Baruch College

Office of Services for Students with Disabilities Information Packet

Baruch is committed to making individuals with disabilities full participants in its programs, services and activities through compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. It is the policy of the Baruch College that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall be denied access to or participation in any program, service or activity offered by the universities. Individuals with disabilities have a right to request accommodations.

Our Core Values

- Treat students as dignified individuals with rights and responsibilities
- Empower students to manage their own accommodations to the greatest extent possible
- Make information available so students can make informed choices
- Provides reasonable accommodations without lowering standards or changing the essential nature of a course or program
- Seeks to provide quality services in an efficient, effective, timely and professional manner

Services for Students with Disabilities

If you have a physical, psychological, or learning disability, Baruch College provides services through the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (OSSD), a division of the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management and Dean of Students. For more information contact Barbara Sirois, Director of Services for Students with Disabilities, 55 Lexington Avenue, Room B2-271, 646-312-4590. Email: barbara.sirois@baruch.cuny.edu.

- Advocacy: an active process designed to make Baruch College's systems more responsive to the needs of each individual served by the system
- Federal mandate 504 & Americans with Disabilities advocacy
- Pre-admission interviews & orientation
- Priority registration
- Tours as needed
- Modifications to academic requirements as necessary to ensure that such requirements do not discriminate against students with disabilities, or have the effect of excluding students solely on the basis of disability
- Room changes as needed for accessibility
- Reasonable modifications for exams
- Print materials available in alternate formats
- Provision of auxiliary aids: readers, writers, interpreters, note takers, science laboratory assistants, etc.
- Counseling for issues related to disability
- Outside referrals
- Assistive Technology Services
- Liaison with vocational rehabilitation

Assistive Technology Services

OVERALL GOAL:

Consistent with Baruch College's mission of access and excellence in post-secondary education, the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities strives to help students who rely on assistive technology achieve their educational, professional, and personal goals.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Enhance compliance with the requirements of federal, state, and local laws and policies regarding the use of adaptive technology to achieve equal access for students with disabilities
2. Distribute resources and provide support for the delivery of consistent and efficient assistive technology throughout the Baruch community
3. Assess students' assistive technology needs
4. Train students with disabilities in the use of assistive technology

Assistive technology available through the Office of Disabled students (OSSD) includes but is not limited to the following:

- **Cassette Players/Recorders and Transcription Machines:** Both standard (2-track) and Library of Congress (4-track) models are available for use within our office or for loan
- **Closed Circuit TVs (CCTVs):** Devices that magnify printed materials onto a monitor for viewing. Stand-alone models, as well as, PC split screen models are available for use within our testing/reading rooms
- **Communication Devices for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing:** Devices include TDDs for electronic communication via telephone, as well as personal amplification systems used to amplify a speaker's and reduce ambient noise. Our office is equipped with a SuperPrint TTY with printer, phones with amplified handsets, William Sound Personal FM systems, and infrared headsets for use in 80+ seat classrooms.
- **Computer Screen Enlargement Software:** A computer adaptation that magnifies and speaks text being displayed on the computer screen. MAGIC and ZoomText Xtra Level 2 is available for use within our assistive technology lab
- **Computer Screen Reading Software:** A computer adaptation that speaks the contents of the computer screen and identifies GUI components (i.e. dialog boxes, buttons, ect.). Jaws For Windows is available for use within our assistive technology lab
- **Braille Writers / Braille Embossing:** Devices used to produce Braille materials. Manual Perkins Braillers, a Braille'N Speak electronic notetaker, and a Juliet Interpoint embosser are available

- **Reading Systems:** Computer-based systems that read aloud scanned materials. PCs installed with Kurzweil 1000 and 3000 software are available within our assistive technology lab
- **Speech Recognition Systems:** Computer-based systems used to operate a computer via spoken commands in place of a keyboard. A PC installed with Dragon Naturally Speaking Professional is available
- **Tactile Image Enhancing:** A device used to produce raised-line images from photocopied sources. Upon request our office will reproduce course materials, such as charts and graphs into raised-line images

Procedures for obtaining your accommodations

ACCOMMODATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

If you require accommodations in the classroom and have already established these accommodations through an in-take with the director or assistant director of Disability Services, you can pick up memos for your professors in our reception area. If you need to clarify or change accommodations please see the director or assistant director. Having a disability that is invisible makes it tempting not to identify yourself to your professors. Remember the accommodations you receive do not reflect on your ability.

