ABSTRACT
        This report is an outcome of a project designed to seek,
screen, evaluate, describe, and disseminate highly effective approaches used
by two-year colleges to serve students with significant disabilities.
"Two-year colleges" included academic institutions, technical colleges, and
vocational institutes. From a pool of 18 applicants, the project made site
reviews of six schools. In this volume, the approach used by Springfield
Technical Community College (STCC), in Springfield, Massachusetts, is
described. The Office of Disability Services (ODS) at STCC works in a
proactive manner within the institution to identify and remove physical,
programmatic, technological, and attitudinal barriers and maintains an
ongoing vigilance to ensure that new barriers are not erected. It
aggressively seeks to identify students, increase awareness of services,
provide technological resources, and educate all faculty and staff on issues
that relate to disability, federal law, adaptive technology, and
accommodation. The report discusses the mission, goals and objectives of
STCC, significant features of ODS, key factors that make STCC's approach
effective for students with significant disabilities, and evaluation results
demonstrating the effectiveness of STCC's approach. Characteristics that are
manifested in all six of the profiled schools are also listed, and an
accompanying CD-ROM describes the projects. (CR)

Serving Students with Significant
Disabilities in Two-Year Colleges

Office of Disability Services
Springfield Technical Community College • Springfield, MA

Serving Students with Significant Disabilities in Two-Year Colleges

Office of Disability Services

Springfield Technical Community College
Springfield, MA

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NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY
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Contents

Office of Disability Services
Springfield Technical Community College
Springfield, Massachusetts

5

Introduction

Rationale and Need for This Project

Two national trends support the value and timeliness of this project. The first is the dramatic increase in the number of postsecondary students with significant disabilities enrolled in two-year colleges over the past decade (Henderson, 1999; Horn and Berktold, 1999). The second trend is the on-going constraint posed by limited resources available to postsecondary support services providers, coupled with the more intense and more extensive academic support needs presented by students with significant disabilities. These trends necessitate that postsecondary support staff display a high degree of ingenuity and resourcefulness in order to meet the needs of students with significant disabilities. The products developed through this project are intended to provide these dedicated individuals with stimuli to their imagination and examples that they can adapt to their own settings.

Project Goal

This project's goal was to seek, screen, evaluate, describe, and disseminate highly effective approaches used by two-year colleges to serve students with significant disabilities. "Two-year colleges" includes academic institutions, technical colleges, and vocational institutions.

Definition of "Individual with a Significant Disability"

This definition is very similar to the definition or "individual with a severe disability" which it replaces. It is taken from PL 105-220, the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, Title IC—Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998, Definitions, Section 6:

(A)   In General.   Except as provided in subparagraph (B) or (C), the term "individual with a significant disability" means an individual with a disability—

  (i) Who has a severe physical or mental impairment that seriously limits one or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome;

  (ii) whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time; and

(iii) who has one or more physical or mental disabilities resulting from amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental retardation, mental illness, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculoskeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), paraplegia, quadriplegia, and other spinal cord conditions, sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, end-stage renal disease, or another disability or combination of disabilities determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs described in subparagraphs (A) and (B) of paragraph (2) to cause comparable substantial functional limitation.

Selection Process

Nomination

A call for nominations form was circulated nationally in both print and electronic formats, and posted on the project's web page (www.cew.wisc.edu/nidrr). Ninety-eight schools from 28 states were nominated.

Application

Nominees wishing to participate completed and returned a 42-question survey. Eighteen schools from 15 states completed this step.

Application Review/Rating

Seventeen experts from different work settings (including two-year colleges, universities, teacher training programs, and advocacy organizations), specialties (including sensory disabilities, developmental disabilities, and learning disabilities), and geographic regions of the country served on the project's National Review Panel (Figure One). Their places of employment were current at the time they served on the project's National Review Panel.

The National Review Panel met on January 22-23, 1998, to evaluate each application. All participating panel members (12 of 17) were formed into three member teams and assigned a portion of the applications. During the first phase of the process, each reviewer rated his or her assigned applications individually using multiple criteria. In addition, each reviewer rated each application's overall scope and design, evidence of effectiveness, and replicability. Each reviewer also specified whether a site visit should be conducted.

After completing individual ratings of each application, reviewers carried out the second phase of the review process: small group discussions of their assigned applications. During this phase, reviewers either reaffirmed or changed their individual decisions regarding whether to conduct a site visit to a particular applicant. In the third phase of the review process, the entire National Review Panel discussed and reaffirmed their respective individual and small group decisions.

Figure One: National Review Panel

Dr. Eduardo Arangua
Madison Area Technical College
Madison WI

Dr. John Bellanti (Retired)
Mid-State Technical College
Wisconsin Rapids WI

Ms. Marcia Carlson
Facilities Access/Planning & Management
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Madison WI

Ms. Diane Coley
Division for Vocational Rehabilitation
Department of Workforce Development
Milwaukee WI

Mr. J. Trey Duffy
McBurney Disability Resource Center
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Madison WI

Ms. Elizabeth Getzel
Rehabilitation Research and Training Center
Virginia Commonwealth University
Richmond VA

Dr. Thomas Grayson
National Transition Alliance
University of Illinois
Champaign IL

Mr. Thomas Heffron
Wisconsin Technical College System Board
Madison WI

Ms. Robin Jones
Great Lakes Disability and Business Technical
Assistance Center
Institute on Disability and Human
Development
Chicago IL

Ms. Carol Kopp
Southwest Wisconsin Technical College
Fennimore WI

Dr. Carolyn Maddy-Bernstein
National Center for Research in Vocational
Education
University of Illinois
Champaign IL

Dr. Fred Menz
Research and Training Center
University of Wisconsin-Stout
Menomonie WI

Dr. Edna Szymanski
Department of Rehabilitation Psychology and
Special Education
School of Education
University of Wisconsin
Madison WI

Dr. Kelli Thuli
National School to Work Office
Washington DC

Dr. Lloyd Tindall (Retired)
Center on Education and Work
Madison WI

Mr. Raymond Truesdell
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
WI Department of Workforce Development
Madison WI

Dr. Michael Wehmeyer
The ARC of the United States
Arlington TX

3

Review Panel Results

Six of eighteen applicants were selected for site reviews. Applicants not chosen for site reviews received copies of reviewers' ratings and certificates of participation.

Site Reviews

The project director and a member of the National Review Panel made two-day site visits to each of the six finalists. A different Review Panel member accompanied the project director on each trip. The site visit's purpose was to validate, enrich, and expand upon data provided in the initial application and answer questions and concerns raised during review/rating of written applications.

Site Visit Procedures

Each site received copies of reviewers' ratings as well as a copy of the Site Review Itinerary and Reviewer's Rating Summary. The latter instruments were designed by project staff to structure the site review. Each site developed a schedule using the framework outlined on the Site Review Itinerary. Specific activities were selected in order to address questions or issues described raised by the National Review Panel. The project director provided each fellow site visitor with copies of the site's written application, a summary of the site review's purpose, a description of the site reviewer's role, a procedure list, and suggested questions. Prior to each visit, the project director and his fellow site visitor reviewed that site's written application and reviewer's ratings and listed key questions/issues to explore during the site review. During the site visit, each visitor conducted observations; reviewed documents; and interviewed students, staff, agency representatives, and other key informants; and independently rated each scheduled activity using the following criteria:

"1" = observation, interview, or document review provides evidence that supports selection of site as a highly effective approach.

"2" = observation, interview, or document review did not provide evidence that supports selection of site as a highly effective approach.

"3" = evidence provided during observation, interview, or document review was inconclusive.

"4" = site reviewer did not participate in this observation, interview, or document review.

Each reviewer provided written documentation of any "2" or "3" ratings.

Finally, each site reviewer provided an overall rating by answering three questions about that site:

(i) This site visit addressed concerns raised by National Review Panel members in their initial rating:

Fully   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   Not at all   N.A.

(ii) Data obtained during this site visit satisfied concerns raised by National Review Panel members in their initial rating:

Fully   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   Not at all   N.A.

(iii) This site implements a highly effective approach to serving students with significant disabilities: Yes_____   No_____

All six sites featured in this project received favorable scores using the approach sketched above.

A Word About the Approaches Described Through This Project

This publication summarizes the approach used by Springfield Technical Community College, Springfield, Massachusetts. Other publications in this series examine the approaches used by Hinds Community College, Raymond, Mississippi; Florence-Darlington Technical College, Florence, South Carolina; Longview Community College, Lee's Summit, Missouri; Milwaukee Area Technical College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Lakeshore Technical College, Cleveland, Wisconsin. Additional copies of all publications in this series may be downloaded at no cost from the project's web page at http://www.cew.wisc.edu/nidrr/.

It is important to note that each description captures a "moment" in the organizational life of each featured approach. All organizations, and the services they provide, are dynamic entities. Over time, policy decisions, funding fluctuations, career changes, and personal tragedies impinge on the operation of these services. A visitor to any of the schools featured through this project would recognize instantly the impact of these forces. These changes in no way alter or diminish the value of the approaches as described, nor lessen their potential for replication in other settings.

References

Henderson, C. (1999). *1999 College Freshmen with Disabilities, A Biennial Statistical Profile.* Washington, DC: American Council on Education, HEATH Resource Center.

Horn, L. and Bertold, J. (1999). *Students with disabilities in postsecondary education: A profile of preparation, participation, and outcomes.* Washington, DC: US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

5

OFFICE OF DISABILITY SERVICES

Springfield Technical Community College

The Office of Disability Services at Springfield Technical Community College
strives to achieve equal educational and program opportunities and full
participation within the college community for persons with disabilities by
working in a proactive manner within the institution to identify and remove
physical, programmatic, technological, and attitudinal barriers and maintaining
an ongoing vigilance to ensure that new barriers are not erected.

Mission, Goals, and Objectives

The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is an integrated part of the Enrollment Management/Student Affairs Division at Springfield Technical Community College, Springfield, Massachusetts.

The mission of Springfield Technical Community College is to employ the highest standards in the delivery of its unique and diverse programs and services to our students. The ODS strives to achieve equal educational and program opportunities and full participation within the college community for persons with disabilities. The office works in a proactive manner within the institution to identify and remove physical, programmatic, technological, and attitudinal barriers and maintains an ongoing vigilance to ensure that new barriers are not erected. To this end, the office seeks to implement the college's commitment to excellence in education in a barrier free environment.

Significant Features of the Office of Disability Services

Our approach could be best described as both proactive and integrative in nature. We aggressively seek to identify students, increase awareness of services, provide technological resources, and educate all faculty and staff on issues that relate to disability, ADA, adaptive/assistive technology, and accommodation. We combine the integrated services of two grants, one focused on technology and the other on career development and placement, with the campus ADA and disability services. The office works closely with area high schools, vocational rehabilitation agencies, area businesses, and campus facilities, computing, counseling and support services, and faculty. A state-of-the-art adaptive computing facility provides assessments, training, and education to students and faculty. Through the Alliance of Cooperating Colleges and Employers for Student Success (ACCESS), funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Research Services (OSERS), the college provides education and technical assistance to the cooperating colleges of greater Springfield and area businesses.

Key Factors that Make the Office of Disability Services Effective for Students with Significant Disabilities

The effectiveness of our approach is built upon ongoing efforts to communicate with all parties involved. We strive to work with students throughout all phases of the educational process, from admissions, career development, technology assessment, and academic accommodations to job readiness and employment placement. Faculty also have played a vital part in recognition, referral, and in their willingness to participate in the design of effective strategies to address the accommodation needs of students. ODS staff maintain regular contact through attendance at regular division meetings as well as personal contact.

Springfield Technical Community College's office of Institutional Research maintains a database of statistical information. Through this office, the ODS is able to track the number of students with disabilities, graduation rates, GPAs, etc. Institutional Research also maintains information about job placement rates after graduation.

In addition, the ODS staff have been participating in a research project through the Department of Education, Libraries and Lifelong Learning. Project EXCEL is designed to evaluate the effectiveness of career development and job placement strategies for students with disabilities. The project design also is intended to measure the effectiveness of training and educational services to faculty and staff. This project has enabled the ODS to measure the effectiveness of specific student services.

Background Information

The population of the area served by college comprises approximately 30 cities and towns and a population of about 500,000. Of these, about 225,000 live in urban areas and about 175,000 in suburban areas. The current unemployment rate in Western Massachusetts is 4.7 percent; in inner Springfield it is 30 to 40 percent. The average family income in the area served by STCC ranges from $6,250 to $34,448.

Faculty and Staff Characteristics

	Male		Female	
	Minority	Non-Minority	Minority	Non-Minority
Faculty*				
Employed Full-time	2	79	4	88
Employed Part-time	3	77	5	47
Total	5	156	9	135
Staff				
Employed Full-time	5	107	17	126
Employed Part-time	5	50	9	49
Total	10	157	26	175

*Combined day and continuing education faculty.

Enrollment Information

Total number of full-time students 1997–1998 school year   6,419

(19.6% minority
30.7% receive financial aid)

	In Associate Degree Programs	In Certificate of Completion Programs	In Certificate Programs
1997–1998 Enrollees	6,039	289	91

Students with Significant Disabilities Served by the Office of Disability Services

Primary Disability	Number with Disability			Number who received help from ODS		
	Fall 1996	Spring 1997	Fall 1997	Fall 1996	Spring 1997	Fall 1997
Deaf						
Visual impairment	47	41	43	1	0	1
Hearing impairment	36	33	24	9	6	3
Physical disability	96	95	81	40	25	28
Learning disability	154	142	151	25	17	21
Psychiatric disability	24	27	33	15	11	16
Substance abuse	6	4	7	4	3	5
Attention-deficit disorder	6	1	2	2	0	1
Head injury	1	1	1	1	1	0
Traumatic brain injury	3	2	3	1	1	1
Environmental illness	2	1	0	0	0	0
Chemical dependency	2	1	0	1	1	0
Post-traumatic stress	1	0	1	1	0	1
Other	124	112	91	31	22	17
Total	502	460	437	131	87	94

Staff

Director Name/Job Title: Mary A. Moriarty, ADA Coordinator, ODS Coordinator, Project Director
Academic Degrees/Certificates:

    M.Ed., Rehabilitation Counseling

    CAGS, Rehabilitation Counseling

    LRC Licensed Rehabilitation Counselor

    LMHC, Licensed Mental Health Counselor

    LCSW, Licensed Certified. Social Worker

6 years in current position

13 years in the field

25% supervising students with significant disabilities

10% providing services to students with significant disabilities

14

65% conflict resolution

Funding for position: 100% state taxes .

Kris Kozuch, Accommodations Specialist

Academic Degrees/Certificates:

    M.Ed., Rehabilitation Counseling

    B.S., Rehabilitation Services

    LRC, Licensed Rehabilitation Counselor

1 year in current position

8 years in the field

100% providing services to students with significant disabilities

Funding for position: 100% state funding

Peter Shea, Learning Disabilities Specialist

Academic Degrees/Certificates:

    B.S., Clinical Psychology

    M.A., Clinical Psychology

    Ed.D., Education

1 year in current position

8 years in the field

100% providing services to students with significant disabilities

Funding for position: 100% state taxes

Tara O'Donnell, Counselor

Academic Degrees/Certificates:

    B.A., Rehabilitation Services

    M.Ed., Rehabilitation Counseling

2 years in current position

100% providing services to students with significant disabilities

Funding for position 100% grant funds

Constance Henriques, Adaptive Lab Technician

Academic Degrees/Certificates: A.S. (2001) Computer Information Services

2 year in current position

2 years in the field

100% providing services to students with significant disabilities

Funding for position: 100% grant funds

Funding

Source	1996–1997	1997–1998
Springfield Technical Community College	$111,300	$115,000
OSERS – ACCESS	$110,000	$115,000
U.S. Department of Education, National Institute on Postsecondary Education Libraries and Life Long Learning	$227,000	$228,425
Total	$448,300	$458,425

Services Provided to Students with Significant Disabilities

Outreach

The ODS staff work closely with secondary school systems as well as with vocational rehabilitation programs in early identification and pre-admission planning for students with disabilities. Communication with secondary school guidance personnel is fostered through membership in the Massachusetts Transition Initiative and through direct contact with guidance and special education staff in area schools. The college's admission staff are also part of the enrollment management division and provide information about disability services in their recruitment activities as well.

The ODS staff also work closely with the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission and with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind in establishing a system of pre-admission referral for

prospective students. Representatives from both agencies are board members for the business advisory team and participate in bimonthly planning meetings. The college has hosted informational sessions for counselors from vocational rehabilitation, and ODS staff have attended staff meetings at state rehabilitation offices. The overall goal is to enhance communication and interaction between the staffs and to have clear mechanisms for early referral and planning.

The ODS staff has also participated in a local Disability Awareness Day and used that as a way to reach potential new students. Project EXCEL staff have also hosted an Assistive Technology Fair attended by over 100 people in the Spring of 1997 hosted by 14 different vendors.

Admissions Accommodations

Pre-admission inquiries about disability are not permitted at STCC. A student's admission to the college's programs is based solely on their qualifications. In the admission packet of materials given to all students, information is given which directs students with disabilities to the ODS for assistance. Admission testing is done after a student is accepted. With documentation of a disability, accommodations for placement testing are made as appropriate.

Disability Documentation Policy

All students are required to present current documentation of a disability prior to receiving any academic accommodations. Documentation must be from an appropriate licensed professional. Documentation is then reviewed with the student, past accommodations are evaluated, and recommendations for current accommodations made. Whenever possible, the student's preferred method for accommodation is used. Faculty are notified by phone and by campus mail through the use of an accommodation form (see Exhibit A). Documentation remains confidential and on file in the ODS office. In the case of a student who presents without documentation, referrals are made to area professionals for evaluation. Funding for such evaluations is the responsibility of the student.

The ODS staff has developed and implemented a test taking policy that is distributed to all faculty who utilize testing accommodations (see Exhibit B).

The ODS staff has also developed a course substitution policy for student with disabilities that may preclude learning in the quantitative area even with reasonable accommodations. In some cases the institution will permit substitution of courses as an accommodation. Each case is carefully considered on an individual basis (see Exhibit C).

Pre-enrollment Orientation, Academic Preparation, and Support Services

ODS has through Project EXCEL produced a student orientation packet that is available to all students with disabilities. The packet describes the role and function of the ODS staff, academic accommodations, and support services that are available to students with documented disabilities. It also describes the adaptive computing lab and the two grant projects, EXCEL and ACCESS. In addition, ODS staff attend faculty division meetings on a regular basis to inform faculty of services and also run workshops at the new student orientation.

Students with disabilities needing specialized adaptive and assistive technology are highly encouraged to be assessed and evaluated by Project ACCESS staff prior to the start of the semester. Currently the staff of the adaptive lab work with incoming and returning students to decide which, if any, assistive or adaptive devices may help them in their academic pursuits.

The ODS staff are also active participants in the overall incoming student orientation and are visible in workshops and panels during the orientation. ODS staff also encourage students with disabilities to be part of the student mentor program. This allows incoming students with disabilities the opportunity to interact with returning students with disabilities.

All staff are trained in registration and scheduling and have online access for student course scheduling in their offices. ODS staff also are available at late registration to facilitate the registration process for students with disabilities.

Enrollment Process

The college has an open enrollment policy, as do all community colleges in Massachusetts. Should a student need assistance in the enrollment process, that assistance is available in the admissions office as well as through ODS staff. Admissions material is provided in alternative format if requested. Frequently, students are referred through high school guidance counselors or vocational rehabilitation agencies prior to admission. In this way, services, accommodations, and technology assessment can be determined and provided throughout the admission process.

Who Pays for the Accommodations?

As a general policy, the college pays for equipment and accommodations that relate specifically to access to academics or college services and, as a general rule, are used on campus. Examples might include adaptive computer equipment, assistive listening devices, interpreters, or on campus notetakers or readers. Vocational rehabilitation is responsible for equipment or services that are personal in nature or are used by the student off campus. These examples might be personal care attendants or home computers. Decisions about accommodations are highly dependent on the individuals involved and how

18

their disability impacts them. The college tries to work closely with vocational rehabilitation services in providing consistency and in developing individualized plans for support. In order to meet an immediate need, there have been occasions when a specific piece of equipment is borrowed for a semester. There have been other occasions when the cost of a particular service is shared. Our approach, as well as that of our local vocational rehabilitation professionals, has been to work together in providing necessary services in a timely manner.

Career Advising and Career Planning Assistance

As part of the ODS, all students with disabilities are invited by personal letter to take part in the career development project called Project EXCEL (1996-1999). The main focus of Project EXCEL is to empower students with disabilities to develop the needed skills to locate and secure jobs in a competitive labor market. Searching for a position can be a long and often frustrating process. Having knowledge and refined skills in the areas of networking, employability skills, individual rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act, job accommodations, adaptive equipment, and employer responsibilities under the ADA are essential to anyone looking to compete for available positions today.

The Project EXCEL staff are able to offer technical support and a more individualized plan to assist students in locating meaningful employment. The staff can assist students in goal identification and planning, locating full- or part-time employment, setting up job shadowing experiences, placement in a volunteer or paid internship, and determining any necessary job accommodations.

Throughout the entire process, information regarding disclosure options, job accommodations, and legal rights are available for dissemination to students upon request.

Students are asked to complete a survey to establish baseline career information (see Exhibit D). Levels of knowledge regarding identification of career/vocational goals, skills and abilities necessary to obtain the goal, confidence in ability to achieve that goal, and potential obstacles to achieving that goal are measured. Students then meet with a career counselor to do interest and career testing, complete the project-developed *Narrowing Down the World of Work* (Exhibit E) workbook, utilize the multimedia career center, and/or do informational interviewing. Students can take the Career Assessment Inventory and the Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator and receive counseling regarding those reports. After the workbook and interpretation are complete, research begins on the career choice. This might include informational interviewing, visiting Future Works (across the street from campus), composing letters to request further information, or visiting the local library.

A three-course sequence includes:

♦ *Introduction to Career Planning*, in which students are assisted in identifying their strengths, interests, and abilities; gain self-knowledge regarding labor market trends and occupational growth; acquire knowledge of campus and community resources; and are expected to research at least two areas of interest.

♦ *Job Search Strategies*, which focuses on implementing career plans and goals by developing and refining employability skills in the areas of job search strategies, cover letter and resume writing, networking, and the interview process.

◆ Internships and co-op experiences, which involve securing either a paid or volunteer internship or practicum experience combined with an on-campus seminar. These experiences provide the students with actual work experience and makes them more competitive in today's job market.

Students are encouraged to be proactive in their career search and meet every two weeks with counselors to further explore their identified goals. Staff also assist in arranging for on-site informational interviewing if it is applicable. Monitoring of course selection, academic advising, and study skills development also take place in this initial phase. Students are also assisted in making appointments with on-campus program representatives to ask questions about particular major fields of interest.

The second phase, usually after the first semester or academic year, includes a referral to the project's job developer. The job developer helps the student locate a field experience training, whether it be paid, volunteer, or a clinical affiliation. Students are also assisted with developing a resume, refining their interview skills, and organizing their job search. Again, students are referred to the Career Center where materials are available in a variety of media in the adaptive technology lab. This can also include videotaping a role-play of a job interview with a staff person or enrolling in a college level two-credit course, *The Job Search Process*. Topics in that course, in addition to employability skills training, include "Your Rights as an Individual with a Disability," "What Are Reasonable Accommodations on the Job?" and "What an Employer Can and Cannot Ask in the Interview." The job developer also works through the project-developed *Quick Results in Your Job Search* (Exhibit F) with the student to refine already existing skills. Students are notified of job fairs, career fairs, and cooperative education openings on a regular basis. Several students in past years have been selected for summer employment with the President's Committee on Employment of Individuals with Disabilities who recruit on campus each winter.

The job developer, in conjunction with the assistive technology staff, assesses the student and determines if any reasonable accommodations will be needed. The staff are available to assist employers if accommodations are necessary. Once a placement has been found, the job developer maintains contact as needed with the employer and the student to ensure that the student and employer needs are met.

Students interested in receiving service under Project EXCEL agree to:

◆ Work closely with Project staff on a regular basis

◆ Take an active role in locating work

◆ Follow through with scheduled appointments for on-site visits and interviews

◆ Notify Project staff of their intent to withdraw from the program prior to their withdrawal

◆ Keep a journal of contacts and maintain bimonthly phone or personal contact with staff

Project EXCEL staff agree to:

◆ Work closely with students to define career goals and plans

◆ Maintain confidentiality of student records and discussions

◆ Assist students in familiarizing and utilizing on-campus resources including the Office of Cooperative Education, as well as employers in the community

◆ Provide supportive and technical support during the job search process

An integral part of the career planning process is the joint effort of ODS/Cooperative Education and Career Services. ODS staff attend bimonthly staff meetings to be kept abreast of job postings etc.

At times students are referred to existing college personnel for assistance in career development and job placement.

Career services have continued beyond the completion of Project EXCEL. Students are still receiving the services from the ODS staff.

Requests for Accommodations

How the school responds to a student's request for an accommodation varies. It will depend on whether or not the student has completed all the necessary steps to become registered with the ODS. If the student is *not* registered with the ODS and has requested an accommodation with an individual department or professor, the professor is advised to refer the student immediately to the ODS. The professor is advised that if the accommodation being requested had been approved by the ODS, notification of the professor would have occurred in writing through our office. In the event that the student bypassed registering with our office, the professor is advised that they are not obligated to provide the requested accommodation. If the accommodation is justifiably warranted (as in the case of an obvious disability), the staff *may* also advise the instructor to provide the accommodation. When time permits, the student must register with the ODS before any future accommodations are given.

The steps to registering with the ODS are not difficult. Students may identify themselves as having a disability in several ways. Information regarding the ODS is available in the student handbook, the college catalog, through various on-campus communication devices, and referral by college faculty/staff. In the acceptance letter to all students entering the college, a note is made that any student with a disability should call the ODS to arrange for services. When the student calls or visits the ODS, an appointment is given to meet with a staff person for an initial intake interview. Students are also reminded to bring documentation of their disability to this appointment. Students with learning disabilities and attention deficit disorders are referred to a counselor specializing in that area. All other students with disabilities receive appointments with the counselor for students with disabilities. At the time of the initial intake, students are asked to provide copies of documentation from a licensed professional of their particular disability. If necessary, students are given guidelines regarding the documentation. The standards adopted by this institution regarding students with attention deficit disorder and learning disabilities are the Association of Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) standards. Distribution of the student orientation manual and project brochures of additional services available for students with disabilities are given at this time. They are also always available in the ODS.

