ASKAAN: ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS NETWORK FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY

A Project

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by
Houa Lee

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by

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Abstract

of

ASKAAN: ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS NETWORK FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACULTY

by

Houa Lee

Statement of Problem

Despite current, enforced disability laws and legislation, several persistent barriers remain in the academic environment. A significant lack of disability-related knowledge and negative attitudes among teaching faculty toward students with disabilities are among some of the most common challenges faced by students with disabilities. The college teaching faculty’s lack of knowledge regarding disability can create significant barriers to students with disabilities (Sniatecki, Perry, & Snel, 2015), especially toward access. This likely affects student success and contributes to the lower success rate, such as lower completion and graduation rates, experienced by this student population.

Sources of Data

The research data were obtained using a variety of resources and methods, including peer-reviewed journal articles, online research databases, previous CSUS Master’s Projects, dissertations, and books. Further, research was acquired through
relevant websites pertinent to specific disabilities and accommodations for students with disabilities.

Conclusions Reached

A PowerPoint website presentation was created for community college teaching faculty, which was designed to enhance their level of knowledge regarding disability-related information for students with disabilities.

___________________________, Committee Chair
Todd Koch, Ph.D.

___________________________
Date
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

Although widely recognized today, disability rights for students in higher education was not always provided. The first major legislation protecting students with disabilities in higher education did not come about until the early to mid-1970s after the passing of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Specifically, under this Act, Section 504 was established to protect students in higher education from discrimination on the basis of disability in any federally funded postsecondary institution (Meyers, Lindburg, & Nied, 2014). Although these changes brought about new safeguards for students with disabilities, including the implementing of academic accommodations, many postsecondary institutions were initially resistant and noncompliant toward providing such changes for students with disabilities (Meyers et al., 2014). This noncompliance perpetuated significant academic barriers to students with disabilities, and inevitably, led to litigation. Several cases were heard in district courts, appellate courts, and even the Supreme Court, while others were settled outside of court (Meyers et al., 2014).

The next major legislation to follow the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. The ADA of 1990 was established to further protect individuals with disabilities from other forms of discrimination in any organization, agency or institution, including those that are not federally funded; thus, this legislation addressed employers, public access accommodations, local and state
government, telecommunications, and public and private universities’ services, programs, employment and activities (Meyers et al., 2014). The passage of the ADA led to mandated training on college campuses and, as a result, several institutions developed formalized processes for providing accommodations and services to college students with disabilities (Meyers et al., 2014). However, one must keep in mind that this does not necessarily translate into mandatory training of disability law for faculty, as the ADA does not mandate that universities and colleges train faculty in knowledge of disability law (May, 2013). Hence, although disability rights in higher education has led to the growth of disability service providers, offices and centers on college campuses throughout the United States, which exist to serve and support students with disabilities, various struggles nonetheless remain with us today.

Whereas the struggles of the past in implementing accommodations and provisions of services for students with disabilities largely derived from resistance at various levels of the postsecondary institutions, the struggles of today mainly derive from genuine lack of knowledge among faculty on disability-related law, specific disabilities and reasonable accommodations (Duggan, 2010). This is highly important because faculty play a pivotal role in the success of students with disabilities (as well as those without disabilities) (Hong & Himmel, 2009); hence, a faculty’s limited knowledge about disabilities may have potential detrimental effects on the success of students with disabilities (Hong & Himmel, 2009).
Barriers or obstacles faced by students with disabilities are not to be taken lightly as isolated events that are only faced by students with disabilities and not the rest of the campus community or society. Arguably, if we do not educate our professionals and educators about disability laws and rights, as well as the importance of providing reasonable accommodations for student success, we are not only failing to protect the civil rights and liberty of our own American citizens, but the future of our workforce and productivity.

Due to the increasing number of students with disabilities enrolled in postsecondary education, specifically in community college (Mamiseishvili & Koch, 2012), it is crucial that teaching faculty be familiar with disability laws as well as their role and responsibilities toward students with disabilities. During the 2008-2009 academic year, approximately 354,200 students with any disabilities were enrolled at public two-year institutions in the United States, while approximately 215,000 were enrolled at public 4-year universities, and fewer students with disabilities were enrolled at all other institutions (Raue, Lewis, & Coopersmith, 2011).

A large part of the increase in enrollment of students with disabilities in postsecondary education is due, in part, to the passage of disability legislation in higher education (Bryan & Myers, 2006), which protects individuals from discrimination on the basis of disability. Another portion of the increase is due to overall population growth and a rising percentage rate of enrollment by all citizens (Meyers et al., 2014). Hence, due to the inevitably increasing population of students with disabilities at community
colleges throughout the nation, it is crucial that teaching faculty are prepared and equipped to serve and support this population, not only out of legal obligation but to ensure student success and foster acceptance of diversity.

Many methods of educating faculty regarding the provision of services to students with disabilities were considered in pursuing the current project. A PowerPoint website product was chosen by the author for several reasons. First, a “self-administered” technology-based faculty training (or related activity) has the benefit of being able to reach large numbers of faculty members while also eliminating any inconvenience of scheduling conflicts around development activities (Bourque, 2004). In addition, due to heavy constraints on faculty’s time, it is beneficial to have information (or training-related activity) be made available in more convenient formats that are easily accessible to faculty, such as through the internet (Scott & Gregg, 2000).

Therefore, the purpose of this project is to provide information to teaching faculty regarding disability laws and legislation, specific disabilities, educational limitations, and academic accommodations. A PowerPoint website titled, “ASKAAN: Academic Accommodations Network” was produced in the hope that it will be made available via website, and serve as a resource for faculty reference.

**Statement of the Problem**

Despite current, enforced disability laws and legislation, several persistent barriers remain in the academic environment for students with disabilities. These barriers include a lack of knowledge and negative attitudes among (teaching) faculty toward
students with disabilities. The lack of knowledge of college teaching faculty regarding disability can create significant barriers to students with disabilities (Sniatecki, Perry, & Snel, 2015). Although not the sole factor, this lack of knowledge is likely a contributing factor toward the lower success rates and, consequently, lower graduation and/or completion rates among students with disabilities.

Previous research has shown that faculty knowledge of disability is a significant predictor of faculty willingness to accommodate students with disabilities (Hong & Himmel, 2009). Faculty knowledge of disability also is associated with determining whether faculty will have positive or negative experiences working with students with disabilities (Hong & Himmel, 2009). In other words, the less knowledge faculty possess about disability law, and specific disabilities and accommodations, the less likely they are willing to accommodate this population. This discovery is important for two main reasons since (a) student success is partially dependent on receiving reasonable accommodation to alleviate the impact of a disability, and (b) lack of compliance on the part of faculty makes the institution susceptible to discrimination complaints and potential litigation (Bourque, 2004).

Furthermore, Gregg (2009) noted that students with disabilities have lower retention rates, especially during the first two years of college, than their counterparts without disabilities. At the 2-year institutions, retention rate is defined as “the percentage of first-time degree/certificate-seeking students enrolled in the fall who either returned to the institution or successfully completed their program by the following fall” (Aud &
Hannes, 2011, p. 22). As previously mentioned, two-year colleges serve the largest proportion of postsecondary students with disabilities, yet half of these students failed to persist, transfer, or complete a degree or certificate by the end of their third year (Mamiseishvili & Koch, 2012).

Thus, the issue of faculty knowledge of disability is important to address in order to better understand and minimize potential academic or educational barriers, whether unintentional or intentional, faced by students with disabilities. A critical component is to increase faculty awareness or knowledge on disability law which may positively affect student recruitment, retention, and completion in postsecondary settings as well (Dona & Edmister, 2001). As Walker (1980) stated, “Support services can make it possible for the handicapped student to enter the postsecondary setting physically, but only faculty can provide access to knowledge and ways of knowing” (p. 54).

**Theoretical Framework**

Several theories exist regarding how attitudes are formed and changed, and many of these theories propose a connection between knowledge and attitudes. One theory, known as the ABC Model of Attitudes (Jain, 2014), specifically contends that attitudes are linked to three components: cognition (that is, knowledge and beliefs), affect (that is, thoughts and emotions), and behavior (that is, overt actions). According to this theory, attitudes can be formed based on any one of these components or a combination of them. In addition, research has linked knowledge to attitudes about individuals with disabilities by demonstrating that negative attitudes can be improved by increasing knowledge
(Campbell, Gilmore, & Cuskelly, 2003). That is, limited faculty knowledge regarding disability laws and regulations, specific disabilities, and academic accommodations may shape negative faculty attitudes that can result in an absence or inefficacy of accommodations for students with disabilities that can, in turn, impact student success.

Definition of Terms

**Academic Accommodations or Accommodation**

An alternative method for presenting academic material or service that, in its original form, is not accessible to a student with a disability. The alternative approach is a means that results in accessibility (Duggan, 2010). Examples include producing a Braille textbook for a person who is blind, providing a sign language interpreter for a person who is Deaf, or giving extra exam time to complete an examination for a student with a learning disability. Accommodations are considered the opposite of academic modification (Duggan, 2010).

**Academic Modification**

A method in which an academic material or service not accessible to a student with a disability is substantially changed into a means that is accessible (Duggan, 2010). For example, a student with a visual impairment only completes odd numbered exercises in a textbook, a Deaf student does not watch a movie other students watch, or a student with a learning disability has one wrong answer removed from a multiple choice examination (Duggan, 2010).
Attitude

There are several definitions of “attitude”, but the listed definitions have been chosen according to relevance. According to Malhotra (2005), an attitude is a summary evaluation of an object or thought. Further, Walley et al. (2009) submits that attitudes may be positive, negative or neutral. Lastly, attitude is a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993).

Community College

A community college is a public institution of higher education that is designed to offer a 2-year curriculum terminating with an associate’s degree (Community college, n.d.). Community colleges are also known as junior colleges or city colleges. In the present study, the term “community college” is used synonymously with the term “two-year college.”

Disability

In Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the term “disability” means, with respect to an individual: physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such an individual; a record of such an impairment; being regarded as having such an impairment.
Educational Limitation

Limitations that affect one’s education because of their disability, such as memory loss or difficulty with reading comprehension for students with traumatic brain injuries.

Equal Access

Assurance of equal opportunity for students with disabilities in all aspects of the college experience. Access is not limited to admission, but includes access through degree completion (Bourque, 2004).

Faculty

The term “faculty” refers to all ranks of academic instructional staff at institutions of higher education (professors, assistant professors, associate professors, adjunct faculty, lecturers, etc.).

FERPA (The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act)

A federal law designed to protect student privacy for students who are 18 years of age or older, establishing them as legal adults entitled to confidentiality of their student records (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

Knowledge

Knowledge is defined as how much information is known regarding specific disabilities, academic accommodations, and laws that govern students with disabilities in higher education.
**Reasonable Accommodation**

An accommodation that does not require substantial modifications, fundamental alternations, or undue administrative or financial burden (Bourque, 2004)

**Student Success**

Student success is defined as successful attainment or completion of a degree and/or certificate at 2-year institutions.

**Student with a Disability**

A person enrolled at a community college who has a verified impairment which limits one or more major life activities and which imposes an educational limitation

**Universal Design (UD)**

A methodology used to make physical locations and environments (e.g., classrooms) usable for all persons, and especially for persons with disabilities

**Limitations of the Project**

**Time**

This author was largely limited to gathering research from peer-reviewed journal articles, government and state agency websites, non-profit agency websites, books written by scholars, and dissertations largely between 2006 and 2016. Furthermore, very recent research around community college teaching faculty attitude and knowledge, as well as provision of services for students with disabilities, was limited and unavailable.
Geography

This project is limited in focusing on public 2-year or community college students with disabilities. The intended audience for this project is community college teaching faculty across the United States. It does not necessarily address state specific needs and statistics. The geographical target is the United States.

Author Bias

The project content is based upon the author’s inclusion and interpretation of current available research. Additionally, this author is passionate about the project topic based upon experiences with working with this population and a desire to see improved attitude and improved provision of services by faculty. The author has reviewed and studied disability as well as education, vocational and cultural concerns, thus the author assumes there is a level of understanding on the part of the readers. The assumption may inadvertently cause omission of details or explanations.

Organization of the Project

In the Introduction, an overview is provided of the history of disability in higher education as well as the acknowledgement of an increased population of enrolled students with disabilities in postsecondary educational settings. There was a review of faculty attitude and provision of accommodation disparities within the community colleges, and discussion of how increasing faculty knowledge of disability plays a role in enhancing accommodation services and educational outcomes for this population. In Chapter 2, this author synthesized a review of current literature pertinent to this project. Chapter 3
comprises the methodology used to collect data for this project. Lastly, Chapter 4 provides a summary of the project and recommendations for future research. The appendix contains the PowerPoint slides of the website entitled ASKAAN: Academic Accommodation Network for Community College Faculty.
Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The influx of students with disabilities into higher education has largely been enabled by the passage of disability laws, such as the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and American with Disabilities Act of 1990, both of which prohibit educational institution from discriminating against students with disabilities (Hawke, 2004). Despite their continued enrollment increases, there are still significant challenges faced by this population toward successfully completing their education, and hence improving their overall quality of life and independence as evident in their low completion rates compared to their peers without disabilities (Barber, 2012).

Although there are several factors that may contribute to the low completion rates, such as part-time attendance and/or low socioeconomic status, a critical factor that cannot be overlooked involves faculty knowledge and attitude, and its impact on the provision of accommodations. Improving faculty knowledge and, thus, faculty attitude, is the primary means to improve provision of accommodations. This chapter reviews literature on Faculty Knowledge and Attitude, Disability Legislation, Faculty Role and Responsibilities, Understanding the Community College Student Today, Success and Challenges of Students with Disabilities, Types of Student Disabilities and Limitations, and Accommodations and Strategies for Instructors.
Faculty Knowledge and Attitude

There is limited recent research regarding the level of disability-related knowledge that community college teaching faculty possess and how this can shape faculty attitude, thus affecting the provision of accommodations for students with disabilities. Much of recent and related literature focuses on university faculty and teachers, and how their beliefs shape attitude, which can affect the provision of accommodations for students with disabilities. Perhaps the lack of recent and relevant research on community college teaching faculty is due to the possibility that not much has changed concerning disability laws or legislation in higher education since the early 1990s. To be fair, however, little research has been conducted, in general, regarding faculty attitudes as it relates to students with disabilities in higher education (Rao, 2004).

Due to the scarcity of information regarding community college teaching faculty, alternative relevant information was gathered. Based on research that found no significant differences in attitudes toward disability and provision of accommodations between 2-year and 4-year teaching faculty (Ihori, 2012), research focused on 4-year teaching faculty was utilized. In addition, some “older” literature was included in this paper.

Multiple theories exist regarding how attitudes are formed and changed, and many of these theories propose a link between knowledge and attitudes (McDonnall, O’Mally, & Crudden, 2014). Hilgard (1980) proposed that attitudes are linked to three components: affect (i.e., thoughts or emotions), behavior (i.e., overt actions), and
cognition (i.e., knowledge or beliefs). According to Hilgard (1980), attitudes can be formed based on any of these components or a mixture of them. Similarly, McDonnall et al. (2014) concluded that attitudes may be mainly based on emotions or experiences, but others may be influenced by knowledge.

Research has linked knowledge of disability to attitudes toward individuals with disabilities by showing that negative attitudes can be improved by increasing knowledge (see Campbell et al., 2003). This is important, because research shows that faculty attitudes and intent to provide academic accommodations are positively correlated (May, 2013).

In addition, knowledge is a significant predictor of faculty willingness to accommodate students with disabilities, and is a precondition for whether or not faculty will have positive or negative experiences working with students with disabilities (Hong & Himmel, 2009). This is also found in Bourque’s study (2004), which showed that knowledge level has significant predictive power in determining attitude toward, and intention to provide, accommodations to students with disabilities.

Furthermore, Dowrick, Anderson, Heyer, and Acosta (2005) showed that positive faculty attitudes toward students with disabilities were linked to better adjustments in academic courses for students compared to negative faculty attitudes, which were linked to less successful adjustment for students with disabilities. McWaine’s (2011) study of the experiences of students with disabilities also revealed that faculty attitudes were one of the major barriers they had to overcome. Likewise, resistance from faculty members
with limited knowledge of students with disabilities in the provision of accommodations and observing these students’ rights pose a major barrier to student success (Mamiseishvili & Koch, 2011). In a study by Bourque (2004), the research supports the claim that students with disabilities may experience negative attitudes on the part of faculty, leading to a “chilly climate” for these learners. Moreover, prior research has also shown that faculty members' attitudes are considered by students to be crucial to their success (Bourque, 2004).

With respect to the dynamics of faculty attitude and implementation of effective accommodations, research on Canadian college faculty and students found that if an instructor held a negative attitude toward accommodations, or impeded their implementation, then students with disabilities would hesitate or choose not to use accommodations because of the associated stigma (Hindes & Mather, 2007). On the other hand, faculty with a positive stance regarding accommodations effected a greater willingness in students to seek assistance (Kim & Lee, 2015).

The aforementioned reluctance to utilize accommodations (Hindes & Mather, 2007) is important because one of the most critical tools to facilitate learning for students with disabilities in higher education is the provision of accommodations (Kim & Lee, 2015). Likewise, legally mandated accommodations have been found to be one of the key factors helpful to college completion among students with disabilities (Barber, 2012).

