

Holyoke Community College

Office for Students with Disabilities and Deaf Services (OSDDS)

Faculty/Staff Guide

Revised July 2017

The OSDDS office is located in Donahue 147

Main office: 413.552.2417

VP: 413.650.5502

osd@hcc.edu

These policies and procedures are subject to change.
This document is available on the www.hcc.edu website

OSDDS CONTACT INFORMATION

How to access the Disability & Deaf Services Website:

www.hcc.edu

→ “Courses & Programs”

→ “Academic Support”

→ “Disability & Deaf Services”

Service Hours:

Monday through Friday 8:30-4:30 and evenings by appointment

STAFF

Director

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Main Office

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Assistive Technology Center

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Disability Learning Specialists

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OSDDS Test Administrators/Transcribers

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Dear HCC Faculty and Staff,

Holyoke Community College (HCC) respects each student's dignity, capacity to contribute, and desire for personal growth and accomplishment. The college fosters intellectual and physical independence to the greatest extent possible in all of its students, and offers reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities and Deaf/Hard of Hearing students. It is the collective responsibility of the entire HCC community to ensure access.

This guide outlines what faculty and staff need to know about the Office for Students with Disabilities & Deaf Services (OSDDS). We engage in the interactive process with students, staff, and faculty to find innovative solutions and promote greater inclusion in college programs and services. We recognize the importance of a collaborative effort toward this end and are certain that this goal cannot be fulfilled by a single department.

Accommodations are not intended to eliminate a student's disability or responsibilities, but to support the student's own efforts to circumvent obstacles to learning. Students are expected to meet essential course and degree requirements. Accommodations should not lower academic standards or compromise the integrity of academic programs. HCC does not require students to accept the services of OSDDS, nor do we impose an accommodation on any student. Self-identifying as a person with a disability and requesting and utilizing accommodations are personal decisions.

Thank you for joining us in our vision of a college community where *access* has arrived.

OSDDS staff is available to answer questions and address potential concerns regarding accessible design and program access. **The OSDDS Main Office is located in Donahue 147 and can be reached at 413.552.2417.**

Summary of OSDDS Student Services

- Direct support from Disability Learning Specialists and/or Deaf Specialists
- Evaluation of disability documentation
- Determination of types of accommodations needed outlined in Accommodation Agreements
- Assistive technology provision/instruction
- Advocacy
- Referrals to other campus services
- Accessible texts (e.g. ordering of textbooks in digital, audio, braille, and large print formats)
- Provision of accessible furniture
- Provision of notetakers, scribes, readers

Deaf Services

Deaf Services is listed as its own entity within our department in recognition of Deaf Culture. Members of the Deaf community tend to view deafness as a difference in human experience rather than a disability. Our Deaf Specialists assist Deaf/Hard of Hearing students identify the types of classroom support that may be of benefit:

- ASL interpretation
- C-Print captioning (produces text that is a thorough and concise translation of spoken English content)
- FM amplification
- Interpreter support for Deaf staff and faculty

Any questions about Deaf Services, communication and teaching strategies, or ways to be an ally to the HCC deaf community, can be directed to **Carol Ann Smalley or Debbie Geoffroy in Donahue 147B or 413.552.2317. Video phone: 413.650.5502.**

Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Program (ICE)

HCC's ICE Program has served as a model among the twelve Massachusetts Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative programs, providing college access to students 18-22 years old with Intellectual Disability and/or Autism Spectrum Disorder, and who continue to receive special education services through partnering school districts. Adopting the ThinkCollege! Transition model, the ICE Program offers a fully inclusive college experience for transitional planning, personal growth, and skill-development. **Contact Andrea Hojnacki at [413.552.2844](tel:413.552.2844) / Donahue 137.**

To learn more about the MA Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment Initiative visit:

<http://www.mass.gov/edu/birth-grade-12/higher-education/initiatives-and-special-programs/inclusive-concurrent-enrollment/>

Assistive Technology Center (ATC)

The ATC (DON151) offers assessment, training, and access to a variety of academic computing programs. ATC services include:

- Consult with faculty/staff about adaptive software
- Coordinate accessible published works (electronic textbooks, Braille, large print, etc.)
- Referral to outside resources (Perkins Talking Book Library, BookShare, LearningAlly)
- Training:
 - Smartpen
 - Read Write (text-reading and study skills tools)
 - JAWS (screen-reading)
 - Zoomtext (text enlargement)
 - Dragon Naturally Speaking (voice recognition)
 - And many more; just come ask us!

On-site scanning and format translation of text is also available with adequate notice. For more information on the ATC contact **Robert Baran at 413.552.2156** or rbaran@hcc.edu.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The following is a list of frequently asked questions regarding the roles and responsibilities of OSDDS. For specific situations, further questions, and concerns, please feel free to contact the OSDDS Main Office (DON 147) at 413.552.2417.