Once the office has received the documentation, the counselor and student meet again to review the specific recommendations made by the licensed professional. Adaptive and assistive technologies available on campus are outlined, as is how to arrange for readers, scribes, notetakers, use of equipment, etc. Any accommodations are listed on a disability accommodation form that is co-signed by the student and a representative of ODS (see Exhibit A). Copies of this form are either hand-delivered to the professors by the student or sent by the ODS to the individual professors. With the permission of the student, the staff person may also make contact with the particular professor to ensure that the accommodation is understood. Also, any questions that the professor may have are handled at this time.

The staff involved in the evaluation and the provision of accommodations vary as to the particular needs of the student. Primarily, it will be the counselor assigned to work with the student. In the event

17

that assistive or adaptive technology is necessary, an adaptive computer technician will be involved. Also, it may be necessary for an evaluation to be made to determine the feasibility of the accommodation request. Project ACCESS staff have developed and refined an assistive technology evaluation form to be used with students who might benefit from assistive and adaptive technology (see Exhibit H).

Accommodations

Support services and academic accommodations are arranged through the Office of Disability Services. These accommodations allow students with disabilities equal access to all programs at STCC and are available when requested in a timely fashion. The purpose behind the accommodations is to assist students with disabilities in completing the requirements for a course.

Any full- or part-time, day or evening student with a documented disability is eligible for services. The accommodations are specially designed for a student's specific disability and needs. Not all accommodations are academic in nature and it is important for the student to make an appointment with a Disability Services staff person to determine accommodations prior to the start of the semester.

Accommodations made for students with disabilities on our campus perhaps can best be explained by categorizing them into "in-classroom," "testing," "assistive/adaptive technology," "course," "physical plant," and "support services." Although many accommodations are similar in each category, this format provides a more focused view of what has proven effective on our campus. Accommodations for students vary greatly by disability and need. Evaluation occurs with each individual student and is supported by recommendations of professionals in the field.

Prior to receiving any accommodations, students must meet with a counselor in the Disability Services Office. Some accommodations require time to arrange, and, for that reason, it is important to contact the Office as soon as it is known that an accommodation is needed. It is also a good idea to have the accommodation in place, in advance of need, as it is easier to cancel or discontinue the service if it is not needed than to struggle to find it if it is needed.

In addition, academic accommodation information needs to be relayed to professors as soon as possible and it is therefore recommended that students contact professors *before* class begins or during the first week of the semester.

The purpose of the Adaptive Computing Technology Lab on campus is to provide a variety of services to students with disabilities who can benefit from current technological advances that, when best utilized, can work to maximize student success. The lab is available for use by any current student or STCC alumni with a disability who has completed an orientation to the equipment and the rules regarding use of the lab.

In-Classroom Accommodations

♦ Use of notetakers for in-class notes, professors sharing their notes or use of carbonless note paper

♦ Use of tape recorder for in-class lectures

22

- ◆ Assistive listening devices
- ◆ Sign language interpreters
- ◆ Special seating arrangements or chairs—for example, preferred seating in the front or rear of classroom, provision of chairs with arms or back support, elevated desk or tables for wheelchair users
- ◆ In-class scribe if necessary for in-class writing assignments
- ◆ Permission to leave the class if necessary (usually due to psychiatric disability)
- ◆ Magnification and speech output/input programs in some computer classes
- ◆ Enlarged printing of class handouts
- ◆ Use and loan of cassette players for books on tape

Testing

- ◆ Time, time-and-a-half, or double time to complete tests
- ◆ A quiet or distraction-free space
- ◆ Reader or audiotape of questions
- ◆ Alternate format (where permissible)
- ◆ Use of word processor on essay-type exams

Assistive and Adaptive Technology

Computer Technology

- ◆ Alternative Input Devices/Pointers
- ◆ IntelliKeys with 4 cables
- ◆ Overlay Maker for IntelliKeys
- ◆ BAT Personal Keyboard (one-handed keyboard)
- ◆ Tash Mini Keyboard
- ◆ Big Buddy Button (Switch)
- ◆ Glidepoint Touch Pad
- ◆ Kensington Track Ball

Voice Recognition

- ◆ Dragon Dictate Power Edition (Win, CD)
- ◆ Dragon Naturally Speaking
- ◆ Kurzweil Voice Pro

23

- ◆ Kurzweil Voice Pad
- ◆ Voice Pilot.

Screen/Text Readers

- ◆ Jaws for Windows
- ◆ Window-Eyes
- ◆ PW Web Speak

Screen Enlarger/Text Reader

- ◆ ZOOMTEXT Xtra (level 2)

Scanning/OCR

- ◆ OMNI 1000
- ◆ OMNI 3000
- ◆ HP Scanner 4 Cse
- ◆ HP Document Feeder

Assistive Software for Learning Disabilities

- ◆ Inspiration for Windows
- ◆ Co:Writer & Write: OutLoud
- ◆ TextHelp by Lorien Systems

Braille Tools

- ◆ Duxbury Braille Translator
- ◆ 3M Braille Labeler
- ◆ Transparent Labeling Tape

Resource Book

- ◆ Assistive Technology Resource Book

Programming/Authoring Tools

- ◆ Hyperstudio
- ◆ Visual Basic V 5.0

24

Assistive Devices

◆ Franklin Speller

◆ Assistive Listening Devices

◆ Talking Thermometer and Calculators

◆ 4 Track Tape Players SONY Tape Recorders

◆ CCTV

Courses

◆ Reduced course load

◆ Extra time to complete programmed course of study

◆ Priority registration

◆ Late withdrawal from courses

◆ Course substitution in the event of a specific disability. The substitution must not substantially alter the nature of the program course of study

Physical Plant

◆ Rescheduling of classes to alternate rooms/buildings

◆ HP parking stickers

◆ Specialized seating arrangements

◆ Alteration of desk/table height

Support Services

◆ Informal assessment for suspected learning disabilities

◆ Referrals for evaluation (off-campus) to provide required documentation of a learning disability

◆ Interpretation of documentation (psychological evaluation)

◆ Study skills course

◆ Reading skills course

◆ Advocacy and self-advocacy training

◆ Personal and career counseling

◆ Referral to appropriate vocational rehabilitation agencies

◆ Support letters to health insurers for part-time students

◆ Academic Support Group for students with learning disabilities

◆ Computer lab technicians and tutors

25

♦ Math tutors

♦ Utilization of campus-wide resources for tutoring in other departments (Math Lab, English Writing Lab, Adaptive Computer Lab)

Authority to Enforce Implementation of Reasonable Accommodations

As of the year 2000, the ODS consists of the coordinator of disability services, a full-time accommodations specialist, a full time Learning Disabilities Specialist, and a full-time counselor. Other staff include technicians who work in the ODS's Adaptive Computer Lab. The above named people, minus the lab technicians, are in positions that include responsibility for reviewing students' documentation, determining reasonable accommodations, and monitoring the implementation of any academic accommodations. The staff works with the student to develop an effective plan for implementation of the accommodations and works diligently with faculty and other staff members to ensure the delivery of the accommodations.

In the event of a lack of compliance on the part of faculty, these same staff are responsible for contacting the faculty to determine whether there is a problem with the accommodation. Cases are reviewed as necessary during internal staff meetings at the counselor's request. The ADA coordinator is responsible for mediation and conflict resolution and has ultimate authority to determine the reasonableness of any request.

Case Management Design and Procedures

Students with disabilities entering the college receive the same treatment as any other incoming student. Students receive an incoming packet of information from the Admissions Office regarding placement testing, financial aid, student orientation, etc. Also in this acceptance packet is information on referral to the ODS in the event that the student has a disability.

Within the ODS, each counselor works under the auspices of the ADA Coordinator/Coordinator of Disability Services. Located under the umbrella of the Enrollment Management and Student Affairs Division of the college, the ODS works with nearly half of the students who self-identify as having a disability. The ODS is separated into three main groups of staff (case counselors): Project EXCEL staff, Project ACCESS staff, and the Adaptive Computer Technology Lab.

All students identifying and/or referring themselves to the ODS are given an appointment for an intake screening session. They are encouraged at that time to bring copies of the documentation of their disability and are assigned a counselor within the Disability Office. One counselor is responsible solely for students with attention deficit disorders and learning disabilities and another takes on all other students with varying disabilities. In addition, students are referred on an as-needed basis to the staff of Project EXCEL, which is a career planning and job placement program for students with disabilities.

In the event that the student needs special assistive or adaptive technology training and/or equipment, a referral is made by the ODS staff to the department's Adaptive Computer Technology Lab and the staff of Project ACCESS. There students are evaluated as to what adaptive technology might best suit their needs and make the courses accessible. Students then can receive training on the adaptive technology, tutoring, and assistance in becoming proficient in the technology's use.

The ODS staff serves as a comprehensive team in its approach to working with students with disabilities. All counselors and personnel in the ODS are trained to work with a variety of disabilities and freely share knowledge and expertise in working with particular disabling conditions. Students are encouraged to utilize campus services as much as possible and are assigned an academic advisor in their major. This advisor performs their course selection and scheduling. If necessary, priority registration can be done by the ODS staff to facilitate academic accommodations. Also, the staff work together to provide the necessary services for students should they need assistance finding tutors, unraveling the mysteries of financial aid, or working effectively with professors in classes. The counselors also help the students locate available community and campus resources for any difficulties they may be encountering. Counselors meet with the students prior to the start of the semester, during the semester on an as-needed basis, and once again as the semester draws to a close. Contact with students by the Project EXCEL and ACCESS staff can be more involved depending on the services provided for the particular student.

Postenrollment Academic Support Services

In order to understand all the services offered to students with disabilities it is important to follow them after they have received letters of acceptance. The letter of acceptance to the college includes the phone number of the ODS, and all students are reminded to make contact with the office if they have a disability. Once the call comes into the ODS, an appointment for an initial intake is made and the student is told to bring in documentation from a licensed professional of his or her disability and recommendations for accommodations. Students are given appointments with one of two counselors, depending on their particular disability.

During this intake interview, the student is given an orientation manual. The manual outlines the ODS's programs and services and accommodations that may be provided depending on the disability. This initial meeting between the counselor and student is often the first real contact the student has with the staff of the college. Releases of information forms are signed for information sharing with vocational rehabilitation personnel, private therapists, physicians, and any other professionals working with the student. Critical during this initial meeting is the outlining of the student's and ODS's responsibility in meeting the accommodation needs of the student. The counselor also will spend a significant amount of time describing the role of the academic advisor, location of specific college offices (registrar, financial aid, library), services offered by ODS, and answering questions regarding college life. The relationship at the onset has proven to be an effective determinant of student retention.

Once the semester has begun, students are monitored by their academic advisors and are encouraged to check in with the ODS staff during the semester. If a student is using the services of the Adaptive Tech Lab he or she might be seen several times a week, and the LD specialist also coordinates a support group that meets weekly. Students are encouraged to meet with professors regarding their needs prior to the start of the semester or within the first week of school.

Communication with professors occurs only by request of the student to deal with any previously unforeseen circumstances or issues that might have come up. Students are encouraged to visit and talk with professors during their office hours regarding any concerns. The ODS staff also checks in with the students by mid semester to determine whether the accommodations set in place are working effectively. In the event that an unusual accommodation (alternative testing format, use of assistive technology, etc.) is in place, the counselor will make contact as needed with the professor much earlier. This reinforces to the professor the role of the ODS staff. Vocational rehabilitation agency personnel can be actively involved with the student, and during the initial intake a release of information form is signed by the student allowing for communication with the vocational rehabilitation agency on an as-needed basis. Bimonthly ODS staff meetings address all student concerns. Grades are monitored by ODS staff at the mid-term and end of the semester.

The Adaptive Lab

An essential component of an overall strategy for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities is adaptive technology. Springfield Technical Community College has a well-equipped lab with state-of-the-art software and hardware. The lab has six work stations. Every station has Internet access and word processing and spreadsheet capabilities. In addition, each station has a unique set of adaptive software and hardware designed to meet the individual needs of students. Although it is clear that each student requires a singular solution, we are better able to meet the needs of all students by designing stations for the following categories of disabilities:

- Blindness/low vision
- Learning disabilities
- Mobility impairments
- Speech and language disorders
- Deafness and hearing impairments
- Other disabilities (e.g., chronic illness, allergies, etc.)

Effective use of the lab is maximized by interviewing each student in order to evaluate his or her needs and abilities. The student is then matched to the technology available in the lab, and several introductory training sessions on the equipment are conducted. The student's needs are then reevaluated and adjustments are made as needed. Throughout the process, the adaptive lab staff members are available to meet with students' professors when necessary. Training and support in the lab are ongoing.

In 1997 we worked with more than 30 students. Some have needed a cursory introduction to the computer and others have required training on voice recognition systems. We have worked with students in the classroom, in lab situations, and one-to-one in the adaptive lab. We have worked with faculty to create alternative access to materials for students with chemical sensitivities.

The equipment available in the adaptive lab includes the following products:

Product Name	Supplier
Hardware and Accessories	
TouchWindow for Win/DOS	Edmark
Universal Mount	Don Johnston Inc.
Universal Table Mount	Tash
Alternative Input Devices/Pointers	
IntelliKeys with 4 Cables	IntelliTools
Overlay Maker for IntelliKeys	IntelliTools
Protective Overlay Sheets	Edmark
BAT Personal Keyboard (dual)	Blazie Engineering
Tash Mini Keyboard	Tash Inc.
Big Buddy Button (switch)	Tash Inc.
Glidepoint Touch Pad	Computer City
Kensington Track Ball	Computer City
Voice Recognition	
Dragon Dictate Pwr. Ed. (Win, CD)	HGM Associates
Dragon Naturally Speaking	Dragon Systems
Kurzwell Voice Pro (V 2.5)	Computer City
Kurzwell Voice Pad	Computer City
Voice Pilot	Maverick Digital
Screen/Text Readers	
Jaws for Windows 2.0	Henter-Joyce
Window-Eyes 2.0	GW Micro
PW Web Speak	Productivity Works
Screen Enlarger/Text Reader	
Zoomtext Xtra (level 2)	AlSquared
Scanning/OCR	
OMNI 1000	Pathways Technologies
OMNI 3000	Pathways Technologies

HP Scanner 4 Cse	Computer City
HP Document Feeder	Computer City

Assistive Software for Learning Disabilities

Inspiration for Windows	Inspiration Software
Co:Writer & Write OutLoud	Don Johnston Inc.
TextHelp by Lorien Systems	Maxi Aids

Braille Tools

Duxbury Braille Translator	Blazie Engineering
3M Braille Labeler	Maxi Aids
Transparent Labeling Tape (3/pkg.)	Maxi Aids

Resource Book

Assistive Tech. Resource Book	IntelliTools

Programming/Authoring Tools

Hyperstudio	Scantron Quality Computers
Visual Basic V 5.0	STCC Bookstore

In 1997, we began working with a student with severe mobility impairments. The student learned Dragon Dictate (a speech recognition tool) and used it to complete work in a computer science course. The student did well in class, enrolled for another semester, and is now using an alternative keyboard and alternative mouse in combination with speech recognition. The student has a system at home that was designed by our staff with the same equipment that she uses here at STCC and is expressing an interest in environmental control software and telephone software. The student is enrolling in more advanced computer classes this semester.

Last year we began working with a student with low vision. The student was introduced to software that magnified the image on the screen and provided speech out. He uses the software in the lab to complete homework assignments. Now close to graduation, the student has a system that our staff designed and is learning how to use the equipment independently.

This year we began working with a student with mobility impairments. Before her experience with speech recognition, this student did not expect to be able to complete the degree because of the pain involved in moving. She is now enrolling in several courses for the coming semester, and one of her professors has expressed an interest in her earning credit for learning the speech recognition software. An independent study for the student is in the negotiating process.

Support Services for Students with Learning Disabilities

Students are referred to our office by their high school guidance counselors, their parents, vocational rehabilitation counselors, faculty here at STCC, other students, or themselves. In some cases students have been diagnosed with a learning disability and bring the documentation with them. In the majority of cases, the student goes through an informal screening procedure as follows:

- ◆ Educational history, including family and personal history

- ◆ Reading and comprehension assessment

- ◆ Using of the AHEAD Checklist for High School Students with a Learning Disability (see Exhibit N)

- ◆ Use of a brochure by Dr. Loring Brinkerhoff detailing the definition and characteristics of college students with learning disabilities.

- ◆ Signing release forms in the case of students who have been previously evaluated by a psychologist or neuropsychologist (see Exhibit O)

- ◆ Referral to an appropriate community resource if student has never been tested, depending on the health insurance of the student

- ◆ Explanation of our menu of support services and academic accommodations

The information on the student profile form (see Exhibit P) is summarized for easy reference. Finally, the accommodation form is filled out in consultation with the student and is subsequently mailed to the appropriate faculty members. In some cases, the student prefers to hand-deliver the form. The student is always encouraged to meet with the faculty member to discuss and arrange for the accommodations. The ODS staff make sure that the student knows his or her responsibilities in this process by providing a copy of the form and going over the policy and procedures on the reverse side.

Sometimes it is necessary to advocate for the student, usually by telephone. Occasionally the ODS staff meets with faculty, parents, tutors, or advisors to facilitate accommodations. Students are encouraged to make appointments with the counselor for students with learning disabilities as often as they wish. In addition, a weekly academic support group is facilitated by the counselor, where students can meet each other, receive support, and discuss such topics of interest as stress management, test-taking strategies, notetaking skills, etc. New students especially benefit from the group.

If a student needs books on tape, we recommend that they bring a list of the books they will be using in the upcoming semester to our secretary as soon as possible after scheduling. In order for the secretary to order the books through our institutional membership in Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic, it is necessary for this to be done before the end of the current semester. If the books are not available from that source, we often have tapes made here by work-study student readers. We also lend four-track tape players, which we have borrowed from the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind at Perkins School. (These four-track models are necessary to play the RFB&D tapes.) In addition, students can borrow from the office regular tape recorders for taping class lectures, and pads of carbonless paper can be provided for notetaking assistance by fellow students. Students know that they are respected and valued and that we are committed to facilitating the highest levels of educational excellence and potential quality of life for postsecondary students with disabilities.

31

Nonacademic Support Services

Nonacademic support services for students with disabilities exist on our campus in an integrated model. Students are highly encouraged to join extracurricular activities such as career clubs, recreational and religious fellowship clubs, the student radio station, newspaper, governance groups, and athletic teams. In addition to the various clubs, students can participate in study skills training sessions offered every semester in test taking strategies, reading for content, memory techniques, and time management. Also offered are career information hours sponsored by a variety of academic major divisions.

Varying each semester as well is a support group following the Alcoholics Anonymous model for students working on substance abuse recovery issues. This group is student run with the assistance, as needed, by a staff person from the College's Counseling Center. In previous years, a support group for students entering college who have psychiatric disabilities has run with a closed enrollment. Students with disabilities are also encouraged to visit with the ODS staff to address career concerns, seek mediation with vocational rehabilitation agency personnel, receive assistance with course selection, obtain short-term problem solving counseling and support and placement assistance in full- or part-time employment, internships, or volunteer placements (1996-1999).

Through the Cooperating Colleges of Greater Springfield, Project ACCESS (Alliance of Cooperating Colleges and Employers for Student Success) trains a local network of employers in applications of adaptive technology that may be used to increase the employability of individuals with disabilities. A Mobile Adaptive Technology Unit brings resources to employers for training, consciousness raising, and information on ADA issues. Another focus of the grant is to better prepare students with disabilities for self-advocacy and to confidently use effective employment-related skills and interviewing strategies for accessing the local job market. Project ACCESS trains faculty and staff at each of the seven surrounding colleges in the uses of adaptive technology for enhancing student learning and workplace success. Linkages with the local One Stop Career Center assist in expanding local employer awareness of college students with disabilities who have proven to be among the finest employees.

The staff of Project ACCESS is available to students with disabilities for helping evaluate assistive and adaptive technologies necessary for academic success. ACCESS staff work with students, counselors, vocational rehabilitation personnel, faculty, and employers to identify and evaluate any accommodations to assist the student in classes or on the job.

Support groups are offered on campus depending on the current needs and demands of the student population. If at all possible, students are referred to existing campus resources. During students' initial visits on campus ODS staff distributes an orientation manual outlining support services provided by the office. If after meeting with the ODS staff person during the first few weeks of the semester, a student identifies the need for a particular support service, the following steps may occur and may include a referral to a local agency already providing this service (e.g., transportation) and a referral to an existing campus service already in use.

32

Career services (vocational and employment-based) once begun by Project EXCEL staff continue to be offered by personal invitation to all students who self-identify as having disabilities and can provide supportive documentation from a licensed professional. On an ongoing basis, staff attempt to reach students with disabilities through a survey developed to ascertain their level of career knowledge. Students who complete the survey are contacted by phone or personal letter and are invited to come in and meet with the career counselor to review their career/educational plans. Provision of intensive support services in academic, employment, and career areas is currently being provided in one-on-one or small group settings.

Students role play with staff to learn how to make their accommodation needs known to a potential employer. They are given the opportunity to test various assistive and adaptive technologies in the lab to determine their appropriateness for use on the job. The Job Developer will then provide follow-up services to these same students once they have obtained the placement.

Student Appeal/Grievance Policies and Procedures for Handling Accommodations Disputes and/or Complaints of Discrimination

Accommodations are made after careful scrutiny of the documentation of the disability provided from a licensed professional. The student and ODS staff person meet to discuss, develop, and plan for accommodations that will be necessary to ensure equal access to all services of the college. The accommodations are then monitored throughout the semester as necessary.

In the event that the student does not agree with the accommodations that the college will grant, the student is encouraged to talk first with their primary ODS staff member. If no resolution is reached or opposing viewpoints continue, the student is referred to the Coordinator of Disability Services/ADA Coordinator on campus. A meeting takes place to discuss the situation and present all necessary information. If after the meeting the student continues to feel that the accommodation is not adequate, the student is referred to the college catalog for specific details regarding the college's grievance procedures.

If a student has a grievance relating to college policy, procedure personnel, or student rights, the student may follow this grievance procedure. If assistance is needed with the process, the student may contact the Dean of Student Services' Office, and help will be provided.

Definitions
Complaint
The informal, often unwritten stage of an allegation of mistreatment.

Grievance
A written complaint filed by a student with the person designated by the president as student grievance officer specifically alleging discrimination or an abridgement of his or her rights as a student.

Student grievance officer

A college employee assigned responsibility for administering the student grievance procedure, including the maintenance of specified records. At STCC, the Dean of Student Services has been assigned this responsibility. In case of grievance against the Dean, the President shall designate another college official to act as the student grievance officer.

Grievant

The student or students filing the grievance. The grievant must have been a registered student of the College at the time of the alleged mistreatment.

Purpose

The primary purpose of this procedure is to secure prompt and equitable resolution of student complaints and grievances. Grievances properly filed in this forum include, but are not limited to, matters arising under federal and state laws prohibiting discriminatory educational practices. Customary channels of communication shall be used wherever feasible, in seeking clarification of questions of concern before the grievance procedure is utilized. Every effort shall be made to maintain confidentiality at each level of this procedure.

Time

The number of days indicated at each level shall be considered as a maximum. Every effort shall be made to expedite the process. Nevertheless, the specified time limits may be extended in extenuating circumstances by the immediate supervisor of the person against whom the grievance is directed, the president or his or her designee, or by mutual consent of the grievant and the person against whom the grievance is directed, provided that such extensions shall be confirmed in writing.

Procedure

Level One—Informal Procedure

Customary channels of communications shall be used in seeking clarification of questions of concern and in resolving complaints before the formal procedure is used. This is the informal stage where most complaints are resolved. For example, a student who has a complaint regarding a classroom incident customarily notifies the faculty member, and then the dean of that division. The student may consult with the student grievance officer (Dean of Student Services) at any time prior to or during the grievance procedure, and must consult with him prior to filing any written complaint.

Step One

Except in cases of alleged physical assault or sexual harassment, the grievant shall first present the grievance orally and informally to the person against whom a grievance exists. This should be done in a reasonable period of time, within 30 calendar days from the date that the grievant knew or should have known of the grievable act or inaction. An individual who believes her complaint at Level One, Step Three—that is, with the immediate supervisor of the person against whom the complaint exists, not later than 30 calendar days following the instructional period when the alleged incident occurred.

Step Two

If the complaint is not resolved within ten calendar days after the notice of the Step One complaint, the grievant may within ten calendar days present in writing the allegations and known facts to the person being grieved. A complaint filed at this level should specifically state that it is filed at Level One, Step Two. The grievant shall also date the document, retain a copy, and hand deliver or send it by certified mail. The person against whom the complaint is directed shall forward a written Step Two response, if any, to the student within seven calendar days from receipt.

Step Three

If the complaint is not resolved within seven calendar days after receipt of the Step Two response or if no written response is issued, the grievant may present it in writing to the supervisor of the person against whom the grievance is directed, with a copy to the vice president of the area of the person(s) against whom the grievance is directed. The supervisor shall investigate the complaint, and after conferring with the appropriate vice president, shall forward his or her written decision to the grievant and to the person being grieved within seven calendar days.

Level Two: Formal Procedure

Step One

Student Grievance Committee. If the complaint is not resolved within the period allowed at Level One, Step Three, the grievant may present a formal grievance, in writing, including a statement of the charges, and all supporting statements and evidence, to the student grievance officer within ten calendar days after receipt of the supervisor's decision. The student grievance officer shall arrange a meeting of the Student Grievance Committee within 14 calendar days following receipt of the grievance, and shall provide a copy of all written supporting statements and evidence presented at the lower steps to each member of the committee at least 24 hours prior to the hearing. The committee shall render its findings and any recommendations within seven calendar days.

Membership of the College Student Grievance Committee

The committee shall consist of five members: one classified employee, one administrator, one faculty/staff unit, and one student. The fifth member shall be from the same identifiable group as the person being grieved. Members shall be appointed by the president. In cases of discrimination as they apply to applicable federal or state anti-discrimination laws, the Affirmative Action Officer shall be a non-voting committee member. The student grievance officer shall be a nonvoting committee member, attend all meetings, and maintain confidentiality of meetings.

