



Director's Corner

Thank you to everyone for their commitment to helping Potsdam students with disabilities gain access to the educational opportunities our campus has to offer. Welcome to the second additional of this spring newsletter- we are excited to share some of our most recent updates with you.

Brightspace Reading Features



Did you know all students have access to built in reading features in Brightspace called Readspeaker

Between January 2023- Dec 2023 users used the reading features **408,561** times!!!!

The Office is Expanding

Thanks to the “Transformative Funds” provided by NY State which specifically provided money to support students with disabilities at 4-year institutions this office is expanding! The Office of Accommodative Services is currently conducting a search for “Technology Specialist” This person will specialize in assistive technology and help assigning accommodations.

A look at some exciting changes (starting summer 2024)

- We will be providing more hands on support regarding assistive technology regarding notetaking, captioning, document accessibility, and FM systems.
- Implementing “Accommodate” a document management system which includes 1 location for all of your students with accommodations letters
- New Exam Center and Location for OAS. We will be moving down the hall in Sisson to Sisson 136-142 and will be more than doubling the size of our exam center. We have designed a welcoming and comprehensive space for testing and have incorporated national best practices as well as Potsdam student feedback in the configuration of the testing center.

Training Opportunity

OAS will be presenting a “Back to the Basics” faculty centered training covering a variety of topics such as current student body make up, service animals, accommodations letters, testing accommodations, video captioning, syllabus statements and more. It will be a jam packed hour of content! Look out for the announcement including date and time on the CCI webpage

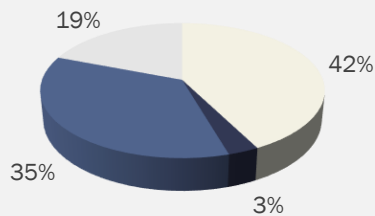
Document Accessibility Matters

The numbers speak for themselves with over 400,000 clicks for using the built in reading feature in Brightspace! As you can see, ensuring your documents can be read by text to speech technology is critical.

To ensure your documents can be read, Brightspace has a built in accessibility checker- if you see your items are in red after uploading use the suggestions to make edits.

Help ensure your documents are following current [document accessibility standards](#)

2023 Student Population



Supporting Students with Autism -Suggestions on how to make your class more inclusive.

This past fall, OAS with the help of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Office we were able to bring in Dylan Emmons, an autistic consultant, author, and college professor to campus. Below find some of his first hand suggestions on how to help support students.

Syllabus- Use clear and direct language -write out those unwritten rules. IE:
Refrain from laying on the art tables while working
State Rules for class discussion- How long can someone talk, what happens if you don't participate
Make procedures for missed classes known

270

Number of Potsdam students that have identified during the fall of 2023 as having either a disability that impacts them with the need of classroom or housing accommodations or both.

42% = Neurodevelopmental

Learning, Autism, ADHD, Speech

3%= Sensory

Vision, Deaf, Hard of Hearing

35%= Mental Health

19%= Physical/Medical

Chronic Medical Condition, Mobility, Orthopedic, TBI

Class Participation- Allow for multiple ways – not everyone is comfortable with raising their hand. IE: Discussion boards, Journals, Emails with details. Write out daily class goals

Set up check in's on a regular basis- Autistic student can struggle with taking initiative

Provide clear feedback- Let students know why they missed points.

Likewise, let them know when they do something stellar.

Pop Quiz Conundrum

Food for thought: Five-minute pop quizzes during classes then necessitate a time extension of 2.5 to 5 minutes more and leave the professor and the rest of the students waiting. So, what is an alternative? Read [“The Accommodation Dilemma of Pop Quizzes”](#) by Ruth J. Fink, Ph.D.

Information for New Faculty

A PowerPoint is available on the OAS website which explains more information about this office. We encourage everyone to take a look. [Office of Accommodative Services Helpful Tips PowerPoint](#)