Teaching Tip: Students with Disabilities: What Teachers Need to Know

Soon after the beginning of the semester you may have received a MIO about one or more of your students with an attached form titled “Academic Accommodation Form for Students with Disabilities.” Here’s more information on how that works.

Did you know that most students with learning disabilities have average to above average intelligence and potential, and with the appropriate accommodations can be very successful in their College studies? Did you know that students with disabilities have a legal right to accommodations that provide them with the opportunities to be successful in their studies? Many different services are available for students with disabilities at Vanier, and the services provided will depend on the student’s specific disabilities and accommodation requirements. The intent is to maximise the students with disabilities’ opportunities to learn, and to also provide them with the opportunity to be assessed equitably and fairly on their learning. Examples of some of the services provide are: use of note-takers, use of a computer in class, use of specific software applications, special accommodations on tests and exams (i.e. extra time, quiet area, use of a computer), etc. The end goal is to provide students with disabilities with the opportunities to meet the course competencies, just like any other student is required to.

Which students qualify for accommodations?

✓ A student who has been officially diagnosed with a disability and has the documentation

✓ Students who have not been previously diagnosed but suspect they may have a learning disability can contact Access for Students with Disabilities (Access) for more information about testing services

Who provides these services?

✓ All services relevant to disabilities can be accessed through Access for Students with Disabilities, which includes professionals working in Student Services and The Learning Centre. Please contact the Access technician, Ourania Zafiri, who will refer you to the professional working with your student

What about accommodations?

✓ The main goal of accommodations is to provide the student with the opportunity to demonstrate, and be assessed on her knowledge and skills, as related to the course competencies, in a fair and equitable manner

✓ Teachers are usually informed, at the beginning of the semester on what accommodations a student may require, through a MIO and attached document

✓ The most common accommodations include a quiet space to do tests, extra time to complete tests, exams and the use of reading software applications, or the use of spell-and-grammar-check software when doing tests or assignments
✓ The teacher may provide extra time for test accommodations, when practical, or they can be provided through Access for Students for Disabilities, via The Learning Centre. However, it is generally recommended that registered students who want to use their accommodations write their tests through Access for Students with Disabilities.

What can teachers do?
✓ Provide the accommodations required by your students who are registered with Access and have been identified as having a disability.
✓ If it’s unclear to you what accommodations are indicated, or how they can be provided, contact Access for more information (or the professional who is listed at the bottom of the memo you received at the beginning of the semester).
✓ If you suspect students may have a learning disability, encourage them to discuss this possibility with Martine Roy, Learning Disability Strategist. If you suspect students may have physical disabilities or health related conditions, encourage them to discuss this possibility with Irma Mazzonna, Counsellor.

Access services are free and confidential, geared towards helping students. Please feel free to contact the office if you require further information or assistance.

- All general inquiries can be directed to Ourania Zafiri – zafirio@vaniercollege.qc.ca
- For students with physical disabilities or health related conditions please contact Irma Mazzonna – Mazzonni@vaniercollege.qc.ca
- For students with learning disabilities or ADHD, please contact Marya Grant – grantm@vaniercollege.qc.ca
- For student with suspected learning disabilities, please contact Martine Roy – roym@vaniercollege.qc.ca