

# **SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH PSYCHOLOGICAL DISABILITIES UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, MORRIS**

## **What is a psychological disability?**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines “disability” as an impairment that “substantially limits one or more of the major life activities.” Although some disabilities are easy to observe, many disabilities are not. Some examples of “hidden” disabilities are learning disabilities, mental illness, epilepsy and asthma.

Psychological disabilities encompass chronic mental or emotional illnesses from depression and bipolar disorders to social phobia and schizophrenia. These chronic conditions can result in functional limitations that substantially limit one or more major life activity, thus may qualify as a disability when diagnosed by a psychologist or physician.

Students who live with a disability may receive assistance, and possibly accommodation, by utilizing a variety of University services.

## **What services are available?**

Students living with a documented disability are eligible to receive support services including:

- Academic assistance and accommodation
- Counseling
- Assistance with medication issues
- Referral to community resources

These University offices can provide useful resources for students living with disabilities. Staff members are available to assist with identifying ways to achieve within the University setting.

### **Disability Services**                      589-6178

*Room 362, Library*

*9 AM-4:30 PM, Monday-Friday*

This office coordinates documentation and accommodation assistance for students who live with a disability. A staff member meets individually with a student to discuss the disability and possible accommodations, to secure required documentation, to explain the privacy issues when notifying campus community members and to discuss the available options and resources including:

- Academic assistance and accommodation (tutors, quiet rooms for test-taking, etc.)
- Assistance with medication issues
- Coordinate with and refer to community support services (after-care psychiatric nurses, long-term counseling, housing assistance...)

### **Student Counseling**                      589-6060

*Second Floor, Behmler*

*8 AM-4:30 PM, Monday-Friday*

Full-time professionally trained counselors provide personal counseling for all UMM students, including those who have a documented disability. Counselors will assist students in identifying whether or not they have a psychological disability. Services are offered free of charge and are strictly confidential, unless a student signs a release-of-information form. This office can provide:

- Short term counseling
- Assistance with medication issues
- Referral to University and Community resources (counselors, physicians...)

## **UMM Health Services**      589-6070

*First Floor, C.A. Gay Hall  
8 AM-4 PM, Monday-Friday*

This outpatient clinic provides services similar to those of a family physician, at no charge to UMM students. Through a contract with the community hospital, physicians are available each morning. A registered nurse is on site during clinic hours. Services available include:

- Consultation with a physician or registered nurse
- Medical treatment, including prescriptions
- Assistance with medication issues and insurance
- Referral to University resources and community medical services

### **Instructors & Academic Advisors**

These individuals may be informed of appropriate accommodations when a student has a documented disability. At a student's request, they will be notified about accommodations via a confidential letter from the Disabilities Services Office. These individuals can:

- Provide recommended classroom accommodation or suggest alternatives
- Discuss student accountability for classroom performance and behavior
- Coordinate academic planning
- Refer to appropriate University resources

### **Student Affairs Offices**

*Athletics, Multi-Ethnic Student Program, Residence Life and Student Activities*

Since these offices support students' development outside of the classroom, student affairs staff, such as resident advisors or coaches, may become aware of a student's disability. The Student Affairs staff may:

- Refer to appropriate University resources
- Assist students in adapting to the college environment
- Provide recommended accommodation or suggest alternatives
- Support community development and explain and enforce University conduct codes

## **If I have a disability...**

### **Do I need to let anyone at the University know?**

Students are not required to disclose a disability to anyone on campus. However, to access services and accommodations, documentation of a disability is required. The Disabilities Services Office keeps this documentation. When students have requested accommodations, Disabilities Services keeps information regarding disabilities confidential and reveals only need-to-know information necessary for accommodation. Student Counseling may also assist students and keeps strictly confidential records. You are encouraged to consult with either office regarding the options.

### **How do I access these services?**

Start by making an appointment with a Disabilities Services staff member (Ph: 589-6179.) She/he will help you identify what documentation is needed and whether or not there are appropriate accommodations for your disability.

### **What are my responsibilities as an individual who lives with a disability?**

Students who seek accommodations for their disability are responsible for:

- providing current documentation to Disabilities Services.
- participating in the process of determining and implementing reasonable accommodations
- informing Disabilities Services when accommodations are not working or need to be modified
- working with Disabilities Services when symptoms related to their disability or medication side-effects change so that accommodations may be reviewed and adapted as needed

All students, including those with disabilities, are responsible for their academic progress and meeting campus conduct codes for student behavior. All students must adhere to University policies and procedures. The processes are outlined in the *Student Conduct Code, Student Life Handbook and UMM Catalog*.