

# Office of Accessibility Services Student Handbook



## **Office of Student Accessibility Services**

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## **I. Introduction**

OSAS provides academic services and accommodations that are in compliance with the American Disabilities Amendments Act of 2009 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

This handbook is designed for students with a documented disability or disabilities and for students who think that they might have a disability. Information about the disability services process, rights and responsibilities, self-advocacy, study skills and learning disability terminology are included for your review. If you have a question that is not answered by this handbook, please contact the Director of Student Accessibility Services for clarification and guidance.

### *Mission*

The mission of the Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) at Fisher College is to ensure equal access to educational opportunities for students with disabilities. We strive to create a positive learning environment in which the student can grow and develop academically and personally. The services and support we provide are individually designed and based on specific needs as identified by the Director of Student Accessibility Services.

### *Office Information*

The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is located at 131-03 (lower level) Beacon Street. We are reachable by telephone at 617-670-4429 and email at [OSAS@fisher.edu](mailto:OSAS@fisher.edu).

## II. How is College Different from High School?

At the college level, students are responsible for self-disclosing their disability and requesting academic accommodations. It is important to familiarize yourself with the differences in services between high school and college as you make the necessary preparations to obtain disability services. Accommodations that were provided in high school may not necessarily be available on the college level.

High School	College	Fisher College
Individuals with Disabilities Education (IDEA) is the law and is about entitlement.	American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is the law and about antidiscrimination.	We comply with ADA and Section 504.
IDEA is about success.	ADA and Section 504 is about access.	By leveling the playing field and providing equal opportunity, the student has access.
Education is a right and must be provided to all students.	Education is NOT a right and students must meet admissions criteria.	Student must meet admission criteria. Some programs have specific requirements.
School district must identify the disability.	Student must self-identify.	Student must self-identify and register with OSAS.
School district must provide the evaluations and testing.	Student must pay the expenses for testing and evaluations.	Student must cover the cost of testing and evaluations. Referrals are provided.
School district develops the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). IEP services must be implemented by the special education dept.	IEPs do NOT exist and are not sufficient documentation. Student must identify needs and request services.	Student must provide the requested documentation. IEP alone is NOT sufficient.
Classroom and curriculum alterations are required.	Alterations are NOT required, particularly those that compromise the academic standards of the class or program.	Reasonable accommodations are provided unless fundamentally alters the course or program requirement or puts undue hardship on the college.
School district is responsible for arranging academic accommodations.	Student must self-advocate and arrange the accommodations.	Student is responsible for arranging and requesting accommodations through OSAS.
Personal care services must be provided.	Personal care services are NOT provided.	Personal care services are NOT provided. Referrals are available.
Parent advocates and has access to student information.	Student must self-advocate and parent does not have access to information.	Student advocates and must sign a consent to release information. Refer to FERPA and

### III. Eligibility for Accommodations

The Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) is the first check-in point for students seeking academic accommodations and services. We determine the student's eligibility and work collaboratively to identify reasonable accommodations. Written documentation that shows clear evidence of a disability is required.

In compliance with ADA and Section 504, students are eligible if they can show evidence of:

- A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities;
- A person who has a history or record of such impairment; or
- A person who is perceived by others as having such impairment.

Students seek assistance for various documented disabilities including, but not limited to:

- Learning disabilities in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, information processing, sequencing, discrimination and among others;
- AD/HD;
- Psychiatric disabilities including depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, etc.;
- Physical or medical conditions such as traumatic brain injury, chronic illnesses, etc.; or
- Vision and/or Hearing Impairments.

If you have a documented disability or you think that you have a disability, we encourage you to meet with the Director of Student Accessibility Services as soon as possible to discuss whether you are eligible for services.

### IV. Services Provided by OSAS

- Academic skills counseling to help increase self-awareness, self-determination and independence
- Review of all requests for accommodations (include Assistance Animals)
- Notification of approved accommodations to faculty
- Additional advising and vocational counseling
- Advocacy
- Assistive Technology (Smart Pens/Read Write/Learning Ally – see details below)
- Assistance in obtaining out-of-pocket accommodations such as assistive technology, educational testing, personal care services, books on cd/tape, interpreting services, etc.
- Assistance with housing accommodations
- Information and referrals
- Note-taking services
- Supplementary assistance with academic skills including study skills, test-taking, time management, etc.
- Testing Accommodations:
  - ⊗ Alternative test site (exams can be taken in OSAS)
  - ⊗ Extended test time (time and a half)
  - ⊗ Low, quiet distraction environment separate from the class
  - ⊗ Reading/scribe services

- Tutoring

*At this time, Fisher College does not have particular resources available for students who request Communication Access Real Time Translation (CART reporter). Other mobility services are provided on a case by case basis.*

OSAS maintains a Computer lab located in the lower level of 131 Beacon Street. Students registered with OSAS are allowed access to any of the technology aids available. Various assistive technology software is installed on the computers to help with the learning process and academic achievement of undergraduates at Fisher.

## V. Requesting Services

Whether you are a new or returning student, requests for academic accommodations **must** be made at **least three weeks** prior to the start of each semester in which you are enrolled at Fisher College.

