CONTENTS

The Office of Educational Accessibility ................................................................. 2
Responsibilities and Accommodations ................................................................. 4
  Student Responsibility ........................................................................................... 4
  Responsibility of the Educational Accessibility Counselors ............................ 4
  Responsibility of the Faculty, Administration and Staff ................................. 4
  Accommodations .................................................................................................. 5
  Accommodations vs. Accessibility ...................................................................... 5
Other Faculty Responsibilities ................................................................................ 6
Services Provided to Students with Disabilities .................................................... 8
  Specific Services Provided to Students with Documentation of a Disability or Chronic Medical Condition ................................................................. 8
  Personalized Program Services Available to Students with Disabilities ............ 9
Specific Impairments and Related Classroom Strategies .................................... 10
  Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) ....................................................................... 10
  Blind and Visually Impaired .............................................................................. 11
  Hearing Disabilities .............................................................................................. 12
  Learning Disabilities ........................................................................................... 13
  Physical Disabilities and/or Systemic Illnesses ................................................ 14
  Psychological and Psychiatric Disabilities ......................................................... 15
  Speech and Language Disorders ....................................................................... 15
  Acquired Brain Injury ......................................................................................... 16
Campus Contacts .................................................................................................. 18
The Office of Educational Accessibility

The Office of Educational Accessibility at Tidewater Community College provides students programmatic and physical access, in a supportive atmosphere and in accordance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008, The Virginians with Disabilities Act of 1985, as well as other applicable state and federal law. In recognition of the talents and needs of our students with disabilities and chronic health issues, The Office of Educational Accessibility provides an array of services designed to enhance their educational experiences.

Once the student meets the requirements for admission to TCC, access must be available, both physical and programmatic. A student cannot be subjected to discrimination under any offered program or activity. This includes access to electronic information such as registration and distance learning courses. TCC Administration, full time and adjunct faculties and staff, are required to provide services to ensure access to the college and its programs. The college’s Educational Accessibility Administration has established best practices and standards to receive and interpret documentation, educate faculty, establish reasonable academic accommodations, and implement specialized services. The Office of Educational Accessibility clearly publicizes the procedures for accessing services and receiving accommodations. Statements addressing procedures are in the catalogue, student handbook, web page and other print & electronic media. The Office of Educational Accessibility is also available to provide training for accessibility in information technology, such as on-line courses.

The District Office of Educational Accessibility coordinates practices at all TCC campuses. Students frequently utilize one or more campuses and their services. We are responsible to meet stated services, regardless of where they are to be implemented.

A student’s ultimate success or failure in his or her endeavors is not the primary determinant in assessing whether or not the institution has made a good faith effort in providing reasonable academic accommodations.
Responsibilities and Accommodations

Student Responsibility
The student is asked to provide documentation of a disability or chronic medical condition to the campus Educational Accessibility Counselor. Together, the counselor and the student determine appropriate academic accommodations based on the student’s functional limitations. A listing of campus Educational Accessibility counselors contact information can be found at the end of this booklet. The academic accommodations provided to students with disabilities are based on established and publicized guidelines and procedures. These guidelines can be found on the Office of Educational Accessibility’s web page. Except for architectural or information technology, including on-line classes and web access, TCC has no obligation to act until the student provides notice of the existence and documentation of a disability, and makes a direct and specific request for accommodations. The student is responsible to ensure that the counselor has received the appropriate documentation in order to receive academic accommodations. The student is also responsible for providing his or her instructor(s) with a copy of his or her Accommodation form. Faculty and students should be aware that the Accommodation Form is not retroactive. Students with disabilities are held to the same code of conduct as are all students, even if the conduct is a manifestation of their disability.

Responsibility of the Educational Accessibility Counselors
The campus Educational Accessibility counselors determine the need for accommodation(s) based on documentation of a disability meeting TCC guidelines, and an intake interview with the student. The counselor develops the academic accommodations based on the student’s functional limitations, and provides the student with the Accommodation Form. The Educational Accessibility counselor, or College Wide Coordinator, may also be called upon to facilitate the implementation of the accommodations.

