**DISABILITY RESOURCES (DR)**

**CO-OP or CLINICAL INTERNSHIPS AND ACCOMMODATIONS**

General Information

* Legally, the college is responsible for proactively determining whether a student's performance in a clinical or co-op setting would be affected by disability, and what accommodations would allow the student to participate appropriately and successfully.
* Placement sites are considered to be an extension of Lane’s learning environment, and the college would be held responsible if there are accessibility issues.
* There should be care taken to develop placement sites that are accessible to the most people possible.
* Students need to be aware of their rights to seek accommodations for a co-op or clinical placement. There should be notices in handbooks, and posters/ flyers informing them that if accommodations are needed, to speak to their Co-op Advisor and Disability Resources.
* Where needed, the college should find an appropriate alternative placement for students who have disabilities.
* If Disability Resources determines that an accommodation is appropriate, then the college has responsibility for paying for it. There should be no cost to the employer for accommodations.
* Be aware that students may be reluctant to disclose their disability to an employer—fearing they may be judged, or seen as not being able to do the job. It’s important to support the students, coaching them and helping to normalize these requests.

Coordinator Role—What the coordinator can do to help facilitate and smooth the process

* Whenever students indicate they have a disability, contact DR to discuss the situation and how to facilitate the accommodations process.
* Interns with disabilities might need adjustments such as schedule flexibility to accommodate medication regimens; assistive equipment, like computers, or services such as sign language interpreters. In discussing accommodations with the student, consider asking the following:
  + What accommodations have you used while in school?
  + What are the functions of the job?
  + How will the disability affect these functions?
  + What would help you do the job to the best of your abilities?
* Since it may be necessary to discuss the purpose of the accommodations with an employer, don't be afraid to consult with both the student and his/her DR Advisor for any information that will help smooth the process.
* Approach the internship sites matter-of-factly. The main focus is for them to have an accessible, welcoming, inclusive environment. Become practiced in discussing accommodations comfortably and matter-of-factly without undue focus—this helps to normalize the process.
* Unless students gives specific permission to disclose their disability, accommodations should be discussed without indicating what the disability is.
* A suggested approach might be: “In order for this to be an accessible environment, we’ll need to provide the student with \_\_xyz\_ (e.g. an ergonomic keyboard & chair, etc).”
* Support students in advocating for themselves re. accommodations that will help them be successful in their co-op/clinical placements. The students may have some great ideas about what works for them.
* Students who are comfortable disclosing a hidden disability should talk knowledgeably about their disability, how they handle it and what accommodations they need:
  + "I have (state the disability)."
  + "It affects me in this way… (state how)."
  + "It helps if I have… (state a concrete solution)."
* Engaging in a collaborative process, with clear expectations for all of the parties involved, is the best way to ensure successful internship/clinical experience.