This information is being provided to ensure that members of the Cornell Faculty are well-informed about federal disability laws and strategies to support students with disabilities.

Accommodating Episodic Conditions

An increasing number of students with disabilities have medical or mental health conditions that present a challenge to participating in routine activities of life and school on a consistent basis. These conditions may persist throughout a person's lifetime with episodic and unpredictable flare-ups. Students often seek assistance and guidance from faculty members about how best to balance the management of a health condition with the demands of their academic work.

When dealing with the impact of chronic conditions, students may require modifications beyond test-taking accommodations such as deadline extensions or adjustments to the absence policy because of medical flare-ups. This type of accommodation requires assessing what modification to deadlines or attendance is reasonable within the context of each course. The student, instructor and SDS Counselor (as needed) can assess how the accommodation will affect the essential requirements of the course.

TA's are often used to assist with administering testing accommodations and are designated as the primary contact for disability accommodations in a class, however, when classroom modifications beyond testing arrangements are needed, the instructor should be the primary contact for accommodation requests. Even in the realm of testing accommodations, the instructor is ultimately responsible for both the administration of the exam and the actions of the TA.

Learn more about teaching students with disabilities

The *Faculty Resource Guide to Teaching Students with Disabilities* has information about types of disabilities and their impact on student learning. The guide, along with previous editions of this Bulletin and other helpful information, can be found on the SDS website at www.sds.cornell.edu/faculty.

If you have questions about accommodations, do not hesitate to contact the SDS staff. Our goal is to help identify effective solutions for barriers to equal access for students with disabilities.

Accessible Course Packets

You research, edit, and compile the contents for your course packets well before they hit the shelves at the campus bookstore. The work you do in these initial phases can help set the stage for students who require accessible course materials. An **accessible course packet** is one that can be readily used by everyone, including students with disabilities. Characteristics of accessible course packets include:

- Content that is read electronically as **TEXT**, not simply shown as **IMAGES** like many scanned documents (images cannot be read by document reading software such as "VoiceOver" on a Mac or "Narrator" on a Dell);
- Documents that use **headers and other styles** to provide structure for screen reading software;
- Use of **alt text** to describe images, graphics, tables and diagrams; and
- Documents that **do not rely on color** to convey meaning (for low vision or color blindness).

To create accessible documents, review the electronic versions of document files before they are assembled and sent to the Cornell Store (http://store.cornell.edu/t-custom-publishing.aspx) using the accessibility features within the Microsoft Office Suite of products or Adobe Professional. These tools can help you identify where additional effort is needed and fix problem areas — such as PDF images that need conversion to text — to create course material that is more accessible to all students, with and without disabilities.

For more information on creating accessible course packets, visit www.sds.cornell.edu/faculty or review the following websites:

Adobe accessibility tutorials: http://www.adobe.com/accessibility/resources.html
Microsoft accessibility tutorials: http://www.microsoft.com/enable/training

Animals in the Classroom

Cornell Policy 2.8, Pets on Campus, prohibits pets from university-controlled buildings. This article gives a brief overview of when animals are permitted in campus buildings.

Service Animal: The Americans with Disabilities Acts of 1990, as amended in 2008, defines a service animal "any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability." A service animal meeting this definition is not required to be licensed or certified by a state or local government or animal training program.

The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler's disability. Some **examples of the tasks service animals are trained to provide** include:

- Guiding individuals who are blind;
- Alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people, traffic, alarms or other sounds;
- Pulling a wheelchair;
- Fetching items or turning on/off light switches;
- Alerting others or standing guard over a person during a seizure; or
- Calming a person with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack.

Assistance Animal: An animal that provides comfort, reassurance, social interaction and other emotional benefits. The animal does not have to be a dog or trained to perform any specific task. An assistance animal is not a service animal. The use of an animal may be approved as a reasonable accommodation through established Student Disability Services procedures. **If an assistance animal is allowed as an accommodation in the classroom, instructors will be notified via an SDS accommodation letter provided by the student.**

Service Dog in Training: A service animal in training, including puppies in training once they are old enough to remain under the control of the handler. The animal must be accompanied by a person who is training the service animal and **the animal must wear a leash, harness, or cape that identifies the animal as a service animal in training**.

When should a Service or Assistance Animal NOT be allowed in a classroom?

If the service or assistance animal is behaving in a discrete and calm manner, there is no reason for the animal to be removed from a classroom. There are, however, circumstances under which it is OK to ask for an animal to leave:

- The animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it.
- The animal is not housebroken.

As always, feel free to **contact SDS if you have any questions** about animals in the classroom or any student disability issue.

For more information, visit: http://sds.cornell.edu/Other_Accommodations/Service_Animals.html

Service Dog Etiquette

- Do NOT talk to the animal—talk to the handler.
- Do NOT touch the service animal without asking for and receiving permission.
- Do NOT make noises, make excessive eye contact, or call a service dog.
- Do NOT offer food to the animal.
- Do NOT ask personal questions about the handlers disability, or otherwise intrude on his or her privacy.
- Do NOT be offended if the handler does not wish to chat about the service animal.

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Questions You May Ask

If you spot a dog in the classroom (or other building on campus) and it is not obvious what tasks the dog performs, there are two questions you may ask to determine whether it is a service animal:

1. Is the animal required because of a disability?

   If the answer is no, you may ask that the dog be removed.

2. What tasks has the animal been trained to perform?

   If the answer is none, you may ask that the dog be removed.

If the answer is that the dog is a service animal in training, it should be allowed to remain unless it is being disruptive.

You may **NOT**:

- Ask questions about the person's disability
- Request medical documentation
- Ask that the animal demonstrate its ability to perform the work or task