

MEMORANDUM

To: Academic Department Chairs

From: Jennifer Murchison, Assistant Director
Disability Resources for Students (DRS)

RE: Information to Share with Faculty about Disability-Related Issues

Date: August 2018

The University of Memphis' Disability Resources for Students (DRS) has made a commitment with department chairs to remind faculty, including adjunct faculty and teaching assistants, of their roles and responsibilities regarding students with disabilities. This should allow further engagement of students and provide equal access and opportunities for students. As such, we ask you to share the following with faculty:

- **DRS website information important for faculty is located at:**

<http://www.memphis.edu/drs/faculty>

- **Syllabus Statement**

A statement on the course syllabus and an announcement in class often make students more comfortable about disclosing their disability and need for accommodations. DRS suggests this or similar:

Student with disabilities are encouraged to speak with me privately about academic and classroom accommodations. It is strongly encouraged that you register with Disability Resources for Students (DRS) to determine appropriate academic accommodations. DRS is located at 110 Wilder Tower, by phone at 901-678-2880 and via email at drs@memphis.edu DRS coordinates all accommodations for students with disabilities.

DRS also offers volunteer opportunities for students who provide copies of notes to students who have that as an approved accommodation. Scholarship, community service, and volunteer hours can be validated for this service by DRS.

- **Student Requests for Accommodations**

Students who need disability-related accommodations for courses should provide faculty with memos from DRS. We are now using **Accommodations Information Management (AIM)** system to send these memos via email. The electronic/paper memo confirms the student is registered with DRS and lists accommodations which are considered reasonable and appropriate. Accommodation memos provided to faculty mean the students have submitted documentation related to their disability with DRS. These memos to faculty are submitted throughout the semester. Faculty members are not required to provide accommodations retroactively. Students requesting accommodations who do not present memos should be referred to DRS.

- **Accessibility of all Information, Materials and Technology**

The University of Memphis has an initiative to plan and prioritize how the University will ensure instructional information, materials and technology are fully accessible to students, faculty and staff with disabilities. Important points for faculty include:

- “Accessible” means individuals can independently acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services within the same time frame as individuals without disabilities, with equivalent ease of use;
- This includes all online programs, websites, videos, PowerPoints, and handouts;
- The expectation that information be accessible via screen readers and enlargers and all audio components be captioned;
- Questions about accessibility of information, materials and technology should be sent to the Center for Teaching and Learning, a part of UM Tech - Information Technology Services (<http://www.memphis.edu/umtech/teaching/>)

- **Test Accommodations**

DRS provides test proctoring as a service for faculty and students who need to use assistive technology, a reader/scribe, or a low stimulus environment. Faculty members may choose to administer their own exams so long as they provide the listed accommodations. DRS is committed to test security, maintaining the integrity of test administration, and accountability in the handling of all test. Tests proctored in DRS are monitored via staff members and closed-circuit cameras.

Questions may be directed to 678-2880 or emailed to: drstests@memphis.edu Tests administered in DRS should be sent to this address. Access to this account is limited to select DRS staff. Our Testing Coordinator, April Huggins, is happy to assist you.

- **Confidentiality**

Information about a student’s disability is confidential. It is the student’s information to share or not share. Although many students are open about their disability, no reference to the student’s disability should be made around others. It is never appropriate to ask a student to disclose their disability.

- **Diversity**

Disability Resources for Students is dedicated to leading the University of Memphis community in embracing disability as an aspect of diversity. The staff in DRS are happy to meet with your department and faculty to discuss topics related to disabilities, students, and to answer questions about our office or conduct workshops. To set up a meeting, contact us at 901-678-2880 to schedule a time for our staff to visit your department or class(es).