



## **ACADEMIC CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE**

### **SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Thank you for your interest in Huntington University. We are happy to provide some information about services for students with disabilities here at HU. We strongly encourage individuals who are considering Huntington University to thoroughly investigate the types of services which are available on this campus and on others as well. Don't be shy about asking questions! You need as much pertinent information as possible to make a decision about which college or university will provide the best "fit" for you and offer accommodations which will make it possible for you to access the academic environment.

Because Huntington University has a relatively modest enrollment, we do not have a specific "Office for Students with Disabilities." In addition to some of our other duties, the staff in the Academic Center for Excellence are pleased to coordinate the services which are provided to eligible students with disabilities. The accommodations are typically a modification in the classroom or physical setting in order for students to fully participate in the learning opportunities here at the University.

We have developed this brochure to help students with disabilities, as well as their parents, better understand disability services at HU. A question and answer format follows.

***Can I expect the same type of services and guidelines in college as I received in high school?***

It is important for you to be aware that the laws and regulations which apply to schools serving students in grades K to 12 are generally quite different than those for colleges and universities. For instance, the IDEA regulations apply to all public elementary and secondary schools. IDEA requires these schools to identify students with disabilities and to pay for the assessment required to determine any diagnosis and for any necessary academic accommodations. It is understandable that many families of

students with disabilities incorrectly believe that information about a disability automatically transfers from high school to college along with academic transcripts and that the college will just continue services and accommodations which were provided in high school. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA Amendments Act, however, govern public and private colleges and universities which receive federal financial assistance. Under these provisions, the student is responsible for notifying the institution of his disability, bearing any cost of documenting the disability and identifying necessary accommodations. Unless you tell us about your disability, we probably won't know about it. (In fact, it is illegal for us to ask if you have a disability before the decision has been made to admit you to the University.)

### ***What qualifies as a disability?***

In order for a student to be eligible for accommodations due to a disability, she must have a condition (such as learning disability, neurological condition, Spectrum disorder, low vision, mental illness, paraplegia) which substantially limits one or more major life activities (seeing, hearing, walking, learning, etc.). A student may also be considered to have a disability if she has a record of an impairment or is regarded as having such an impairment. The student must meet the academic standards required to be admitted to the University. In addition, the student must be expected to function successfully with reasonable modifications to rules, policies, or practices, with the removal of barriers, or with the provision of auxiliary aids or services.

A copy of your high school Individual Education Plan (IEP), 504 Plan or SOP (Summary of Performance), by itself, may not be sufficient documentation, although it is useful in helping staff understand the kind of support services you received there. Ideally, evidence to document a disabling condition will contain

the following information: reference to the original diagnosis (history of the condition), statement of the diagnosis, instruments used to determine the diagnosis, description of how the condition affects performance, recommendations for accommodations which can help you overcome the barriers imposed by the condition, and signature and title of the appropriate professional (physician or psychologist) making the diagnosis.

### ***How can I get documentation?***

Most students with learning disabilities contact their high school special services office and ask that copies of their psychological reports, IEP, SOP or 504 Plan be sent to the University. Students with medical or psychological difficulties may make similar requests of their physician or psychologist. Any student may ask his Vocational Rehabilitation counselor to send documentation. We also have copies of forms for different disabling conditions which you can ask an appropriate specialist to complete for you.

Sometimes the reports we receive are too sketchy to for us to determine that a student is eligible for accommodations. When that happens, it is the student's responsibility to obtain more information, at her expense.

As a result of the ADA Amendments, the ACE director places increased importance on the interview with the student regarding the impact the condition has on how the student functions. It is not our intent for the eligibility process to be burdensome to the student.

### ***What kinds of accommodations are available?***

There is no list of reasonable accommodations which are available to students with particular disabilities. Accommodations are determined on a case-by-case basis, depending on the supporting documentation and interviews with students. Some of

the more common accommodations include extended time on exams, taking exams in ACE, note taking assistance, books in alternate format (on CD, electronic), interpreters, and moving classes to accessible buildings. The ACE director is also available to discuss course requirements as they relate to your disability, which can be helpful when scheduling classes.

The University makes peer tutoring for many courses available to undergraduate students at no charge. There are no special LD tutors on campus. The Writing Center is open several times each week on a drop-in basis so students may get help with writing assignments. These services are not considered to be accommodations; nor are “accountability” or time management planning.

