

LEARNING DISABILITIES PROGRAM MANUAL



Banacos Academic Center
Westfield State University

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Learning Disabilities Program Manual, Banacos Academic Center, Westfield State University, August, 2014.

Introduction

Welcome to the Banacos Academic Center's Learning Disabilities Program! We have a long and vibrant history of success working with college students with learning disabilities. In keeping with the vision of nineteenth-century reformer and educator Horace Mann, Westfield State University has been in the forefront of providing an education to students without barrier to race, gender, economic class or disability. Since 1979, the Learning Disabilities Program (LDP) has been committed to providing a fulfilling educational experience to qualified students with learning disabilities. We provide academic support and reasonable accommodations to students with learning disabilities and ADHD throughout their undergraduate careers as they transition to college and become independent learners.

The LDP is located in the Banacos Academic Center which also houses Disability Services, the Tutoring Program, MTEL ComLit Preparation, and Academic Skills Preparation. The Banacos Academic Center has a large room for studying and tutoring, a computer room, an assistive technology lab, a distraction-reduced exam room, and LDP staff offices. All students at WSU are welcome to utilize the computer lab and the tutoring services and study space. In addition to the reasonable accommodations LDP students are entitled to, the LDP also offers several services for students, services which are integral to student success. Students in the LDP determine their own level of involvement with program services, as the program is elective. LDP services are as follows:

Learning Disabilities Program Services

- Access to a program advisor: Students in the LDP are assigned a program advisor who remains dedicated to the student for the duration of the undergraduate experience. Students work with program advisors to determine what reasonable accommodations, services and resources will best meet their learning needs. Program advisors also work with students to help with time management, study skills and self-advocacy. Always feel free to contact your program advisor if you have questions or encounter challenges—talking to your program advisor can be a good place to start.
- Early course registration: For the first two years (the student must have earned under 54 credits), students in the LDP are eligible for early registration (registering before seniors, juniors, etc.). Start the process by requesting a meeting with your program advisor. Getting your course schedule set early will help you by setting a schedule with time between courses if you need time to process information or study between classes. You can also use early course registration to set your classes in the morning or afternoon, depending on your ability to focus.
- Progress reports: Program advisors request feedback each semester from LDP students' faculty assessing student progress by each semester's midterm. Students should meet with their program advisor to discuss professor feedback.

Other Banacos benefits:

- Free workshops on time management, test taking, reading retention and more.
- Social group: this is not your high school's "social skills" group; this group provides a weekly opportunity for students to make meaningful connections with others on campus. Group members are actively involved with choosing the planned activities. Some of the activities have included: game nights, themed parties, outings to the park, and going out to eat.
- Email updates and reminders from both Sarah Lazare, the Banacos director, and your program advisor about upcoming events and deadlines. Be sure to check your WSU email frequently to stay up to date!
- Various semester events are offered. Past events have included cookie decorating, pizza study breaks, and guest speakers. Guest speakers have included Dino Innarelli from WSU's Career Services, Jane Thierfield-Brown (an expert on Autism Spectrum Disorders) from College Autism Spectrum, and various professors and staff who have talked about their own disabilities. If you have ideas about future guest speakers, please contact Sarah Lazare, the director, or your program advisor.

Relevant Legislation

As a student with a disability, you are entitled to certain accommodations. These accommodations seek to remove barriers that exist for students with disabilities in the educational environment. While you were in grades K-12, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) mandated that you receive an individualized educational plan (IEP) to ensure your success in school. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is an aspect of the law that protects individuals from discrimination based on their disability in all levels of education. Section 504, as amended in 1998, states that

No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall, solely by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Some students in K-12 have a 504 plan, which is just about accommodations students receive at school, compared to an IEP which provides more assistance in educational growth.

Now that you are in higher education, you will receive a list of approved reasonable accommodations, not an IEP or 504 plan. (See the next page to determine the differences between accommodations in high school and college.) There are two laws that govern how you receive equal access in the educational environment: The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and its amendments (ADAAA, 2008) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The ADA states that “No qualified individual with a disability shall by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of a public entity, or to be subjected to discrimination by such entity.”

Students who would like to learn more about disability laws and their application to higher education are encouraged to contact Sarah E. Lazare, Director of the Banacos Academic Center, at slazare@westfield.ma.edu or by telephone (413) 572-8789.

Transitioning from High School to the University

Knowing the difference between academic expectations in high school and college is the key to starting out successfully. Here are some differences to keep in mind:

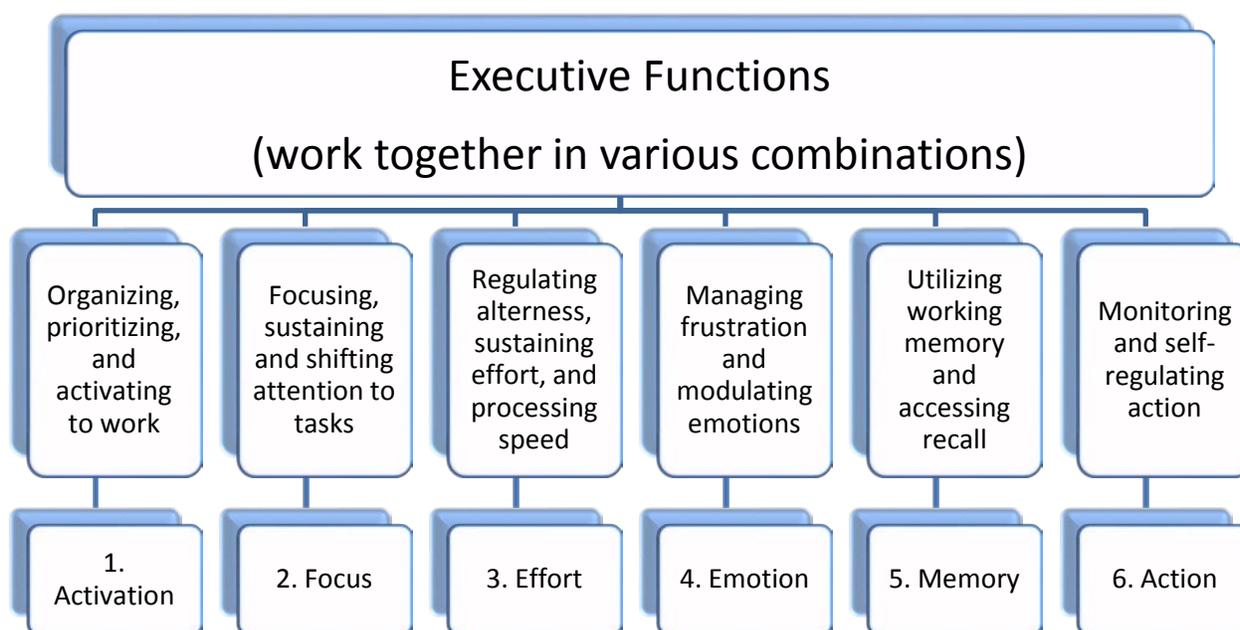
Question	High School	University
What is the relevant law?	IDEA and Section 504 refer to equal access that students receive at the K-12 grade levels. A student's IEP or 504 plan ends when the student graduates high school.	ADA and Section 504 apply to higher education and reasonable accommodations for which students are eligible. This is the law applicable to higher education.
What is the focus of the law?	The IDEA focuses on a free and appropriate education that meets the unique needs of students and improves their educational results.	ADA and Section 504 focus on removing barriers to educational programming through reasonable accommodations and modifications to policies and practices.
How are accommodations arranged?	Parents and guardians of students meet with school staff to agree on modifications to the classroom and curriculum for the student.	Students request and discuss reasonable accommodations with their program advisor who then decides which ones are approved.
Who will tell me how I'm doing in my classes?	Teachers will often inform the student if he/she needs help in a class.	Students take the first step to find out how they are doing in class. Students request assistance from professors and program advisors.
Are there modifications to the work load or content?	Test and homework modifications sometimes occur. The number of test or homework problems may be reduced. The amount of topics to cover may be reduced.	All students must do the same work; modifications to policy and practices only serve to provide access, not to change the curriculum requirements or standards.
How is my day structured?	Students' daily schedules are closely monitored by school staff throughout the school day with little free time.	Students organize their own schedules. Some days a student might only have 2 classes. The student must organize the remaining time and assign times to read, write, and study.
How do I know when my assignments are due?	Teachers remind students frequently in class.	Students receive a syllabus in the beginning of the semester with due dates for assignments and are responsible for tracking due dates and changes in them by themselves.
Is student information private?	Parents are privy to their student's grades, information about the disability, etc.	Parental involvement is limited, as outlined by FERPA guidelines. Students must provide written permission for records to be divulged.