Given the above, it is obvious that faculty play a crucial role in the decision-making process of students with disabilities regarding accommodations (Hindes &
Mather, 2007). As a result, it is important that faculty recognize the factors that promote or impede the use of accommodations, as well as the significant role that accommodations have on academic success (Kim & Lee, 2015). For example, test accommodations, and specifically time extension and modification of exam materials, have a strong influence on GPA (Kim & Lee, 2015). This implies that time extensions and material transformations can improve the possibility of academic success and that these accommodations directly influence test scores (Kim & Lee, 2015). Again, increasing faculty knowledge of disability laws and accommodations is not only important for successful implementation of accommodations but for student success as well.

Overall, we can see how faculty knowledge shapes faculty attitudes and, thus, impact the provision of accommodations for students with disabilities. Specifically, knowledge related to legal requirements (disability law and accommodations) and specific disabilities (specific disability groups and teaching strategies) are common areas of deficiency that community college teaching faculty face. Furthermore, these issues must be addressed to better improve access and learning for students with disabilities (Duggan, 2010).

In a 2001 study conducted by Jean Dona, 233 academic and vocational/technical faculty at 15 community colleges in Mississippi were surveyed regarding their knowledge of disability law in higher education. The results showed that, overall, only 39% of faculty demonstrated an acceptable level of knowledge, also known as a correct
response rate of 80% or more. This finding suggests that community college teaching faculty have very limited knowledge of the implications that disability laws, especially the ADA, have regarding rights and responsibilities for faculty, staff and students (McWaine, 2011).

To be fair, faculty attitude and its impact on the provision of accommodations is not the sole factor impacting student learning and success. It is important to acknowledge that there are also several other factors, such as full-time attendance, degree aspirations, first-year GPA, socioeconomic status, minority status, social support, and so forth that may impact student success (Kim & Lee, 2015). However, the compliance and support of teaching faculty to accommodate and build understanding toward students with disabilities is an indispensable factor relevant to their success. As these students eventually and hopefully move on from the educational institution into the labor market, their interaction and experience regarding accommodations and support for seeking such assistance will likely shape their future interaction regarding self-advocacy and accommodations with employers in the workplace (Barber, 2012). Therefore, it is even more important that faculty build supportive and positive interactions with students with disabilities to form the basis from which students can experience positive reinforcers regarding support for their disabilities, and continue such requests for future supports.

Lamport (1993) found that faculty who seek to better understand students with disabilities tend to have students who are more successful. Similarly, Pompper (2006) found that faculty who seek to build relationships with students demonstrated increased
student retention. In addition, Pompper found that faculty who feel that they lack knowledge of formal policies and procedures concerning students with disabilities believed that if they had a clearer understanding of related policies and procedures, they would be better able to help students.

This idea that faculty who have a clearer understanding of related policies and procedures would be better able to help students is also supported by other research. In a study by Murray, Lombardi, Wren, and Keys (2009), faculty who attended some type of disability training demonstrated higher levels of openness towards facilitating student accommodations and a greater sensitivity to students with disabilities’ unique needs. Hence, increasing faculty knowledge of legal requirements and specific disabilities and other relevant information is critical. In the next section, these topics are explored, starting with disability legislation and law in higher education.

**Disability Legislation**

Prior to the implementation of federal laws that specifically protected persons with disability from discrimination, such as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution provided the basis for protection against discrimination of people with disabilities (Hawke, 2004). Under the Fourteenth Amendment’s equal protection clause, states may not deny equal protection under the law to persons within their jurisdiction (Hawke, 2004). Additionally, since its ratification in 1868, the amendment has expanded to apply to all public entities including postsecondary
institutions (Hawke, 2004), such as community colleges. Furthermore, Subpart E of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title II and III of the ADA governs accommodations in higher education. At the postsecondary level, students with disabilities may be eligible for civil rights protection under Subpart E of Section 504, which states:

No qualified handicapped student shall, on the basis of handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any academic, research, occupational training, housing, health insurance, counseling, financial aid, physical education, athletics, recreation, transportation, other extracurricular, or other postsecondary education aid, benefits, or services to which this subpart applies. (Legal Information Institute, n.d.a, para. 1)

To ensure that students with disabilities have access to physical and instructional environments, Section 504 refers to “appropriate academic adjustments” (U.S. Department of Education, 2011, para. 8) that might be necessary to prevent discrimination. Academic adjustments are described in the legislation as “modifications to its academic requirements as are necessary to ensure that such requirements do not discriminate or have the effect of discriminating, on the basis of handicap, against a qualified handicapped applicant or student” (Legal Information Institute, n.d.b, para. 1). The ADA also helps to prevent discrimination through the use of accommodations (Center for Autism Research, 2014).
Although the term “modifications” is used in the legislative definition of “academic adjustments,” most colleges (and universities) provide accommodations, not modifications (Newman & Madaus, 2014). To clarify, an accommodation can be a device, practice or intervention, or procedure provided to a student with disability that affords equal access to instruction or assessment (McLaughlin, 2012). Its purpose is to minimize or eliminate the impact of a student’s disability so that she or he can achieve the standard (McLaughlin, 2012). A key point is that an accommodation does not change the content being taught, nor does it reduce learning or achievement expectations (McLaughlin, 2012). In contrast, a modification may also be a device, practice intervention or procedure, except the teacher is changing the core content standard or the performance expectations (McLaughlin, 2012).

With respect to applicability of the above, Section 504 and the ADA apply to individuals who have a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or major life activities. Additionally, the ADA defines “disability” as “people who have a history of, or who are regarded as having, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities” (Meyers et al., 2014, p. 14). Subsequently, the ADA defines “major life activities” as ability in “caring for one’s self, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, performing manual tasks, and learning” (Meyers et al., 2014, p. 21).

However, in order for Section 504 and ADA protections to apply, the individual must meet normal and essential eligibility requirements (Center for Autism Research,
or, in other words, must be a qualified individual. According to the ADA, a “qualified individual” is defined as “an individual with a disability who, with or without, reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of the . . . position that such individual holds or desires” (Meyers et al., 2014, p. 21). Likewise, if a student can demonstrate that they can be successful in an academic or nonacademic program with a reasonable level of accommodation, then Section 504 mandates that the student be permitted to participate (Hawke, 2004). Moreover, a reasonable accommodation is defined by the ADA as, “any change or adjustment . . . that permits a qualified applicant . . . with a disability to participate in the . . . process, to perform the essential functions . . . or to enjoy benefits and privileges of . . . equal to those enjoyed by [others] without disabilities” (Meyers et al., 2014, p. 21).

Furthermore, Section 504 applies only to schools that receive federal financial assistance, including student loans. However, if direct or indirect federal aid is received for any program or activity of the college, the institution is bound to comply with Section 504 requirements in all of its programs and activities, regardless of whether they are federally subsidized or not (Hawke, 2004). Section 504 not only prohibits discrimination against students (and employees) with disabilities at educational institutions, but also legally mandates teaching faculty to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Under the Rehabilitation Act, the college is responsible for ensuring compliance of Section 504 by appointing a coordinator (i.e., a 504 coordinator) to oversee and regulate its requirements. As a result, every community college should have
a 504 Coordinator. This person can serve as a valuable resource for teaching faculty should they have any legal concerns or questions regarding disability laws and legislation or practices.

However, for higher education institutions that do not receive federal financial assistance, the ADA also provides for accommodations. It is important to note that Title II of the ADA applies to state-funded universities, community colleges, and trade schools, whereas, Title III applies to private colleges and trade schools. Title II of the ADA incorporates Section 504; thus, Title II schools still must provide appropriate academic adjustments even if they do not receive federal funds (Center for Autism Research, 2014). For those schools that are not federally funded and which are not state supported (that is, Title III schools), they still must make their courses accessible, or accommodative for all people regardless of the presence of a disability (Center for Autism Research, 2014). However, this standard is generally less strict than that required by Section 504 and Title II (Center for Autism Research, 2014).

The only exception to the provision of accommodations, as stated by Section 504 and the ADA, is if it results in an undue hardship for the college or program (Hawke, 2004). That is, no entity is required to provide a requested accommodation if its provision would result in a fundamental alteration to a program or activity or if it would create an undue hardship (or financial burden) for the institution. Under the ADA, there are several factors that may constitute an undue hardship, such as size and budget of program, number of employees of the institution, type and cost of program, type of
facility and operation, availability of funding, and impact on the employer’s ability to
correct business (Hawke, 2004). Ultimately, however, the courts may overrule the claim
(Hawke, 2004).

Moreover, the ADA requires public entities to ensure that communications with
applicants, participants and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as
communications with others (Hawke, 2004). Additionally, the Office of Civil Rights
(OCR) suggests that adaptive software be provided to make computer information
accessible instead of providing assistive devices (Hawke, 2004). Last, but not least,
Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which requires that the federal
government’s electronic and information technology be made accessible, also extends to
postsecondary institutions and requires them to make their electronic and information
technology accessible, including but not limited to computers, copiers, telephones, and
more (Hawke, 2004).

In regard to physical accessibility, federal regulations require that all buildings
and facilities be accessible to students with disabilities, including classrooms &
recreational facilities (Hawke, 2004). This does not mean, however, that every part of
every building must be accessible (Hawke, 2004). However, this is relevant for teaching
faculty because this means that their classrooms must be accessible. For instance, if a
classroom is inaccessible, it is highly recommended that classes be relocated to a
different and more accessible building or classroom. This helps the faculty member to
avoid potential issues with a student, as well as to avoid incurring costs to the institution for renovation or reconstruction of already existing buildings.

One of the most remarkable aspects of Title II is the protection offered to people with disabilities who wish to participate in higher education (Meyers et al., 2014). The ADA protects individuals from being denied the opportunity to participate, but does not require institutions to accommodate every one with a disability (Meyers et al., 2014). That is, a person with a disability has the right to nondiscrimination and meaningful access, yet also has the responsibility to request reasonable modifications be made on their behalf (Meyers et al., 2014). A person with a disability has the right to effective academic adjustments and aids, but also has a responsibility to provide documentation to representatives at the institution (Meyers et al., 2014). An individual has the right to personalized assessments, but also has a responsibility to meet eligibility standards detailing the qualified status (Meyers et al., 2014). Finally, a person with a disability has the right to confidentiality, yet also has the responsibility to provide necessary information when requested (Meyers et al., 2014).

As we see, disability law and legislation in higher education protects students with disabilities from discrimination yet holds them to similar academic standards as students without disabilities. Students with disabilities are not provided privileges or “hand-outs” as commonly misperceived; they are simply provided the right to an equal education by being provided equal access to education as enabled through accommodations. However, knowledge regarding disability law and legislation is only
one component toward improving faculty attitude. In the next section, the legal requirements, including faculty role and responsibilities, as well as the importance of faculty-student relationship and its impact on student success are further explored.

**Faculty Role and Responsibilities**

Prior research has consistently demonstrated that students greatly benefit from in- or out-of-classroom interactions with their peers, faculty members, and staff members (Mamiseishvili & Koch, 2012). For example, in Mamiseishvili and Koch’s study (2012), the authors concluded that, given similar resources and accommodations, students with disabilities that had better rapport with faculty members were retained longer and had higher GPAs at the community college than students with disabilities who did not have such advantages. Given the significance of involvement with faculty members, it is concerning to find that a majority of students with disabilities attending 2-year institutions in Mamiseishvili and Koch’s study never had informal meetings with faculty members and never participated in study groups (73.0% and 59.9%, respectively).

Mamiseishvili and Koch’s (2012) study also revealed that students with disabilities enroll in 2-year institutions with high degree aspirations, but without the proper academic planning and realistic action plans, more frequently experienced failed or diminished degree aspirations. Faculty and staff members working with students with disabilities need to foster high goals and aspirations in these students, yet also provide proper supports to help them persevere and achieve their goals (Mamiseishvili & Koch, 2012). This will likely require an approach that supports and embraces educational
fluidity, such as understanding that a student’s current educational aspirations and goals are unfixed ends, which are strongly shaped by ever-present factors inside and outside of college. For example, Yuen and Shaughnessy (2001) recommended helping students with disabilities develop life plans based on their goals, objectives, and available resources. They suggested the use of reflective journals and discussions to help students become more self-aware, develop options, and find resources to fulfill their goals (Yuen & Shaughnessy, 2001).

Mamiseishvili and Koch (2012) also concluded that academic integration through faculty and peer interactions should continuously be encouraged. Moreover, faculty members can play a critical role in creating a learning environment that encourages collaboration with peers within and outside of the classroom (Mamiseishvili & Koch, 2012). Recent studies have shown that for community college students, relationships that begin in the classroom tend to extend beyond academics and into the social spheres of their lives (Mamiseishvili & Koch, 2012). In particular, fostering student-centered, collaborative learning opportunities, such as study groups, can be one effective way to create such relationships as well as a sense of connectedness with the institution for students with disabilities (Mamiseishvili & Koch, 2012).

The importance of a collaborative and positive relationship between faculty and students with disabilities, and its impact on student success cannot be overlooked. In Duggan’s study (2010), faculty stated that their willingness to build a professional and comfortable relationship with students with disabilities had helped students to feel more
comfortable asking questions, to feel that faculty was more approachable if they needed someone to talk to, and raised students’ interest levels in the subjects being taught. In addition, faculty who sought to build relationships with their students demonstrated increased student retention, and those who sought to understand their students with disabilities tended to have more successful students (Duggan, 2010).

In a study by Bourque (2004), it was discovered that factors perceived by faculty to be influential and motivating factors for faculty compliance included key figures, such as a department chairperson, academic dean, other faculty members, and the Office of Disability Services staff. Faculty members in Bourque's study indicated strong agreement that they wished to do what the Office of Disability Services believed they should do regarding their responsibility to provide accommodation, and moderate agreement that they were motivated to comply with these wishes. This finding indicated that faculty members relied heavily on the Office of Disability Service staff. However, such reliance has its pros and cons (Bourque, 2004).

First, referral to student service personnel as a resource is a positive finding if we assume this approach provides an individual faculty member with student specific information and guidance on a case-by-case basis (Bourque, 2004). However, this means that when faced with a new type of disability, faculty must again refer to the Disability Service staff for additional guidance (Bourque, 2004). It would be in the best interest of faculty, who are often pressed for time, to have a knowledge foundation or access to information that provides them with a basic understanding of their role and
responsibilities, as well as students' responsibilities, and prepares them to provide reasonable accommodation to students with a range of disabilities (Bourque, 2004). It is also important that faculty better understand the challenges faced by their students with disabilities rather than rely on the Disability Services office in every situation (Meyers et al., 2014) since faculty can more efficiently implement any instructional or classroom-related changes or accommodations that can immediately impact learning or access for students. Additional reasons for being less reliant on the Disabilities Services office include the limited staffing and operating hours of the Disability Services office (Meyers et al., 2014).

With respect to student responsibility, it is the student’s responsibility to ask for academic adjustments and provide any required documentation of disability, including proof that the disability substantially limits one or more major life activities, including learning (Center for Autism Research, 2014). As soon as the student is accepted to the college, the student should contact their institution’s Disability Services Department (typically referred to as Disabled Student Programs & Services, Office for Students with Disabilities, Services for Students with Disabilities, or other similar department) to set up a meeting to discuss academic adjustments with a counselor.

The student is responsible for communicating approved academic adjustments to his or her instructor and for alerting the instructor and the Disability Services Department if there are any problems as soon as they occur (Center for Autism Research, 2014). The student must also provide a Letter of Accommodation or Accommodation Letter prior to
receiving accommodations in class. Teaching faculty are only entitled to the Letter of Accommodation (or Accommodation letter) which states the student’s approved accommodations and are not entitled to know the student’s disability or educational limitations, unless the student chooses to self-disclose.

Students should request accommodations in a timely manner, since requesting accommodations at the last minute will not provide sufficient time for changes to be made. If an instructor is hesitant to provide an approved adjustment, he or she can contact their Disability Services Department to set up a meeting with the student’s counselor to explain why the adjustment is needed. Holding a meeting between the instructor, student, and the Disability Services counselor can help keep everyone informed (Center for Autism Research, 2014).

With respect to identifying and approaching students with disabilities, there are several training programs that teaching faculty can utilize. One such training program is Kognito Interactive’s At-Risk for University and College Faculty and Staff (Thomas, 2015). According to their website, Kognito Interactive’s training program “is an online professional development simulation designed to help faculty and staff build confidence, knowledge, and skills to best support students exhibiting signs of psychological distress” (para. 1). Kognito Interactive’s training program uses simulated conversations with virtual students to provide learners with hands-on practice in approaching students they are concerned about and, if necessary, how to refer them to support services. Interested teaching faculty should inquire with their educational institution as to whether or not their
institution is subscribed with Kognito’s At-Risk for University and College Faculty and Staff training program; otherwise, the program can be purchased individually through their website (Kognito Interactive, 2013). A benefit to this training program is that it is conveniently online, so teaching faculty can learn at their own pace.

In addition to the above, there is a certification-training course that teaches faculty how to identify, approach and work specifically with students with mental health issues. Mental Health First Aid USA is an evidence-based public education program that has been found to be highly effective in providing resources, key skills, and information to help understand, identify and respond to the signs of mental illness and substance abuse (Thomas, 2015). Mental Health First Aid is an interactive 8-hour training course that presents an overview of mental illnesses and substance use disorders in the United States. Faculty can go onto the Mental Health First Aid USA website to see if a course is being offered in their area and sign up. The course introduces participants to risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems, builds understanding of their impact, and reviews common treatments. Overall, these training programs are a highly effective way for teaching faculty to identify, approach and refer students with disabilities for support, while at the same time avoiding the pitfalls of diagnosing, counseling or providing advice to students (Thomas, 2015).

