

THE DASS INSIDER

A NEWSLETTER FOR SMU FACULTY

INFORMATION ON DISABILITY SERVICES AND ACCESS ISSUES AFFECTING YOUR STUDENTS AND CLASSES



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Managing Mental Health Conditions in the Classroom

As DASS continues to see increasing numbers of mental health conditions on our campus, faculty play an important role in guiding students to resources to help with depression, anxiety and other conditions easily exacerbated by stress. When semester obligations such as papers, projects and exams begin to accumulate in the semester, some students may show increased **symptoms** of diagnosed mental health conditions such as the ones listed below.

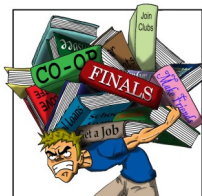
Fatigue: Anxiety and depression trigger different “fight or flight” neurotransmitters. Insomnia is often a side effect of anxiety and depression.

Lethargy: The neurotransmitters that affect fatigue can result in decreased energy and interest in activities.

Weakened Immune System: Anxiety and depression can affect a student’s physical health as well. Increased colds, stomach ailments and aches and pains are not uncommon.

Headaches: Increased tension can lead to clenching jaws which brings on headaches.

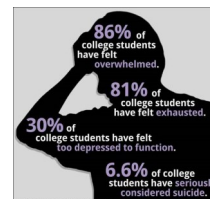
What can faculty do to support students who may be managing these disability impacts, especially during the high stakes period of time around final exams? Here are a few suggestions from DASS:



*Ask your student if they are doing ok if you suspect difficulties. Often, just knowing that someone has noticed and is interested can lead a student to seek help.

*Be familiar with the CCC referral process as well as the free mental health services in SMU’s Health Center.

*Refer your student to DASS if it seems like this will be an ongoing or long term issue.

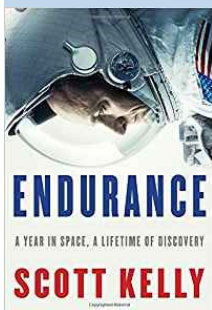


Inside this issue:

Mental Health Conditions	1
Animals in the Classroom	1
Beyond SMU for DASS students: Career Support	2
Final Exams Reminders	3
Timely Delivery of Exams	3
Managing Pop quizzes	4
Planning Ahead for Jan Term	4

Book Corner

How far can students with ADHD go?
To space and back!



Endurance:
A Year in
Space, A
Lifetime of
Discovery

By Scott
Kelly

To learn of Scott Kelly’s experience with ADHD, visit:

<https://www.dallasnews.com/arts/books/2017/11/01/astronaut-scott-kelly-endurance-memoir-dallas-interview>

Woof, Woof: Animals in the Classroom

What is the difference between a Service Animal and an Emotional Support Animal? Can a student bring either into the classroom? It is imperative that all instructors and staff know the difference between the two types of animals, the two questions to ask to determine if the animal is indeed a Service Animal, and how to handle a request for an ESA.



When it is not obvious a dog is a service animal, the following inquiries are permitted:
Is the dog required because of a disability?
What work or task has the dog been trained to perform?

Please review the details at

<http://www.smu.edu/Provost/ALEC/DASS/DisabilityAccommodations/TypesofAccommodations#Service>

Watch this video on the subject: Animals on Campus – what, when, and where

<http://www.texasbartoday.com/2014/02/24/veterans-and-bootz-law-service-animals-and-persons-with-disabilities-in-texas/>

Disabilities and Careers: A Follow-Up

by David Tylicki

In the September 2017 edition of The DASS Insider, I began a discussion on career and disability. After collaborating with staff within the both Hegi Family Career Center and Cox Career Center, as well as learning more about the local resources for our students, I'd like to follow up.

In my experience working with higher ed students with disabilities, I've had a few instances where faculty and staff members asked me how a student with disability-related accommodations will function "in the real world." My answer is usually a confident, "Just fine." While most students don't utilize workplace accommodations, they are available, and in fact, mandated by federal law, just like academic accommodations. The accommodations simply take on different forms - an office instead of a cubical to reduce distractions, flexible work schedules, providing written instructions of duties and tasks in addition to verbal, and so on. I've even had the opportunity to work with medical, law, and business students with accommodations who've gone on to be quite successful in their demanding careers.