Managing Executive Functions and ADHD

Many people will tell you that college will be one of the best times of your life. It's true college will be a memorable and exciting time in your life, but your ultimate goal is to gain an education while making the most of your time here. If you have trouble focusing or staying organized, keeping on track with your work can be challenging.

The LD Program has over 140 students diagnosed with ADHD and many more have been diagnosed with some aspect of executive functioning difficulties. Executive functions are the processes that occur in our brain that help us to plan, organize, focus, and control our actions. Dr. Thomas Brown, an expert on ADHD/Executive Functioning, describes 6 ways executive functioning works in our brains to help us finish the tasks we need to do.

He uses the following flow chart to show how various brain processes work in combination:



TE Brown (2005). <http://www.drthomasebrown.com/add-adhd-model/>, 8/11/14

The LDP has witnessed great success with students who do a few basic things consistently: regularly attend class, stay organized, and follow through with due dates for assignments and tests. Conversely, we've seen students who struggle when they don't abide by due dates or who irregularly attend class. If you begin to get behind in work or if you feel your class attendance is slipping, contact your program advisor immediately. Discuss ways to get back on track so you can be successful. You might discuss how to approach the professor whose class you've missed or setting up times to meet with a tutor to get caught up on work.

The important thing is to reach out for help when, or before, you need it. We strongly suggest that you meet with your program advisor once a week, especially in the first semester. Don't hesitate. Set up weekly meetings with her now.

Using Brown's 6 executive functions, we can use the chart below to see the differences between highly successful students and unsuccessful students.

Steps to Success:

Executive Functions	The Successful Student does this:	The Unsuccessful Student does this:
Activation	Uses a daily planner to record due dates for tests and papers. Develops a plan each day for studying and completing work. Meets with advisor to request reasonable accommodations. Regularly checks online resources such as PLATO.	Does not use a planner. Does not set aside time to complete work. Never looks at course syllabi and never records due dates. Does not meet with program advisor to request reasonable accommodations. Forgets to check online resources such as PLATO.
Focus	Finds a quiet place to study and complete work. Develops a routine for scheduling daily activities and studying.	Spends more time on social media and video games. Does not set aside time to study. Allows friends and relatives to distract from tasks and studying.
Effort	Studies two hours outside of class for every hour in class; regularly prepares for tests weeks and days in advance. Revises writing assignments. For online classes, makes time to do the work over several days.	Crams before a test. Considers studying only an hour for a test that requires a lot more work. For online classes, tries to do the work just hours before the deadline.
Emotion	Uses stress management techniques. Exercises to reduce stress. Gets enough sleep. Takes time to process feedback from professors. Works with counseling services to address concerns as they arise.	Keeps emotions bottled up and acts out. Does not get regular sleep or exercise.
Memory	Rehearses new information by studying class notes prior to class, rewriting and reorganizing notes. Writes summaries and study guides weekly. Proves understanding through weekly practice of course content.	Does not take class notes and does not review new information.
Action	Uses planner, attends class regularly, turns in work on time. Consults program advisor to discuss accommodations or other concerns.	Does not use planner or attend class regularly. Does not turn in work on time. Does not meet with program advisor to discuss accommodations.

Being aware of steps you need to take to be organized and persist in your work will help you succeed. Develop consistent habits of studying regularly, practice the material you need to know, and ask for help when you need it.

The list below outlines some very basic, commonsense tips for academic success here at WSU.

Tips for Student Success

Many students find that they enjoy academics in college more than they did in high school, and many grow into successful and vibrant learners. Below are suggestions for having a successful academic career.

- **Know your learning style:** Tap into your strengths. Most students with learning disabilities know how they learn best. Visual learners rewrite their class notes and make charts. Auditory learners read books out loud or listen to class recordings.
- **Always attend your classes.** Regardless of what your friends or professors say, regular attendance matters. Even if professors do not seem to take daily attendance, they expect you to be in class ready to learn.
- **Exam preparation begins the first day of class.** Look at your syllabus, know the course description and the purpose of the course. Buy your books! Review your notes and other class materials regularly. Make study guides for each class each week.
- **Plan to study two to three hours for each hour in class.** College classes often require a heavier reading load and longer papers. Studying for one hour for a test will not be adequate test preparation. There are three hours of class each week per course. That means you should plan to study 6-9 hours per week per course.
- **Organize your time.** To be successful, you will need to use your time effectively. Use a daily planner. Your program advisor can provide you with a free one: just ask! During the first week of school, you can record your test and paper dates. Organizing your days and weeks allows you to see what free time you have outside of class for studying, tutoring, and leisure time.
- **Check your WSU email daily.** At WSU, your university email is an official mode of communication. It is the primary way your professors and your LDP program advisor will contact you. By checking your email frequently, you can find out about important events, such as early registration, housing signups, and more.
- **Keep your appointments.** If you make an appointment with a professor or your major advisor, be sure to show up on time and ready to meet.
- **Get to know your professors.** Visit during office hours. Show your professors your class notes and study guides. Building relationships early will make communication easier in and outside of class.
- **Use the resources on campus.** WSU has a vibrant tutoring program, a Reading and Writing Center, and the LDP program advisors. If you need something, just ask—these resources are there for you to utilize.

- **If you're struggling in a class, get a tutor!** If you are experiencing academic difficulty, please don't wait! To make your request for a tutor, go to the Tutoring Program web page and fill out the online request form. You also can write to tutor@westfield.ma.edu, or just stop by the front desk and the student on duty can give you contact information for a tutor who can give you one-on-one assistance. Since tutoring is by appointment, you can arrange your tutoring sessions to fit your classes and other commitments. During the academic year, the Center is open the following hours:
Monday through Thursday: 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.;
Fridays: 8 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; and, Sundays: 1:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
- **Practice the way you're expected to perform.** Athletes do it, musicians do it. Start by learning small chunks of information. Prove to yourself you know the information. Practice writing essay exams and taking multiple choice tests. Rehearse presentations. Write and revise your essays.
- **Sleep, eat well, and exercise regularly.** Doing these three will help you stay healthy and alert. Regular sleep helps alleviate stress, inattention, and builds your immunity.

Reasonable and Appropriate Accommodations

An accommodation is a legally supported modification to a policy or practice that gives a student with a disability an equal opportunity to benefit from the educational process. Reasonable accommodations remove barriers to classwork, buildings, events, research and other activities. All reasonable accommodations are determined on an individualized basis by the program advisor in consultation with the student and upon review of supporting documentation. Some examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

Testing Accommodations

- Extended time
- Reduced distraction testing room (located in the Banacos Academic Center)
- Reader or Scribe
- Screen reader (Kurzweil 3000, Kurzweil 1000, JAWS, ZoomText)
- Voice recognition software (Dragon Naturally Speaking)
- Assistance with filling in Scantron answer sheets
- Permission to take breaks or take parts of an exam at different times
- Permission to use a word processor, calculator or assistive technology
- Permission to schedule exams to avoid conflicting times or if too many are scheduled in one day
- Permission to stand up and walk around
- Permission to eat or drink during exams
- Large print

Attendance and Participation in Class

- Permission to take breaks
- Preferential classroom seating

- Extended time for written assignments and projects
- Leniency with attendance
- Scheduling class in an accessible setting

Assistive Devices and Services

- Note takers
- Use of recording device (provided by the student)
- Use of laptop (provided by the student)
- Screen reading software
- Voice recognition technology (normally provided by student)
- Other assistive technology

Course Texts and Other Material in an Alternative Format

- Books and printed material in audio format
- Books and printed material in electronic format
- Books and printed material in Braille
- Video captioning
- Live transcription services

University Requirements

- Reduced course load
- Course substitutes or waivers
- Early course registration

Housing Accommodations

- Single
- Signaling devices
- Quieter floor
- Alterations to room

Requesting and Receiving Reasonable Accommodations

Receiving reasonable accommodations will be an important part of your success. We strongly recommend that you request accommodations during your first year here. Too often students say, "I want to try my first test without extra time." In our experience, trying the first test with your accommodations is a more reasonable and less risky approach. Reading and writing assignments and exams at WSU will be more rigorous than in high school. Requesting **and using** your accommodations during your first year could prove invaluable as you transition from high school to university.