Responsibility of the Faculty, Administration and Staff
It is the responsibility of the faculty, administration and staff to facilitate and maintain open communication related to Educational Accessibility, and to ensure compliance with the accessibility standards, and the implementation of the academic accommodations stated on the Accommodation Form. The student and the campus Educational Accessibility counselor should have a clear understanding of the essential elements or technical requirements of the course. It is the responsibility of the faculty, administration and staff, to develop and communicate
these essential elements or technical requirements. The ultimate goal is to provide reasonable academic accommodations to the student in order to assist them in meeting these technical requirements, unless doing so would fundamentally alter the essential nature of the course. In addition, knowledge of the technical requirements, related to occupations and careers ultimately tied to the coursework, will assist the student in choosing a curriculum and/or classes. It is also helpful for all students, but especially students with disabilities, to have access to a syllabus prior to the first day of class, outlining the reading and writing requirements. The Office of Educational Accessibility Administration therefore asks that you submit your syllabi and technical requirements to the campus Educational Accessibility counselor, to be kept on file and available to students. The District Office of Educational Accessibility can provide information to assist in the development of the standards and requirements. All such standards and requirements should be reviewed regularly to ensure the continued applicability, given the fact that new technology may have replaced some elements of the profession.

Accommodations

Students with disabilities must be provided the same opportunity for success as are all students. As required by law, the TCC Office of Educational Accessibility provides academic accommodations to ensure access to the curriculum, upon the documentation of a disability or chronic health condition. When a student provides an “Accommodation Form” from an Educational Accessibility Counselor, faculty is required to provide the stated accommodations. While most accommodations are not overly burdensome, faculty should contact the campus Educational Accessibility counselor if there are any questions or concerns. Accommodations may be: individualized to meet the student’s needs; faculty facilitated; require provider-faculty-student cooperation; require assistive technology; and may require administrative/staff support.

Accommodation versus Accessibility

All public and private colleges and Universities must meet accessibility requirements, both physical and programmatic, as stated in the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Rehabilitation Act. Such access is required whether there are students with disabilities registered. This accessibility includes such things as ramps and accessible parking (when parking is provided to all students) as well as information technology such as web sites and online courses. Accommodations, on the other hand, can be thought of as “individualizing opportunities” for particular students with disabilities. This may include such things as additional time on tests, FM listening devices or other Assistive Technology. Failure to provide either access or accommodations constitutes discrimination on the basis of disability.

Your campus Educational Accessibility counselor or the office of Educational Accessibility Administration is available to assist you.

Other Faculty Responsibilities

1. Faculty/staff are prohibited from asking the student about his/her disability. Students may choose to disclose their disability to you, thereby opening the door for discussion; however this should only be a one-on-one discussion. It is never permissible to ask a student with a disability to identify themselves in a classroom, or for you to discuss their disability with others.

2. Do not remark about a student’s disability and/or request for accommodations in front of the class or others.

3. Your signature on a student’s Accommodation Form is confirmation that you are aware that accommodations are required. Refer students to the campus Educational Accessibility Counselor if they seek accommodations without the Accommodation Form.

4. You can encourage timely communication and reduce misunderstandings by inviting students with special needs to approach you privately as soon as possible. Put a written statement on your course outline and periodically announce the information in class.¹

5. If you accommodate a student without an Accommodation Form, you may risk setting a precedent that could later cause confusion and misunderstandings.

6. Over accommodating may lead to future misunderstandings. Therefore, please provide only those accommodations authorized on the Accommodation Form.

¹A suggested statement is:

All students will be treated with respect to their individual needs. If you are receiving services related to a disability or medical condition from Educational Accessibility, please make an appointment to talk to me privately to review your Accommodation Form. Any information about your disability or medical condition we discuss is confidential and will not be shared with anyone. If you feel you need accommodations for a disabling condition, please contact your Educational Accessibility counselor or the District Coordinator at 822-7752.
7. If the accommodation requires a quiet, less-distracting environment for test taking, the instructor is responsible for getting the test to the testing center with instructions as to what the student is permitted to use (Calculators, etc.) and/or any specific time the test is to be administered and/or completed.

8. If the student requires materials be provided in Braille, please make sure to get the materials (electronic format is preferred) to The College Wide Office of Educational Accessibility at least one week in advance of the date the material is needed in the class. You may email the material or drop off material at The College-Wide Office of Educational Accessibility located on the Virginia Beach campus. Please contact the Administrative Assistant at 822-7752 for additional information.

