

SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

ASK THE STUDENT	Students should discuss their needs with instructors, but this is not always done. Do you have some questions about whether or not a student needs an accommodation? Ask the student!
BE AWARE OF YOUR LANGUAGE	Use terms such as “students with disabilities” rather than “disabled students.” Emphasis on the person rather than his/her disability is best.
RELAX	Do not be afraid to approach the person with a disability. Treat people as you would like to be treated--with respect.
SPEAK DIRECTLY TO THE STUDENT	Do not consider a companion to be the conversation go-between. If the student has an interpreter, speak directly to the student, not the interpreter. In addition, when talking with wheelchair users, sit down and communicate at eye-level.
HELP ONLY IF ASKED	Be considerate of the extra time it might take for a person with a disability to get things said or done. Do not talk <i>for</i> the student with a disability, but give help when needed. Encourage rather than correct.
SPEAK SLOWLY AND DISTINCTLY	When talking with a person who is hearing impaired, or has other problems in comprehension, speak slowly without exaggerating lip movement. Stand in front of the person. Many students who are deaf rely on reading lips; a bright light behind your face makes this difficult. It is usually OK to write notes.
APPRECIATE ABILITIES	Students with disabilities, like all of us, do some things well and others not as well. Focus on what is done well instead of deficits. Build confidence.
BE CONSISTANT IN ADMINISTERING GRADES	It is not fair to give a student with a disability a passing grade because you feel sorry for him/her. Grades should be based on merit. There are students with disabilities who earn good grades and others who do not.

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