Students are responsible for requesting accommodations in a timely manner. The time varies, based on the nature of the request. For example, requests for housing accommodations are

usually made yearly, while classroom accommodations are made each semester, prior to the class starting.

1. Obtain a Reasonable Accommodations Request form online or ask for a paper copy from your program advisor.
2. Talk with your program advisor about the accommodations you are requesting.
3. Fill out an accommodation request form each semester at a minimum two weeks before the accommodation is needed (longer for certain accommodations, such as housing, interpreters, electronic texts, note takers, and moving classrooms).
4. Review your requests with your program advisor (does your documentation support your requests? Are your requests reasonable and most appropriate for you?).
5. Requests for accommodations are not normally denied. Situations where they might be denied include the following: your documentation does not support the request; the request is not reasonable for college; the accommodation is too burdensome or would be a hardship; the timing of the request is late; the request fundamentally alters the class curriculum; or, you are asking for an accommodation retroactively.
6. Once your list of reasonable classroom accommodations is approved, a notice will go to you and your professors or other relevant campus offices via campus email.
7. Discuss your accommodations with your professors if the accommodations are classroom-related.
 - a. Ask your professors if they received an email notification from a Banacos advisor. Bring a copy of the email with you to the conversation.
 - b. Discuss how to confirm arrangements, particularly with exams, extended deadlines and absences:
 - i. Confirm the time and place of the exam and whether you or the professor will deliver the exam to the Banacos exam room.
 - ii. Confirm how and when the professor will receive notice of when you need to be absent or need to request an extended deadline for a disability-related reason.
 - c. Discuss how your disability affects your class performance. (Suggested).
 - d. Follow up with an email and "cc:" your program advisor. This email could be as follows: "Dear Professor A, Thank you for talking with me today. I would like to confirm what we said today about my approved accommodations which was _____. If this is not your understanding, please write back to me to clarify. Thank you, B."
8. If your professor indicates that s/he will not allow certain accommodations, discuss this with your program advisor immediately. Sometimes it is not reasonable to have an accommodation in a certain situation because it substantially alters the curriculum or purpose of a course. Sometimes there is confusion, miscommunication or misunderstanding. Your program advisor and you can work with the professor to determine an appropriate way to make reasonable accommodations.
9. Keep a copy of the reasonable accommodations notification email from your program advisor. First, you should keep records of the notices you receive for your reasonable accommodations. Second, if you need accommodations in the future for a job, a

professional exam, a short summer program or other reason, you might be asked to provide proof that you received accommodations in the past.

Keep in mind that the documentation you submit to request reasonable accommodations is yours and you should have your own copy. Your documentation might be useful in the future if you go to graduate school or need to take an exam for your profession (such as social work licensure, police training, etc.). The Learning Disabilities Program keeps documentation for five years after your time at WSU has ended, so please think about keeping a copy for your records. Your program advisor can give you a paper copy or make an electronic copy for you.



Program advisor with student.

Supporting Documentation Requirements

Many students in the Learning Disabilities Program have more than one sort of disability. To be admitted to the LDP, you submitted documentation that demonstrated your learning disability or ADHD. If you believe you have another disability for which you would request reasonable accommodations, please read below to find out what sort of information – documentation requirements – we will need to consider your request.

Documentation from an appropriate practitioner is required to establish both the presence of a disability and the need for accommodations. Documentation supports a written request and does not constitute a request itself. Please be sure to be specific with your requests on the Request for Reasonable Accommodations form.

In general, documentation of a learning disability should be no more than three years old when a student enters college. Documentation of most physical and psychologically based disabilities may need to be updated every six to twelve months, depending on the changing nature of the disability. Westfield State University documentation requirements are adapted from guidelines developed by AHEAD (Association of Higher Education and Disability).

AHEAD Association On Higher Education And Disability: Seven Elements Of Quality Disability Documentation

The dimensions of good documentation discussed below are suggested as a best practices approach for defining complete documentation that both establishes the individual as a person with a disability and provides a rationale for reasonable accommodations. By identifying the essential dimensions of documentation, institutions allow for flexibility in accepting documentation from the full range of theoretical and clinical perspectives. This approach will enhance consistency and provide stakeholders (students, prospective students, parents and professionals) with the information they need to assist students in establishing eligibility for services and receiving appropriate accommodations.

1. The credentials of the evaluator(s)

The best quality documentation is provided by a licensed or otherwise properly credentialed professional who has undergone appropriate and comprehensive training, has relevant experience, and has no personal relationship with the individual being evaluated. A good match between the credentials of the individual making the diagnosis and the condition being reported is expected (e.g., an orthopedic limitation might be documented by a physician, but not a licensed psychologist).

2. A diagnostic statement identifying the disability

Quality documentation includes a clear diagnostic statement that describes how the condition was diagnosed, provides information on the functional impact, and details the typical progression or prognosis of the condition. While diagnostic codes from the Diagnostic Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association (DSM) or the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) of the World Health Organization are helpful in providing this information, a full clinical description will also convey the necessary information.

3. A description of the diagnostic methodology used

Quality documentation includes a description of the diagnostic criteria, evaluation methods, procedures, tests and dates of administration, as well as a clinical narrative, observation, and specific results. Where appropriate to the nature of the disability, having both summary data and specific test scores (with the norming population identified) within the report is recommended. Diagnostic methods that are congruent with the particular disability and current professional practices in the field are recommended. Methods may include formal instruments, medical examinations, structured interview protocols, performance observations and unstructured interviews. If results from informal, non-standardized or less common methods of evaluation are reported, an explanation of their role and significance in the diagnostic process will strengthen their value in providing useful information.

4. A description of the current functional limitations

Information on how the disabling condition(s) currently impacts the individual provides useful information for both establishing a disability and identifying possible accommodations. A

combination of the results of formal evaluation procedures, clinical narrative, and the individual's self report is the most comprehensive approach to fully documenting impact. The best quality documentation is thorough enough to demonstrate whether and how a major life activity is substantially limited by providing a clear sense of the severity, frequency and pervasiveness of the condition(s).

While relatively recent documentation is recommended in most circumstances, common sense and discretion in accepting older documentation of conditions that are permanent or non-varying is recommended. Likewise, changing conditions and/or changes in how the condition impacts the individual brought on by growth and development may warrant more frequent updates in order to provide an accurate picture. It is important to remember that documentation is not time-bound; the need for recent documentation depends on the facts and circumstances of the individual's condition.

5. A description of the expected progression or stability of the disability

It is helpful when documentation provides information on expected changes in the functional impact of the disability over time and context. Information on the cyclical or episodic nature of the disability and known or suspected environmental triggers to episodes provides opportunities to anticipate and plan for varying functional impacts. If the condition is not stable, information on interventions (including the individual's own strategies) for exacerbations and recommended timelines for re-evaluation are most helpful.

6. A description of current and past accommodations, services and/or medications

The most comprehensive documentation will include a description of both current and past medications, auxiliary aids, assistive devices, support services, and accommodations, including their effectiveness in ameliorating functional impacts of the disability. A discussion of any significant side effects from current medications or services that may impact physical, perceptual, behavioral or cognitive performance is helpful when included in the report. While accommodations provided in another setting are not binding on the current institution, they may provide insight in making current decisions.