Rules for Committee Hearings

The rules governing hearings before the College Student Grievance Committee are available in the Dean of Student Service's office.

Step Two

Within 30 calendar days after the grievance committee issues its findings and recommendations, the president or designee shall evaluate all the evidence and make a decision, in writing, to all concerned parties. At the president's or designee's discretion, a hearing may be conducted prior to rendering a decision. This hearing shall be closed, with the grievant and the person(s) grieved invited, and each may bring a representative. The decision of the president or designee shall be final and binding on all parties.

Grade appeals

Complaints or grievances filed in connection with assigned grades represent a special case within the grievance procedure. Grading reflects careful and deliberate assessment of a student's performance by the instructing professional. As such decisions are necessarily judgmental, the substance of these decisions may not be delegated to the grievance process. Nevertheless, the college recognizes that in rare cases the process of grading may be subject to error or injustice.

Except as otherwise provided by a separate grade appeals procedure for clinical programs as approved by the president of the college, a student who alleges an error or injustice in the grading process may employ the grievance procedures described in Level One, Steps One through Three, above; provided that the appropriate Den for these purposes shall be the Executive Vice President/Academic Dean. No complaint challenging a grade may be initiated after 30 calendar days following the last day of the instructional period for which the grade was granted. If the faculty member who assigned the grade is no longer employed by the College or not available, the complaint may be initiated with the appropriate dean. If substantial evidence of error exists, the grade may be remanded to the instructor for reassessment. If the instructor is unavailable, the grade shall be reassessed by the appropriate dean or designee.

Hearings and Decisions

At each of the above levels, the grievant and the person being grieved shall be afforded the opportunity to be present and be heard. In addition, each party may present, examine, and cross-examine witnesses. All decisions and/or recommendations at each level must be writing, with the exception of Level One-- Steps One and Two, and shall include supporting reasons with copies to both parties.

Rights of Persons Being Grieved

If recommendations result in sanctions against College employees, these measures shall be regarded as administrative actions subject to all conditions of applicable collective bargaining agreements and College and Higher Education Coordinating Council personnel policies.

Alternative Forums

Filing a grievance in accordance with the procedures herein detailed in no way abrogates the student's right to file complaints with the appropriate state and federal agencies or with the court. However, once the grievant initiates proceedings in any other forum, his or her rights to proceed under the student grievance procedures are waived. For purposes of filing federal level charges of discrimination, the student may contact the College Director or Affirmative Action.

Withdrawal

Students may withdraw their informal or formal complaints at any time. Withdrawal may be accomplished in writing or by oral agreement confirmed in writing.

Reprisals

The College shall not interfere, restrain, or coerce any student in the exercise of his or her rights under this grievance procedure and/or his or her participation in any grievance proceedings.

Transition Services

Individualized transition planning and preparation begin while students are still matriculated in their degree programs. Students are offered numerous person-centered counseling and skill development services, including, but not limited to:

♦ Identification of personal strengths and weaknesses that will influence success in various work environments

♦ Job shadowing experiences and career information interviews

♦ Placement in career-track volunteer and paid part-time positions as resume-building experiences

♦ Resume development and editing

♦ Cover letter writing

♦ Network development and implementation

♦ Critical evaluation of employment offers

♦ Counseling on workplace issues

♦ Notification of employment opportunities and job fairs

Students who choose to continue their education at four-year colleges are assisted in contacting the ODS at the receiving colleges and communicating classroom and testing accommodation requirements to appropriate staff.

Collaboration Between Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Other Adult Service Agencies

The counselors of the ODS attempt to connect and communicate regularly with vocational rehabilitation agencies. This was started a number of years ago during an initial meeting in which counselors from the ODS presented a detailed explanation of services offered in the ODS at Springfield Technical Community College (i.e., accommodations, career planning, job placement services) to local vocational rehabilitation service providers. Since those meetings, rehabilitation counselors, as a matter of course, refer all clients interested in attending STCC to the counselors of the ODS. A constant communication is maintained with the rehabilitation counselors. If a client is referred to us by a rehabilitation service, the ODS counselor will ask the student's permission to speak with the rehabilitation counselor and ask that the student sign a release of confidential information form (see Exhibit I). In doing so, the two counselors are able to discuss and assist the student in a collaborative effort. Additionally, a convenient part of this agreement is that the rehabilitation counselors usually have very detailed documentation of the student's disability. If the student signs the appropriate release, then the rehab counselor can send the ODS a copy of this information, expediting the process

The ODS makes a major effort to have a respectful and cooperative working relationship with the rehabilitation case workers. It is in the students' best interest that all work together to provide the services that will best enable them to obtain their goals. The ODS conducts workshops on campus to meet the personnel and explain the services the college offers and the process used to assist the students in pursuing their educational goals. The ODS counselors make it a part of their job to invite rehabilitation counselors to meetings with students if possible, and they are willing to attend meetings at the rehabilitation facility to meet with potential students as well.

Overall, the ODS provides group workshops, one-on-one meetings, presentations, brochures, flyers, and frequent telephone communication to maintain a constant flow of information between the two offices. As a result of this successful interaction, the ODS constantly receives questions and referrals from clients interested in and/or considering attending STCC. It is important to note also that if the ODS sees students in need of vocational rehabilitation services, the ODS will refer them as well.

Partnerships with Business and Industry

Project staff work collaboratively with existing college resources (primarily the Career Placement/Cooperative Education Office). Staff successfully utilize existing relationships with employers as well as develop new ones through direct recruitment. This recruitment is pursued through scheduled personal meetings with human resources officers of various local and regional employers. This pool of employers includes private for-profit organizations, private not-for-profit agencies, and government agencies. Some of these employers contact project staff directly with information on staffing needs.

Project staff also collaborate with local offices of the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission to enable and facilitate successful competition of project beneficiaries for job openings. A recruitment flyer from the President's Committee on Employment of Persons with Disabilities actively recruits students from the college for its summer program.

In the summer of 1995, a *Guide to Etiquette and Terminology* was developed and disseminated to 500 local area employers (see Exhibit J). In conjunction with a 15-minute video entitled *You Can Get There from Here*, the Guide was used to market the recruitment of students with disabilities for internships, etc. This film won national recognition in 1995 at the National AHEAD conference in Columbus, Ohio.

In 1997, *ACCESSing Ability* was produced to document the successful transition of graduate students with disabilities. This video is being distributed in the academic and business communities to gather continued support for the successful acquisition of employment opportunities for graduates.

In the past, a Business Advisory Board was established for Projects EXCEL and ACCESS. The Board monitored grant progress and promoted the employment of individuals with disabilities in the business community. The board meets bimonthly to strategize effective means for placing students in employment opportunities. The Board acted as a partner in providing business contacts, networking, and the business perspective.

Follow-up Procedures

The responsibility of determining the status of graduates/completers for the entire graduating class falls under the auspices of the College's Career Planning and Placement Office. That office sends out a survey to all graduates of the College in the early fall each year for the previous May graduates. A massive phone call follow-up conducted primarily by that office solicits information on all students, with or without disabilities. Job placement data are then made available on the graduates who respond, identifying placement in a position in or out of their major field of study, job location, school transfer status, and salary.

Due to an increased attrition rate, the College has initiated a task force targeted to address the issues of attrition, suspension, probation, and college withdrawal. The task force has represented the financial aid, student services, counseling center, and admissions offices. Recently, the task force conducted a telephone campaign to speak directly with each student who withdrew to ascertain whether some intervention may have been helpful to ensure their academic success at the college.

Specifically for students with disabilities, it is up to the individual ODS staff person to pursue with the student why he or she has withdrawn from school. Project EXCEL staff have tracked 75 students with disabilities through their college careers to gather data regarding the effectiveness of intensive career counseling and support services to enable success in college. Prior to this, Project SCORE (Students Creating Optimal Resources for Employment) conducted a similar tracking and follow up with 80 students. Withdrawing students are encouraged to come in for an exit interview with either the ODS or Dean of Students Office. The student also must meet with a financial aid representative if warranted. Initial data (end of one year) look promising regarding retention rates for students receiving services from Project EXCEL.

Staff Development

The staff of the ODS has attempted to create an aggressive outreach program to educate staff and faculty of the college. Its major focus has been on multimedia presentations about the role and function of the ODS on campus, current assistive and adaptive technology available to students with disabilities in the classroom, and metacognitive strategies for effectively working with students in the classroom.

Each year, staff from the ODS attend and present to faculty at division meetings. In the first workshop of the year, the divisions targeted are those which include the majority of majors into which students with disabilities are enrolled. Typically, an outline of the services and responsibilities of faculty in providing academic accommodations are presented, followed by a question and answer period. About 80 faculty members typically attend these division meetings. The meetings were held in November and March of the 1996–1997 academic school year.

In the second workshop, an Adaptive and Assistive Technology Open House, exhibits and displays the various technology available to students on campus. In May of 1997, the ODS and Project EXCEL also co-sponsored an Assistive Technology Fair that was supported by 15 vendors and attended by close to 100 faculty, staff, employers, and students from campus and the local community. Feedback was very positive, and faculty from the Health/Human Service divisions mandated attendance for students in the Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy Assistant programs.

In July 1997, Project EXCEL staff developed and disseminated *Students with Disabilities in the Classroom: A Resource Guide for Faculty and Staff* to all faculty in the day and evening divisions of the College (see Exhibit K). This 36-page resource guide has received accolades from administration, staff, and faculty alike. Baseline data for research purposes have been obtained through surveys of faculty and will be reevaluated after the training in the spring semester 1998. Effectiveness and usefulness of the guide will be measured.

Other media include a 10-minute video entitled *ACCESSing Ability*, produced in the spring and summer of 1997. The video highlights current students and graduates of the college with disabilities currently employed or in experiential learning activities in local businesses. Production of this film finished in August of 1997 and is closed captioned. Plans are to show the film at the yearly division staff meetings and community presentations to local employers as a learning tool.

On September 18, 1997, nationally acclaimed attorney Salome Heyward was on campus for a full day presenting to faculty and staff regarding ADA law and its effect on higher education. Ms. Heyward was available to answer questions on all aspects of disability law for faculty and staff and also met with the ODS staff for private consultation.

The staff of the ODS also actively participate in a Western Massachusetts Service Providers group that meets several times each year. Composed of disability service providers from five local colleges, the group meets to review and support the services provided at the community college and university levels. The ADA coordinator of the college has also served on the Massachusetts Adaptive Computing Technology team for the past several years based at the University of Massachusetts–Boston.

Staff of the ODS also hosted College/Career Information Tours for local state vocational rehabilitation personnel in May of 1997. The agency staff were able to tour the campus, visit with different department chairpersons, and see the services available on campus for students with disabilities.

During academic year 1997-1998, updates to the divisional staff took place in the fall and spring semesters. A half-day employee assistance conference occurred in May 1998. Co-sponsorship of the conference included the Employee Assistance Partnership (EAP) of the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission. Presentations covered disability law, adaptive technology resources, and EAP services in the workplace.

Many of the ODS staff have attended the following professional conferences at various times during 1996 through 1998. The workshops and conferences increase their professional awareness of issues concerning the needs of students with disabilities in higher education. Staff have attended the Association of Higher Education and Disability National Conferences in New Orleans, San Jose, Columbus, and Boston, the National ADA Coordinators Conference (southwest regional) in Alabama, the Psychiatric Grand Rounds through Holyoke Hospital, the Postsecondary Education Learning Disabilities Institute Conference in Saratoga, New York, the Disability Access Institute in Boston, the National Closing-the-Gap Conference in Minneapolis, the Computer Expo in Boston, and the New England Rehabilitation Training Institute on Psychiatric Disabilities in Holyoke, Massachusetts. The Staff presented at the California AHEAD Conference in October, 1998, the NCDA Conference in Oregon in June, 1999, the ACTE Conference in Orlando in December, 1999, and the AHEAD Conference in Kansas City in July, 2000.

Evaluating the Performance of Students with Significant Disabilities

Of students with significant disabilities enrolled in associate degree programs during the 1996-1997 school year, 37 completed the program during or at the close of the 1997-1998 school year.

The primary purpose of Project EXCEL was to demonstrate and evaluate effective strategies that can positively affect the career development, learning, retention, and job placement of adults with disabilities mainstreamed through community college career programs.

It was hypothesized that

♦ . Persistence rates and graduation rates of adult college students with disabilities will improve after identification of career goals and participation in a comprehensive service delivery program.

♦ Job placement rates for adult students with disabilities who acquire structured career relevant work experience while matriculating through college will meet or exceed the placement rates of students with disabilities who did not.

♦ Career education faculty who have had professional development exposure to ADA regulations and to uses of adaptive technology for assisting persons with disabilities will increase the number of students they refer to employers for jobs when such referrals are solicited.

The Project findings show evidence of higher retention rates among EXCEL participants. Seventy-two percent of first-year EXCEL participants were retained throughout the three-year period, while only 52 percent of the control group of non-participants were retained. During the second year of the project, almost 66 percent of the Excel participants were retained, while only 43 percent of the non-participants were retained. At the end of the three-year project, about half of the retained participants graduated and about half were still enrolled.

Higher grade point averages were found among participants in the EXCEL Project. During the first year, the mean grade point average for participants was .37 higher than non-participants. During the second year, the EXCEL students' mean grade point average was .46 higher than the control group's.

Job placement rates, too, were higher among the EXCEL students. Of the first-year participants, 52 percent were working—15 in full-time positions and 11 in part-time positions. Of the first-year control group, only 22 percent had jobs, 8 full-time and 3 part-time. Among the second-year EXCEL students, almost 26 percent were working, compared to only 8.6 percent of the non-EXCEL students.

EXCEL Survey Results

An important facet of Project EXCEL is the survey of faculty opinions regarding several issues related to students with disabilities (see Exhibit L). Based on the surveys and personal interviews, it was found that faculty were interested in receiving information that was succinct, easily readable, and not requiring interpretation. Personal or departmental contact with students with disabilities had more impact on their opinions than any materials that were distributed. Faculty were more open to working with the Office when they realized that they were not going to be asked to alter their academic standards. Overall, significant, measurable changes in faculty attitudes were not found in the study. There was, however, a move from negativity to neutrality on many of the items measured, and so further research regarding the impact of professional development training on faculty attitudinal changes may prove useful.

Students participating in Project EXCEL completed evaluations of the importance of the services offered as well as their satisfaction with the services they received (see Exhibit M). All of the career/vocational services were viewed as important, and one-on-one career counseling was viewed as the most important service offered in this category. All employment-related services were seen as at least somewhat important. Assistance with writing cover letters and resumes was identified as the most important of these services. General support services were also viewed as at least somewhat important, but overall not as important as the career/vocational and employment-related services.

In addition to the valuing the importance of one-on-one career counseling, students also gave this service their highest satisfaction rating. With the employment-related services, they were most satisfied with the cooperative education job bank binders. General support services received the highest satisfaction ratings overall, with computer tutoring being the most highly rated service in this category.

Plans for Improvement

Current services provided to students with disabilities are comprehensive. The state-of-the-art adaptive computer technology lab is a model for all surrounding schools. The configuration of assistive technology on our campus is centralized with distribution to other campus labs on an as-needed basis. Our goal is greater integration of assistive technology into existing labs and better distribution. Achieving this goal requires increased training of faculty members and lab technicians in the use of adaptive/assistive technology so that they become more knowledgeable in the use of these applications. We also plan to integrate the adaptive computer technology currently available in our labs into the College's Student Success Center.

A staff person from Project ACCESS serves on the Quality Team to improve teaching and learning on the campus, making sure that any services targeted to improve the academic success of students will be accessible to students with disabilities. As the campus moves into the 21st century, it is the intent of the staff of the ODS to ensure the accessibility of the services to students with disabilities.

Exhibit A
Accommodation Form

Date:_____

To:_____

Class/Section:_____

From:_____ Ext._____

Student:_____ SSN:_____

This student has come to us seeking support services due to a documented disability. The following are recommended accommodations:

Classroom

_____Tape recorder   _____Seating (specify)_____

_____Beverage in classroom   _____Assistive listening device

_____Sign language interpreter   _____Note taking assistance

_____Other (specify)_____

Testing

_____Extended time: _____time & a half   _____double time   _____other:_____

_____Distraction-reduced space (available in Office of Disability Services)

_____Reader

_____Scribe

_____Equipment (available in Office of Disability Services/Adaptive Computing Lab):

    _____Word processor with spell checker/grammar checker

    _____Speech input computer (Dragon Dictate)

    _____Magnification system: ____MAGIC   _____Closed-circuit TV

_____Other (Specify)_____

Students are encouraged to meet with their instructors to discuss the accommodations listed above. Please call 781-7822 with any questions or concerns.

_____   _____
Student   Counselor

Springfield Technical Community College is mandated by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 to provide accommodations to students with disabilities. Our office assists faculty and staff in provision of appropriate modifications for students with disabilities.

Exhibit B
Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Policy

Students with disabilities may be eligible for testing accommodations. In order to establish this eligibility, the student must provide clear documentation of the disability, which is then kept on file in the Office of Disability Services. Appropriate accommodation will be determined by Office of Disability Services staff in consultation with department faculty.

The instructor has the option of determining the time and place of the exam, within the guidelines provided by ODS. The student may take the exam in a Division Office or classroom; or with the instructor's permission, the student may take the exam in the Office of Disability Services during the regular class time or an alternative period. ODS can provide a distraction-reduced location and, if needed, a reader or a scribe. Any other alternative location must be preapproved by the instructor and the Disability Services staff. Please note: Proctoring is not available through the Office of Disability Services.

Procedure

Student's Responsibilities

♦ Meet with instructor(s) and discuss exam arrangements and necessary accommodations prior to, or as early as possible in, the semester.

♦ Arrange to take exams as closely as possible to in-class exam times.

♦ If taking exam in the Office of Disability Services, schedule necessary exam space with the office at least one week in advance.

♦ Schedule scribe or reader service (if needed) at least two weeks in advance.

♦ Assure that any changes in arrangements are communicated directly to the Office of Disability Services by the instructor.

♦ Students must take the exam in the agreed upon location at the time specified. Notify Office of Disability Services immediately of any changes in exam place or time.

Transfer of Exam Procedure (If taking the exam in Office of Disability Services)

The following are acceptable methods of transferring an exam to and from the Office of Disability Services:

◆ The instructor seals the exam in an envelope and signs her or his name across the seal of the envelope. The student delivers the sealed envelope to the secretary of the ODS. The completed exam is returned to the instructor in the same secure manner as above.

OR

◆ The instructor may personally deliver the exam and pick it up from the ODS.

OR

◆ A work-study student may pick up the sealed exam from the instructor and return it after it has been sealed and signed by an ODS staff person.

Exhibit C
Course Substitution Policy

Policy

The college recognizes and is understanding of the nature and severity of documented specific learning disabilities that may preclude learning in the quantitative area even with reasonable accommodations. In some cases the institution will permit substitution of courses as an accommodation. Each case must be carefully considered on as individual basis.

Procedure

The following procedure must be followed if a student with a documented learning disability is seeking a modification of a quantitative requirement.

1. The student is required to petition in writing to the Learning Disabilities Specialist attached to Disabilities Services Offices that he or she will be unable to fulfill a specific course requirement.

2. The student must provide the Learning Disabilities Specialist with current, relevant, and comprehensive documentation and assessment data from certified professionals. Testing must be comprehensive. It is not acceptable to administer only one test for the purpose of diagnosis. Minimally, domains to be addressed must include (but not be limited to):

    ◆ Aptitude: The *Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale – Revised* (WAIS-R) or WAIS-III with subtest scores is the preferred instrument. The *Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery – Revised; Tests of Cognitive Ability* or the *Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale*, Fourth Edition are acceptable. The *Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test* (KBIT) is not a comprehensive measure and therefore is not suitable.

    ◆ Achievement: Current levels of functioning in reading, mathematics and written language are required. Acceptable instruments include the *Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery-Revised;* Tests of Achievement: *Wechsler Individual Achievement Test* (WIAT); *Stanford Test of Academic Skills* (TASK); *Scholastic Abilities Test for Adults* (SATA); or specific achievement tests such as the *Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test.* The *Wide Range Achievement Test-3* (WRAT-3) and the *Mini-Battery of Achievement* (MBA) are not comprehensive measures of achievement and therefore are not suitable.

    ◆ Information Processing: Specific areas of information processing (e.g. short term and long term memory; sequential memory; auditory and visual perception/processing; processing speed) must be assessed. Information from subtests on the WAIS-R (or WAIS-III), the *Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Cognitive Ability*, or the *Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude-Adult* (DLTA-A), as well as other instruments relevant to the presenting learning problem(s) may be used to address these areas.

3. Testing must be current. This means testing that has been conducted with the past three years. All reasonable accommodations and services are based upon assessment of the current impact of the student's disabilities on his or her academic performance.

4. Actual test scores must be provided. Standard scores are required; percentiles and grade equivalents are not acceptable unless standard scores are also included.

5. In addition to actual test scores, interpretation of results is required. Test protocol sheets or scores alone are not sufficient.

6. Professionals conducting assessment and rendering diagnoses of learning disabilities must be qualified to do so. Trained, certified and/or licensed school psychologists, clinical psychologists, learning disabilities specialists, and other professionals with training and experience relevant to adults and their evaluation are typically involved in the process of assessment.

7. Diagnostic reports must include the names, titles and professional credential (e.g. licensed psychologist) of the evaluators as well as the date(s) of testing. All reports must be typed. Handwritten scores or summary sheets are not acceptable.

8. The student must provide documentation that includes the specific diagnoses of a math disorder. If documentation does not specify the diagnosis of a math disorder, the student will be required to attempt the course for which the substitution is being requested. This attempt must be done while employing reasonable academic accommodations.

9. The course substitution mush be reasonable and appropriate to the student's course of study.

10. Any reasonable substitution must be approved by the department chairperson and the appropriate dean. Appropriate substitutions for eligible persons for graduation and general education requirements are to be recommended by department chairpersons where there is reasonable opportunity for successful employment or meeting admissions requirements for transfer into four-year colleges and universities. Substitutions must not compromise the academic integrity of the programs.

11. The student's request will be reviewed by the Learning Disabilities Specialist. All documentation will be maintained confidentially by the Learning Disabilities Specialist. Recommendations will be submitted to the appropriate department chairperson.

Grievance Procedure

If a student has a grievance relating to this policy, he or she should refer to the procedures outlined under Student Grievance Procedure in the Springfield Technical Community College Catalog. If assistance is needed with the process, the student my contact the Dean of Student Services' Office, and help will be provided

Exhibit D
Project EXCEL Student Survey

Dear Student:

We need your HELP! We have been given the opportunity to explore ways to better meet the needs of our students with disabilities. Your responses to the following survey would provide us with much needed feedback to help improve the services we provide. Either circle the number of your response or fill in the blank. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask one of the staff members on duty.

Student Name:_____   Date:_____

Social Security Number:_____

1. Have you identified a vocation or profession as your ultimate goal?   1. Yes   2. No

    If YES, what is that vocation or profession?_____

    If NO, what will help you decide on a career?_____

2. How many years do you expect it will take for you to obtain this goal?_____

3. How willing are you to pursue this goal even if it takes longer?
              1. Very Willing   2. Somewhat Willing
              3. Somewhat Unwilling   4. Very Unwilling

4. Of the following, what have you done to learn the skills you need to succeed in your chosen career?
    (Check all that apply.)
    ☐ Talked to persons who are in that career
    ☐ Read books/articles on that career
    ☐ Surfed the World Wide Web for information about that career
    ☐ Worked in same or related field
    ☐ Received career/vocational counseling about that career
    ☐ Taken courses related to that career
    ☐ Other; please describe_____

5. How knowledgeable are you about the skills and abilities that are necessary to obtain the career you have identified above?

    1. Very Knowledgeable   2. Somewhat Knowledgeable

    3. Somewhat Unknowledgeable   4. Very Unknowledgeable

6. How confident are you in your ability to team/develop the necessary skills?

    1. Very Confident   3. Somewhat Unconfident

    2. Somewhat Confident   4. Very Unconfident

7. What kind of obstacles do you believe you will have to overcome to fulfill your goal?
   (Check all that apply)

☐ My own value as an employee   ☐ Lack of finances

☐ My own employability   ☐ Need for child care

☐ Personal health/medical   ☐ Lack of transportation

☐ Limited self-confidence   ☐ Family Opposition

☐ Self-awareness   ☐ Social pressures

☐ Academic demands   ☐ Employer reluctance

☐ My inability to get along with others   ☐ Lack of self-discipline

☐ My own inability to do the job   ☐ Other; Specify

8. Which of the above is your greatest obstacle?_____

9. Have you ever confronted this obstacle before?   1. Yes   2. No

    If YES, what did you do? (Check all that apply)

☐ Nothing   ☐ Got help from family/friends

☐ Got professional help/assistance   ☐ Other; please specify

10. Once you have received the proper training for your chosen career how likely is it that you would be discriminated against by a potential employer?

    1. Very Likely   3. Somewhat Likely

    2. Somewhat Unlikely   4. Very Unlikely

    If UNLIKELY, why?_____

11. In what kind. of services would you participate to help you obtain your goal? (Check all that apply)

☐ Career planning course   ☐ Vocational counseling

☐ Job seeking skills course   ☐ Interest testing

☐ Internship co-op course   ☐ Academic advising

☐ Part-time job through student employment   ☐ Resume preparation

☐ Participate in co-op seminars   ☐ Practice interview skills

☐ Placement assistance

12. Would you be willing to participate in a special grant project designed to study the effectiveness of these types of services?   1. Yes   2. No

Thank you for your cooperation. Please return this form to a staff member on duty, drop it off in the Disabilities Office Building 27 Second Floor, or return by mail to:

       Office of Disabilities Services

       STCC

       One Armory Square

       Springfield, MA 01101-9000

Exhibit E
Narrowing Down the World of Work
A Career Decision Making Workbook

Compiled By

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Funding Source

Introduction

Trying to make a decision about what kind of career you would like to do for the rest of your life can often times be a very frightening process. There are so many occupations to chose from that choosing the "right" one for yourself can be a very overwhelming process. The positive side however, is that there are some very easy steps that you can take to help ease your anxiety while at the same time allowing you to make some very wise and informed career decisions. This booklet is designed to help you with this very process. Read through it and do the activities that will help you over the obstacle(s) you are currently facing. Remember, though, this is not designed to give you the answers, but to facilitate the career decision making process. Ultimately you must be the one to choose what you will do with your future. It is not an impossible task, but instead one that requires a great deal of commitment on your part. Good luck with your journey! If you should need more guidance, don't forget to contact one of the counselors in the Office of Disability Services at x3179.

