



# Teaching at UGA

The Office of Instructional Support & Development

— A unit of Academic Affairs serving the instructional needs of the faculty

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## Students “LEAD” with Their Voices of Experience

A valuable resource available to faculty is a new student group called LEAD: Leadership, Education and Advocacy for Disabilities. LEAD students speak across campus to faculty members and their staff, highlighting many topics such as:

- \* personal experiences
- \* classroom and campus accommodations
- \* myths and truths of why accommodations are necessary and appropriate
- \* legal issues facing post-secondary institutions within the area of disability
- \* concerns of faculty

Throughout this initial year of development LEAD has experienced continued success as opportunities for faculty education have increased and as student interest has climbed. LEAD students are excited about their contributions to the university, its faculty, and its students. Brian Oglesbee, past chair of LEAD, states: *“I think that LEAD is working hard to bridge the communication gap between students and professors and other faculty members. LEAD’s purpose is to show that students with disabilities are really no different than any other student.”*

While many students on campus have more noticeable disabilities - such as hearing, vision, and mobility impairments - many more have invisible disabilities - such as attention deficit disorder, psychological disorders, and chronic illness. LEAD’s mission is to address the gamut of disabilities by making help more readily available. As Josh Davidson, a sophomore majoring in psychology with attention deficit disorder, said: *“A little help is something I’ve always needed, but never asked for...I’m here to help make sure other students don’t make the same mistakes I did.”*

To have a presentation for a specific class or for department faculty and teaching assistants, call Audrey Cowart, Disability Services Staff and LEAD advisor at 542-8719 or e-mail at [audreyls@arches.uga.edu](mailto:audreyls@arches.uga.edu). Additional resources and information for faculty can be obtained on the Disability Services Web Site at [www.dissvcs.uga.edu](http://www.dissvcs.uga.edu).



*2000-2001 LEAD members (left to right): Josh Davidson, Dale McPherson, Shane Archibald, Roman Henclewski, Debra Cohn, Emily Bridges, Clairborne Perrklliant, Bill Hollingsworth, Danny Brewington (graduate assistant), Audrey Stafford (co-advisor), Brian Oglesbee, Crystal Gangelgoff, Guillaume Bauer, Carly Armour and Sara Sammons. Not pictured are Hee Koo Moon, Nathaniel Klein and Martha Wisbey (co-advisor).*

### People First Language

*“The difference between the right word and the almost right word is a really large matter--it’s the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning.”*

-Mark Twain

People with disabilities are people *first*. Disability is a part of the person; **it does not define the person**. “People first” language puts the person before the disability.

#### Instead of saying...

“she is disabled”  
“head injured student”

#### Try saying...

“she is a person with a disability”  
“the student with a head injury”

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# The Role of Technology in the Lives of Students with Disabilities: Ever Heard of JAWS?

*“My professor puts everything on PowerPoint and gives us the notes to follow his lecture.... Wow, this will help me comprehend the material!”*

This comment, from a student with ADHD, reflects a single example of how technology advances today have created accessible learning environments for students. PowerPoint offers students with either learning disabilities, or with hearing, visual or mobility impairments, the chance to receive information in formats suitable for their accommodation needs.

New technologies on college campuses have transformed the way students with disabilities access material and experience learning in their academic programs. For example, individuals with mobility issues, who may not have the skills to manipulate a pencil, keyboard, or mouse, may use ergonomic keyboards, head mounted infrared pointers, and speech recognition software. Students with visual impairments are accommodated with Braille devices, talking word processors, screen readers (**J**ob **A**ccess **W**ith **S**peech), screen enlargers, and tactile graphic pads. Ergonomic furniture, desks, lab stools, and chairs provide additional support mechanisms for students needing specific accommodations for access in classrooms, science labs, libraries. Another example is portrayed when students access information for classes through e-mail. This basic form of communication can assist a student with a chronic illness who may experience prolonged absences.

In addition to technology-specific tools for individual students, WebCT has broadened the capabilities of faculty, allowing materials to be posted on-line and offering navigational features. WebCT is jointly supported by (OISD) Office of Instructional Support and Development and (UCNS) University Computing and Networking Services.

You can contact either office by calling: UCNS: 542-3106 or OISD: 542-1355.