*If you have never worked with OSAS before:*

**Step 1:** You should contact the Director of OSAS as soon as possible to register for disability services. At this time, we will schedule a formal intake meeting. At the intake meeting, please bring the following things or you can mail or drop them off before the meeting:

- Completed accessibility forms – Request for Services Form, Disability Verification Form, Release of Information Form
- Current documentation of your disability

**Step 2:** You will formally meet with the Director of OSAS for an intake and to discuss your documentation, educational history, eligibility, and reasonable accommodations.

**Step 3:** You will be notified by the Director of OSAS about your eligibility for accommodations. All decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. Eligible students must pick-up the Faculty Accommodation Letter of Notification Form from the OSAS.

**Step 4:** You should meet with your professors privately after class or during office hours to discuss how the accommodations will be arranged. You and each professor must sign the form. Please drop this form off to OSAS. The Director of OSAS will provide a copy to your professor.

*If you have worked with OSAS before:*

**Step 1:** You must contact OSAS three weeks before the start of each semester to formally request accommodations. However, it is preferred that you meet with the OSAS director soon after you register for classes. Accommodations **DO NOT** automatically renew each semester.

**Step 2:** Bring your completed Request for Accommodation Form and a copy of your course schedule to the OSAS. We will discuss your academic progress and determine reasonable accommodations.

**Step 3:** You will be notified by the Director of OSAS about your eligibility for accommodations. All decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. Eligible students must pick-up the Faculty

Accommodation Letter of Notification Form from the OSAS.

**Step 4:** You should meet with your professors privately after class or during office hours to discuss how the accommodations will be arranged. You and each professor must sign the form. Please drop this form off to OSAS. The Director of OSAS will provide a copy to your professor.

## **VI. Documentation Guidelines**

OSAS requests documentation in the form of a comprehensive diagnostic evaluation verified and supported by a licensed/certified professional (i.e. a medical doctor, licensed psychologist, educational or school psychologist, psychiatrist, audiologist) who has the authority to do so. The Director of OSAS uses this information to help determine reasonable accommodations, identify the functional limitation of the disability and provide equal access to programs and activities. You must submit this documentation along with the Disability Verification Form.

Please review the following documentation guidelines and possible accommodations that are specific to your disability and refer to it as you and your clinician prepare the requested documentation.

<b>Documentation Guidelines for Learning Disabilities (LD) and Possible Accommodations:</b>
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1. Documentation must be provided by a professional who is properly credentialed, licensed and/or certified. There must be a match between the credentialed individual giving the diagnosis and the condition (disability). The credentialed professional must have received comprehensive training and acquired relevant experience in this field. All reports should be on letterhead, typed, dated and signed.
2. Documentation should be current within the past three years. An IEP is helpful, but not sufficient.
3. Documentation must be comprehensive:
  - a) A diagnostic interview that includes onset of the condition, how the condition impacts the individual's level of functioning, progression/history of the condition and ruling out alternative explanations for school problems;
  - b) Relevant diagnostic instruments/assessments that measures cognitive ability, academic achievement and information processing:
    - Cognitive ability or Aptitude: Preferred instrument is the WAIS-III – The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale with subtests. Other acceptable instruments include the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery-R – Test of Cognitive Ability or the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale 4<sup>th</sup> ed.
    - Achievement battery w/ subtests and scores in the domains of mathematics, written and oral language and reading (comprehension and decoding). Preferred instruments are the Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery-R, Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT); or Stanford Test of Academic Skills, or specific achievement tests such as the Test of Written Language (TOWL-3), or Woodcock Reading Mastery.
    - Information processing in areas such as executive functioning, short- and long-term memory, sequential memory, processing speed, visual/auditory perception. Preferred instruments include subtest on the WAIS-III, Woodcock-Johnson, Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude (DTLA-3);
    - The testing must include standard scores, percentiles, and should be interpreted.
  - c) Clear indication that the disability substantially limits learning or other major life activity;
4. Clear evidence that there is a need for accommodations and clear recommendations and rationale for accommodations to help guide/plan the student's academic career.

**Possible Accommodations:**

- √ Extended test-time
- √ Quiet testing area
- √ Note-taker
- √ Tape Recorder



<b>Documentation Guidelines for Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD) and Possible Accommodations:</b>
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1. Documentation must be provided by a professional who is properly credentialed, licensed and/or certified. There must be a match between the credentialed individual giving the diagnosis and the condition (disability). The credentialed professional must have received comprehensive training and acquired relevant experience in this field. All reports should be on letterhead, typed, dated and signed.
2. Documentation should be current within the past three years. An IEP is helpful, but not sufficient.
3. Documentation must be comprehensive:
  - a. A clinical interview that includes onset of the condition, how the condition impacts the individual's level of functioning, the history of the condition and how it fits the DSM-IV-TR criteria and pertinent rating/inventory scales (i.e. Beck);
  - b. Relevant diagnostic instruments/assessments that measures cognitive ability, academic achievement and information processing.
    - Cognitive ability or Aptitude: Preferred instrument is the WAIS-III – The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale with subtests. Other acceptable instruments include the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho- Educational Battery-R – Test of Cognitive Ability or the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale 4th ed.
    - Achievement battery w/ subtests and scores in the domains of mathematics, written and oral language and reading (comprehension and decoding). Preferred instruments are the Woodcock-Johnson Psychoeducational Battery-R, Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT); or Stanford Test of Academic Skills, or specific achievement tests such as the Test of Written Language (TOWL-3), or Woodcock Reading Mastery.
    - Information processing in areas such as executive functioning, short- and long-term memory, sequential memory, processing speed, visual/auditory perception. Preferred instruments include subtest on the WAIS-III, Woodcock-Johnson, Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude (DTLA-3);
    - The testing must include standard scores, percentiles, and should be interpreted.
  - c. Clear indication that the disability substantially limits learning or other major life activity;
4. Clear evidence that there is a need for accommodations and clear recommendations and rationale for accommodations to help guide/plan the student's academic career.

