

## Office of Disability Resources CAS Executive Summary and Action Plan 2010-11

The Office of Disability Resources (ODR) CAS committee has worked diligently to identify the areas of strength and weakness within the Disability Resources program. Once the CAS committee was identified and confirmed the Associate Dean of Student Affairs presented information concerning: The self-assessment process, What existing evidence will be gathered, and What new evidence may be generated and how the committee will have access to the evidence. This meeting occurred on Tuesday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2011 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. The Associate Dean of Student Affairs provided a tentative outline for the self-assessment. Due to illnesses and scheduling difficulties the committee did stray away from the tentative schedule but completed their review of material on Friday, March 4, 2011.

The following CAS Committee was established in collaboration with the Associate Dean of Student Affairs. The CAS review committee members included:

**Maggie Butler**, Director, Office of Disability Resources  
**Dave Davino**, Counselor, Counseling Center  
**Dr. Matt Lucas**, Assistant Professor, Dept. Health and Physical Education  
**Dr. Rachel Mathews**, Director, Dept. of Special Education  
**Kate Morgan**, Assistant Director, Academic and Career Advising  
**Leah Mullins**, Assistant Director, Office of Disability Resources  
**Amanda Riggleman**, Student Employee, Office of Disability Resources

### Part 1: Mission Overview

The mission of the Office of Disability Resources is *“To assure equal educational access for students with diverse disabilities. To seek to collaborate with all components of the University community to increase awareness, remove barriers and promote an inclusive environment where students are empowered to be successful learners, self-advocates and citizen leaders.”* The mission embraces student learning and development through empowerment of students in their academic and physical environment. By focusing on the development of citizen leadership and working in collaboration with academic partners to influence student success, The work of the ODR aligns with the core purpose of the institution.

### Part 2: Program Overview

The primary elements of the program include: Student development of self-advocacy skills, equal access to academic and physical environments, campus outreach, collaboration with campus partners and the community. There is evidence to confirm that the program contributes to student learning and development through retention rates and GPA statistics generated by the office of institutional assessment and the annual ODR student survey. Although there is some evidence that confirms contribution to student learning and development, a more deliberate assessment should be conducted concerning the accessibility of academic curriculum and reasonable accommodations in the classroom and testing settings.

### **Part 3: Leadership Overview**

The program director is positioned on various campus committees that allow opportunities to express issues and/ or concerns regarding students with disabilities. The director is visible and available to students and campus partners. Weekly meetings are held with ODR staff to stay abreast of programmatic areas and issues that may arise.

### **Part 4 Human Resources**

The ODR is understaffed at this time and has merged two positions due to a lack of staff and resources. Currently the Administrative Assistant has a dual role as the Accommodation Coordinator. The Accommodation Coordinator position requires... 1) a working knowledge of assistive technology, 2) troubleshooting practices related to assistive technology and 3) knowledge of assistive technology corporations and vendors. The Accommodation Coordinator is also responsible for proctoring examinations that are scheduled within the ODR. The Accommodation Coordinator position is an essential component to an ODR office and resources should be allocated for the additional staff member.

Currently the ODR does not have a comprehensive training for the ODR staff concerning disability law, various disability types, and disability etiquette. Professional development funds are not included in the ODR operational budget and employees participate in trainings at their own expense. ODR employees have access to the ODR library which includes compliance information and best practices as well as disability-related journals through the Longwood Greenwood library. The ODR staff is required to meet weekly with the director to address their programmatic areas, progress, issues and concerns. Performance of employees is conducted through the Longwood University performance evaluation process facilitated by the Office of Human Resources.

### **Part 5 Ethic**

The ethical standards that guide the ODR are those established by the National Association for Higher Education and Disability. The director is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (C.R.C.) and is held accountable for ethical practices by The Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification code of ethics. The director must recertify every 5 years and engage in 120 continuing education credits. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) provides guidance concerning confidentiality and identification of individuals with disabilities. The ODR has a confidentiality statement on their website and consent forms for information released concerning students registered with ODR based on the ADA regulations. The ODR does not provide direct services to faculty and staff with disabilities. Those services are managed through the Office of Human Resources.

