September 1, 2015

TO ALL FACULTY

RE: Student Accommodation Requests

Dear Colleagues:

I write to you on behalf of the UCSC Disability Resource Center (DRC) with important information as you prepare for your fall quarter classes. By considering the needs of all students in your course planning, you will save time and effort. More importantly, you will provide equal access for students, while ensuring both you and the University are in compliance with Federal and State Laws, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). When working with DRC students, it is important to recognize that accommodations are a student right to ensure educational equity.

Disability Statement to Students in Class
To receive requests for accommodations in a timely manner, incorporate the following paragraph in your course syllabus, website, and class announcements:

UC Santa Cruz is committed to creating an academic environment that supports its diverse student body. If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations to achieve equal access in this course, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me privately during my office hours or by appointment, preferably within the first two weeks of the quarter. At this time, I would also like us to discuss ways we can ensure your full participation in the course. I encourage all students who may benefit from learning more about DRC services to contact DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at drc@ucsc.edu.

Confidentiality Reminder
Disability-related information and affiliation with the DRC are confidential matters protected by FERPA guidelines. Please keep DRC letters confidential and do not identify DRC students or acknowledge individual requests for accommodations in public.

Textbooks/Electronic Access
A significant number of DRC students require course materials in alternate formats. Students with print disabilities require texts in Braille, large print, electronic and/or audio formats. Students who are Deaf or hard-of-hearing require closed-captioning on all course video content. Blind students require image descriptions. The DRC will support you in creating access. The DRC uses your submitted book lists to begin any needed format conversion well before the start of the quarter without the need for additional faculty involvement. The University is open to grievances and lawsuits under the ADA if DRC students are not provided timely and equal access to course materials.

Be sure to:
1. Finalize your syllabus and select textbooks and readings well before the start of a quarter. Submit required book lists to the Bay Tree Bookstore, as off-campus locations are not always accessible.
2. Provide clean copies of articles for course readers, library or ERes holdings, and eCommons postings (e.g. not crooked and free of underlining and/or notes in the margins).
3. Select video content (DVDs, YouTube videos, etc.) that has closed captioning. Best practice dictates turning captions on, regardless of having a Deaf or hard-of-hearing student in class.
4. Make course content accessible (websites, PowerPoints, PDFs, etc.).
   a. For support, visit the Faculty Instructional Technology Center at McHenry Library.
      (http://its.ucsc.edu/fitc/)
   b. Should you not want help, instructions are found here: http://www.pcc.edu/resources/instructional-support/access/documents/OnlineAccessibilityHandbook-loRes.pdf

Exam Arrangements
Instructors must arrange or administer exams for students who have testing accommodations (http://drc.ucsc.edu/fac-staff/faculty/faculty-exam-sheet.html). While some instructors implement the accommodations themselves, departments/divisions may have designated staff members to support faculty with this obligation. Contact your department manager if your role in this is not clear. DRC handles summer exams.

Universal Design
Universal Design for Instruction (UDI) is an approach to curriculum that minimizes barriers and maximizes learning to meet the needs of all students. UDI relies on three principles: (1) using a variety of mediums for instruction, including audio (e.g. lecture), visual (e.g. video), kinesthetic (e.g. acting out a scene), etc.; (2) providing multiple forms of assessment, such as papers, presentations, projects, debates, etc.; and (3) utilizing different ways to engage and motivate students. When designing your course, consider how both classroom and curricular design may pose barriers for your students. When possible, implement UDI practices to increase student success. Information about UDI and its application in postsecondary settings can be found here: http://www.washington.edu/doit/programs/center-universal-design-education/postsecondary/universal-design-instruction-postsecondary

DRC Resources
For additional information, please view the faculty and staff link on the DRC website (http://drc.ucsc.edu/fac-staff/faculty/index.html). DRC service coordinators are available to consult faculty and staff on disability-related questions, including DRC referrals and inclusive design. The DRC is also available for presentations on a variety of topics, including UDI, stigma and bias, disability identity, working with DRC students, and more.

Thank you for reviewing this information about the DRC and its services. I appreciate your support in working with students to ensure equal access to education.

Please contact DRC Director Rick Gubash by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at rgubash@ucsc.edu if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,

Richard Hughey
Vice Provost and Dean
Undergraduate Education

c: Academic Deans
   College Provosts
   Department Chairs
   Department Managers
   College Academic Programs Coordinators
   Academic Preceptors
   Department Advisors
   DRC Director Gubash