### **Possible Accommodations:**

- √ Extended test-time
- √ Quiet testing area
- √ Note-taker
- √ Tape Recorder

<b>Documentation Guidelines for Psychiatric Disabilities and Possible Accommodations:</b>
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1. Documentation must be provided by a professional who is properly credentialed, licensed and/or certified. There must be a match between the credentialed individual giving the diagnosis and the condition (disability). The credentialed professional must have received comprehensive training and acquired relevant experience in this field. All reports should be on letterhead, typed, dated and signed.
2. Documentation should be current within the past six months. An IEP is not sufficient.
3. Documentation must be comprehensive:
  - a) A specific diagnosis using all five axes of the DSM-IV-TR.
  - b) Clinical diagnostic evaluation that includes:
    - Onset and history of the diagnosis.
    - Current symptoms, its progression and any fluctuations in symptoms/condition.
    - Any inventory/rating scales (i.e. Beck Depression), or psychological and/or personality testing used to make the diagnosis.
    - Medical information that includes medication side effects/adjustment and history.
    - Description of substantial loss of functional ability, unpredictability, and/or crisis issues related to the disability.
    - Any current neuropsychological or psych-educational testing, if applicable.
  - c) Clear indication that the disability substantially limits learning or other major life activity;
4. Clear evidence that there is a need for accommodations and clear recommendations and rationale for accommodations to help guide/plan the student's academic career.

**Possible Accommodations:**

- √ Extended test-time
- √ Quiet testing area
- √ Note-taker
- √ Tape Recorder
- √ Medical Leave
- √ Extensions on assignments
- √ Recommendation to Housing

<b>Documentation Guidelines for Physical and Medical Disabilities and Possible Accommodations:</b>
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1. Documentation must be provided by a professional who is properly credentialed, licensed and/or certified. There must be a match between the credentialed individual giving the diagnosis and the condition (disability). The credentialed professional must have received comprehensive training and acquired relevant experience in this field. All reports should be on letterhead, typed, dated and signed.
2. Documentation should be current within the past six months. An IEP is not sufficient.
3. Documentation must be comprehensive:
  - a) A specific diagnosis of a disability with relevant medical history and functional limitations.
  - b) Clinical diagnostic evaluation that includes:
    - Onset and history of the diagnosis.
    - Current symptoms, its progression and any fluctuations in symptoms/condition.
    - Any assessments used to assist in the diagnosis.
    - Medical information that includes medication side effects/adjustment and history.
    - Description of substantial loss of functional ability, unpredictability, and/or crisis issues related to the disability.
    - Any neuropsychological or psych-educational testing, if applicable.
4. Clear evidence that there is a need for accommodations and clear recommendations and rationale for accommodations to help guide/plan the student's academic career.

**Possible Accommodations:**

- ✓ Extra test-time
- ✓ Tape Recorder
- ✓ Note-taker
- ✓ Recommendation to Housing
- ✓ Medical Leave
- ✓ Extensions on assignments

<b>Documentation Guidelines for Traumatic Brain Injury and Possible Accommodations:</b>
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1. Documentation must be provided by a professional who is properly credentialed, licensed and/or certified. There must be a match between the credentialed individual giving the diagnosis and the condition (disability). The credentialed professional must have received comprehensive training and acquired relevant experience in this field. All reports should be on letterhead, typed, dated and signed.
2. Documentation should be current within the past six months. An IEP is not sufficient.
3. Documentation must be comprehensive:
  - a) A specific diagnosis of a brain injury with relevant medical history, use of medication and its impact on academic demands.
  - b) Clinical diagnostic evaluation that includes:
    - Description of substantial limitations in one or more major life activities.
    - Description of how these limitations affect academic performance.
    - Any neuropsychological testing within the past 3 years.
4. Clear evidence that there is a need for accommodations and clear recommendations and rationale for accommodations to help guide/plan the student's academic career.