7. Recommendations for accommodations, adaptive devices, assistive services, compensatory strategies, and/or collateral support services

Recommendations from professionals with a history of working with the individual provide valuable information for review and the planning process. It is most helpful when recommended accommodations and strategies are logically related to functional limitations; if connections are not obvious, a clear explanation of their relationship can be useful in decision-making. While the post-secondary institution has no obligation to provide or adopt recommendations made by outside entities, those that are congruent with the programs, services, and benefits offered by the university or program may be appropriate. When recommendations go beyond equitable and inclusive services and benefits, they may still be useful in suggesting alternative accommodations and/or services.

Tips for Talking with Your Professors

Many students with disabilities find it easy to approach their professors on the first day of class to discuss how their disability impacts them in the classroom and to discuss their reasonable accommodations. Others may not be sure of what to say. Together, you and your program advisor can create helpful questions to ask your professor to get the conversation started. Here are suggestions for successful encounters with your professors.

Make an appointment! When discussing your accommodations or any other issue with a professor, you need the professor's full attention. The time immediately before or after class often is not a good time to talk with your professor. A professor might have several students to address or obligations directly after class. The professor's attention may be divided. The professor likely is unable to give you the time necessary to adequately discuss your needs. Most importantly, the environment in a classroom is not private.

Be prepared. When you arrive at your scheduled meeting time, have an idea of what you want to discuss.

- **Bring your reasonable accommodations email** from your program advisor. If this is your first meeting, confirming your accommodations can be a good way to get a conversation started. The email outlines the reasonable accommodations you will receive that semester for your courses. Print a copy for yourself and keep it with your course materials so you can show your professors.
- **Bring your questions about the course material.** You'll show the professor your dedication if you have questions written down. If you are going over a graded test, have some idea of what went wrong and discuss ways to improve your test performance. If you have trouble understanding lecture material, ask specific questions. Your program advisor or tutor can help you craft questions. Offer options that will work for you.
- **Bring questions about your interests.** If the professor is studying something that interests you, ask about their research and possibly how you could get involved in it through internships or presenting at conferences. Ask how the professor's career began. Ask if they know of resources that would help you explore your own interests.

Be polite. It is important to be polite when meeting with your professors. Show up on time as your professors' time is valuable. When communicating in person and through emails with your professors, use appropriate language and greetings (For example, say, "Dear Professor or Dr.____," not "Hey Professor"). Avoid being rude or demanding; both you and your professor might become defensive and the conversation might be unproductive. For example, say, "I'd like to talk with you about my approved accommodations," not "You need to give me extra time on my tests." You can still receive help or the accommodations to which you are entitled without demanding them. In the event that your professor is unresponsive, politely end the conversation and contact your program advisor to assist you.

Discuss the logistics of your accommodations. If you need extended test time and your professor gives a quiz at the start of class, discuss whether you should you show up early or

take the quiz after class. If you wish to take tests in a reduced-distraction test location, you should inform your professor that you would like to take the exam in the Banacos Center's exam room. Then, when you have discussed with your professor how the test will arrive at the Center, fill out the purple exam request form—this can be done in the Center (room 170) or online on the Banacos Academic Center web page. You will need to do this each time you wish to take a test here at the Center. Communicate with your professors frequently so that your accommodations work smoothly.

Signing Up for Exams with Reasonable Accommodations

The Banacos Academic Center has a distraction-reduced room specifically for students who are eligible to take exams with reasonable accommodations such as extended time, distraction-reduced testing, small group settings, and assistive technology (room 171). If you plan to take an exam with reasonable accommodations, be sure to communicate with your professors about this and with the exam room staff (room 170).

To take an exam at the Center, students should do the following:

- Make sure that you have consulted with your program advisor each semester to confirm that your requested exam-related accommodations have been approved for your courses.
- Students must submit a request for each exam they wish to take in the exam room.
- Requests for exam times can be made either online (see the Banacos Academic Center Exam Room web page) or in the Banacos Academic Center by filling out the purple exam request form next to the exam room office in the Banacos Center.
- Students should request exam times as soon as possible.
 - **2 days:** Most exams should be requested at least 2 days before the exam is scheduled.
 - **7 days:** If you need a reader or scribe, 1) request the exam at least 7 days beforehand, and 2) consult with your reader or scribe (sometimes your program advisor, but it might be an exam room assistant or other Banacos staff person) to confirm availability.
 - **7 days:** Request an exam 7 days beforehand, also, if you need one of the following:
 - use of a computer;
 - a separate room with fewer students;
 - to be alone;
 - Jaws;
 - Kurzweil;
 - Zoomtext;
 - Dragon Naturally Speaking; or,
 - Other accommodations.
 - Please discuss these type of requests with your program advisor or the exam room staff as soon as possible and before requesting the exam.

- If you have not made a timely request, please consult with exam room staff to see if you can be accommodated.

Policies for taking an exam at the Center's exam room:

- Students must arrive at the exam room at least 10 minutes before an exam is scheduled to begin, unless otherwise arranged with exam room staff.
- Students must silence all electronic devices and place them and other personal items in their backpacks under the table.
- Students may never leave the exam room without checking in with the proctor.
- All exams will be timed. Students generally receive either 50% or 100% extended time, or receive breaks during their exams with time stopped. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis in consultation with your program advisor upon review of your supporting documentation.
- If a student exceeds the allotted time, the professor will be informed of the situation. If the professor has given notification that the student may continue, the exam room staff will note where the student is when time ended by either drawing a line in the exam where the student was, or by making a photocopy of the work completed. The student will then be allowed to finish the exam up to the time allowed by the professor. How the exam is graded is up to the professor's discretion.

Requesting Course Texts and Other Print Material in an Alternative Format

Electronic text or alternate format reading materials can be made available to students with qualifying disabilities who are registered with Disability Services or the Learning Disabilities Program and request this particular accommodation. While you can request texts through your program advisor, Disability Services' access advisor will be your contact person for receiving the texts. Upon request, Banacos staff provides alternative formats of required and recommended course reading assignments including course textbooks, readers, handouts, materials posted to PLATO, and specifically required or recommended library materials. Commonly requested formats include PDF files, Kurzweil edited files, and MP3 files. Additional formats (e.g., Braille, transcription, or closed caption) can also be made available. Some students may prefer to acquire the texts themselves by searching, for example, Learning Ally or Bookshare. We can still be helpful in acquiring course syllabi or reading lists to aid in your search. We ask that you submit requests when your courses are confirmed for the upcoming semester and, at a minimum, three weeks before classes start.

If you are requesting Braille or closed captioned material, you likely will need to start the process earlier than 3 weeks before classes start. Your process will require early course registration and ordering texts as soon as possible. Please make sure to speak with the access advisor to create a workable schedule for obtaining texts.

Making Requests

Submitting your e-text requests as early as possible makes it more likely you will receive your alternate format materials prior to the start of the semester. Students are strongly encouraged to submit requests when they register for courses and at least four weeks prior to the start of

the semester, earlier for Braille or closed captioned material. Please submit your request to your program advisor or to the access advisor. When submitting your request, you have two options:

1. Submit an Electronic Text Request form. Attach a list of the texts you wish to have converted and indicate the courses for which you are making requests. If you don't yet have access to this list, we will request it from the faculty.
2. Submit an Electronic Text Request form with a copy of your course schedule attached and indicate the courses for which you are making requests. Banacos staff will contact the assigned faculty members to obtain reading lists.

When submitting your list of texts, you can also prioritize them by what you need first and what is the most important.

Receiving Texts

Requests will be accepted throughout the semester; however, it does take time to obtain and convert these texts. Students who submit their requests less than four weeks before classes start may have to wait for the entire text or receive segments of the text on a rolling basis. The rolling basis option means that you will receive selected chapters or sections at a time based on the reading assignments listed in the course syllabus. We aim to ensure that timely requests are fulfilled so that students receive the required reading assignments two weeks before they are due.

Disability Services will make every effort to provide the appropriately formatted electronic version of the text as quickly as possible. Completion time for conversion depends on the size and format of the text and, importantly, how many other students are waiting for their requested materials. In the event that a publisher file cannot be obtained, students will need to provide their copy of the text for scanning. We will return the text to you within three business days. In these cases, we will attempt to complete the scanning without removing the binding of the book.

Note: If accessing texts in an electronic format is new to you, talk to your program advisor about this. Disability Services offers workshops and a written user guide on how to use Kurzweil 3000.