Hiring people with disabilities (PWDs) is not just a government requirement anymore; there are incentives. Companies have learned that people with disabilities have skillsets that make them ideal employees in certain areas. Hiring PWDs is no longer all about meeting quotas, but instead about strengthening teams and organizations. Major corporations are therefore actively seeking and hiring PWDs.

Nationally, organizations like [The Lime Network](#) prepare university students - including veterans - who happen to have all types of disabilities for scholarships, internships, and careers with some of the world's leading corporations. One of their self-stated goals is to help their corporate partners "understand the importance of, and fully value, the talent and strengths that employees with disabilities bring to the workplace."

Similar, local organizations include [LaunchAbility](#), which partners with major corporations based in or near Dallas, and [EmployAbility](#), which was founded in 1982, as the Dallas Mayor's Committee for the Employment of People with Disabilities. EmployAbility provides scholarships, education, tools, and training to jobseekers with disabilities and serves as a link to businesses that wish to hire them. Brandy Dalton, Director at the Cox Career Management Center, had the opportunity to attend EmployAbility's 2017 Career Expo with a recent alumnus. "There was a range of employers. I didn't realize how many would be there," she told me. "There were opportunities [for PWDs of] all ages, with a variety of experience levels and skill sets. The recruiters held one-on-one interactions, asked about [the student's] background, and made it a comfortable, not intimidating environment. They asked [the student], 'What are you looking for?' and 'What are your top skill sets?'" These local groups and others like them are resources for our SMU students with disabilities who have excelled in their majors, are ready to pursue a career, and want to find companies who are not only disability-friendly, but disability-positive.

Since students look to trusted faculty members for references, pointers for breaking into a certain career field, or just as mentors, DASS wants to be sure our instructors are aware of these additional supports for those students with diagnosed conditions that could (or do) qualify as a disability. We tell our students, if sharing your condition shrinks the pool of applicants you're competing against, go for it! For companies who have proven to be disability-positive (such as Ernst & Young, AT&T, Goldman Sachs, Lockheed Martin, and Bank of America) it could be smart for students to identify themselves as having a disability. Students are encouraged to talk over this very personal decision with their Career Counselor or a DASS staff member, as well.



JPMorgan We See Ability Program
Goldman Sachs Scholarship for Excellence



Google Lime Scholarship



Final Exams at DASS—Fall 2017 Reminders

Hopefully, you have met with any student who is approved for DASS-related classroom accommodations and advised each student on the best method for obtaining those accommodations for final exams. If you are UNABLE to accommodate your student within the department and need DASS to proctor a final, please review the following details.

Students must schedule their final exam(s) with DASS using our Online Scheduler.

The deadline for students to schedule with DASS is **11/28** in order for us to start our work on checking accuracy of test times, creating proctor forms, arranging proctor coverage for the heavy schedule, and planning for unique accommodation needs like readers and scribes. ***If you have not already communicated with your DASS students about finals, please take them aside and discuss the plan. If testing at DASS is the only option, direct them to follow the procedures ASAP. Our time blocks fill up and we may not be able to accommodate students as it gets closer to the deadline due to limited seats in our testing room.***



DASS cannot administer:

- computer-based exams, such as those on ExamSoft, Canvas, or that require Excel;
- exams that require slides or a projector, such as many ARHS exams.

If students fail to follow our procedures for testing, we will direct them back to their instructors to work out the necessary accommodations.

Just because DASS has denied a student to test at DASS because they missed our deadline does NOT mean the faculty member should necessarily deny the accommodation for the upcoming test. If it is reasonable for you to put the accommodation in place, then you should do so.

At DASS we have 3 blocks of time every day of finals for students to schedule an exam. The exception is Saturday finals, which are only offered at 9:00 am.

For more information on test proctoring for final exams, please visit [HERE](#).

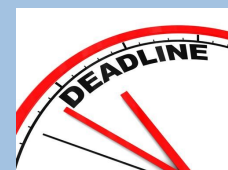


Timeliness of Receiving Exams at DASS

There are several reasons behind our request to have exams sent to DASS well in advance of testing times. The first and foremost is related to student accommodations. When tests arrive at the last minute (or not at all), the DASS students' testing experience is disrupted.