**Possible Accommodations:**

- √ Extra test-time
- √ Tape Recorder
- √ Note-taker, as needed
- √ Recommendation to Housing

**Documentation Guidelines for Visual Impairment  
and Possible Accommodations:**

1. Documentation must be provided by a professional who is properly credentialed, licensed and/or certified. There must be a match between the credentialed individual giving the diagnosis and the condition (disability). The credentialed professional must have received comprehensive training and acquired relevant experience in this field. All reports should be on letterhead, typed, dated and signed.
2. Documentation should be current within the past six months. An IEP is not sufficient.
3. Documentation must be comprehensive:
  - a) A detailed description of the disability with relevant medical and visual history and its impact on academic demands.
  - b) Clinical criteria for vision impairment that includes:
    - Assessment measures
    - Present symptoms
    - Fluctuation or changes in vision
    - Summary of treatment (i.e. corrective lenses)
    - Any neuropsychological testing completed in the past 3 years.
4. Clear evidence that there is a need for accommodations and clear recommendations and rationale for accommodations to help guide/plan the student's academic career.

**Possible Accommodations:**

- ✓ Extra test-time
- ✓ Seating in the front of the class
- ✓ Note-taker
- ✓ Recommendation to Housing
- ✓ Reading services

**Documentation Guidelines for Hearing Impairment  
and Possible Accommodations:**

1. Documentation must be provided by a professional who is properly credentialed, licensed and/or certified. There must be a match between the credentialed individual giving the diagnosis and the condition (disability). The credentialed professional must have received comprehensive training and acquired relevant experience in this field. All reports should be on letterhead, typed, dated and signed.
2. Documentation should be current within the past six months. An IEP is not sufficient.
3. Documentation must be comprehensive:
  - Summary of assessment procedures and current diagnosis of a hearing impairment, any fluctuation in hearing, level of severity and onset.
  - Medical history of hearing loss.
  - Description of functional limitations and its impact on academic demands.
  - Any neuropsychological testing in the past 3 years.
4. Clear evidence that there is a need for accommodations and clear recommendations and rationale for accommodations to help guide/plan the student's academic career.

**Possible Accommodations:**

- ✓ Note-taker
- ✓ Assistance to obtain external resources such as ASL interpreters, CART reporters, special lighting, assistive listening devices, etc.

## VII. Rights and Responsibilities

### *Rights and Responsibilities of Students*

#### Rights of students with disabilities (as defined under the ADA) at Fisher College

- Equal access to the College's programs, activities, and services
- To be treated fairly, with respect and dignity
- Reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services
- Appropriate confidentiality of all information concerning their disability as required by federal and state law
- Information made available to students regarding services available through OSAS
- To have due process in appealing accommodation decisions

#### Responsibilities of students with disabilities at Fisher College

- Meet the College's qualifications and maintain essential technical, academic, and institutional standards
- Inform OSAS if they require an accommodation to have equal access to any of the College's programs, activities, or services
- Provide the OSAS with appropriate documentation (per documentation guidelines) which clearly demonstrates how their disability limits their participation in any of the College's programs, activities, and services
- Follow the specific procedures required for requesting and obtaining reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services
- Working collaboratively in implementing academic accommodations

### *Rights and Responsibility of Fisher College*

#### Rights of Fisher College

- Maintain the College's academic standards and essential program requirements
- Enforce the College's Academic Standards
- Receive appropriate documentation supporting students' need for accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services
- Defer action on a student's request for accommodation until the student provides appropriate documentation
- Offer students the most cost-effective accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services that meet the students' particular needs
- Decline to provide an accommodation that creates a fundamental alteration or waiver of a course or program
- Refuse to provide a requested accommodation, adjustment, and/or auxiliary aid and service, if providing the requested accommodation would impose an undue burden on the College.

#### Responsibilities of Fisher College

- Provide information to the students concerning the resources and services available for students with disabilities and provide that information in accessible formats upon request
- Ensure that the College's programs, activities, and services are accessible to students with disabilities
- Work with students who request accommodations to identify and provide reasonable accommodations in an academic context
- Respond to all requests for accommodation in a timely manner

- Maintain appropriate confidentiality of the students' documentation, records, and communications in accordance with FERPA, federal and state law
- Update OSAS policies and procedures as needed

### *Rights and Responsibility of Faculty Members*

#### Rights of Fisher College Faculty Members

- Accommodations should only be granted once the faculty has received an Accommodations Form from OSAS
- Accommodations are provided from the point of official notification and are not retro-active
- Consult with the Director of OSAS regarding the appropriateness of a specific accommodation, if in question. Students should never be questioned about the awarded accommodation

#### Responsibilities of Fisher College Faculty Members

- Work collaboratively with OSAS and the student to arrange academic accommodations
- Cooperate with OSAS by signing the Accommodation Form and providing services
- Consult with OSAS when there are questions about the appropriateness of an accommodation
- Refer new and returning students to OSAS
- Respect the student's privacy and confidentiality about the specifics of their disability
- Become aware and knowledgeable about the policies and procedures of OSAS
- Recognize that some students with disabilities have academic or behavioral problems that are not related to their disability. Faculty should make a referral to the appropriate office or department i.e. Academic Affairs, Dean of Students, Counseling Services, etc.
- Faculty members may not request documentation from a student or ask specifics about their disability
- Faculty members do not have access to disability records



## VIII. Accommodations

Faculty members' involvement is important in implementing accommodations for students with disabilities. Your responsibility is to ensure that students with disabilities have access to learning in your classroom. You may be asked to assist students with arranging a note-taker, helping facilitate the test-taking process, or perhaps providing course materials and syllabi in advance, just to name a few.