Q: A student has asked for accommodations. How do I know the student truly has a disability and needs accommodations? Who is responsible for determining appropriate accommodations?

A: OSDDS is the office on campus that determines appropriate accommodations. The office engages in an interactive process with the student in order to determine eligibility for services.

Students must:

- Register and complete an intake process with OSDDS
- Disclose their disability (self-identify)
- Provide documentation of their disability from a credentialed professional who determines and supports the appropriate and necessary accommodations reflective of the student's current level of functioning
- Keep a copy of the Accommodation Agreement(AA), which outlines the approved accommodations
- Provide faculty, or other pertinent departments with copies of their AA
- Request services for accessible texts, notetaking, and/or accessible furniture each semester
- Make requests for accommodations and services in a timely manner according to established policies and procedures

Q: What are some of the most common accommodations?

A: You will commonly find listed on the Accommodation Agreements (AA)

- Testing Accommodations – Extended (double) time, separate room/quiet space, reader, scribe, computer for essay exams, calculator, assistive technology, breaks, alternate format (such as large print, audio or Braille).
- Classroom Accommodations – Notetaker, captioning, course materials in accessible format, assistive technology, excused disability-related absences, sign language interpretation, C-print captioning, and **accessible furniture (please do not move OR remove furniture from classroom)**.
- Other Accommodations – Accessible textbooks, full-time status with reduced course load.
- Instruction pages related to specific accommodations will be attached to the AA, when applicable

Q: What is the best way to inform students in the class that I would like to help in facilitating exam accommodations or any classroom accommodations?

A: Create a great syllabus

- Include HCC's Disability Services Statement:
Holyoke Community College values inclusion and equal access to its programs and activities and is committed to fostering an environment of mutual respect and full participation. Our goal is to create learning environments that are equitable, inclusive and welcoming. If you are an individual with a disability and require reasonable academic accommodations you are advised to contact the Office for Students with Disabilities & Deaf Services (OSDDS) at any time to discuss your accommodation needs and options. OSDDS will work collaboratively with students with disabilities to develop effective accommodation plans for implementation in the classroom. The OSDDS is located in DON 147. For an appointment, please call 413.552.2417. The Video Phone (VP) number is 413.650.5502.
- Include info about the physical demands of the class, your rules and expectations, teaching style info, your preferred method of contact (campus phone number, email address, office hours, and office location), exam dates, assignment/project overviews, attendance and grading policies, and a statement about academic integrity and HCC's Code of Conduct
- Pass out paper and email electronic copies (or post in Moodle) during the first few days of class
- Discuss your syllabus in the beginning of the semester, and avoid changing essential elements of the course thereafter

Q: I have a student who is having difficulty in my class. I think the student may have a disability. What should I do to help the student?

A: Getting the conversation started...

- **Do not ask what a student's disability is, or mention a student's disability or accommodations in front of others.** Instead, meet privately with the student. Ask the student if they ever received any kind of assistance in the past, if a student does disclose any type of disability, encourage them to register at OSDDS (DON147) even if they don't know whether they want to utilize our services. Services are confidential and voluntary.
- At the beginning and throughout the semester encourage *all* students to use your office hours and the resources on campus. Consider posting names and locations of the Library, CAPS, Writing and Math Centers, ACT (Advising, Career & Transfer) Center, etc.
- Keep in mind that most countries do not have civil rights laws to protect the rights of people with disabilities. An international student may be especially shy if the student comes from a country where having a disability is not respected or supported, or the student might be unaware that support services/assistive technology is available to them.
- Some students are reluctant to disclose information about their disabilities to OSDDS; and many disabilities are not visually or readily apparent.

Q: Is it OK to provide an accommodation to a student who does not have an Accommodation Agreement?

A: Not usually. OSDDS is the only designated office at HCC where students can request accommodations. However, if a student with an apparent physical disability needs assistance with access, you may provide it. Or if a student shows up to class with an obvious injury, such as her dominant hand is in a cast, it is fine for you to give the student a copy of your notes or extra time to write an assignment. Short term injuries and illnesses are not considered disabilities. However, if a student with a short term injury needs assistance, such as a notetaker, please refer the student to OSDDS and we will try to offer short term help.

Q: I have a student in class who told me that s/he has a disability, but since that time has never requested any accommodations. Am I still responsible for accommodations?

A: No, you are only responsible for accommodations if requested.

If the student does not present you with an Accommodation Agreement (AA)...

- Remind students the first day of class to please bring you their AA from OSDDS
- If student responds, "I don't have one," encourage the student to register with OSDDS (Donahue 147; 413.552.2417).