In this section, we talked about the roles and responsibilities of teaching faculty as well as of students. As can be seen, both parties have specific roles and responsibilities that are crucial to the implementation of accommodations. As such, collaboration and
trust between teaching faculty and student is necessary to ensure a smooth process for the
student and to minimize any potential misunderstandings. It is great to have the campus
disability office and counselors as resources, but it is important to remember that the best
source to go to regarding questions about a student’s accommodations or disability-
related challenges is the student himself/herself. Within the next section, the unique
challenges of community college students with disabilities to gain a more comprehensive
understanding of this special group are explored.

Understanding the Community College Student with a Disability

Two-year colleges serve the largest segment of the population of postsecondary
students with disabilities and offer educational options and academic supports that may
not be available at 4-year institutions (Mamiseishvili & Koch, 2012). However, half of
the 2-year college students with disabilities fail to persist, transfer, or complete a degree
or a certificate by the end of their third year (Mamiseishvili & Koch, 2012). Additionally, the stress of transitioning into postsecondary education is often aggravated
by the concurrent onset of disruptive symptoms.

It is also important to note that there is a difference between visible disabilities
(e.g., wheelchair users) and invisible disabilities (e.g., learning disabilities). Individuals
with hidden disabilities, specifically, psychiatric disabilities, tend to withdraw from
college prior to completion of their program of study (Collins & Mowbray, 2005). This
tendency to withdraw for completion may be attributable to the greater stigma often
associated with psychiatric disabilities, in comparison to physical disabilities, because of the ambiguous nature of these conditions (Smart, 2009).

Prior research has indicated that students with psychiatric disabilities are often hesitant to request the academic supports necessary for their success out of fear that the responses they will receive will be negative (Collins & Mowbray, 2005). The same could hold true for students with learning disabilities (Mamiseishvili & Koch, 2012). Therefore, teaching faculty must be aware that just because a student’s disability is not physical or visible does not mean that they do not have a disability or educational limitation and require accommodations.

It is also important to understand that there are differences regarding disability disclosure and accommodations in high school versus postsecondary education. Whereas, in secondary school, students with disabilities are identified and provided accommodations, in higher education, it is the student’s responsibility to self-disclose, request the services and present the necessary documentation to receive the supports (Getzel, 2008). Hence, students with disabilities may not be aware of what the process is for obtaining and utilizing accommodations in higher education, or they may not be ready to disclose their disability and ask for specific services (Mamiseishvili & Koch, 2012). Getzel (2008) indicated, “understanding how to access and use accommodations is a critical self-determination skill” for college students with disabilities (p. 210). In this regard, faculty can play a key role by informing or referring appropriate students to the
disability service department on campus to initiate the accommodation process and/or connect students to further support services.

In Mamiseishvili and Koch’s (2012) study, more than half of the students with disabilities (53.7%) delayed their enrollment in postsecondary education after finishing high school. In addition, 51.0% maintained only part-time or mixed enrollments during their first year in college. The study showed that both of these nontraditional student indicators put students with disabilities at a higher risk of dropping out and decreased their likelihood of persistence. However, delaying enrollment in college and navigating full-time enrollment during their first year may create additional challenges that are unique to students with disabilities. Getzel (2008) stated that adjusting to college life is difficult for all students, but managing accommodations together with the demands of postsecondary education may have greater effects on the persistence of students with disabilities.

Concerning statistics, during the 2008-2009 academic year, approximately 317,500 unduplicated students with disabilities attended public 2-year institutions or community colleges (Raue et al., 2011). This statistic reflects growing enrollment over the years, with much of the growth between 2000 and 2010 occurring because of full-time enrollment, during which the number of full-time students rose 45% and the number of part-time students rose 26%. During the same period, the number of females rose 39%, while the numbers of males rose 35%. This suggests that enrollment increases can
be affected both by population growth and by rising rates of enrollment (Meyers et al., 2014).

With respect to disclosure, Newmann and Maudas (2014) found that although 100% of students with disabilities had received special education services in secondary school, by the time they were college-age, only 35% self-disclosed to a post-secondary institution of their disability. Approximately one half of the original population of students identified above reported that they did not consider themselves to have a disability, and 14% indicated that they considered themselves to have a disability but chose not to disclose this information to their post-secondary institution.

Newmann and Madaus’s (2014) findings were similar across types of postsecondary institutions, with rates of disclosure ranging from 28% at Community and Technical Educational (CTE) institutions to 33% at 2-year and 4-year institutions. Furthermore, 56% of students with disabilities at 2-year and 4-year institutions, and 54% at CTE institutions did not consider themselves to have a disability. In addition, 12% of students at 2-year institutions, 10% of students at 4-year institutions, and 19% of students at CTE identified as disabled but had opted not to disclose disability to the postsecondary education institution.

It is not clear whether the significant percentage of students did not choose to disclose disability because there was a good match between the post-secondary institutions and the student's strengths and, therefore, they did not feel their disability presented a significant barrier, or if this was the result of students not fully understanding
the nature of their disability or reason for accommodations and supports they received in secondary school (Newmann & Madaus, 2014). It is also not clear if this is because students are unaware of differences in legal rights and responsibilities between high school and post-secondary institutions, but the existing literature points to the latter reason (Newmann & Madaus, 2014). Regardless of the reason, the fact that such a significant number of students with disabilities do not disclose is important because, without disclosure, postsecondary institutions are not required to provide services and reasonable accommodations and supports based on a disability. As a result, although receipt of accommodations and other supports is common in secondary school, it is much less prevalent at the postsecondary level (Newmann & Madaus, 2014).

In Newmann and Madaus’s study (2014), they found that when students were in high school, approximately 98% of them received at least one type of accommodation, modification or services because of a disability. In contrast, only 24% received such services at the postsecondary level. The receipt of disability-related accommodations, modifications and services ranged from 16% at Career and Technical Education (CTE) schools, to 22% at 4-year institutions, and 25% at 2-year colleges. Regarding accommodations specifically, 95% of students were reported to have received this type of support in secondary schools versus only 23% at 2-year colleges, 22% at 4-year universities, and 15% at CTE schools (Newmann & Madaus, 2014). Regarding modifications specifically, 59% of postsecondary students with disabilities received at least one modification at secondary level versus only 4% in postsecondary school
(Newmann & Madaus, 2014). Again, this diminished utilization of services may be due to some students being able to manage without the need for accommodations or modifications. On the other hand, the diminished utilization of services may be at least partially attributable to some students not understanding the need for, or benefit of, such accommodations and therefore not seeking them out.

In addition to the above, student disclosure rates appear to vary by disability type (Kranke, Jackson, Floersch, Townsend, & Anderson-Fye, 2013). For example, students with hidden or non-apparent disabilities, such as learning disabilities or mental illnesses, may be more reluctant to disclose their disabilities as the stigma against them tends to be higher than it is for those with visible disabilities (Kranke et al., 2013). In addition, students with hidden or invisible disabilities who received academic support were embarrassed and/or stigmatized when they disclosed their disability to faculty (Salzer, Wick, & Rogers, 2008). Now that we understand that self-disclosure is a difficult emotional process for many students, it is crucial that faculty are supportive of student disclosure to improve their likeliness of disclosing such disabilities, which is instrumental for them to receive the proper supports necessary to succeed in college.

In general, three factors influence disclosure. First, the fear that the disability will greatly limit their academic achievement influences whether or not a student will disclose (Kranke et al., 2013). Second, negative faculty perceptions can be a greater stressor than the disability itself prompting students to hold off on requesting for accommodations (until functional limitations creates stress beyond what is manageable and there is a
serious risk of failing or dropping out) (Kranke et al., 2013). Third, the greater the self-stigma the less likely the student is to disclose their disability (Kranke et al., 2013). As a result, we cannot overlook the impact that faculty support and encouragement exerts on student willingness to disclose disability.

**Success and Challenges of Students with Disabilities**

The potential benefit of postsecondary educational supportive services to students with disabilities can be great. The Task Force on Post-Secondary Education and Disabilities concluded that students who successfully graduate from community colleges can expect incomes and careers which pay wages comparable to those of graduates without a disability (Walters, 2000). Undoubtedly, educational achievement can be the most effective means for people with disabilities to achieve financial independence and equality (Duggan, 2010).

Clearly, with the proper supports and resources, students with disabilities can succeed in postsecondary education. A Disabled Student Programs and Services report (California Community College Chancellor’s Office [CCCCO], 2010) revealed that, while students with disabilities served by DSPS are underrepresented in the college population in comparison to their peers without disabilities, students with disabilities take both credit and noncredit courses at greater rates than students with disabilities who are not served by DSPS. The Disabled Student Programs and Services report also revealed that students who receive DSPS services demonstrate greater persistence and essentially the same retention level (with the notable exceptions of basic skills and workforce
preparation classes). Last, but not least, students with disabilities who receive services through DSPS are successful at both degree and certificate attainment at a substantially higher rate than students with disabilities who do not receive services.

Despite these positive indicators, the Disabled Student Programs and Services report (CCCCO, 2010) revealed that DSPS students were substantially less likely to be transfer directed (completed transfer level math and English) than their peers without disabilities. In addition, despite the fact they were more transfer-prepared (completed 60 CSU or CSU transferrable units), students with disabilities were far less likely to actually transfer to a four-year institution than their peers without disabilities. Thus, the struggle continues as students with disabilities are entering into community college at record numbers, but still fall below national community college enrollment averages for students without disabilities (Garrison-Wade & Lehmann, 2009). Furthermore, many of these students are at risk of leaving college before earning a degree.

The National Council on Disability (2003) website indicated that students with disabilities lag behind their peers in academic preparedness. This lack of academic preparedness is largely attributed to their high school educations (Garrison-Wade & Lehmann, 2009). Data from studies exploring student college success highlight how low expectations, e.g., of secondary school teachers, educational authorities and students themselves, can lead to these students being poorly prepared for college (Garrison-Wade & Lehmann, 2009). For example, many students with disabilities are not expected to attend college; the pervasiveness of negative stereotypes creates conditions that foster
lowered expectations about the level of contributions students with disabilities can make (Garrison-Wade & Lehmann, 2009). Similarly, high school students with disabilities may not enroll in college preparation courses, thus preventing them from gaining the level of knowledge and skills required in first-year college courses (Garrison-Wade & Lehmann, 2009). Hence, those who do go on to college unprepared are more likely to have to take remedial courses and have lower GPA and SAT scores than students without disabilities (Garrison-Wade & Lehmann, 2009).

Similarly, transition from high school to community college is further hindered by multiple institutional factors, resulting in poor service coordination, and poor communications surrounding student support efforts (Garrison-Wade & Lehmann, 2009). Challenges include professors and school personnel who lack sensitivity concerning students’ needs, provide inconsistent services, and provide insufficient financial resources (Garrison-Wade & Lehmann, 2009). Furthermore, in a study of nine community colleges in three states, Lancaster, Mellard, and Hoffman (2001) found inconsistencies across colleges in their delivery of services for students with disabilities. The authors concluded that faculty and staff, with the exception of disabilities resources providers, have little experience with or training regarding disabilities (Lancaster et al., 2001).

Concerning graduation rates, the U.S. Census Bureau in 2015 found that adults without a disability were more likely to hold a college degree than adults with a disability (Ryan & Bauman, 2016). Specifically, the percentage of students without a disability
who hold an Associate’s Degree or more was 45%, compared to approximately 25% for students with disabilities (Ryan & Bauman, 2016). There are a variety of reasons as to why this may be but likely one of the most significant explanations centers around barriers to accessing accommodation services for students with disabilities (Duggan, 2010). For a student to access services, they must self-identify as having a disability and provide appropriate documentation (Duggan, 2010). As we already know, significant amounts of students with disabilities never formally seek services. This leaves a large population of students to whom accommodations are never delivered and, therefore, less likely to graduate (Duggan, 2010).

This section comprised a discussion of some of the complex successes and unique challenges that students with disabilities face in higher education, such as greater persistence and retention level with support services such as DSPS as well as low completion/graduation rates and lack of academic preparedness. To further our understanding of students with disabilities, the next section explores specific disability groups and limitations these groups experience.

**Types of Student Disabilities and Limitations**

During the 2008-2009 academic school year, there existed twelve main student disability categories served at community colleges across the nation (Raue et al., 2011). The types of student disabilities reported by 2-year postsecondary institutions that enrolled students with disabilities by disability category, are as follows: Specific Learning Disabilities; Difficulty hearing; Mobility limitation (orthopedic impairment);
Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyper Disorder (ADHD); Mental Illness (psychiatric, psychological); Difficulty seeing (or visual impairments); Health impairment, including Chronic Illness; Traumatic Brain Injury; Cognitive or Intellectual Disability; Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD); Difficulty speaking or language impairment; and Other (Raue et al., 2011).

However, it is important to keep in mind that the specific disability populations at each community college campus may vary according to their specific frequency and enrollment rates. To obtain information regarding a campus’ specific student disability population, an individual may contact their campus disability office (if applicable). Furthermore, we will explore each disability group or category in-depth below.

**Students with Specific Learning Disabilities**

The percentage distribution of students with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) at 2-year postsecondary institutions during the 12-month 2008-2009 academic year was 31% (Raue et al., 2011). As such, students with SLD comprise the largest group of students with disabilities enrolled at public 2-year institutions. Examples of Specific Learning Disabilities can be dyslexia, dysgraphia, auditory processing disorder, dyscalculia, language processing disorder, non-verbal learning disabilities, and visual perceptual or visual motor deficit (Learning Disabilities Association of America [LDAA], 2016).

SLDs fall under the “umbrella” term of “learning disabilities” which are neurologically based processing problems (LDAA, 2016). These processing problems
can interfere with learning basic skills such as reading, writing and/or math; and can interfere with higher-level skills such as organization, time planning, abstract reasoning, long or short-term memory and attention (LDAA, 2016). Learning disabilities have nothing to do with how intelligent a person is. In fact, students with learning disabilities tend to have average to above average intelligence; however, there often appears to be a gap between the individual’s potential and actual achievement (LDAA, 2016).

Moreover, learning disabilities should not be confused with learning problems, which are mainly the result of hearing, visual, or motor handicaps; of emotional disturbance; of mental retardation; or of environmental, economic or cultural disadvantages (LDAA, 2016). Furthermore, in a study by McCleary-Jones (2008) that involved a focus group compromising students with LDs, one of the primary reasons identified for a student with a LD to withdraw from a class was lack of support. The feeling of poor support might be linked to faculty, administrator, and student perceptions of students with learning disabilities (McCleary-Jones, 2008).

In McCleary-Jones’s 2008 research concerning community college students with LDs, they found several thematic areas of difficulty for students. First, professors did not have an understanding of the student’s learning disability. Second, instructors did not know how to accommodate student needs. Third, instructors refused to allow students accommodations, such as extra time for examinations. Fourth, administrators dismissed student complaints; and last, but not least, fellow students were pressuring students with learning disabilities for not taking examinations with other students although they were
allowed to take their tests in another location so they could receive additional time to finish their tests.

A final potential issue for the community college student with a learning disability is that they may not even realize they have a diagnosis, or cannot afford to pay for an assessment to determine their diagnosis (Duggan, 2010). Of course, depending on the postsecondary institution, evaluations and assessments for learning disabilities may be provided. However, this brings us to an important distinction between secondary school (which is governed by Individuals with Disability Educational Act) and postsecondary education (governed by ADA and Section 504); that is, colleges and universities are not responsible to provide testing to determine if a student has a learning disability (Duggan, 2010).

As a result, it is reasonable to assume that some students at the postsecondary level may not have been diagnosed due to cost or other factors. Students who have not been diagnosed can experience frustration, which can ultimately result in academic failure. In such a situation, referring a student to the Learning Disability or Disability Office on campus is an important first step to help students find resources and services necessary for academic support. For example, a study by Canto, Proctor, and Prevatt (2005) found that even if students receive a diagnosis but do not receive support services or accommodations, just having the opportunity to acquire self-awareness and validation of their frustrations may have a positive impact.
Students with Difficulty Hearing

The percentage distribution of students with Difficulty Hearing by 2-year postsecondary institutions during the 12-month 2008-2009 academic year was 4% (Raue et al., 2011). Hearing loss can occur at birth, suddenly, or gradually over time (WebMD, 2014). Depending on the cause, hearing loss can range from mild to severe and can be reversible, temporary, or permanent (WebMD, 2014). Most students who are hard of hearing use either hearing aids or American Sign Language (ASL) as a means of communication (Duggan, 2010). Deaf students who use ASL are often the ones who face more difficulty given the complexity of communication and the differences in their primary language of ASL versus written English (Duggan, 2010). ASL is an oral language where body movements and gestures often represent concepts rather than words (Channon & Sayers, 2007). As a result, word orders and syntax can be very different from written English. ASL uses many more nouns and verbs, fewer if any articles like “the” or “an”, and word order is similar to romance languages (Channon & Sayers, 2007).

Deaf students report higher levels of depression than hearing students. This may be significantly related to the fact that they have a different language and an inability to communicate broadly with hearing students, except through an interpreter (Duggan, 2010). On the other hand, deafness can create uniqueness in that many people who are Deaf view themselves as being part of a cultural group due to their shared language and history (Duggan, 2010). Often Deaf adults will capitalize the letter “D” in their use of the
word “Deaf” to highlight this feeling and students who attend institutions with large Deaf populations may be less inclined to feel isolated (Duggan, 2010). However, beyond issues of communication, difficulties of English comprehension and interpreter availability can further complicate their college experience (Duggan, 2010).

Channon and Sayers (2007) further explained the language differences. At age 17, the average deaf student uses the same number of compound and complex sentences as the average 10-year-old hearing student, and the average sentence length is equal to the average for an 8-year-old hearing student. These differences in languages can make getting through an English composition course especially difficult, and may explain why an estimate two-thirds to three-quarters of postsecondary students who are Deaf or hard of hearing drop out of college (Duggan, 2010).