Dreaming: The Starting Block

When you were a young child and someone asked you what you wanted to do when you grew up, do you remember what you told them? Further, did you actually ever wind up doing this job? Regardless of whether or not you have actually accomplished your childhood dream is not the point. What really matters is that you dared to dream that you could and you would accomplish what you imagined.

Dreaming and using your imagination are perhaps the best ways to begin to choose the career that might be best suited for you. Take a minute to brainstorm. Think about all of the things that you would like to do for an occupation. Don't think about whether you would be good or bad at them; or if you have the education to do the job; or if the job will produce a large enough income to meet your lifestyle etc. Leave all of the boundaries behind you and just dream. For now, allow yourself to just think about every possible job that you have any kind of interest in doing. On the lines provided below write down those jobs which come to mind.

After you have brainstormed all the occupations that interest you, it would be to your benefit to prioritize them by simply numbering them, with #1 as the career you find most interesting.

Occupations of Interest

_____   _____

_____   _____

Self Assessment: The Reality

Now that you have given yourself time to dream, you need to begin to focus in on the realities of your life circumstances. The time has come to look within yourself and find the career that is best suited for you. This can be done best by matching your personality with what you want from life. This process, otherwise known as self-assessment, is perhaps one of the most vital parts of your career search. You will be much happier in a career that suits your lifestyle and personality as well as your interests instead of one that does not. Therefore, the activities that follow on the next few pages will be extremely valuable to you as you continue on your journey.

What Do You Value?

One way to begin the self-assessment process is to evaluate what you value. Values can be defined as the amount of worth or importance that a person gives to something. Therefore, when dealing with the career development process, it is vital that you understand what components of life and work are most important to you. Understanding what components you put less value on will be important information as well. When you can understand what you value in a career, you will be more satisfied with your life in general.

Life Style Values

Clarifying what you value from your life is not always an easy process. It can take time. To begin to help you get a better grasp on what your values are, it might be easier to break down the process into smaller segments. Begin by learning what things are important to your **life style**. This is very essential because if you can determine what you need to be happy in life, you will be able to ensure that these elements are included into your work environment. For example, if you find that you truly value your time alone, you would not want to chose a career such as a doctor where you would probably be on call often and be around people all of the time. An occupation such as this would allow for very little time alone.

Below is a survey designed by Bowling Green State University (Allen and Nagy, 1995) that will assist you in beginning to understand what your life style values are. By reading through the survey and ranking how you feel about each item, you will learn what is most important to you. You will also begin to know what components are not important to you. When you have finished the survey, list the top four items you feel are most important to you and the top four which have no importance to you. Use this information when you begin to do some career research.

Ideal Life Style Inventory

Live in a house:

        Very Important   Moderately Important   Not Important

Live in a Rural Area:

        Very Important   Moderately Important   Not Important

Entertain at Home:

   Very Important   Moderately Important   Not Important

Spend Money:

   Very Important   Moderately Important   Not Important

Frequent Travel:

   Very Important   Moderately Important   Not Important

Have Many Possessions:

   Very Important   Moderately Important   Not Important

Have Lots of Money:

   Very Important   Moderately Important   Not Important

Live Close to Recreation:

   Very Important   Moderately Important   Not Important

Live Near Cultural Centers:

   Very Important   Moderately Important   Not Important

Political Activity:

   Very Important   Moderately Important   Not Important

Access to Movies, Restaurants:

   Very Important   Moderately Important   Not Important

Active Member in Community:

   Very Important   Moderately Important   Not Important

Time Alone:

   Very Important   Moderately Important   Not Important

Access to Education:

   Very Important   Moderately Important   Not Important

Live in Constant Climate:

      Very Important   Moderately Important   Not Important

Live Near Place of Work:

      Very Important   Moderately Important   Not Important

Work Only for Money:

      Very Important   Moderately Important   Not Important

The Most Important Life Style Values

_____

_____

_____

The Least Important Life Style Values

_____

_____

_____

56

Work Values

Beyond knowing what you value in life, it will become important in your quest for a career to understand what you value from work. What is it exactly that you need to get out of your work? Do you need to be able to work with people in your job to feel successful? Do you need to be in a position of authority? Both? Neither? There is no right or wrong answer to what you need to get out of the career you choose, only that you must want to get something from your work. In essence, understanding what will satisfy you in a job will further help you direct your career choice. If you are able to pinpoint what exactly you want to accomplish through work, and you incorporate these values into the career you choose, you will be motivated, happy and satisfied with your career decision.

To help you get started with this task, Oakton Community College has compiled a list of values that provide job satisfaction. Read through the list and put a (+) next to those things you think you would like to have in your job. Then put a (−) next to those things you do not want in a job. There very well may be things that you are feeling indifferent about in this list. Just leave those blank. When you are finished, highlight the top four items you will value and want to get out of your job. Then, with a different color highlighter, mark the top four you would not want in your job. When you continue with the career process, keep these in mind. You will want to make sure that these characteristics are addressed in your research.

Work Values Inventory

1. **HELP SOCIETY**—do something to contribute to the improvement of the world I live in

2. **HELP OTHERS**—provide service to other people in a direct way, individually or in small groups

3. **PUBLIC CONTACT**—visibly work with others on a daily basis

4. **WORK WITH OTHERS**—visibly work as a member of a team toward common goals

5. **AFFILIATION**—be recognized as a member of a particular organization or department

6. **FRIENDSHIPS**—develop close personal relationships with colleagues as a result of work

7. **COMPETITION**—engage in activities where there are win/lose outcomes (sales)

8. **MAKE DECISIONS**—have the power to decide courses of action, policies

9. **WORK UNDER PRESSURE**—work in situations where time pressure is prevalent or the quality of work is constantly judged

10. **POWER AND AUTHORITY**—control work activities or opinions of other people

11. **INFLUENCE PEOPLE**—change attitudes or opinions of other people

12. **WORK INDEPENDENTLY**—do projects alone without other people

13. **KNOWLEDGE**—strive to constantly learn about information, truth and understanding

14. **INTELLECTUAL STATUS**—be regarded as an "expert" in the field

15. **GENERAL CREATIVITY**—create new ideas, programs or organizational structures, not previously developed by others

16. **ARTISTIC CREATIVITY**—develop new art in a fine arts field such as music, photography, painting, or sketching

17. **AESTHETICS**—appreciate the beauty of the environment around you

18. **SUPERVISION**—be directly responsible for work done by others

19. **CHANGE AND VARIETY**—work responsibilities frequently change in content and setting; unstructured work environment

20. **PRECISION WORK**—work in situations requiring exact measurements to be attained with machinery or tools

21. **STABILITY**—work environment involving routine activities; guaranteed work hours

22. **SECURITY**—assurance of keeping my job within reasonable payment for services

23. **FAST PACE**—environment where the work must be done quickly at a high pace of activity

24. **RECOGNITION**—people are aware of my accomplishments

25. **EXCITEMENT**—experience high degree of stimulation in my work

26. **ADVENTURE**—work duties require physical or mental risk-taking

27. **PROFIT/GAIN**—likely to accumulate large amounts of money or other material gain

28. **INDEPENDENCE**—able to determine the nature of work without significant direction from others

29. **MORAL FULFILLMENT**—my work is contributing to a set of moral standards which I feel are important

30. **LOCATION**—life in a town, city or other geographical area conducive to my lifestyle which allows me to do the things I enjoy the most

31. **COMMUNITY**—live in a town/city/region where I can get involved in local programs and issues

32. **PHYSICAL CHALLENGE**—a job that requires physical exertion

33. **TIME FREEDOM**—responsibilities I can carry out according to my own time schedule

34. **HONESTY**—being frank and genuinely yourself with everyone

35. **TRAVEL**—involved with frequent out-of-town travel

36. **COMMUTE**—place of employment that is near my home (less than 1/2 hour away)

37. **EARLY RETIREMENT**—able to stop working before age 65 with a good pension

38. **ADVANCEMENT**—work that offers many opportunities for continued education and professional training

39. **WORK ENVIRONMENT**—pleasant, comfortable, quiet

40. **TRUSTWORTHINESS**—ability to be honest, straightforward and caring

41. **RELIGIOUS FAITH**—having a religious belief

42. **LOYALTY**—maintaining allegiance to a person, group, or institution

43. **JUSTICE**—treating others fairly or impartially, conforming to truth, fact, or reason

44. **EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING**—peace of mind, inner security, ability to recognize and handle inner conflicts

Research: The Final Step

Congratulate yourself! You have done quite a bit of work in your quest to find a career that is best suited for you. However, you are not finished. The final step in the career development process is to do some research. Like anything else, if you gather all the information you can, you will be able to make an informed decision. This is absolutely true when you are trying to decide on an occupation. Without doing this final step, you will not have all the information you need to make that informed decision. Therefore, all of the work you have done up to this point will not have paid off.

So, where do you begin? The good news is that you have a lot more information than you realize. All you need to do is go back to the beginning of this workbook where you first started to brainstorm about careers that were interesting to you. Choose one of those careers out of that list that you would like to research and begin.

Avenues to Doing Career Research

You can find information on a particular career in several different ways, and the good news is that for the most part you will not even have to leave Springfield Technical Community College to it. Below is a list of avenues that you can use to do your research. **Remember that when doing your research you will want to keep in mind those things which you value in life and work. Make sure that most of these values will be achievable in your career.** If you cannot maintain the life and work style you are looking for then perhaps you need to research another career on your list.

Office of Disability Services

The Office of Disability Services along with the Counseling Center are staffed with experienced counselors who can help you as you begin to research a career. The counselors in both of these offices will be able to provide you with excellent assessment tools as well as references and contacts for your informational interviewing process.

Cooperative Education

The Office of Cooperative Education is an excellent resource for you as you do your career research. The staff in this office will be able to assist you with much of your career exploration as they will be able to direct you toward valuable research resources and may be able to give you references to use in the informational interviewing process.

The Informational Interview

When you are doing research on a specific career, the informational interview is one of the most valuable ways that you can find out information. The informational interview is exactly that—an interview where you speak to someone doing the career you are researching. You should set up an appointment that **should last no long than a half hour** to discuss the specifics of his or her job. Because the staff in the Offices of Disability Services, Cooperative Education and the Counseling Center may have access to many employers, it is advised that you meet with a counselor before you set up an interview.

Below is a series of questions (Bowling Green State University, 1995) that may be helpful to you when you prepare for your informational interview. This list is not considered complete but instead a beginning point. You are encouraged to add any questions that you feel would be valuable to you in your research.

Informational Interview Questions

1. How did you get into this occupation?
2. What steps did you take to get where you are now?
3. What methods did you use to find work in the occupation you are in?
4. How did you become interested in this occupation?
5. What attracted you to this particular occupation?
6. What are the entry-level positions that a person might qualify for in this occupation?
7. What is the progression of jobs from the beginning to the top?
8. What does the company expect you to do in this job?
9. What are the responsibilities in this job?
10. What are the characteristics of a person who is successful in this type of work?
11. What products/services does your company produce?
12. Are there any special concerns that a person should be aware of in this occupation?
13. What skills, abilities, and personal qualifications does a person need for this position?
14. What type of preparation, education, training or background do you need for this job?
15. Do you need a certain degree or license for this job?
16. What is it about this job that gives you personal satisfaction?
17. What are the frustrations about your job?
18. What is the best thing about working here?
19. How much time do you spend at work?
20. Does the amount of time you spend at work effect your personal time?
21. What are the beginning, average and top salaries of people in this occupation?
22. Who makes the decision on how the work will be done in your department?
23. What are the lines of authority in your company?
24. What is a typical day like for you?
25. What other occupations are closely related to this job?
26. Could you suggest any temporary, part-time, or summer work experiences that would help a person get ready for this career?
27. How secure is employment in this field?
28. What types of changes do you see in this field in the next few years?
29. What other advice or information could you give to a person considering a job in this career?
30. Is it all right to contact you for another interview if I need more information in the future?

Career Library

One way to do your research is to visit the career library that the Office of Disability Services has compiled for your use. The library is located in the Adaptive Lab in Building 27 on the second

floor. This library has many books, videos, worksheets, and software programs to help you find all of the information you will want to know about a particular career. Please refer to Appendix A of this workbook for a complete listing of available materials. The library is open to all students at STCC. For more information about the career library call x3179.

Reference Library

The library located on the first floor of Building 27 also has many references that would be helpful to you in your research process. Some of the books in the reference library may also be available in the career library offered by the Office of Disability Services. However, the library has many other books that are not available in the career library.

Conclusion

You have now finished the task of learning how to narrow down your career choices. For some, the journey has been successful and you have reached some solid conclusions about what you might want to have as a career when you finish at STCC. For others, the discovery process may not be over. While you may have been able to begin to narrow down your career choices, you still have not come to a final decision. This too, is fine. Continue working on it. Continue to follow the steps outlined in this book: Dream, Self-Assess, and Research. If you continue to use this process, in time you should narrow down the career path. However, if after doing the activities within this workbook you are still feeling really overwhelmed, you may want to contact a counselor at x3179 to help you get back on track.

Appendix A, Narrowing Down the World of Work Career Library Reference List (Excerpts)

Books

Job Searching Skills
Adams (1996). *Adams Cover Letter Almanac.*

> New edition. Like *Adams Resume Almanac* and *Adams Job Almanac*, this book is big (735 pages), and very nicely done. There are 600 samples of cover letters, including responses to classified ads, responses to "blind" ads, "cold" letters, follow-up letters, information requests, thank you letters, responses to rejection, "resurrection" letters, acceptance letters and more. Also gives the 10 key ingredients of a successful cover letter, the 20 most common blunders, etc. Indexed.

Adams (1997). *Adams Electronic Job Search Almanac.*

> Geared toward computer users of all levels, this easy-to-use resource covers all aspects of job hunting, including finding over 450,000 current job openings using the internet, bulletin board systems and other online resources; taking advantage of career services offered by commercial online providers; networking with peers via special interest groups and newsgroups; creating and posting an electronic resume; researching potential employers and using the Web to clinch job interviews. Very comprehensive and up-to-date.

Kennedy, J. L. (1996). *Cover Letters for Dummies.*

> Offers tips and techniques for letters geared toward a variety of job hunt situations such as inquiring about positions, asking for additional information, requesting an interview, salary history issues, and thanking interviewers for their time. Includes suggestions on how to make a cover letter stand out in a crowd and provides over 75 examples of cover letters and other job hunt letters that work, plus how to answer newspaper ads, send letters to employment agencies, "cold-call letters," and more.

Elderkin, K. W. (1989). *How To Get Interviews from Classified Job Ads.* Manassas, VA: Impact.

> Shows job hunters how to respond effectively to classified job advertisements in newspapers and magazines.

Lefkowitz, R. (1997). *WOW! Resumes for Administrative Careers.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

> Administrative assistants, secretaries, and other office workers: A resume book just for you is finally here! Going beyond basic "how-tos" this book is loaded with examples and checklists geared to the office professional. Discover how to hook an employer's interest with just the first few lines, enhance job descriptions using a simple formula, transform even menial work into impressive tasks, and create cover letters that sing.

Marcus, J. J. (1996). *The Resume Doctor: How To Transform a Troublesome Work History into a Winning Resume.* New York: HarperCollins.

> For those who are currently unemployed or have a history of unemployment, those nearing retirement, those who have undergone a recent decrease in responsibility, those with a record of job-hopping, a history of unrelated positions, or various other work history problems, this book can be a lifesaver. Marcus offers reassurance, creative ideas and detailed problem-specific strategies for showcasing anyone's strengths and successes while de-emphasizing problems.

Marino, K. (1993). *Resumes for the Health Care Professional.* New York: John Wiley & Sons.

> More than just guidelines for the health care professional's unique resume and cover letter, this book identifies job trends in the health care industry, illustrates effective job search techniques, and demonstrates how to prepare for an interview. Special advice for the health care student and recent graduate is given plus a lengthy list of health care and medical associations and their publications.

63

Nadler, B. J. (1994). *Naked at the Interview: Tips and Quizzes to Prepare You for Your First Real Job.* New York: John Wiley & Sons.

> Many first-time job seekers face the same embarrassment and vulnerability that you may have felt if you ever dreamt you were suddenly naked in front of a crowd of people. Using a series of nine intriguing diagnostic tests, Nadler helps first-time job seekers focus on their viable job skills and master the entire job search process. Each quiz is followed by practical advice on action steps and listings of many helpful resources. Combining humor and career counseling expertise, Nadler offers job hunters in today's grim job market both a laugh and a leg up on landing a job.

Noble, D. F. (1996). *Gallery of Best Resumes for Two-Year Degree Graduates: A Special Collection of Quality Resumes by Professional Resume Writers.* Indianapolis: JIST Works.

> This book begins by citing 101 ways for making a better resume and ends with hundreds of examples of resumes, many provided by professionals who design resumes for a living. Unlike many resume books, where the examples are all authors, the diversity of sources is reflected in the wide range of examples shown.

Witt, M. A. (1992). *Job Strategies for People with Disabilities.* Princeton, NJ: Peterson's Guides.

> The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has opened the door for employment opportunities never before available to millions of people with disabilities—nearly one out of every five of our nation's adults! This definitive career book rings with sensitive and practical advice for getting your first job, being promoted, and making career changes. It will answer your questions about the law, career decisions making, and job finding as it tells the stories of real people with real jobs and shares their secrets of success.

Career and Major Choice References

Easton, T. A. (1996). *Careers in Science.* Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Publishing.

> This book provides all the information career changers and college students choosing a career in science need to select a profession and narrow it down to a job that suits them. Written by experts in the field, this book presents an overview of the profession, outlines job options, shows how to plan and prepare for the career, reports on salaries and benefits, education and training, advancement possibilities, long-term outlook, and resources for more information.

Farr, J. M. (1997). *Top Jobs for People Without Degrees.* Indianapolis: JIST Works.

> Up-to-date descriptions for 111 major jobs, with details on growth projections, training required, and working conditions. Bonus career planning and job search section includes techniques proven to help find better jobs in less time.

Farr, J. M., Ludden, L. L., and Mangin, P. (1997). *The Enhanced Occupational Outlook Handbook.* Indianapolis: JIST Works.

> This book combines the best features of the Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH) and the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT). Based on the latest available data, the Enhanced OOH combines all job descriptions from the OOH with all 7,700 DOT job titles—and complete DOT job descriptions for the 3,000 most important jobs. The result is a 700-page book that eliminates having to juggle two big reference volumes to find what you want. You get lots of additional career information from the DOT organized around the OOH's user-friendly occupational clusters.

Fasulo, M. and Walker, P. (1995). *Careers in the Environment.* Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Publishing.

> This book provides all the information career changers and college students choosing a career in the environment need to select a profession and narrow it down to a job that suits them. Written by experts in the field, this book presents an overview of the profession, outlines job options, shows how to plan and prepare for the career, reports on salaries and benefits, education and training, advancement possibilities, long-term outlook, and resources for more information.

Major Decisions: The 150 Most Popular College Majors

> *Major Decisions* is the perfect tool for college-bound students or students wanting more information about a specific major. Detailing the 152 most popular majors, *Major Decisions* provides all the information students need to choose a course of study. Each major has a full one-page write-up with a complete description, plan of study, career opportunities, and other important information. The detailed information makes college and career searches more understandable and manageable. Researched, written, and extensively field tested by two experienced school counselors, *Major Decision* was developed using information supplied by hundreds of colleges and universities.

Sacks, T. J. (1997). *Careers in Medicine.* Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Publishing.

Stair, L. B. (1996). *Careers in Computers.* Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Publishing.

Swanson, B. (1995). *Careers in Health Care.* Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Publishing.

> The above books provide all the information career changers and college students choosing a career in medicine, computers and health care need to select a profession and narrow it down to a job that suits them. Written by experts in the field, these books present an overview of each profession, outline job options, shows how to plan and prepare for each career, reports on salaries and benefits, education and training, advancement possibilities, long-term outlook, and resources for more information.

College Success Strategies

Adelman, P. and Olufs, D. (1990) [2nd ed.]. *Assisting College Students with Learning Disabilities: A Tutor's Manual.* Association on Higher Education and Disability.

> This manual is designed for use by service providers and tutors working with students with learning disabilities. Included are suggestions for (1) determining problem areas, (2) helping students study

effectively, (3) planning exam strategies, and (4) managing time. Also included is a sample tutoring program for spelling.

Dolber, R. (1996). *College and Career Success for Students with Learning Disabilities.* Lincolnwood, IL: NTC Publishing.

> This new guide helps students with learning disabilities tackle all the critical issues of college and career. Dolber covers the college assessment and application process with an emphasis on the special needs of this group, plus finding and gaining admission to the right college, preparing cover letters and resumes, exploring career options, networking, interviewing, evaluating job offers and more. A clear format uses bulleted lists, checklists, and other features for maximum accessibility and readability.

Marshall, B. and Ford, W. (1994). *The Secrets of Getting Better Grades: Study Smarter, Not Harder.* Indianapolis: JIST Works.

> Millions of students of all ages do not reach their academic potential. Why? Because they need to study smarter. This is an excellent primer that helps students get better grades without studying longer. Give practical advice on taking a positive approach to your abilities, manage your time and study environment, working with your brain and not against it, listening and taking notes more effectively, becoming more efficient in your reading, writing better term papers and oral reports, and memory aids for peak performance on tests.

Resources from the Department of Education and Training

Career Moves: Your Guide to Growing Job Opportunities in Massachusetts
> This booklet provides descriptions of selected growth jobs, education and training requirements, wages and salaries, industries where the jobs are found, and information about career paths in the occupational field.

Directory of National Information Sources on Disabilities 1994–1995, Volumes 1 and 2
> This two-volume directory provides names, addresses, and phone numbers of a large number of agencies who handle every aspect of people with every type of disability.

Occupational Opportunities: Your Guide to Job Prospects in Massachusetts
> This booklet identifies the fastest growing occupations and those projected to generate the most new jobs through 2005. An overview of the state's economic and employment structure is also included.

Software

The Occupational Outlook Handbook on CD-ROM

For students doing Career Awareness activities, the OOH multimedia product will keep them interested as they explore the different groups of occupations to see what each includes. For students doing Career Exploration, they can use their assessment results or go to the Index to look up occupations "they've heard about". And, for students actually doing career planning, the detailed descriptions in the OOH can be searched using the keyword process to find all of the occupations that relate to their primary interests.

The American Sign Language Dictionary on CD-ROM (also comes with a hardcover dictionary)

This multimedia training combines 2,200 video clips and signs, learning games, animation and finger spelling. No book could be as effective in showing real people using these highly animated, metaphoric and visual words. Surpasses videotape by accepting command in five languages and can replay each word again and again. The CD-ROM includes a brief history of the language, which is estimated to be the third most commonly used language in the United States. The American Sign Language Dictionary on CD-ROM brings the highly acclaimed book to life, making it fast, easy, and fun to learn sign language.

Interview Skills of the Future

"Ask the Expert" exposes students to the interview process. "Recall-O-Rama" quizzes students. "Picto Puzzle" challenges students to uncover the hidden messages by correctly answering interview related questions. Pre- and post-tests in each of the three modules measure concept mastery and presents the student with a "Certificate of Completion."

Nerves, Sweat and Fear: The Basics of Interview Preparation

This module focuses on the basic skills found in preparing for the interview. The essentials of resume writing and the application procedure are explored. This module emphasizes that when it comes to interview fright, the best defense is a good offense. A good offense begins with thorough preparation.

A Two-Way Street: Interview Skills in Action

Students are taken step-by-step through the interview process from the greeting through the interview close with this module. Topics such as what to wear, non-verbal behavior, and answers to common interview questions are all explored in the interactive CD format.

Special Interview Challenges: Minorities, Women and People with Disabilities

This section teaches a tactful and positive response to challenging interview questions for those groups having a hard time breaking through the traditional hiring barriers. A special emphasis is placed on avoiding the "victim" role. This CD acquaints the student with terms such as networking and informational interview. Ideal for students of any age.

Your Personal Trainer for the SAT

> This CD-ROM creates a personalized training schedule to help students maximize their scores! Complete with five full SAT tests' worth of sample questions and over 1,000 on-screen problems. This software includes extensive strategy sessions to help students improve in key subjects; workout sessions to allow students to practice what they have learned; 3D graphs to chart progress and compare scores to the national average of entering first-year students at over 300 colleges; two pre- and post-test booklets to let students simulate the actual exam away from the computer; and detailed score reports to let students evaluate strengths and weaknesses.

Multimedia Study Skills

> Organized into two modules: (1) Study Skills. Students tailor a program to cover learning styles, notetaking, prime study times, reading, listening, remembering, and getting to the point of an assignment. Each section includes full motion videos and audio with exercises that reinforce the content. (2) Test Taking. Presents a system for approaching tests, with specific sections on objective tests (true/false, multiple choice, and matching) and subjective tests (essay).

Videos

Special Interview Challenges: Minorities, Women and People with Disabilities (also comes with reproducible worksheets for students)

> This video teaches tactful and positive responses to challenging interview questions for those groups having a hard time breaking through the traditional hiring barriers. It illustrates proper techniques for successful interviewing. A special emphasis is placed on avoiding the "victim" role. It also acquaints the user with terms such as networking and informational interview.

Part of the Team

> This video was produced as a public service by the IBM corporation in cooperation with the National Easter Seal Society and the Work Environment and Technology Committee of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. This video introduces you to eight managers and supervisors who know first-hand about working with people with disabilities as well as ten people with different kinds of disabilities. "Part of the Team" is valuable for: awareness training on diversity in the workforce; addressing questions about supervising people with disabilities; and information on whom to call for free assistance on hiring and accommodating people with disabilities.

Nobody Is Burning Wheelchairs

Informational Interviewing: A Foot in the Door

> How to tap the great potential of an informational interview is discussed in this new, up-beat, and relevant video. Informational interviews are a great way to learn about an industry, a company, a job title, and more. This new career resource even covers preparing for an informational interview, preliminary research to do ahead of time, and some appropriate questions to ask and some questions to avoid. This career resource is a must for today's competitive job market.

