The RBHS Office of Disability Services (RBHSODS) provides the necessary tools, resources and support for disabled students to become responsible decision-makers and self-advocates in charge of their own future. We are also here to support faculty and staff.

What’s New? ODS Office hours

Have you ever had a quick question about disability-related accommodations? Are you wondering how to make a course assignment more accessible to all students? Would you like to learn more about the Office of Disability Services at RBHS (RBHS ODS)?

Beginning March 15th, 2021, RBHS ODS will begin hosting virtual office hours for students, faculty, and staff. Members of the RBHS community can meet with Cindy Poore-Pariseau and Jenna Rose via Zoom every week during the following times (EST):

Cindy Poore-Pariseau: Wednesdays 12-1:00 pm
Mondays 4:00pm-5:00 pm

Jenna Rose: Tuesdays at 3pm-4pm
Fridays at 9am-10am

Cindy’s zoom address: https://rutgers.zoom.us/j/3554361472?pwd=bXFmTEFZWllId3hTNninL2RVbW9mUT09

Jenna’s zoom address: https://rutgers.zoom.us/j/55475825337?pwd=aUR0UvhCdmhuY0wrNDNNTXp0dHl5Zz09

All are welcome to drop in anytime within the hour to chat for 15 minute increments, or longer if no one is in the waiting room.

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Hi! People often ask how to know if a student needs accommodations. The best way is to talk to the student and hear what they say. Here are some possible scenarios:

- **Scenario 1:** The student is consistently failing in class, but it’s not due to disability. The student is not sure how to ask for accommodations, or the faculty hasn’t made them clear.
- **Scenario 2:** The student is consistently receiving low grades, and it’s due to disability. The student has observed the accommodation in action, but the faculty hasn’t made the accommodation clear or explained how it’s being applied.

By the way, a student can ask for accommodations at any time. They can apply for them late in the semester, or even after the course is over. We handle requests as they come in, so you can be assured that your student will receive the accommodations they need.

If you have any questions about the Office of Disability Services, you can contact us at odsrbhs@ca.rutgers.edu.

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Ask the ODS Coordinator—

**Topic:** Extended time on exams/quizzes;

**Question:** I have a very bright student in my class who does well in all aspects of the course. Why does she need extended time for tests? I don’t see any problem whatsoever.

**Answer:** Many disabled students have very high abilities and do very well in their courses. A disability may be in the form of slower (but very effective) processing of information, strengths in alternate learning styles or invisible disabilities that impact concentration or require adaptive technology. In all cases, you can rest assured that you, the instructor, do not have to make the decision as to whether or not a student can/should use an accommodation. If a student provides you with a Letter of Accommodation, you will know the student has met the criteria necessary to receive the accommodations listed.

Submit your questions to:
odsrbhs@ca.rutgers.edu

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Point of View is important . . . .

**Boss:** I’m looking for an employee who is creative
**Applicant:** That’s me, I have ADHD and dyslexia. I’m also bipolar and schizophrenic.

**Dilbert:** Each of his conditions are highly correlated with creativity

**Applicant:** Are you “normal”?
**Boss:** I think so

**Applicant:** Wow, I feel Sorry for you. It must be hard going through life without any creativity.

**Boss looking at Dilbert:** What’s happening here?
**Dilbert:** It might be some sort of creative thing.

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"If I regarded my life from the point of view of the pessimist, I should be undone. I should seek in vain for the light that does not visit my eyes and the music that does not ring in my ears. I should sit apart in awful solitude, a prey to fear and despair. But since I consider it a duty to myself and to others to be happy, I escape a misery worse than any physical deprivation."

Helen Keller
What’s New (Cont’d)

Language: Person with Disability vs. Disabled Person

AHEAD, The Association of Higher Education and Disability, is an organization ODS looks to for best practices. In accordance with their recommendation, we will be shifting our language a bit from Person first (Person with disability) to Identity first (Disabled Person). Statement from AHEAD:

...“Language is a powerful way to demonstrate professional values and, in our specific case, our beliefs about disability. There are two prevalent ways that we identify with disability in language: person-first and identity-first. Both options have implications for how we think about disability.

*Person-first language* distances the person from the disability, ostensibly to separate the person from the negative connotations and stigma with which we have all been socialized. As professionals, many of us have been taught that person-first language is preferable, and some disabled individuals choose to identify as a person first, based on their personal orientation to disability. Example: I am a woman with a disability. I am separate from the stereotypes and stigma you associate with disability.

*Identity-first language* challenges negative connotations by claiming disability directly. Identity-first language references the variety that exists in how our bodies and brains work with a myriad of conditions that exist, and the role of inaccessible or oppressive systems, structures, or environments in making someone disabled. Example: I am disabled, queer, and Latinx. I have an impairment, and I am disabled by societal barriers.

*These language choices underscore the differences between impairment and disability.* "Impairment" is the term used by disability studies scholars to refer to a physiological difference in one’s body or brain. Disability is a lived experience with far-reaching political, social, and economic implications.

....... "When referencing disability, naming it explicitly is important. AHEAD (and RBHS ODS) embraces the word "disability" and actively avoids the use of outmoded euphemisms such as "special needs," "physically or mentally challenged," differently- or alternatively-abled, etc."

Facts and Figures

The students served by RBHS ODS come to us with a variety of disabling conditions ranging from psychological to speech and language. Each condition requires different accommodations. Those accommodations are listed in the next chart.

The most used RBHS ODS accommodations are exam related followed by notetaking assistance and the use of various forms of technology. Each accommodation is important in terms of leveling the playing field without giving an unfair advantage to disabled students.

We could not implement these accommodations without your help, and we THANK YOU!

We welcome your questions, comments or requests. We are available to talk to individuals, give presentations to faculty or staff or students, and will respond to individual questions.

Feel free to contact us at odsrbhs@ca.rutgers.edu
And/or by completing the survey at https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2RH3NWV