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Myth #3 Everyone Diagnosed with ADHD is Hyperactive

FACT: While hyperactivity may be the most visible symptom of ADHD, it does not occur in all individuals. There are different subtypes of ADHD, including inattentive type where the individual doesn't demonstrate overt hyperactivity. People diagnosed with inattentive type ADHD struggle with distractibility, forgetfulness, disorganization and may have problems with short term memory.

Myth #4 Individuals who Take ADHD Stimulant Medication May become Addicts

FACT: Actually, there is evidence to the contrary that shows that having untreated ADHD increases the risk that the individual could abuse drugs or alcohol. Stimulant treatment is known to improve an individual's academic and social functioning, which can lead to increased self-esteem, less self-medication and less substance abuse.

Myth #5 Students who Receive Disability Accommodations because of Their ADHD get an Unfair Advantage

FACT: The Federal Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation and the Maine Human Rights Act all forbid discrimination against individuals with disabilities. Under both federal and Maine state law an individual with ADHD may be considered to have a disability. UMaine Students with ADHD provide documentation of disability that is reviewed by Disability Support Services professional staff to assess the impact of the student's ADHD and determine if accommodations are required in order to receive equal access to educational programs at the University of Maine.

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Biederman J, Monuteux MC, Spencer T, Wilens TE, Macpherson HA, Faraone SV (2008). Stimulant therapy and risk for subsequent substance use disorders in male adults with ADHD: a naturalistic controlled 10-year follow-up study. *American Journal of Psychiatry*. 165(5), 597-603.

Silver, L. (2007). *What Is ADHD? Attention Deficit Diagnosis and Treatment Information*. Retrieved 11/26/2013, from ADDitude Magazine website: <http://www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/1572.html>

Tartakovsky, M. (2011). *9 Myths, Misconceptions and Stereotypes about ADHD*. Psych Central. Retrieved 11/26/2013, from <http://psychcentral.com/blog/archives/2011/06/24/9-myths-misconceptions-and-stereotypes-about-adhd/>

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Disability Support Services serves UMaine students with a disability. For faculty and staff disability services and accommodations, please contact Bonita Grindle at the Office of Equal Opportunity, 581.1227 or bgrindle@maine.edu.



Spring 2014

Disability Support Services The UMaine Disabilities Insider

Welcome to the spring edition of our biannual Disabilities Insider Newsletter. Things frequently change in regard to disability law and accommodation services and we are endeavoring to keep you updated on access issues that affect your students and your classes.

ADHD/ADD Myths, Rumors and Stereotypes

How many times have you heard someone remark that everyone seems to have ADHD or ADD? According to the American Psychiatric Association, 5 percent of children are diagnosed with ADHD (sometimes called ADD), and according to the National Institutes of Health, 4.1 percent of adults have the disorder. Perhaps it's true that our fast paced society and the abundance of technology and electronic stimuli have impacted the attention span of many youth and adults, but even so, Attention Deficit is a valid disorder that significantly impacts the individuals who are diagnosed with it. There is a difference between being occasionally distractible and clinically diagnosed with ADHD. Many myths about this condition abound; here's some factual information that may help dispel some of the misconceptions people have about ADHD.

Myth #1 ADHD Isn't a Real Medical Disorder.

FACT: ADHD is a biologically based neurocognitive disorder that has been recognized as a legitimate diagnosis by the National Institutes of Health, the American Psychiatric Association, the U.S. Department of Education and other major medical, psychological and educational organizations. ADHD can impair academic, social and interpersonal functioning, and is also associated with several conditions and disorders, including mood disorders, anxiety disorders and learning disabilities. Advances in cognitive neuroscience, genetics, brain imaging and other sciences have provided evidence that ADHD is a complex disorder with roots in a number of areas of neurological functioning, including but not limited to problems regulating neurotransmitters and the brain's prefrontal cortex.