Disability Services has a comprehensive Adaptive Technology Resource Center (ATRC) providing students with disabilities access to the most up-to-date technologies. Professors and student technology assistants are available to train or assist individual students in the use of adaptive technology. The ATRC is located on the second floor of Clark Howell Hall, 542-8719. Visit the Disability Services Adaptive Technology website link at: <http://www.dissvcs.uga.edu>.

In efforts to increase campus computer lab accessibility, specific departments have requested an upgrade of their lab software and hardware to better meet the needs of students with disabilities. In advancing technology within our student computer labs, it is critical to remove barriers inherent in the modes of representation, expression, or engagement. The Office of Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action has recommended the enhancement of access to UGA computers. A letter sent to Vice Presidents, Deans, and Directors from Mr. Len Davis, Director of the Equal Opportunity Office, outlines minimum standards for accessibility at computer sites throughout campus. Web site accessibility has recently come to the forefront with the passage of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 requiring that electronic and information technology be accessible to persons with disabilities. The University, in support of continued advancement of accessible learning, outlines these web accessibility guidelines supported by the Board of Regents at <http://www.uga.edu/help/wai>.

JAWS software is one-way to “bite into” this valuable material. Faculty can increase environments with appropriate adaptations and supports for students with all types of abilities. This will only increase access to learning, and therefore strengthen aspiring student leaders at UGA.

## Disability Links

- ⌘ UGA Disability Services [www.dissvcs.uga.edu](http://www.dissvcs.uga.edu)
- ⌘ UGA Learning Disabilities Center [www.coe.uga.edu/ldcenter](http://www.coe.uga.edu/ldcenter)
- ⌘ Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic [www.rfbd.org](http://www.rfbd.org)
- ⌘ Disability Access Information & Support [www.janejarrow.com](http://www.janejarrow.com)
- ⌘ Association on Higher Education & Disability [www.ahead.org](http://www.ahead.org)
- ⌘ Americans with Disabilities Act [www.usdoj.gov/crt.ada](http://www.usdoj.gov/crt.ada)
- ⌘ Assistive Technology Solutions [www.abilityhub.com](http://www.abilityhub.com)
- ⌘ Web Accessibility Guidelines [www.w3.org](http://www.w3.org)
- ⌘ Assistive Technology Industry Association [www.atia.org](http://www.atia.org)

# First Outstanding Faculty Member Award

According to research on college student retention, students stay in college based on factors such as: the response and support they receive from faculty, their interaction with peers, and their overall involvement in the campus environment. For students with disabilities, the success and progression for them as students relies primarily on the support they receive from their professors. Last fall, the staff at Disability Services gave students with disabilities the opportunity to acknowledge exceptional faculty members who exhibited teaching styles conducive to a positive and supportive learning environment.

Students with disabilities registered with Disability Services complete a nomination form including a statement of their faculty choice and description of the faculty member's distinctive qualities as an instructor. Students may nominate previous professors, those employed at UGA or retired, or current professors. Forms are reviewed by a committee and a faculty member is honored.

As experienced last year, the committee found the selection process difficult due to the wonderful response from the students. Faculty not chosen receive letters of recognition and their department heads are also notified.

Based on the nominations this past year, Dr. Michelle Graham, Assistant Professor in the School of Social Work, was the first recipient to receive the Outstanding Faculty Member Award in the year 2000-2001. Dr. Graham was nominated by Miss Carly Armour, '01 Bachelors of Social Work graduate of the University of Georgia. Carly described Dr. Graham as "a great teacher and incredible motivator...a student who is learning from all of us [students]." In Carly's written statement, she describes Dr. Graham as a professor who spends her time and energy understanding the daily realities of students with disabilities, which in Carly's case was being deaf in an auditory world. With Carly, it was to understand deaf culture.

During the award ceremony,



*Dr. Graham, Assistant Professor, School of Social Work, is presented 2000-2001 Outstanding Faculty Member Award on February 1, 2001 by Dr. Karen Kalivoda, Director of Disability Services. Carly Armour, pictured on the left, nominated Dr. Graham as the first recipient of this teaching award.*

Dr. Kalivoda stated to Dr. Graham, "by asking Carly to explain her deaf culture, you allowed her to share a part of herself. Your genuine interest in her life was incredibly important to her. This type of regard and care allows students to be themselves, while honoring their unique way of learning."