9. If you are teaching an on-line course, Virginia Law requires that your course materials are fully accessible to vision or print impaired students (reading or comprehension of the written word), as well as captioning for any audio portions, for students who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. If you need assistance in determining the accessibility of your course, please contact the Center for E-Learning.

10. If your course or program of study has specific technical standards or essential requirements, share these immediately with your class.

11. To enhance advising and reduce student confusion, please send copies of your Technical Requirements and Syllabus to the Coordinator of Educational Accessibility, Virginia Beach Campus for distribution and discussion with campus counselors.

12. Call your campus Educational Accessibility Counselor if you need support in the provision of accommodations, are seeking guidance in referring a student, or have questions and/or suggestions.
Personalized Program Services Available to Students with Disabilities

- Assistance in obtaining documentation of disability or previous evaluations
- Evaluation of documentation of a disability and provision of appropriate accommodations
- Individual evaluation for a specific Learning Disability as need determines
- Assistance with other postsecondary institutions for transfer transition
- Referral and assistance obtaining community resources
- Assistance in contacting community services supporting individual students
- Time management and study strategies
- Techniques to enhance self-advocacy skills
- Interpreter Specialist for deaf and hard-of-hearing students
- Assistive technology devices and training, including hardware and software

The information in this section has been adapted from the University of Colorado at Boulder, Educational Accessibility website: http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/handbook/handbook8.html

Specific Impairments and Related Classroom Strategies

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)

The essential feature of ADD, with or without hyperactivity, is a persistent pattern of inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity that is more frequent and severe than that typically observed in individuals at a comparable level of development. Diagnostic criteria include onset of behaviors before age six and evidence of behaviors in at least two different settings (i.e., school, home, work). Characteristics include difficulty with sustained attention, following instructions, organization of tasks and activities, and procrastination.

Suggestions for assisting students with ADD include:

- A detailed syllabus, including due dates and outlines, help the student learn to organize information.
- Classroom and course expectations (i.e., assignments, attendance, deadlines, participation, etc.) should be made as clear and specific as possible.
- Highlighting and summarizing key concepts and terms in lecture to help with focus.
- Faculty and staff should be sensitive to the impacts of ADD (and possibly the medication) yet consistent regarding expectations and deadlines.
- Faculty and staff should be aware that students with ADD may have difficulty completing long-term assignments; consequently, any support in this area (referral to Educational Accessibility, providing more structure, working individually with students, etc.) is valuable.
- Students with ADD often require more ongoing feedback regarding academic performance.

Refer students to Educational Accessibility for assistance and support services.
**Blind and Visually Impaired**

Most students with visual disabilities are not totally blind, but have low vision. Of those who are blind, only about half read Braille. It is important to understand that students with visual impairments must plan in advance to get their course materials in alternative format. Texts are available from a variety of resources. Students generally prefer E-Texts that are ordered through the Assistive Technology Specialist. Students need a course syllabus or list of required textbooks well in advance of the start of the semester, as the publishers often take several weeks to respond to the request for the material in electronic format.

Suggestions for assisting students with visual impairments include:

- Provide enlarged print materials for students with low vision. The Educational Accessibility counselor can assist with enlarging materials. Materials can be converted into Braille by the College-Wide Educational Accessibility Administrative Assistant. This process can often take at least 2 business days to complete.
- Information on chalkboards or overheads should be as large and clear as possible. All visual information should be read aloud or described. Verbal description should also accompany classroom activities.
- Lab and field experiences may require unique accommodations. Educational Accessibility will assist in determining reasonable accommodations.
- During class discussions, acknowledge the speaker by name.
- Trained guide dogs (or other service animals) are working animals; therefore, they should be treated as such. Service animals are permitted anywhere on campus.

Referrals to the College Wide Office of Educational Accessibility at 822-7752 are encouraged. The Educational Accessibility office is a resource for providing access for visually impaired students. Feel free to call with questions or concerns.

**Hearing Disabilities**

There are two categories of hearing loss: pre-lingually deaf and post-lingually deaf. Individuals who are pre-lingually deaf (deafened before the acquisition of a spoken language) generally use American Sign Language (ASL) or another signed language system, and identify with deaf culture. They have a distinct language and culture and do not view themselves as “disabled.”