## **Part 6 Legal Responsibilities**

The crucial legal issues that face the ODR include, 1) indirect access to resources to purchase approved educational auxiliary aids<sup>1</sup>, in a timely manner and 2) ensuring that approved reasonable accommodations that do not compromise the nature of a course are provided. The ADA of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act are mandates established for implementing the crucial legal issues mentioned above. Longwood University established policy 5024 in accordance with the mandates to ensure that approved accommodations are provided by faculty, non-tenured faculty, adjunct faculty administrators, and staff. Currently the Director of the ODR informs the Associate Dean of Wellness of the need of educational auxiliary aids. The Associate Director of Wellness then discusses those needs with the Vice President of Student Affairs and the Vice President of Finance. Approvals are granted by the Vice President of Finance before monies are allocated. In most cases the ODR operational budget does not cover the cost for educational auxiliary aids.

Currently there is limited training for faculty and staff concerning the compliance of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. All new faculty receive training at the beginning of each academic year. Each professor who has a student in his or her course is provided with an accommodation letter that denotes the student and faculty responsibilities, approved accommodations, legal requirements, and contact information for the ODR. It is important for all university employees to know why accommodations are provided and that accommodations are a right and not optional. University leadership is necessary to address the university's compliance with state and federal law and to implement accountability measures.

## **Part 7 Equity and Access**

The ODR has a general review process for all documentation submitted. The ADA of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 have specific definitions of what defines a disability. The ODR intake process and rubrics are based on the laws' definition of disability. The ODR has registration procedures for individuals with Learning Disabilities, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder, Blindness or Visual Impairment, Deafness or Hearing Impairment, Physical Disability, Psychiatric Disability, Traumatic Brain Injury, Medical impairments, and Asperger. Currently staffing imbalances are addressed with the Office of Human Resources hiring procedures.

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<sup>1</sup> Educational Auxiliary Aids are services or devices that enable persons with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills to have an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, programs or activities conducted by an agency.

## **Part 8 Diversity**

The ODR works to promote disability as an aspect of diversity. Through campus wide awareness events and collaborating on diversity projects, the ODR is an active advocate for promoting disability as an aspect of diversity. The ODR holds an appointment on the Diversity Council and was integral in providing disability-related questions on the university 2010-2011 climate survey. The ODR staff works individually with students who present with a wide range of diverse disabilities.

## **Part 9 Organization and Management**

The process of accessing ADA funds restrains the office from functioning properly and creates an environment of non-compliance with state and federal laws for the university. The ODR will require direct access to resources and/or a direct line of communication to those individuals who manage those resources to ensure auxiliary aids are provided and compliance is maintained. Currently the ODR utilizes student surveys to assess the satisfaction of programs and the staff of the office. At this time there are no outside surveys used with campus or community partners.

## **Part 10 Campus and External Relations**

The ODR must maintain effective relationships with all components of the campus that interact with students and visitors. This includes academic departments, student affairs departments, and finance offices. The role of ODR is to proactively and consciously provide access throughout all facets of the university. The ODR should also maintain positive relationships with state agencies that provide services to individuals with disabilities as well as school systems. Correspondence was provided to the committee that demonstrates the current relationship with the Heartland Transition Council, VCU T/TAC, and the VA Department of Rehabilitative Services.

## **Part 11 Financial Resources**

The immediate financial concerns include inadequate funding of the ODR operational budget and indirect access to resources to purchase auxiliary aids for approved students and campus events. The ODR budget reports denote the frugality of the ODR spending. The budget reports also show that equipment and auxiliary needs exceed the ODR operational budget. Currently the Office of Finance must be consulted for approval of additional resources for equipment and auxiliary aids.

## **Part 12 Technology**

At the present time the ODR has technology located in its office but some of the equipment is outdated. The computers are outdated and not consistent for administering examinations. The Office of Finance has approved resources to purchase updated

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software licenses. The ODR continues to need assistive technology that addresses the needs of students with various diagnoses.

### Part 13 Facilities and Equipment

The ODR facilities are located in a location on campus that provides confidentiality. The current ODR facility is not adequately structured for individuals with various diagnoses. The office aesthetics is not consistent with other university buildings that students frequent. The facility is not in compliance with ADAAG building codes. Many testing rooms are not accessible to individuals with mobility impairments. The entrance of the ODR office is not accessible without propping the door open, which is a fire hazard. The testing rooms are laid out in a manner that is also a fire hazard with no single entrance and exit.