OSAS provides services for:

- Testing and Classroom Accommodations
- Note-taker Services
- Audio Recording of Class Lectures
- Disability- Related Academic Counseling
- Technology Aids
- Authorization for Assistance Animals (see separate section)

### *Testing and Classroom Accommodations*

Students who are eligible for testing accommodations outside of the classroom must make arrangements ahead of time to take their exams at OSAS. Each faculty member will provide OSAS with a copy of the Test Proctoring Form and exam. Students must schedule their exam proctoring time in OSAS using the online registration system at [FisherCollege.Acuityscheduling.com](http://FisherCollege.Acuityscheduling.com) approximately a week in advance. Completed exams will be returned to faculty electronically and delivered to their mail box. Exams must be delivered to OSAS at least three days prior to the exam. Students should follow up with their faculty member prior to each exam to confirm that the exam and proctor form have been sent to OSAS.

### *Peer note-taker Services*

Requests for note-taker services as an accommodation **must** be made by the student to OSAS at least three weeks before classes start or as soon as possible at the start of the semester. These services are considered supplementary to class lectures, therefore, the student will not be provided with lecture notes if he/she does not attend class (unless the absences are due to extenuating circumstances).

- Who can be a note-taker?
  - A student who is currently or planning on taking the same class/time as the student with the disability
  - A student, who has legible handwriting, attends classes regularly, and can make a semester long commitment
  - A student who's note-taking is complete and understandable
- How does the student get a note-taker?
  - If the student has been awarded the note-taker accommodation, they may ask for help with finding a suitable note-taker. OSAS will work with your faculty member to identify possible candidates.
  - The student with a disability may talk to other students in the class and may choose a note-taker on his/her own.
- Once a note-taker is identified
  - Note-takers should be referred to OSAS to be trained and make arrangements.
  - A small stipend is provided to note takers at the end of the semester.

### *Memory Tool - Note Card Accommodation*

The purpose of a memory aid is to cue or trigger information that the student has learned. A note card is typically an 8.5"X11" sheet of paper or two large note cards. It may include acronyms, diagrams, tables,

category heading, and lists of steps involved in a procedure, key terms and formulas. Full definitions or direct copies of notes are not appropriate memory aids.

Student must deliver the note card to the faculty member several days in advance of the test date. The Faculty member is responsible for reviewing the information and either allowing the student to make recommended changes or approving the card by signing and dating the upper right hand corner. The OSAS director is available for consultation to the student and/or the instructor as needed.

### *Audio Recording of Class Lectures*

If appropriate, some students may be eligible for tape/audio recording of lectures as an accommodation. Students who are permitted to record lectures as an accommodation will be required to agree in writing to abide by the following conditions:

- Audio-taped lectures will only be used for your academic/personal purposes for studying and preparation related to class. Recorded lectures cannot be posted or shared.
- Audio-taping is considered a source of information and the author or source must be cited and given credit. Please review the College's Academic Dishonesty Policy.
- Audio recordings cannot be shared or posted. Student will sign a contract regarding proper usage of recording devices.

### *Disability Related Counseling*

The OSAS extends its services to students by providing disability- related counseling. We assist students on issues related to self-advocacy skills, academic accommodations, academic skills (i.e. time management, test-taking, etc.), career planning, social competence and self- esteem, and adjustment related to their disability.

### *Technology Aids*

OSAS maintains a Computer lab located in the lower level of 131 Beacon Street. Students registered with OSAS are allowed access to any of the technology aids available. Various assistive technology software is installed on the computers to help with the learning process and academic achievement of undergraduates at Fisher. Currently the following technology aids are available thru OSAS:

**Learning Ally:** Resources for students with reading-related learning disabilities and visual impairments. Students have access to over 80,000 books in print, VOICetext audio-books and other helpful web-based tools. The OSAS recognizes and abides by copyright laws. In contract signing with the OSAS Director and by receiving accessible texts, student agrees not to redistribute or sell material without authorized consent

**Read & Write:** A software program that makes for easier reading, writing and notetaking. This assistive learning solution can help students achieve their potential by understanding, reading, writing and communicating with greater ease and confidence.

Some highlights of the program are:

- Improve reading comprehension: hear web pages and documents read aloud
- Help students understand unfamiliar words with text and picture dictionaries
- Develop writing skills and confidence with word prediction
- Support homework and independent research with study skills tools
- Is designed for people with learning difficulties, dyslexia or visual impairments, English Language Learners (ELL) and those learning English as a Second Language (ESL)

**Smart Pens (Echo-Live Scribe)** – OSAS makes available to students “Smart Pens” that work with specific

notebooks (also supplied thru OSAS) to audio record a class meeting. The audio recording can be downloaded later on to a student's computer for personal review. Recordings cannot be shared or posted. Students will sign a contract regarding proper usage.

## **IX. Assistance Animals**

### *Definition of an Assistance Animal*

“Assistance Animals” are animals that work, provide assistance, or perform tasks for the benefit of a person with a disability, or animals that provide emotional support which alleviates one or more identified symptoms or effects of a person's disability. Some, but not all animals that assist persons with disabilities are professionally trained. Other Assistance Animals are trained by their owners. In some cases, no special training is required. The OSAS will determine whether or not the animal performs the assistance or provides the benefit need as a reasonable accommodation by the person with the disability. In general there are two types of Assistance Animals (Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals).