Moreover, Deaf students can also struggle with note taking in class since they are required to move their vision from the interpreter, to the instructor, to their notepads. For this special group of students, it is important to understand cultural differences, and address the impact of the academic complexities that the accommodations for their disabilities might impose (Duggan, 2010).

**Mobility Limitation (Orthopedic Impairment)**

The percentage distribution of students with Mobility limitation/Orthopedic impairments by 2-year postsecondary institutions during the 12-month 2008-2009 academic year was 8% (Raue et al., 2011). Students with physical limitations that affect their mobility or bodily control are considered to have orthopedic impairments (Duggan,
2010); these can be students who use wheelchairs or have physical limitations. Through the passage of the ADA and its focus on physical access, much has been accomplished in terms of physical access on community college campuses. However, coordinating accessible public transportation, in addition to accessible housing, continues to create challenges for students with physical disabilities (Duggan, 2010).

Another source of frustration related to transportation issues and other complications comes from the difference in services provided by institutions of higher education compared to services for K-12 students. The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), the applicable law for secondary students, requires that the following are provided: accommodations, modifications to curriculum, transportation to and from school, ancillary services as needed such as but not limited to physical and occupational therapy, medical services for diagnostic or evaluation services, and orientation and mobility services, among others (Duggan, 2010). Conversely, in higher education, colleges are not obligated to provide these types of services. This situation can create difficulty for students with orthopedic disabilities and other disabilities who have relied on these services and suddenly no longer receive them when they transition to higher education (Duggan, 2010).

Moreover, a negative reaction towards individuals with visible disabilities can also create a sense of alienation for affected students. For example, Cerebral Palsy is an orthopedic disability that can affect motor control and speech patterns. In a study conducted by Nabors and Lehmkuhl (2005), 180 college students read short vignettes
about either a person with, or a person without CP. Afterward, they were asked to give their opinions about the two people. Results showed that students who read the vignette about the person with CP had much more negative perceptions of the person in all aspects of life than students who read about the person without CP (Nabors & Luhmkuhl, 2005). Undoubtedly, the visibility of an orthopedic disability can create a social reaction resulting in isolation from their peers, and instructors should be aware of this occurrence especially about how it may affect students with visible disabilities (Duggan, 2010).

**Students with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD)**

The percentage distribution of students with ADD/ADHD by 2-year postsecondary institutions during the 12-month 2008-2009 academic year was 13% (Raue et al., 2011). ADHD, formerly known as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), is a condition in which a person has trouble paying attention and focusing on tasks, tends to act without thinking, and has trouble sitting still (WebMD, 2016a). The common characteristics of ADHD are impulsivity, inattention, and/or hyper-activity (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

The primary symptoms of ADHD include failure to listen to instructions, inability to organize oneself and work tasks, fidgeting with hands and feet, talking too much, inability to stay on task, leaving projects, chores and work tasks unfinished, and having trouble paying attention to and responding to details. Although individuals may have
both inattention and hyperactivity symptoms, many individuals predominantly display one symptom more than another (Duggan, 2010).

Primary ways that these issues may manifest for a student with ADHD at the college level are in social skills (Wadsworth & Harper, 2007). Students with ADHD may have trouble in forming relationships as well as developing effective communication skills with faculty. As a result of such difficulties, academic projects requiring students to work in collaborative groups can be problematic (Simplicio, 2007). It is also important to note that many students with ADHD have a co-morbid diagnosis of depression and anxiety (Wadsworth & Harper, 2007), which may contribute to additional issues that affect academic relationships and success. However, similar to students with learning disabilities, many students with ADHD may be unaware of their diagnosis, or are unable to afford to pay for diagnostic evaluations and medications. Hence, faculty support, including initiating conversation and/or referrals, is critical to understanding and addressing the needs of students with ADHD.

**Students with Mental Illness (Psychiatric, Psychological)**

The percentage distribution of students with Mental Illness (psychiatric and psychological) by 2-year postsecondary institutions during the 12-month 2008-2009 academic year was 15% (Raue et al., 2011). Mental illnesses can include a number of *Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM-V)* diagnoses, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorder, and depression (Duggan, 2010). The American Association of Suicidology determined that more than 80% of colleges say that they are seeing more
students with serious psychological problems than five years ago (Duggan, 2010). They also found that students at community colleges attempted suicide one or more times at a 2% higher rate than students at universities (Duggan, 2010). Tragedies, such as Virginia Tech where 32 students and staff were killed, have also placed a spotlight on students with mental illness, resulting in an increase of paranoia and fear about a population of students who are often misunderstood (Duggan, 2010).

Cook (2007) discussed a variety of stressors that may contribute to the development, or exacerbation of mental health problems among students. These stressors include meeting expectations of parents, coping with family problems, handling long-distance relationships with significant others, lack of transportation, balancing school workload and class schedules with full-time work, peer pressure, relationship problems, difficulty managing time, racism, and financial problems. Furthermore, Boysen and Vogel (2008) stated that mental illness often carries a stigma, causing people to experience reduced self-esteem and health care utilization, discrimination, and a perception of public devaluation. As such, these issues can intensify the impact of mental illness and increase academic difficulties for students (Duggan, 2010).

Another experienced mental illness is depression. An American College Health Association (2006) study conducted in 2004, found that in a sample of over 47,000 college students, 14% had been clinically diagnosed with depression; 25% of those diagnosed had been to therapy for depression; and 38% of those diagnosed were taking medication for depression. In addition, over 40% of the total respondents stated that they
felt so depressed they had difficulty functioning in life activities at least one or more times during the last school year (American College Health Association, 2006). With so many students feeling that they are in distress, it is becoming increasingly important for faculty to better recognize symptoms when students are in need of assistance (Duggan, 2010).

**Students with Difficulty Seeing (or Visual Impairments)**

The percentage distribution of students with Difficulty Seeing or Visual impairments by 2-year postsecondary institutions during the 12-month 2008-2009 academic year was 3% (Raue et al., 2011). Students with visual impairments or who are legally blind mainly learn through other modalities including tactile, kinesthetic and auditory modalities (Duggan, 2010). They may use accommodations such as assistive technologies and alternative media to assist them in accessing materials. For some students, they may also be able to read written materials in Braille or Nemeth code, which is a version of tactile language similar to Braille designed for mathematical equations and symbols (Duggan, 2010).

Moreover, most challenges for students with blindness result from issues involving access since much of the material in higher education is visually based. As such, a primary learning challenge experienced by students who are blind or visually impaired has to do with alternative material production of written text to either audio recordings or Braille. Furthermore, two of the areas in which blind students or students
with visual impairments experience particular difficulty are learning foreign languages and math (Duggan, 2010).

First, foreign languages can be problematic because alternative materials in other languages are likely difficult to obtain in either audio recording or in Braille (Duggan, 2010). Given that foreign languages typically require students to read and write in a different language, especially for students who do not know Braille, learning to write another language relying on only audio recordings can be very difficult (Duggan, 2010). Math also poses difficulties for students who are blind or have visual impairments for similar reasons as those discussed in learning a foreign language (Duggan, 2010).

Another major challenge for students who are blind or visually impaired includes the use of technology. While assistive technology, such as screen readers, allows students to operate their computer and browse the Internet without the use of a monitor, web sites still must be written in a way that enables the material to be screen reader accessible (Duggan, 2010). In one study, 100 blind students were asked to browse a variety of websites that were both personal and academic. The average amount of time lost was 30.4%, with many websites crashing and eventually being completely inaccessible due to poor formatting (Lazar, Allen, Kleinman, & Melarkey, 2007).

In summary, for students who are blind or visually impaired, creativity and patience are crucial for success, given the limitations of access that can be imposed by their disability (Duggan, 2010). It is also important for faculty to have an understanding of issues surrounding visual impairment if they are to be effective in teaching these
students. Enburg (1999) surveyed college students with visual impairments and found that one of the most difficult struggles for students was with faculty, especially in regard to lack of faculty empathy and effectiveness in working with students with disabilities. This was directly linked to the faculty’s level of education and experience, and the preexisting attitudes they had toward students with disabilities (Enburg, 1999). Again, we see that attitude and education prove to be critical elements for enhancing student success among this unique population.

**Students with Health Impairment, including Chronic Illness**

The percentage distribution of students with Health Impairment, including chronic illness by 2-year postsecondary institutions during the 12-month 2008-2009 academic year was 10% (Raue et al., 2011). Students who have a chronic health diagnosis that impacts their well-being are categorized and tracked by the National Center on Educational Statistics (2006) as having a Health Impairment. Examples of diagnoses include health conditions such as diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDS, and other illnesses that impact a student’s complete health.

Students with health impairments or chronic illnesses often find it challenging to succeed in traditional college academic programs because of unpredictable symptoms and relapses, which often exacerbate and decrease over time (Royster & Marshall, 2008). The students also may be on medications that cause a negative reaction, or they may experience physical symptoms that make attending class difficult. Students who have been diagnosed with serious chronic illnesses also can experience heightened feelings of
anxiety, depression, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder-like symptoms which can make maintaining attention and focusing on studying difficult (Barakat & Wodka, 2006). Although less serious health conditions may not create such intense symptoms, they can still affect student mental health.

Additionally, students with health impairments can be at risk for heightened symptoms due to social activities, such as alcohol consumption, or emotional distress, all of which can negatively affect interpersonal growth and adult development (Duggan, 2010). Because of all of these challenges, students with health conditions have unique situations in which their physical symptoms may not appear to be disabling, but internal emotional and interpersonal issues negatively affect their ability to attend college and learn (Duggan, 2010).

**Students with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)**

The percentage distribution of students with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) by 2-year postsecondary institutions during the 12-month 2008-2009 academic year was 3% (Raue et al., 2011). TBI is an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external force, such as a fall or blow to the head (WebMD, 2016b). The impact can be mild to severe in affecting a student’s abilities to control emotion, cognition, and behavior (WebMD, 2016b). Marschark, Richtsmeier, Richardson, Crovity, and Henry (2000) report that although it appears that adult college students with TBI generally regain most of their intellectual functioning after their injuries, they still continue to experience difficulties
with controlling their emotions as well as report distress in their personal and emotional functioning.

Students with TBIs also may experience educational limitations involving difficulty with memory and focus. It is important to keep in mind that the causes for TBI and areas of impact will vary on an individual basis and may manifest different symptoms or educational limitations within different students. Therefore, having a discussion with the student about any specific educational limitations is the most important way to target and reduce any possible educational complications (WebMD, 2016b).

**Students with Cognitive or Intellectual Disability**

The percentage distribution of students with cognitive or intellectual disability by 2-year postsecondary institutions during the 12-month 2008-2009 academic year was 5% (Raue et al., 2011). Students with intellectual disabilities (ID), formerly known as mental retardation, can also fall under the “Developmental Disability” (DD) category. In comparison, DD is broader than ID, and includes physical, intellectual or both types of symptoms (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2012). By definition, students with intellectual disabilities possess below-average intellectual function and a lack of skills necessary for daily living (Medline Plus, 2015).

Fortunately, due to the mission of open access, many community colleges have responded to addressing the needs of students with ID. For example, Sacramento City College offers a program called College2Career for students with ID. According to the
website, the program supports education related to employment goals, with a strong focus on building skills leading to employment. The program also aims to increase students’ ability to work, with decreasing support, in an independent, integrated placement. In addition, Baltimore Community College has developed a program called Single Step Childcare, which allows students with DD to take classes and participate in carefully supervised internship programs that enable them to get state-certification as childcare providers (Schmidt, 2005).

Nonetheless, many community colleges do not provide such specialized programs. For such community colleges, unfortunately, their students with ID typically have limited time and participation on campus, resulting in little to no acquisition of skills or knowledge necessary for basic employment (Duggan, 2010). However, in clarification of Section 504, the Office of Civil Rights explained that students with disabilities must demonstrate that they are qualified for higher education. According to the government, a qualified student with a disability is one who meets the academic and technical standards requisite for admission or participation in the institution's educational and programmatic offerings (Duggan, 2010). Hence, if a student cannot intellectually meet the academic requirements because of their disability, even with accommodation, that student can be dismissed (Duggan, 2010).

**Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)**

The percentage distribution of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder by 2-year postsecondary institutions during the 12-month 2008-2009 academic year was 2% (Raue
Students who have disorders on the Autism Spectrum, including Asperger’s syndrome (a high-functioning form of autism), are one of the fastest growing groups in higher education (Duggan, 2010). Colleges are seeing more and more students with autism enrolling because elementary and secondary school systems have become better equipped to prepare this population for higher education (Duggan, 2010).

This trend, however, is creating a new challenge for colleges. A recent article written by Adreon and Durocher (2007), who are researchers at the University of Miami-Nova Southeastern University Center for Autism and Related Disabilities, highlighted areas of difficulty related to the transition of these students from high school to college. They cite one of the main reasons students with autism fail in college is due to a lack of transition planning from secondary school into higher education.

Some of the most common but often overlooked areas that are important for students to consider include deciding what type and size of college to attend, discussing when and how to disclose one’s disability, identifying appropriate academic supports and accommodations, identifying strategies to assist in adjusting to the college environment, and identifying necessary social supports (Adreon & Durocher, 2007). Hence, faculty should consider these factors and how they may affect students when addressing issues related to this student population.

Furthermore, Dillon (2007) emphasizes important points and areas of difficulty that students with autism likely experience. In highlighting a typical college experience for a student with autism, Dillon explained:
One person may talk in class all the time, preventing any other discussion, while another might never speak up at all. One person might miss most classes, not due to lack of interest but rather poor planning and organization of time and self. A third might arrive at class an hour early to make sure he will acquire his favorite chair. Another might get lost crossing the campus or be late waiting to park in his preferred parking spot rather than taking an available space. (p. 502)

Hence, Dillon suggested that the most common areas where students may experience the greatest difficulty are in time management and organizational skills. As such, instructors should be especially aware of these characteristics of autism when working with this unique and increasing population (Duggan, 2010).

**Students with Difficulty Speaking or Language Impairment**

The percentage distribution of students with difficulty speaking or language impairment by 2-year postsecondary institutions during the 12-month 2008-2009 academic year was 1% (Raue et al., 2011). Speech and language impairments fall under communication disorders, which are defined as an impairment in the ability to receive, send, process, and comprehend concepts or verbal, nonverbal and graphic symbol systems (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association [ASHA], 1993). A communication disorder may range in severity from mild to profound and may be developmental or acquired (ASHA, 1993). Specifically, a speech disorder is defined as an impairment of the articulation of speech sounds, fluency and/or voice (ASHA, 1993). On the other hand, a language disorder is defined as impaired comprehension and/or use
of spoken, written and/or other symbol systems. The disorder may involve (1) the form of language (phonology, morphology, and syntax), (2) the content of language (semantics), and/or (3) the function of language in communication (pragmatics) in any combination (ASHA, 1993).

**Other Disability**

The percentage distribution of students with “Other” disabilities by 2-year postsecondary institutions during the 12-month 2008-2009 academic year was 1% (Raue et al., 2011). Some of the main types of disability included under the “Other” category are Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) (Duggan, 2010). Additional disabilities that may fall under this category include temporary disabilities, burns, and more. Overall, disabilities that do not fit under any other category typically fall under the “Other” category; and disability categories that fall under “Other” may vary from college to college.

It is important to understand that the accommodations for each disability will vary from individual to individual, depending on specific needs since no two similar disabilities share exact challenges or educational limitations. However, in general, there are shared accommodations that can be provided to most qualified students with disabilities that greatly enable access and better learning. These shared accommodations and strategies will be explored in the next section.
Accommodations and Strategies for Instructors

Higher education institutions must provide students with disabilities with reasonable accommodations. As mentioned earlier in Subheading 2, “Disability Legislation,” the two laws that apply are the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (for educational institutions receiving federal funding) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. In higher education, students with disabilities are responsible for identifying themselves and for documenting and requesting specific academic adjustments or accommodations in accordance with their needs in a timely manner (Marcum & Perry, 2010). Students who self-identify as having a disability should be referred to the appropriate office at the community college, if such services are provided, so that the disability can be documented and reasonable accommodation(s) can be discussed with a counselor (Marcum & Perry, 2010).

In addition, although students have the option to, they do not have to disclose their disability to an instructor or professor in order to receive reasonable accommodations. However, instructors are entitled to a Letter of Accommodation or Accommodation Letter prior to providing accommodations. The form should not state the student’s disability, but rather only their approved accommodations while also serving as evidence that a student does have a documented disability. Without receiving the Accommodation letter, the instructor is not obligated to provide accommodations to a student. Thus, it is highly recommended for students with disabilities who need or want
accommodations to meet with their college’s disability office (e.g., DSPS) to initiate the process to receive accommodations.

It is also important to note that although reasonable accommodations are mandatory to support qualified students with disabilities, a service such as DSPS is not in itself mandatory on college campuses. This means that disability support programs on college campuses are largely voluntary. Hence, such support services may not always be available on college campuses. In this regard, teaching faculty will need to have a discussion with their own students in order to find out what their student’s educational limitations are (as a result of their disability) and discuss what accommodations will work best for their students to enable their ability to succeed.

Eligibility for reasonable accommodations in post-secondary institutions is driven by the federal definition of “disability” as “a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits or restricts the conditions, manner, or duration under which an average person in the general population can perform a major life activity such as walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, working, or taking care of oneself” (Marcum & Perry, 2010, p. 53). As such, it is important to understand that disability is an umbrella term that encompasses vast and diverse groups of disabilities, ranging from visible (e.g., physical) to invisible (e.g., learning, psychological). Thus, it may not always be easy to tell if a student has a “disability” or not since stereotypical views of disability largely rely on visible features, such as using a wheelchair, crutch, cast, and more. Therefore, it is important that instructors are sensitive and open to
students who approach them with a challenge and be willing to discuss how the student’s
disability may affect their education.

