



Legal Issues

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

According to federal law, no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of a public entity.

“Qualified” with respect to postsecondary educational services, means “a person who meets the academic and technical standards requisite to admission or participation in the education program or activity, with or without reasonable modifications to rules, policies, or practices; the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers; or the provision of auxiliary aids and services.”

“Person with a disability” means “any person who (1) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities [including walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working], (2) has a record of such an impairment, or (3) is regarded as having such an impairment.

Disabilities covered by legislation include (but are not limited to) AIDS, Cancer, Cerebral Palsy, Diabetes, Epilepsy, head injuries, hearing impairments, specific learning disabilities, loss of limbs, Multiple Sclerosis, Muscular Dystrophy, psychiatric disorders, speech impairments, spinal cord injuries, and vision impairments.

UW Identification and Accommodation Process

Faculty members and teaching assistants are encouraged to be responsive to the pedagogical needs of all students. However, students with disabilities may have some additional educational needs which they should discuss with each faculty member. Teaching assistants can also play an important role in making accommodations. It is helpful to include a statement on the class syllabus inviting students who have disabilities to discuss academic needs. An example of such a statement is: “To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact Disability Resources for Students (DRS), 011 Mary Gates Hall, 206-543-8924 (voice) or 206-543-8925 (TTY). If you have a letter from DRS indicating that you have a disability which requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to me so we can discuss the accommodations you might need in this class.”

A student with a disability needing accommodation should provide each instructor with a letter from DRS indicating possible accommodations. The faculty member can then work with the student to make the appropriate accommodation(s) for the specific class. *Under no circumstances should the faculty member or teaching assistant refuse to make a requested accommodation;* instead, if agreement is not reached on an accommodation, the faculty member should contact DRS for assistance.

If a student does not present a letter from DRS and does not have a visible disability, the faculty member should refer the student to DRS prior to making an accommodation for a disability.

UW faculty members are encouraged to apply universal design principles in their instruction to minimize needs for accommodations and to make their courses more accessible to all students. For more information about universal design of instruction, consult www.uw.edu/doiit/equal-access-universal-design-instruction.

Examples of Academic Accommodations

Disability	Accommodations
Low Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seating near front of the class • Large print handouts, lab signs, and equipment labels • Monitor connected to microscope to enlarge images • Class assignments made available in electronic format • Computer equipped to enlarge screen characters and images
Blindness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio-recorded, brailled, or electronic-formatted lecture notes, handouts, and texts • Verbal descriptions of visual aids • Raised-line drawings and tactile models of graphic materials • Braille lab signs and equipment labels, auditory lab warning signals • Assistive lab equipment (e.g., talking thermometers, calculators, light probes, and tactile timers) • Computer with optical character reader, speech output, braille screen display, and printer output
Hearing Impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpreter, real-time captioning, and/or an FM system • Note taker • Visual aids • Written assignments, lab instructions, summaries, and notes • Use of email for class and private discussions • Visual warning system for lab emergencies
Learning Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note taker and/or audio-recorded class sessions • Captioned films • Extra exam time, alternative testing arrangements • Visual, aural, and tactile instructional demonstrations • Computer with voice output, spellchecker, and grammar checker
Mobility Impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note taker, lab assistant, and/or group lab assignments • Classrooms, labs, and field trips in accessible locations • Adjustable tables, lab equipment located within reach • Lengthened pull-chains on safety showers • Class assignments made available in electronic format • Computer equipped with special input device (e.g., voice input, alternative keyboard)
Health Impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note takers • Flexible attendance requirements • Extra exam time • Assignments made available in electronic format • Use of email to facilitate communication

Useful Teaching Techniques

Below you will find examples of teaching techniques in the classroom, laboratory, examinations, and fieldwork that benefit all students, but are especially useful for students who have disabilities.

Classroom

- Select course materials early so that students and DRS or the ATC staff have enough time to translate them to audio recording, braille, and large print.
- Make syllabi, short assignment sheets, and reading lists available in electronic format (e.g., CD, email, online).
- Face the class when speaking. Repeat discussion questions.
- Write key phrases and lecture outlines on the blackboard or overhead projector.

Laboratory

- Take the student on a tour of the lab she or he will be working in. Discuss safety concerns.
- Assign group lab projects in which all students contribute according to their abilities.
- Arrange lab equipment so that it is accessible to and visible by everyone.
- Give oral and written lab instructions.