Student responsibilities

- Register to receive accommodations and provide documentation that supports your request for electronic texts.
- Submit written requests via the electronic text request form, in a timely manner, and inform the access advisor of any changes as soon as possible (i.e., dropped class, reading not necessary, you obtained an e-copy on your own).
- Verify your ownership of the text. Disability Services may not be able to release the electronic version of the book/reader to you until you provide verification of ownership of the source material by providing a receipt of purchase.

- Notify the access advisor or your program advisor of any problems that arise due to delays in production or errors and ask for assistance in resolving these situations. This includes situations when your instructor is providing texts at the last minute or requiring students to read during class and no alternative way for you to obtain texts has been arranged.
- Any materials provided to you by the Banacos Academic Center may not be copied or distributed in any manner that violates copyright law. Additionally, if you sell the original hard copy version of a copyright protected text, you must promptly return the converted alternate format version to the Banacos Academic Center or delete your electronic version.

Banacos Academic Center responsibilities

- Determine if you qualify for electronic texts as a reasonable accommodation.
- Provide electronic texts, upon request, in a timely manner.
- Maintain open lines of communication regarding the status of each request and work to troubleshoot any problems that may arise due to delays in production or errors. If a student submits a timely request but Banacos staff experience significant delays in providing accessible texts, Banacos staff may work with students and faculty to request extended time for completion of assignments based on readings.

Self-service

Banacos staff encourage you to learn about, and become proficient in, using technology to support your use of electronic texts now and in the future. In light of that, we will provide training on the use of scanners and Kurzweil 3000 software. There is a scanner located in the assistive technology lab for student use. The copy machine in the Banacos Academic Center can be used to scan to your email. The scanner at the Banacos front desk can be used when staff are available. Alternatively, you may choose to locate electronic versions of the text on your own. A resource list of organizations that provide electronic texts can be found at the end of these guidelines.

Organizing your readings

You will likely receive many files which, if not properly organized, can become cumbersome. The text files you receive will be named in the following manner: author_title_ch#_pp#-#. For example, it might read: Wineburg_Historical Thinking_ch2_pp28-60. Naming files this way allows you to easily sort the files for each text in alphabetical order and see which parts of the text are included in each file. When saving the files to your computer or flash drive, we recommend that you create a folder for each course. Within that course folder, create a subfolder for your readings. If you have multiple large textbooks in a course, you may want to create a separate folder for each book. You should also keep a copy of the course syllabus in the course folder for reference as you complete your reading assignments.

Question and answer

Q: Why do I need to submit text requests right after I register for courses?

A: It takes time for Banacos staff to obtain electronic copies of texts and complete any necessary converting and editing work. Some publishers are not reliable and do not provide files in a timely manner. Also, if there is an increase in requests for electronic texts, we need to adjust staffing in order to meet everyone's needs.

Q: My professor keeps handing out articles and handouts during class to read during class. What should I do?

A: Ask your professor to send an accessible digital file of the text to you before class with enough time for you to read it before class or, if appropriate for you, so that you can read it with software during class. Please contact your Banacos advisor to alert her and explain the situation. Banacos staff can help you work with faculty members to obtain materials in advance and prepare them for your use before or during class.

Q: I can't open my file or I get gobbledegook and can't read it.

A: Contact the access advisor as soon as possible so we can work on correcting the problem. If there will be a delay in resolving this problem, your program advisor can work with you and your instructor to request extensions on assignments as needed.

Electronic Texts Resources

Amazon: www.amazon.com – Amazon provides eBooks usable by Kindle eReaders and free applications for Android, iPad, Mac, Blackberry, Windows PC, and Windows Phone. The Kindle eReader device is not required to make use of the free downloadable applications for the above listed devices. Books are available for purchase.

Amazon Kindle for PC with Accessibility plugin – Created to allow for screen reading of texts on Windows PC, regardless of whether Text-to-Speech is activated by publisher. Works with JAWS.

Bookshare: <http://www.bookshare.org> – Bookshare provides downloadable books in DAISY, MP3, and Braille Ready Format (BRF). This resource is available for individuals with print disabilities. Books are free with membership. The membership is currently free for students at the time of this publication.

Café Scribe: <http://www.CafeScribe.com> – Café Scribe provides a collection of books in digital format that also includes study tools all in one. There is also a three-day free trial of texts available.

CourseSmart: <http://www.coursesmart.com> – CourseSmart is an organization that works with publishers to provide books in a downloadable format. It is available on computer and some eBook readers. Contact <http://www.coursesmart.com/accessibility> for specifics. Purchases are digital rentals, with the books available for a period of time.

Google eBooks: <http://books.google.com/ebooks> – Google provides a collection of eBooks that is slowly expanding in scope to include non-fiction and scholarly works. Some books are available for purchase, while others are free.

Inkling: <http://www.inkling.com> – Inkling provides some textbooks for iPad. Use of these books requires download of an app and paid purchase of individual books.

Learning Ally (formerly RFB&D): <http://www.learningally.org> – Learning Ally provides books in DAISY Downloadable, DAISY CD, or Windows Media Audio (WMA) audio format. This resource is available for individuals with print disabilities. Books are free with paid membership.

LibriVox: <http://www.LibriVox.org> – LibriVox provides free audio recordings of books in the public domain. The recordings are free to download.

Louis Database of Accessible Materials, American Printing House for the Blind: <http://www.louis.aph.org> – The Louis Database has a collection of braille, audio, large print, and electronic file formats. There is a fee for each book downloaded.

MathDaisy: <http://www.dessci.com/en/products/mathdaisy/> – This software program will convert Word documents to DAISY files for reading math related texts.

National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped: <http://www.loc.gov/nls/> – This service provides a collection of books available in braille and audio format. Books are available for free for individuals with print disabilities after submitting an application.

Project Gutenberg: <http://www.gutenberg.com> – Project Gutenberg provides a collection of eBooks available for download in various formats. Books are free for download.

RoboBraille: <http://www.robobraille.org> – RoboBraille is a free online tool for converting materials to MP3, e-book, Braille, or DAISY audiobooks formats.

Note Taking and Note Taking Assistance

There are various forms of note taking assistance available to help you record information from your class lectures and discussions. The type of assistance you use depends upon how you take in information that is presented in the classroom. Have a discussion with your program advisor about what happens to you during a lecture or discussion or when material is presented visually. Some students find that using assistive technology (smart pens or other recording devices) allows them more autonomy. Students who wish to find out more about note taking technology should read below and consult with their program advisor.

The following is a list of techniques and technology students report using to get all of the notes they can while in the classroom.

Before class:

- Read the course readings **before** going to class.

- Jot down questions to clarify in class.

During class:

- Take your own notes to the extent possible for you.
- Use indented margins, charts, concept mapping or different colors to organize your thoughts in class.
- Take notes on PowerPoint slides received before class.
- Type on a laptop or tablet.
- Audio record lectures.
- Use smart pen software to audio record and write at same time.
- Use computer software to audio record and type at the same time.
- Pay attention carefully for understanding, take very few or no notes, and use a note taker to record class information.

After class:

- Review notes soon after class and fill in blank spots or clarify questions.
- Review notes with classmates or bring questions to the professor.
- Compare notes with PowerPoint slides, professor's notes or a note taker's notes received after class.
- Write a summary of what you learned that day in class.
- Write a study guide (weekly, if possible) for the material you need to know in the course.

Audio recording lectures

Students who have been approved to have the reasonable accommodation to audio record a particular course's lectures have a right to do so (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504). The professor also has the right to have you sign an agreement that you will not sell or otherwise distribute the audio recording to anyone else (i.e., no posting to an internet site where others will get it). (This agreement, Photographing or Recording Lectures Agreement, can be found in Appendix D at the end of this manual and online.)

If you use any recording device, make sure that you mark where you are when you stop taking notes. Most recording devices have a counter or a time marker. Write that number down in your notes so that you can return to that spot in the recording. Otherwise, you may be listening to the entire lecture again. Also, leave space for filling in where you stopped taking notes. Better yet, take the time to reorganize and rewrite your notes.

