



ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN YOUR COURSE AND ON CAMPUS

*The information contained in this guide is intended as a resource to help
faculty members*

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Commitment to students with disabilities

CEU is committed to providing equal educational opportunity and participation for students with disabilities in Vienna and Budapest. In support of its disabilities mission, CEU provides services and reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities to ensure their full participation in the university's programs, courses, and activities. The reasonable accommodations or modifications do not require significant alteration to the program or activity: "not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms." (The United Nations, 2006).

What constitutes a reasonable accommodation is often debated. Students with disabilities may need accommodations in such areas as instructional methods, assignments, and assessments, time demands, and schedules, learning environment, assistive technology. Accommodations at CEU are based on individual student needs. Each student who has a disability/condition is invited to register with the Disability Services that supports students with disabilities in order to receive accommodations. Best solutions are reached if Faculty members, whose role is vital in the process, work closely with the Disability Services.

What you as an instructor can do

- Get yourself familiar with CEU Student Disability Policy to know what kind of student support is available at CEU.
- Include a statement on your syllabus making it clear to students that it is the student's responsibility and right to initiate the process of receiving relevant accommodations related to disability by contacting the Disability Services.
- If a student makes reference to having a disability, please refer them to the Disability Services.
- If you detect that some of your students might require **psychological support**, reach out to them individually and direct them to the [CEU Psychological Counseling](#).

Roles and responsibilities

In the following it will be outlined how the student, faculty, committee on students with disabilities, and disability services may work together: Students provide medical and/or psychological documentation to the CEU Disability Services. Faculty members refer students to the Disability Services and participate in the process to determine and implement reasonable accommodations. Disability Services collect and retain

medical/psychological documentation in a confidential manner and determine if condition(s) are a disability in accordance with Hungarian, Austrian and US legal background. The particular accommodations afforded to a student will be determined in consultation with the Medical Center or the psychological counselor and the Committee on Students with Disabilities. Moreover, Disability Services assist with implementation of reasonable accommodations and provide information and referral to campus and community resources to resolve disability-related issues. See more: <https://www.ceu.edu/info-current-students/disabilities/services>

Teaching students with disability

Faculty members usually receive information from the CEU Student Disability Services Officer about students with disabilities. The message includes what accommodations the individual students are eligible for. It is useful for Faculty members to have an understanding of the disability and the challenges students might face due to this disability during their learning process. The information below may help faculty members better understand how various disabilities affect learning and how teaching can be made more accessible.

Issues to consider

- Students may have visible or non-visible/non-evident disabilities.
- Every student has unique strengths and weaknesses, there is no one right way for success.
- Two students with the same disability may qualify for and be eligible to receive different accommodations. (CEU Student Disability Officer)

What you as an instructor can do

- If you are informed that you have a student with disability in your class, take time to inform yourself about the nature of the disability and assess how it might potentially affect students' learning process.
- Review your course syllabus, classroom activities, and assignments and assess whether any adjustments are needed so that a student with disability can participate in these activities equally along with the peers.
- Don't assume what students can or cannot do with regards to participating in classroom activities. Think of multiple ways students may participate without feeling excluded.

NOTE: Students may not be aware of **how to ask for support or what adjustments** may be available to them. So, start by asking **students** if they are experiencing any barriers and give them the **option to raise this in a private** / direct email and / or **signpost them to the CEU Disability Services Officer.**

For students with special needs learning on site may create accessibility concerns

Instructors recognize the need, as well as the opportunity, to design course materials to be as accessible as possible. A course is accessible to such an extent that it is usable by students across the broadest diversity ranges. Designing accessible course content requires careful instructional considerations. The special needs of students are recognized the most when the principles of **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)** are applied (Tobin, 2014).

The following are the three principles of UDL. The design of students' learning experiences in higher education incorporates multiple means of

- engaging with content and people,
- representing information,
- expressing skills and knowledge.

Hence, instructors should provide multiple methods of presentation to help learners acquire knowledge in different ways and multiple methods to help them express what they know. They should also provide multiple options for student engagement, that create safe and inclusive learning environment for all students.

