

What Would You Do If...?

1. A journalism student with quadriplegia is enrolled in an undergraduate news reporting and editing course. Class assignments are timed. The student uses a mouthstick to type and is considerably slower than other students. The student requests either (i) additional time outside of class to complete assignments or (ii) an in-class aide to take dictation. The instructor denies both requests, arguing that (i) time limits are a fundamental requirement for news editing and (ii) an in-class aide would be too distracting to other students. Are the student's requests reasonable? What is an appropriate solution? Is the instructor's position discriminatory or is she within her rights to require the time limit?
2. A 17-year-old hearing impaired student who needs interpreters and notetakers in his classes has parents who do not want to have to deal with DVR for funds, as is required by the UW Policy. They agree to take responsibility themselves for the cost of the service. However, at semester's end, they refuse to pay the administrative fee, which is part of every student's bill and is normally billed to all DVR clients each month. For the university to pick up this part of the bill would be setting a precedent. What should happen at this point?
3. A blind student tape records course lectures. She listens to them later and uses them to prepare for exams. An instructor in one course will not allow her to record his lecture because he will be using the lecture materials to publish a textbook and he does not want any student tape recording the material. Whose rights take precedence? Are there any reasonable alternatives?
4. Professor Proud has a large rare books collection in his subject, and is planning to teach a graduate level seminar in the building where the collection is housed. The building is a totally inaccessible annexed house, not on the campus proper. A graduate student with CP who uses a wheelchair has signed up for the class; the professor knows this, but refuses to change the class location because of the book collection. He proposes holding a private class in the library for this one student, covering the same material he will use with the regular class. Is this "reasonable?" What should the action be here?
5. A student with a learning disability uses a variety of support services, including taped textbooks, notetakers, tutors and alternative testing. Alternative testing in this situation involves having extended time to complete exams. An instructor refuses to allow the student extended time on the basis that it would be unfair to the other students. Would extended time be an unfair advantage for the learning disabled student? Can the instructor refuse to allow the accommodation? On what basis would extended time for an exam be a reasonable accommodation?
6. A hearing impaired student is assigned by his theatre instructor to attend one of the university plays as part of the class requirement.

When the director of the play is approached about the fact that an interpreter will be present, he refuses to allow the light which is needed in order for the student to see the interpreter, as there are blackouts or very dark periods during the play and the director feels that the interpreter light will "spoil the aesthetic effect." What should be done?

7. A student who is dysfluent (stutters) is in a degree program which requires an Oral Communication course. The student prefers not to take the course. The college requires it for graduation. What options are there? What alternatives would satisfy both the concerns of the college and the rights of the student?

8. A student with a psychological disability (borderline personality disorder) has angry outbursts in class, is intimidating the instructor and other students, and is considered extremely disruptive. The university plans to involuntarily withdraw him from the class. He claims this would constitute discrimination against a disabled student under 504. Does the university have the right to drop him?

9. A student with Chronic Kidney Disease is enrolled at a particular college. She applies for admission into the college's nursing program. Based upon the college physician's recommendation that the program would be too stressful for her, the Nursing Department denies her application. Is the department within its right to deny her admission based upon her illness?

10. A visually impaired student needs textbooks on tape. She buys her textbooks, delivers them for taping, and receives them one at a time as they are finished by the readers, keeping well ahead of her assignments on the professor's syllabus. She, however, does not listen to the tapes; nor do much of anything else on her studies. Halfway through the semester, she is in academic trouble and must drop out, thus owing money on her financial aid award. Now she claims that the reason for her failure is that she should have had ALL books and materials finished BEFORE the semester even started, therefore the taping service is at fault for her troubles; so she does not owe the university any money. What is to be done here?

11. A visually impaired college student attempted to participate in the college's inter-collegiate football program. The college refused, citing risks of injury. The college argued they were not in violation of Section 504 because the Athletics Department did not receive any federal financial assistance and therefore the university was not subject to 504 regulations. Is refusal to allow the visually impaired student to play football discriminatory? Is it true that since the Athletics Department does not directly receive federal financial assistance they are not subject to 504 regulations?

12. A student with a back injury comes in with a complaint about the chairs in his classroom. He says they are terribly uncomfortable for

him, and that he needs the university to supply him with "reclining back chairs" for his classroom, as otherwise he cannot sit during the class. Must the university supply this?

13. A student who uses a wheelchair is enrolled in a biology course which has scheduled two field trips. The college provides transportation, but it has no accessible vans or buses. The instructor suggests that (i) the student drop the course, (ii) they take the student in an inaccessible van by carrying him on and off the vehicle, or (iii) the student arrange for his own transportation. Are these feasible alternatives? What other options might there be?

14. A student with a learning disability which was diagnosed AFTER the semester started, is requesting a retroactive drop from a French class which she flunked. The professor does not believe she should be granted the drop before trying the class once again, with help from the LD program. The LD diagnosis mentions "extensive memory problems" and "very weak verbal and written processing skills." Should she be made to take the class over or be given a retroactive drop?

15. A deaf student is in a course of study which requires a foreign language. The student requests he not be required to take the course because (i) most of the course is on audio cassettes, (ii) the course requires students to "speak" the language, and (iii) that deafness itself is a "language" disability and acquiring spoken language is extremely difficult for a deaf person. Is the student's request reasonable? What alternatives might there be? All are three of the student's reasons appropriate?

16. A student with a mild hearing loss is requesting preferential early registration because he needs to assure a seat at the front of the room in each class. Is this a legitimate reason for the request?