

# COLLEGE 101: STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ADVISING AND COURSE SELECTION

## Self-disclosing to academic adviser:

- *What is important for him/her to know to better help you put together a manageable schedule?*
  - More alert, do better in early morning;
  - Joints/body aches in early morning;
  - Topics re: 'x' trigger reaction (e.g. seizure, anxiety, post-traumatic stress);
  - Difficult topics require more time (e.g. math, foreign language);
  - Need time to eat and take medication(s) at certain time(s) of the day.
  
- *What factors/variables are important in choosing your classes?*
  - Class format (small group discussion v. large lecture);
  - Teaching style;
  - Exam format (essay v. multiple choice);
  - Amount of reading;
  - Number of credit hours (desired or manageable v. advised or required)

## Course Selection

- *Is math an area of difficulty for you?*
  - Create a schedule that will allow more time for difficult topics-fewer credit hours-for that semester.
  - Discuss taking the course(s) in the Summer, at another school (e.g. community college).
  
- *How do you handle a lot of reading?*
  - Inquire how much reading is required in the courses you will be taking.
  - Get texts early and begin reading ahead.
  - Ask about materials in alternative formats and/or types of assistive technology.
  
- *What foreign language experience have you had? Is it required for your major?*
  - Identify options and information (e.g. what is required of the Common Curriculum).

## Differences that matter

- *M/W/F classes are approximately 1 hour long; T/Th classes are approximately 1 ½ hours long. What difference does that make for you?*
  - Number days/week of being in-class for continuity, practice, (2 v. 3);
  - Amount of time required to pay attention, be seated in (1 hour v. 1 ½ hours)

- *What about large classes v. small classes? Options of how to meet needs:*
  - Permission from instructor for enrollment in “closed” courses
  - Different course for same requirement
  - Enroll in summer v. fall v. spring (be sure course is offered that semester)
  - Ability to hear, see, focus, interact
  - Ask about Priority Enrollment as an appropriate accommodation
  
- *How many hours do you think you want to take?*
  - Rule-of-thumb is 1 hour in class = 3 hours out-of-class preparation
  - Impact on scholarship, financial aid, Vocational Rehabilitation, other
  - Concern of time (years to graduate, cost) v. level of achievement (GPA)
  
- *When are you most alert? Is there anything that would affect you taking AM classes? Afternoon classes? PM classes?*
  
- *How much time are you allowing between classes?*
  - Amount of time necessary to get to next class (look at the map!)
  - Ability to get organized before beginning class, to re-focus
  - Possible time necessary to prepare for class (e.g. read, write lab report, review notes, complete project)
  - Desired time to relax, study, eat, take medication(s), etc.
  - Will back-to-back classes affect testing accommodations?

## **Course Style**

- *Instructor style-how do you learn best (lecture, participation, read on own)?*
- *Test format-explain to the academic advisor or consider how you do on different types of tests (multiple choice, essay, short answer).*

\*Talk with the instructor/department and/or look at a syllabus BEFORE enrolling in a course. Many syllabi are on-line.

*Source adapted from: “College 101: Students with Disabilities” (Oklahoma State University)*