

College/School or Administrative Unit:
Diagnostic Testing and Disability Services

Using 2008-2009 data collected from office e-mails and contact logs, the office found that the university had four ADA student complaints for which the Vice President consulted our office for information on disability policy and best practices. 100% of these administrative requests were filled.

The policy and information on best practices which were shared by our office, coupled with helpful collaboration from other campus entities, resulted in lasting removal of barriers for persons with disabilities.

For example, in case #1, a student was already in an accessible room in campus housing. The room met minimum legal requirements; however the shower did not meet the individual needs of the paraplegic. The law recommends showers with handrails; however, this student could not adequately grip or stand to shower. Our office worked in concert with the division of Administration and Auxiliary Services as well as Campus Communities, our VP for Finance and the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and Institutional Relations to have the shower retrofitted to accommodate the individual needs of the student. The intent of the Section 504 accessibility law was exceeded. The solution to rebuild the shower, although costly, flowed from policy consultations with our office.

In two cases of an academic nature, the students whose major was Social Work petitioned the department for a math course exemption or substitution based on their handicapping condition. In both instances, the Office of Disability Services researched and evaluated their most recent psychological evaluation, school histories, and mitigating circumstances, on a case-by-case basis. After identifying legitimate concerns, recommendations were issued from our office on Considerations Regarding Course Substitutions. Documentation: Course Substitutions Considerations document is available in the Office of Diagnostic Testing and Disability Services.

Lastly, a mature female student with a "hidden" disability (other health impaired) registered with our office and was given a letter of accommodations to notify faculty of her needs. This procedure is in accordance with the disability statement included on the course syllabus of every class offered by the university. However, because she didn't "look" disabled, she was asked to show her scars and prove that she was not being dishonest. The student filed an EEO complaint. The academic dean working with the EEO officer requested that the Office of Disability Services conduct a sensitivity training with the entire faculty. During this sensitivity training, faculty asked questions, gave examples of situations in their classes, etc. The leadership of the department took responsibility for setting a tone of acceptance and dispelling attitudinal barriers towards persons with disabilities of any nature. Documentation: Sensitivity Training agenda available in the Office of the Dean, College of Business.

*Submitted by Kay Norman, Director of Diagnostic Testing and Disability Services
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