Carly Armour and Dr. Karen Kalivoda presented a plaque to Dr. Graham during a reception in February 2001. The presentation was later featured in *Columns*. Those attending the reception were Dr. Tom Dyer, History professor and previous Vice-President for Instruction and Associate Provost; Dr. Tom Burke, Associate Vice-President for Student Affairs; Dr. Sylvia Hutchinson, professor at the Institute of Higher Education; Dr. Bonnie L. Yegidis, Dean of the School of Social Work; and Dr. Larry Nackerud, Associate Dean of the School of Social Work.

With its success, the award will become an annual event for Disability Services and Student Affairs staff and students.

**"I consider myself to be a student of pedagogy. With assistance from the many experts on campus, such as the Peer Mentoring Program, the Disability Services Office, and the Office of Instructional Support and Development, I am able to improve every aspect of my teaching – hopefully benefiting every student in every class that I teach."**

**- Dr. Michelle Graham**

# Answers to Questions Faculty Frequently Ask

## **Does Disability Services serve only students who have physical disabilities?**

No. Disability Services serves students who have many different types of disabilities, both visible and hidden. Examples may include attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorders (ADHD), acquired brain injuries, hearing impairments, lupus, and psychological disorders. Students who have ADHD constitute the largest group of students served by Disability Services.

## **What types of disabilities are *not* served by Disability Services?**

Disability Services does not provide accommodations for specific learning disabilities (LD) such as dyslexia, dyscalculia, and expressive language disorders.

## **What is a specific learning disability and where do I refer a student who has such a disability?**

A specific learning disability is a developmental disorder that affects a student's ability to interpret and process information. Unlike an acquired brain injury, a learning disability is usually present at birth and is not caused by external factors. Students with specific learning disabilities receive accommodations through the Learning Disabilities Center (LDC) in Milledge Hall.

## **What is attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder?**

ADHD is a disability often characterized by inattention, hyperactivity, distractibility, and impulsivity. Although ADHD may affect the performance of a person in a school setting, it can also affect other domains of life such as organizing, planning, and managing time at home or at work.

## **Do Disability Services and the Learning Disabilities Center offer the same types of accommodations?**

The accommodations for students who have ADHD, acquired brain injuries, LD and psychological disorders, are similar. Both the Learning Disabilities Center and Disability Services offer notetaking, books on tape, private or low-distraction testing rooms, extended time for tests, and academic assistants.

## **How do I know which department is serving a student?**

Typically a student registered with Disability Services or the Learning Disabilities Center will get a letter that they are instructed to give to their professors each semester. The letter is designed to outline the accommodations needed for the registered student.

## **A student has informed me of a difficulty with learning or keeping up in class. As the student's professor, I feel the student should seriously consider an educational evaluation. What should I tell the student?**

Direct this student to Disability Services to meet with a disability specialist. The specialist, after gathering information, can refer the student to a physician, psychologist, neurologist, or other health professional for evaluation and diagnosis.

## **Who do I contact about a student who wants accommodations on a test?**

*Disability Services*  
*Clark Howell Hall*  
*542-7721*  
*(fax) 542-8489*

**-OR-**

*Learning Disabilities Center*  
*Milledge Hall*  
*542-5453*  
*(fax) 542-4532*

# Students with Disabilities in YOUR Classroom:

## General Suggestions:

- ☞ Address students with disabilities in your syllabus. It is their responsibility to communicate their needs to you in advance. A syllabus statement might read, *“The University of Georgia is committed to full inclusion of all students. Students who, by nature of a documented disability, require academic accommodations should contact the professor during office hours. Students may also speak with Disability Services at 542-8719 to discuss the process for requesting accommodations.”*
- ☞ Announce on the first day of class the desire to speak individually with students with disabilities as soon as possible.
- ☞ Use various models and formats to present classroom material, including the internet, chalkboard, overhead projectors, videos or demonstrations.
- ☞ Provide visual and hands-on learning opportunities when possible.

## Disability-Specific Suggestions:

- ☞ Order textbooks or videos for class:
  - ✂ order books available in accessible formats, e.g. books on computer disk, videos with closed captioning
  - ✂ ask the publisher for an extra desk copy of a text for sign language interpreters to become familiar with terminology
- ☞ Provide students with a course syllabus and reading assignments in advance. These will assist students that need material converted to tape or disk.
- ☞ State your policies regarding class attendance and assignments. Students with chronic illness, such as multiple sclerosis, may be absent from class and need to make informed decisions about course requirements.
- ☞ Face the class when speaking to a student audience containing students with hearing impairments who are reading lips. Another option students may choose is an assistive listening device.