#### *Definition of a Service Animal:*

“Service Animal” has been individually trained to do work or performs tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. Service animals provide active support and can be with students in all public areas as well as their room and residence hall common area, with the possible exception of certain labs if protective gear is required.

#### *Definition of an Emotional Support Animal:*

“Emotional Support Animal” provides passive support and would only be permitted in the student's room and the common areas of their residence hall.

Requirements for Faculty, Staff, Students, and Other Members of the Fisher College Community: Members of the College community are required to abide by the following practices:

#### *For Service Animals:*

- Allow a Service Animal to accompany its Owner at all times and in all places on campus, except where animals are specifically prohibited
- Do not touch or pet a Service Animal unless invited to do so
- Do not feed a Service Animal
- Do not deliberately startle a Service Animal
- Immediately report any disruptive behavior to the Fisher College Police Department
- Do not separate or attempt to separate an Owner from his/her Service Animal
- Do not inquire about the Owner's disability. The nature of a person's disability is a private matter. Any questions regarding Service Animals or their Owners should be directed to the OSAS

#### *For Emotional Support Animals:*

- Allow Emotional Support Animal in residence hall room and common areas
- Do not touch or pet a Support Animal unless invited to do so
- Do not feed a Support Animal
- Do not deliberately startle a Support Animal
- Immediately report any disruptive behavior to the Fisher College Police Department
- Do not separate or attempt to separate an Owner from his/her Animal

- Do not inquire about the Owner's disability. The nature of a person's disability is a private matter. Any questions regarding Support Animals or their Owners should be directed to the OSAS

The following requirements must be met to ensure the Health and Well-being of an Assistance Animal:

- **Vaccination:** In accordance with local ordinances and regulations, the Assistance Animal must be immunized against diseases common to that type of animal. Dogs must have current vaccination against rabies and wear a rabies vaccination tag. Cats should have the normal shots required for a healthy animal. Local licensing requirements must be followed.
- **Health:** Assistance Animals must be in good health as documented annually by a licensed veterinarian. Documentation can be a vaccination certificate for the Assistance Animal or a veterinarian's statement regarding the animal's health. The College has authority to direct that the Assistance Animal receive veterinary attention. Local licensing laws must be followed.
- **Leash:** If appropriate, the Assistance Animal must be on a leash, unless the leash would inhibit the Assistance Animal's ability to be of service.
- **Other Conditions:** The OSAS may place other reasonable conditions or restrictions on the Assistance Animal depending on the nature and characteristics of the Assistance Animal.

*Procedures for Residence Students to Request Approval to Keep an Assistance Animal:*

A residence student requesting permission to keep an Assistance Animal in College housing and associated facilities must make a formal request to the College's Office of Student Accessibility Services. To do so, the residence student should submit the appropriate Housing Application Form as well as documentation of their disability to be reviewed by the Office of Student Accessibility Services. The Housing Application form is available online on the Residential Life and Housing website which can be reached by going to: <http://www.fisher.edu/student-life/residential-life/how-to-apply/housingapplication>. The disability documentation is due to the Office of Student Accessibility Services no later than June 1st for new students and February 1st for returning students. While applications submitted after these dates will be accepted and considered, Fisher College cannot guarantee that it will be able to meet late applicants' accommodation needs, including any needs that develop during the semester.

*Documentation of the need for an Assistance Animal should follow the Office of Student Accessibility Services' guidelines for documentation of a disability, and should generally include the following information:*

- Statement from the student regarding the type of animal they wish to bring to campus and allow them to access college life that would not otherwise be possible without the animal. And a statement on how the need for the Assistance Animal relates to the ability of the student to succeed at the College
- Verification of the student's disability from a currently treating physician, psychiatrist, licensed social worker, or other mental health professional
- Statement on how the Assistance Animal serves as an accommodation for the documented disability from a currently treating physician, psychiatrist, licensed social worker, or other mental health professional
- Current documentation of items requested must be dated within the **last 12 months**

The Office of Student Accessibility Services will review documentation and arrange a meeting with the student. This policy will be carefully reviewed with the residence student at that time.

If approved, the Office of Residence Life & Housing will make a reasonable effort to notify tenants in the residence building where the Assistance Animal will be located. Students with medical condition(s) who are affected by animals (e.g., respiratory diseases, asthma, severe allergies) are asked to contact the Office of Student Accessibility Services if they have a health or safety related concern about exposure to an Assistance Animal. The College is prepared to also reasonably accommodate individuals with such medical conditions that require accommodation when living in proximity to Assistance Animals. The Office of Student Accessibility Services and the Office of Residence Life & Housing will resolve any conflict in a timely manner. Staff members will consider the conflicting needs and/or accommodations of all residence students involved.

Residence students, whose request for an Assistance Animal through this process is not granted, will have the opportunity to appeal such decisions.

A student with an approved Assistance Animal must review and sign an agreement regarding the guidelines for having an animal on campus and in the residence halls as applicable.