The University is not responsible to provide personal services such as assistance from an attendant, transportation, wheelchairs, coaching for LD or Asperger’s students or hearing aids.

In addition, there are other accommodations which may be provided to some students in high school which are not reasonable on the college campus. Here are some examples of requests which are not considered to be reasonable at HU: using a word bank for every exam, allowing students to retake exams on which they earned low scores, having staff call or go to students’ rooms daily to be sure they are up for class, asking professors to provide weekly reports of how students are performing in class, ensuring that students take medication as prescribed, pushing a wheelchair across campus or carrying books for a student every day.

### ***How much advance notice is required in order to receive accommodations?***

As soon as you are pretty sure you will be attending HU, you should contact the ACE director to get the process started so you will be able to receive accommodations when classes begin. Most students utilize the Disability Disclosure form which is included with their acceptance letter. Some services, especially textbooks in alternate format and interpreters, involve a considerable amount of time to arrange. We ask that you give us a minimum of four weeks notice for those services, and two weeks for others.

Before accommodations begin, we will discuss the obstacles you face because of your disability and what accommodations you have requested. Then we will sign an agreement which identifies the accommodations for which you are eligible.

Some students, especially those with mild learning disabilities or ADHD, have not needed to use a great deal of accommodations in high school and wonder if they should pursue them in college. It has been our experience that most students find college to be more challenging than high school, and it is better to have accommodations in place for college. We strongly suggest that you request accommodations and use them at least during the first several weeks of the semester. Should you find that they are not necessary, you may discontinue them. But it is far better to be approved for accommodations and not need them, than to find out after a disastrous semester how important they are.

### ***What will professors know about my situation?***

Our goal is that students with disabilities will be able to discuss their needs with professors and advocate for themselves since it is such a critical life skill. However, since some students don't

have any experience in doing so, we are willing to help them develop those skills.

Confidentiality is very important to us. If you are a freshman, with your permission, we will send a formal notification to the professor of each course for which you will need an accommodation. Upperclassmen are expected to deliver their letter to professors. The notification typically does not give any details about your condition, just a description of the accommodations you are eligible to receive. You are free to share more information with your professors if you wish, but we will not release your disability information without your consent.

***Will professors be displeased if I ask for accommodations?  
Could it have a negative effect on my grades?***

Requesting an accommodation or adjustment to the environment is not asking for “favors” or special privileges. There is a campus-wide commitment to helping students access Huntington’s environment/classrooms and achieve to the best of their abilities. And some profs ask for advice as to how to assist students to learn as much as possible in their courses. They are aware of our mandate to provide reasonable accommodations to eligible students.

***Is there a waiver or substitution for writing, math or foreign language requirements?***

There is no HU policy to automatically waive particular requirements for students with learning disabilities. However, requests are considered by the Academic Concerns Committee on an individual basis, through a petition process. The University is not obligated to waive requirements which are considered to be essential elements of the HU educational program, but a modification in the way a particular student meets the essential requirements may be made.

***What experience does HU have with students with different disabilities?***

Some of the students we have worked with have had the following conditions: learning disability, ADHD, hard of hearing, low vision, paraplegia, cerebral palsy, Autism, Asperger's Syndrome, bipolar disorder, fibromyalgia, anxiety disorder, depression, and rheumatoid arthritis.

***How much of the campus is accessible to someone who uses a wheelchair?***

Fourteen of seventeen campus buildings are accessible. Four residence halls, Roush, Miller, Meadows and Livingston, have handicap accessible rooms.

The inaccessible buildings are the Administrative Annex and Baker and Hardy Halls. Students who have need of services in the Administrative Annex (such as accessing Ministry/Missions professors' offices) are accommodated on an individual basis. If a class is scheduled in the Administrative Annex, it can be relocated to an accessible building.

Students who are eligible for a handicapped parking permit may present documentation to the Student Life office to obtain one on campus, or simply display one they already possess for their vehicle.

***Are organizations/advocates outside the University ever involved with my education?***

A student may give consent for the ACE director to release information to his parents or professionals such as physicians, Vocational Rehabilitation counselors, or personal counselors. We are pleased to cooperate with others who are knowledgeable about your situation and wish to support your educational objectives.

### ***Should I disclose my disability to my roommate?***

This answer to this question varies from one situation to another and there are many different opinions. If you have concerns about how a roommate may respond to you, feel free to discuss it with the ACE director or the Residence Hall Director.

