

**HUNTINGTON
UNIVERSITY LEARNING
CENTER**

**SERVICES FOR
STUDENTS WITH
DISABILITIES**

Thank you for your interest in Huntington University. We are happy to respond to your request for information about services for students with disabilities. We strongly encourage individuals who are considering Huntington University to thoroughly investigate the types of support 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 appropriate services 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 Learning Center are pleased to coordinate the services which are provided to students whose disabilities require some kind of modification in the classroom or physical setting in order for them to maximize learning opportunities here at the University.

We have developed this brochure to help students with disabilities, as well as their parents, navigate the sometimes-confusing waters of higher education disability services. 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,

however, governs public and private institutions which receive federal financial assistance. Under the provisions of Section 504, the student is responsible for notifying the institution of his disability and 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 not legal 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, vision impairment, 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), by itself, is not sufficient documentation, although it is useful in helping staff understand the kind of support services you received there. Specifically, reports to document a disabling condition must 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 and IEP be sent to the University. Students with medical or emotional difficulties may make similar requests of their physician or psychologist. Any student may ask her 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 make it possible 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 his expense.

What kinds of accommodations are available?

There is no list of 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 the Learning Center, notetakers, assistance with books in alternate format (on tape, electronic), interpreters, "coaching" or time management planning, and moving classes to accessible buildings. The Learning Center 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 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.

The University is not responsible to provide personal services such as assistance from an attendant, transportation, wheelchairs or hearing aids.

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

As soon as you're pretty sure you'll be attending HU, you should contact the director of the Learning Center 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 admissions 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 your diagnosis and what accommodations have been recommended. Then we will sign an agreement which identifies what accommodations you are eligible for.

Some students, especially those with learning disabilities, 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 many 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 semester. Then if 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.

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. The notification 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 any of your disability records 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/classroom and achieve to the best of their ability. And some profs ask for advice as to how to assist students to learn as much as possible in their courses. They are aware that we are legally mandated to provide 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 kind of experience do you have with different disabilities?

Some of the students we have worked with have had the following conditions: learning disability, ADD or ADHD, hearing impairment, vision impairment, paraplegia, cerebral palsy, autism, personality disorder, fibromyalgia, anxiety disorder, depression, and rheumatoid arthritis.

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

Twelve of sixteen campus buildings are accessible. Three residence halls, Roush, Miller, and Meadows, have handicap accessible rooms.

Inaccessible buildings include the Becker administration building, the administrative annex, and Hardy Hall. Students who have need of services in any of these buildings (such as the registrar, business office, and mailing and duplicating) are accommodated

on an individual basis. For instance, packages are delivered, changes in course registration are managed by telephone or e-mail, etc. If a class is scheduled in Becker, it is relocated to an accessible building.

Students who are eligible for a handicapped parking permit may present documentation to the Student Development 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 case?

Students may give consent for the Learning Center director to release information to her 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.

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 Learning Center 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 director of the Learning Center and provide documentation regarding your disability
- to formally request accommodations by meeting or consulting with the director of the Learning Center 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 on tape

will be asked to apply for membership with Recordings for the Blind/Dyslexic; 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 Learning Center 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 the Learning Center after registration so the appropriate process can begin
- 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 tape/scan a textbook (for the reader/scanner)
- to provide 3 days’ notice to the professor and Learning Center staff each time you plan to take an exam in the Learning Center
- to attend class even if interpreter or notetaker services are being provided
- to assume responsibility for meeting with faculty to discuss concerns or conflicts
- to notify the Learning Center 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, please go to the Office of Civil Rights website:

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

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 Learning Center director; or sign a release for your VR counselor to send it

___ contact the Learning Center director to arrange for accommodations you may need on campus (testing, attendant, notetakers, 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 June

For more information, or to request this brochure in an alternate format such as large print or cd-rom, please write or call:

Kris Chafin, Learning Center Director
Huntington University
2303 College Ave.
Huntington, IN 46750

(260) 359-4290
fax: (260) 359-4144

kchafin@huntington.edu

other contact information

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

campus ministries	Bill Fisher	359-4031
career development	Martha Smith	359-4040
financial aid	Sharon Woods	359-4014
freshman orientation	Tana Fortney	359-4027
health services	Donna Heck	359-4092
director of residence life/student programs	Jesse Brown	359-4028
registrar	Sarah Harvey	359-4010
personal counseling	Martha Smith	359-4040
	Dave Kinningham	359-4121 (mid-August to May)
student billing	Shelia Hacker	359-4023