

Disability Services Newsletter

WHAT IS THE RIT DISABILITY SERVICES OFFICE?

The RIT Disability Services Office:

Location:

Eastman, 2340 & 2342

Hours:

8:30-4:30 M-F

Coordinator:

Susan Ackerman

5-6988 v/tty

smacst@rit.edu

Administrative Assistant:

Kathy Crouse

5-7804 v/tty

kecldc@rit.edu

Web site:

www.rit.edu/dso

“The disability services coordinator determines accommodations for students with disabilities using established processes and procedures in a consistent, centralized manner”.

The RIT Disability Services Office (D.S.O.) was created in 1994, in keeping with federal law, for the purpose of reviewing requests for accommodation from students with disabilities and determining appropriate and reasonable accommodation. RIT is committed to providing equal access to programs, services and physical facilities. The Disability Services Office is the mechanism for administering established processes and procedures for determining accommodations that will “level the playing field” for students with disabilities in a consistent, centralized manner.

Requests for accommodation are accompanied by documentation of the disability from a relevant professional, such as a psychologist, physician or psychiatrist. The decisions about appropriate and reasonable accommodation due to a disability are made by the coordinator after gathering information from the student and reviewing the documentation presented, and are based on legal guidelines.

The most common disabilities among students at RIT are learning disorders and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. Also served are students with a variety of other disabilities, including mental illness, vision impairments, and various medical conditions that affect their ability to access programs, services and facilities on campus. Deaf and hard of hearing students are served by the D.S.O. if they have a disability in addition to deafness.

Common academic accommodations for students with disabilities include extended time for tests and the services of a note-taker. The Academic Accommodations Office (A.A.O.) portion of Disability Services runs the test center in Eastman 2310 and coordinates note-taking services. Please see the back of this publication for further information on academic accommodations.

If a student has not registered with the D.S.O. or does not present a “Disability Services Agreement” but requests that faculty make academic adjustments, please refer them to the D.S.O.

The D.S.O. also works with Housing Operations, Food Service, Parking and Transportation, and other campus departments as needed to address nonacademic requests of students with disabilities.

From 1998 to November 2004 the disability services coordinator was Pamela Lloyd. Current coordinator Susan Ackerman started in March 2005. Susan’s credentials and experience include a B.A. in Psychology, M.S. in Special Education, 22 years of teaching experience in K-12 and 5 years in higher education. Kathleen Crouse has been the administrative assistant in the D.S.O. since 1998; she holds an A.A.S. degree in educational interpreting and has 20 years of experience in the field of disability services.

In 1995 there were 113 students registered as having a disability; today there are about 800. Our highest number of registrants was at the end of the 2005 academic year with 878.

The disability services coordinator also works with RIT Human Resources and supervisors regarding work related accommodations for employees with disabilities. For more information, see the “For Faculty/Staff with Disabilities” section of the D.S.O. Web page.

Visit the Disability Services Office Web page at www.rit.edu/dso for more information or contact Susan or Kathy.

WHAT TO DO WHEN STUDENTS PRESENT THEIR “DISABILITY SERVICES AGREEMENT”

Students who are registered with the D.S.O. will present faculty with their *Disability Services Agreement (D.S.A.)* in order to verify their recommended academic accommodations. Faculty are requested to keep these things in mind:

- ◇ Read the D.S.A.; accommodations and procedures are listed and explained.
- ◇ Have a conversation with the student about how to put the listed accommodations into practice. Ideally, this is student initiated.
- ◇ Students may not be comfortable discussing their accommodations in front of others; offer to speak with them privately or during office hours. Respect students’ desire to keep their disability information confidential.
- ◇ Faculty are only obligated to provide the accommodations that are listed.
- ◇ Contact Susan Ackerman for more information or go to www.rit.edu/dso.

Testing Accommodations:

Alternate testing location:

- ⇒ Students can utilize the *testing center*, a proctored setting located in Eastman, room 2310.
- ⇒ Please deliver tests to A.A.O. at least 24 hours in advance of testing.
- ⇒ Do not require students to come to class, pick up test, and proceed to testing center; allow them to avoid bringing undue attention to themselves by going directly to the testing center.
- ⇒ Become familiar with the use of the testing center envelopes.
- ⇒ Contact Mina Suchak for more information.

Procedure for use of Testing Center Envelopes:

- ◇ Student will present an envelope with the left side completed.
- ◇ Review information on left side and clarify with student if necessary.
- ◇ Faculty are asked to fill out right side of envelope *accurately and completely*, enclose the test and deliver to A.A.O. or the appropriate *secure college drop point*.

Extended time for tests:

- ⇒ 1.5x means the student can use one and one-half times the amount of time the class has been allotted. 2x means double the amount of time.
- ⇒ Discuss with the student the logistics involved in taking the test in the classroom or the necessity of utilizing the testing center.

Use of a reader, scribe, or word processor:

- ⇒ These auxiliary aids are available in the testing center; see “alternate testing location” guidelines.
- ⇒ Students using a reader will use “readplease.com” software. Tests are scanned; please deliver at least 24 hours in advance of testing.
- ⇒ Students using a scribe will work with an A.A.O. employee.

Use of a basic, 4 function calculator or “formula card”

- ⇒ This accommodation overrides department “no calculator” policies.
- ⇒ A formula card contains only formulas; no definitions or examples of use. Content to be approved by instructor prior to test.

Classroom Accommodations:

Note-taker

- ⇒ Student and/or A.A.O. may ask faculty to announce need for note-taker in class or by email. You may be given a form to give to the note-taker explaining how to get hired.
- ⇒ Keep the identity of the student receiving notes confidential unless they request otherwise.

Extended time for projects, labs and assignments

- ⇒ Discuss a mutually acceptable plan for determining due dates or intermediate steps to be followed prior to due date.

Ability to tape record lectures

- ⇒ Allow student to record lectures.

Priority seating

- ⇒ Allow student to sit in seat or area of their preferences; assist as needed in securing this location.

The RIT Academic Accommodations Office (A.A.O.):

Location:

Eastman, rm 2310

Phone: 5-2023

Interim Coordinator:

Mina Suchak

5-5538

mplsdc@rit.edu

Web site:

www.rit.edu/aao

Hours:

8:00am-6:00pm M-R

Can extend to 8:00pm

8:00am-4:30pm F

Can extend to 6:00pm

Services available:

Testing Center

Note-taking

Texts in alternate format

Testing Center envelopes: secure college drop points

Business 12-A300

CAST 10-1121

CIAS 7A-2512

Engineering 09-2103

GCCIS 70-1013

Liberal Arts 06-2210

NTID 60-2850

Online Learning 05-A650

Science 08-1130