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Office of Accommodative Services (OAS) - Spring 2026

Director's Corner

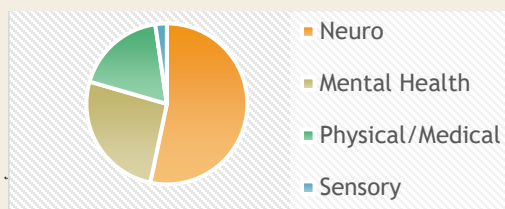
Welcome to the Spring Newsletter! As we review the achievements of 2025, we are thrilled to showcase the growth made possible by State Incremental Funding. From new resources to enhanced student support, our progress has been transformative. Of course, none of this would be possible without the incredible faculty and staff at SUNY Potsdam.

Thank you for your tireless work in making accessibility a standard, not an afterthought. We couldn't do it without you!



Self-Identified Student Population

Fall 2025 student body



Neurodevelopment – 51 %

Learning, Autism, ADHD, Speech

Mental Health- 25%

Physical/Medical- 17%

Chronic Medical Conditions, Mobility, Orthopedic, TBI

Sensory- 2%

Vision, Deaf, Hard of Hearing

Please note that some students have more than 1 disability. Graph shows only students with classroom accommodations.

OAS had 225 students registered for classroom accommodations with 350 different students registered for classroom, housing, or both types of accommodations.

Accommodation Update

Minor Extension Accommodation

For Fall 2025 OAS made some big changes to their Minor Extension Accommodation. Once called “Flexible Attendance” this accommodation now accounts for the variety of things that are affected with student absences.

OAS works directly with faculty to figure out the limits of classroom attendance and assignments in a proactive approach at the start of the semester. After the launch of it this fall, we can honestly say this approach seems beneficial in many ways.

If you see an email from OAS regarding this accommodation you need to make an appointment to speak with us so we can work together to figure out the specific details for your particular course.

641

of Accommodation

letters sent out through

Accommodate during

Fall 2025

297

of Exams

monitored in OAS

during Fall 2025

OAS has step by step tutorials for our students- [Student Accommodate Tutorials](#). Students are also welcome to stop by OAS in Sisson 131 to get direct help with requesting their letter and [scheduling an exam](#).



Zeuschel Overhead Scanner

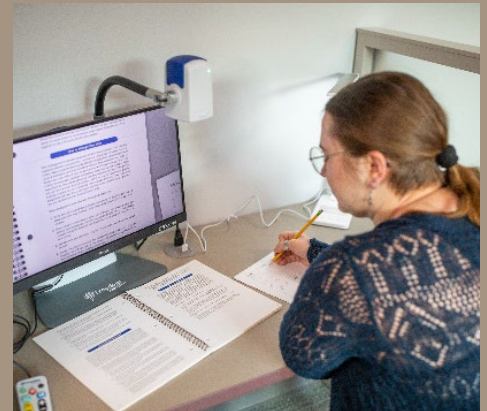
Located in the Crane Library and the Learning Commons this scanner can be used by any student, faculty, or student and scans documents quickly.

It can turn inaccessible documents that cannot be read by a computer into readable files. The scanner offers a book cradle for large format items which makes scanning music and oversized books much easier!

See our office library staff for help using this equipment.

Enlarging Device

Onyx HD Portable Magnifier is multi versatile and has a 3- in-1 flexible camera monitor which allows for document reading, distance viewing, and self-viewing modes. Students with visual impairments can use this device on exams in the OAS exam center to enlarge their content without the need for oversize documents.



Cloverbook Plus

Cloverbook Plus is a smaller portable magnifier with a large 12.5 touchscreen video magnifier with three viewing modes of near, self, and distance.

Great for enlarging details on the board students can sign this device out during the semester.

In April 2022 Governor Kathy Hochul and the Legislature in SUNY's operating budget passed a bill to provide \$10 million per year to its state-operated campuses to better support students with disabilities.

The Power of Access

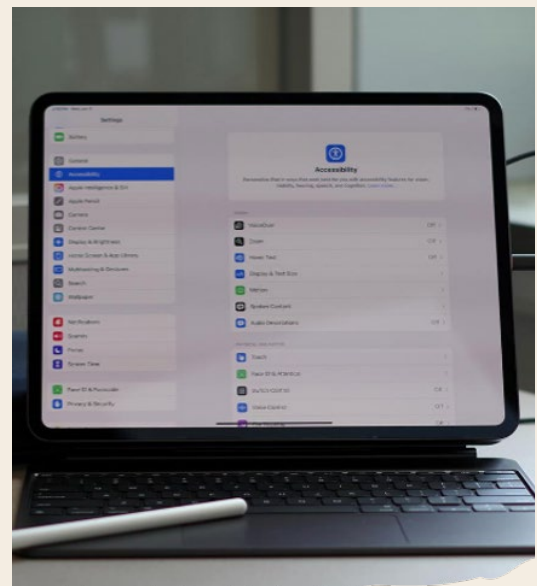
Assistive Technology fosters an equitable environment where every student has the same opportunity to succeed and persist toward their degree.

The technology shown on this page are devices OAS has purchased to increase access to courses for students with disabilities.