Assistive note taking technology

Smart pen technology records both in audio and video format. It records the sounds around it and visually records what the pen is writing. Computer software is available for both Macs and PCs that records the sounds and links them to where the words are being typed on the page. Both technologies allow students to return to places in their notes where they were confused or stopped writing and listen to the original words of the professor at that time.

Requesting note takers

Students requiring note takers for their classes should make their requests as early as possible to their program advisor—when the class schedule is finalized, if possible. A Notetaking Services Acknowledgement form is available in Appendix C of this manual and online under the “Important Forms” section of the Banacos Academic Center web page. Upon making the requests, students will be required to read and sign that they have received the note taking policies and procedures. These include the following:

- Students must request note takers through the Banacos Academic Center each semester and make specific requests for each course.
- Students must make their request to their program advisor in a timely manner, or as soon as they have confirmed the courses they are registered in for the upcoming semester. It may take several weeks to identify and hire a note taker.
- Students must notify their program advisor immediately if they drop or add a class, or decide that a note taker is not needed in a particular class.
- If a note taker is absent, or a note taker has not yet been found, students may request to use a recording device until the note taker returns or is hired.
- Note takers are only available for taking notes for content provided for class. Students are not permitted to request anything additional of their note taker, such as typing papers, tutoring or notes on the course readings. These sorts of requests must be made through program advisors. For tutors, students should make a tutor request.

Rights and Responsibilities

Westfield State University is committed to its moral, educational, and legal responsibility for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 1998. To this end, discrimination against students with disabilities is prohibited in programs, services, and activities. (Discrimination means being treated differently than others based on your disability.) Please talk with your program advisor if you have questions.

Summary of rights

A student with a disability at Westfield State University has the right to:

- Dignity and respect;
- Reasonable accommodations;
- Receive an education in an integrated environment – meaning a setting that allows students with disabilities to interact with other students to the fullest extent possible;
- Equal access to education, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities;
- Confidentiality of records provided to the Banacos Academic Center’s Learning Disabilities Program according to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA); and,

- Non-discrimination based on a disability.

Westfield State University has the right to:

- Establish academic course and degree requirements, inclusive of determining essential standards and requirements for courses, degrees, programs, activities, and services;
- Request and receive documentation of a disability to support requests for accommodations and to confirm status for eligibility in certain programs or services; and,
- Deny a request for accommodations and services if:
 - the student fails to provide the required documentation;
 - the provided documentation does not support the requested accommodation;
 - the student fails to make the request in a reasonable time period in order for staff to arrange the accommodation;
 - the requested accommodation poses an unreasonable health or safety risk; or,
 - the requested accommodation imposes an undue burden or fundamental alteration to a program, service, or activity.

Summary of responsibilities

A student with a disability at Westfield State University has the responsibility to:

- Meet qualifications and maintain essential Westfield State University standards and requirements for courses, programs, services, and activities;
- Abide by the University's Academic Honesty Policy, Student Conduct Regulations and Classroom Student Conduct Policy;
- Provide proper documentation of a disability from a qualified, appropriate professional;
- Request an accommodation in a timely manner (usually before the need arises);
- Make requests in writing using the appropriate forms;
- Make their own requests, not through a doctor, practitioner, friend, parent or guardian;
- Notify the Learning Disabilities Program in a timely manner if there is a problem with an accommodation;
- Follow published procedures for obtaining reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and auxiliary aids or services;
- Follow campus policies and procedures as set forth by the University; and,
- Properly store prescriptions and keep them secure. Students are responsible for the administration of their own medications. Sharing prescribed medications may be a violation of federal and state laws.

Westfield State University has the responsibility to:

- Provide equal access to courses, programs, activities, and services;
- Practice non-discrimination in accordance with state and federal laws;

- Provide approved reasonable accommodations in a timely manner to students;
- Provide courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities that are available and usable in the most integrated and appropriate settings;
- Ensure that classroom materials, such as presentations, handouts, videos, exams and websites are fully accessible; and,
- Maintain confidentiality of records and communications according to FERPA.



Student with a tutor in the Banacos computer lab.

Assistive Technology

The Assistive Technology Lab (ATL), located in room 171 of the Banacos Academic Center, offers a variety of assistive technology hardware and software tools designed to meet the needs of students with various disabilities. These programs provide tools and strategies to assist students whose disability may present challenges with reading, writing, memory, or organization. If you would like to access the ATL or learn more about how these tools might be helpful to your individual learning needs, discuss your questions with your program advisor. Below is a description of some of the assistive technology programs we currently offer. (If you need training on any of these softwares, please consult with your program advisor.)

Kurzweil 3000 is available in the lab for all and on the web for approved users. Students may acquire a license through their program advisor. Kurzweil 3000 is a comprehensive reading, writing and study skills software program that supports students with learning difficulties including dyslexia, attention deficit disorders or English Language Learners (ELL). The primary feature of this program is its ability to convert printed text to digital text which then can be read aloud as audio as the text is being highlighted on the screen. Kurzweil 3000 also reads printed material on the web. Although Kurzweil 3000 offers many different voices for the user, users may purchase different voices at www.cepstral.com or other relevant sites. For many students, this simultaneous ability to both see and hear the reading improves tracking, focus,

and comprehension. The student can easily control the reading speed, text size, and highlighted content. Study skill tools include multiple color highlighting, bookmarks, column notes, sticky notes, spelling support and an integrated dictionary. Writing support includes a talking word processor that echoes back your writing, word prediction, graphic organizing, spelling and grammar check. If you benefit from hearing your papers read aloud, you can scan your paper and hear it read aloud via Kurzweil, which can help you catch errors as well as identify places in your writing where you need to develop your ideas further.

Dragon Naturally Speaking is available in the Assistive Technology Lab only. Dragon is a voice recognition program that enables the user to dictate documents, emails, or spreadsheets by voice instead of typing. This program requires some initial training to create an individual voice profile and learn the basics of dictation for improved accuracy. Voice recognition can be an ideal solution for users who have difficulty with manual dexterity, slow typing skills, dyslexia or other challenges that affect spelling, or who just prefer to speak rather than type. Dragon is considered a personal assistive technology, and if students want access on their personal computer, they must purchase it themselves. If you think you would like to add Dragon software to your personal computer and you are worried about the cost, talk with Financial Aid to see about an educational loan to assist you with the cost.

Inspiration is available in both computer labs in the Banacos Academic Center. Inspiration is a graphic organizing tool that supports visual thinking and learning. The program allows the user to design concept maps with shapes, colors, and text. The user can easily switch the view from a visual map to an outline with the click of a mouse. Inspiration can be very helpful for users who think and organize with images rather than words.

ZoomText is available in the Assistive Technology Lab. ZoomText is a screen magnification software designed for users with visual impairments. This program can enlarge the screen image up to 36 times the actual size. The ZoomText software also has built-in text to speech features which read content aloud in addition to the magnification.

JAWS is available in labs across campus. JAWS is a screen reading program used by blind individuals to access the content displayed on the screen and to navigate the computer. JAWS also has the ability to output content to refreshable braille displays.

Kurzweil 1000 is available on one computer in the Assistive Technology Lab and one computer in the library. Offering much of the same functionality as Kurzweil 3000, Kurzweil 1000 is designed for blind and low vision users.

Preparing for Early Course Registration

Early course registration is an LDP service for those students who have earned less than 54 credits (typically the first two years of college). Some students' documentation also supports early course registration as an accommodation after the completion of the 54 credits. Early course registration means that students start the advising process earlier than other students. They meet with their program advisor and major advisor to plan a schedule for the next semester. This schedule should be made with the student's learning style and reasonable accommodations in mind so that students are placed in classes that best allow them to perform to their ability.

