3-2012

Student Disability Services Campus Newsletter, April 2012

University of Northern Iowa. Office of Student Disability Services.

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Recommended Citation
University of Northern Iowa. Office of Student Disability Services., "Student Disability Services Campus Newsletter, April 2012" (2012). Student Disability Services Campus Newsletter. 5.
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With graduation and the close of another academic year upon us, I wanted to take this opportunity to recognize three outstanding staff members within SDS that will be starting a new chapter in their lives this May and will no longer be with the office.

Jackie McAndrew has served as the SDS graduate assistant since Fall 2011. During this time, she has conducted an assessment to improve the weekly mentoring program which led to the adoption of Google Documents for our worksheets and promotion of StrengthsQuest for interested students.

Amy Dillard began working in SDS in Fall 2011 as a graduate assistant and was hired as a program assistant for the Spring 2012 semester. Besides assisting Jackie with the weekly mentoring program, Amy also reached out to NISG and student organizations by offering presentations on the use of universal design techniques in student organization event planning.

Last, but not least, Kayla Ferdon has been serving as Alternative Text Coordinator since Spring 2008. During her time here, Kayla has helped to improve the efficiency of our alt text conversion and was recently awarded the UNI Student Employee of the Year award for her commitment to our office.

I wish Jackie, Amy and Kayla the best of luck as they prepare for their next adventure in life and thank not only them, but all of our SDS staff for their hard work and dedication to our students.

Ashley Brickley
Coordinator, Student Disability Services

Spring is here!

Getting to Know Accommodations: Tape Recorders for Lectures

**What is involved in using tape recorders for lectures?**
To provide an equal opportunity for active participation and engagement in the classroom, students may be eligible to use a tape recorder to record class lectures.

SDS has tape recorders available for checkout or students may provide their own.

**Why is this accommodation provided?**
Individuals whose disability limits their ability to take notes because of auditory processing difficulties, illegible handwriting, short-term memory deficits, or other functional limitations that make note taking difficult may be eligible to use a tape recorder to record lectures.

**How can an instructor help with this accommodation?**
While students with disabilities who need it as an accommodation must be allowed to tape classes, faculty may ask for students to sign an agreement which indicates that the tapes will not be sold or used for any other purpose than their own educational needs.

If instructors have additional questions regarding the use of tape recorders for lectures, they can email ashley.brickley@uni.edu to find out more.
Awareness for Individuals with Disabilities Student Organization

The student organization, Awareness for Individuals with Disabilities (AID) met on Tuesday, March 27th and discussed several issues:

- Elections for next year’s AID officers will be opening up next week and will be voted into action at the final meeting on April 24th.
- AID is looking for volunteers to run the orientation booth for recruitment of new students. If you are interested, please contact Ashley Brickley at ashley.brickley@uni.edu.
- Members discussed changing the name of the organization. If members have any ideas for this new name please email President Brian Werts at wertsb20@uni.edu. AID is also seeking new event ideas for next year so those ideas can be emailed as well.

For more information, please contact Ashley Brickley, AID Advisor at ashley.brickley@uni.edu.

Examples of Universal Design

Below are examples of instructional methods that employ principles of universal design. They are organized under eight performance indicator categories, with a goal statement for each. Applying these strategies can make your course content accessible to people with a wide range of abilities and disabilities, ethnic backgrounds, language skills, and learning styles.

1. **Class Climate**. Adopt practices that reflect high values with respect to both diversity and inclusiveness. Example: Put a statement on your syllabus inviting students to meet with you to discuss disability-related accommodations and other special learning needs.

2. **Interaction**. Encourage regular and effective interactions between students and the instructor and ensure that communication methods are accessible to all participants. Example: Assign group work for which learners must support each other and that places a high value on different skills and roles.

3. **Physical environments and products**. Ensure that facilities, activities, materials, and equipment are physically accessible to and usable by all students, and that all potential student characteristics are addressed in safety considerations. Example: Develop safety procedures for all students, including those who are blind, deaf, or wheelchair users.

4. **Delivery methods**. Use multiple, accessible instructional methods that are accessible to all learners. Example: Use multiple modes to deliver content; when possible allow students to choose from multiple options for learning; and motivate and engage students—consider lectures, collaborative learning options, hands-on activities, Internet-based communications, education software, field work, and so forth.

5. **Information resources and technology**. Ensure that course materials, notes, and other information resources are engaging, flexible, and accessible for all students. Example: Choose printed materials and prepare a syllabus early to allow students the option of beginning to read materials and work on assignments before the course begins. Allow adequate time to arrange for alternate formats, such as books in audio format.

6. **Feedback**. Provide specific feedback on a regular basis. Example: Allow students to turn in parts of large projects for feedback before the final project is due.