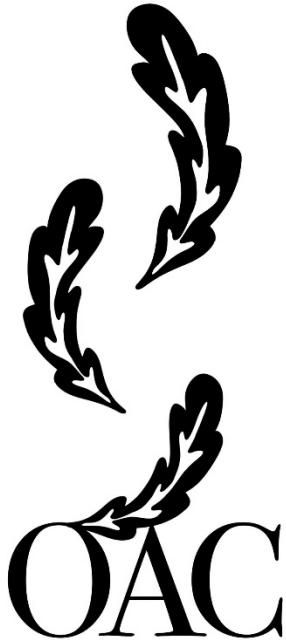
- C-Pen portable reading device
- Livescribe Echo II smart pen and notebooks
- Phonak Roger On directional recognition microphone with receiver
- SONY USB audio recorder
- Additional adjustable seating and study tools, including standing desks, phone mounts, and a seat cushion

An iPad Pro is available to loan to qualifying students on a temporary basis. Built-in features include live captioning, voice recognition, screen reading, visual alerts, and enhanced visual accessibility options. Our iPad includes an Apple Pencil Pro and Magic Keyboard to serve a wide variety of accommodation needs.

iPad Pro



Two New Programs OAC & Ignite



Openness, Accessibility, and Community.

New student initiated advisory group for students with disabilities.

Purpose:

- Raise awareness about accessibility and disability related issues on campus.
- Build community for students registered with Accommodative Services.
- Advise Accommodative Services on how we serve students, staff, and faculty.

Students who are registered with OAS can join OAC, no gpa or class year requirements! Be the look out for this group tabling in the Union this spring.



A Look Back at Our Inaugural "Ignite" Program

This past August, we officially launched Ignite, SUNY Potsdam's first-ever transition program designed specifically for students with disabilities.

Over two high-impact days, our Ignite pioneers moved into their residence halls early to beat the rush and settle into campus life.

The program bridged the gap between high school and higher education, offering deep dives into the Accommodate platform, guided tours of fall classrooms, and vital workshops on the shift from high school to college-level accommodations.

From shared dinners with OAS staff to joining the campus-wide move-in celebration, these students started their journey with a built-in community and the tools to succeed from day one.



Ignite Family Dinner in Raymond

Student Feedback:

"Thank you for doing Ignite it was very helpful"

"Very fun and helpful"

100% of students said moving into the dorms early was helpful



Ignite Facts....

2 – Days

3- Program Leaders

9- Activities

16- Participants

93% of students
rated their
experience as
excellent or good

Dr. Sam Crandel ...

Enhancing Inclusivity: A Deep Dive into Neurodiversity in the Classroom

How do we best support neurodiversity in our classrooms? This was the central question at our Fall 2025 DEI Symposium workshop led by **Dr. Sam Crandel**. Through interactive group work, attendees explored the nuances of neurodivergent learning and shared actionable ideas for fostering inclusivity.

The session was made even more powerful by the participation of our attendees—thanks to your pre-submitted questions, we were able to focus on real Potsdam examples, ensuring the solutions we discussed were both practical and campus-specific



Classroom Study on Notetaking >>>

ADHD/ADD Executive Functioning

Finding suggest “as inattentive ADHD increase, lecture learning decreases if notes were taken by hand and increase with tablet and laptop modalities. This highlights the importance of considering individual difference when examining the efficacy of notetaking to optimize learning.

Why Accommodations Matter: A Perspective You Can’t Miss.

During the second week in December, there was an exceptional op-ed piece published in Inside Higher Ed.

I wanted to send the article to the most people as possible, so I thought I would save the link to the article for this newsletter.

Occasionally, there are articles published in the popular press that cast doubts on the accommodation process and the appropriateness of the services we provide to students with disabilities.

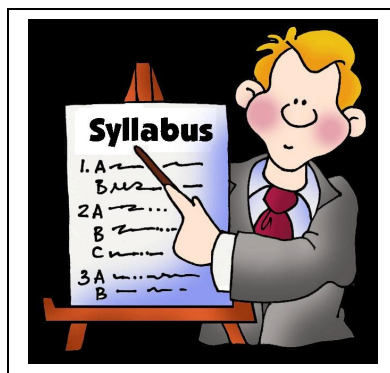
If you have ever read one of those articles – and wondered –read this one, too!

[No Colleges Do Not Overaccommodate](#)

Share Your Thoughts!

Do you have a training topic, or a professional speaker centered around disability that you would like to learn more on or hear speak?

Please email Jessica Burnett at burnettjj@potdams.edu to share your ideas.



The New OAS Syllabus Statement

We’ve made it easier than ever to point students toward accessibility support! Vetted by SUNY Legal and approved by the Faculty Senate, SUNY Potsdam now features a [standardized syllabus statement](#). Using this required language ensures all students have equal access to the same vital information. It’s a small change that makes a huge impact on campus equity and clarity.

Students who need accommodations to complete the requirements and expectations of this course because of a disability should contact the Office of Accommodative Services (136 Sisson Hall, (315) 267-2590, oas@potdams.edu) or complete their request by filling out the [New Student Accommodation Request Form](#). Please note that accommodations are generally not provided retroactively so timely contact with the Office of Accommodative Services is important.

Students registered with the Office of Accommodative Services (OAS) should use the Accommodate Portal to submit their “Semester Request” (Letter of Accommodation) every semester. This letter informs faculty of potential course access and accommodations that might be necessary and reasonable. Further conversation with OAS, faculty, and the student may be warranted to ensure reasonable accommodations.