Furthermore, Section 504 and Title II of the ADA states that it is the student’s
responsibility to self-identify and contact their college campus’ office for persons with
disabilities (U.S. Department of Education, 1998). To assist students and to avoid legal
proceedings, the college should provide early information to incoming students about the
office and/or counseling and should encourage any affected students to seek services.
For teaching faculty, this can be as simple as stating a notification on their course
syllabus about information and services for students with disabilities to receive
accommodations. If applicable, the office for disability or counseling should have
processes in place to evaluate students and/or their medical information and should begin
a dialogue with students’ professors to determine an accommodation that meets the
student’s needs without unnecessarily disrupting the professor’s course (Marcum &
Perry, 2010). Hence, it is crucial that teaching and counseling faculty have a positive
relationship with open communication to better support the needs and success of students
with disabilities.

Students with disabilities attending community colleges are increasingly
sophisticated about their legal rights. This generation is graduating from high school
under the protection and support of the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act
(IDEA), which guarantees a free and appropriate education for all students with
disabilities in primary and secondary public education (Hawke, 2004). Under IDEA,
school districts are obligated to identify and evaluate students who may be in need of special education (Hawke, 2004). Once identified, the student is entitled to an individualized education plan (IEP), regardless of the expense to the school district (Hawke, 2004). Unfortunately, many of these students and their parents expect comparable treatment in the postsecondary environment despite the fact that the same legal obligations do not exist. Again, at the post-secondary level, disclosure of disability is voluntary but if a student wants to receive accommodations, disclosure to their college’s disability office and to teaching faculty is mandatory (Hawke, 2004).

Once a request for accommodation has been made and supported by appropriate documentation, the college must decide if the accommodation is reasonable under the circumstances (Hawke, 2004). Examples of reasonable accommodations include changes in delivery of instruction (e.g., videotape or via the Internet); modifications to programs, such as substitution of a required course; extension of time or format for examinations; and extensions of time to complete program requirements (Hawke, 2004). Colleges also may need to provide auxiliary aids to individuals based on their needs, whether in the form of personnel (interpreters, note-takers, and transcribers) or assistive devices (listening devices, tape recorders, and closed captioning) (Hawke, 2004).

It is important to note that the educational institution does not have to grant every accommodation requested. As discussed earlier, neither the ADA nor Section 504 requires that the college fundamentally alter a program to make an accommodation (Hawke, 2004). For an accommodation to constitute a fundamental alteration, it must
require more than a modification to the program; that is, it has to compromise the
essential nature of the program (Hawke, 2004). In addition, the institution does not have
an obligation to engage in a single accommodation that is so excessive it creates an undue
hardship on the institution (Hawke, 2004). Some specialized devices cost more than
$5,000 and individuals may require multiple devices. However, caution should be
exercised in citing cost as the sole determinant for denying a request for accommodation.
In accordance with the regulations, the cost of the accommodation alone is not sufficient
to withhold compliance, but a decision must take into consideration the institution’s
budget, number of employees, and other factors (Hawke, 2004).

Moreover, federal law does not create a legal right to all accommodations
beneficial to a student with a disability; only reasonable accommodations are required
(Hawke, 2004). Honoring the notion of reasonableness, there is no statutory requirement
that colleges explore all available alternative accommodation, unless it chooses to do so
(Hawke, 2004). Most requests for accommodation at community colleges will be of an
obvious and routine nature, with no legal or financial analysis required (Hawke, 2004).
However, when the requests for accommodations require excessive or expensive
adjustments, the decision-making process should be deliberate and involve legal and
business counsel (Hawke, 2004).

About accommodations, a range of possible academic adjustments may be
provided, including a reduced course load and extended time on exams. Although
students with disabilities may utilize the same or similar accommodations, it is important
to keep in mind that every student has unique needs. Such situations should be assessed on a case-by-case and course-by-course basis to best meet the individual needs of a student (Newman & Madaus, 2014).

According to the 2011 National Center for Educational Statistics (Raue et al., 2011), the 25 accommodations most commonly used in public 2-year institutions are as follows: additional exam time, classroom notetakers/scribes, adaptive equipment and technology, alternative exam formats, help with learning strategies or study skills and audio textbooks/digitally recorded texts, readers and faculty-provided written course notes or assignments, physical adaptations to classrooms, sign language interpreters/transliteratorators and counseling about vocational rehabilitation services, tutors to assist w/ongoing coursework, large print or braille materials, Disability resource handbook, priority class registration, moving classes to a more accessible location, course substitution or waiver, career or placement services targeted for students with disabilities, oral interpreters/transliteratorators, real-time captioning, disability benefits counseling and other, Paratransit for on-campus mobility, personal attendants, and independent living skills training.

As useful as accommodations may be, it is also important to employ teaching strategies within the classroom or instruction to support the learning and success of students with disabilities. After interviewing several instructors and professors who work in higher education with students with disabilities, Duggan (2010) discussed nine effective teaching strategies that instructors can employ when working with students with
disabilities. The first and most common strategy involves breaking concepts down into smaller segments to make information more manageable. Second, creating instructional materials in alternate formats was deemed highly helpful, such as having print materials distributed in print format, electronically, or both.

Third, the use of journaling as a means for parent to teacher communication can also be helpful to build understanding from parent to student to instructor, especially in the case of students with more severe developmental disabilities where parents are the student’s legal guardians. In the special situation in which a parent is the legal guardian, FERPA, with a student’s permission, does allow communication to be open between faculty and parents. Fourth, communicating with former students who share similar disabilities, all the while maintaining student confidentiality, for ideas can be helpful. Fifth, visualization exercises to assist students who have excessive levels of anxiety can be helpful, especially when asked to give a presentation in front of a class. For example, the instructor can meet the student individually in their office. The student is asked to close their eyes and explain in detail what they are seeing and experiencing as they give the speech. If the student expresses fear or anxiety, the instructor addresses the anxieties as they go through the visualization.

Sixth, grading rubrics could be an effective means for students to understand how their grade will be determined for assignments, and what the expectations are for those assignments. Seventh, instructors can explain that sometimes the method they use to instruct materials, even if well developed and thought out, might not reach all students.
In this case, it is best to meet with students individually and attempt to teach the concepts using a different method. A final strategy, regarding math courses, comprises placing large math problems individually on separate sheets of paper, since this process can help students who have difficulty with visually tracking information; this prevents students from becoming distracted by upcoming math problems.

Just as important as accommodations and teaching strategies, communication with students with disabilities is also key to fostering a positive and trusting relationship that supports student success. Communication strategies involve interacting comfortably with people with and without disabilities to foster effective communication and understanding (Meyers et al., 2014). Meyers et al. (2014) identified several recommendations for communicating with people with disabilities. First, speak directly to the person, since having a functional limitation does not mean the individual cannot communicate for him or herself.

Second, speak in a regular tone, since a physical or cognitive limitation does not mean the person cannot hear or understand you. Third, use descriptive language indicating direction or size when communicating with people with cognitive and visual disabilities. For example, “about two feet to your left,” “two inches from the curb,” etc. Fourth, identify yourself when you meet a person with a visual disability. In groups, identify to whom you are speaking and notify people when it is their turn to speak.

Fifth, describe what is drawn, written, or illustrated during presentations. When you ask people to read it on their own, you are excluding those who are not able to see or
read it. Sixth, listen attentively to people with speech disabilities. Do not assume you understand or pretend to understand; ask for clarification as needed. Seventh, it is always appropriate to offer your help, but do not assume the person will need or accept your help.

Moreover, Meyers et al. (2014) provided specific communication strategies for certain disabilities, including visual disability, deaf or hard-of-hearing, mobility disability and cognitive disability. First, when speaking with a person with a visual disability, a gentle touch on the elbow will indicate to a person with a visual disability that you are speaking to him/her. Also, if you are walking with an individual who is blind, do not take that person’s arm; instead let that person take your arm.

Accordingly, when speaking with a person with a visual disability, do not shout; a visual disability does not equate to hearing difficulty. If you have a question for the person with a visual disability, ask the individually directly; do not ask his/her companion. Concerning guide dogs, do not pet a guide dog, except when the dog is “off-duty.” Even then, you should ask the dog’s owner first. Furthermore, do not worry about substituting words for “see,” “look,” or even “blind” especially where these words may fit within context. Last, but not least, when you meet a person you know with a visual disability, mention your name since it may be difficult to recognize voices.

Second, when meeting a person who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing, it is important to speak clearly and distinctly, but do not exaggerate speed or volume unless specifically asked to do so by the individual with a hearing disability. Also, provide a clear view of
your mouth. Waving your hands or holding something in front of your lips, thus hiding them, makes lip reading extremely difficult. Furthermore, speak directly to the person, rather than from the side or back of the person.

It is also important to speak expressively since persons who are deaf cannot hear subtle changes in tone, which may indicate sarcasm or seriousness, and many will rely on facial expressions, gestures, and body language to understand you. In addition, if you are having trouble understanding the speech of a person who is deaf, feel free to ask him/her to repeat. If that does not work, then use a paper and pen. If a person who is deaf is with an interpreter, speak directly to the person who is deaf, and not to the interpreter.

Third, when meeting a person with a mobility disability, offer help, but wait until it is accepted before giving it. Sometimes, giving help before it is accepted may be perceived as rude and sometimes can be unsafe. Next, it is important to recognize and accept the fact that a disability exists. Not acknowledging a disability is similar to ignoring someone’s gender or height since overlooking such attributes may undermine or minimize the impact they have on an individual. In addition, treat a person with a disability as a healthy person. Having a functional limitation does not mean that the individual is sick. Finally, keep in mind that persons with disabilities have the same activities of daily living as you do.

Last, but not least, when meeting a person with a cognitive disability, use very clear and specific language. Use concrete rather than abstract language, and provide cues to help with transitions, such as, “In five minutes we’ll be going to lunch.” It is also
helpful to condense lengthy directions into steps as well as to use short, concise instructions. Next, present verbal information at a relatively slow pace, with appropriate pauses for processing time and with repetition if necessary. Furthermore, reinforce information with pictures or other visual images. It may also be helpful to use modeling, rehearsing, and role-playing; and limit the use of sarcasm or subtle humor. Last, but not least, if you are not sure what to do or say, just ask the person what he/she needs.

Now that we have some idea of disability etiquette when communicating with persons with specific disabilities, the classroom is another setting in which consideration should be taken when working with students with disabilities. An important strategy that instructors can utilize to maximize student learning is Universal Design (UD), which is a concept that originates from the field of architecture. UD emphasizes the importance of designing physical environments to be functionally accessible to a wide variety of users, particularly individuals with disabilities (Rao, Edelen-Smith, & Wailehua, 2015).

Educational frameworks based on the concept of UD expand this idea of universal access to pedagogical practices with the aim of creating accessible learning environments (Rao et al., 2015). In contrast to physical access, which enables access and interaction with the physical environment, cognitive access relates to the recognition, affective, and strategic learning networks in the brain. Based in the neuroscience of learning, cognitive access focuses on the processes behind acquisition of skills and knowledge. These cognitive processes include demonstration of knowledge and skills, comprehension of
information, engagement and self-regulation during the learning process (Rao et al., 2015).

An advantage to using the Universal Design approach is that all students can access information regardless of diagnosis or disclosure (Duggan, 2010). Disclosure rates have decreased significantly from high school to postsecondary education. Consequently, accommodations request rates have also decreased significantly from high school to postsecondary education. Therefore, Universal Design for curriculum is important since disclosure rates are so low in order to address needs of students (Newman & Madaus, 2014).

Moreover, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a model that has a set of principles for developing online accessibility in higher education (Dell, Dell, & Blackwell, 2015). The three overarching principles include presentation; action and expression; and engagement and interaction (Dell et al., 2015). For example, presentation may include using color with care and choosing fonts carefully (Dell et al., 2015). Action and expression may include modeling and teaching good discussion board etiquette (Dell et al., 2015). Engagement and interaction may involve choosing content management system (CMS) tools carefully and providing accessible document formats (Dell et al., 2015).

Overall, it is important to understand the importance that accommodations play in ensuring equal access to higher education for students with disabilities. In addition, implementing a holistic approach that includes teaching strategies, various
communication strategies and environmental strategies (e.g., UD) in addition to providing academic accommodations will likely be more effective in supporting student success. The above accommodations, as well as information and strategies regarding Universal Design for Learning and long-distance education, will be further addressed on the website, ASKAAN.
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Review of Sources

The author began this project research in Spring 2016 utilizing the California State University, Sacramento’s online research database to search peer-reviewed journal articles between the years of 2006 and 2016, with some exceptions due to a lack of recent research on community college students with disabilities. Perhaps the lack of recent and relevant research on students with disabilities in community college results from the possibility that not much has changed concerning disability laws or legislation in higher education since their passing in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In addition, many of the initial and relevant issues related to community college faculty provision of academic accommodations may not have changed significantly.

The terminology search words used to locate the appropriate and relevant articles and books included: students with disabilities, postsecondary institutions, academic accommodations (disabilities), history of disability in higher education, attitudes toward disabilities, faculty attitudes, three attitude components, knowledge about disabilities, universal instructional design, community college, student success, and disability laws in higher education. The terms were used separately and conjointly to help narrow search results.

Additionally, this author reviewed references of current and relevant journal articles to obtain additional resources. Information retrieved included statistics related to
populations of students with disabilities in community college, common student
disabilities in community college, common academic accommodations provided in
community college, and teaching faculty attitude toward provision of academic
accommodations. Additional research included information gathered from dissertations,
books, faculty-related training, previous master’s projects completed by vocational
rehabilitation counselor graduate students, and online websites. Lastly, the author used
the CSUS Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling Master’s Project Handbook as an outline
to organize the overall written structure of the project.

The websites reviewed and retrieved by this author included

- Learning Disabilities Association of America (LDA) (http://ldaamerica.org)
- National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) (https://www.nichd.nih.gov/)
- Medline Plus (https://medlineplus.gov/)
- American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA) (http://www.asha.org/)

The information obtained from these websites provided this author with additional
knowledge and resources related to vocational rehabilitation services and multicultural
competency for students with disabilities. Furthermore, the information gained from
these websites was necessary to assist in the writing of the literature review and the
formation of the PowerPoint website.
Method

This author’s work experience includes work as a Clerk and Proctor for the Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSP&S) Department at American River College. Through this field experience, the author observed disparity among students with disabilities related to academic accommodations. From Fall 2012 to Fall 2015, the author encountered some issues and complaints by DSP&S students regarding teaching faculty, such as facing resistance by teaching faculty in the provision of accommodations. On separate occasions, this author also encountered teaching faculty coming into the DSPS Department inquiring on disability laws and legislation, academic accommodations and resources to help them better understand how to work with DSP&S students. In addition, some teaching faculty have expressed frustration and remarked that they do not have time to serve this population.

This author began to question how knowledge of disability among teaching faculty might affect the provision of academic accommodations in the community college settings. The author began to search journal articles related to faculty knowledge and attitude. The literature showed that faculty attitude as a barrier to the provision of accommodations for students with disabilities was a common theme among teaching faculty and expanded into the 4-year and university systems. After researching for this project, the author learned of some of the specific information deficits shared among teaching faculty and began to address the areas of awareness and knowledge related to disability competency.
The next step in developing this project topic was the search of previous CSUS Master’s Thesis/Projects related to faculty knowledge of disability in community college and provision of accommodations for students with disabilities. During this process, the author found a few projects related to academic accommodations for students with disabilities. One of the graduate projects developed focused on providing information to faculty at a specific community college campus regarding their DSPS policies, guidelines and procedures. The other graduate project was intended for school staff, with a sole focus on students with emotional/behavioral disturbances. Thus, the available CSUS Master’s Project literature failed to examine the interrelationships between community college teaching faculty knowledge of disability and attitude, and its effect on the provision of academic accommodations to students with disabilities.

As the CSUS Master’s Project literature was absent of significant prior research on this interrelation, the author was unable to expand upon prior Master’s projects. Further, the lack of significant relevant Master’s projects indicated a need to address this topic area for vocational rehabilitation counseling, specifically for community college DSP&S counselors who often work with teaching faculty in facilitating accommodations for students with disabilities. With the decision to move forward with the creation of a website (see Appendix), this author pursued Internet and video searches related to the development of a basic Website Presentation using Microsoft PowerPoint. Additionally, this author explored an existing, similar website titled, AskJAN.org, which is geared toward employers and provides information on accommodations for employees with
disabilities. This particular website helped to guide the development of the structure and content used in the project website.

**Design of Website Presentation**

The goal of the current website PowerPoint presentation is to address the need to improve the provision of academic accommodations by teaching faculty in the community college setting. Most importantly, the website is free and can be conveniently accessed by faculty on their own time. It is designed to improve faculty knowledge and with the aim of improving faculty attitudes toward the provision of academic accommodations for students with disabilities. The website is in the form of a PowerPoint Presentation and will address the following: disability laws and legislation in higher education, specific disabilities, academic accommodations, teaching and classroom strategies, and additional resources to support faculty. The specific information included in the website was selected based on academic research, and included great care to ensure sensitivity and non-stereotyping material.
Chapter 4

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The increasing enrollment rates of students with disabilities in community colleges across the United States have influenced the need to address attitudinal barriers that affect the provision of accommodations for this student population within community college settings. However, despite the attempts to address this issue, students with disabilities continue to experience barriers in access and outcomes at the postsecondary level. This is particularly concerning as students with disabilities in the U.S. have significantly lower success and completion rates within higher education compared to their peers without disabilities. The goal of this project is to educate and improve the knowledge of disability-related matters among teaching faculty, with the aim of improving faculty attitude and, consequently, the provision of accommodations for students.