Here are some suggestions to help prepare for early course registration:

- Familiarize yourself with the University's Common Core of Studies so that you know which classes you need to take prior to graduating. The requirements for fulfilling the Common Core of Studies is described in the University's Undergraduate Catalog, catalog.westfield.ma.edu, and is outlined in the back of the Course Offerings Booklet which is distributed every semester in paper copy.
- When the semester's Course Offerings Booklet is available, obtain one (these can be found in the Banacos Center at the front desk, from your program advisor, in your residential hall, and in the Advising Center in Parenzo Hall). The Registrar's website will also have an electronic copy: www.westfield.ma.edu/registrar.
- Familiarize yourself with your major's requirements. You can find your major's requirements in the Undergraduate Catalog found at catalog.westfield.ma.edu. If you are Undeclared, focus on taking Common Core courses or electives that might help you select an appropriate major.
- Make an appointment with both your program advisor and major advisor (if you have a declared major). Then, when you show up to meet with your program advisor, have a draft prepared of courses you would like to take for the upcoming semester. Your program advisor can discuss with you whether the times or courses are appropriate.
- When you meet with your major advisor, be sure to bring your prepared advising sheet and be sure to make the meeting on time. If, for some reason, you can't make the meeting, email or phone to cancel.
- During your meeting with your major advisor, you could discuss the following:
 - what courses you need to take in order to complete your major and obtain your degree,
 - the upcoming semester as well as your academic interests, internship possibilities, study abroad possibilities and your progress toward graduation, and
 - how the disability might affect your schedule (i.e., medications wear off late afternoon, or make you drowsy at certain times of day; more than two multimedia ways of teaching give you headaches, etc.)
- Before leaving your meeting, be sure your major advisor has given you your new Alternate Registration PIN. You will need the PIN to register early. (Your Alternate PIN

will change every semester, so you must see your advisor during each advising period. Your prior PIN will not work.)

- Keep a copy of your signed advising form (with PIN!) in a safe place until your scheduled registration date.

How to Register for Courses

Your program advisor may have a paper copy of directions for how to register for courses. Also, the Course Offerings Booklet has detailed instructions on the back page.

At 7:00 a.m. on the designated day for you to register, do the following:

- Log onto the University's website.
- Select the myWestfield link.
- Select the Academics link.
- Select the Add or Drop classes tab under "Registration Tools."
- Enter the correct term, such as Spring 2015.
- When prompted, enter the Alternate PIN you received from your advisor.
- Use the CRNs, or course reference numbers, to register for classes. The CRN is a five digit number. You will find the CRNs in the Course Offerings booklet and under "Look up classes" in the Academics section of MyWestfield.
- When finished, click the "Submit" button. The screen will show you which classes you've been registered into.
- Remember to submit your accommodation request form for the term to your program advisor.

Note: If you are unable to enter your courses online, please notify your program advisor to discuss how your courses will be added.

Full Time Status with Reduced Course Load

It is not uncommon for students to withdraw from courses mid-semester due to medical, emotional or academic difficulties. Students with disabilities may have this need compounded by their disability which in some cases may make timely completion of course work impossible. While students in the day division program are expected to be full-time, Westfield State University recognizes the need for some students with disabilities to have a reduced course load as an LDP service. Students in the LDP may be considered full-time if they have 9 credits a semester; eighteen credits per academic year would be considered acceptable academic progress. If other circumstances arise where students think that a reduced course load is warranted, that request should be made and will be reviewed on an individualized, case-by-case basis.

Below are some important factors to consider before dropping a course or requesting a reduced course load:

- Will dropping a class impact your progress toward graduation?
- Do you have a scholarship or financial aid? If so, will it cover you if you need to stay at WSU an additional semester, take a summer course at another college, or take a reduced course load?
- Are certain courses/prerequisites for your major only offered alternating semesters?
- Are you an NCAA athlete? There are restrictions against dropping below 12 credits in a semester. Petitioning the NCAA to take a reduced course load takes time. Consult with your coach and program advisor **early** if you are thinking of dropping below 12 credits.

Before withdrawing from a course or requesting a reduced course load, students are strongly encouraged to speak with their faculty and major advisors as well as their program advisor to discuss the implications as well as possible solutions, such as extensions or incompletes. Your program advisor can also discuss helpful strategies and services, such as academic coaching, assistive technology, classroom accommodations and other support to help you stay on track.

Privacy

The Learning Disabilities Program at Westfield State University is designed to provide a broad network of support for students with learning disabilities and ADHD. To meet that goal, every semester, the LDP staff will inform faculty who are teaching students in their courses that students are part of the LDP. When relevant or requested by the LDP student, program advisors will also inform academic advisors, coaches, residential life staff, and financial aid. Program students' success depends on the staff's ability to share information with others to help students receive support from various offices on campus. Information regarding the nature of the disability will not be disclosed without the specific written permission of the student.

If you would like to opt out of this facet of the program or allow others to know more about the nature of your disability, please fill out the Consent to Release Information form with your program advisor (found in Appendix E of this manual). The LDP staff protect the privacy of students' academic records and disability documentation in accordance with FERPA. Students' information will only be released under the following circumstances:

1. To help create a network of support as described in the first paragraph above, unless the student explicitly opts out in writing through the Consent to Release Information form or during New Student Orientations Privacy Statement.
2. The student signs a Consent to Release Information form with an LDP staff person. Please note that this release form can be used to revoke any written consent that you have given during new student orientation or other time.
3. The staff is required to by law or court order.
4. The student's conduct is a direct threat to himself or herself or others and the nature of the disability is relevant to the threat.

Additionally, in order to receive reasonable accommodations, it is necessary to disclose to relevant staff or faculty that you are registered with the Banacos Academic Center and entitled to receive reasonable accommodations.

Helpful Campus Resources

Academic Advising

Parenzo Lobby
413-572-8191
advising@westfield.ma.edu

Athletics

Woodward Center
413-572-5405

Career Center

Lammers Hall
413-572-5426
careers@westfield.ma.edu

Counseling Center

Lammers Hall
413-572-5790

Dining Services

413-572-5300 ext. 4064

Andrew Bonacci

Dean of Undergraduate Studies
Parenzo
413-572-5374

Marsha Marotta

Vice President of Academic Affairs
Parenzo
413-572-5214

Maureen McCartney

Associate Dean
Academic Achievement
Parenzo 101
413-572-8801

Human Resources

2nd floor, West Wing
Horace Mann Building
413-572-8192

Reading and Writing Center

Parenzo 218
413-572-5402

Residential Life

Scanlon
413-572-5402
housing@westfield.ma.edu

Smarthinking Tutoring

www.smarthinking.com

TRiO Student Support Services Program

Parenzo 104
413-572-5793

Tutoring Program

Banacos Academic Center
tutor@westfield.ma.edu

Urban Education

Parenzo 108
413-572-5389
urbaned@westfield.ma.edu

Will Lafever

Veteran Services
Horace Mann Building
413-572-8370



Banacos Academic Center
Disability Services
413-572-5789 v
banacos@westfield.ma.edu

Reasonable Accommodations Request

Complete this form each semester for classroom accommodations.

Accommodations may take up to two weeks to get into place (most classroom accommodations). Others may take longer or require advance notice (i.e., housing alterations, early course registration, interpreters, note takers). Please submit your request in a timely fashion.

Today's Date:

Request for: Year: Semester: Fall Winter
 Spring Summer I Summer II

Name: UWID#:

Address:

Phone: Email:

Major 1: Major 2:

What accommodations are you requesting?

If you are requesting **exam accommodations** please check all that apply:

- 50% (time and a half)
- 100 % (double time)
- Reduced distraction environment
- Reader
- Scribe

Office Use Only

Notes:

Course Schedule

Course/Section Number (i.e., ENGL 0102-001)	Instructor	Professor to receive notice? Check One
1.		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2.		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
3.		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
4.		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5.		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
6.		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
7.		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
8.		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

If your schedule changes after you have submitted your request, be sure to inform your Banacos advisor.

Which offices would you like notified and what should we tell them?

Residence Life

Facilities

Parking Clerk

Dining

Registrar

Other:

Is there any other information you would like us to share with other offices or instructors?

No

Yes. What information and to whom?

Student Signature

Date

If submitting this form electronically, type in your name and the date above and send it from your Westfield State email address.



Banacos Academic Center
Disability Services
413-572-5789 v
banacos@westfield.ma.edu

Electronic Text Request

Please complete this form each semester to request all electronic texts.

