

College 101: Students with Disabilities

Advising & Course Selection

Self-disclosing to academic advisor:

- What is important for him/her to know to better help you put together a manageable schedule?
 - More alert, do better in early morning
 - Joints/body aches in early morning
 - Topics re: 'x' trigger reaction (e.g. seizure, anxiety, post traumatic stress)
 - Difficult topics require more time (e.g. math, foreign language)
 - Need time to eat and take medication(s) at certain time(s) of the day

- What factors/variables are important in choosing your classes?
 - Class format (small group discussion vs. large lecture)
 - Teaching style
 - Exam format (essay vs. multiple choice)
 - Amount of reading
 - Number of credit hours (desired or manageable vs. advised or required)

Course Selection:

- Is math an area of difficulty for you?
 - Create a schedule that will allow more time for difficult topics-fewer credit hours-for that semester
 - Discuss taking the course(s) in the summer, through Independent Study & Correspondence, at another school (e.g. community college)

- How do you handle a lot of reading?
 - Inquire how much reading is required in the courses you will be taking
 - Get texts early and begin reading ahead
 - Ask about books in alternate format

Differences that matter:

- M/W/F classes are approximately 50 minutes long; T/R classes are 1 1/4-hours long. What differences does that make for you?
 - Number days/week of being in-class for continuity, practice, (2 vs. 3)
 - Amount of time required to pay attention, be seated in class (50 min. vs. 1 1/4 hr)

- How many hours do you think that you want to take?
 - Rule-of-thumb is 1-hr in-class = 3-hrs. out-of-class preparation (some classes will require more study time)
 - Impact on scholarship, financial aid, Voc. Rehab, other
 - Concern of time (years to graduate, cost) vs. level of achievement (GPA)

- When are you most alert? Is there anything that would affect you taking AM classes? PM classes?
- How much time are you allowing between classes?
 - Amount of time necessary to get to next class
 - Ability to get organized before beginning class, to re-focus
 - Possible time necessary to prepare for class (e.g. read, write lab report, review notes, complete project)
 - Desired time to relax study, eat, take medication(s), etc.

Course Style:

- Instructor style: how do you learn best (lecture, participation, read on own)?
- Test format: explain to the academic advisor or consider how you do on different types of tests (multiple choice, essay, short answer).

*Talk with instructor/department and/or look at a syllabus BEFORE enrolling in a course, if possible.

Adapted from: "College 101: Students with Disabilities," Oklahoma State University

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