As you know, it is best if your professor can administer your exam with accommodations. However, if this is impossible and you will need this office's assistance in administering exams with accommodations, please **be sure** to follow their Testing Policies/Procedures handout, which is available from our reception area. Also, remember to discuss your needs with Evelyn Morales or Harriet Baer at the beginning of the semester. One final point in reference to classroom accommodations: it is best if you speak to your professors about your needs within the first two weeks of classes and it absolutely is necessary to meet with Evelyn or Harriet early in the semester to discuss your needs in reference to exams administered through this office.

AUXILIARY AIDS AND AUXILIARY AID PERSONNEL

If you require the use of auxiliary aids and/or assistance of auxiliary aid personnel such as note-takers, readers, writers, interpreters, science laboratory assistants, assistant technology, etc., please notify us as soon as possible. If you are sponsored by the Commission for the Visually Impaired or VESID, talk to your counselor about payment.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

If you require assistive technology or would like an in-take to evaluate your needs, please call to schedule an appointment with our Assistive Technology Manager, Ronald Bissessar.

SECURITY EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

You are encouraged to think seriously about whether or not your safety would be jeopardized if you did not receive special assistance in a fire or other emergency due to your disability. If you have not already filled out a form about the Emergency Evacuation Plan, please do so. Anyone in Reception can help you do this.

PLANNING AHEAD ACADEMIC ACCESSIBILITY

Frequently, it is necessary to plan far in advance if you require academic accommodations due to your disability. For instance, if you are a student with a visual impairment and you have questions about participating in a science laboratory course, you must begin discussing the situation with me and/or the Chairperson of the

department almost a full semester before you plan to register for the course. You must also plan ahead if you have learning disability or hearing impairment and are concerned about the foreign language requirement.

There are many other times when it is important for students with disabilities to plan ahead in reference to their courses if they are going to have full access to their academic program. It is your responsibility to be aware of potential accessibility issues you might encounter due to your disability. It is also your responsibility to have the initiative to plan ahead. However, this is not always an easy task. If you require assistance in identifying potential problem areas, in working out accessibility in classes, or if you have trouble planning ahead, please schedule an appointment with the director or assistant director.

PART TIME TAP

The Part Time TAP accommodation allows students who are unable to take a full time course load because of their disability to receive full time TAP with 6 credits. If you believe that you qualify for this accommodation, please schedule an appointment with the director or assistant director.

CUNY LEADS Project

The LEADS Project is a partnership program established to facilitate the successful academic and career outcome for students with disabilities who are enrolled in CUNY programs. The project may provide services for eligible students which include career counseling, job seeking skills, job placement assistance, free textbooks, internship assistance and training regarding ADA/504. This new and exciting program is free for all eligible students. Make an appointment with our LEADS Counselor, Melanie Menge to discuss how this program might benefit you.

Determination of Reasonable Accommodations

Determining Reasonable Accommodations

A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a course, program, service, activity or facility that enables a qualified student with a disability to have an equal opportunity to attain the same level of performance or enjoy equal benefits and privileges as are available to similarly situated students without disabilities. The university is obligated to provide accommodations only to the known limitations of an otherwise qualified disabled student. To determine reasonable accommodations, the Director of Disability Services usually seeks information from appropriate university faculty and personnel regarding essential standards for courses, programs, services and activities.

Reasonable accommodations are determined by examining:

- The barriers resulting from the interaction between the documented disability and the campus environment
- The possible accommodations that might remove the barriers
- Whether or not the student has access to the course, program, services, activity or facility without an accommodation
- Whether or not essential elements of the course, program, service, activity or facility are compromised by the accommodations

Accommodation Request Analysis

In reviewing accommodation requests, the following analysis is used:

1. Does the student have a disability?
2. Is the student “otherwise qualified”?
3. Was the request submitted in a manner consistent with established university policies and procedures?
4. Is the request reasonable and/or readily achievable?
5. Is the nature of the program or activity fundamentally altered by the provision of the accommodation?
6. Does the provision of the accommodation present an undue financial or administrative burden on the university?

