COLLEGE 101: STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
ADVISING AND COURSE SELECTION

Self-disclosing to academic adviser:

➢ What is important for him/her to know to better help you put together a manageable schedule?
  o More alert, do better in early morning;
  o Joints/body aches in early morning;
  o Topics re: ‘x’ trigger reaction (e.g. seizure, anxiety, post-traumatic stress);
  o Difficult topics require more time (e.g. math, foreign language);
  o Need time to eat and take medication(s) at certain time(s) of the day.

➢ What factors/variables are important in choosing your classes?
  o Class format (small group discussion v. large lecture);
  o Teaching style;
  o Exam format (essay v. multiple choice);
  o Amount of reading;
  o Number of credit hours (desired or manageable v. advised or required)

Course Selection

➢ Is math an area of difficulty for you?
  o Create a schedule that will allow more time for difficult topics-fewer credit hours-for that semester.
  o Discuss taking the course(s) in the Summer, at another school (e.g. community college).

➢ How do you handle a lot of reading?
  o Inquire how much reading is required in the courses you will be taking.
  o Get texts early and begin reading ahead.
  o Ask about materials in alternative formats and/or types of assistive technology.

➢ What foreign language experience have you had? Is it required for your major?
  o Identify options and information (e.g. what is required of the Common Curriculum).

Differences that matter

➢ M/W/F classes are approximately 1 hour long; T/Th classes are approximately 1 ½ hours long. What difference does that make for you?
  o Number days/week of being in-class for continuity, practice, (2 v. 3);
  o Amount of time required to pay attention, be seated in (1 hour v. 1 ½ hours)
What about large classes v. small classes? Options of how to meet needs:
- Permission from instructor for enrollment in “closed” courses
- Different course for same requirement
- Enroll in summer v. fall v. spring (be sure course is offered that semester)
- Ability to hear, see, focus, interact
- Ask about Priority Enrollment as an appropriate accommodation

How many hours do you think you want to take?
- Rule-of-thumb is 1 hour in class = 3 hours out-of-class preparation
- Impact on scholarship, financial aid, Vocational Rehabilitation, other
- Concern of time (years to graduate, cost) v. level of achievement (GPA)

When are you most alert? Is there anything that would affect you taking AM classes? Afternoon classes? PM classes?

How much time are you allowing between classes?
- Amount of time necessary to get to next class (look at the map!)
- Ability to get organized before beginning class, to re-focus
- Possible time necessary to prepare for class (e.g. read, write lab report, review notes, complete project)
- Desired time to relax, study, eat, take medication(s), etc.
- Will back-to-back classes affect testing accommodations?

Course Style
- Instructor style-how do you learn best (lecture, participation, read on own)?
- Test format-explain to the academic advisor or consider how you do on different types of tests (multiple choice, essay, short answer).

*Talk with the instructor/department and/or look at a syllabus BEFORE enrolling in a course. Many syllabi are on-line.

Source adapted from: “College 101: Students with Disabilities” (Oklahoma State University)