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Focus on Technology: LAPTOP LOAN PROGRAM

With a generous donation of funds from Suncor, CNA purchased 50 laptops with Kurzweil, enabling us to develop a laptop loan program. This program is being coordinated through our libraries. Learners with disabilities will bring a signed form to the library (from the Coordinator of Disability Services or a designate) indicating they have been given approval to borrow a laptop. The learner then signs out the laptop for a pre-determined loan period—much like they would a book. This program gives learners access to the Kurzweil program off campus, thus enabling them to use assistive technology to study and work at home.

A big thank you is extended to Suncor for its donation and to the library staff for their assistance in making this a successful venture!

Applying Principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

If an applicant/learner meets entrance requirements for a program, disclosure of any disability is voluntary. This means instructors may never truly know the many layers of abilities and disabilities among the learners in a class, making the case for UDL even more compelling.

Universally designed learning environments are created to be accessible to everyone; usable by all learners without the need for adaptation or accommodation.

Two examples of how you can incorporate principles of UDL into your courses:

➢ Provide copies of notes to everyone by posting online. This eliminates the need for learners with disabilities to have a note-taker and they can access the notes online in alternate format (i.e. using a reader or printing in large font).
➢ Request a double period when the schedule is developed. Use this time to administer exams. This would allow learners with disabilities to avail of extra time without needing a separate accommodation. This is a benefit to other learners as well who may appreciate the time for reasons other than having a disability.

Focus on Individuals: DAVE BOYD and DEAN PITCHER

The Information Technology (IT) employees at Corner Brook Campus, Dave Boyd and Dean Pitcher, have been exceptional to work with over the years when dealing with computer issues within Disability Services. Learners are using our computers constantly and when our printer, scanner, transcription equipment, exchange server, or network freezes up, these guys are here right away to get our learners' technical difficulties back on track so they can continue with their tests/exams/training.

This year, we have a new resource room and six new computer stations to maintain. Dave and Dean installed all of these computers at our stations as well as the software that was needed. They have been instrumental in helping to set up the new computer network lines and electrical outlets that were needed in our wonderful new space. Our campus requires Dave and Dean to be extremely busy, yet everyone is able to run their departments smoothly because we have efficient, pleasant, and knowledgeable IT support. Thank you, Dave and Dean!

By Lynne Wheeler (Resource Facilitator-Corner Brook Campus)

FAIR ISN'T everybody getting the same thing.......

FAIR IS everybody getting what they need in order to be **successful.**

I have a Disability-yes, that's true-but all that really means is I may have to take a slightly different path than you.

—Robert M. Hensel, Disability Activist, Producer, and Poet

Focus on Disability: **AUTISM**

Tips for Teaching Learners with Autism/Asperger's

Learners with Autism/Asperger's have specific characteristics and needs to consider while they are in college. Many of these individuals have difficulties with verbal and non-verbal language, social skills, abstract reasoning, attention, inference, and generalization, to name a few areas. Some tips that can help instructors when working with learners that have this disorder include:

❖ Keep verbal and written language as straightforward and concrete as possible. Avoid the use of slang, idioms, etc. If there are terms or expressions in your field that must be used, do not assume that learners with autism/Asperger's will understand them – provide direct instruction as to their meaning. Do not expect learners to be able to "read between the lines."

❖ Be clear and direct about expectations in class, on assignments, and on exams. If a learner, for example, regularly asks too many questions in class, you might allow the learner to ask only five questions in class, and meet with them privately, after class, to discuss any additional questions.

❖ Group projects, camps, field trips, etc. may challenge learners with autism/Asperger's. Be proactive – meet with the learners and/or the Coordinator of Disability Services (CDS) to help them prepare. Be clear about roles and behavioural expectations and consider alternative ways for learners to meet program goals if appropriate.

❖ Where possible, allow learners to focus on their specific areas of interest on assignments.

❖ Keep change and surprise to a minimum. Avoid pop quizzes. Let learners know well in advance if dates, locations, or any other details change.

❖ Be proactive and direct in approaching learners about any concerns. Remember, they may not be aware of the issues nor are they likely to feel comfortable approaching you.

Most Commonly Requested Accommodations:

✓ Additional time for exams (standard is time plus half)
✓ Exams in separate location
✓ Alternate format exams (Kurzweil)
✓ Enlarged font–exams/handouts, etc.
✓ Scribing using Dragon Dictate
✓ Extended program/reduced course load
✓ Note-taker/copy of notes
✓ Clarification of exam questions
✓ Speak Q/Word Q

What do you see?
Ask your CDS for the answers.

Rethink "Deficits/Problems": They might be gifts, assets, and strengths.
www.disabilityisnatural.com