Rights and Responsibilities

Student with disabilities have the right to:

- Full and equal participation in all services and activities of the college
- Reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids and services
- Privacy and to not have confidential information freely disseminated throughout the campus
- Limit access to confidential records. In doing so, however, students recognize that implementing accommodations may become more difficult
- Information readily available in accessible formats

Students with disabilities have the responsibility to:

- Meet qualifications and maintain essential institutional standards for courses, programs, services, and activities
- Identify as an individual with a disability when an accommodation is needed and to seek information, counsel and assistance as necessary
- Demonstrate and/or document (from an appropriate professional) how the disability limits their participation in courses, programs, services, and activities
- Follow published procedures for obtaining reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids and services, or requesting barrier removal

The College, through faculty and staff, has the right to:

- Establish essential functions, abilities, skills, knowledge and standards for courses, programs, services, jobs and activities or facilities and to evaluate students on this basis;
- Confirm disability status and request and receive current, relevant documentation that supports requests for accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids and services;
- Have appropriate staff discuss students and their disabilities in order to implement requested accommodations (particularly instructional accommodations);
- Deny a request for accommodations, academic adjustments or auxiliary aids and services, and/or barrier removal in facilities if the documentation does not demonstrate that the request is warranted, or if the individual fails to provide appropriate documentations;
- Select among equally effective accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids and services;
- Refuse unreasonable accommodations, academic adjustments or auxiliary aids and services, and/or facility-relation barrier removal request that impose a fundamental alteration on a program or activity of the university.

<u>The College has the responsibility to:</u>

- Provide information to faculty, staff, students and guests with disabilities in accessible formats upon request
- Ensure that courses, programs, services, activities and facilities, when viewed in their entirety, are available and usable in the most integrated and appropriate settings
- Evaluate students on the basis of their abilities and not their disabilities
- Respond to requests on a timely basis
- Provide or arrange reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids and services for students with disabilities in courses, program, services, jobs, activities and facilities
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality of records and communication except where permitted or required by law

How To Best Notify Your Professors Concerning Your Disability

Talking to professors about disability and individual needs can be difficult, both emotionally and practically. However, it will hurt you if you fail to do the job right. Here are some tips about the right way of doing it:

- It is always necessary to provide your professor with official verification of your disability as well as an official request of reasonable accommodations. This is accomplished through the use of the memos, letters and forms you get from the staff of OSSD.

- Remember to read these memos as it is absolutely essential that you understand what these memos say to your professor. Also, be sure that you never give out blank memos.

- Next, you must make sure that you find a time to talk with your professor. You will note that the memo you give to your professor doesn't state what your disability is. This information is confidential, therefore you may wish to access your right to accommodation while minimizing the risk of stigma sometimes associated with disabilities. On the other hand, we know that it is often helpful to disclose your disability to your professor and explain how the accommodation(s) listed on the Accommodation Approval form compensate for your deficit areas(s).

- Remember, the better your professors know you and the more they understand the reason for your needs, the more likely you will be to get their full cooperation. In other words, the more accessible you are to your professors the more accessible they may be to you.

- During this initial discussion it is also necessary to carefully discuss how you will arrange for individual testing, if you require it. Please make sure that your professors understand how to work with you and OSSD to provide you with reasonable test accommodations.

- Finally, remember that the worst thing you can do to yourself is to simply drop OSSD's memos in your professors' hands and think all is well. You will have problems unless you really talk with them.

If you need any further assistance with this, please schedule an appointment with the Coordinator or the Assistant Coordinator of OSSD.

Alternative Testing

The purpose of alternative testing is to permit students to be evaluated on the basis of their knowledge of course content without undue interference from their disability. Examples of more common test accommodations include extended time, a semi-private room, a taped or brailed exam, use of adaptive equipment such as a computer or text enlarger, or an alternative test date. Below you will find an explanation of the accommodations.

- **Extended time** is recommended for a student whose performance is compromised by a physical or cognitive impairment that causes significantly slower reading, writing, recalling or organization of information.
- A **distraction-free room** is recommended for students who have significant difficulty with concentration, or are highly distractible, or employ test strategies that might be distracting to those around them (e.g., read questions aloud). Some students with physical disabilities may need a separate room in order to lie down or stand up as a way to manage pain or muscular conditions.
- **Adaptive equipment** permits a student to read and/or respond to a standard test.
- Tests may be provided in **alternative formats** (e.g., tape recorded, brailed or large print) for students with print impairments. This may include students with reading or visual disabilities.
- Students whose disabilities fluctuate (e.g., depression, chronic fatigue syndrome, diabetes, etc.) may request a **test date change** so that they are able to take the exam when interference from their conditions minimal. Students are expected to take exams within a reasonable amount of time from the original test date and to notify the instructor of this request in a timely manner.
- Some students request an **alternative test format**; for example, an essay exam is substituted for a multiple-choice exam. In this situation, the intent of the test format will be discussed to determine whether or not a different format can accurately show what the student has learned. In some cases, altering the test format fundamentally changes the nature of the course thus altering the test format is not appropriate.