The ABC Model of Attitude has largely influenced the framework for this project. The ABC Model of Attitudes (Jain, 2014) specifically contends that attitudes are linked to three components: cognition (that is, knowledge and beliefs), affect (that is, thoughts and emotions), behavior (that is, overt actions). According to this theory, attitudes can be formed based on any one of these components or a combination of them. Therefore, by improving knowledge, we can improve attitudes that influence and affect the provision of accommodations for students with disabilities.
The goal of this project was to develop a PowerPoint website for teaching faculty working with students with disabilities. The target audience was community college teaching faculty across the United States. As indicated by the literature review, students with disabilities continue to encounter attitudinal barriers that impact the provision of accommodations in the postsecondary setting, which has negatively affected their success and completion rates. The aforementioned disparities are linked to the levels of knowledge regarding disability law and legislation, reasonable accommodations and specific disabilities among faculty. Specifically, it appears that the area of disability-related knowledge is an impacting factor to overall faculty attitude. The website was designed to inform educators about disability-related matters and to increase their knowledge on this topic to better facilitate the provision of accommodations and understanding toward students with disabilities. The information was specific for students with disabilities as there are specific barriers for this student population.

Lastly, this author desired to develop a project that would not only ultimately empower teaching faculty to work more successfully with students with disabilities, but also to support a positive change for students with disabilities. The goal was to remove a barrier to achieving access, thus affecting student success, by ensuring that teaching faculty have the knowledge and resources to meet the needs of their students with disabilities.
Recommendations

The project was limited to a theoretical model and was not subsequently utilized or implemented in a real setting. The recommendation for future research is to apply the PowerPoint website and analyze the outcomes of the teaching faculty participants. The implementation process would provide valuable information on the effectiveness and weaknesses of the website.

Additionally, accommodations and disability categories continue to develop and change over time. Given this, the website put forth ought to be adjusted over time to reflect updated disabilities, accommodations, and disability law and legislation in higher education. As research continues to develop, the project should be modified to mirror the most current and relevant understandings of disability-related information in higher education.

In addition to updating the relevant information within the website, it would be beneficial to tailor the website for specific community colleges. In particular, community colleges that have a disability office would need information pertinent to their student population, as the PowerPoint website was not designed to address any specific community college’s students with disabilities population. The specific tailoring would help to address particular issues and strengths unique to the setting and those teaching faculty.
APPENDIX

ASKAAN: Academic Accommodation Network for Community College Teaching

Faculty
ABOUT AAN

The Academic Accommodation Network (AAN) is a source of free guidance on educational accommodations and disability-related information. AAN empowers instructors to work successfully with students with disabilities to improve the provision of accommodations. Those who can benefit from AAN's services include community college teaching faculty, and to a lesser extent, public two-year community colleges of all sizes, community college disability counselors, and service providers, as well as students with disabilities. AAN represents a comprehensive academic accommodation resource available online. Its author has experience and training related to disability in the community college environment, and has earned a Master's degree in her specialized field of vocational rehabilitation counseling. AAN's development has been achieved through the efforts of the author, as a part of her Master's Project.

AAN does not provide consultant services. Please read the Disclaimer section for more information.
TERMINOLOGY

Academic accommodation or Accommodation
An educational method or strategy that assists a student in performing adequately in an academic setting. In addition to assistive technology, academic accommodation may include providing extra time on tests, note-takers, or other aids to a student who has a documented disability. If a student has a documented disability, the academic accommodation is intended to provide an equal opportunity for the student to participate in academic pursuits. Accommodation statements must be reviewed on an annual basis.

Academic modification
A modification is an academic adjustment that can be made to assist a student with disabilities to perform adequately in an academic setting. Modifications may include changing course requirements, course assignments, or other aspects of course content or instruction. Modifications are intended to provide an equal opportunity for the student to participate in academic pursuits. Modifications statements must be reviewed on an annual basis.

Attitude
There is a general belief that students with disabilities are less likely to achieve academic success than their peers without disabilities. However, research has shown that students with disabilities are just as likely to achieve academic success as their peers without disabilities. Students with disabilities may require additional support and accommodations to achieve academic success. Students with disabilities are just as capable of achieving academic success as their peers without disabilities.

Community College
A community college is a public or private institution of higher education that grants associate degrees. Community colleges are often located near urban areas and provide a wide range of programs, including associate degrees, certificates, and vocational training. Community colleges are often seen as a stepping stone to a four-year university. Community colleges are also often less expensive than four-year universities. Community colleges are often located near urban areas and provide a wide range of programs, including associate degrees, certificates, and vocational training. Community colleges are often seen as a stepping stone to a four-year university. Community colleges are also often less expensive than four-year universities.

Disability
In Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the term “disability” means a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity such as walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, or breathing. The term “disability” includes both medical diagnoses and impairments that may be temporary or permanent. The term “disability” also includes a history of such an impairment. Disability resources are available for students with disabilities. Disability resources may include accommodations such as note-takers, sign language interpreters, or extra time on tests. Disability resources may also include counseling services, mental health services, and other support services.

Educational standards
Limitations that affect a student’s education based on disability, such as primary and secondary education, may be the result of personal preferences or policies. Educational standards may include limitations on the amount of coursework required, the type of coursework required, or the level of coursework required. Educational standards may also include limitations on the amount of coursework required, the type of coursework required, or the level of coursework required. Educational standards may also include limitations on the amount of coursework required, the type of coursework required, or the level of coursework required.

Federal laws and legislation

- **Section 504:** Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination based on disability in any program or activity operated by recipients of federal funds.
  - Click HERE to continue reading more.

- **ADA:** Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibits discrimination based on disability by public entities, regardless of whether they receive federal financial assistance.
  - Click HERE to continue reading more.

For further resources on these two laws, please visit the A-Z Topics by clicking HERE.
SECTION 504 OF REHABILITATION ACT 1973

Section 504 states that "no qualified handicapped student, on the basis of handicap, shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination under any academic, research, occupational training, housing, insurance, counseling, financial aid, physical education, athletics, recreation, transportation, or other extracurricular or other post-secondary education aid, benefit, or service to which such student would otherwise be entitled." (Hawkins & Medusa, 2014)

To ensure that students with disabilities have access to educational and instructional environments, Section 504 requires "appropriate academic adjustments" that might be necessary to prevent discrimination. Academic adjustments are described in the regulations as "modifications to academic requirements when necessary to ensure that such requirements do not discriminate adversely against the effect of disabilities, on the basis of handicap, against a qualified handicapped applicant or student." (Hawkins & Medusa, 2014)

Although the term modifications is used in the legislative definition of "academic adjustments," most colleges (and university) provide accommodations, not modifications (Hawkins & Medusa, 2014). To clarify, an accommodation can be a device, practice, or intervention, or procedure provided to a student with disability that affords equal access to instruction or assessment (McGuigan, 2012). It is purpose is to eliminate or diminish the impact of disability so that she or he can achieve the standard (McGuigan, 2012). A key point is that an accommodation does not change the content being taught, nor does it reduce learning or achievement expectations (McGuigan, 2012). In contrast, a modification may also be a device, practice, intervention, or procedure, except the teacher is changing the course content standard or the performance expectations (McGuigan, 2012).

Furthermore, Section 504 applies only to schools that receive federal financial assistance, including student loans. However, if direct or indirect discrimination is received for any program or activity of the college, the institution is bound to comply with Section 504 requirements of its programs and activities. Regardless of whether they are federal standards, if not (Wright, 2001), Section 504 (not rest for discrimination against students and employees) with disabilities of educational institutions, but also applicable to private, public, or educational institutions. Under the Rehabilitation Act, the college is responsible for ensuring compliance of Section 504 by enforcing a coordinator(s) to supervise compliance and enforce its requirements. As a result, every college must have a 504 Coordinator (the person can serve as a valuable resource for teaching staff). They should have any legal concerns or questions regarding disabilities laws and legal practices.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Section 504 states that an AWA prohibits any institution that has a policy or practice that discriminates against an individual with a disability. The policy or practice links the disability with a policy or practice that is not considered discriminatory because it is not a function of the disability. (Hawkins & Medusa, 2014)

In an educational institution in the Section 504 and AWA, to require, the individuals must have normal intellectual and essential skills or academic performance requirements (Center for Autism Research, 2014). In other instances is a qualified individual is defined as "an individual who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of an education program." (Center for Autism Research, 2014). These programs can be demonstrated that they are accessible in an academic or academic program. To do so, the institution must evaluate the individual's academic performance and record to demonstrate that the individual can perform the essential functions (Center for Autism Research, 2014). The evaluation is to be conducted by the AWA as the "reasonable accommodation." (Wright, 2015) That means a qualified individual has, with a disability, to perform the essential functions, or to receive the benefits of an education program (Wright, 2015).

The only exception to the requirement of accommodations as stated by Section 504 and the ADA, if it is not a function of the disability, is for the school program (Wright, 2001). That is, it would not be required to provide a reasonable accommodation if the program itself was the fundamental reason. However, if it is an academic program that is required, then the institution is bound to comply with Section 504 requirements as stated by the ADA. (Wright, 2001)

Moreover, the ADA and the AWA do not require that other disabilities have the same rights and privileges as those who are not disabled. (Wright, 2001). However, the ADA does not require that other disabilities have the same rights and privileges, or that all other disabilities are treated the same. (Wright, 2001)

In an educational institution in the Section 504 and AWA, the ADA prohibits discrimination against a qualified individual with a disability in the program of the institution. (Hawkins & Medusa, 2014). The institution must make reasonable accommodations to ensure that the individual has equal access to the educational opportunities offered by the institution. (Hawkins & Medusa, 2014)
ACCOMMODATIONS

- Additional exam time
- Classroom Note-takers/scribes
- Adaptive equipment & technology
- Alternative exam formats
- Help with learning strategies or study skills
- Audio textbooks/digitally recorded texts
- Readers and faculty-provided written course notes or assignments

- Physical adaptations to classrooms
- Sign Language interpreters/Orai Translators
- Counseling about vocational rehabilitation services
- Tutors to assist w/ ongoing coursework
- Large print or braille material
- Disability Resource handbook
- Prioritization of class registration
- Moving classes to a more accessible location
- Course substitution or waiver
- Career counseling services targeted for students with disabilities
- Real-time captioning
- Disability benefits counseling
- Parking for on-campus mobility
- Personal attendants
- Independent living skills training

ACCOMMODATIONS: ADDITIONAL EXAM TIME

An example of additional exam time is when a student receives 1.5x (time and a half) for an exam. Hence, if the class typically receives 1 hour total to finish an exam, a student with 1.5x would instead receive 1 hour 30 minutes total. 60 minutes + 30 minutes = 90 min (or 1.5 hrs).
ACCOMMODATION: CLASSROOM NOTETAKERS/SCRIBES

- An example of a classroom notetaker is someone who either takes notes or shares notes with a student with a disability. This position may be voluntary (e.g. classmate) or placed through hiring.

- A scribe is someone who literally writes for a student with a disability who cannot write due to functional limitations. For example, a student with an amputated arm may need a scribe to write his/her exam essay. Scribes do NOT think for the student or provide any answers or clues for a student.

ACCOMMODATION: ADAPTIVE EQUIPMENT & TECHNOLOGY

- Examples of adaptive equipment and technology can include talking calculators for students who are blind; special computer softwares such as screen-readers or speech-to-text for students with visual impairments; assistive writing tools for students with limited writing ability; tables that can be adjusted for height for students in wheelchairs; and much more.

ACCOMMODATION MAY NOT BE APPLICABLE TO ALL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. PLEASE CONSULT WITH YOUR COLLEGE DISABILITY OFFICE AND ASK YOUR COLLEGE’S SPECIFIED SUPPORT INFORMATION.
ACCOMMODATION: ALTERNATIVE EXAM FORMATS

- Examples of alternative exam formats can include enlarged exam formats (e.g., 11" x 18") for students with visual impairments or braille versions of exams for students who are blind.

ACCOMMODATION MAY NOT BE APPLICABLE TO ALL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. PLEASE CONSULT WITH YOUR COLLEGE’S DISABILITY SERVICES OFFICE FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION.

ACCOMMODATION: HELP WITH LEARNING STRATEGIES OR STUDY SKILLS

- Examples of learning strategies can include: note-taking, organizing information, mapping out key concepts and relationships, and much more for strengthening comprehension and storage of information.

- Examples of study strategies can include: flashcards, mnemonics, study groups, or "teaching" the topic to another person for strengthening understanding of information.

ACCOMMODATION MAY NOT BE APPLICABLE TO ALL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. PLEASE CONSULT WITH YOUR COLLEGE’S DISABILITY SERVICES OFFICE FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION.
ACCOMMODATION: AUDIO TEXTBOOKS/DIGITALLY RECORDED TEXTS

- Audiobooks are basically an audio version of a book that an individual can listen to rather than read. For example, a student with a visual disability may not be able to read a textbook. Hence, having the textbook available in audio format is a helpful option to help the student receive/sustain the information.

- Another example may include a book that is available electronically (e.g., pdf) and can be uploaded or synchronized with a text-to-speech reading software (e.g., Kurzweil, fluently).

ACCOMMODATION MAY NOT BE APPLICABLE TO ALL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. PLEASE CONSULT WITH YOUR COLLEGE DISABILITY OFFICE/ACCESSIBILITY OFFICE OR SPECIALIST FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION.

ACCOMMODATION: READERS AND FACULTY-PROVIDED WRITTEN COURSE NOTES OR ASSIGNMENTS

- An example of a reader is someone who literally reads to a student with a disability who is unable to read due to functional limitations. For example, a student who is blind and does not read braille may need a reader. Readers do NOT define or explain any terms or provide clarifications for a student.

- An example of faculty-provided written course notes or assignments may include teacher lecture notes.

ACCOMMODATION MAY NOT BE APPLICABLE TO ALL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. PLEASE CONSULT WITH YOUR COLLEGE DISABILITY OFFICE/ACCESSIBILITY OFFICE OR SPECIALIST FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION.
ACCOMMODATIONS: PHYSICAL ADAPTATIONS TO CLASSROOMS

- An example of a physical adaptation to a classroom can include making sure there is enough space between all the furniture for a student in a wheelchair to move and maneuver around in the classroom easily.

ACCOMMODATION: SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS/TRANSLITERATORS

- Sign language interpreters can be useful for students who are deaf, hard-of-hearing or have hearing loss.
- Oral transliterators, also called oral interpreters, facilitate spoken communication between individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and individuals who are not. Individuals who are "oralists" use speech and speechreading as their primary mode of communication and may or may not know or use manual communication modes or sign language (Oral Transliteration, n.d.).
COUNSELING ABOUT VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES

- Counseling about vocational rehabilitation services is not an accommodation but a support service available to students with disabilities.
- Students may receive specialized academic, personal and career counseling through their college’s disability office (if applicable) or vocational rehabilitation counseling through their state’s department of rehabilitation agencies (e.g., Dept. of Rehab in California).

TUTORS TO ASSIST W/ ONGOING COURSEWORK

- Tutoring is not an accommodation but a support service that may be available at your community college campus.
- Students can utilize tutors available on their campuses for additional academic support. Many departments provide their own tutoring services in various subjects for students. Please check with your college for specific tutoring services available to students with disabilities.
ACCOMMODATION: LARGE PRINT OR BRAILLE MATERIAL

- Large print or braille material for exams and/or textbooks may be available for students. Please check with your college's disability office or alternate media office for specific information.
- For additional information, you can also visit the High Tech Center Training Unit at: http://www.htctu.net/divisions/act/main.htm
ACCOMMODATION: PRIORITY CLASS REGISTRATION

- Priority registration allows for early registration of courses for the upcoming semester. This can be helpful for students with disabilities who may need early registration due to various reasons. For example, a student with a disability who takes his/her medication in the morning may need afternoon/evening courses to avoid drowsiness in the morning, following medication. As such, priority registration allows students to plan an accommodative schedule that minimizes potential complications.

- Many students who are a part of specialized programs, such as DSFS (Disabled Student Programs & Services), EOPS (Extended Opportunity Program & Services), CalWORKS, and Former Foster Youth may qualify for Priority Registration. Check with your college for specific information.

ACCOMMODATION: MOVING CLASSES TO A MORE ACCESSIBLE LOCATION

- As a way to ensure accessibility, an instructor may choose to move his/her classroom into a more accessible classroom location. For example, if a class is located in an old part of the building which does not have ramp and/or elevator access, an instructor can move his/her classroom into a part of the building that does have ramp and/or elevator access to allow students who use wheelchairs to be able to access the classroom.

ACCOMMODATION MAY NOT BE APPLICABLE TO ALL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. PLEASE CONSULT WITH YOUR COLLEGE'S DISABLED STUDENTS SERVICES OFFICE AND DISABILITY COUNSELOR/SPECIALIST FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION.
ACCOMMODATION: COURSE SUBSTITUTION OR WAIVER

- Course substitution basically allows for substituting or replacing of a certain course with another course. For example, if a student is near graduation and needs one more course to graduate but that course is not being offered this/next last semester, the student may be allowed to substitute that last course with a different course that is currently being offered to avoid delaying graduation. Please check with a counselor for specific information.

- A course waiver basically allows for the removal of or forgoing of a course. Please check with a counselor for specific information.

ACCOMMODATION MAY NOT BE APPLICABLE TO ALL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. PLEASE CONSULT WITH YOUR COLLEGE DISABILITY OFFICE AND/OR COUNSELOR OR SPECIALIST FOR SPECIFIC INFORMATION.