Success in College and Career with Attention Deficit Disorders

This video program is for graduating high school students, college students, their counselors and educators, and adults with ADD interested in making appropriate career decisions. Information focuses on what people with ADD can do to achieve success in their career and in college. Appropriate school selection, using resources available on campus, communicating with instructors, and developing study strategies are discussed.

Miscellaneous

How to Reduce Test Anxiety

This is an **audio** tape designed to help students who have trouble with test anxiety reduce their stress and become more effective test takers.

Career Education Wall Charts

Prepared under the direction of Dr. Carl McDaniels, a nationally known career educator, these wall charts have strong graphics and are extremely informative. Charts include Women in Nontraditional Careers, How to Interview for a Job, Locating Jobs through Classified Ads, Health Careers, Careers in Sports Fields, Educational Requirements for 400 selected Occupations, Earnings by Occupation and more.

Contact Persons

If you would like to use any of the above materials or need assistance,
please ask a staff person from the Office of Disability Services to help you
Remember that all materials on this list are for use ONLY in the Adaptive Lab,

Monday–Friday, 8AM–3:45PM.

Appendix B, Narrowing Down the World of Work
References

Allen, P. and Nagy, E. (1995). *Ideal Life Style Inventory.* Bowling Green State University Office of Career Services: Bowling Green, OH.

Allen, P. and Nagy, E. (1995). *Informational Interview Questionnaire.* Bowling Green State University Office of Career Services: Bowling Green, OH.

Oakton Community College Office of Instructional Support Services. (1993). *Work Values Survey, Career Orientation and Options Program.* Des Plaines, IL.

Exhibit F

Quick Results in Your Job Search

A Job Search Manual for Prospective and Recent Graduates with and without Disabilities

Developers

Tom Kerner and Colleen O'Brien

Springfield Technical Community College

Office of Disability Services

Springfield, MA 01105

Reprinting Permission/Funding Service

Introduction

You may already be an experienced and successful jobseeker. However, you will find one or two pieces of information herein that will help you to expedite or facilitate your effort. If this provides you with even a marginal advantage in your pursuit of your dream job, this manual will be well worth reading.

Now congratulate yourself. It hasn't been easy to get as far as you have. From the quantity and quality of work that you've done, you know that Springfield Technical Community College sends out knowledgeable, competent graduates. The employers in this region know that, too. Through academic study, laboratory work, and field experience you have acquired a set of skills that will make you a valuable asset in your new workplace. That set of skills, however, is not enough to *get* you the job that

you want. You also need a set of job-seeking skills that will help you to identify available openings, get you the interviews for those positions, and present yourself and your qualifications professionally and convincingly in those interviews. The purpose of this manual is to equip you with the skills that you need for that successful job search.

Your successful job search will consist of the following simplified sequence of activities:

| Sub-mission of resume and cover letter | → | Noti-fication of appoint-ment for initial interview | → | Initial interview | → | Noti-fication of appoint-ment for hiring interview | → | Hiring Interview | → | Noti-fication of starting date |
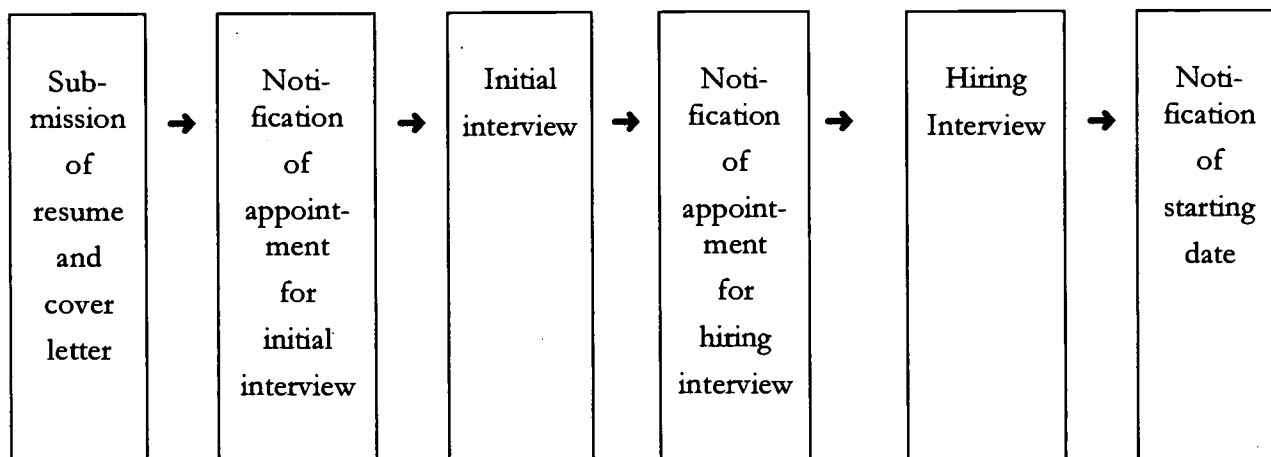
Equipment You Will Need

A minor investment in equipment (some of which you need for other practical purposes anyway) can facilitate your job search tremendously:

◆ Highlighter (for circling ads in the Sunday paper)

◆ Small stack of resumes (on bonded paper)

◆ Stack of networking cards

◆ List of professional references

◆ List of personal references

◆ business grade correspondence for cover letters

◆ Business envelopes

◆ Access to a word processor with letter quality printer

◆ Access to a FAX transmitter

◆ Postage stamps

◆ Thank-you cards

Highlighters are extremely important when you begin the job search. They are helpful when

looking through the classified advertisements in the newspaper because you can accent those jobs which are interesting to you. Also, highlighters will be helpful when reading through job descriptions. It is recommended that at least two different colored highlighters be used when reading through each job description in order to separate different sections of the ad. For example, one color may be used to accent the points of the job description which you would like to emphasize in your cover letter. The other color highlighter may be used to clarify the exact qualifications that the company is seeking in a candidate for the position. Regardless of how you chose to separate your job descriptions with the colored highlighters, be sure it is meaningful and helpful for you in the next steps of your job search.

Keeping a **small stack of resumes** (about 10 or 15) with you at all times is a very good idea. Not only are they readily available when you see a job which you would like to apply for, but you also never know with whom you may be in a conversation regarding your career path. Anyone at any point could inquire about your job search and request to see your resume. If you are going to carry your resumes with you, keep them in a folder or some other protective holder that will keep them free from wrinkling and tearing. Remember: The presentation of your resume reflects on you as a potential job applicant.

Having a **list of professional references** is an essential part of the job search. Potential employers will often ask that you submit a typewritten copy of three to five professional references along with your resume at the time you apply for a job. A professional reference is someone with or for whom you have worked in the past and who will speak highly of your attributes and character in a work setting. Your professors who taught courses in your academic major are usually good people to ask for references. It is important to remember that you always get *permission ahead of time to* use someone's name as a reference for a job.

Your **personal references** are a separate list much like that of your professional reference list. This list should be typewritten and include people who know you very well. However, unlike professional references, personal references usually are individuals who have never worked with you. The three to five people you chose to include on this list should be able to speak of your character in a highly positive way. This list, however, should not include family members. While family members know you well, employers usually assume that they are somewhat biased in their views.

Buy a box of inexpensive **thank-you cards** or note cards (with no greeting printed inside). Write and mail them to your interviewers so that they receive them within 48 hours of each interview.

Networking cards are not necessarily essential to your job search but certainly will be an asset. Networking cards are much like business cards but are designed for the beginning professional. These cards should be the same size as a business card and should contain the following information:

♦ your name

♦ degree you have obtained

♦ date of graduation

♦ your phone number

♦ street address and/or e-mail address

♦ a list of your top four attributes that make you a suitable candidate for the type of position you are seeking

If you decide to design a networking card, make sure to carry several with you at all times. You can give them to anyone who may help you land a job in your field. Also, networking cards can take the place of carrying several copies of your resume.

Jane Smith
AA, Human Services—May 1997
Springfield Technical Community College
◆ Experienced at working with at-risk adolescents
◆ Excellent communication skills
◆ Trained at crisis intervention
◆ Various counseling techniques

1 Springfield Street	(413)555-5555
Springfield, MA 01101	e-mail: jane@javanet.com

Where To Begin Your Search

Start circulating your resume and answering advertisements two months before you graduate. Employers seldom hire walk-ins on the spot to do the kind of work for which you have studied and trained. Since the application and interview process can be drawn out over weeks or months, you need to begin your job search months in advance of your full-time availability. This will enable you to start working as soon as possible after graduation.

If an employer makes you an offer before graduation, ask if you can accept on a part-time basis while you finish your final semester. If an employer really wants to hire you, the employer will be flexible as long as you are, too. If the employer cannot be flexible, you best bet is to say thank you for the offer, but that you need to finish your degree and would you please keep your resume on file if anything should come up in the future.

Resume

Everybody needs help with resume preparation. College resource people who are available to you are:

Louisa M. Davis, Director
Pamela J. White, Assistant Director
Office of Cooperative Education Career Services and Transfer Affairs
Building 27, 2nd floor
(413) 781-7822, Extention 3807
and

Tom Kerner, Career Counselor
Office of Disability Services*
Building 27, 2nd Floor
(413) 781-7822, Extnsion 3179

* In order to take advantage of the services offered by the Office of Disability Services, you must provide clinical documentation of your disability.

The College's Office of Disability Services has placed a set of resume preparation guides (software and conventional print) in the Adaptive Computer Lab for use by students and graduates with disabilities.

Additionally, there are numerous publications and a great many software products available in bookstores and libraries that purport to help in resume preparation. As you review these products, keep in mind that, effective immediately, your resume is the most important document of your life because it is going to be a determining factor in how you pursue the rest of your working life. The time and care that you invest in your resume now will be more than justified by the number and variety of job interviews that they secure for you. You need to look for products that require you to do actual research into your past, digging out specific numbers and quantities (for example, "recruited 36 new accounts" and "operated facility supplying fresh water to 115,500 households and 3,600 commercial/industrial users") and specific skills that you acquired and applied (for example, "computed weights of steel I-beams up to 36.25 tons using trigonometry and solid geometry" or maintained skin integrity of 18 comatose patients.")

Any resume-preparation product that purports to generate your resume in a couple of hours probably is not eliciting nearly the amount of information that you need to place on it. There is no such thing as quick resume preparation. If you rush through it, you will leave out a lot of information that employers need to know. The compilation and editing of your marketable skills probably will require from ten to thirty hours.

Many large institutions use computerized resume scanners, which function best with resumes that are printed on plain white paper with no enhancements such as fancy type fonts or graphics. In the case of scanners, the person who reviews the scanned resumes will read them on a computer screen, never even having seen the hard copy. This is so much better for you because it means that you won't have to print on expensive paper. However, you should mail it in a 10-inch by 12-inch envelope because a scanner can misread a word that has a crease running through it.

Your resume may take months to prepare. It requires research, composition of a rough draft, and at least three sessions of editing. This means that you need to start it in your second-to-last semester. By word processing it and saving it on a disk, you will be able to make important additions to it based on your academic work in your final semester.

Take copies of your resume with you every place you go. Keep them in a sturdy pocket folder in your car or in your backpack. You never know whom you might encounter.

'7 4

Cover Letters

Cover letters will accompany all resumes that you sent out in reply to advertisements. Any of the standard business letter formats are acceptable. The easiest one is illustrated in Appendix A. Be sure to begin with your return address and telephone number block. Follow with the mailing date. Next, put in the address block of the organization to which the letter is going. Direct it, if possible, to the attention of a particular individual.

The text of the cover letter contains three paragraphs, each with a special set of information:

1. the title of the job and where you found out about it

2. your particular qualifications for meeting the needs that the employer expressed in the advertisement

3. your request for an interview and information on how to contact you to arrange it at the employer's convenience

Keep in mind that you can use this same system for every cover letter that you write. After you have done three or four, you will be able to compose them almost automatically. Sections one and three above don't require any elaboration. Section two, however, requires some explanation. When employers write job descriptions of available positions, they are describing the ideal candidate. Since this ideal candidate *does not exist*, the employer will hire the applicant who most nearly matches the list of qualifications. In order to compose section two of your cover letter, simply read through the advertisement and address the employer's requirements item by item. Cross each item off in the advertisement as you write about it. If the employer has listed any skills that you lack, don't mention them. However, you should finish this paragraph with an assurance to the employer that you enjoy learning new skills.

Be sure to keep a copy of every cover letter that you send out. When you are notified of an interview appointment, review the cover letter that you sent with your resume requesting that interview. Your interviewer(s) probably will ask you to elaborate on information in that letter. Rehearse some answers to yourself beforehand.

Fancy envelopes are not a requirement since they are thrown into the trash by the clerk or secretary who opens them. The people responsible for screening, interviewing, and hiring won't even see your envelopes so don't waste your money on expensive ones. Plain ordinary business envelopes will work just as well in getting your resume and cover letter to where they need to go.

Networking

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (1996) defines "networking" as "the exchange of information among individuals, groups, or institutions." Fortunately, you don't have to construct your network. It is already in place. All you have to do is identify the elements of it and start working them.

Everyone you know is a potential contact to a job referral. These people know other people. Tell all of them that you're looking for a job and what kind of job you want. Give each of them a copy of your resume or networking card.

Schedule time every Sunday or Monday to screen the "help-wanted" ads in the Sunday paper, marking the interesting ones with your highlighter. Mail out your replies to the Sunday advertisements by Monday evening.

One-stop career centers—Career Point in Holyoke (413) 532-4900 and FutureWorks in Springfield (413) 858-2800 are agencies that contract with the state to assist you in finding work. Their services, which are free of charge to you, include access to telephones, word processors, FAX units, and postings of job openings. Each center offers scheduled initial welcome sessions that introduce you to the services and facilities to which you will have access. Call ahead to find a time that is convenient for you. If you haven't registered at a one-stop career center, do so by the middle of your next-to-last semester.

Professors are frequently approached by recruiters asking for recommendations of reliable hard-working students. Be sure to give a copy of your resume to each of your professors in your academic major. This will facilitate their referring you to recruiters.

The College's Office of Cooperative Education/Career Placement and Transfer Affairs offers a job referral service to students who register. This requires five copies of your resume and filling in a brief registration form. Many employers contact the College directly seeking applicants for openings. This office notifies qualified registrants promptly by mail on receiving job postings. Additionally, students may come in personally to review the job postings in any degree category. They are arranged in binders by academic major, with the most recent postings placed on top. This office is located on the second floor of Building 27.

The Internet is a valuable source of up-to-the-minute information of numerous types. It is particularly useful for searching for jobs outside of your local area. You can use it to acquire information on employment opportunities regionally, nationally, and internationally. You also can use it for researching your prospective employers to find details of their product and service lines and their financial conditions. Your searches will be governed to an extent by the limitations of the mechanisms you use to get access to the Internet. One caution to observe is that some information sources tell you how regularly their information is updated while others do not. Sometimes you will not know if the information is current. The reference sections of the College library and your local public library have the facilities to get you started on your searches. Call ahead to see if you need to reserve keyboard time.

Employment agencies—most agencies collect their fees only from the employers that hire the successful applicants. Other agencies, however, collect fees from the job applicants. If you decide to use an agency that requires you to pay, be sure to require a written guarantee of permanent employment before paying any money to that agency.

Temporary employment ("temp") agencies are an excellent means of securing transitional employment in order to generate an income while you pursue your search for your full-time career position. There are other advantages as well, including the opportunities to avoid long-term commitment while you work for particular employers. By accepting a temporary position, you can get first-hand experience with an employer to find out if that employer has created the kind of work environment in which you can enjoy working.

Disclosure of Disability and Accommodations Requirements

The general rule on disclosure of a disability is that it is personal information, and you need to reveal it only when it will have some impact on your interactions with the people with whom you are dealing. According to the Chairperson of the President's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities, "The only reason to disclose a disability is if you require an accommodation for an interview or to perform the essential functions of a particular job" (Coelho 1997). It is essential, however, that you deliver appropriate information well in advance of the time that it will be acted upon. Don't save it as a surprise. Nobody likes surprises. If, for example, you communicate by TTY and relay operators, you need to put those telephone numbers on your resume and cover letters. The people who schedule your interviews will appreciate having this information in advance because it will enable and facilitate communication with you. If you need an accommodation (such as wheelchair access or a sign language interpreter) for your interview, you need to inform the person who schedules the appointment. Accommodations required for the interview are the *only* ones to disclose before the interview. You should clearly state your workplace accommodation needs in your hiring interview after you are offered the job. This will enable you to be productive the moment that you start working.

Interviewing

If you are nervous about experiencing job interviews, you should contact the people named in the above Resume section of this guide. They will schedule appointments with you to perform realistic practice interviews in an office setting. This service is especially valuable to people who previously have never had to interview for jobs. College professional staff people will critique your interview performance with you, pointing out your strengths and making suggestions for improvements.

Every job has a dress code. Dress for your interviews as you have seen professionals dressed in their jobs. However, if your new career requires wearing a uniform, you should wear a dark conservatively-cut business suit to your interviews. Men and women interviewees should keep jewelry to a minimum because your interviewer needs to concentrate on you with no distractions. Be sure to polish your shoes. Don't apply perfume, after-shave lotion, or any other heavy fragrances before you interview. You never know if your interviewer is going to be allergic to them or might simply find them unpleasant. The only equipment you will need is a notebook, a pen, and a few extra copies of your resume in case they are needed. Your interviewers may expect you to jot down important numbers, words, and phrases.

The College's Office of Disability Services has CDs and videos on interviewing skills. They are available in the Adaptive Computing Lab on the same schedule as the resume resources listed above. They will give you valuable details on how to present yourself as positively and professionally as possible.

Your College library and your local public library also have materials on the subject. As with most subjects, these sources will contradict each other on some details. However, they all agree on general principles and will be valuable in helping you to prepare for your interview.

77

There will be two distinct rounds of questioning in your interviews. Each of your interviewers will have a prepared set of questions for you. Appendix B of this document contains a sample list of these questions. You should prepare a two or three sentence answer for each question. Limit your answers to 30 seconds. Confine your answers strictly to the questions that are asked. This will help you to keep your answers clear and concise, and your interviewers will respect your courtesy. Be sure that you understand each question before answering. If you are unsure of your interviewer's meaning, ask for clarification.

The second round of questioning will be an invitation to you to ask some questions of your interviewers. Appendix C of this manual offers some suggestions for you to rephrase in your own words. Your interviewers will expect you to express your concerns, but limit yourself to three or four questions. Remember that your interviewers have to budget their time.

Regardless of how much you practice, you still will be nervous in your interviews because a lot of your life depends on how well you present yourself in a short period of time to complete strangers who are scrutinizing you very carefully. If you feel uncomfortable in the interview, and the quality of your presentation suffers because of your discomfort, be sure to tell your interviewer that you are very motivated and highly qualified in your field but that you have very little experience at interviewing and just don't do well in interviews. Your interviewer will take this into account when evaluating your performance.

At the close of each interview ask for the interviewer's business card. This will facilitate your sending your interviewer a personal thank-you card or note.

Interim/Temporary Employment

Most graduates accept interim employment in order to pay the bills while continuing their searches for their dream jobs. There is nothing wrong with this. In fact, the employer who finally hires you in your career field will look positively on your work ethic if you are willing to work outside of your field on an interim basis. It shows that you enjoy working and are flexible. Temporary employment can also be an opportunity to get on the job training and experience.

Temporary staffing agencies can be helpful to you in finding these interim placements, both inside and outside of your career field. Moreover, placement by a temp agency can lead to an offer of full-time permanent employment. Temporary placements can also give you an inside look at an organization to help you decide if you want to start a career there.

If you have a choice of interim jobs, accept one that is related to your chosen field. If necessary, accept a series of jobs that approximate your career choice more and more closely until you interview successfully for the one that you truly want.

On the same theme, be prepared to accept part-time work in your field while you continue your search for full-time career-track employment. Your interviewers and supervisors probably had the same experience. They will look positively on your experience and on your willingness to work.

Accepting Rejections

Keep a file of your rejection letters. Like everyone else, you will get a lot of them. You will feel tremendously frustrated at times. Remember the College staff are here to assist you in your job search. If you feel that you are not getting anywhere with it, make an appointment to come in and review the strategies that you are applying. You might have left out an important element of your search, or the job market in your field might be particularly difficult at the time of your search. Either way, your College placement staff people can help you with advice, counseling and referrals. When you finally accept the offer of your dream job with your dream employer, you will be glad that you sought help and persevered.

Rejecting Acceptances

If you are apprehensive about accepting a job offer (or staying in a job where you do not feel successful), your College placement staff people, once again, are here to help you with your decision-making. Reluctance or unhappiness are indicators that your intuition is telling you something about workplace issues—not necessarily career choice matters. Listen to your intuition. Discuss the issues in specific terms with the College's career staff before you make a decision. Remember that your work environment is just as important as the work itself. If you cannot quit a stressful and aggravating job due to financial reasons, make an appointment with your College career staff to design a job search plan around your work schedule. You are qualified for an interesting and rewarding job in a workplace that you will enjoy going into every day. You have worked hard for that privilege, and you deserve it. Now go for it.

Appendix A, Quick Results in Your Job Search
Sample Cover Letter

1501 Main St. - Apt. 4C
Ludlow, Ma 01102
(413) 788-2304

October 17, 1997

UltraTech Coatings Corporation
Attn: Human Resources
788 Springfield Street
Chicopee, MA 01013

To whom it may concern:

Enclosed please find my resume in response to your advertisement for an Administrative Assistant in the *Sunday Republican* of October 16.

My extensive successful experience in customer service and complaint resolution could be very useful to your company. I can manage various multi-line telephone systems. My office skills include Microsoft Access, Microsoft Word, and Wordperfect. I also have experience with numerous filing systems. Enjoyment of working a variety of tasks and effective prioritization are among my strengths. I work well independently and also enjoy cooperating on teams.

I feel that I am well qualified for this position. Please contact me at the above return address or telephone number to arrange an interview at your convenience.

Yours,

Gregory Leese

80

79

Appendix B, Quick Results in Your Job Search
Questions Frequently Asked by Recruiters

1. Tell me something about yourself.
2. What do you see yourself doing as a career in five years?
3. Do you work well under pressure?
4. How do you feel about working as a team member?
5. How do you feel about working independently?
6. What particular strengths will you bring to this position?
7. What are some areas that you feel you need work on?
8. Think about the best supervisor you ever had, and tell me what made that person a good supervisor.
9. Without mentioning any names, please describe a serious problem you have had in your workplace, and tell me how you handled it?
10. What types of people do you get along with best?
11. What types of people present the greatest challenges to you?
12. Why did you leave your last employer?
13. Why have you changed careers?
14. What things do you do to handle job stress?
15. If you could tell me one thing right now that would make me hire you on the spot, what would that be?
16. Why have you chosen to pursue a career in this field?
17. How are you at managing time?
18. Can you prioritize your work?
19. Why do you think you would like to work for this company?
20. Tell me about your experience and how you feel it relates to this position?
21. Can you make occasional 2-day and 3-day trips?
22. How do you evaluate your own success or failure?
23. Please describe the work environment in which you are most comfortable.

Appendix C, Quick Results in Your Job Search
Questions You Can Ask a Recruiter

1. Why do you enjoy working for this organization?
2. What are the opportunities for advancement here?
3. Do you anticipate employment stability or expansion?
4. What are the biggest challenges that my predecessor faced?
5. Does the company promote from within or recruit from the outside?
6. How does the company encourage continued education?
7. How long do people typically work in this position?
8. How will my performance be evaluated?
9. What industry or economic trends could influence the company's staffing?
10. What management style is encouraged by the company's leadership?
11. Do you offer any in-house training programs?
12. What are the promotion possibilities from this job?
13. What are this company's greatest strengths?
14. Please describe the work environment?

References

Coelho, T. (1997). Looking for Employment? Tips for conducting a Successful Job Search from Chairman Coelho. *En a' ble* 1, 16

Mish, F. (Ed.). (1996). *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (10th ed.). Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc.

82

Exhibit G
Notification to Faculty

To: Faculty Member

From: Andrea Bonavita, Counselor
        Office of Disability Services

Date:

Re: Accommodations for student who will be attending your class

Please note the enclosed accommodation form lists a student who will be in need of a notetaker in your classroom. The form specifies which section the student will be attending. I have also enclosed a Student Orientation Packet describing general information regarding our office for your convenience.

Our office is requesting that you assist this student in finding a peer to share their notes that they will be taking in this specific lecture class. If you could make a general announcement at the beginning of the semester, in class, for anyone willing to volunteer to do this it would greatly assist the student in the process of finding someone quickly. Or if you are familiar with a student in this particular class that you think may be willing to help please suggest it to him or her.

Our office will provide the student who is taking notes with special carbon notebooks so that they may just take notes as usual and then rip out the carbon copy and give it to the student that is unable to take the notes. As soon as the semester begins the student will be speaking with you to go over more details.

Thank you for your cooperation. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns in regards to this matter. I may be reached in the Office of Disability Services at extension 3179.

Exhibit H
Assistive Technology Evaluation Form

General Information

Name_____   Date of Birth_____

Address_____   Telephone_____

City_____ State_____   Zip_____

What is your diagnosed disability?_____

Please describe your functional disability (disabilities):_____

Are you a client of a state rehabilitation agency?   Yes   No

If yes, name of agency_____

Name of counselor:_____   Telephone_____

Are you working with the Office of Disability Services?   Yes   No

If yes, name of Counselor:_____

Year in School: _____   Major:_____

Intended area of employment:_____

Courses you are taking this semester: Attach copy of schedule

What are your goals for using a computer?_____

Writing Experience

How do you take class notes?

- ☐ Independently handwritten
- ☐ Independently word processed
- ☐ Notetaker
- ☐ Friend's notes

- ☐ Instructor's notes
- ☐ Tape recorder
- ☐ Don't take notes
- ☐ Other_____

How do you prepare papers or written assignments?

- ☐ Independently handwritten
- ☐ Handwritten by someone else
- ☐ Independently typed

- ☐ Typed by someone else
- ☐ Submitted on audio tape

If typed, do you or someone else use a   ☐ Typewriter   ☐ Computer

How do you revise and edit your papers or assignments?

- ☐ Independently handwritten
- ☐ Handwritten by someone else
- ☐ Independently typed

- ☐ Typed by someone else
- ☐ Submitted on audio tape
- ☐ Don't revise or edit

To make revisions, do you or someone else use a   ☐ Typewriter   ☐ Computer

If you revise or edit, your papers yourself, what tools do you use?