Last-minute emails and phone calls to the student to let them know their test has not arrived creates a very distracting environment. Also, DASS processes multiple tests (~ 25) during each testing day and has established procedures to increase accuracy in replicating the testing environment requested by each professor. To stop this process at a critical time (the morning of a test) to handle one test that has not arrived jeopardizes the smooth testing arrangements for all DASS students that day, not just the one affected by a late-arriving test. Finally, the REQUIRED proctor form which DASS uses to track a professor's requests concerning delivery of the tests, allowed items and return of the test remains a critical component to minimize stress on test day for students and DASS. Without a proctor form, we are unable to determine many important items related to testing, and will not be able to instruct our proctors on your wishes. A proctor form that does not contain a professor's cell phone number on test day is especially burdensome when questions arise. In these situations, DASS will contact departmental staff in order to allow a student to test, if at all possible.

DASS test proctoring serves as a back-up courtesy to professors who have exhausted other means of accommodating DASS students on test days. Should DASS policies and procedures conflict with professor preferences regarding test delivery or administration, we encourage faculty to be creative in finding ways to accommodate DASS students in or near the classroom.



Faculty Q&A: Pop Quizzes

I administer pop quizzes. How can I provide accommodations such as extended time to a DASS student?

Students with extended time for tests and quizzes should still be afforded the extra time for pop quizzes, as long as it does not fundamentally alter the essential elements of the curriculum. Consider these options: give the DASS student warning of the quiz so he can take the quiz in your office before or after the class or start early or stay late in the classroom. Or, with advance notice, the student could schedule to take it at the DASS office with a proctor. If you are not comfortable giving advance notice, take on the responsibility of scheduling the space and proctor for the student and direct him to that location on the day of the pop quiz. Move the pop quiz to the end of the class period and allow the student to remain after. Examine the purpose of the pop quiz. Is it to show mastery or is it an attendance tracking technique. Is there an alternative assignment the student could do to meet the objective? Call DASS for more discussion on solutions, given your particular circumstances and challenges and your student's accommodations.

For more FAQ's for faculty, see <http://www.smu.edu/Provost/ALEC/DASS/FAQ/ForFaculty>.



Jan Term 2018 — Special Considerations for Faculty jan term

If you are teaching a course for JanTerm, consider these items when working with students with accommodations.

Be sure your DASS syllabus statement (see box below) is up to date. Encourage your students both verbally and in writing to get their letter of accommodation (LOA) to you as soon as possible. They do this by requesting the letters on our website and we will have them printed in a day or two, ready to be picked up by the student. Realize though that, once JanTerm starts, they have few hours during the work day to get to our office and we may have limited staff during that time. DASS suggests you contact your students BEFORE the course starts and encourage them to request their letters from DASS right away. DASS will also encourage JanTerm students to request letters promptly.

Beforehand, consider how you will accommodate any students who come to you with an LOA and request extended test time or a reduced distraction environment for testing (the most common accommodations). There should be available classroom space during JanTerm but your departmental support staff may be limited. DASS has very little opportunity to provide test proctoring so it is best for you to make plans to manage most accommodations within your department. If you have a unique circumstance, please contact our office early to discuss the situation.

Sometimes, instructors use part of class time to lecture and part of class time for an exam. Consider how that will impact a student with accommodations like extended time and how you can make it work for all students.

For any questions, please contact Alexa Taylor alexat@smu.edu or brainstorm with Jan Term staff due to their experience with this unique semester. Wishing you a successful JanTerm!

VISIT US ONLINE AT
WWW.SMU.EDU/ALEC/DASS.ASP

VISIT US AT DASS

Please include this statement in your syllabus:

Disability Accommodations: Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first register with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS). Students can call 214-768-1470 or visit <http://www.smu.edu/Provost/ALEC/DASS> to begin the process. Once registered, students should then schedule an appointment with the professor as early in the semester as possible, present a DASS Accommodation Letter, and make appropriate arrangements. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement.

5800 Ownby Drive—Suite 202 Loyd Center
2nd Floor - Altshuler Learning Enhancement Center
Entrance near Gate 3 of Ford Stadium
Parking in the Meadows Garage

Phone: 214-768-1470

Email: dass@smu.edu



DASS IS MORE THAN ACCOMMODATIONS.

For resources that may be helpful to faculty and staff, please visit:
<http://www.smu.edu/Provost/ALEC/DASS/Resources/ForFaculty>