### **student rights and responsibilities**

Freshmen often struggle to make a successful adjustment to college life. There are many transitions for disabled and nondisabled students alike. The laws which govern high schools are different from those for colleges/universities, as is the process to qualify for accommodations. What follows is a brief summary to guide and inform you of the expectations for students with disabilities at Huntington University.

#### **rights**

- to be given access to higher education even though you may have a disability
- to receive reasonable accommodations that enable you to have equal access to educational opportunities
- to have access to auxiliary aids/assistive technology
- to be given free choice in career objectives and not counseled toward a “more restrictive” program
- to receive assistance from ACE staff in removing any physical, academic, or attitudinal barriers
- to be free from discrimination or retaliation based on a disability
- to appeal decisions or actions with which you are dissatisfied

## **responsibilities**

- to identify yourself to the ACE director and provide documentation regarding your disability
- to formally request accommodations by meeting or consulting with the ACE director at least two weeks before your first semester at HU begins. (A minimum of four weeks notice is requested if you require alternate format textbooks, visual aids or interpreter services. Some students who require books in alternate format will be asked to apply for membership with Learning Ally; HU will pay the annual fee.)
- to provide for your personal independent living or other personal disability-related needs. (If you will require the services of an attendant, contact the ACE director for assistance. We may be able to help you recruit potential attendants.)
- for students requiring alternate-format texts, to bring a copy of your course schedule to ACE after registration so the texts can be requested from publishers
- to provide a copy of any text which is to be read or scanned, or work out a schedule to share the text(s)
- to bring a syllabus for each course for which you require HU to scan/edit a textbook
- to provide at least 3 days notice to the professor and ACE staff each time you plan to take an exam in ACE
- to attend class even if interpreter or note taker services are being provided
- to provide at least 24 hours notice for cancelling interpreters

- to assume responsibility for meeting with faculty to discuss concerns or conflicts
- to notify the ACE director if an approved accommodation is not being provided or is unsatisfactory, or if a modification is necessary

adapted from *The Policy Book: Guidance for Disability Service Providers*, JoAnne Hill, 2000

For more information about student rights and responsibilities, or to access other resources, please check out the websites on the back page of this booklet.

### **checklist**

A number of items on the following list will apply to incoming students with disabilities.

— schedule a campus visit to discuss available access, opportunities, and programs

\_\_\_\_\_ complete and return the admission application and submit all other required materials to the Admissions Office

\_\_\_\_\_ complete and return financial aid forms to the HU Financial Aid Office; also file the FAFSA and appropriate state financial aid forms

\_\_\_\_\_ schedule an appointment with your Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselor to be certain you understand what kind of support you are eligible to receive from VR

\_\_\_\_\_ after being notified you have been admitted, complete the Disability Disclosure form and send your medical or psychological documentation of disability to the ACE director; or sign a release for your high school or VR counselor to send it

\_\_\_\_\_ contact the ACE director to arrange for accommodations you may need on campus (testing, attendant, note takers, interpreters, alternate format books, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_ mail your Student Deposit

\_\_\_\_\_ complete your HU Health Record forms and mail them

\_\_\_\_\_ read, sign, and mail the Housing Contract, if applicable

\_\_\_\_\_ plan to attend Freshman Registration Weekend in April or June if possible

## contact information

The area code for each of these individuals is 260. The “formula” for HU email addresses is firstinitiallastname@huntington.edu.

campus ministries	Arthur Wilson	359-4031
career services	Martha Smith	359-4040
financial aid	Jerry W. Davis	359-4014
residence life	Jesse Brown	359-4028
registrar	Sarah Harvey	359-4010
personal counseling	Martha Smith	359-4040
student billing	Shelia Hacker	359-4023
student success	Scott Raymond	359-4328

For more information, or to request this booklet in an alternate format such as large print or digital file, please write or call:

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for further information:

*Students with Disabilities Preparing for  
Postsecondary Education: Know Your  
Rights and Responsibilities*

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>

*DO-IT College Preparation Resources for Students*

[http://www.washington.edu/doit/Resources/college\\_prep.html](http://www.washington.edu/doit/Resources/college_prep.html)

*AHEAD Resources for Students and Parents*

<http://www.ahead.org/students-parents>

*Going to College*

<http://www.going-to-college.org/>

*An Open Letter to Parents of  
Students with Disabilities About to Enter College*

<https://www.huntington.edu/uploads/page/Jarrow%20ltr.pdf>