- ☐ Dictionary
- ☐ Thesaurus
- ☐ Grammar book

- ☐ Computer programs
- ☐ None
- ☐ Other_____

Computer Experience

Have you ever used a computer?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

What type of computer have you used?

- ☐ IBM/IBM compatible
- ☐ Macintosh

- ☐ Other PC
- ☐ D VAX mainframe
- ☐ Other mainframe

Do you own a computer?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No
                                What kind?_____

What word processing programs have you used?_____

What other programs have you used?_____

Where did you get your computer experience?_____

Can you type?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Are you a touch typist?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Have you used a standard keyboard?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

What, if any, adaptive device have you used with the computer?_____

86

Exhibit I
Release of Confidential Information

I, _____ of _____
        (name of client or guardian)   (address)

authorize _____
        (name and address of individual, hospital, agency, or program)

to disclose information that is contained in my medical/educational record to:

        Office of Disability Services

        Springfield Technical Community College

        One Armory Square

        Springfield, MA 01101

The purpose or need for such disclosure: _____

_____

_____

This consent to disclose information from my record may be revoked by me at any time except to the extent that action has already been taken to comply with it. Without my express revocation, this consent will automatically expire within six months.

_____
Signature of client (or) Parent (or) guardian

_____
        Counselor

_____
Date.

87

Exhibit J
Guide to Etiquette and Terminology for Working with Individuals with Disabilities

Mission Statement

Project SCORE's (Score Creating Optimal Resources for Employment) objective is to empower students with disabilities to access and pursue career opportunities and to assist employers by providing technical consultation about the Americans with Disabilities (ADA), job accommodations, and assistive technology.

People are often confused about the correct terminology to use when writing or talking to individuals who have disabilities. The first section of this guide provides the appropriate terminology for referring to people with disabilities and disabling conditions.

To begin, it is important to make the distinction between disability and handicap.

A disability is a condition caused by accident or trauma, genetics, or disease that may limit a person's mobility, hearing, vision, speech, or mental function. Some people have one or more disabilities.

A handicap is a physical or attitudinal constraint imposed upon a person, whether or not that person has a disability. *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* defines handicap as "to put at a disadvantage."

For example, some people with disabilities use wheelchairs. Stairs, narrow doorways, and curbs are handicaps imposed upon people who use wheelchairs.

People with disabilities prefer to be called "people with disabilities." People with disabilities are not conditions or diseases; they are individuals first and only secondarily do they have one or more disabling conditions.

Writing or Talking about People with Disabilities

Acceptable Terms	Unacceptable Terms
Person, persons with a disability	Cripple, crippled. The image conveyed is of a twisted, deformed, useless body
Disability: a general term used for functional limitations that interfere with a person's ability, for example, to hear, walk, learn, or lift	Handicap, handicapped person
People with cerebral palsy, people with a spinal cord injury	Cerebral palsied, spinal cord injured, etc. Never identify people solely by their disability.
Person who has had a spinal cord injury, polio, a stroke, etc., or a person who has multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, arthritis, etc.	Victim; people with disabilities do not like to be perceived as victims for the rest of their lives, long after victimization has occurred.

Has a disability, has a condition (of spina bifida, for example) or born without legs, etc.	Defective, defect, deformed, vegetable. These words are offensive, dehumanizing, degrading, and stigmatizing.
Deafness/hearing impairment. "Deafness" refers to a person who has a loss of hearing within a range of slight to severe. "Hard-of-hearing" describes a person who is hearing impaired and usually has listening and speaking abilities adequate for ordinary telephone communication. Many individuals who are hard-of-hearing use hearing aids.	Deaf and dumb—is as bad as it sounds. Inability to hear or speak does not suggest less intelligence.
Person who has a mental illness or a psychiatric disability.	Psycho, nut, crazy, schizo, psychiatric, schizophrenic.
Person who has a mental or developmental disability.	Retarded, idiot.
Uses a wheelchair or crutches; a wheelchair user; walks with crutches.	Confined or restricted to a wheelchair, wheelchair bound. Most people who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices do not regard them as confining.
Able-bodied; able to walk, see, hear, etc. People who are not disabled.	Healthy. When used to contrast with disabled, healthy implies the person with a disability is unhealthy.
People who do not have a disability.	Normal. When in use as the opposite of disabled, implies the person is abnormal.
A person who has (name the disability). For example, a person who has multiple sclerosis.	Afflicted with/suffers from. Most people with disabilities do not regard themselves as afflicted or suffering continually. A disability is not an affliction. An affliction may have caused a disability.

Facts You Can Use

♦ The Americans with Disabilities Act covers people whose disabilities typically cause great difficulty in such daily activities as walking, talking, seeing, hearing, communicating, thinking, learning, or working.

♦ Of the 14,648,000 persons who have work disabilities, only 4,250,474 (29 percent) are employed.

♦ Two-thirds of the individuals with disabilities between the ages of 16 and 64 are unemployed.

Tips on Conversation

♦ The most important thing to remember in any conversation with someone with a disability is to assume nothing. If you have a question about what to do, what language or terminology to

89

use, what assistance, if any, they might need, the person with the disability should be your first and best resource. Do not be afraid to ask.

♦ Be patient not only with the person with the disability but also with your attempts to ease communication. Becoming frustrated can make the conversation more difficult and both parties need understanding to communicate effectively.

♦ The important thing to focus on while conversing with someone with a disability is the goal of the conversation. It is what is communicated, not the manner in which the communication takes place, that is important.

Blind and/or Visually Impaired

Important Facts

♦ The definition of legally blind is 20/200 vision with best correction. Most people who are considered blind have some sight rather than no sight at all.

♦ Many persons who are blind are independent and get around fairly well.

♦ While many people who are blind can use Braille, most people who are blind do not.

Things To Do

♦ Introduce yourself. Identify who you are and what your job or role is. Give the person verbal information that is obvious to those who can see.

♦ Be descriptive when giving directions. Saying "over there" has little or no helpful information to someone with little or no vision. Stating "three doors down on your left" would be much more useful.

♦ Always ask someone if they need your assistance and how you might assist them before assisting them. Lead someone who is blind only after they have accepted your offer to do so. The control must be with the person needing assistance.

♦ Tell them when you have brought new items into the environment, describing what they are and, more importantly, where you have put them.

Things To Avoid

♦ Do not move items after their position has been learned by the person.

♦ Do not use references that are visually oriented, like "over there by the green plant."

♦ Do not interact with a guide dog while it is working.

Considerations

♦ Individuals who are blind and/or visually impaired are largely more independent than most people believe them to be.

90

◆ Individuals who are blind have a history of being patronized and talked to as if they were children.

Deaf and/or Hard-of-Hearing

Important Facts

◆ Most individuals who are deaf or hearing impaired have some hearing rather than no hearing at all.

◆ Lip-reading, while helpful, is at best only 30 to 50 percent effective.

◆ Long conversations with individuals who can lip-read can be very fatiguing to the person who has the impairment.

◆ Not all individuals who are deaf use sign language, speak, or lip-read.

Things To Do

◆ Find out how the individual best communicates.

◆ If the individual uses an interpreter, address the individual, not the interpreter.

◆ If the individual reads lips, speak in a normal, not exaggerated way. Short, simple sentences are best. Avoid blocking the view of your face.

◆ Gain the person's attention before starting a conversation.

◆ If you think you may have been misunderstood, verify understanding.

Things To Avoid

◆ Do not become impatient if it takes longer to communicate.

◆ If the individual uses hearing aids, avoid conversations in large, open, and noisy surroundings.

Considerations

◆ Individuals who may deal very well one-on-one in communication may have a difficult time with two or more speakers, especially if there are many interruptions and interjections.

◆ When someone asks, "what did you say?" the answers "never mind," "nothing," or "not important" are very common replies. These are considered offensive because they communicate that the person is not worth repeating yourself for.

◆ When two or more people are conversing with someone who lip reads, they should be close together, not far apart.

Wheelchair User

Important Facts

♦ There is a wide range of physical abilities among wheelchair users. This means that the persons who use them require different degrees of assistance or no assistance at all.

♦ Some persons do not use wheelchairs exclusively but may also use canes, leg braces, or, in some cases, no assistive devices at all for short periods.

♦ All individuals are different. Different sizes and shapes meet the different needs of their individual users. Some wheelchairs move manually and others are motorized.

Things To Do

♦ If you are asked to fold, carry, or store a wheelchair, treat it with the same respect you would if you were holding someone's eyeglasses.

♦ When speaking to someone who uses a wheelchair, remember to give the person a comfortable viewing angle of yourself. Having to look straight up is not a comfortable viewing angle. Stand at a slight distance or sit.

Things To Avoid

♦ Do not come up to someone who is using a wheelchair and start pushing the chair without asking permission.

♦ When communicating, do not stand too close to the person in the wheelchair. Give him or her space.

Considerations

♦ It is a common experience for individuals who use wheelchairs to be told that some place is accessible when it is not. Listen carefully when anyone who uses a wheelchair tells you that some area that you thought was accessible is not.

♦ Do not assume that the person using a wheelchair needs assistance. Ask first if the individual is in need of anything that you can provide.

Conditions that Cause Difficulty with Speech

Important Facts

♦ There are many reasons for having difficulty with speech, including deafness, cerebral palsy, stroke, head injury, physical malformation of speech mechanisms, and general speech impairment, to name just a few.

♦ It is not unusual in stressful situations for someone's speech to become harder to understand.

Things To Do

♦ If you do not understand what the individual is saying, bring it to his or her attention immediately and ask how the two of you can better communicate.

♦ If it is a stressful situation, stay calm. If you are in a public area, consider moving to a more private location.

♦ Consider writing as an alternative means of communication.

Things To Avoid

♦ Do not pretend to understand if you do not.

♦ Do not finish people's sentences for them.

Considerations

♦ Many individuals with difficulty in speech find themselves in situations where people treat them as if they are drunk, developmentally disabled, or mentally ill. They are unfortunately accustomed to being avoided, ignored, or even hung up on by phone.

♦ Accessibility for individuals with difficulty in speech lies within your power. Your understanding, patience, and communication skills are as important to someone with speech that is difficult to understand, as a ramp or a grab bar is to someone who uses a wheelchair.

Individuals with Dwarfism

Important Facts

♦ Dwarfism is a protected disability under the ADA. However, there is a difference between being short in stature and having dwarfism. Generally, an individual is considered to have dwarfism if he or she is 4'10" or under and has differentness in body proportion.

♦ Fewer than half of the people with dwarfism experience orthopedic problems.

Things To Do

♦ Whenever possible, find a way to have eye-level contact with the individual. Sometimes this means standing a little farther apart than usual so that the individual does not have to look straight up at you.

♦ If the individual is having difficulties dealing with existing furniture, ask what she or he prefers.

♦ Relate to the person's age and professional status, not his or her physical size.

Things To Avoid

♦ Avoid shortness jokes, even if the individual initiates them. Some individuals with dwarfism may use a joke about being short to "break the ice"; this does not provide a license to make shortness jokes about him or her.

Considerations

◆ There are two parts of the disability: a sociological part and a physiological part. The sociological part affects how people feel about themselves, which in turn affects everything they do. However, a person will usually find it easier to deal with the physiological component of disability.

Mental and Emotional Illness

Important Facts

◆ There are many types of mental and emotional illnesses with different causes. Some disorders are thought to be biologically or chemically based and can be controlled with medication therapy.

◆ Just because a person is taking medication does not mean she or he is too unstable to work.

◆ There are many different degrees of severity; some are very disabling while others are easily managed or short-term.

Things To Do

◆ Respect the individual's privacy during evaluation on the job.

◆ If questions are asked relating to his or her disability, interview the individual in a private space.

◆ Be empathetic; realize the person may not be comfortable talking about his or her disability.

◆ Be sensitive to his or her workload, especially initially, before she or he has mastered the job.

Things To Avoid

◆ Do not try to provide counseling or therapy to the individual.

◆ Do not reveal information about his or her disability to co-workers.

Considerations

◆ Many people have either experienced mental or emotional illness at some time in their lives or know someone who has.

◆ Because this disability is invisible, others cannot easily see the pain, but it is real.

◆ When testing, make sure the individual understands the questions being asked. If there is more than one part of a text, give instructions for only one part at a time. Let the individual finish the first part before giving instructions for the next part.

94

Specific Learning Disabilities

Important Facts

♦ Public Law 94-142 defined a specific learning disability (SLD) as "a disorder in one or more psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken, or written, which...may manifest itself in imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations."

♦ SLDs affect *how* an individual learns.

♦ Not all individuals with SLDs are dyslexic or have difficulty writing or doing mathematics.

♦ Not all individuals with SLDs have difficulty hearing or processing information, attention deficiencies, or confused thinking patterns.

Things To Do

♦ To find out how the individual best learns, *ask.*

♦ If the individual has difficulty reading instructions, instruct verbally or use a tape recorder or Dictaphone™.

♦ If the individual has difficulty writing, use a voice-activated computer or a word processing unit with spell check features. A careful job description evaluation might find writing is not an essential part of the job.

♦ If the person has an auditory processing deficiency, ask if she or he understands you; paraphrase what you said if there is a doubt. Allow the person to demonstrate the task. *Be patient.*

♦ If the individual has difficulty reading, use a tape recorder or Dictaphone™. A text enlarger or a reader that highlights text as it reads also might be helpful.

♦ If the individual has directional problems, provide a map when sending him or her to other locations within your facility.

♦ Be literal in what you say. Many individuals with SLDs have difficulty interpreting different tones of voice. They may understand words to mean exactly what they say.

♦ Encourage the individual to be creative, possibly finding other ways to do tasks; this new way ultimately may be more efficient and to your advantage.

Things To Avoid

♦ Do not become impatient or annoyed with the individual if it takes longer for her or him to learn something than an employee without SLDs.

♦ When communicating verbally, avoid repeated interruptions and confusing directions.

Considerations

◆ In the interviewing situation, ask the applicant how she or he would do the essential functions of the job. The individual with SLDs may have new or different ways to accomplish the goals. Be flexible. Do not insist on how to do something, only that it needs to be done.

◆ If job applications or other forms require completion, allow the person to take them home to fill out, if possible.

◆ Testing accommodations should be made on a case-by-case basis. The applicant should be asked before the test what he or she will need, if anything, to accommodate any disability(ies). Make sure that the individual understands the questions being asked. Keep in mind that the individual with SLDs often cannot remember more than one instruction at a time, particularly under stressful conditions.

Information obtained from the California Governor's Committee for Employment of Disabled Persons developed for the *Windmills Training Manual.*

Exhibit K
Students with Disabilities in the Classroom
A Resource Guide for Faculty and Staff (Excerpts)

Compiled By

Kris Kozuch

Student/Staff Development Coordinator

Project EXCEL

Springfield Technical Community College

Office of Disability Services

Division of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs

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Funding Source

This guide will be made available in alternative format by request.

9 7

A Message from the President

Dear Colleague:

The Mission Statement of Springfield Technical Community College reflects our commitment to student success by providing educational and training programs to all students. The College continually strives to deliver the highest quality educational experience through its teaching and student support services for a diverse college community that includes students with disabilities.

Springfield Technical Community College offers equal access to all programs, services and facilities within the College. The Office of Disability Services seeks to implement and support the College's commitment to excellence in education in a barrier free environment.

Thank you for your continued contributions to excellence in service to all our students. This resource guide will serve as a valuable asset to the faculty and staff of our college in assisting students with disabilities to develop and achieve their goals successfully.

Sincerely,

Dr. Andrew M. Scibelli
President

98

The Law

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

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

Definition of Terms

A person with a disability is an individual with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. An individual is considered to be a person with a disability if he/she (1) has a disability, (2) has a history of a disability, or (3) is perceived by others as having a disability.

Provisions of Section 504

Springfield Technical Community College, as a public institution of higher education, which has received federal assistance, is legally bound to prohibit discrimination in the recruitment process, the admission process and the educational process of students with disabilities. Students with documented disabilities are entitled to receive approved modifications, appropriate academic adjustments or auxiliary aids that will enable them to participate in and have the opportunity to benefit from all educational programs and activities of Springfield Technical Community College.

Under the provisions of Section 504, Springfield Technical Community College may not:

♦ Limit the number of otherwise qualified students with disabilities admitted

♦ Make pre-admission inquiries as to whether an applicant has disabilities

♦ Exclude an otherwise qualified student with a disability from any course of study

♦ Provide less financial assistance to students with disabilities than is provided to nondisabled students, or limit eligibility for scholarships on the basis of disability

♦ Counsel students with disabilities into more restrictive career paths than are recommended to students who are nondisabled

♦ Measure student achievement using modes that adversely discriminate against a student with a disability

♦ Establish rules and policies that have the effect of limiting participation of students with disabilities in educational programs or activities

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is still in effect, and it contains (in Subpart E) more specific information regarding postsecondary education than the ADA.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 is civil rights legislation that affects some 43,000,000 Americans with disabilities. It is the purpose of this act to provide a clear and comprehensive national mandate for the elimination of discrimination against individuals with disabilities. The ADA applies to all institutions of higher education regardless of receipt of Federal funds.

Provisions of the ADA

Title I covers nondiscrimination in employment activities.

Title II of the ADA is divided into two subparts. Subpart A requires that state and local government entities and programs be made accessible to persons with disabilities. Subpart B requires that public transportation systems be made fully accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities.

Title III covers the accessibility and availability of programs, goods, and services provided to the public by private entities.

Title IV requires that telecommunication services be made accessible to persons with hearing and speech impairments and has specific reference to the development of telecommunications relay systems and closed-captioning technology.

Title V of the ADA contains miscellaneous provisions that apply to all of the other titles as well.

Facility Access. The ADA requires existing facilities of Title II entities to be accessible. Springfield Technical Community College has a compliance plan to make all existing facilities accessible to students with disabilities to the extent that access is readily achievable and not an undue burden. For new construction or renovations, the college must be in compliance with Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) or the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities (ADAAG), without the elevator exemption. The choice of standards must be consistent within a single building.

General Etiquette

People with disabilities prefer to be called people with disabilities, not disabled people. People with disabilities are not conditions or diseases; they are individuals first and only secondarily do they have one or more disabling conditions. The following is a glossary of acceptable terms:

Writing or Talking about People with Disabilities

Acceptable Terms	Unacceptable Terms
Person, persons with a disability	Cripple, crippled. The image conveyed is of a twisted, deformed, useless body
Disability: a general term used for functional limitations that interfere with a person's ability, for example, to hear, walk, learn, or lift	Handicap, handicapped person
People with cerebral palsy, people with a spinal cord injury	Cerebral palsied, spinal cord injured, etc. Never identify people solely by their disability.
Person who has had a spinal cord injury, polio, a stroke, etc., or a person who has multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, arthritis, etc.	Victim; people with disabilities do not like to be perceived as victims for the rest of their lives, long after victimization has occurred.
Has a disability, has a condition (of spina bifida, for example) or born without legs, etc.	Defective, defect, deformed, vegetable. These words are offensive, dehumanizing, degrading, and stigmatizing.
Deafness/hearing impairment. "Deafness" refers to a person who has a loss of hearing within a range of slight to severe. "Hard-of-hearing" describes a person who is hearing impaired and usually has listening and speaking abilities adequate for ordinary telephone communication. Many individuals who are hard-of-hearing use hearing aids.	Deaf and dumb—is as bad as it sounds. Inability to hear or speak does not suggest less intelligence.
Person who has a mental illness or a psychiatric disability.	Psycho, nut, crazy, schizo, psychiatric, schizophrenic.
Person who has a mental or developmental disability.	Retarded, idiot.
Uses a wheelchair or crutches; a wheelchair user; walks with crutches.	Confined or restricted to a wheelchair, wheelchair bound. Most people who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices do not regard them as confining.

Able-bodied; able to walk, see, hear, etc. People who are not disabled.	Healthy. When used to contrast with disabled, healthy implies the person with a disability is unhealthy.
People who do not have a disability.	Normal. When in use as the opposite of disabled, implies the person is abnormal.
A person who has (name the disability). For example, a person who has multiple sclerosis.	Afflicted with/suffers from. Most people with disabilities do not regard themselves as afflicted or suffering continually. A disability is not an affliction. An affliction may have caused a disability.

Source: Oklahoma Disability Etiquette Handbook, from the Office of Handicapped Concerns, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 1993.

Springfield Technical Community College Resources

ADA Coordinator/Disability Services Coordinator
Mary A. Moriarty is the official ADA Coordinator for Springfield Technical Community College. She is located in the Office of Disability Services in Building 27 on the second floor and can be reached by calling Ext. 3179. The Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the college complies with federal regulations that guarantee qualified college students with disabilities equal access to all programs and services. Any student, faculty or staff member may contact her office for clarification of federal regulations, appeal of a grievance, or resolution of a disability-related problem.

Office of Disability Services
The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is the official contact for students with disabilities who request special services or accommodations to provide equal opportunity for academic success. Students must self-identify to the ODS and provide documentation of their disability from a licensed professional. The staff of ODS serve as advocates for students with disabilities and assists them in achieving equal access to all college programs and services. The staff is available to consult with faculty, administrators and staff concerning appropriate services for students with disabilities.

Some services provided by the ODS include maintenance of confidential records of students' documentation; assistance with registration including priority registration; assistance with interpretation and implementation of accommodations; provision of notetakers, readers, adapted testing arrangements; assistance with ordering recorded tests; and access to adaptive/assistive technology.

Counselor for Services to Students with Disabilities
Students with disabilities who request services and/or accommodations to minimize the effects of their disabilities are assigned a counselor. They serve as advocates for students and ensure equal access to all college programs and services. Counselors are also available to consult with faculty, administrators and

staff about appropriate services and modifications for students with disabilities. The Counselor will assist in the implementation of accommodations whenever possible. At STCC, the counselor for students with Learning Disabilities is Deena Shriver and for all other students is Andrea Bonavita. Both can be reached at Ext. 3179 and are located in Building 27, on the second floor.

Office of Disability Services Grant Projects

Project EXCEL

In 1996, the U.S. Department of Education funded STCC to develop a career development program for students with disabilities. The purpose of Project EXCEL is to assist in training faculty and staff in the requirements of disability laws, assistive technology, metacognitive skills and legal decisions available when working with students with disabilities. The Project Staff also assist students with disabilities to identify career interests/aptitudes, make informed career decisions, access necessary assistive technology, find internships and cooperative education placements and develop effective job search skills and strategies.

Project EXCEL Staff

Mary A. Moriarty	Project Coordinator
Kris Kozuch	Student/Staff Development Coordinator
Tom Kerner	Job Developer
Mario Carneiro	Adaptive Computer Lab Technician
Jane Kmon	Secretary

Project ACCESS (Alliance of Cooperating Colleges and Employers for Student Success)

Project ACCESS is a postsecondary education program funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. The goal of the project is to increase employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Project staff will train faculty on employment support services, adaptive technology and accommodations for people with disabilities, as well as increasing the awareness of area employers of adaptive technology with a Mobile Adaptive Unit.

103

Project ACCESS Staff

William Hersh — Project Director

Maureen Bourbeau — Adaptive Computer Lab Technician

Susan Fusco — Secretary

Adaptive Equipment Available on Campus
Through the Office of Disability Services

Cassette Recorders

Two and/or four-track variable-speed playback recorders with headphones can be used with the Library of Congress cassettes and the Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic cassettes

Computer/Adaptive Devices

- Keyboard software to minimize key strokes
- CCTV
- Adaptive mouse
- Dragon Dictate speech recognition system
- Franklin Speller, Talking Calculator, Talking Thermometer
- Screen print enlarger
- Assistive listening devices
- Tutoring

Copying

- Makes large-print single copies of syllabi, tests, brief readings, and handouts
- Provide carbonless notetaker paper

TTY (Teletype) or TDD (Telecommunications Device for the Deaf)

◆ Enables an individual who is deaf or has a hearing-impairment to communicate by telephone if the other party being called also has a TTY or TDD
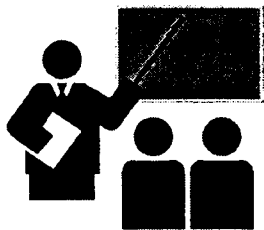
Braille

◆ HumanWare Brailler

OSCAR Screen Power Speech Program

◆ Reading Assist Viewer

◆ Provides speech output for printed documents for students with visual impairment and/or learning disabilities

Readers/Scribes

◆ Text can be put on cassette tape for students who are visually impaired.

◆ Assistance with notetaking and written exams can be given.

General Considerations for Students and Faculty

Specific suggestions for teaching students with disabilities will be offered in the sections devoted to each disability. This section will discuss several general considerations.

Responsibilities of Students

It is the responsibility of the student to identify himself or herself to the Office of Disability Services and to provide documentation of the disability by a licensed professional.

The student will consult with the staff to determine specific accommodations that will be required while he or she is a student at Springfield Technical Community College. The student will authorize any notification of instructors of his or her required modifications and strategies. The student will be told of his or her responsibility to meet with his or her instructors at the beginning of each quarter to discuss arrangements for accommodations in each course.

Students with disabilities must maintain the same responsibility for their education as students who do not have disabilities. This includes maintaining the same academic levels, maintaining appropriate behavior and giving timely notification of any special needs.

Responsibilities of Faculty

It is the responsibility of the faculty to cooperate with the ODS in providing authorized accommodations and support service for students with disabilities in a fair and timely manner. Faculty should meet with students who provide an accommodation form to establish the means of providing the accommodation as early in the semester as possible. Students should initiate this meeting, but faculty are encouraged to take the initiative when students are reluctant to self-advocate.

If a student requests that an instructor provide accommodations for a disability and the faculty member has had no official notification of the student's need for accommodation, it is important that the instructor assist the student in contacting the ODS. If the disability is visible (use of wheelchair, hearing aids, service dog, etc.) and the requested accommodation is obviously appropriate, the faculty member should provide the accommodation while paperwork is being completed.

Faculty are not able to refuse to provide required accommodations, to question whether the disability exists when accommodations have been authorized by the college, or to request to examine the students' documentation without a written consent signed by the student. However, faculty members can have input and should arrange with students the means for providing accommodations in a particular class. A student must be able to comprehend the course material and communicate that comprehension to the instructor, but accommodations must give the students the opportunity to achieve that outcome, so long as the accommodation does not alter the fundamental nature of the

course or program. If a faculty member has questions about the appropriateness of a required accommodation, he or she should consult with the ODS staff.

