



Center for Accessible Resources

Working with Students with Mental Health Disabilities Center for Accessible Resources (CAR)

Students with mental health disabilities experience a wide range of challenges in the classroom. Mental health conditions are not generally apparent and some students choose not to receive accommodations from CAR for these conditions.

We know that it is not possible to generalize about the needs of all students with mental health disabilities. Therefore, it is not possible to list accommodations that work for all students with mental health disabilities. It is important to assess the needs of each student individually. However, there are some strategies that can assist instructors in working with students with mental health disabilities in their classes.

General classroom strategies

- Clearly outline course expectations.
- Make yourself available to meet with students during office hours and via telephone or email.
- Provide personal and meaningful feedback on academic performances.
- Approach each student with an open mind about their needs and strengths.
- Summarize important points from the lecture at the end of class.
- These students may need to take breaks, or have food/water with them in the classroom (this will be noted in the student's Letter of Accommodation).

One-on-one interactions

- Discuss accommodations and any inappropriate classroom behavior with the student privately. Accommodation specialists can assist with this conversation if necessary.
- Refer the student to the appropriate therapeutic resources if asked (i.e. Counseling Department on campus).

- Be patient with the student. Sometimes communication can take a bit longer and you may have to repeat yourself.
- Listen carefully to the student and work with them to meet their needs when appropriate.

Due to the episodic nature of mental health disabilities, students may go through periods of success and stability as well as acute illness. It is important to only provide the accommodations to a student that are listed in their Letter of Accommodations. If you have further questions about how to work with students with mental health disabilities, please contact CAR.

To request this information in an alternate format please contact the Center for Accessible Resources at (541) 463-5150 or accessibleresources@lanecc.edu.

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