## **X. Confidentiality**

The Office of Student Accessibility Services will not disclose disability-related information without your prior written or verbal consent. To ensure confidentiality, documents should be sent to OSAS and should not be sent to any other office or professor. All information is confidential, stored in a secure place and will not be part of the student's educational records. Information will only be released on a need-to-know basis and when the law requires doing so.

## **XI. Grievance/Appeal Process**

Fisher College makes every attempt to provide reasonable accommodations/services and equal access to educational opportunities and services. If you disagree with an accommodation/service decision, please provide a written request for reconsideration to the Director of Student Accessibility Services. The request must outline the reason for the reconsideration and should include any supporting documentation. If for any reason, the accommodation/service request is not resolved, the student should send a written letter of appeal to the Vice President of Academic Affairs will determine whether the appeal will be approved. Appeals will be heard by the OSAS Review Committee.

## **XII. Learning Disability Terminology**

**Accommodations:** are strategies and materials that assist students with disabilities to complete homework, assignments and exams. It provides opportunity for the student to complete tasks more effectively.

**Auditory Discrimination:** sensory disability that involves difficulty hearing the difference between similar sounding words and syllables despite normal hearing. Understanding language is difficult.

**Auditory Figure-Ground Discrimination:** difficulty hearing and picking out meaningful sounds from background noise.

**Auditory Memory:** difficulty remembering something you heard some time ago and/or difficulty recalling something recent.

**Auditory Sequencing:** difficulty understanding and recalling the order of words.

**Dyscalculia:** a math disability that involves difficulty in solving arithmetic problems and grasping math concepts.

**Dysgraphia:** a writing disability that involves difficulty with spelling, forming letters, writing within a defined space, poor handwriting, trouble putting thoughts onto paper, trouble processing what the eye sees and making sense of what the ear hears.

**Dyslexia:** a reading/language processing disability that involves difficulty with reading, writing, spelling and maybe even speaking.

**Dysnomia:** difficulty in remembering names or recalling words for oral and written expression.

**Dyspraxia:** motor disability that involves difficulty planning and completing fine motor tasks.

**Executive Function:** is a set of mental processes that helps us to connect past experience with present action. It involves activities such as planning, organizing and managing time and space.

**Learning Disability (LD):** a neurological disorder that affects the brain's ability to receive, process, store and respond to information. In more simple terms, the brain is "wired" differently for a person with a LD and the person may have difficulty in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, spelling, reasoning and organizing and/or recalling information.

**Nonverbal Learning Disability:** Neurological disorder that involves difficulty with visual-spatial, intuitive, organizational, evaluative and holistic processing functions.

**Spatial Relationships:** difficulty understanding distance (near or far) and how objects are spaced in relation to oneself, or understanding the relationship between objects and characters in a spoken narrative or on paper.

**Visual Discrimination:** difficulty seeing the difference and similarities between letters, shapes, colors, objects and patterns.

### **XIII. Self-Advocacy Tips**

1. Know yourself and accept your disability:
  - Feel comfortable with your learning disability.
  - Your disability does not define who you are. You Do!!
  - Be able to describe your disability.
  - Understand the testing used to identify your disability. Ask the psychologist, special education specialist or liaison to explain the tests and what your learning issues are.
2. Let others know about your disability:
  - Don't hide from your disability, embrace it!
  - You'll feel better and less embarrassed or ashamed about your learning difficulties.
  - Be able to discuss helpful accommodations. It will help you to feel more relaxed and less

anxious.

3. Determine how you learn best:
  - Identify your preferred learning style. Is your preferred learning style visual, auditory, kinesthetic or a combination of these?
  - Figure out if you learn better in the morning, afternoon or evening.
  - Know if you study better with silence or noise.
  - Be aware of what subjects are easier or harder for you.
  - Acknowledge your strengths and weaknesses in subject areas and learning styles.
4. Be aware of related issues that might interfere with your ability to self-advocate:
  - Develop your self-esteem and maintain a positive attitude.
  - Control and deal with your frustrations by developing good coping strategies. Try to stay calm and relaxed.
  - Be an effective communicator.
  - Seek assistance, be assertive and know what supports are available.
5. Understand and anticipate your needs:
  - Discuss your needs with your Professor on the first day of classes.
  - Practice asking for help.
  - Be aware of what classroom accommodations are necessary for your success. Do you need extra time on tests?
  - Set reasonable goals and know what is realistic and know your limitations.
  - Develop compensatory strategies. For example, sit in the front of class and be prepared.
6. Know your rights:
  - Know what services and accommodations are available.
  - Know when it is appropriate to seek advocacy help from OSAS, if a Professor is hesitant to provide reasonable accommodations.
  - Know what you really need for accommodations.
7. Compromise:
  - Be aware that some Instructors will bend over backwards to provide accommodations and others may not be as flexible.
  - Be flexible and open to other ideas.
  - Build trust with your Instructor by following through with everything.
8. Find a place to get support:
  - Know what supports are available in the college and the community.
  - Know that sometimes you may feel “stuck” or need support in dealing with a difficult teacher.
  - OSDS is here for you and can refer you to more supports.
9. Make plans for the future:
  - Determine your long-terms goals and set priorities.
  - Determine where you want to be in 5 or 10 years.
  - Think about what type of work you’d like to be doing after graduating.

