



Office Memorandum

Date: September 20, 2006
To: All Faculty
From: James M. Ross, President
Copies: K. Button, S. Garcia, H. Lujan, P. Quan, A. Ross
Subject: **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS**

Reasonable Accommodation for Students

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, California State University, Los Angeles, has a legal obligation to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified students with protected disabilities.

Protected disabilities are physical or mental impairments that limit one or more major life activities. Major life activities include any function that the average person in the general population can perform, such as learning, reading, seeing, hearing, speaking, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, breathing, working, sitting, standing, lifting and reaching.

Among the disabilities with particular implications for the University are learning disabilities. Learning disabilities encompass a variety of neurological problems which have an impact on an individual's ability to organize visual, auditory or other sensory information and, consequently, on that individual's performance. Learning disabilities do not include mental retardation.

When Reasonable Accommodation is Required

Reasonable accommodations are any actions taken to permit a student to: (a) have equally effective communication; or (b) to have equal access to instruction, programs, services and activities sponsored by the University. Providing reasonable accommodation is mandatory when:

- a. The student has a protected disability. (Medical documentation may be requested to verify the existence of a protected disability and the need for reasonable accommodation.)
- b. The student requests a reasonable accommodation.
- c. A reasonable accommodation is required due to a protected disability.
- d. It is possible to provide that accommodation without undue hardship. Undue hardship is a fundamental alteration in a program or service or an undue financial or administrative burden. Under the law, in most instances, it will be difficult to justify an exception based on undue hardship. Any situation thought to be an undue hardship must be discussed with the Equity and Diversity Specialist at: (323) 343-3040 (Tel), (323) 343-3670 (TDD), or (323) 343-3662 (FAX).

Types of Reasonable Accommodations

Types of accommodations most likely to be requested include but are not limited to:

- a. Auxiliary aids and services such as readers, note takers or qualified interpreters; voice recognizing software, assistive listening devices; captioning (closed, open or real time).
- b. Accessible formats such as large print, computer diskette or permission to tape record.
- c. Accommodations in taking examinations such as allowing additional time, permitting the examination to be taken in a setting with no distractions, providing an amanuensis or taking the exam in a room without incandescent lighting.

Equipment or devices that a person would use in daily activities whether in school or not, such as wheelchairs, canes, and glasses, are not required to be provided.

Procedures for Requesting and Obtaining Reasonable Accommodation

As you respond to individual requests for reasonable accommodation, first ask the student to complete the Reasonable Accommodation Request form (available from the Office for Student with Disabilities, [OSD] Student Affairs Room 115). The OSD will determine whether an individual has a protected disability and whether the disability requires a reasonable accommodation to participate in the instructional program, etc. The OSD will work with the student in identifying a reasonable accommodation that will be effective. (This need not be the accommodation requested so long as it is effective.) The OSD maintains a supply of auxiliary aids and has access to auxiliary services. In the event your visual aids class materials must be reformatted for accessibility, the OSD can help you identify the most cost-effective and least burdensome approach to take in reformatting.

The Office for Students with Disabilities may be contacted at: (323) 343-3410 (voice), (323) 343-3139 (TDD) or (323) 343-6429 (FAX).

Cost

Auxiliary aids and services for effective communication must be provided to students with a protected disability on request at no charge to the requester. For other types of reasonable accommodations involving cost, the requester may pay part or all of the cost. Unless the cost is an undue hardship for the University, the University is responsible for paying the remainder of the cost. For this purpose, the University has established a central budget, therefore, cost will not be charged to the requesting department.

Recommended Action

It is recommended that at each initial class meeting, you mention that students with protected disabilities who need reasonable accommodation make an appointment to see you during your office hours. This will preserve the student's privacy and indicate your willingness, and that of the University to provide reasonable accommodations when needed. If due to schedule conflicts you are unable to meet with your student, insure that the student is immediately referred to OSD as previously indicated.

Questions about the ADA may be directed to the Office for Equity and Diversity, Administration 606, extension 3-3040.