



THE REALITY OF ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS - DEMYSTIFYING AND UPDATING THE PROCESS.

Andrea Carter, Assistant Dean
Student Wellness, Support &
Success

January 9, 2017

DISABILITY

The nature or degree of certain disabilities might render them “non-evident” to others. Chronic fatigue syndrome and back pain, for example, are not apparent conditions. Other disabilities might remain hidden because they are episodic. Epilepsy is one example. Similarly, environmental sensitivities can flare up from one day to the next, resulting in significant impairment to a person’s health and capacity to function, while at other times, this disability may be entirely non-evident.

LEGISLATION

The Code requires that accommodation be provided where doing so does not compromise the essential criteria of the course or program, and cause undue hardship to the University.

The University provides academic accommodations for students with disabilities in accordance with the statutory duty arising from the Ontario Human Rights Code.

OHRC GUIDELINES

“An appropriate accommodation at the post-secondary level would enable a student to successfully meet the essential requirements of the program, with no alteration in standards or outcomes, although the manner in which the student demonstrates mastery, knowledge and skills may be altered. In this way, education providers are able to provide all students with equal opportunities to enjoy the same level of benefits and privileges and meet the requirements for acquiring an education without the risk of compromising academic integrity.”

MAKE UP TESTS/ EXTENSIONS

a student may be unable to write a mid-term test or complete graded term-work for disability-related reasons. Accommodation in this instance would normally require that scheduled graded term work or tests be adjusted by providing similar evaluation on alternate dates.



ALTERNATIVE EVALUATION FORMATS

When reviewing accommodations requests Faculty members need to be able to answer if the method in which they are testing the student is an essential course requirement.

ACCESSIBILITY VS. ACCOMMODATION

Accessibility is universal. It potentially helps everyone even those without a disability. No need to disclose if coping well. Example: push buttons on doorways, or facing the class when teaching.

Accommodation is about the individual. It is case by case. Varies among individuals and requires additional assistance from those who specialize in the area. Example: reading glasses, pm classes only.



MOVING FORWARD

Recognizing policy directives on functional limitations to ensure appropriate accommodations are in place for students to help them succeed

Building relationships with faculty to better understand the work and framework of academic accommodations

Ensuring that learning outcomes are consistent among all students