



Letter of Introduction/ Disclosure **OPTIONAL**

Dear Student,

You may be wondering why we are asking you to write a letter of introduction to disclose your disability to your professor(s). One reason is that your disability has influenced your approach to learning, your determination, and many other things in your life. What you have learned about yourself and how you have dealt with your disability may say volumes about the kind of person and student you are. Second, when professors have a clear understanding of your disability related needs, they are more prepared to accommodate you.

However, before you disclose your disability via a letter of introduction, please take the time to determine your own personal privacy boundaries concerning the amount and type of information you want to share with your professor(s). Attached, we have provided you with an outline and a sample letter that you may want to reference. When you are ready to give this letter to your professor(s), we recommend you do it when you give them your Academic Accommodation forms, be sure to pick a time when you are not rushed and can thoughtfully explain your disability and needs. Remember to keep the disclosure conversation focused on your abilities and be self-determined and practical. Maybe you will want to practice talking about your disability with someone you trust first. Of course, we are happy to assist you – just ask!

Best wishes for a productive and successful semester!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pamela A. Farron".

Pamela Farron, Coordinator

Daniel Collyer, Learning Specialist

Letter of Introduction/ Disclosure

Optional Guidelines

Date

Insert date

Salutation

Begin your letter by addressing your professor – “Dear Professor:”

Introduction

In the introductory paragraph, introduce yourself, identify your disability and explain the purpose for writing this letter

Definition

In this paragraph, define/describe your disability.

Application

In this paragraph, explain how your learning disability impacts you specifically and how you compensate for it.

Suggestions

In this paragraph, offer a few suggestions for how your instructor(s) may help you.

Conclusion

Finally, end your letter by summarizing your strengths and challenges and asking for your instructor’s support.

Closing

End your letter with an appropriate closing – “Sincerely”

Signature

Sign your name to your letter

Date

March 24, 2010

Salutation

Dear Professor:

Introduction

My name is John Doe and I am enrolled in one of your courses. I receive services through the Disability Resource Center because I have a learning disability. I am writing this letter to provide you with some background information on this disorder and how it impacts my learning.

Definition

A learning disability is a general term for a variety of subtypes including dyslexia, dyspraxia, dysgraphia, and dyscalculia. Generally, a person with a learning disability has average to above average intelligence, but has significant difficulty in one or more of the following areas: oral expression, listening comprehension, written expression, basic reading skills and reading comprehension, mathematical calculation, problems solving. Sometimes a person with a learning disability may also have difficulty with sustained attention, time management, or social skills. A person does not outgrow a learning disability, but he/she may learn to compensate for it. Also, the degree of severity varies from individual to individual. A learning disability is not the result of mental retardation, lack of educational opportunities or learning English.

My disability related issues are that I read very slowly, cannot always remember what I read, confuse similar words, struggle to identify and differential main ideas and supporting details and have difficulty following written directions. Some things that have helped me to be successful in school have been learning to use character recognition software – Kurzweil and Adobe Reader, for example; using digitally recorded textbooks, active reading strategies, and two-column notes. I also find it helpful to discuss what I am reading with a tutor or study buddy. Taking a reduced course load is also helpful because it allows me to spend the extra time I need to read and prepare for class.

Application

Suggestions

I am continually improving and have made great strides in becoming a responsible young adult; however, I need the assistance of the Disability Resource Center and my instructors to help reinforce this. For these reasons, I am offering a few suggestions for you to consider that may help me to succeed:

- Please do not ask me to read aloud in class. I may misread or substitute words, omit word endings or beginnings, and skip lines. It is the nature of my disability and it makes me extremely uncomfortable.
- Allow additional time for me to process information and thoughts before expecting a response from me. It may take a minute or two to express my thoughts or ideas.
- Please provide reading assignments well in advance so that I have the extra time I need to read them and/or use the Kurzweil.
- Understand that I will need to take my tests in the Disability Resource Center because they will convert my exam to a digital format so that I may use the Kurzweil.
- Because I often make mistakes when copying information from the board, it would be helpful for you to give assignments both orally and in written form to avoid confusion.

Conclusion

Over the years, I have made terrific progress learning to compensate for my disability. I am gaining self-confidence and feel proud to be attending college. I understand that I may have a few more obstacles and challenges in life than others; however, I am confident that with the help and support of the Disability Resource Center and my instructors, I can overcome these obstacles and challenges and be successful in school and in life.

Sincerely,

Closing

John Doe

Signature