Individuals who are post-lingually deaf have had the opportunity to acquire some form of spoken language, although they may not have complete mastery of that spoken language. Some post-lingually deaf persons have learned sign language and prefer to have a sign language interpreter. Others would prefer to use an oral interpreter, real-time transcription (C-Print), assistive listening devices (ALDs) or note taking services.

Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing are impacted in their acquisition and use of spoken language. Therefore, the comprehension and expression of English in a written form could pose a difficulty for them.

Suggestions for assisting students who are deaf or hard of hearing include:

- Always talk directly to the student, not the interpreter or captionist. It is not necessary to preface statements or questions with “tell him” or “ask her.” All questions and comments should be directed to the student. The interpreter is the communication facilitator and will interpret any interactions you wish to have with the student. Please remember that any time the interpreter speaks, he or she is speaking for the student.
- Overheads and handouts are an effective way of communicating information. Also make a copy of these available to the interpreter.
- Make sure that any videos or films are captioned. If the materials are not captioned, the interpreter or C-Print Operator may need to view the film or video beforehand. You should ensure that any new purchases of video are captioned.
- Speak at a moderate rate, especially when reading material aloud. Remember the interpreter is often a sentence or two behind the speaker, therefore, the deaf student may be delayed in contributing ideas. You will, in some cases, hear the interpreter voice the student’s question or contribution to the discussion. Other deaf students prefer to voice for themselves. Be mindful of controlling the pace of class discussions to allow for participation by all students.
If a student does not understand a question posed to them, repeat or rephrase the question to be more readily understood by the deaf student. Without the interpreter, pencil and paper may be an effective method of communication.

When you hear first person pronouns coming from the interpreter, remember he or she is speaking for the deaf person, and is not personally participating or offering opinions in the classroom.

Referrals to the College Wide Office of Educational Accessibility at 822-7752 are encouraged. The Educational Accessibility office is a resource for providing access for hearing impaired and deaf students. Feel free to call with questions or concerns.

### Learning Disabilities

A learning disability is a clinical diagnosis of a specific cognitive processing deficit that impacts academic achievement (i.e., reading, written language, mathematics, etc.). The presence of a learning disability does not mean that the individual has low intelligence.

Suggestions for assisting students with learning disabilities include:

- Provide materials such as a detailed syllabus, outlines, and lecture summaries, to help the student organize information.
- Classroom and course expectations (i.e., assignments, attendance, deadlines, participation, etc.) should be made as clear and specific as possible.
- Highlighting and summarizing key concepts and terms in lecture to help with focus.
- Students with learning disabilities may have a history of academic struggles. Consequently, patience and a positive attitude are important.
- Students should be encouraged to meet individually with faculty for clarification of course information.
- When possible, provide information in both visual and auditory modes. Handouts and specific explanations are helpful.
- Encourage peer study groups.
- Students with learning disabilities may need more time to process information. Consequently, they may need more time to respond to questions or to complete reading assignments in class.

### Physical Disabilities and/or Systemic Illnesses

Physical disabilities and systemic illnesses refer to a heterogeneous group of chronic body centered impairments, injuries and/or illnesses that include, but are not limited to, mobility impairments, multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, chemical sensitivities, spinal cord injuries, cancer, AIDS, muscular dystrophy, and spina bifida. Students with physical disabilities and/or systemic illnesses are often impacted with respect to paths of travel and building/classroom accessibility.

Suggestions for assisting students with physical disabilities and/or systemic illnesses include:

- Be conscious of classroom/office accessibility and request necessary adaptations. (i.e., height of desk or table should be adjusted to accommodate a wheelchair, allow sufficient space for wheelchair mobility).
- Provide the least restrictive and most inclusive setting possible. When communicating with a person in a wheelchair, it is preferable to sit down.
- If a room or building is not accessible, contact the campus Educational Accessibility counselor who will facilitate accessibility, which may include relocating the class or activity.
- Breakdown of assistive technologies upon which some students depend may cause absence, tardiness, or an interruption in course work. Be sensitive and aware of this possibility.
- The impacts of systemic illnesses are often unpredictable; consequently, students may miss classes or may have difficulty meeting deadlines for assignments. In these particular situations, individualized response may be necessary, including requesting documentation from the physician. The College-Wide Office of Educational Accessibility can provide technical assistance regarding rights and responsibilities of students, staff, and faculty in these situations.
- Never push or lean on the wheelchair of an individual with a disability without the person’s permission.
- Service dogs are working animals; therefore, they should be treated as such. Service animals are permitted anywhere on campus.
Psychological and Psychiatric Disabilities