10. Shower yourself with positive affirmations:

- You can do it!
- You're smart!

#### **XIV. The ABC's of College Survival**

FIND YOUR MOTIVATION – WHY ARE YOU HERE?

- Keep focused and remind yourself of the prize that awaits you.
- Sometimes it'll be tough, but imagine yourself without a degree or a career.
- Shower yourself with positive affirmations and inspiration – “You're going to be the best nurse!”
- Surround yourself with positive people like a great Advisor!

GO TO CLASS AND BE AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT

- The magic is in those chairs.
- Find out what your Professor expects of you.
- Be on time for class.
- Sit up front, especially if you get easily distracted or if you can't understand the material.
- Ask questions and engage in class discussion.
- Make a friend in class.
- Find a study partner.

MANAGE YOUR TIME AND STAY ON TRACK

- Pass assignments in on time.
- Review your syllabus.
- If you have no homework, read ahead.
- Be organized – use a daily planner or calendar.
- Write in all important dates (when assignments are due, test dates, work schedule, etc. - even birthdays!)
- Break down larger tasks into smaller tasks.
- Make reminder or to-do lists.
- Get support and involve your friends and family.

READING TIPS

- Review the table of contents and chapter objectives.
- Skim chapter first then read chapter summary.
- Then read chapter – pay close attention to subheadings and bold print.
- Take notes while you read and write a brief summary of the chapter.
- If you don't understand something, make a note of it and ask your Professor.
- If you highlight, don't highlight everything – be sure to read your highlights!
- Use the SQR3 Method (See OSAS for a copy of this method).

LISTENING and NOTE-TAKING TIPS

- Don't worry – you don't need to write down everything the professor says!
- In class, take notes on major points.



- Be sure to write down anything the professor writes on the board.
- If you miss something, just stop – don't get nervous. Leave a space. Then start writing at the beginning of the next sentence. After class, ask a classmate for the missed notes or ask the instructor.
- Review your notes after class and fill in missing information (sometimes you can get this from the textbook).
- Pay close attention to any handouts from the instructor.
- If you arrive early to class, review your notes while you're waiting.
- Rewrite your notes two weeks before the test (helps you get organized and start to remember the material).

USE MNEMONICS (memory-aid tactics) TO REMEMBER MATERIAL

- Use rhymes such as "I" before "E" except after "C."
- Use phrases whose first letters represent ideas you need to remember. Examples:
  - ❖ *Every Good Boy Does Fine. (EGBDF)*
  - ❖ *Mary Very Easily Makes Jam Saturday Unless No Plums. (This phrase is helpful to use in order to remember the order of the planets from the sun: Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto).*
  - ❖ *"HOMES" (This word can be used to help remember the names of the Great Lakes: Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, and Superior).*
- Create an unusual picture in your mind that will help you memorize ideas. (Remember the more bizarre the more likely you will remember it!).
- Make-up a story, which includes words that remind you of what you are trying to memorize.

OTHER HELPFUL STUDY TIPS:

- Try study groups.
- Don't cram!
- Get enough sleep.
- Exercise.
- Get a proper diet – it gives you the energy and focus you need.
- Study during your peak energy periods.
- Break up studying into 40 or 50-minute sessions with 5 or 10 minute breaks in between.
- Consider work-study jobs – work at the college. Students who work at the college tend to have higher GPA's!
- Go to Tutoring at the Academic Center for Enrichment. They can help with writing, math, reading, etc.
- Use study sheets instead of flash cards. Fold a piece of paper in half and put the term on one side and the definition on the other. Test your memory!
- Or use a tape recorder where you can say the word then the definition. Play the tape in the car, while doing chores, during exercising – you can even sing it to help you remember it more!
- Use flash cards (note cards) to help you memorize the material. For example, write the word on one side ("amoeba") and definition on the other side of the card (one-celled organism).
  - ❖ Review flash cards while waiting for appointments, riding the bus, etc.
  - ❖ Review flash cards before bedtime – they seep into your memory!

### FIND A GOOD STUDY PLACE

- Find a space with good ventilation and lighting, a comfortable chair
- (but not too comfy!), and a desk big enough to spread out your notes, books, etc.
- Fight distractions! Try to stay away from the television, phone, CD player, distracting view of other activities, etc.
- If your mind wanders, stand up and face away from your books. You don't want your books to be associated with daydreaming!
- Don't start any unfinished business before you study – you may end up thinking about it and have trouble concentrating.
- Keep a reminder list – this will increase your ability to concentrate.
- Relax before you start to study – free your mind from your busy day.

### PLAN A REGULAR STUDY SCHEDULE.

- Set a time and place to study.
- Make a list of what you want to accomplish.
- Set long term schedule - put in obligations you're required to meet every week such as job hours, classes, church, other meetings, etc.
- Set a schedule for the week – a “TO DO LIST”.
- Make a list of what you need to accomplish for the week, including upcoming assignments, tests, and projects.
- Example: Dinner with Jack/Finish Composition Paper - Monday  
Composition Paper due Tuesday  
Meet with Advisor on Wednesday  
History Quiz - Thursday