CAREER OR PLACEMENT SERVICES TARGETED FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

- Career or placement services are not accommodations but services that may be available to students with disabilities.

- Please check with your college’s disability office to see if they offer any programs or services focused on career/job placement for students with disabilities.

- For example, the College to Career (C2C) program at Sacramento City College offers support for the learning needs and employment goals of individuals with intellectual disabilities and/or autism spectrum.

HOME PAGE  ACCOMMODATIONS
ACCOMMODATION: REAL-TIME CAPTIONING

- Captions, composed of text, are used by people who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing to access content delivered by spoken words and sounds. Real-time captions, or Computer Assisted Real-time Translation (CART), are created as an event takes place.

- A captioner (often trained as a court reporter or stenographer) uses a stenotype machine with a phonetic keyboard and special software. A computer translates the phonetic symbols into captions almost instantaneously and displays them on a laptop or on a large display screen. A slight delay may occur due to the captioner’s need to hear and enter the words and the computer’s processing time.

- Real-time captioning can be used for programs that do not have scripts or captions such as lectures, classes, congressional or council meetings, news programs, and non-broadcast meetings, such as those of professional associations.

ACCOMMODATION: DISABILITY BENEFITS COUNSELING

- Disability benefits counseling varies and may pertain to a wide range of students with disabilities, such as those who are receiving SSDI/SSI and are going to college with the goal of employment, military veteran students who are receiving veteran benefits, and more.

- Please check with your college’s disability office, veterans office, and any other relevant offices for specific information.
ACCOMMODATION: PARATRANSLIT FOR ON-CAMPUS MOBILITY

- Paratransit is a specific form of transportation available to students with disabilities. For example, a student in a wheelchair who is unable to drive may utilize paratransit to ensure transportation from home to college and vice versa. Please check with your local paratransit provider for more information.

ACCOMMODATION: PERSONAL ATTENDANTS

- A personal attendant may attend to a student with a disability for personal care reasons. For example, a personal care attendant may be responsible for transporting a student in a wheelchair from class to class, and/or attend to a student who is prone to seizures to ensure their safety in class.

- Personal care attendants are not provided as accommodations. If you have questions regarding mobility aids, please contact your college’s disability office.
ACCOMMODATION: INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS TRAINING

- Independent living skills (ILS) training is not typically an academic accommodation, but a service mostly provided by outside agencies for individuals with disabilities. ILS training is helpful to improve student’s daily living skills, such as navigating with a cane for a student with a visual disability.
- For more specific information, contact your college’s disability office.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- The first and most common involves breaking concepts down into smaller segments to make information more manageable.
- Second, creating instructional materials in alternative formats were deemed highly helpful, such as having print materials distributed in print format, electronically, or both.
- Third, the use of journaling as a means for parent to teacher communication can also be helpful to build understanding from parent to student to instructor, especially in cases of students with severe developmental disabilities where parents are the student’s legal guardians. In the special situation where a parent is the legal guardian, IEP/FA, with a student’s permission, does allow communication to be open between faculty and parents.
- Fourth, communicating with former students who share similar disabilities, all the while maintaining student confidentiality, for ideas can be helpful.
- Fifth, visualization exercises, to assist students who have excessive levels of anxiety can be helpful, especially when asked to give a presentation in front of a class. For example, the instructor can meet the student individually in their office. The student is asked to close their eyes and explain in detail what they are seeing and explaining as they give the speech. If the student expresses fear or anxiety, the instructor addresses the anxiety as they go through the visualization.
- Sixth, grading criteria could be an effective means for students to understand how their grade will be determined for assignments, and what the expectations are for those assignments. Seventh, instruction sometimes indicate that the method they use to instruct material, even if well developed and thought out, might not reach all students. In this case, it is best to meet with students individually and attempt to teach the concept using a different method. A final strategy, regarding math courses, consists of placing large math problems individually on separate sheets of paper since this process can help students who have difficulty with visually tracking information; and prevent students from becoming distracted by the upcoming math problems.

DUGGAN, 2016
DISABILITY CATEGORIES

- Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) or Attention Deficit Hyper Disorder (ADHD)
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Cognitive or intellectual Disability
- Difficulty hearing
- Mobility limitation (orthopedic impairment)
- Difficulty seeing (or visual impairments)
- Difficulty speaking or language impairment
- Health impairment, including Chronic illness

NOTE: IF A DISABILITY IS NOT LISTED HERE, PLEASE CONTACT YOUR COLLEGE’S OFFICE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY SERVICES TO DISCUSS POTENTIAL ACOMMODATION NEEDS FOR YOUR INQUIRER

ATTENTION-DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

ADHD, formerly known as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), is a condition in which a person has trouble paying attention and focusing on tasks, tends to act without thinking, and has trouble sitting still (WebMD, 2016). The common characteristics of ADHD are impulsivity, inattention, and/or hyperactivity (DSM-V, 2013). The primary symptoms include failure to listen to instructions, inability to organize one’s self and work tasks, fidgeting with hands and feet, talking too much, inability to stay on task, leaving projects unfinished, and having trouble paying attention to and responding to details. Although individuals may have both inattention and hyperactivity symptoms, many individuals predominantly display one symptom more than another (Duggan, 2010).

Examples of accommodations may include:
- extended time to complete tests or assignments
- note takers
- tutors or other organizational supports
- reduced course loads
- preferential registration for smaller classes
- preferential seating near the front of a class or meeting
- copies of class or meeting notes
- private, quiet work and testing areas
- recorded lectures and/or books
- printed material on audiotape or in electronic format
- written directions

DISABILITY OPPORTUNITIES, INTERNETWORKING, AND TECHNOLOGY (DOIT)
AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER, INC. ASPERGER'S

Students who have disorders on the Autism Spectrum, including Asperger’s syndrome, one of the best growing groups in higher education (Duggan, 2010), Autistic disorder (sometimes called autism or classical ASD) is the most common condition in a group of developmental disorders known as the autism spectrum disorders (NINDS, 2016). Individuals with autism have difficulties with social interaction, display problems with verbal and nonverbal communication, and exhibit repetitive behaviors or narrow, obsessive interests; these behaviors can range in impact from mild to disabling (NINDS, 2016).

Examples of accommodations may include:
- Reasonable accommodations for a student with Asperger Syndrome may include:
  - private rooms in residence halls
  - reduced course loads
  - preferential registration for smaller classes

COGNITIVE/INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY

Students with intellectual disabilities (ID), formerly known as mental retardation, can also fall under the “Developmental Disability” (DD) category. In comparison, DD’s broader than ID, and includes physical, intellectual, or both types of disabilities. (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2012). By definition, students with intellectual disabilities possess below-average intellectual functioning and a lack of skills necessary for daily living (Medline Plus, 2012).

Examples of accommodations may include:
- Allow verbal response instead of written response
- Allow typed responses instead of written response
- Use spell-check on computer
- Provide ample space on forms requiring written responses
- Provide written information
- Provide checklists
- Use keyguard
- Use alternative input devices
- Speech recognition
- Joystick
- Touchscreen

HTTP://ASUJA.ORG
DIFFICULTY HEARING

Hearing loss can occur at birth, suddenly, or gradually over time (WebMD, 2014). Depending on the case, hearing loss can range from mild to severe and can be reversible, temporary, or permanent (WebMD, 2014). Most students who are hard of hearing use either hearing aids or American Sign Language (ASL) as a means of communication (Duggan, 2010). Deaf students may struggle with note taking in class since they are required to move their vision from the interpreter, or their instructor, to their note pads. For this special group of students, it is important to understand cultural differences, and address the impact of the academic complexities that the accommodations for their disabilities might oppose (Duggan, 2010).

Examples of accommodations may include:

- interpreters
- sound amplification systems
- note taking
- real-time captioning
- email (for faculty-student meetings and class discussions)
- virtual waiting system for lab emergencies
- changing computer auditory signals to flash changes
- captioned video presentations

Tips

- When speaking, ensure the student can see your face & avoid unnecessary pacing/moving.
- When speaking, avoid obscuring your lips or face with hands, books, or other materials.
- Write discussion questions/answers on a whiteboard or overhead projector.
- Speak clearly & at a normal rate.
- Provide written outlines, assignments, instructions, and demonstrations summaries & distribute them before the class or other presentation, when possible.

MOBILITY LIMITATION

Students with physical limitations that affect their mobility or bodily control are considered to have orthopedic impairments (Duggan); these can be students who use wheelchairs or have physical limitations. These include but are not limited to amputation, paralysis, cerebral palsy, stroke, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, arthritis, and spinal cord injury (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology, n.d.). A mobility impairment may impact, to varying degrees, a student’s ability to manipulate objects, turn pages, write with a pen or pencil, types on a keyboard, and/or perceive research materials (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology, n.d.).

Examples of accommodations may include:

- accessible locations for classrooms, labs, work sites, and field trips
- wide aisles and uncluttered work areas
- adjustable height and tilt tables
- all equipment located within reach
- note takers, scribes, and lab assistants
- group lab or work assignments
- extended exam time or alternative testing arrangements
- computer with speech input, Morse code, and alternative keyboards
- course and program materials available in electronic format
DIFFICULTY SEEING

Students who have no sight cannot access standard printed materials (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology, n.d.). In addition, students who have been blind since birth may also have difficulty understanding verbal descriptions of visual materials and concepts (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology, n.d.). Students with visual impairments or who are legally blind may learn through other modalities including tactile, kinesthetic, and auditory modalities (Suggested). They may use accommodations such as assistive technologies and alternative media to assist them in accessing materials.

Examples of accommodations for blindness may include:
- audio-recorded, brailled, or electronic-formatted notes, handouts, and tests
- verbal descriptions of visual content
- raised line drawings and tactile models of graphic materials
- braille equipment/braille
- auditory emergency warning signals
- adaptive lab equipment (e.g., taking thermometers and calculators, light probes, tactile frames)
- computers with optical character readers, speech output, flexible screen displays and embossed output

SPEECH/LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENT

Speech and language impairments fall under communication disorders, which are defined as an impairment in the ability to receive, send, process, and comprehend concepts or verbal, nonverbal, and graphic symbol systems (Speech-Language-Hearing Association, 2013). A communication disorder may range in severity from mild to profound and may be developmental or acquired (American Speech-Language Hearing Association, 1993). Specifically, a speech disorder is defined as an impairment of the articulation of speech sounds; fluency and/or voice (American Speech-Language Hearing Association). On the other hand, a language disorder is defined as impaired comprehension and/or use of spoken, written, and/or other symbol systems.

Examples of accommodations may include:
- Provide pen and paper, chalk or dry-erase boards
- Allow the use of a computer with word processing software, word prediction software, and/or speech output software
- Provide a portable speech amplifier
- Provide, or allow the use of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices (AAC devices provide communication access through typed or pre-programmed words and sentences, or through pictorial symbols.)
- Allow the use of e-mail or instant messaging

http://aslam.org
HEALTH IMPAIRMENTS

Students who have a health impairment that impacts their well-being are categorized and tracked. The National Center on Educational Statistics (2004) defines a health impairment as having a health impairment. Examples of diagnoses include health conditions such as diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDS, and other illnesses that impact a student's overall health. Students with health impairments, for instance, may have challenges in traditional college academic programs because of unpredictable symptoms and relapses, which often exacerbate and decrease over time (Royster & Oleno, 2006). The students may also be on medications that cause unwanted side effects, or they may experience physical symptoms that make attending class difficult. Students who suffer from certain chronic illnesses can also experience heightened levels of anxiety, depression, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder-like symptoms which can make maintaining attention and focusing on studying difficult (Bokser & Wolraich, 2006). Although less serious health conditions may not create such intense symptoms, they can still affect student mental health.

Examples of accommodations may include:
- note takers
- recorded class sessions or meetings
- flexible attendance requirements
- extended exam time
- alternative testing arrangements
- assignments available in electronic format
- the use of electronic mail for supervisor and instructor-student meetings and for class or small group discussions
- web-based or email distribution of course materials, lecture notes, and other documents
- environments that minimize fatigue and injury
- an ergonomic workstation with adjustable keyboard trays, monitor rests, glare guards, foot rests, adjustable chairs, and/or anti-fatigue matting
- speech recognizer, computer input devices, ergonomic keyboards, one-handed keyboards, expanded keyboards, or miniature keyboards

MENTAL ILLNESS

Mental illnesses can include a number of Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-V) diagnoses, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorder, and depression (Duggan, 2014). Royten and Vegel (2008) state that mental illness often carries a stigma, causing people to experience reduced self-esteem and health care utilization, discrimination, and a perception of public devaluation. As such, these issues can intensify the impact of mental illness and increase academic difficulties for students (Duggan). Students may have particular problems receiving, processing, and recalling information during times of stress (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology, n.d.). Side effects from medication may also impact attention, memory,alertness, and activity level (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology, n.d.). The episodic and unpredictable onset and recurrence of illness can also interrupt the educational process as well as performance in student employment (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology, n.d.).

Examples of accommodations may include:
- note takers
- early notification of deadlines for projects, exams, and assignments
- flexible attendance requirements
- encouraging and validating academic and work environments
- availability of a quiet work or testing area
- materials available in electronic format
- web page or email distribution of course materials and lecture notes
SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES

Students with specific learning disabilities may have average to above average intelligence but may have difficulties acquiring and demonstrating knowledge and understanding content. Disabilities, Opportunities, Interventions, and Technology (n.d.) states that these difficulties in achievement and intellectual ability (Disabilities, Opportunities, Interventions, and Technology, n.d.) Examples of specific learning disabilities can be

- Dyslexia: A persistent and significant difficulty in learning to read and improve reading skills.
- Dysgraphia: A difficulty in writing and spelling that affects the formation of both handwriting and typing.
- Dyscalculia: A difficulty in understanding and learning numbers and mathematical concepts.
- Auditory Processing Disorder (APD): A difficulty in processing spoken language.
- Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD): A difficulty in focusing and maintaining attention.

Accommodations for students with specific learning disabilities may include:

- Extended time on tests.
- Use of assistive technology devices.
- Recorded notes or assignments.
- Flexible scheduling and deadlines.
- Assistive technology tools such as spell checkers or reading assistants.
- Audio recordings of textbooks.
- Braille and large print materials.
- Alternative testing formats.

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY (TBI)

TBI is an acquired injury to the brain caused by an external force, such as a fall or blow to the head (WebMD, 2016). The impact can be mild to severe, affecting a student's abilities to control emotions, cognition, and behavior (WebMD, 2016). Maniscalco, Richtmeier, Richardson, Crovity, & Henry (2000) report that although many adults with TBI generally regain most of their intellectual functioning after their injuries, they still continued to experience difficulties with controlling their emotions as well as report distress in their personal and emotional functioning.

Examples of accommodations for students with TBI may include:

- Extended time on tests.
- Breaks or modified assignments.
- Flexible deadlines.
- Assistive technology tools such as spell checkers or reading assistants.
- Braille and large print materials.
- Alternative testing formats.
- Audio recordings of textbooks.

Examples of educational accommodations:

- Increased time for tests.
- Extra credit for missed tests.
- Alternative assignments.
- Flexible deadlines.
- Assisted technology tools.
OTHER (DISABILITIES)

Some of the main types of disability included under the “Other” category are Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) (Duggan). Additional disabilities that may fall under this category include temporary disabilities, burns, and more. Overall, disabilities that do not fit under any other category typically fall under the “Other” category.

Please keep in mind that disability categories which fall under “Other” may also vary from college to college.

Overall, it is important to understand that the accommodations for each disability will vary from individual to individual, depending on specific needs. Therefore, having a discussion with the student about any specific educational limitations is the most important way to target educational complications and implement optimal accommodations to alleviate learning barriers.

A-Z TOPICS

- Accessibility
- Alternative Input Devices
- ADA
- Assistive Technology
- Communication Strategies
- Definition of Disability
- Disclosure
- Emergency Evacuation
- Funding
- Reasonable Accommodation
- Section 504 Rehabilitation Act
- Service Animals
- Testing Accommodations
- Universal Design
- Veterans
**A-Z TOPIC: ACCESSIBILITY**

- **Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG)** - Access Board Link

- **How to Make Presentations Accessible to All** - W3C Web Accessibility Initiative Publication
  - http://www.w3.org/WAI/training/accessible

- **Web Accessibility and Online Applications** - JAN Webpage
  - http://askjan.org/topics/onlineapps.htm

- **Convert a Word document into a DAISY accessible media file** - DAISYPedia Link

**ACCESSIBILITY. (N.D.). Retrieved October 1, 2016, from http://askjan.org/topics/access.htm**

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**A-Z TOPIC: ALTERNATIVE INPUT DEVICES**

- **JAN's Accommodation and Compliance Series: Alternative Input Devices: Options to Consider**
  - http://askjan.org/media/altninput.html

- **JAN's Accommodation and Compliance Series: Speech Recognition: Options to Consider**
  - http://askjan.org/media/speechrec.html

A-Z TOPIC: ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

- AccessibleTech - A Project of DBTAC
  - http://www.accessibletech.org/index.html
- ADA.gov Accessible Technology Section - US DOJ Resource
- Assistive Technology Industry Association (ATIA)
  - http://www.atia.org/
- Center for Applied Special Technology
  - http://www.cast.org/
- High Tech Center Training Unit
  - http://www.htctunet/index.htm

A-Z TOPIC: AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

- ADA OVERVIEW
- REGULATIONS - TITLE II OF THE ADA
A-Z TOPIC: COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

General communication recommendations

- Speak directly to a person with a disability.
- Having a functional limitation does not mean the individual cannot communicate for himself/herself.
- Speak in a regular tone. A physical or cognitive limitation does not mean the person cannot hear or understand you.
- Use descriptive language indicating direction or size when communicating with people with cognitive and visual disabilities. Instead of saying, “over here,” “that way,” and “tall guy,” use words to describe the direction, space, length, and size, e.g., “about two feet to your left,” “straight ahead,” “two inches from the curb,” etc.
- Identify yourself when you need a person with a visual disability in groups. Identify to whom you are speaking and verify people when it is their turn to speak.
- Describe charts, drawings, visuals, or illustrations during presentations. When you ask people to read it or their own, you are excluding those who are not able to see or read.
- Listen attentively to people with speech disabilities. Do not assume you understand or pretend you understand. Ask for clarification as needed.
- It is always appropriate to offer your help, but do not assume the person will need or accept your help.