Students in each of the main categories, adapted from [W3C: Diversity in Web Use](#): visual/auditory/cognitive, learning and neurological differences/physical disabilities/and speech disabilities, experience different types of issues accessing online courses.

Visual impairments

Visual disabilities range from blindness to low vision. Visual disabilities may result in difficulties with the following activities:

- Mobility around campus and in the classroom
- Ability to take notes in class
- Ability to see classroom visual aids,
- Reading standard print materials
- Finding transportation
- Obtaining textbooks in an alternative format and in a timely manner (audio, large print, Braille)

What you as an instructor can do

- **Use large print handouts:** recommended spacing between lines of text is 1.5 the best fonts for a text Arial and Tahoma.
- Provide **seating** where the lighting is best or close to the front of the classroom;
- **Provide documents in accessible format.** If a PDF, or PowerPoint is used, an accessible Word or HTML version needs to be created.
- Consider substituting some of your readings with podcasts or other audio materials.
- **Use color with care,** use color combinations that are high contrast.
- Be flexible with deadlines if assignments are held up by the document conversion process.
- Provide **hand-outs** (preferably electronically) in advance of lectures and seminars and allow audiotaping where possible to assist review of notes.
- Give **advance warning and guidance** about reading lists and other course resources, to allow students to transcribe essential material into accessible forms.
- Give **verbal description** of visual aids or writing on whiteboard or slides, and spell aloud difficult words or names. Talk through calculations or procedures as they are carried out.
- Ensure **key notices** (e.g., regarding cancellations or re-scheduled classes) are also announced in ways that are accessible to blind or visually impaired students.
- Encourage **the use of spell-check** and grammar-assistive devices when appropriate to the course.
- If possible, arrange for **converting exam papers** in their usual format (e.g., Braille, modified layout, large print).
- A student may require **an assistant in exams** to be a reader or make graphs accessible during the exam.
- A student may require the use of **separate room with proctor**;
- A student may require the **use of computer/own laptop** with an extra monitor to produce answers during the exam
- A student may require **extra time:** Some students may be entitled to get at least 50 percent extra time as a disability compensation.
- Consider alternatives to any assignments which depend on visual communication.
- If you teach online, having your lecture pre-recorded and shared with the students via CEU e-learning is highly beneficial.

Auditory impairments

Hearing loss can vary. Some students have mild hearing problems, others struggle more. Those with milder hearing loss are called "hard of hearing ". Those with little or no

functional hearing may be referred to as "deaf." The most common barrier between students who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and their peers and instructors is communication. Examples of disability related limitations include:

- Listening to and understanding lectures
- Taking notes in class
- Working effectively in group projects or class discussions

What you as an instructor can do

- face student when speaking, this allows lip reading. If you teach online, ask all students to keep their cameras on be aware that moustaches, beards, hands, or microphones in front of your face create difficulties for lip-readers.
- Ensure that any background noise is minimized.
- If you teach online, having your lectured pre-recorded and shared with the students via CEU e-learning is highly beneficial to **prepare transcripts** of your recorded videos and audios. It may also be effective, if group questions are transcribed in text. A free, open-source media player for transcribing is [Able Player on GitHub](#).
- The impact of hearing loss can cause delays in receiving learning material. Students who need information transcribed must sometimes wait for a significant period for this to happen. This needs to be considered in terms of timelines and deadlines.
- **provide captions** for videos or other audio-type online course materials (e.g., narrated PPT). Check [Captioning your own video for free](#) for more ideas. If you record your lectures with Panopto (incorporated in Moodle/CEU e-learning, it also has this function.
- (Foreign) Language abilities are often affected by hearing loss, depending on the age of onset. Students who acquired their hearing loss early in life may have literacy issues. Providing reading lists well before the start of a course for students with a hearing loss can be beneficial.
- Check [here](#) for more tips and strategies.

