

Discussing Accommodations with Professors

Discussing academic concerns or disability-related accommodations with professors can be difficult for some students, especially when it's the first time. Here are some suggestions to help you prepare for your conversations.

- **Schedule your meeting as early in the semester as possible.** Contact your professor to find a mutually convenient time to meet privately. If you email, give your professor your schedule and a list of any other times you'd be unavailable so that he or she can easily determine when you'd both be free.
- **Start in your comfort zone.** If it feels overwhelming to bring letters to all of your professors, start by approaching the ones you are most comfortable around. As you gain confidence, set up appointments with the others.
- **Organize your thoughts prior to the meeting.** Think about your accommodation requests or any information you may want to discuss. If you feel you might forget anything, write it down.
- **Let the accommodation letter be your guide.** Focus the discussion on your accommodations, not your disability. If you are comfortable discussing your challenge areas and your related strengths, this would be mutually beneficial, but you do not need to disclose your diagnosis to receive accommodations.
- **Be aware of logistical limitations.** If you have extended time on tests and you prefer to take your test in the classroom with the professor, but the professor has a class right after yours, it may be necessary to take the test with a proctor.
- **Be open to suggestions or comments from instructors.** Accommodations often require a collaborative effort and instructors are frequently able to offer creative suggestions for implementing accommodations.

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*Statistics have shown that students with disabilities who have demonstrated the most academic success have a solid understanding of how their disability impacts their daily functioning, and are able articulate those challenges and **ask for reasonable accommodations.***

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If you'd like to **speak to an upper-class student** who has overcome nervousness about asking for accommodations, please let Marni Jones know and she'll provide you with the contact information of such a student.

Reconnect with Marni Jones if you need to. If you find you are unable to schedule an appointment with your instructor, or are experiencing barriers of any kind, contact Marni to discuss the situation. If your professor poses any questions you don't know the response to--or you do not feel comfortable answering, ask him or her to contact Marni Jones at ext. 1734 or jonesmar@dickinson.edu