IUP Disability Access and Advising

GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING ACCESSIBLE ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

As a State Institution, IUP falls under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which requires IUP, as a public entity, to make ALL of its programs, services, activities, and events accessible for people with disabilities. This includes all events that are hosted on- and off- campus and events that are held inside or outside of the classroom. This also includes providing access to any person at any event that is open to the general public, including sporting events, arts, clubs and organizations.

What types of disabilities are represented at IUP?

The types of disabilities that are represented at IUP include physical disabilities, sensory disabilities, and hidden disabilities. Some examples of physical disabilities include cerebral palsy or other obvious physical or muscular disabilities that affect mobility or speech, and some examples of sensory disabilities include vision loss and hearing loss.

Hidden disabilities, as the name suggests, are not nearly as visible as physical or sensory disabilities. Examples of hidden disabilities include learning disabilities, ADD/ADHD, traumatic brain injury, psychological disabilities (such as depression, anxiety, and bi-polar disorder), medical conditions that are not as obvious (such as fibromyalgia, back issues, cardiac conditions, and epilepsy or seizure disorders), and autism.

Common Disability Categories Served by D^2A^2

- **Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder**
- **Learning Disability**
- **Emotional/Psychological Disability**
- **Health (e.g., Cardiac, Connective Tissue Disorder, IBS, POTS)**
- **Mobility, Physical, etc.**
- **Traumatic rain Injury/Concussion**
- **Deafness and Hearing Loss**
- **Blindness and Visual Impairment**
- **Autism Spectrum Disorder**

Requesting Accommodations

When considering attending an activity or an event, individuals with mobility concerns are more likely to ask about accessibility in advance of an activity or an event, but they are not guaranteed to do so. People who have temporary disabilities such as injuries or concussions are more unlikely to ask about accommodations that are available, and individuals with vision, hearing or limb loss vary in their rates of asking for accommodations.

Generally, individuals with hidden disabilities will not reveal their disability or ask for accommodations for an activity or an event. Although it is technically not a requirement to provide accommodations if one is not aware of a person's disability, it is important to make people aware of your genuine desire to accommodate as well as how to request accommodations.

Common Accommodations for Activities and Events

Although the accessibility and accommodation needs of persons with disabilities are specific to the individual, some common types of accommodations that are often requested by individuals with disabilities include:

- Relocation of the activity or event to an accessible venue or space
- Alternative formats for printed materials, such as braille or enlarged print
- Preferential seating
- Sign language interpreters and/or CART (Communication Access Real-Time Translation)
- Captioned media and/or transcripts of spoken information for videos, theatrical performances, and other productions
- Assistive Listening Devices such as an FM system or a loop system

Planning for Activities & Events

When holding an event, there are two main types of accessibility that you need to consider: **physical access** and **programmatic access**. Providing accommodations for activities and events allows everyone to feel welcome and ensures that everyone can access and maneuver within the facility, communicate effectively with staff and other participants, access printed and electronic materials, and fully participate in all activities and events. The following are some considerations for planning a fully accessible activity or event:

Physical Access: Can the individual get in the building and navigate it and services?

- Is there an accessible pathway and entrance to the building that has an automatic door, a call button, or an aide?
- Is there an elevator and/or a ramp that provides an accessible route to all parts of the building?
- Are there designated parking spaces for persons with disabilities nearby?
- Do the elevators have auditory, visual, and tactile signals and controls and can the elevator controls be accessed from a seated position?
- Are all pathways at least 36" wide with areas for turning and clear of any obstructions for the safety of individuals who have visual or mobility disabilities?
- Can a wheelchair fit under the tables and desks?
- Are there clearly marked accessible restrooms nearby?
- Are there accessible alternate locations available if needed, such as breakout rooms or replacement rooms?
- Are there quiet areas where noise and other distractions are minimized?
- Is there adequate lighting available?

Programmatic Access: Can the individual access the materials and answer the questions? Are alternate means of communicating information available?

- Provide materials in braille and/or enlarged print
- Arrange for CART or interpreters
- Provide access to a screen reader
- Ensure access to an FM system, loop, or other devices to aid hearing or allow the individual to provide these
- Make sure that websites are accessible (for example, PDFs that are not embedded)
- Provide materials with sharp contrasts in background and text
- Use fonts that are sans serif (Arial or Helvetica) instead of serif fonts (Times New Roman)

Contact D^2A^2 for assistance with providing programmatic access for meetings, activities, and events as needed.

(Adapted from DO-IT, University of Washington)

Questions to Ask When Determining Accommodations for an Activity or Event:

- **What do the event tasks require?** Break down all of the components of the event. This will help you to determine the best way to fully include a participant with a disability.
- **What physical, sensory, and cognitive skills are needed?** Compare the skills required to complete a task or participate in the event to the skills of the participant. Does a modification need to be made in order for the person to be successful or participate?
- **What components of the event access or involvement require accommodation?** Check with the participant to see which aspects he or she feels require accommodations.
- **What accommodation options exist?** The individual is your best resource. If he or she requires assistance with answering this question, be sure to access campus and community resources.

Providing Information on How to Request Accommodations for an Activity or Event

Including a statement about disability access and accommodations on all of your flyers, e-mails, and other forms of promotional and registration materials will allow individuals with disabilities to identify and communicate their need for accommodations to the event planner in time to arrange for the accommodations and access services that are needed. The following are some examples of statements that can be included on promotional materials:

"If you have questions concerning access or wish to request disability-related accommodations, please contact [name] at [phone number and e-mail address] as early as possible." (Adapted from Colorado College)

"In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, Indiana University of Pennsylvania will honor requests for reasonable accommodations made by individuals with disabilities. Requests can be served more effectively if notice is provided at least 10 days before the event. Direct accommodation requests to _____." (Adapted from NC State University)

"Accommodation requests related to a disability should be made by [specific date] to [sponsoring department contact person, phone number, and e-mail address]." (Adapted from Oregon State University)