Shared Responsibilities

Students with disabilities have the first responsibility to report their needs to the faculty in a timely manner as faculty are not required to anticipate special student needs. Faculty/staff members should keep students in mind when making special class arrangements such as field trips. Faculty/staff should state on their course syllabi that students need to inform them of their special needs as soon as possible to ensure that those needs are met in a timely manner. If a student waits until the day of an exam to ask for extended time or a separate testing area, the student has failed to make the request in a timely manner. If the student fails to ask for extended time until late in the semester, the instructor is only required to provide accommodations from that time and does not need to offer make-up exams.

When a student discloses a disability, faculty/staff members should ask what they can do to facilitate learning. Often it is as simple as allowing the student to sit in the front of the class.

Faculty/staff members may not discourage students from specific fields of study if the student meets the admission requirements, maintains the appropriate grades, and is otherwise qualified. Faculty/staff members are responsible to provide an education and the student is responsible to maintain the academic standards.

What Faculty Can Do

♦ During the first class and in the course syllabus, announce that if anyone is in need of accommodations to see you after class or during office hours.

♦ Know about services available on campus for students with disabilities.

♦ Give an outline of the course, explain course requirements clearly, be exact about necessary reading materials, and provide this early in the semester to allow for advance planning by the student.

♦ If the student has not approached you, approach the student to ask if accommodations are necessary and indicate you are willing to help.

♦ If a student requests an accommodation without an accommodation form from the ODS, refer the student to the office. You are not obligated to provide any unauthorized accommodations at a student's request.

♦ Make lectures and notes easy to understand and make assignments clear.

♦ Allow preferred seating for students with disabilities.

♦ Be flexible with the content and format of arrangements and exams (for example, oral exam, Braille, audio taped). Give extra time if supported by documentation.

♦ Be supportive but not overly solicitous.

♦ Do not accept work of a lower quality from students with disabilities. Remember that identical treatment is not "equal" treatment.

♦ Support students interested in taking your course. If you foresee problems, discuss these but let students make up their own mind.

Test Taking Policy for Extended Time Testing

The following procedures have been adopted by the Office of Disability Services (ODS) for the provision of testing accommodations.

Initial Testing Accommodations (Set Up)

Upon receipt of verification of the student's eligibility for extended testing time, the student and instructor should discuss methods of examination. The following methods have been successfully implemented.

♦ The student can take, with the instructor's permission, the test in the ODS during the regular class time or an alternative period. The exam will be logged in and secured (before and after the exam) in a locked file cabinet. The Office can provide a quiet location and a work study student as a reader or scribe. **Proctoring is not available and the exam checklist must be completed by the appropriate faculty member.**

♦ The student can take the test in a Division office or classroom, provided the space is free of interruptions and an instructor or a Division designee is available.

♦ Any other alternative location must be preapproved by the instructor and the ODS Staff.

Exam Transfer

The following are designated as acceptable methods of exam transfer to and from the ODS:

♦ The instructor can seal an envelope and sign his/her name across the seal on the envelope, thus ensuring the security of the test. The student delivers the test where it will be opened by staff. The student is assigned a room and takes the exam. During the exam, any texts or study guides are left with the instructor or with the ODS Staff. The exam is returned in the same manner.

♦ The instructor may hand deliver and pick up the exam upon completion in the ODS.

♦ A work study student may pick up the sealed exam and return it to the faculty member upon completion, the exam having been resealed by a staff person.

Student Responsibilities

♦ Students are responsible for meeting with professors to discuss exam arrangements and the nature of their disability at the beginning of the semester.

♦ Students are responsible for scheduling extended time tests as close to the in-class examinations as possible.

♦ Students are responsible for scheduling an exam space with the ODS at least one week in advance. If a reader or scribe is needed, the request should be made two weeks in advance. If an advance arrangement is not scheduled by the student, testing space and/or staff assistance cannot be guaranteed.

♦ Students must take the exam in the agreed-upon location, at the time specified. Any changes need to be cleared with the faculty member.

108
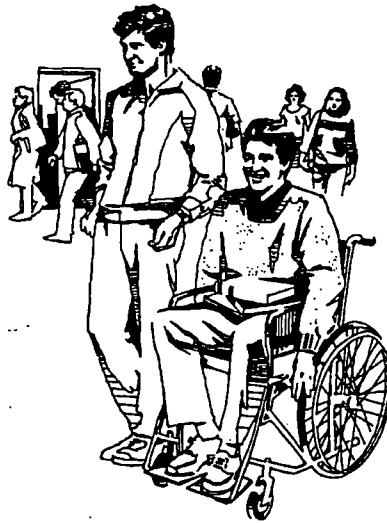
ADD/ADHD
(Attention Deficit Disorder/
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)

ADD/ADHD are neurobiological disabilities frequently characterized by inappropriate degrees of

◆ Inattention

◆ Impulsivity

◆ Hyperactivity

These characteristics appear in early childhood, are relatively chronic in nature and are not due to other physical, mental or emotional causes. Research has established that ADD comes in three basic types:

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, predominately inattentive type includes people who show significant problems of inattention, but not much difficulty with impulsivity or hyperactivity.

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, predominately by hyperactive impulse type includes people who show significant problems with hyperactivity and impulsivity, but only some difficulty with inattention.

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, combined type includes people who show significant problems with inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity.

As the public and professional awareness of ADD/ADHD increases, the number of students who have been identified and treated for this disability is increasing. ADD seldom exists alone and while this may happen, ADD more often appears with other neurobiological disabilities. Like other students with disabilities, students with ADD may have been frequently misunderstood by others. They try to control their symptoms and appear as if they have no disability. To avoid being embarrassed, they try to keep up with everyone else.

Difficulties associated with students who have ADD/ADHD may include

♦ Poor academic performance

♦ Labels such as "stupid" or "lazy"

♦ Low self-esteem

♦ Difficulties in relationships with peers and co-workers

♦ Depression

♦ Anxiety

♦ Substance abuse

♦ Disorganization

♦ Forgetfulness

♦ Uncoordination and/or clumsiness

♦ Procrastination

New students have a great deal of anxiety regarding increased expectations at the postsecondary level. Some externalize this anxiety by expressing frustration and blaming problems on faculty or advisors. They often times have difficulty with change, complex procedures and understanding rules. Few people understand that adults with ADD can't perform according to conventional measures.

Suggested Modifications for Students with ADD/ADHD Disabilities

Students may need some accommodations in the classroom to succeed. These may include:

♦ Extended time and/or private room for exams

♦ Use of a computer or word processor for written work and personal organization

♦ Permission to tape record lectures

♦ Eligibility on a case-by-case basis, for a course substitution from an approved list of courses

♦ Use of a calculator, speller's dictionary, proofreader and/or word processing equipment

♦ Use of a notetaker based on their inability to concentrate on listening and simultaneously taking notes

♦ Ability to receive their textbooks on tape

♦ Technological tools that assist them in compensation for problems with organization that include: personal organizers, tape players, and time management training

♦ Clear course syllabi with information about their course content, work expectations, and definitive time lines for when work is due

♦ Use of visual references for auditory instructions such as writing instructions on the blackboard and giving verbal directions

♦ Making eye contact with the student before calling on him or her or giving instructions

♦ Allowing the student to sit up front in the classroom

♦ Prompt, explicit feedback, both written and oral

♦ Use multi-media presentations

Additional accommodations may include those for students with learning disabilities.

Head Injury/Traumatic Brain Injury

More than one million people incurring head injuries each year are between the ages of 15 and 28 years of age. Brain injury can result from two types of trauma: external events, such as closed head trauma, or internal events, such as cerebral vascular accident, or tumors. The consequences of brain injury are many and complex. Understanding how brain function is different after injury has much greater implications for education than knowing the cause or type of the injury.

The Student with a Head Injury

There is great variation of the possible effects of a head injury on an individual. However, most injuries result in some degree of impairment in the following functions:

♦ **Memory**—Memory deficits are probably the most common characteristic of students with brain injury. The primary problem is the inability to store information for immediate recall. Long-term memory or previously acquired knowledge is usually intact.

♦ **Cognitive/perceptual communication**—Distracted by extraneous stimuli, students may have difficulty focusing enough for learning to take place.

♦ **Speed of thinking**—Students with cognitive deficits from brain injury often take longer to process information.

◆ **Communication-language functions**—Writing, reading, speaking, listening, as well as the pragmatics may be impaired. Problems in pragmatics include interrupting, talking out of turn, dominating discussions, speaking too loudly or rudely, or standing too close to the listener.

◆ **Spatial reasoning**—Spatial reasoning refers to the ability to recognize shapes of objects, judge distances accurately, navigate, read a map, visualize images, comprehend mechanical functions, or recognize position in space.

◆ **Conceptualization**—Deficits in conceptualization reduce ability to categorize, sequence, abstract, prioritize, and generalize information.

◆ **Executive functions**—The ability to engage in goal setting, planning, and working toward a desired outcome in a flexible manner is often impaired.

◆ **Psychosocial behaviors**—Some of the common types of psychosocial behavioral disabilities include depression/withdrawal, mental inflexibility, denial, frustration, irritability, restlessness, anxiety, lability, impulsivity, poor social judgment, disinhibition, euphoria, apathy, fatigue, and decreased awareness of personal hygiene.

◆ **Motor, sensory, and physical abilities**—Brain injury can result in specific impairments primarily manifested in the physical or medical condition of the student after the injury.

Comparison with Specific Learning Disabilities

On the surface, problems encountered by the person who has survived a head injury may seem like those common to students with learning disabilities. Many of the academic modifications listed for students with learning disabilities will also be appropriate for students with head injuries. Whereas similarities exist, there are important differences, which have significance on effective programming.

To summarize, compared to students with learning disabilities, the student with an acquired brain injury may

◆ Be more impulsive, hyperactive, distractible, verbally intrusive, and/or socially inappropriate

◆ Have discrepancies in ability levels that are more extreme and harder to understand, such as reading comprehension at a level four years lower than spelling ability

◆ Learn some material rapidly, since they may need only to be reacquainted with a process or concept which they knew preinjury

◆ Have more severe problems generalizing and integrating skills or information

◆ Require ongoing monitoring of tasks using independent thinking and judgment

◆ Be unable to process information presented through usual remedial strategies because comprehension may deteriorate as the amount and complexity of material increases

◆ Require a wider variety of strategies to compensate for impaired memory and problems with word retrieval, information processing and communication

◆ Have more pronounced difficulty with organization of thoughts, cause-effect relationships, and problem solving

♦ Resist new learning strategies which seem too elementary (not accepting the changes caused by the injury)

♦ Retain the pretrauma self-concept of a student without a disability and have difficulty accepting that abilities and behaviors have changed and need to be adjusted

Common Needs for Students with Head Injuries

♦ **Structure**—Survivors of recent injuries often do not organize well. Returning to or entering school may provide a badly needed routine.

♦ **Flexibility**—A great deal of flexibility is needed in scheduling the re-entry. Routines may need to be slowed down, and placement decisions may need to change after periods of rapid recovery.

♦ **Reduced demands**—Reducing demands on the student with a head injury may involve substituting a less demanding class, altering response modes (such as oral vs. written responses), providing books and lectures on tape, or providing other support services. The students may need a reduced course load or classes that meet for shorter periods of time and should be encouraged to enroll in a study skill refresher course.

♦ **Supervision**—The poor judgment and memory problems of a student with a head injury may make supervision a necessary ingredient of the educational program. For the student, this supervision could take the form of a planning and monitoring system which requires the faculty member and the student to plan together, set goals, and report and evaluate progress.

♦ **Intervention**—With head injuries, students are often not conspicuous before they begin to have serious trouble and they often misjudge their own problems. The head injury may make the student unable to assess the need for help without direct intervention.
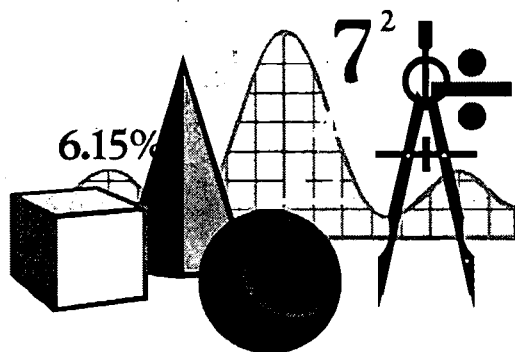
Deafness and Hard-of-Hearing

The two main types of hearing loss are sensorineural (nerve deafness which involves impairment of the auditory nerve) and conductive deafness (usually a dysfunction of a part of the ear mechanism). Hearing loss is measured by decibels; according to the decibel count, the loss may be mild, moderate, or profound.

More individuals in the United States have a hearing impairment than any other physical disability. The 21 million people in the United States who have this disability differ considerably. A person may be born with a hearing loss or may become hard-of-hearing due to an accident or illness.

If the age of onset occurs before the acquisition of language and the development of speech, the individual may have language-based deficiencies such as poor syntax and vocabulary, and difficulty understanding abstract concepts.

Communicating with Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students

Although they may wear hearing aids, many students rely primarily on lip reading. Even highly skilled lip readers usually comprehend only 30–40 percent of what is said. Also, lip reading students frequently miss class members' comments and have difficulty understanding instructors who cover their lips, face the chalkboard, move around, or have a mustache.

People who wear hearing aids may not hear sounds the way others do. Hearing aids amplify all sounds and can make small noises, loud air conditioners, hissing fluorescent light fixtures, traffic noise, and the like overwhelming. Sometimes people with hearing aids hear only jumbled and disjointed fragments.

An interpreter may be necessary to convey the oral message to the deaf student by the use of sign language (American Sign Language, Signed Exact English or Cued Speech). The interpreter should be placed close to the instructor or between the instructor and the student so the student can watch both the signing and the body language of the instructor.

During lectures, students with hearing impairments often need to have the instructor's speech amplified so that they can hear. Some students may ask that the instructor wear a small wireless FM microphone that is compatible with their hearing aids. Other students may need to audiotape lectures so that they can play the tape back at a higher volume.

114

Technology is available to make telephone communication available to individuals with hearing impairments. Some students can use a regular telephone if it has a volume control. Other individuals must use a TTY (telecommunication device for the deaf). Massachusetts has a Telephone Relay Service, which makes it possible for a TTY user and someone with a telephone to communicate. The telephone number for this Relay Service is 1-800-439-2370. The Office of Disability Services also has a TTY that faculty/staff can use to call students.

Recommendations for Students with Hearing Disabilities

♦ The student with a hearing disability may need a notetaker so that he or she can give full attention to watching the speaker or interpreter. If possible, hand out typed or printed notes.

♦ The instructor should face the class as much as possible and should speak clearly and audibly. It is helpful to all students if the instructor repeats questions asked by the class.

♦ Students will need to sit close to the speaker for maximum intake of visual cues.

♦ Instructors should keep a minimum amount of lighting on when presenting audiovisual information so the instructor or interpreter can be seen at all times. It would be helpful to supply the student with a written explanation of a demonstration in advance.

♦ Be patient and take the time to communicate effectively. Ask students to repeat or clarify if you don't understand their speech.

♦ For students who have a hearing impairment, grades for participating in group or class discussions pose problems. Small groups are encouraged as they pose fewer problems.

♦ Many students with hearing disabilities need to receive assignments in written form in order to ensure proper understanding of the requirements.

♦ The instructor should write technical or unfamiliar vocabulary on the chalkboard or use an overhead transparency.

♦ The instructor should give a student who is deaf adequate time to respond to questions or participate in class discussions. There is a lag time between the end of a comment and the end of the interpretation into sign language.

♦ If using television shows or films for classes, faculty should use films that are captioned. As for slides and non-closed captioned videotapes and films, it is beneficial to give a brief synopsis before the presentation and to review key concepts afterward.

♦ When talking to a student who uses a sign language interpreter, one should address comments to the student and look at him or her, not the interpreter.

Learning Disabilities

Several definitions of specific learning disabilities exist. The definition most often used in higher education is that of the U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Services Administration. This definition reads as follows:

A specific learning disability is a disorder in one or more of the central nervous system processes involved in perceiving, understanding, and/or using concepts through verbal (spoken or written) language or nonverbal means. This disorder manifests itself with a deficit in one or more of the following areas: attention, reasoning, processing, memory, communication, reading, writing, spelling, calculation, coordination, social competence, and emotional maturity.

Each definition of specific learning disability concludes that individuals with this disability have:

♦ Average to superior intelligence

♦ A chronic disorder of neurological origin which causes difficulty in receiving, processing, integrating, and/or expressing information

♦ A severe discrepancy between achievement and intellectual capacity in one or more areas that did not primarily result from inadequate sensory acuity; environmental, economic, or academic disadvantage; emotional disturbance; or mental retardation.

Often people assume that students with learning disabilities are unmotivated and unintelligent. Many question whether these students can succeed in college. Students with learning disabilities are not intellectually limited. They have the potential to succeed in higher education.

Some of the terms referring to disorders included under the umbrella term "specific learning disabilities" are dyslexia (difficulty with reading), dysgraphia (difficulty with writing), dyscalculia (difficulty with mathematics), and ADHD (Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder).

Adelman and Olufs (AHSSPPE, 1986) describe some of the problems characteristic of college students with learning disabilities. Naturally, no student will have all of these problems.

Study Skills

♦ Inability to change from one task to another

♦ No system for organizing notes and other materials

♦ Difficulty scheduling time to complete short-term and long-term assignments

♦ Difficulty completing tests and in-class assignments without additional time

♦ Difficulty following directions

Interpersonal Skills

♦ Impulsivity

♦ Difficulty delaying resolution to a problem

♦ Disorientation in time—misses class and appointments

♦ Poor self-esteem

Reading

♦ Difficulty reading new words, particularly when sound/symbol relationships are inconsistent

♦ Slow reading rate—takes longer to read a test and other in-class assignments

♦ Poor comprehension and retention of material read

♦ Difficulty interpreting charts, graphs, scientific symbols

♦ Difficulty with complex syntax on objective tests

Writing

♦ Problems in organization and sequencing of ideas

♦ Poor sentence structure

♦ Incorrect grammar

♦ Frequent and inconsistent spelling errors

♦ Difficulty taking notes

♦ Poor letter formation, capitalization, spacing and punctuation

♦ Inadequate strategies for monitoring written work

Oral Language

♦ Difficulty concentrating in lectures, especially lectures of several hours

♦ Poor vocabulary, difficulty with word retrieval

♦ Problems with grammar

Math

♦ Difficulty with basic math operations

♦ Difficulty with aligning problems, number reversals, confusion of symbols

♦ Poor strategies for monitoring errors

♦ Difficulty with reasoning

♦ Difficulty reading and comprehending word problems

♦ Difficulty with concepts of time and money

Additionally, an adult with a learning disability may have social skill problems due to inconsistent perceptual abilities. He or she may be unable to detect the difference between a joking wink and a disgusted glance. The student may not notice the difference between sincere and sarcastic comments or be able to recognize other subtle changes in tone of voice. These difficulties in interpreting nonverbal messages may result in lowered self-esteem for some adults with learning disabilities and may cause them to have trouble meeting people, working cooperatively with others, and making friends.

Although a learning disability cannot be "cured," its impact can be lessened through instructional intervention and compensatory strategies. Appropriate academic adjustments made for students with learning disabilities may include some of the following strategies.

Suggested Modifications

♦ Give priority registration.

♦ Allow late withdrawal from a class without penalty.

♦ Consider the possibility of allowing substitutions for otherwise required coursework on an individual basis. This would occur only if the course is not found to be essential to the area of study and if making a substitution would not require a "substantial change in an essential element of the curriculum."

♦ Provide extended time to complete a course.

Textbooks and Printed Course Material

♦ Provide taped textbooks. Students who have textbooks on tape as an approved accommodation can often obtain them from Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic. If the needed text cannot be found, the college will have readers record the text.

♦ If the textbook has a study guide or computer tutorial, suggest that the student use it and help him or her obtain it.

♦ There is an Adaptive Computer Technology Lab on campus that may be used by students with learning disabilities.

♦ Double space all material.

♦ Provide handouts in high contrast form.

♦ Make the syllabus available prior to the first day of class to allow students to begin their reading early.

Lectures

♦ Use multimedia presentations.

♦ Use notetaking modifications:

a. A notetaker may be requested. This person should be a good student who takes complete notes.

b. The classmate's notes may be photocopied or the classmate may prefer to take notes with carbonless paper.

c. Provide copies of the instructor's notes for those classes the student attends.

d. Permit students to tape record lectures.

e. Provide copies of transparencies.

◆ Read aloud material that is written on the chalkboard or that is given in handouts or transparencies.

Written Assignments

◆ When the purpose of the assignment is to demonstrate knowledge or opinions allow alternative formats of equal difficulty such as taping, visual displays, oral presentations, etc.

◆ Allow the student to dictate to a scribe or to dictate and transcribe his or her own dictation.

◆ Allow the student to use a word processor for in-class writing assignments.

◆ Minimize penalties for misspellings, incorrect punctuation, and poor grammar unless the object of the assignment is to demonstrate written skills. Examples abound of scientists, mathematicians, and others who have poor reading and writing skills due to learning disabilities.

◆ Allow the student to use a dictionary and/or electronic spellchecker.

◆ Critique an early draft of the paper.

Math

◆ Allow use of a basic, four-function calculator in class.

◆ Examine the test for types of errors. It may be appropriate to give partial credit for work shown even when the final answer is incorrect due to transposed numbers, etc.

Evaluation

◆ Allow tests to be taken in a quiet environment with minimal distractions.

◆ Allow the student to use a blank card or paper to assist reading.

◆ Allow extended time.

◆ Provide alternatives to computer-scored answer sheets (e.g., allow the student to mark the exam rather than a separate answer sheet).

◆ Allow the student to respond orally to exam questions. Answers may be relayed directly to the instructor, tape recorder, or scribe.

◆ Give the student prompt, explicit feedback, both written and oral.

♦ Consider alternative test designs. Some students with learning disabilities may find multiple choice formats confusing. A student with a perceptual impairment will have trouble with tests requiring students to match different items.

♦ Consider alternative or supplemental assignments to evaluate students' mastery of the course material. Taped interviews, slide presentations, photographic essays, or handmade models may lead to more accurate evaluations of mastery.

Orthopedic/Mobility Disabilities

A variety of mobility-related disabilities result from neuromuscular and orthopedic impairments. These disabilities may be congenital or they may be the result of an accident or illness. They may include conditions such as spinal cord injury, paralysis, cerebral palsy, severe forms of arthritis, polio/post polio, spina bifida, orthopedic injury, amputation, cardiac conditions, cystic fibrosis, later stages of AIDS, stroke, and muscular dystrophy. Although many muscular and mobility impairments are visible, many are not (e.g., multiple sclerosis, arthritis).

The severity of the disability varies within each disability group. Some conditions are such that the person experiences pain, spasticity, or lack of coordination. In other conditions, there are intermittent flare-ups (when a student might be absent from class) and periods of remission, when the student seems to have no impairment of function (e.g., multiple sclerosis). Accommodations therefore, are on a case-by-case basis.

A number of students who use wheelchairs are able to stand but not walk. Some who use wheelchairs can walk with the aid of canes, crutches, braces, or walkers. Using a wheelchair may help these individuals conserve energy or move about more quickly. Some students who use wheelchairs have full use of their arms and hands, whereas others do not. Students with muscular and mobility impairments also may have a hearing or speech impairment (e.g., cerebral palsy). Others may tire very easily. Because of vast differences among students, even when they have similar impairments, the student herself or himself is the best judge of what he or she can or cannot do. (Access is a major concern of students who are wheelchair users.)

Suggested Modifications for Students with Mobility Disabilities

♦ It may be necessary to be lenient with these students when they are occasionally late getting to class, particularly in inclement weather. Advisors and students should schedule classes to allow extra time for getting from class to class. Also, it may be necessary to schedule classes physically close together on campus.

♦ Many of these students will need notetakers, tape recorders in class, and/or adjustable-height desks or tables. These will be put in place by the ODS.

♦ Most students will have no unusual difficulty with tests. Some, however, will need extra time and/or special arrangements (e.g., typewriter, computer, scribe, audio-taping answers or oral exams) which can be arranged through the Office of Disability Services.

♦ Extra time may be needed for assignments due to medical conditions that may involve large blocks of time in doctors' offices or hospitals.

♦ When instructors intend to hold a class in a new location or go on a field trip, they should check to be sure that the new site is accessible. If the college provides transportation for field trips, it is required to provide accessible transportation.

♦ Some students will require help manipulating tools, laboratory equipment, and/or chemicals. An assistant or lab partner, who merely functions as the student's hands or legs, also may be needed.

♦ Many of the students who require parking in HP spaces on campus are in this category of disabilities. Staff can assist in educating students who are not disabled to realize that most people who need special parking are not wheelchair users.

♦ Treat the student as you would all other students whenever possible. In some cases, you will not need to do anything special at all.

♦ When speaking for any extended period of time with a student who is a wheelchair user, the professor may want to sit down.

♦ Talk to students about the impact of their disability on their ability to do well in your course and about any accommodations that you can make to help them do well.

Psychological Disabilities

The term "psychological disabilities" covers a wide range of conditions and may include (but not be limited to) chronic conditions such as severe personality disorders, psychoneuroses and psychoses.

People with serious psychological disabilities have some structural and biochemical characteristics in their brains that are different from those of people who are not mentally ill. Psychological disabilities are usually, although not always, a chronic condition. It is important for those around this person to realize that this type of disability is biological and not "a matter of choice." With appropriate treatment, the vast majority of psychological disorders are effectively cured or controlled. Treatment, which often combines medications and psychotherapy, can effectively stop acute symptoms in 80 percent of those living with schizophrenia, end the terror of phobic disorders, and halt the downward spiral in approximately 90 percent of those living with depressive disorders.

Problems related to providing educational support services to students with a history of mental illness are founded in the misconceptions and stigmas about the illness. Common myths about psychological disabilities often cause college faculty and staff to be reluctant to approach students realistically because of fears that the students are very fragile or could be violent. In reality, people with mental illness do not commit more violent crimes than the rest of the population. Although comparatively few students with psychological disabilities may react to stress by becoming agitated or even threatening, faculty who are familiar with this group of students with disabilities report that incidents of disruptive behavior by individual students can often be predicted and, therefore, prevented.