Myth #2 ADHD Only Affects Children

FACT: Contrary to popular belief children don't necessarily outgrow ADHD. Many individuals who are diagnosed with the disorder continue to struggle with symptoms through adulthood. The symptoms may change over time, so the physically hyperactive youth may seem more restless, inattentive or anxious in adulthood. There are also adults who have struggled throughout their lives with ADHD symptoms, but aren't diagnosed until later in life. We meet with students in this situation at UMaine Disability Support Services every semester.

UMaine DSS

121 East Annex
Orono, ME 04469-5725
Voice 207.581.2319
TTY 207.581.2325
Fax 207.581.9420



umaine.edu/disability

YOURS, MINE AND OURS

The students with Disabilities at UMaine are your students, my students and indeed all of our students. You are all familiar with the concept of “It takes a village to raise a child.” Well it takes an entire University to create access.

When I first started in Disability Services 22 years ago I was very lonely in my work. The attitude on the heels of the ADA was that Disability Services would handle all access issues, and faculty and staff wouldn't have to make any changes or improve the accessibility of the environment or courses unless mandated to do so. When we pause to give thanks, I am thankful that that attitude has changed over the years. Many of my fellow employees at the University have become much more aware of barriers to our students and opened their eyes and ears and become change agents. It is not uncommon for a staff member to report that a restroom in their building is not accessible enough for the students in their department. Or, for a faculty member to seek a technology that makes the course information accessible for all their students.



We have come a long way in opening up our educational world. There are still some physical barriers in visual, audio, lighting, and seating in our classrooms. I hope that you will continue to be the eyes and ears to help identify where we need to focus our efforts.

Disability Services can't do it alone and we are grateful to the faculty and staff who are willing to join our efforts to create equity for all our students. Thank you, Ann Smith

Syllabus Statement

All faculty members are required to include an accommodation statement in their syllabi. Here's one example of a statement many faculty use.

If you have a disability for which you may be requesting accommodation, please contact Disability Support Services in 121 East Annex 581.2319, as early as possible in the term.



Faculty Questions and Answers From DSS

Does the University have a shuttle service for students with Disabilities?

Disability Support Services operates the UMaine Access Van throughout the academic year. We transport students with a variety of permanent and temporary disabilities from their residence halls to classes, dining halls and other areas on campus. Rides are only to and from locations on campus, so we're not able to transport to the movie theatre, grocery store or the Bangor Mall.

Students who use a wheelchair, are on crutches because of an injury or have other mobility related disabilities can contact the office to schedule rides by calling 581.2319. We operate during the regular semester while classes are in session, but not during summer months. Over the last 5 years the Access Van has averaged between 200-300 runs each semester transporting students with disabilities.

Our van drivers also pick up and return tests to faculty who request that students who need accommodations in their classes take their test in East Annex.



Changes to The Accommodation Letters

Beginning the Spring of 2014, you may notice a change to the accommodation letter you receive from a student. Following the suggestions from many faculty members, accommodation letters will now state if the student has requested the assistance of a notetaker.

During the course of a semester, we provide many accommodations for students besides testing accommodations including: alternative format textbooks, in-class furniture, and the use of our Access Van for mobility issues. In the past, the accommodation letters we've written have only included the information that the instructor needs to act upon directly (i.e.: extra time for exams). The notetaker request was previously not included to prevent any possible confusion as to who is responsible for finding a notetaker. Recently though, we've been hearing from faculty that they would like to know about the notetaker request, and for the purposes of transparency, we are happy to include that information - especially in light of the last couple semesters where there's been, on the very rare occasion, the need for help in finding a volunteer.

As in the past, no immediate action on the instructor's part will need to be taken—Disability Services will remain responsible for the recruitment and managing of notetakers. Typically, we are able to recruit a volunteer from the class roster by offering them a \$50 Bookstore Scholarship, but should no volunteer be found, we may need to contact the instructor for help. For more information about the notetaker accommodation, please contact our offices, or visit our website, where more information can be found in the Spring 2012 Newsletter: <http://www.umaine.edu/disability/umaine-disability-insider-faculty-newsletter/>.