



Best Practices for Teaching Students with Vision Impairment

Suggested Classroom Accommodations

- Discuss necessary classroom accommodations and testing adaptations early in the semester (within the first couple of class days).
- Contact the Office of Counseling and Student Accessibility Resources to verify a student's vision impairment and request accommodation letters if there is question about eligibility.
- Taped textbooks may be available, but sometimes they can take a few weeks to arrive. The student should also be familiar with other ways to make print accessible, such as scanning the book and listening to it with a speech output system on a computer.
- Be open to students' taping your lectures; agreement forms are available from the Office of Counseling and Student Accessibility Resources.
- Provide appropriate written and verbal descriptions to accompany any visual aids, diagrams, films, or videos that you might use in class.
- As you are writing on the chalkboard or discussing a diagram, verbalize what you are writing. When using technical terms, remember to spell them out or give descriptions if appropriate.
- Try to speak directly to the class, remembering that turning your head away can muffle sound; body language and gestures cannot be seen.
- Appropriate seating is important for a visually impaired student; since the student cannot see visual cues, he or she needs to be seated in a position to receive verbal cues.

Accommodated Testing Administration

- Adapted testing procedures generally include the use of readers, scribes, word processors, and large print magnifying equipment.
- The Office of Counseling and Student Accessibility Resources / Designee is available for consultation and assistance in test administration.
- Tests can be administered by having the questions read to the student by a reader.

Tips for Positive Communication

- Introduce yourself and anyone else who might be present when speaking to a student with vision impairment.



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- Use a normal voice level when speaking; remember a student with a vision impairment has sight problems, not a hearing loss.
- Speak directly to the student with the vision impairment and address him or her by name.
- Do not hesitate to use such words as look or see; students with vision impairments use these terms also.
- When walking with a student with a vision impairment, allow him or her to take your arm just above the elbow. Walk in a natural manner and pace.
- When offering a seat to a student with a vision impairment, place the student's hand on the back or arm of the seat. This gives the student a frame of reference to seat himself or herself.
- Do not hesitate to ask a student what accommodations, if any, are required in the classroom. The student is the "expert" about his or her particular needs.