Dealing with Disruptive Behaviors When They Occur

Most students with psychological disabilities never draw attention to themselves by behaving disruptively. Few, because their symptoms are more persistent and/or cyclical, may experience periods in which "holding it together" becomes more difficult. Disciplinary issues should not be confused with mental health issues. All students, including students with psychological disabilities, have the responsibility to meet the code of conduct of all students by adapting behavior to the educational environment. If disruptive behaviors persistently occur or a student code of conduct is violated, the issue should not be defined as a health issue. It should be defined as a disciplinary issue, and a referral to the Dean of Students should be made.

Suggested Modifications for Students with Psychological Disabilities

Servicing students with psychological disabilities on campus is a relatively new phenomenon. However, based on existing knowledge and experiences, the following suggestions have been provided. Students may need:

- ◆ Assistance with orientation/registration/financial aid forms
- ◆ Assistance in choosing classes and instructors
- ◆ Extended time for exams
- ◆ Notetakers, readers, tape recorders
- ◆ Modification in seating arrangements
- ◆ Beverages allowed in class due to medication side effects

♦ Possible flexibility in the attendance requirements of a course in the case of hospitalization/crisis

♦ Incomplete or late withdrawals rather than failures in the event of prolonged illness-related absences/crisis

♦ Time management and study skills assistance

The Office of Disability Services staff are especially helpful to students with psychological disabilities when they help the student identify and explain his or her own functional classroom limitations, such as difficulty with oral presentations, or the need to accommodate side effects of medications (e.g., thirst, itching, agitation, frequent trips to the bathroom, etc.). Students are required to make up missed assignments and tests.

Visual Disabilities

Similar to people with varying degrees of hearing impairments, it is less common for someone to be completely blind. In actuality, their ability to see may exist anywhere along a continuum from sighted to blind. In addition, amount of usable sight varies from person to person, and visual acuity may change under differing light conditions. Vision is measured in terms of how much can be seen (peripheral field of vision), and how clearly it can be seen (visual acuity).

Legal blindness means having between zero and 10 percent of normal visual acuity in both eyes (20/200 vision or less), and/or 20 percent or less of normal peripheral vision in both eyes. In other words, this person, while wearing glasses, can see less at 20 feet than a person with normal vision can see at 200 feet.

Low vision or partially sighted means having visual acuity and/or field or vision that is less than normal, or having a visual limitation in only one eye. Vision that is limited to a narrow angle in the center of the field of vision sometimes is called tunnel vision.

Visual disabilities are so varied that it is often difficult to detect such a student in the classroom or on the campus. The student may appear to get around without assistance, read texts, and/or even take notes from the chalkboard. However, in most cases some form of assistance is needed.

Some students use aids such as guide dogs. These dogs are trained to move at the direction of their masters and are well disciplined to function in group settings. It is important to note that guide dogs are not to be petted or distracted in any way while they are on duty. Guide dogs are allowed by law in all college buildings, including laboratories, food services areas, classrooms and administrative offices.

Other students may use white canes, and a few use special electronic sensing devices to enhance mobility. Special considerations may be needed for the student who is visually impaired when a class

is moved to a new location, when a group goes on a field trip, or when the furnishings in a room are moved for a special program.

Adaptive Technology Aids

Whenever possible, texts are obtained in Braille, on tape, or on computer diskettes from national lending libraries. The college will provide texts and materials in alternative format when they are not available for loan.

For classes and labs which utilize computers, print enlarging software and/or vocal output adaptations can make computers accessible by individuals with visual disabilities.

An OSCAR screen power reading program is available in the Adaptive Computer Technology Lab. This machine is an optical scanner that reads typeset and typewritten material and turns it into DECtalk synthetic speech. A HumanWare Brailler is also available for anyone needing to translate material into Braille for students.

Suggested Modifications for Students with Visual Disabilities

◆ Provide reading lists or syllabi in advance to allow time for arrangements to be made, such as the taping or Brailling of texts.

◆ Allow the student to use notetaking devices such as Braille-writers.

◆ Allow tape recording of lectures and class discussions.

◆ Team the student with a sighted classmate or lab partner.

◆ Reserve front seats for low-vision students. Make sure seats are not near or facing windows. Glare from the light can make it hard for a student to see the instructor or the board.

◆ Verbalize the content printed on transparencies or on the chalkboard.

◆ Face the class when speaking.

◆ Provide large print copies of classroom materials by enlarging them on a photocopier.

◆ Be flexible with assignment deadlines, especially if library research is requested.

◆ If a specific task is impossible for a student to carry out, consider an alternative assignment.

◆ Provide alternative testing formats (e.g. oral, large print, Braille or taped).

◆ Allow extended time for tests.

◆ Other adaptations suited to specific situations, such as tactile materials in presenting graphs or illustrations may be helpful.
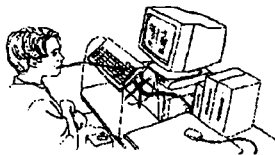
Other Disabilities

There is a large number of students on campus who are registered with the Office of Disabilities Services and have illnesses or medical conditions that do not fit into any of the major disability groups outlined in this guide. These students, however, are covered by Section 504/ADA. Their illnesses or conditions can affect their energy level, memory, mobility, speech, vision, and/or muscular control. In some cases, the degree of impairment may even vary from one day to the next because of the nature of the medical condition, medication received, or therapy. Illnesses may not follow a set course and are often progressive which can cause emotional issues for the student.

A partial list of these, often times hidden, disabilities include:

AIDS	Diabetes mellitus	Muscular dystrophy
Allergies	Epilepsy	Renal (kidney) disease
Arthritis	Fibromyalgia	Respiratory disorders
Burns	Heart disease	Sickle-cell anemia
Cancer	Hemophilia	Stroke
Cerebral palsy	Lupus	Tourette's Syndrome
Chronic pain	Multiple sclerosis	

Because of medical involvement in many of these condition, some students may be absent from class frequently, and may need similar accommodations to those discussed elsewhere in this guide. Other students will need no accommodations.

Common side effects of medications include fatigue, memory loss, shortened attention span, loss of concentration, and drowsiness. Often times, the degree of impairment varies from time to time for a variety of factors.

Suggested Modifications for Students with Hidden Disabilities

◆ Extended-time for exams

◆ Enlarged printed materials or use of CCTV

◆ Tape recorded course materials

◆ Use of a reader

◆ Flexibility in attendance requirements in cases of health-related absences

◆ Computers or other assistive/adaptive technologies

◆ Scribes

◆ Other accommodations found elsewhere in this guide

Exhibit L
Project EXCEL Faculty Survey

This is a survey of faculty opinions regarding several issues related to students with disabilities.

Section I lists several statements after which you should indicate how much you agree or disagree by circling the appropriate number. While these statements often refer to students, faculty, or employees, you should try not to consider individual cases but respond as if each item were prefaced by the phrase "in general."

Section II lists several activities/materials pertaining to students with disabilities, and you are asked to indicate whether you have attended/received any of the activities/materials.

Please indicate your department code here:_____

Section I

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
Students with disabilities currently are encouraged by faculty to pursue any career programs they choose.	1	2	3	4	5
Career education faculty need to have access to diagnostic information regarding the disabilities of students prior to referring them to a potential employer.	1	2	3	4	5
Students with disabilities are very knowledgeable about career choices appropriate for their abilities, interests, and disabilities.	1	2	3	4	5
Students with disabilities should be provided equal access to all academic/career track programs.	1	2	3	4	5
Students with disabilities should be channeled into specific career track programs.	1	2	3	4	5
Services for students with disabilities are commonly known on the STCC campus	1	2	3	4	5
Many students with disabilities are enrolled in unrealistic career track programs.	1	2	3	4	5
Faculty *should* be responsible for providing alternative academic accommodations in their courses, *such* as alternative testing formats, for students with visual or learning impairments.	1	2	3	4	5

Students should be required to disclose their disabilities prior to admission to a career track program.	1	2	3	4	5
Faculty are knowledgeable about issues that relate to disability.	1	2	3	4	5
Employees with disabilities require more time of their supervisors than employees who are not disabled.	1	2	3	4	5
Students with disabilities are highly knowledgeable about what accommodations they need at their work sites.	1	2	3	4	5
Employees with disabilities take significantly longer than other employees to complete a task.	1	2	3	4	5
It is a reasonable to require an employer to have a height-adjustable desk for an employee who uses a wheelchair.	1	2	3	4	5
Employers have unspoken anxieties about the cost if hiring a person with a disability.	1	2	3	4	5
When notified of a job opening at a particular company or agency, STCC's Career Education Office refers all qualified students regardless of whether they have a disability or not.	1	2	3	4	5
Employees with disabilities should pay for the cost if adaptive equipment accommodations at the worksite.	1	2	3	4	5
A potential employer should have the right to ask questions about applicants' disabilities and how they will effect their job performance.	1	2	3	4	5
Most individuals with disabilities who prefer to work are gainfully employed in the work force.	1	2	3	4	5

The number of students with disabilities I have referred to employers is_____

Section II
Please circle YES or NO for each question.

1. Mary Moriarty and Kris Kozuch from the Office of Disability Services have made several presentations to division meetings. Have you attended any of these presentations this academic year?

      YES   NO

127

2. The Office of Disability Services recently produced a resource guide for faculty and staff entitled *Students with Disabilities in the Classroom: A Resource Guide for Faculty and Staff.* It was given out to all faculty and staff at Opening Convocation. Do you have a copy?

        YES   NO

3. During this academic year, have you attended an open house for the Adaptive Computer Lab?

        YES   NO

4. Did you attend the presentation on September 11, 1998, by Salome Heyward, JD, on "Legal Issues Regarding the ADA in Higher Education"?

        YES   NO

5. Have you viewed the film *ACCESSing Ability* on employability of individuals in the workplace?

        YES   NO

6. Have you had any consultations with Office of Disability Services or Adaptive Technology Lab staff members regarding accommodations in your classes for any student with a disability?

        YES   NO

7. Did you attend the Adaptive/Assistive Technology Fair on campus on either May 9, 1997 or April 17, 1998?

        YES   NO

Office of Disability Services—Springfield Technical Community College

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Exhibit M
Evaluation of Project EXCEL Services

Importance of Service to You

Below is a list of services that you may or may not have used in the past year. Using the numbers on the right, please circle the number which indicates the importance of each service to you personally.

	Very Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Career/Vocational Related Services				
One on one career counseling with Kris Kozuch	1	2	3	4
Noncredit career planning course	1	2	3	4
Job shadowing experience	1	2	3	4
Interest testing (*Career Assessment Inventory or Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*--MBTI)	1	2	3	4
Use of career library resource material in Adaptive Lab (includes videos, resource books, interview software, and printed handouts)	1	2	3	4
Supportive (personal) counseling by Project, EXCEL staff	1	2	3	4
Workbook exercises from *Narrowing Down the World of Work* (blue book)	1	2	3	4
Informational interviewing with individuals working in your chosen career field	1	2	3	4
Workshop on test taking strategies	1	2	3	4
Use of the Internet to search for career/scholarship information	1	2	3	4
Employment Related Services				
Internship/practicum/clinical affiliation/volunteer placement with local area employers	1	2	3	4
Work-study placement assistance	1	2	3	4

135

Resume and cover letter writing assistance	1	2	3	4
Practice job interviews with Tom Kerner	1	2	3	4
Job placement assistance, including referrals to career fairs and job openings by Tom Kerner	1	2	3	4
Referral to FutureWorks, state employment agency	1	2	3	4
Interview for federal summer jobs	1	2	3	4
Use of *Cooperative Education Job Bank* binders	1	2	3	4
Use of *Quick Results in Your Job Search* manual	1	2	3	4
Use of the Job Bulletin Board in the Adaptive Computer Lab	1	2	3	4

General Support Services

Use of adaptive and assistive technology in Adaptive Computer Lab (including Dragon Dictate, OMNI 3000 CCTV)	1	2	3	4
Math tutoring with Art Cooney	1	2	3	4
Computer tutoring and orientation with Mario Carniero	1	2	3	4
Academic support group for students with learning disabilities with Deena Shiver	1	2	3	4
Use of specialized equipment (tape recorder, notetaker, etc.) in classroom	1	2	3	4
Academic accommodations in courses	1	2	3	4

130

Satisfaction with Services

Below is a list of services that you may or may not have used in the past year. Using the numbers on the right, please circle the number which indicates how satisfied you were with the service. If you did not use a particular service, please circle "5" for "Not Applicable" on the satisfaction scale.

	Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Not Applicable
Career/Vocational Related Services					
One-on-one career counseling with Kris Kozuch	1	2	3	4	5
Noncredit career planning course	1	2	3	4	5
Job shadowing experience	1	2	3	4	5
Interest testing (*Career Assessment Inventory or Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*--MBTI)	1	2	3	4	5
Help choosing which classes to take	1	2	3	4	5
Use of career library resource material in Adaptive Lab (includes videos, resource books, interview software, and printed handouts)	1	2	3	4	5
Supportive (personal) counseling by Project EXCEL staff	1	2	3	4	5
Workbook exercises from *Narrowing Down the World of Work* (blue book)	1	2	3	4	5
Informational interviewing with individuals working in your chosen career field	1	2	3	4	5
Workshop on test taking strategies	1	2	3	4	5
Use of the Internet to search for career/scholarship information	1	2	3	4	5
Employment Related Services					
Internship/practicum/clinical affiliation/volunteer placement with local area employers	1	2	3	4	5
Work-study placement assistance	1	2	3	4	5
Resume and cover letter writing assistance	1	2	3	4	5

Practice job interviews with Tom Kerner	1	2	3	4	5
Job placement assistance, including referrals to career fairs and job openings by Tom Kerner	1	2	3	4	5
Referral to FutureWorks, state employment agency	1	2	3	4	5
Interview for federal summer jobs	1	2	3	4	5
Use of Cooperative Education Job Bank binders	1	2	3	4	5
Use of *Quick Results in Your Job Search* manual	1	2	3	4	5
Use of the job bulletin board in the Adaptive Computer Lab	1	2	3	4	5

General Support Services

Use of adaptive and assistive technology in Adaptive Computer Lab (including Dragon Dictate, OMNI 3000,.CCTV)	1	2	3	4	5
Math tutoring with Art Cooney	1	2	3	4	5
Computer tutoring and orientation with Mario Carniero	1	2	3	4	5
Academic support group for students with learning disabilities with Deena Shiver	1	2	3	4	5
Use of specialized equipment (tape recorder, notetaker, etc.) in the classroom	1	2	3	4	5
Academic accommodations in courses	1	2	3	4	5

132

Exhibit N
Checklist for High School Students with Learning Disabilities

Dear High School Student with a Learning Disability:

It is a lot easier for the junior or senior in high school to worry "tomorrow" about what happens after high school. However, with a little planning NOW, and with the help of your high school counselor or L.D. teacher TODAY your move to a postsecondary school, such as a junior college or university, will be much smoother. Here is a checklist for you to use to start on the right track. You will, no doubt, have many more questions. This list is just a beginning. Are you ready for postsecondary education?

I Am Ready Because

1. I am considered the person responsible for my education at postsecondary schools. No one will "hold my hand" or ask me if I need help. However, faculty and staff will be happy to help me once I ask for help.

2. I can describe, out loud, my own learning disability. I can describe what I do because of my learning disability: Do I read slower? Do I have problems understanding what I read? Is spelling my only difficulty? I can describe how my learning disability affects my ability to learn. I can describe what I do to cope with my learning disability.

3. I have copies of all test results related to the diagnosis of my learning disability, IEPs for special services, a transcript of the high school courses I have completed to date, and a recent complete L.D. diagnostic evaluation report. Generally to be eligible for special help for a learning disability in postsecondary schools, a student must have complete records about the diagnosis and management of the learning disability. I have checked with the postsecondary school that I think I may attend in regard to the records they require. (In most instances, a history of the learning disability needs to be included, along with a recent (no older than three years) complete diagnostic report (re)confirming the learning disability. The diagnostic evaluation generally needs to include the *Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale*-R plus other tests).

4. I understand and can discuss the content of the reports concerning my L.D. history and diagnosis. I understand the meaning of what is written in the reports (see number 2). I also understand that these reports are describing me.

5. I can describe, out loud, the types of classroom services (accommodations) I need in the classroom. I know the types of special assistance that work for me. For example: Do I need to tape record lectures? Do I need tape recorded textbooks? Do I write better compositions when I use a word processor? Do I need extra time for tests because of my learning disability? Do I need someone to read exams to me?

6. I have practiced with and am familiar with the accommodations I plan to use in a postsecondary school. I have already tape recorded lectures in school, and I know how to take notes from the recordings. I have already used tape recorded texts and I understand 2-track and 4-track systems. My typing skills are good, and I am familiar with a specific word processing program. I need twice as much time for tests.

7. I have my Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic (Princeton, New Jersey) identification number if I use tape recorded texts. I have access to tape recorded texts and I already have the special tape player needed to listen to the taped textbooks.

8. If I use special accommodations to take tests (such as additional time or a reader), I plan to make arrangements to use these same accommodations when I take my postsecondary admissions related tests (ACT or SAT) so that my scores will accurately reflect what I know. I will talk with my school counselor or L.D. teacher to make these arrangements. If I have already taken these tests without the accommodations, I will take them again with accommodations.

9. I plan to meet with the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities at the postsecondary school I plan to attend. I have the legal right of confidentiality of my disability. I need not identify my disability to anyone. However, to be eligible for special services, I must go to the center or office that coordinates services for students with disabilities and tell them why I need special help and document my need.

10. I have talked to my preferred postsecondary school about courses they expect I will have successfully completed in high school, and I am academically prepared to enter that school. I realize that not all postsecondary schools offer many college preparatory (remedial) courses. I am aware of all the college preparatory courses that are offered at the school I want to attend. I realize there is almost no course of study at the postsecondary level that does not require college English and college algebra. Avoiding high school English and/or algebra is only putting off what I will have to enroll in and learn eventually.

11. I am aware that most postsecondary schools do not have "resource rooms," special L.D. tutors, classroom assignments adapted only for L.D. students, or reduced program standards and requirements. I understand that I will be taking "regular classes" in a postsecondary school, and one-to-one assistance from special education personnel for each class is not generally available. I will need to decide when I need a tutor, and find a tutor myself. I will need to use the learning skills I have learned in high school.

12. I can describe to a reader or notetaker how they can be most helpful to me. I can decide whether their help is meeting my needs. I know I need to let them know if my needs are not being met. When academic aides work with me in my postsecondary school, I will have to tell them how to help me. I know I will work with the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities in this regard. However, I have to be ready with specific information so their help will work for me. I also know that readers and notetakers are not necessarily tutors.

13. I plan to apply for special assistance at postsecondary schools in timely fashion. I will be sure that the school I plan to go to has agreed that I qualify for L.D. accommodations, and I will be sure that my needs for accommodations are known by the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities well before classes begin. I will have placed my order for tape recorded texts in time to have the recordings sent to me before classes begin.

14. I have the skills or will get help to learn the skills about time management, notetaking, listening, test-taking strategies, and library use.

15. I have asked questions about receiving financial support for my education by talking to my local Vocational Rehabilitation Services counselor. If I am eligible for help under their guidelines, they may also be willing to pay for tutors. Springfield Office (413) 736-7296 Holyoke Office (413) 536-8200 Enfield Office (203) 745-5078.

If you have questions about help for students with learning disabilities in a postsecondary school, don't hesitate: Call the Coordinator of Students with Disabilities at that school. This person will be happy to answer your questions or will refer you to a reliable person for the information you need.

We took forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Deena Shriver
Counselor for Students with Learning Disabilities

Springfield Technical Community College
Office of Disability Services
Building 27, Second Floor
(413) 781-7822, Ext. 3179

Exhibit O
Release Form

To Whom It May Concern:

The above student has come to us to request special services due to a disability. In order to better plan services, please forward the following types of diagnostic/assessment materials:

- Individual intelligence test results (including sub-test scores)
- Standardized reading and math test results (percentile scores are the most useful)
- Language assessment
- Individual educational plan (IEP)
- Any and all medical records
- Any further information that would help this student in his or her college experience (adaptive equipment, etc.)
- A clear diagnosis of the disability

Enclosed is a form signed by the student giving us permission to request this information.

Please mark all records CONFIDENTIAL and mail to:

Deena Shriver
Counselor for Students with Learning Disabilities
Office of Disability Services
Springfield Technical Community College
One Armory Square
Springfield, MA 01101-9000

Sincerely,

Deena Shriver
Counselor for Students with Learning Disabilities

Exhibit P
Student Profile Summary Chart

	Abilities	Concerns
Observations and Personal Characteristics		
Academic Performance		
Cognitive Abilities		
Learning/Study Strategies		
Achievement Levels		
Accommodations Recommendations		

Characteristics Manifest in All Six Approaches Featured Through This Project

As part of the selection process, project staff and members of the National Review Panel systematically and extensively reviewed and analyzed documents, conducted on-site observations, and interviewed local staff, current and former students, agency representatives, and local employers from all six sites selected through this project. This review revealed that several staff and organizational characteristics were similar in each of these two-year colleges. This chapter summarizes these similarities.

Staff Characteristics

In spite of the wide range of educational backgrounds, temperaments, and life experiences possessed by support services staff in each site featured through this project, these individuals manifest strikingly similar characteristics. These professionals:
◆ Exhibit high energy that they use to go the extra mile
◆ Demonstrate a commitment to excellence
◆ Display a strong curiosity to learn new approaches
◆ Take concrete actions to develop own and others' skills
◆ Conduct an aggressive, ongoing search for resources
◆ Enact a student-focused philosophy of empowerment and inclusion
◆ Use a highly organized approach to their work
◆ Display creativity and imagination in the accommodations and services implemented, in their time management, and in their efforts to "work the system"
◆ Possess the personal flexibility to respond to surprises and crises effectively and gracefully
◆ Work effectively and comfortably in teams
◆ Communicate critical information frequently, effectively, and in a timely manner
◆ Exhibit leadership, charisma, and gentle persuasion needed to enlist others in the cause
◆ Evince calm persistence toward valued goals

Organizational Characteristics

As with the staff, the organizations featured through this project also differ markedly in size and structure, but evince striking similarities. Among those are the following:
◆ Administrative support is strong and public
◆ Front line staff have decision making power on key service delivery variables
◆ Bureaucratic constraints are minimal
◆ Available resources are focused and used in highly effective ways
◆ A strong philosophy of inclusion is evident

- ◆ Students receive timely and effective support within an empowerment framework
- ◆ Academic and vocational teachers also receive timely and effective support within an empowerment framework
- ◆ A strong, sustained team approach governs provision of services
- ◆ Students are viewed as "ours," not "mine and yours"
- ◆ Strong interagency collaboration is established and sustained

Program Development: Getting "From Here to There"

Effective strategies to help two-year colleges get from "here" to 'there" include selection and support of highly qualified staff who demonstrate many, if not all, of the characteristics sketched above, and sustained application of organizational factors outlined above that empower those staff to serve students in highly effective ways. The approaches featured through this project provide educators and advocates with ideas to stimulate their imagination and serve as a base from which to develop even more effective support services for individuals with significant disabilities.

Access to Electronic Copies of Publications Produced Through This Project

To facilitate the availability of this information, the reader may download additional copies of all publications in this series from the project's web page at http://www.cew.wisc.edu/nidrr/.
These publications include:
Gugerty, J. and Knutsen, C. (Eds.). 2000. *Serving Students with Significant Disabilities in Two-Year Colleges: Special Needs Instructional Support Department—Lakeshore Technical Community College, Cleveland, Wisconsin,* Madison, WI: Center on Education and Work.

Gugerty, J. and Knutsen, C. (Eds.). *Serving Students with Significant Disabilities in Two-Year Colleges: Services for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Program—Hinds Community College, Raymond, Mississippi,* Madison, WI: Center on Education and Work.

Gugerty, J. and Knutsen, C. (Eds.). 2000. *Serving Students with Significant Disabilities in Two-Year Colleges: Program Accessibility Committee—Florence-Darlington Technical College, Florence, South Carolina,* Madison, WI: Center on Education and Work.

Gugerty, J. and Knutsen, C. (Eds.). 2000. *Serving Students with Significant Disabilities in Two-Year Colleges: ABLE Program—Longview Community College, Lee's Summit, Missouri,* Madison, WI: Center on Education and Work.

Gugerty, J. and Knutsen, C. (Eds.). 2000. *Serving Students with Significant Disabilities in Two-Year Colleges: Center for Special Needs—Milwaukee Area Technical College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin,* Madison, WI: Center on Education and Work.

Gugerty, J. and Knutsen, C. (Eds.). 2000. *Serving Students with Significant Disabilities in Two-Year Colleges: Office of Disability Services—Springfield Technical Community College, Springfield, Massachusetts,* Madison, WI: Center on Education and Work.
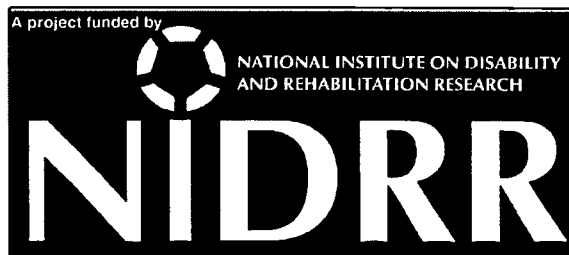
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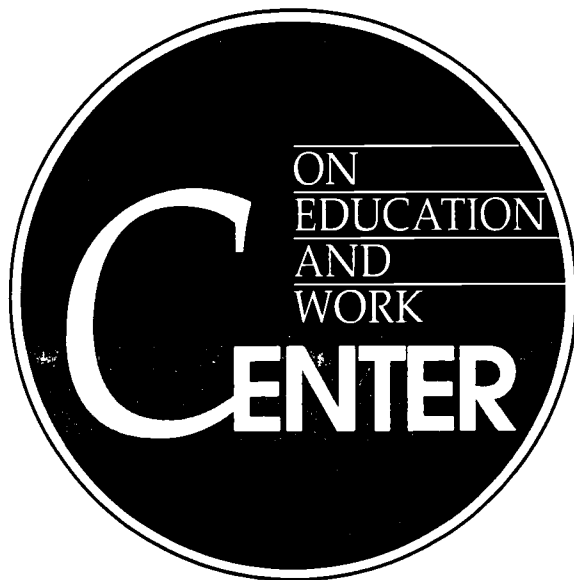
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141