Specific communication recommendations

- Visual Disability
- deaf or hard-of-hearing
- Motor Disability
- Cognitive Disability

A-Z TOPIC: DEFINITION OF “DISABILITY”

The ADA defines persons with a “disability” as “people who have a history of, or who are regarded as having, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities”. In addition, the ADA defines “major life activities” as ability in “caring for one’s self, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, working, performing manual tasks, and learning” (Meyers et al., 2014).
A-Z TOPIC: DISCLOSURE

It is important to understand that there are differences regarding disability disclosure and accommodations in high school versus postsecondary education. Whereas in secondary school, students with disabilities are identified and provided accommodations, in higher education, it is the student's responsibility to self-disclose, request the services, and present the necessary documentation to receive the support (Getzel, 2006).

Hence, students with disabilities may not be aware of what the process is for obtaining and utilizing accommodations in higher education, or they may not be ready to disclose their disability and ask for specific services (Wormslev & Koch, 2012). Getzel (2006) indicated, “understanding how to access and use accommodations is a critical self-determination skill” for college students with disabilities. In this regard, faculty can play a key role by informing or referring appropriate students to the disability service department on campus to initiate the accommodation process and/or connect students to further support services.

A-Z TOPICS: EMERGENCY EVACUATION

- Preparing Makes Sense for People with Disabilities and Special Needs - Ready.gov Publication
- In regard to your campus’ emergency evacuation procedures, please contact your specific college police department.
A-Z TOPIC: FUNDING

Funding sources, such as grants and scholarships, for higher education are available to assist individuals with disabilities. For a list of funding contacts for educational resources, visit the JAN Website at http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?291.

Another source of funding is Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). VR provides a wealth of resources related to employment options for people with disabilities. VR, a state-supported division of services, assists individuals with disabilities who are pursuing meaningful careers. VR assists those individuals to secure gainful employment commensurate with their abilities and capabilities through local job searches and awareness of self-employment and telecommuting opportunities. To contact your nearest VR office, please see http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?992.

Additional funding for assistive technology might include: the U.S. Veterans Administration, the Social Security Administration’s PASS (Plan To Achieve Self-Support) program, your state’s workers’ compensation program if the disability was caused by a work-related injury, non-profit disability organizations, and civic or service organizations (Lions Club, VFW, Rotary Club, etc.

For an additional list of funding resources, click here.

FUNDING LINKS (ND), RETRIEVED OCTOBER 1, 2014 FROM HTTP://ASKJAN.ORG/INDEX/HELP/GENERALINFO.HTML

ADDITIONAL FUNDING, CONTINUED

- Community Resources at http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?290
- Computers at http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?289
- Education at http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?291
- Food at http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?297
- Grants/Loans at http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?300
- Housing at http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?303
- Insurance at http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?306
- Medical at http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?309
- Prosthetics at http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?311
- Specific Disability:
  - Amputation at http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?311
  - Cancer at http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?312
  - Hearing at http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?315
  - Vision at http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?318
- Taxes at http://askjan.org/medr/tax.html
- Transportation at http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?321
- Miscellaneous at http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?324

FUNDING LINKS (ND), RETRIEVED OCTOBER 1, 2014 FROM HTTP://ASKJAN.ORG/INDEX/HELP/GENERALINFO.HTML
A-Z TOPIC: REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

Federal law does not create a legal right to all accommodations for students with disabilities; only reasonable accommodations are required (Hawke, 2004). However, the notion of reasonableness is based on the concept that colleges explore all available alternative accommodations, unless it chooses to do so (Hawke, 2004). Most requests for accommodation at community colleges are of an obvious and routine nature, with no legal or financial analysis required (Hawke, 2004). However, when the requests for accommodations are of an obvious and routine nature, the decision-making process should be deliberate and involve legal and business counsel (Hawke, 2004).

For an accommodation to constitute a fundamental alteration, it must require more than a modification to the program, that is, it has to compromise the essential nature of the program (Hawke, 2004). In addition, the institution does not have an obligation to engage in a single accommodation that is so excessive that it creates an undue hardship on the institution (Hawke, 2004). Some specialized devices cost more than $5,000 and individuals may require multiple devices. However, caution should be exercised in calling cost the sole determinant for denying a request for accommodation. In accordance with the regulations, the cost of the accommodation alone is not sufficient to withhold compliance, but a decision must take into consideration the institution’s budget, number of employees, and other factors (Hawke, 2004).

A-Z TOPIC: SECT. 504 OF REHABILITATION ACT 1973

- **SECTION 504 REGULATIONS**

- **OVERVIEW OF SECTION 504**
A-Z TOPIC: SERVICE ANIMALS

- 2010 Revised ADA Requirements for Service Animals - DOJ Publication
  - http://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm
- Frequently Asked Questions about Service Animals and the ADA - DOJ Publication
- Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals - ADA National Network
  - http://adata.org/publication/service-animals-booklet
- Service Dog & Assistant Dog) Laws - Service Dog Central Website
  - http://servicedogcentral.org/content/nodel59

SERVICE ANIMALS (N.C.), RETRIEVED: OCTOBER 1, 2016, FROM HTTP://AZ.AKAN.ORG/TOPICS/SERVICEANIMALS.HTM

A-Z TOPIC: TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

What is alternative format?
Alternative format is any format that is different from the existing test. Alternative format may be: large print, Braille, color-coded text, audio (reader, tape, CD, or computer).

What is extended time?
Extended time means allowing the test-taker extra time to complete the test. The amount of extended time should be correlated to the test-taker’s disability or limitations. Common examples of extended time include: time and a half, double time, and unlimited time.

What is a reader?
A reader is a person who reads the test to the test-taker. This person should be familiar with the terminology or language used on the test. A reader does not interpret or read, or explain the test. A reader reads the test directions, questions, and answer choices to the test-taker.

What is a scribe?
A scribe is a person who writes down, or otherwise records, the test-taker’s responses. The scribe does not create answers for the test-taker or help the test-taker identify correct answers. The scribe simply writes the test-taker’s answers down on the test or answer sheet.

Who can ask for accommodations in testing?
Individuals with disabilities that inhibit their ability to take tests can ask for an accommodation.

All test scores or standards be lowered/changed/adapted for person with disability?
Generally, no. If a test taker must adapt a certain “passing score,” to must the test taker have a disability. The test-taker with a disability may need an accommodation to help meet the standard, but the standard does not have to be lowered, changed, or altered.

For more specific questions regarding your campus’ disability office testing procedures or accommodations, please contact your college’s disability office.

ACCOMMODATION AND COMPLIANCE SERIES: TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS (N.C.), RETRIEVED: OCTOBER 2, 2016, FROM HTTP://AZ.AKAN.ORG/TOPICS/TESTINGACCOMMODATIONS.HTM
A-Z TOPIC: UNIVERSAL DESIGN

An important strategy that instructors can utilize to maximize student learning is Universal Design (UD), which is a concept that originates from the field of architecture. UD emphasizes the importance of designing physical environments to be functionally accessible to a wide variety of users, particularly individuals with disabilities (Rao, Edelen-Smith, & Wakehua, 2013).

Educational frameworks based on the concept of UD expand this idea of universal access to pedagogical practices with the aim of creating accessible learning environments (Rao, Edelen-Smith, & Wakehua, 2013). In contrast to physical access, which enables access and interaction with the physical environment, cognitive access relates to the recognition, effective, and strategic learning networks in the brain. Based in the neuroscience of learning, cognitive access focuses on the processes behind acquisition of skills and knowledge. These cognitive processes include demonstration of knowledge and skills, comprehension of information, engagement, and self-regulation during the learning process (Rao, Edelen-Smith, & Wakehua, 2013).

An advantage to using the Universal Design approach is that all students can access information regardless of diagnosis or disability (Duggan, 2013). Disclosure rates have decreased significantly from high school to postsecondary education. Consequently, accommodations request rates have also decreased significantly from high school to postsecondary education. Therefore, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is important since disclosure rates are so low in order to address needs of students (Newman and Madak, 2014). Click here to learn more about Universal Design for Instruction.

Moreover, Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a model that has a set of principles for developing online accessibility in higher education (Dell, et al., 2015). The three overarching principles include presentation, action, and expression; and engagement and interaction (Dell, et al.). For example, presentation may include using color with care and choosing fonts carefully (Dell, et al.). Action and expression may include modeling and teaching good discussion board etiquette (Dell, et al.), engagement and interaction may involve choosing content management system (CMS) tools carefully and providing accessible document formats (Dell, et al.). Click here for more information on UDL for online learning.

A-Z TOPIC: VETERANS

- National Resource Directory - U.S. Department of Defense Website compiling federal, state, local, and non-profit resources for Wounded Warriors, Veterans, Family Members, and Caregivers. The NRD is a collaborative effort among the Departments of Defense, Veterans Affairs (VA), and Labor (DOL).
  - http://www.nationalresourcedirectory.gov
- HUDVet - U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Information
  - http://portal.hud.gov/portal/page/portal/HUD/topics/veteran_information
- ADA: Know Your Rights: Returning Service Members with Disabilities - U.S. Department of Justice Document
- http://www.ada.gov/servicemembers_adamto.html
- Veterans: Advocacy and Social Service Resources
  - http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?9950
- Veterans: Minority-Specific Resources
  - http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?1005
- Veterans: Resources by Branch/Specialization
  - http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?1020
- Veterans: Resources by Flexibility
  - http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?1017
- Veterans: Resources by State/Territory
  - http://askjan.org/cgi-win/TypeQuery.exe?1010
UD FOR INSTRUCTION

The goal of UD is to maximize the learning of students with a wide range of characteristics by applying UD principles to all aspects of instruction (e.g., delivery methods, physical spaces, information resources, technology, personal interactions, assessments) (Burgerfeather, 2015). The UD principles of UD are listed below, and are followed by an example of application in instruction:

1. Equitable use: The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities. Example: A professor’s website is designed so that it is accessible to everyone, including students who are blind and using text-to-speech software (Burgerfeather, 2015).
2. Flexibility in use: The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities. Example: A museum, when used as a foldable for a course, allows each student to choose to read written or a description of the contents of display cases (Burgerfeather, 2015).
3. Simple and intuitive use: Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user’s experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration levels. Example: Instructions on science equipment are labeled with text and symbols that are simple and intuitive to understand (Burgerfeather, 2015).
4. Perceptible information: The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user’s sensory abilities. Example: A slide presentation projected in a course includes captions (Burgerfeather, 2015).
5. Tolerance for error: The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions. Example: Educational software provides guidance and background information when the student makes an inappropriate response (Burgerfeather, 2015).
6. Low physical effort: The design can be used efficiently, comfortably, and with a minimum of fatigue. Example: Dormitory shleves are designed automatically for people with a wide variety of physical characteristics (Burgerfeather, 2015).
7. Size and space for approach and use: Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of the user’s body size, posture, or mobility. Example: A flexible science lab work station provides adjustable workspace for students who are left- or right-handed and for those who need to work from a standing or seated position (Burgerfeather, 2015).

For more information and resources on Universal Design, please visit: http://www.washington.edu/dot/resources/popular/resource-collections/applications-universal-design

UDL FOR ONLINE LEARNING

The University of Arkansas website (http://ualr.edu/pace/tenstepsuc/) provides a comprehensive guide to implementing UDL in online classes. Their “Ten Simple Steps Toward Universal Design of Online Classes” provides information regarding the creation and design of online classes using UDL. These steps include:

1. Create content first-then design
2. Provide simple and consistent navigation
3. Include an accommodation statement
4. Choose content management system (CMS) tools carefully
5. Model and teach good discussion board etiquette
6. Use color with care
7. Provide accessible document formats
8. Choose fonts carefully
9. Convert PowerPoint to HTML
10. If the content is auditory, make it visual, and if it is visual, make it auditory

For more specific information regarding each step, visit: http://ualr.edu/pace/tenstepsuc/
SPECIFIC COMM. STRATEGIES: VISUAL DISABILITY

- When You Meet a Person with a Visual Disability
  - It is always appropriate to offer your help, but do not be surprised if the individual would “rather do it myself.”
  - If you are helping and not sure what to do, ask the person.
  - A gentle touch on the elbow will indicate to a person with a visual disability that you are speaking to him/her.
  - If you are walking with a person who is blind, do not take that person’s arm; instead let that person take your arm.
  - Do not shout. “Blind” does not mean hard of hearing.
  - If you have a question for the person with a visual disability, ask the individual directly. Do not ask his/her companion. “Blind” does not mean one cannot speak.
  - Do not pet a guide dog, except when the dog is “off duty.” Even then, you should ask the dog’s master/owner first.
  - Do not worry about substituting words for “see,” “look,” or even “blind.” Do not avoid them where those words fit. You can talk about blindness itself, when you both feel comfortable about it.
  - When you meet a person you know with a visual disability, mention your name. It is difficult to recognize voices unless you happen to have a very distinctive one.

MINERS, UHRBIS & NEC, 2014

SPECIFIC COMM. STRATEGIES: DEAF/HARD-OF-HEARING

- When You Meet a Person Who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing
  - Speak clearly and distinctly, but do not exaggerate. Use normal speed unless asked to slow down.
  - Provide a clear view of your mouth. Waving your hands or holding something in front of your lips, thus hiding them, makes lip reading extremely difficult. Do not chew gum.
  - Use a normal tone unless asked to raise your voice.
  - Speak directly to the person, rather than from the side or back of the person.
  - Speak expressively. Since persons who are deaf cannot hear subtle changes in tone, which may indicate sarcasm or seriousness, many will rely on your facial expressions, gestures, and body language to understand you.
  - If you are having trouble understanding the speech of a person who is deaf, feel free to ask him/her to repeat. If that does not work, then use a paper and pen.
  - If a person who is deaf is with an interpreter, speak directly to the person who is deaf, not to the interpreter.

MINERS, UHRBIS & NEC, 2014
SPECIFIC COMM. STRATEGIES: MOBILITY DISABILITY

- **When You Meet a Person with a Mobility Disability**
  - Offer help, but wait until it is accepted before giving it. Giving help before it is accepted may be perceived as rude and sometimes can be unsafe.
  - Accept the fact that a disability exists. Not acknowledging a disability is similar to ignoring someone’s gender or height. However, asking personal questions regarding the disability would be inappropriate until a closer relationship develops in which personal questions are more naturally asked.
  - Treat a person with a disability as a healthy person. Because an individual has a functional limitation, it does not mean the individual is sick.
  - Keep in mind that persons with disabilities have the same activities of daily living as you do.

(MEYERS, UNDOHR & HEC, 2014)

SPECIFIC COMM. STRATEGIES: COGNITIVE DISABILITY

- **When You Meet a Person with a Cognitive Disability**
  - Use very clear, specific language.
  - Condense lengthy directions into steps.
  - Use short, concise instructions.
  - Present verbal information at a relatively slow pace, with appropriate pauses for processing time and with repetition if necessary.
  - Provide cues to help with transitions: “In five minutes we’ll be going to lunch.”
  - Reinforce information with pictures or other visual images.
  - Use modeling, rehearsing, and role-playing.
  - Use concrete rather than abstract language.
  - Limit the use of sarcasm or subtle humor.
  - If you are not sure what to do or say, just ask the person what he/she needs.

(MEYERS, UNDOHR & HEC, 2014)
ONLINE RESOURCES

  - Learn about the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which provides civil rights protections to people with disabilities in areas such as employment, education, health care, transportation, telecommunications, and community participation.
- College Resource for Students With Disabilities (http://www.bestcolleges.com/resourced/able-students/)
  - Information about legal rights of college students with disabilities, getting accommodations and tips that can help during the application process. Also includes examples of assistive technology for many different types of disabilities.
  - U.S. federal government website for information on disability programs and services nationwide. The site connects people with disabilities, their families and caregivers to helpful resources on topics such as how to apply for disability benefits, find a job, get health care, or pay for accessible housing.
- DO-IT (http://www.washington.edu/doit)
  - The DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology) Center is dedicated to empowering people with disabilities through technology and education. It promotes awareness and accessibility—in both the classroom and the workplace—to maximize the potential of individuals with disabilities and make our communities more vibrant, diverse, and inclusive.

DISCLAIMER

Academic Accommodation Network (AAN). Website provides general information to teaching faculty regarding accommodations for students with disabilities in community colleges within the United States. It is not intended to replace disability counselors and/or the disability office within your community college.

It does not specify the rules and practices of any single community college campus. To get specific information regarding your college's disability services, please contact your campus' disability office. If you have specific questions pertaining to the ADA or Section 504, please contact your college's ADA/504 Coordinator (if applicable).

Links from the Academic Accommodation Network (AAN) website to other sites do not constitute an endorsement from AAN. These links are provided as an information service only. It is up to the web surfer to evaluate the content and usefulness of information obtained from other sites. The information provided about links to other sites was obtained, whenever possible, from the site itself.
REFERENCES