7. **Assessment**. Regularly assess student progress using multiple accessible methods and tools, and adjust instruction accordingly. Example: Assess group and cooperative performance as well as individual achievement.

8. **Accommodation**. Plan for accommodations for students whose needs are not met by the instructional design. Example: Know campus protocols for getting materials in alternate formats, rescheduling classroom locations, and arranging for other accommodations for students with disabilities.

Learn about a Disability: Anxiety Disorder

Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) is a pattern of frequent, constant worry and anxiety over many different activities and events. Anyone can develop this disorder, even kids. Most people with the disorder report that they have been anxious for as long as they can remember. GAD occurs somewhat more often in women than in men.

The main symptom is the almost constant presence of worry or tension, even when there is little or no cause. Worries seem to float from one problem to another, such as family or relationship problems, work issues, money, health, and other problems. Many college students with GAD may worry extensively about handling test anxiety, have a fear of failure, have difficulty concentrating, experience fatigue and irritability, and may become depressed due to the extreme amount of pressure that they feel. Even when aware that their worries or fears are stronger than needed, a person with GAD still has difficulty controlling them.

Some tactics that may help with dealing with GAD include:
- Maintaining a consistent, regular and predictable schedule to minimize added stress
- Allow yourself to take a break when you begin feeling overwhelmed
- Keep a written log of assignments, papers, and tests to handle your course load
- Communicate with professors and student affairs professionals to help with resources and find ways to minimize stressors

Assistive Technology: Read & Write Gold 10 Features

Have difficulty concentrating when looking at a computer screen?
With all of the pop-ups and distracting ads on the Internet, research can quickly turn from a focused activity to an hour of procrastination. Using these features may help just help you to make sure your focus stays on that research!

**Screenshot Reader:**
There are times when text can’t be read aloud as it is part of an image, contained within inaccessible Flash, or found in a locked PDF. Read & Write GOLD has the ability to read aloud even this inaccessible digital text as well as text found in online applications, including course management systems, credit recovery applications, remedial learning programs, and online assessments. With Screenshot Reader, you can select any part of the screen or any text to be read aloud with dual color highlighting. You can even export the text directly into a Microsoft Word document.

Read & Write Gold is a program that promotes reading and writing success. The new software is available for all students in every UNI Computer Consulting Center computer lab.

If you would like to try Read & Write Gold for yourself, check out the available computer labs at the following website: www.uni.edu/its/labs/sccs.
Disability and Dating—Taking a Look at “The Undateables”

A new television show in the United Kingdom focuses on the dating scene for individuals with disabilities. Entitled “The Undateables,” the series follows nine singles as they meet other singles, through a dating agency for individuals with disabilities. By tackling the search for love, a challenge for all individuals, the show creates a buzz about a topic that all can relate to.

Though there have been criticisms about the marketing campaign revolving around the show, including it’s seemingly us vs. them type of theme, it still manages to capture the trials and tribulations of the dating world from the eyes of those individuals with disabilities. We get the chance to experience each date, along with the cast members, and hear about their opinions of the date. The Guardian newspaper writes about the experiences of Luke, one of the cast members of the show.

“Luke, 23 and a standup comedian, has Tourettes. Suffering twitches and involuntary swearing, he faces the obvious challenge of getting women to go out with him whilst yelling “horny b****!” He’s responsible for the most telling remark of the series: it’s not the disability that makes dating harder for him, he says, but the lack of confidence it brings.” (http://www.guardian.co.uk/tv-and-radio/tvandradioblog/2012/apr/02/undateables-channel-4-disability-rights-wrongs).

While the show has created controversy in its marketing attempts, it does get people talking and brings the focus back to the individuals involved, creating a heartfelt and honest depiction of the quest for love.

To find out more about “The Undateables,” visit these sites:
- http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/apr/08/hephzibah-anderson-undateables-powerful-viewing
- http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/apr/03/are-disabled-people-really-undateable
- http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2012/mar/31/dating-agency-disabilities-c4-undateables

Image from http://i.telegraph.co.uk/multimedia/archive/02184/the_undateables_2184582b.jpg
Faculty Resources: Working Toward Student Success

Have you ever wondered if there may be more that you could be doing to help a student in your classroom?

Unless a student discloses a disability to you, do not assume that the student has a disability. If you think that a student may need some accommodations to do their best academically, consider consulting the Student Disability Services Coordinator, Ashley Brickley, for more information about the services that SDS offers. Be sure to make a general announcement to your classes, letting them know the SDS resources and also refer to your syllabus with a statement about the resources for students with disabilities.

The information concerning a student’s disability is completely confidential. Students registered with the SDS office may qualify for accommodations in the classroom and after receiving paperwork about the student’s accommodations, the professor must help that student in receiving their accommodations in a confidential and respectful manner. For additional questions, don’t hesitate to contact the SDS office at 319-273-2677.

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