Disability Services provides recommendations regarding test accommodations; faculty may review the recommendations and offer alternatives. A faculty member may choose to offer more or different accommodations than those recommended by the Disability Services Office.

Testing Accommodations Guidelines/Contract

Students receiving alternative testing arrangements from the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities are required to follow our procedures:

1. **In the beginning of each semester, discuss with your professors your testing accommodations**. This is done by introducing yourself and handing your professor a memo from our office.

2. **Remember it is best if your professor can administer the exam with the appropriate testing accommodations**. This way problems such as exam security and misplaced test can be avoided. However, if it is impossible for your professor to handle this non-standard test administration, our office will do its best to administer the exam. Your professor must allow your accommodations.

3. **Schedule your exam with us at least one week in advance by providing us with the following information**:

   a. Exam information (i.e. date, subject, professor's name)
   b. How the exam will be delivered to us by the professor (fax, e-mail, hand-delivery)
   c. The time you will be arriving for your exam and the time you expect to finish.
   d. Your accommodations (i.e. PC, large print, etc.)
   e. If you are taking your exam at a different time from your class, we must have written permission or a telephone call from your professor

4. If, for any reason, you are not getting the accommodations you need, please inform the Director of Disability Services. Also, if you believe you need a new accommodation you must discuss this with the Director.

It is essential for you to realize that taking your exam in our office is the equivalent of taking it with your professor, and we are responsible for the integrity of the exam. **We expect you to be punctual and behave as if you were taking the exam in class.** If you are late, the extra-allotted time will be deducted from the time you are given. Otherwise, you may talk to your professor about rescheduling the exam. You should know that our testing rooms are monitored by security cameras. Students using a computer to take an exam must use the "testing" account created for administering exams.

I have read the instructions above, and fully understand my obligation toward receiving accommodations for my exams. My signature also indicates that I understand and accept the consequences of my actions with respect to academic dishonesty, and I hereby state that I will not give assistance to anyone, receive assistance from anyone, nor will I use any unauthorized notes during this examination.

Signature_____Date_____

Instructions for Securing Taped and or Electronic Textbooks

Since the passage of Chapter 219, which requires publishers to provide students in higher education with textbooks in alternate format, we have established new procedures for securing textbooks in alternate formats. You will be assisted by Rick Bowen of the Baruch College Bookstore and the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities to insure that you receive your books in an alternate format and in a timely manner. In order to reach this goal we count on you to do the following:

- ✓ You must participate in priority registration which is on the first day of registration in order to forward your schedule in a timely manner to Rick Bowen, {Tel: 646-312-4854 / fax: 212-679-2014} or e-mail 0540txt2@fheg.follett.com, who will assist you with identifying the books you will need. Professors sometimes submit their list of required books at the last minute. In such cases we would appreciate your getting in touch with your professors via e-mail, identifying yourself as a student needing to order textbooks in an alternate format and therefore need to know the titles of the textbooks in advance of the semester. If after you have tried and did not succeed, then contact us so that we can do our best to get in touch with your professors.

- ✓ Once you know the books (including publisher and edition) you need for the Fall '08 session, we ask that you contact "Recordings for the Blind & Dyslexic (RFBD)." If you do not have your subscription, please log onto www.rfbd.org and click the Join Now tab. If you cannot afford the subscription fee, please call Evelyn Morales (646-312-4590) in Disability Services and inform her of this and we will use our intuitional membership.

- ✓ If RFBD cannot provide you with your books in alternate format, please contact Harriet Baer who will order the books from the publishers. Note: you are required by law to purchase the print textbook of any electronic copy you receive from a publisher. In fact, we cannot give you the electronic copy of a book until you bring us a receipt for that particular book.

- ✓ Finally, if the books are not available from RFBD or the publishers, inform Harriet Baer or Evelyn Morales about this so that Disability Services can discuss alternate methods such as scanning to provide you with audio/electronic copies of your textbooks. As always, discuss all other accommodations you may require with Disability Services.

- ✓ Please let us know if any of these procedures are problematic for you or if you have suggestions for improvement.