### Part 14 Assessment and Evaluation

The ODR office uses the university WEAVEonline assessment to create and monitor departmental goals and learning outcomes annually. The use of CAS standards, annual ODR student surveys and the WEAVEonline assessment ensures that the stated mission, program goals and objectives, and student learning and development are achieved.

## Disability Resources Program Strengths

### I. Areas of Program Strength

*Part 1: Mission*

*Part 2: Program*

*Part 3: Leadership*

*Part 4: Human Resources*

*Part 5: Ethics*

*Part 6: Legal Responsibilities*

*Part 7: Equity and Access*

*Part 8: Diversity*

*Part 10: Campus and External Relations*

*Part 12: Technology*

*Part 14: Assessment and Evaluation*

### II. There were no areas with a majority or overall rating of Insufficient Evidence and Rating Discrepancy

**III. The Disability Resources program areas of weakness:**

*Part 9: Organization and Management*

*Part 11: Financial Resources*

*Part 13: Facilities and Equipment*

**IV. Disability Resources Action Plan**

***Part 9: Organization and Management***

1. Increase educational auxiliary aids through university ADA funds
  - A. Fiscal resources have been identified and the Director of Disability Resources will request additional funds to purchase auxiliary aids that will assist students with disabilities
  - B. This request will be made annually as necessary
  - C. The Director of Disability Resources will be responsible for requesting funds for auxiliary aids
  
2. Identify if ODR services, resources, and collaborations are effective
  - A. Surveys for program and service effectiveness will be created for campus partners and outreach partners concerning the ODR services
  - B. The surveys will be given annually
  - C. The Director of Disability Resources and Assistant Director will be responsible for generating and disseminating the surveys
  
3. Provide technical assistance related to disability law and accommodations
  - A. Training will be developed for faculty, staff and students and presented
  - B. The ODR trainings will be offered starting Fall 2011 and will continue on an ongoing basis
  - C. The Director of Disability Resources and Assistant Director will provide technical assistance to faculty, staff and students
  
4. Comprehensive staff training for the ODR
  - A. The ODR will provide ongoing training related to disability law, confidentiality practices and various diagnoses to all full-time and student staff of the ODR
  - B. The comprehensive staff training will be provided annually or as new staff members are hired
  - C. The Director of Disability Resources will be responsible for creating the comprehensive staff training

***Part 11: Financial Resources***

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## *1. Increasing the ODR Operational Budget*

- A. Requests for additional funds will be made for the ODR operational budget
- B. A summary of the operating expenses will be included in the ODR annual report and a list of educational auxiliary aids will be provided as necessary
- C. The Director of Disability Resources will be responsible for including the annual expenses and educational auxiliary aids in the ODR annual report.

## ***Part 13: Facilities and Equipment***

### *1. Improving the accessibility of the ODR*

- A. Capital Planning and construction will be contacted concerning the existing renovation plans drafted for the ODR and a potential project start date.
- B. Communication concerning renovations to the ODR will be ongoing until a completion date is given by Capital Planning.
- C. The Director will follow-up with Capital planning to monitor the status of the ODR renovations

### *2. Improving technology and equipment in ODR*

- A. ODR technology and equipment needs will be assessed each semester and requests made as necessary
- B. Technology and equipment will be assessed on an ongoing basis
- C. The Director of Disability Resources and Assistant Director will assess the technology and equipment needs

### *3. Additional Item*

#### *1. Reviewing and Revising Current Inclusive courses*

- A. Current inclusive courses such as the REC 101 offered to students with disabilities in collaboration with the HARK department will be assessed.
- B. The assessment of the program will begin in the Summer of 2011
- C. The Director of Disability Resources will be responsible for initiating the assessment with the Chair of the Health, Athletic Training, Therapeutic Recreation and Kinesiology department

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### V. Appendices:

#### CAS Collective Ratings

<b>CAS Standards</b>	<b>Ratings</b>
Part 1.Mission	2.67
Part 2.Program	3.16
Part 3.Leadership	3.84
Part 4.Human Resources	3.82
Part 5.Ethics	3.58
Part 6.Legal Responsibilities	3.71
Part 7.Equity and Access	3.04
Part 8.Diversity	3.51
Part 9.Organization and Management	1.84
Part 10.Campus and External Relations	3.95
Part 11.Financial Resources	2.65
Part 12.Technology	3.60
Part 13.Facilities and Equipment	2.38
Part 14. Assessment and Evaluation	3.50



