSP)

260 César Chávez Student Center

University of California, Berkeley

510-642-0518

dsp@berkeley.edu

Consult DSP if you have questions about how to implement academic accommodations. Send students to the DSP website if they request accommodations but do not have a Letter of Accommodation.

Helpful sections of the DSP website include:

[Application Process for Students](#)

[Berkeley Campus Plan for Accommodating the Academic Needs of Students with Disabilities](#)

[Faculty and Staff Realtime Captioning FAQs](#)

[Faculty and Staff AIM Communication Services FAQs \(Includes directions for submitting captioning requests\)](#)

[Faculty Overview](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions — Faculty](#)

[Resources for Faculty](#)

[Alternative Media Office \(Produces instructional materials in the formats students require for equal access\)](#)

[Proctoring Office](#)

[Center for Teaching and Learning: DSP, LOAs, and Accommodations for Your Students](#)

[Disability Access & Compliance](#)

510-643-6456

Contact this office if you have physical access concerns about your classroom or want information about how your academic department arranges for accommodations for department lectures and events.

Campus Services and Information

UC Berkeley Library

[Disability Resources](#)

Library services for patrons with disabilities.

[Educational Technology Services \(ETS\)](#)

9 Dwinelle Hall

510-642-2535

ETS provides some assistive technologies in classrooms.

Office of Emergency Management

[Functional & Access Needs](#)

Disability Complaint Resolution

[DSP Complaint Resolution Process](#)

This website provides an overview of procedures to resolve complaints with the Disabled Students' Program about eligibility decisions, academic accommodations, and other decisions of DSP.

[Berkeley Disability Access & Compliance](#)

If faculty feel that they have been discriminated against on the basis of a disability or feel like UC policies have been violated on the basis of a disability, they can file a formal grievance with DAC or raise an issue of concern with DAC.

Universal Design

[Universal Design of Instruction \(UDI\): Definition, Principles, Guidelines, and Examples](#)

University of Washington, Seattle, DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology) Center

[Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\)](#)

Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST)

Accessible Course Content

[Berkeley Accessible Course Content](#)

[A11y Basics: Accessible Basics for bCourses \(Canvas\)](#)

[A11y Intro Course: Intro to Course Accessibility](#)

Resources for GSIs with Disabilities

[University Health Services Be Well At Work: Faculty/Staff Disability Management](#)

[University Health Services Be Well At Work: Faculty/Staff Disability Management: Reasonable Accommodation](#)

[Berkeley Human Resources: Reasonable Accommodation and the Interactive Process](#)

[Job Accommodation Network \(JAN\)](#)

The information above is included in the [Annotated Campus Resource List](#).

Module 3 Wrap-Up and Quiz (Page 28 of 28)

In this module, **Teaching Students with Disabilities**, you have examined the following topics:

- relevant policy and law;
- accepted terminology;
- UC Berkeley statistics;
- the Disabled Students' Program (DSP);
- academic accommodations;
- tips for teaching students with disabilities;
- enhancing learning through Universal Design; and
- campus resources.

Review

In the course of exploring these topics, it is hoped that you now are able to take steps and find resources to meet the following objectives:

- identify appropriate steps to take to find out if you have students for whom the Disabled Students' Program has issued a Letter of Accommodation;
- respond appropriately if a student tells you that they have a disability and needs an accommodation;
- explain to a colleague Berkeley's policies and procedures for determining whether a student needs an accommodation, what that accommodation should be, and how you and the Instructor of Record become informed about this determination;
- state the reasons you are not the appropriate person to decide whether a student needs an accommodation, and why you should not devise accommodations of your own;
- work toward a classroom environment based on the concept of Universal Design for Instruction, which will minimize difficulties for students with and without disabilities, enabling all students to participate more fully in the learning process; and
- identify the resources on campus that can address questions you may have about teaching students with disabilities.

If you wish, we invite you to respond to questions this module brings up or see what others say about the module content. In the bCourses window or tab, use the Discussions tool in the left navigation menu; from there select the Module 3 discussion. Or use this link to the [bCourses Module 3 Discussion page](#). Discussion is optional. Please note: Your postings will not be anonymous.

After you finish reviewing, please move on to the Module 3 quiz, linked below.

Module 3 Quiz

The quiz for Module 3 will help you master the material by connecting the concepts introduced in the module and applying them to new scenarios. In addition to demonstrating your command of the course content, we hope this activity helps prepare you to clarify issues and discern the best plan of action in the situations you may face as a GSI.

You must score an 8 or higher out of 10 on this quiz. If your score is under 8, you are allowed to retake the quiz up to four times (that is, you have 5 attempts total). If you exhaust your five attempts and still have not passed, please contact the GSI Teaching & Resource Center (gsi@berkeley.edu) for assistance. Please click the link below to open the Module 3 quiz.

[Go to Module 3 Quiz](#)