ACCOMMODATING ONLINE LEARNERS
A faculty guide to access and accommodations in online learning

Access & Accommodation Resources
(Click icon for in-depth information)

Assistive Technology Initiative (ATI)

Digital Teaching Resources

Online Learning Resources

Virtual Student Accommodations

Frequently Asked Questions

How can I ensure that my online course materials are ADA compliant? (E.g. videos, texts and slideshows)	The George Mason University Assistive Technology Initiative (ATI) ensures that multimedia content is accessible to students with disabilities in the Mason community by providing free captioning and transcription services for videos used in the classroom and/or on front facing web resources. ATI also assists in making documents, PDFs and slideshows ADA accessible. Faculty with concerns regarding intellectual property of lectures should contact Disability Services to obtain a Recording/Lecture Notes Agreement.
What collaboration tools can make learning easier and more accessible to students with disabilities?	The Assistive Technology Initiative (ATI) has compiled a list of university sponsored web conferencing solutions and accessibility considerations for each to aid faculty with making informed decisions with respect to supporting students with disabilities in online instruction.
What should I do if a student tells me and/or I suspect that a student is experiencing mental health issues?	Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) remains available to provide services to Mason students. CAPS offers virtual workshops focused on healthy coping skills. If there is an emergent situation and crisis intervention is needed, contact CAPS at 703-993-2380. If there is a life-threatening emergency, call 911 immediately.
What virtual accommodations are available to students in online courses?	Disability Services (DS) collaborates with students with documented disabilities and faculty to provide reasonable accommodations, auxiliary aids, and support services that are individualized and based on documentation and a person-to-person interview and assessment of needs. The following guide details the implementation of common classroom and testing accommodations in a virtual learning environment, and overall accessibility tips for course redesign.
What if I suspect that a student has a disability but hasn't provided me with any documentation from Disability Services? Can I ask them if they have a disability?	In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, do not ask directly about a possible student disability. Faculty may simply tell the student that they notice the student is having academic difficulty and encourage the student to consider looking into support services available on campus (Disability Services would be considered a support service).

What should I do if a student requests special accommodation(s) for a disability?	Faculty are not required to provide any accommodations or academic adjustments if a student has not supplied a Faculty Contact Sheet (aka Accommodation Letter) from Disability Services.
	If a student discloses that they have a disability, it is appropriate to refer and encourage them to visit Disability Services.
	Faculty should not collect student health records. Health documents in support of accommodation should be collected via Disability Services.
What if a student comes to me at the end of the semester and tells me that they have a disability, but has not provided me with documentation from Disability Services?	In order to receive accommodations, students must complete a request form to initiate registration with Disability Services (DS). Students must be registered with DS prior to receiving accommodations.
	Please keep in mind that accommodations are not retroactive. If a student has not supplied you with a Faculty Contact Sheet from Disability Services, then you are not required to provide any accommodations or academic adjustments.