## Disability Etiquette

- \*Refrain from mentioning a person’s disability if it is not germane to the story or conversation.
- \*Remember that a person who has a disability is not necessarily chronically sick or unhealthy.
- \*Speak directly to people who are deaf, not to their interpreters. Everything you say will be interpreted for them.
- \*Talk in a normal tone unless asked to do otherwise. Enunciate words naturally.
- \*Relax! Do not be embarrassed if you use common expressions such as “See ya later” or “Gotta run,” that seem to relate to a person’s disability.
- \*Place yourself at eye level when talking to a person in a wheelchair for more than a few minutes. This will spare both of you a sore neck!
- \*Petting or distracting a guide dog can deter its attention to its work. Remember, a guide dog under harness is working.
- \*Identify yourself and others when greeting a person with a severe loss of vision. For example, say, “On my right is John Smith.” Speak in a normal tone of voice and indicate when the conversation is over.
- \*Listen patiently to people who have impairments. Do not finish sentences for them or assume you know what they are saying. Ask for clarification if you are unsure.
- \*Consider peoples’ wheelchairs as their personal space. Do not touch, lean, or move wheelchairs without their consent.
- \*Treat people with disabilities as you would want to be treated. They are independent people and more aware of their needs than you are.
- \*Be aware that many disabilities are “invisible.”

# The “Dawg-Gone” Truth About Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities may feel alone, dependent, victimized, stigmatized, afraid, burdensome, stupid.

These feelings can serve to differentiate students with disabilities from their nondisabled peers. Classroom accommodations and academic supports for achieving in the college courses are a critical part of what is offered for students with disabilities. Sometimes these students accommodations prove to bring attention to students with a disability and create a feeling of isolation or separateness among their peers.

Faculty make a difference by listening, accommodating, advocating, challenging, believing, trusting, and showing patience.

Faculty interest in each individual student can make a difference in the academic success of all students. Instructors are key players in ensuring

that students with disabilities receive the necessary accommodations in order to reach their potential. Accommodations are not advantages; rather, they are a means of providing each student with full access to The University of Georgia’s educational programs. **Fair evaluations of students should reflect their course achievements and knowledge, not their disabilities.**

The similarities among students with disabilities far outweigh any of their differences. Students with disabilities come to institutions of higher learning with the same range of backgrounds, experiences, intelligence, and skills as other students and harbor the same high aspirations. **The only difference is that these students require academic accommodations in order to achieve their true potential, which is often masked by their disability.**

## Myths About People With Disabilities

- \* Psychological disabilities only affect people from uneducated, disadvantaged environments and prevent them from living normal lives.
- \* People with disabilities automatically know where accessible rest rooms, telephones, and water fountains are located.
- \* People with psychological disabilities can be readily identified by their bizarre, disruptive behavior.
- \* Speaking louder to people with hearing impairments is always appropriate and courteous.
  - \* Guide dogs “know” where their owner wants to go.
  - \* People who are legally blind are completely without sight.
- \* Attention deficit disorder (ADD) is a product of a dysfunctional or unstable home environment.
- \* The more severe a person’s disability, the lower his/her intelligence.
  - \* Anyone who uses a wheel chair is chronically ill or sickly.
  - \* People who are deaf bring friends/family to interpret.

## The Office of Instructional Support & Development

*Teaching at UGA* is published two times a year by the Office of Instructional Support & Development (OISD). OISD is a unit within Academic Affairs devoted to the advancement of instruction at the University of Georgia. The office is advised by the University’s Instructional Advisory Committee and reports directly to the Vice President for Instruction.

The central mission of OISD is to provide campus-wide leadership on matters relating to instruction. By coordinating a wide variety of programs and activities, OISD serves faculty, administrators, and graduate assistants in each of the University’s fifteen schools and colleges.

*Dr. William K. Jackson* is the Director of OISD. Staff members of the *Office of Disability Services* served as guest editors of this issue of TUGA. *Haley Grizzle*, an undergraduate working in OISD, designed the layout for this issue and *Paul Quick*, a graduate assistant in OISD, provided editorial assistance.

OISD is committed to providing access to its programs for all people with disabilities and will provide accommodations if notified. Please call OISD at (706) 542-1355 for more information about architectural access and to arrange for a sign language interpreter, an assistive listening device, large print, audio, or braille.

## Office of Instructional Support & Development

### Instructional Plaza

The University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602-3016  
<http://www.isd.uga.edu/>