A psychological/psychiatric disability is defined as any persistent psychiatric or psychological disorder resulting in impairment of educational, social, or vocational functioning. Psychological disabilities include, but are not limited to, schizophrenia, severe depression, anxiety and/or panic disorders, bipolar disorder, phobias, and personality disorders. Although psychological and psychiatric disabilities can be unpredictable, with appropriate medical management, most can be effectively controlled. However, medication can also cause varying impacts. Psychological and psychiatric disabilities are cyclical in nature, and symptoms can become more apparent at different times in the semester. You may wish to refer a student who is having problems to the personal counselors on each TCC campus, or to the campus Educational Accessibility counselor who may make the referral when appropriate.

Suggestions for assisting students with psychological disabilities include:

- Be aware that the student with a psychological/psychiatric disability may exhibit the following: distractibility, difficulty with concentration and multi-tasking, drowsiness problems with time management and follow-through, listlessness, social detachment, and inconsistency, etc.
- Be flexible regarding class attendance if student’s absences are due to the disability and supported by appropriate documentation.
- In the event of prolonged absences because of the disability, faculty should meet with the student to discuss options regarding completion of the course (i.e., consideration of an incomplete rather than a failure).

Speech and Language Disorders

Speech and language disorders refer to problems in communication and related areas such as oral motor functions. Speech disorders include difficulties with articulation or phonological disorders, pitch, volume, or voice quality. A language disorder impacts one’s ability to understand and/or use words in context.

Suggestions for assisting students with speech and language disorders include:

- Students with speech and language disorders may need additional time (wait time) to respond.
- Some students may use speech enhancers or augmented communication devices that, again, means that wait time is important.

Acquired Brain Injury

Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) is defined as an acquired injury caused by an external physical force, or by a systemic internal injury (as in a stroke, tumor etc.) resulting in total or partial functional disability or psychosocial impairment, or both, that adversely affects a person’s educational performance. The term applies to open and closed head injuries resulting in impairments in one or more areas, such as cognition; language; memory; attention reasoning; abstract thinking; judgment; problem-solving; sensory, perceptual, motor abilities; psychosocial behavior; physical functions; mental fatigue, information processing, hearing and speech.

Suggestions for assisting students with acquired brain injury include:

- Sensitivity and awareness that students with ABI may experience an enormous sense of loss and/or frustration related to the loss associated with the injury.
- Since memorization, organization, and attention are generally areas of concern, any assistance in this area is valuable. Strategies appropriate for students with learning disabilities are also appropriate for students with ABI.
- Due to the nature of the recent war zones in the Middle East, our TCC Combat Veterans may also have experienced a ABI. TCC has a Veterans Counselor on each campus to assist our veterans and family members with their VA benefits. The Center for Military and Veterans Education located on the Virginia Beach Campus, may also be an appropriate referral for Veterans and/or Active Duty Military students.
- Referral to the campus Educational Accessibility counselor for assistance or advocacy.
Campus Contacts

**TCC College Wide Office of Educational Accessibility**
1700 College Crescent
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23453
Administrative Assistant   Phone: 757-822-7752
Assistive Technology Specialist   Phone: 757-822-7753
Interpreter/Deaf Services Specialist   Phone: 757-822-7752

**Chesapeake Campus**
1428 Cedar Road
Chesapeake, VA 23322
Student Development and Outreach
Phone: 757-822-5127
Fax: 757-822-5134

**Norfolk Campus**
315 Granby Street
Norfolk, VA 23510
Phone: 757-822-1226
Fax: 757-822-1214

**Portsmouth Campus**
120 Campus Drive
Portsmouth, VA 23701
Student Development
Phone: 757-822-2208
Fax: 757-686-5173

**Virginia Beach Campus**
1700 College Crescent
Virginia Beach, VA 23453
Counseling
Phone: 757-822-7216
Fax: 757-822-7346