A: If the student presents you with an AA...

- You are responsible for providing those accommodations listed.
- Appreciate that, for many students, meeting with faculty/staff to discuss accommodations can be intimidating. **OSDDS recommends you meet privately with the student** to review the AA; this respects the student's confidentiality.
- **Make a plan with your student.** Should the student remind you of accommodations or will you remember?
- You may want to ask if there is anything they would like you to know about areas of strength or difficulty. If a student reveals areas of difficulty, discuss possible solutions as it relates to the particular subject/course matter.
- Remind students that it is good to share their AA with you, even if the student does not anticipate using all of their accommodations in your course.
- If you believe the requested accommodations will fundamentally alter an essential requirement of your course, or pose a health, safety risk, or an undue hardship, please call the OSDDS Specialist at the contact information listed on the AA and explain your concern. Other appropriate methods of accommodation may be considered. Keep the AA in a secure location.

Q: Why do so many students wait until mid-semester to request accommodations?

A: "I wanted to try to make it on my own." "I wanted my professor to get to know me first."

"I didn't want my professor to think I'm stupid or lazy." "I don't want to be labeled as having a disability." "I thought I was doing better." "I was just diagnosed."

Q: Is it reasonable to give a student with a disability fewer or easier assignments?

A: No. Faculty should never compromise the academic integrity of a course by holding students with disabilities to lower standards.

- Be careful not to define a student by the disability, or reduce your expectations of a student because of the disability.
- Misperceptions and social stigmas can be more disabling than the disability itself.
- At the college level, we generally accommodate by process, not content. If a student is unable to do a particular assignment due to disability, consider giving the student a substitute assignment that is relevant and equally intellectually challenging.

Q: I have a student who has a serious illness and is frequently hospitalized. I hate to fail her because she is trying so hard and gets A's on all of her assignments. What should I do?

A: When a student discloses a serious medical condition, consider whether you can offer flexibility to allow her extended absences. Does your course require in-class participation or group projects? If so, explain that these are essential requirements of the course and she might want to consider choosing a different course. Otherwise, consider allowing her to work on projects independently. Help her find a peer who will share notes when she is sick. Allow her to make up missed exams. If reasonable, offer her extra time to turn in written assignments. Encourage her to register with OSDDS. She may be eligible for accommodations such as a reduced course load.

Q: What should I know when I am advising students with disabilities?

A: In general, ask the same questions you would ask any other HCC student!

- If a student describes areas of difficulty, consider the physical demands of the courses, the requirements, different teaching styles, etc., in helping them to select a course that would be a good fit. *For example, students with attention deficits, other cognitive impairments, or back pain might be encouraged to register for shorter length classes.*
- Respect confidentiality. Let students know that you will not discuss the details of their disability with others and assure them that it will not appear on their academic transcript.
- Withdrawing from courses or the college mid-semester may affect a student's ability to graduate on time as well as financial aid benefits. Please encourage students to speak with their academic advisor, OSDDS Specialist and with someone in Financial Aid before withdrawing.
- Both on-campus and online students with disabilities may be eligible to maintain full-time status with a reduced course load. If a student is requesting this option, consider academic and financial implications. *Things to consider:*
 - Are there prerequisite courses that are only offered alternating semesters?
 - Will taking a reduced course load impact the student's ability to graduate?
 - Will the college accept credits if student takes a summer course at another college?
 - If student is on a scholarship, will it cover tuition if the student needs to stay an extra semester?

Refer students to OSDDS to request the reduced course load accommodation. Consult with colleagues including the Academic Deans and Director of Financial Aid to discuss if and how a reduced course load would impact the student.

Q: I have a student in my class, who has a mobility issue and is *always* late for class, what should I do?

A: Students with mobility impairments may encounter obstacles or barriers to getting to class on time. Often they must take the long way around campus to access elevators and then wait for the elevators to be available. Some students may also have periodic curtailments of functioning, either from their disability or from medication. Flexibility in applying attendance and punctuality policies would be helpful.

Q: I've heard a lot about Universal Design (UD) and am curious about how I could incorporate it into my courses, where can I go to learn more?

A: Refer to the "Universal Design & Creating Accessible Course Materials" document located in the same section as this document on the HCC website

Q: Who is the ADA Compliance Officer and how is their role different than OSDDS?

A: HCC's ADA Compliance Coordinator is responsible for assuring that HCC complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in all programs and services. If you have a concern related to an access issue that is not resolved by the OSDDS you may see HCC's ADA Compliance Coordinator, Yanina Vargas, Vice President Student Affairs (Frost 224), yvargas@hcc.edu, 413.552.2231.