Name: _____ UWID: A _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Banacos Advisor (check one): Sarah Lazare Sue Krieg
 Michelle Rizk-Jarvis Sigrid Stevens
 Kristie Knotts Laura Cummings

The electronic version(s) will be used for the following semester: _____

Format Requested (select one):

- Kurzweil
 PDF
 MP3
 Other (describe): _____

Complete as much information as possible on the next page. Please attach course schedules, syllabi, and reading lists whenever possible.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Publisher: _____

ISBN: _____

Year of Publication: _____

Course: _____

Prof: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Publisher: _____

ISBN: _____

Year of Publication: _____

Course: _____

Prof: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Publisher: _____

ISBN: _____

Year of Publication: _____

Course: _____

Prof: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Publisher: _____

ISBN: _____

Year of Publication: _____

Course: _____

Prof: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Publisher: _____

ISBN: _____

Year of Publication: _____

Course: _____

Prof: _____

Title: _____

Author: _____

Publisher: _____

ISBN: _____

Year of Publication: _____

Course: _____

Prof: _____

Attach additional pages as needed.



Banacos Academic Center
Disability Services
413-572-5789 v
banacos@westfield.ma.edu

Note Taking Services Acknowledgment

Name (print)

UWID

All students requesting note takers for their classes are required to read and sign this acknowledgment before using note taking services. A copy of this acknowledgment is available online and in the Learning Disabilities Program and Disability Services manuals.

By signing below you acknowledge the following:

- I must request note takers through my Banacos advisor each semester I require them and make specific requests for each course.
- I must make my request in a timely manner, preferably, after confirming my courses for the next semester. It may take several weeks to identify and hire a note taker.
- Note takers may not start working until their contracts have been processed by the University's Payroll Office.
- I must notify my Banacos advisor immediately if I drop or add a class for which I have requested a note taker.
- If a note taker has not yet been found, I will discuss potential alternatives with my Banacos advisor.
- Note takers are only responsible for providing notes on content presented for class. Students should not request additional services of a note taker, such as typing papers, or notes from readings. Such requests must be made through Banacos advisors.
- I am responsible to access notes through Plato unless otherwise approved by the Access Advisor. Notes will be available within 12 hours of each class session. If notes are not available or there is difficulty accessing the system, I should inform my Banacos advisor.
- If I do not access notes within two weeks of being posted, then I will be contacted to reevaluate my need for the service.
- Notes do not substitute for missed class. I am not entitled to notes on days I did not attend class.

Signature

Date



Banacos Academic Center
Disability Services
Learning Disabilities Program
Advisor: _____
Advisor Phone #: _____
banacos@westfield.ma.edu

Photographing or Recording Lectures Agreement

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

UWID: A: _____ Email: _____

If requested by an instructor for a course you wish to audio-record or photograph, please discuss what limitations of use pertain to the recording or images and initial all that apply to this agreement.

By signing this document, I hereby recognize that:

_____ I understand that the material recorded in class is to be used solely for my learning purposes and cannot be distributed in part or whole to other parties or posted online without the professor's permission.

_____ I agree that at semester's end I will erase the recordings. If I wish to retain the recordings, I will seek the professor's permission in writing.

_____ In classes where students request privacy (such as counseling classes), I will turn off the recording (when appropriate) during these discussions in order to protect classmates' privacy.

_____ I understand that if I do not adhere to the above conditions this may result in a loss of permission for future recording.

_____ I am not obligated to share this recording with the instructor or anyone else.

Date: _____ Student Signature: _____

Date: _____ Professor Signature: _____

Please return a copy of this agreement to your Banacos advisor to be kept on file.



Banacos Academic Center
Disability Services
Learning Disabilities Program
Advisor: _____
banacos@westfield.ma.edu

Consent to Release Information:

Date: _____

Student's name: _____ **UWID:** _____

It is Westfield State University's policy to keep student records confidential. Banacos Academic Center staff will not disclose any information other than "directory information" about students to people outside the University unless the student has given written consent or in certain other cases permitted by law and University policy. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations, as revised in 1996, sets out requirements designed to afford students rights with respect to their educational records. In addition, it puts limits on what information the University can disclose without having received prior consent.

You may choose to grant Banacos Academic Center staff the right to disclose educational records to certain individuals in accordance with FERPA and University Policy by completing and signing this consent form. You have the right to revoke this consent at any time in writing.

I consent that the following information be released to the people listed below:

- Grades and academic standing** **Nature of disability** _____
- All records** **Other (specify)** _____
- Class schedule**

_____ I waive my right of confidentiality to the following person(s):

Name: _____ **Relationship to student** _____

Address & Telephone #: _____

Name: _____ **Relationship to student** _____

Address & Telephone #: _____

_____ I revoke my waiver of confidentiality. Date: _____

Westfield State University

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number 2090

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APPROVED: May 3, 1993

REVIEWED: September 2011

NON-DISCRIMINATION AND ACCOMMODATION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

PURPOSE

It is the purpose of this document to present a policy on non-discrimination and accommodation for persons with disabilities.

POLICY

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Westfield State University recognizes the multitude of barriers which confront persons with disabilities in access to employment and education. Consistent with state and federal statutes which affirm and protect the equal opportunity rights of otherwise qualified persons with disabilities, the University adopts a policy of non-discrimination and equal opportunity for otherwise qualified persons with disabilities. In all matters of employment and education such persons will receive full and fair treatment.

B. EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

1. Westfield State University will examine all existing employment policies, practices and facilities to insure that they do not disparately treat or impact otherwise qualified persons with disabilities. Where such disparity is found, it will be corrected as quickly and completely as is reasonable under existing financial constraints.
2. Westfield State University will make every effort to employ and advance in employment otherwise qualified persons with disabilities. This requires constructive, pro-active measures to advocate for equal opportunity in all areas of employment including recruitment, selection, upgrading, training, compensation, benefits and all other terms and conditions of employment. Such measures shall include, but not be limited to, vigorous identification of competitive persons with disabilities for selection, promotion and training.
3. In accordance with law, the University will afford reasonable accommodations to any otherwise qualified employee with a disability to enable the employee to perform the essential functions of the job. Reasonable accommodations will also be afforded to applicants for employment who have a disability to enable them to adequately pursue a candidacy for any available position.

C. EDUCATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Westfield State University

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section Personnel

number 2090

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APPROVED: May 3, 1993

REVIEWED: September 2011

1. The University will examine all existing admissions, student support and other student life policies, practices and facilities to assure that they do not disparately treat or impact otherwise qualified disabled persons. Where such disparity is found, it will be corrected as quickly and completely as is reasonable under existing financial constraints.
2. The University adopts a policy of non-discrimination with respect to admissions and access to programs, facilities and services. Further, the University seeks to promote an environment free from harassment.
3. In accordance with Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the University will provide necessary reasonable accommodations (including support services) to otherwise qualified students with disabilities to assure equal access to programs, facilities and services.

D. INSTITUTIONAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

1. The University's Discrimination Complaint Procedures will serve as a system of review and resolution for both informal claims and formal complaints of discrimination because of disability. Any member of the University Community who believes that s/he has been a victim of discrimination because of disability may initiate the informal claim or formal complaint procedures as outlined in the University's Discrimination Complaint Procedures. Further information or advice may be obtained by contacting the Assistant VP Human Resources and Affirmative Action.
2. Complaints that involve students may be investigated and adjudicated/processed in concert with the student conduct office.

REVIEW

This document will be reviewed annually by the Assistant VP Human Resources and Affirmative Action.

Attached: *Discrimination Complaint Form*

Westfield State University

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APPROVED: May 3, 1993

REVIEWED: September 2011

DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT FORM

NAME OF COMPLAINANT: _____

PLACE WHERE YOU MAY BE CONTACTED:

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

DATES OF ALLEGED DISCRIMINATORY ACT: _____

ALLEGED DISCRIMINATOR: _____

NATURE OF COMPLAINT AND RELIEF DESIRED: Include all events, places and persons that you feel are involved with this complaint. (Use additional pages if necessary)

The above information is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief and I hereby elect to use the procedures outlined in the *Discrimination Complaint Procedures*. I (do) (do not) authorize the use of my name in the investigation and resolution of this claim/complaint and the disclosure of this document to appropriate administrators and any or all persons named above, including their representatives.

Signature of Complainant: _____ Date: _____