Cognitive, learning, and neurological differences

Individuals with cognitive differences include students with learning disabilities, dyslexic students, students on the Autism spectrum, those with visual migraines, or with Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Individuals with cognitive disabilities may have difficulty reading text or interpreting illustrations. They may experience challenges with following and keeping up with synchronous learning activities and they have other difficulties:

- Inability to change from one task to another
- Difficulty completing tests without additional time

- Difficulty following directions
- Poor self-esteem
- Difficulty taking notes
- Slow reading rate
- Poor comprehension and retention of material read
- Difficulty with basic math operations

What you as an instructor can do

- Create syllabus with clear descriptions of the classes, the assignments, grading criteria, timeframes, and deadlines.
- Provide signposts and clear connections between different chunks of the session/discussion, visualize important links and connections between different contents.
- Scaffold (chunk) instruction as much as possible.
- Provide multiple opportunities for students to practice in different format; use cooperative learning techniques to allow for peer learning to take place.
- Teach self-monitoring techniques. (Students set goals to complete assignment and check off each step as they complete them). Using peer feedback/peer tutoring might be an additional advantage.
- Use visual aids and provide models, real life cases, diverse examples to help knowledge application.
- Summarize or draw conclusions at the end of the lecture/class.
- Remind students periodically about the rules and revise them, if they do not work.
- Allocate time for students to **read and digest the task first**, before starting an activity or a discussion.
- Ask for regular feedback.
- **Provide periodic** breaks.
- More strategies are available [here](#)

Physical differences

Physical disabilities include but are not limited to paralysis, loss or damage of limb(s), multiple sclerosis, arthritis and other conditions with weakness and limitations of muscular control. Individuals with physical disabilities may face problems to access a course. Students with physical disabilities typically are very knowledgeable of both their limitations and abilities and are accustomed to communicating their needs to others. Examples of physical disabilities include:

- Wheelchair users

- Amputees
- Speech impairments
- Multiple Sclerosis

Some limitations of students with physical disabilities are:

- Difficulty with writing, such as class notes and on exams
- Sitting in a standard desk
- Participating in labs where lab tables and equipment are hard to reach
- Transportation
- Classrooms or buildings that are not wheelchair accessible

What you as an instructor can do

- Make sure that **class takes place** in an accessible building/space
- **Allow audio recorder** or notetaking assistance
- **Allow additional time** for completing exams

Mental health differences

Mental Health disabilities may not always be visible easily, however, they can hinder the learning process. These disabilities include a wide spectrum of conditions that may be chronic or reoccurring. Examples of mental health disabilities are:

- Major depression
- Bipolar disorder
- Severe anxiety disorders
- Sleep disorders
- Eating disorders
- Substance-related disorders

Academic difficulties can include:

- Concentration
- Cognitive (short term memory difficulties)
- Distractibility
- Time management
- Impulsiveness
- Irritability
- Feelings of fear and anxiety

What you as an instructor can do

- **Allow extended time** for completing assignments/exams
- **provide personal and private feedback**
- arrange frequent breaks
- provide separate, quiet room for testing
- If you detect any sign of mental disorder, reach out to the student to offer additional support and direct them to the [CEU Psychological Counseling](#).

Additional resources:

- ✓ CAST (2008). Universal design for learning guidelines version 1.0. Wakefield, MA. Retrieved from http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl/udlguidelines/udlguidelines_graphicorganizer
- ✓ CEU Student Disability Policy. (2014) Retrieved from <https://documents.ceu.edu/file/12752/download?token=TaxZ6J3X>
- ✓ DO-IT University of Washington (2012). Academic accommodations for students with learning disabilities. Retrieved from http://www.washington.edu/doit/Brochures/Academics/accomm_Id.html
- ✓ The **United Nations**. (2006). **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Treaty Series, 2515, 3.** Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml>
- ✓ Tobin, T. J. (2014). Increase online student retention with universal design for learning. *Quarterly Review of Distance Education*, 15(3), 13-24.

WHOM TO CONTACT FOR SUPPORT

CEU Student Disability Services Officer (Natalia Nyikes) at nyikesn@ceu.edu for accessibility issues for students with special needs.

CEU Center for Teaching and Learning (Margaryta Rymarenko) at rymarenkom@ceu.edu for pedagogy-related issues of teaching and learning.

CEU Equal Opportunity Officer (Aniko Kellner) at kellnera@ceu.edu

CEU IT Support Helpdesk at helprequest@ceu.edu for technical issues

CEU Psychological Counseling (Laszlo Biro) at birol@ceu.edu for issues related to psychological support.