

This is the addendum for Jay Dolmage, Melissa Helquist, and Tara Wood's "Connecting Writing Programs and Faculty with Disability Services" published in *PraxisWiki*, *Kairos: Rhetoric, Technology, Pedagogy*, 24(2), available at http://praxis.technorhetoric.net/tiki-index.php?page=PraxisWiki%3A_%3Adisability_praxis

COMPOSITION OR WRITING COURSE ADDENDUM TO ACCOMMODATION AUTHORIZATION

In your writing or composition course, you already can:

- Seek and receive accommodations in a confidential and respectful manner, without fear of stigmatization
- Receive the full range of accommodations that are currently offered by your campus disability office
- Expect a fully accessible physical environment, with all students comfortable in the classroom space
- Expect to be able to revise all of your written assignments with guidance from peers and teachers
- Focus on the content of your composition before worrying about grammar and spelling
- Break your assignments up into steps, working on each assignment a lot in class before you have to write the whole thing
- Expect to participate in class sessions that focus on activities such as reading, writing, and discussion (rather than lectures and note-taking)
- Expect an emphasis on writing and, generally, less testing and lecturing than in some other classes
- Expect to work closely with other students, helping one another comprehend content, and express and revise ideas
- Experiment with different forms of writing, for different audiences, and with different purposes
- Succeed by learning to develop and express your ideas clearly and by developing the habits to write effectively in future classes and in your career

In the next section, please find a list of suggestions that expand the scope of legal accommodations and can make the class even more accessible to you. Writing teachers recognize that because writing (on a computer, by hand, or otherwise) is a physical activity,

we can take steps to facilitate this work. Also, we recognize that students ALL have different literacies, different writing strengths and goals.

Alter Classroom Dynamics To build on your existing strengths and to address individual needs, you and your teacher might consider **altering the dynamics** of some in-class and assigned work in order to remove barriers by:

- Allowing for collaborative in-class options to translate oral work to written text and vice versa, perhaps by reading instructions and course texts aloud, recording class notes, describing images in verbal form, et cetera
- Negotiating deadlines or accepting rough work
- Providing feedback on course progress weekly
- Reading and responding to ideas and written drafts earlier and more often in the writing process
- Setting up tutoring at the Writing Center
- Extending time for in-class assignments
- Providing distraction-free settings for all work, in class and out, and paying attention to student's environmental needs and concerns
- Developing individualized rubrics for assessment

Access Content in Multiple Formats You and your teacher might also discuss ways to **access course content and information in multiple formats**. For instance, your teacher might:

- Provide feedback on your own work in a variety of different formats, including audio, video or written feedback
- Hand out course documents and assignments, post them online, and give verbal reminders
- Make readings available in multiple formats, such as audio books or e-texts
- Engage the class in community note taking, where all students share the responsibility for taking class notes
- Provide large-print and pictorial notes of class discussion
- Post class notes online
- Avoid the use of red ink, print in larger print on yellow paper, et cetera, for ease of

readability

- Provide opportunities for students to interact and collaborate with peers in alternate ways
- Encourage the use of technology like cell phones to take pictures of notes on whiteboards/blackboards; or to record discussions when appropriate, and with permission
- Ask students to create alternative formats for multimodal content (e.g. captions)

Express Knowledge in Multiple Ways You and your teacher can also discuss **multiple options for you to express your knowledge** throughout the writing process by:

- Allowing means of participating in class discussion without speaking in front of the entire class (for instance, extending discussion online or providing comment cards)
- Using technology such as speech-recognition software to draft text
- Using multiple literacies from the invention through the revision process (for instance, oral drafting, sketching and mapping, or cutting and pasting)
- Allowing short assignments to be submitted in alternative formats, and via alternative avenues (for instance, emailing or leaving voicemail messages instead of submitting print copies of work)