

ALGOMA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY

The provision of services to students with disabilities and/or special needs at Algoma University College is based on the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code (May 1989). These services will be provided within the basic guidelines to all academically qualified students with the understanding that students with disabilities may require unique accommodations and must have their needs assessed on a case-by-case basis. Algoma University College is committed to providing the opportunity for success of each student with a disability or special need.

Policies and Procedures

1. Definition of a Disability:

The World Health Organization (1980) disability as: "As restriction or lack of ability (resulting from an impairment) to perform any activity within the range considered normal for a human being". Disabilities may be physical, visual, hearing, learning or invisible impairments.

2. Eligibility For Services:

Students must self-identify to the Special Needs Office and present documentation of their disability in order to receive services. Documentation must be current – within three years for permanent disabilities and within one month for temporary disabilities, and from a qualified medical practitioner and/or registered psychologist depending upon the nature of the identified disability. The documentation must explain the disability and the special needs to be met. The student with the disability should encourage to provide all the information that is readily to him/her.

3. Access to Services:

Upon presentation of documentation to the Coordinator of Special Needs, an intake form is completed and the student's case is opened.

The documentation is reviewed and the recommendations listed within are discussed. If no recommendations are provided within the documentation, the student's functional limitations are discussed and reasonable accommodations for these functional limitations are reviewed with the student.

Students must sign a "Release of Information" form in order for confidential information to be discussed or shared with other departments or personnel within the university or community.

4. *Support Services:*

A) Faculty Notification:

In order to inform faculty members of the student's needed accommodations, the student must submit to the Special Needs Office a request on the Needs Assessment Form. The student must identify the course name and number, as well as the name of the instructor. The Special Needs Office will generate the letter to the faculty within two weeks following the request. The student will pick up the requested letters at the Special Needs Office and deliver to the faculty.

B) Testing Accommodations:

Students needing accommodations for tests and exams must notify the professor of their needs in a timely fashion. Professors may work out individual arrangements with students. If accommodations are needed through the Special Needs Office, adequate notice must be provided regarding the type of needed: extended time, alternative setting, a scribe, reader, taped test questions, test in braille, large print test, use of computer, oral examination, test taped and transcribed to hard copy, etc. A time to provide the accommodations must be established with the Coordinator of Special Needs.

C) Taping of Textbook and Additional Materials:

Students requiring taped texts must submit their requests to the Special Needs Office no later than April preceding the enrollment in September. Transcription service is available through the W. Ross McDonald School for the Blind and the Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

Requests for additional reading material required for a course must be submitted to the Special Needs Office. This service is available through the Volunteer Reader Service of the Special Needs Office of Algoma University College.

D) Equipment:

A limited amount of equipment is available through the Special Needs Office for loan to students for specific purposes. Students must sign for the equipment and accept responsibility for returning it in good condition. In addition, access to a computer is provided for texts/examinations.

5. *Administration of the Policy:*

The Special Needs Office shall oversee the assessment of the student requests and coordinate the development of the program between the student and the university. In addition, the office shall supervise the delivery of services and equipment.

If a student with a disability believes he/she has not been provided with the services to which he/she is entitled, the student shall direct his/her complaints first to the Director of Student Services, who shall try to resolve problems in consultation with the Academic Dean.

APPENDIX A

Definition of a Disability

PHYSICAL:

Any impairment of joints, muscles and/or nerve connections resulting in

- Ongoing pain
- Reduced range of movement and/or balance
- Reduced ability to manipulate objects or move about your environment.

VISUAL:

The vision of a visually impaired person is significantly less than that of a person with normal vision. Legally blind people have less than 10% vision with the best correction for the best eye.

HEARING:

A hearing impairment is a perceived decrease in sound volume and/or clarity and noises are not heard, not distinguished or not identified.

LEARNING:

Someone who is learning disabled may have average or above average intelligence but has uneven or inconsistent performance academically. The three sub-types of exceptionalities are visual-spatial, language and attention disorders.

INVISIBLE IMPAIRMENTS:

This category includes but not limited to people with the following problems:

- Epilepsy
- Hemophilia
- Cardio-vascular disorders
- Respirator disorders
- Alcoholism
- Drug addictions
- Mental illness
- AIDS
- Cancer