Examination and Fieldwork

- Ensure that exams test the essential skills or knowledge needed for the course or field of study.
- Some students will require extra time to transcribe or process test questions. Follow DRS recommendations regarding extra time on examinations.
- Consider allowing students to turn in exams via email or Collect It (www.uw.edu/itconnect/learn/tools/catalyst-web-tools/collectit/about-collectit/).
- Attempt to include student in fieldwork opportunities, rather than automatically suggesting non-fieldwork alternatives. Ask students how they might be able to do specific aspects of fieldwork.
- Include special needs in requests for field trip vehicle reservations.

About this Publication

This brochure is available online at www.uw.edu/doit/. The content of this brochure was developed by the following units at the University of Washington:

- Center for Change in Transition Services
- Disability Resources for Students
- Disabled Student Services
- DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology)
- Rehabilitation Medicine

Video

A nine minute video, *Working Together: Faculty and Students with Disabilities*, may be freely viewed online at www.uw.edu/doit/videos/index.php, or purchased in DVD format.

About DO-IT

DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology) serves to increase the successful participation of individuals with disabilities in challenging academic programs and careers, such as those in science, engineering, mathematics, and technology. Primary funding for DO-IT is provided by the National Science Foundation, the State of Washington, and the U.S. Department of Education. For further information, to be placed on the DO-IT mailing list, request materials in an alternate format, or to make comments or suggestions about DO-IT publications or web pages, contact:

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University of Washington
College of Engineering
UW Information Technology
College of Education

University of Washington-Seattle Campus Resources

For most issues, Disability Resources for Students will be the first point of contact.

Access Guide for Persons with Disabilities
www.uw.edu/admin/ada/newada.php
A guide to accessible UW campus routes and building entrances is available at all campus reference stations and online.

Access Technology Center (ATC)
206-685-4144 (voice/TTY)
atl@uw.edu, Mary Gates Hall
www.uw.edu/itconnect/learn/accessible/atc/
Students, faculty, and staff with disabilities have access to computing resources through specialized equipment and software in the ATC. Check the University of Washington Technology Services catalog for classes.

Braille Service
Mary Gates Hall
www.uw.edu/itconnect/learn/accessible/atc/accessibility-services/braille-embossing-services/
Submit an online request for transcription of syllabi and short class handouts. For braille textbooks and lengthy class materials, contact Disability Resource Services (see below).

Disability Advocacy Student Group
dasatalk@uw.edu
A peer advocacy group for students with disabilities, DASA (disability advocacy student alliance) is available as peer support. DASA plans social and educational events surrounding disability pride. Subscribe to their listserv at mailman.u.washington.edu/mailman/listinfo/dasatalk.

Disability Resources for Students (DRS)
206-543-8924 (voice), 206-543-8925 (TTY)
uwdss@uw.edu
Contact DRS for assistance with the provision of academic accommodations, e.g., audio recording, large print, and Braille class materials; test access, classroom relocation, and sign language interpreters. DRS also provides accommodations for non-course-related activities.

Email
206-221-5000, help@uw.edu
Direct students to University of Washington Information Technology Services to set up a new account. Email accounts are free to students, faculty, and staff.

The Faculty Room
www.uw.edu/doit/programs/accesscollege/faculty-room/overview
A DO-IT website where postsecondary faculty and administrators can learn how to maximize educational opportunities for students with disabilities.

Physical Access Problems
206-685-8814
www.uw.edu/admin/ada/barrier.htm
Call Maintenance and Alterations or go online to FS-Works to report problems with the operation of University facilities such as automatic doors and elevators.

Study Skills
206-543-1240
www.uw.edu/counseling/resources/resources-for-students/
Students having academic difficulties may benefit from resources offered by the Counseling Center. Resources include information regarding academic skills, study skills, and test anxiety, among others.

Teaching and Learning Tools
www.uw.edu/itconnect/learn/tools
Manage online courses with Canvas, collect assignments with Catalyst web tools, record a lecture with Panopto, and submit grades online with GradePage. ITConnect provides links to user guides, help centers, and available training.

Telephone Communication With Students Who Have Hearing or Speech Impairments
If you have regular communications with a student who uses a TTY (teletype), contact DRS for loan of a TTY or talk with the student about getting an email account. For infrequent mediated phone conversations call the Washington Relay Service (711), a free service.

Working Together: Faculty and Students with Disabilities

University of Washington—Seattle

