In honor of Autism Awareness Month this April, we would like to take this time to highlight some of our students with autism and the unique challenges that they face in college. Currently, there are 120 students with autism enrolled with DSPS for the 2017-2018 academic year.

WHAT IS AUTISM?
Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a brain-based disorder that affects behavior, communication and social skills. Individuals with ASD have trouble relating to others. Students with ASD also have different ways of learning, paying attention or reacting to things. They might repeat certain behaviors, enjoy routine and have a hard time adapting to changes in their daily activities. Though many students with ASD are high functioning and can demonstrate an average range of academic skills, they can struggle with other social, behavioral and executive functioning skills that make college challenging for them. A diagnosis of ASD now includes several conditions that used to be diagnosed separately: autistic disorder, pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS) and Asperger syndrome.

Recommended accommodations may include:
- Extended time on exams
- Shared notes
- Audio recorder
- Personal service attendant to prompt student or monitor behavior in the classroom
- Auxiliary aide that assists the student outside of the classroom to develop social and executive-functioning skills

General strategies for instructors working with students with ASD:
- Set clear classroom rules
- Keep a consistent routine
- Be direct with expectations
- Avoid jokes, sarcasm and figurative speech such as idioms, metaphors and similes
- Use various modes of teaching, pairing visual cues with verbal directions
- Intervene if students are bullied
- Offer choices if possible
- Allow for wait time to receive a response
- Reach out to the student to offer support
- Make grades available so students have access to their current progress
- Contact DSPS if you have any questions or need guidance
On Feb. 6, DSPS had the pleasure of welcoming Superintendent/President Geraldine M. Perri, Ph.D., and members of the Board of Trustees to the DSPS High Tech Center (HTC). Guests learned about the wide variety of support services provided to students with disabilities, including the breadth of adaptive hardware and software offered in the HTC, specialized DSPS classes, and educational accommodations. Two of our most popular assistive technology tools, the Smart Pen and Kurzweil 3000, were also demonstrated.

The highlight of the event went to our student presenter, Juan Reyna. Juan is a Citrus College graduate and former DSPS student. He shared how his experience utilizing DSPS counseling services, accommodations and the HTC supported his academic success at Citrus College. Juan is now pursuing a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. DSPS staff thanks Juan for his time and willingness to share his personal story with the Board of Trustees. We wish him much success in his future endeavors!
DSPS 088
STRATEGIES FOR STRESS AND ANXIETY MANAGEMENT
A new course to be offered soon!

DSPS 088 is designed to provide students specific and tangible coping strategies for dealing with anxiety related disabilities and managing stress. Students will be able to identify physiological and psychological symptoms of anxiety and address how thoughts, emotions and behavior interact with each other.

1 unit
Time and Dates to be determined
Instructor: Flora Yee
fyee@citruscollege.edu
FOOD FOR THOUGHT

“The pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees opportunity in every difficulty.”

—Winston Churchill

FOOD FOR FUEL

Eat a healthy, energizing breakfast! According to WebMD, “Studies have linked eating breakfast to good health, better memory and concentration, lower levels of ‘bad’ LDL cholesterol, and lower chances of getting diabetes, heart disease and being overweight.”

For more information on the importance of eating a healthy breakfast and for some healthy recipe ideas, visit www.webmd.com/food-recipes/most-important-meal.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Spring 2018

• Take our Self-Advocacy Questionnaire at https://goo.gl/e8UDTu for a chance to win movie tickets! The winner will be announced on Monday, June 4, at noon in the DSPS High Tech Center. You must be present to win.

• Students can now download Microsoft Office 2016 for free! Ask DSPS how.

• Use the Citrus College portal to access your student services. Visit https://my.citruscollege.edu to start exploring today.

Summer 2018

• The 2018-2019 DSPS Services Agreement is now available! If you do not have your updated DSPS Services Agreement, make an appointment ASAP. If your form is misplaced, copies are available the second week of classes only. Lost or misplaced agreements after the second week are delivered via email on Fridays. Please email your requests to emadrid@citruscollege.edu.

Fall 2018

• DSPS 090: Empowerment for Students with Disabilities
  Offered for the full 16-week semester.
  CRN 21648, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:55-11 a.m.

• DSPS 088: Strategies for Stress and Anxiety Management
  NEW CLASS! Offered for the full 16-week semester
  CRN 23203, Tuesdays, 1:05-2:05 p.m.
In 1976, Assembly Bill 77 (Lanterman Act) required that all institutions in the California Community Colleges System have a student services department responsible for providing educational accommodations to students with disabilities. The California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office and Title 5 of the California Code of Regulations identifies this department as Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS). However, more and more colleges from the 114 California community colleges are changing their program name to something more inclusive.

Colleges are contemplating whether having the word “disability” in their program name deters some students from utilizing services. DSPS currently serves roughly 1,140 individuals out of more than 20,000 students at Citrus College. Because accessing accommodations is voluntary and students must self-identify (along with providing disability verification), this number appears to be disproportionately lower than the actual number of students on campus who have a disability.

Could this inconsistency be partly due to the stigma some students associate with the word “disability”? Do some students feel that the word “disability” negatively labels them and consequently creates a barrier to seek accommodations?

Recently, a bill was introduced to Congress titled H.R. 3199: Improving Access to Higher Education Act of 2017, which is aimed at improving accessibility to and completion of postsecondary education for students with disabilities. The bill suggests the possibility of changing the department name to Office of Accessibility. Other names colleges have adopted include Accessibility Support Center (ASC) and Learning Assistance Program (LAP).

What do you think? Should we remove the word “disability” from our department name?

On the other hand, some students may embrace the word “disability,” recognizing that their unique disability does not define their whole identity. Due to this belief, some leaders in disability advocacy are promoting the #SayTheWord campaign. For more information on #SayTheWord, visit https://goo.gl/rWTU5G. However, words have power. They have a great deal of influence over how we think. It is important to use person-first language as part of the empowerment and inclusion process within our campus culture. Currently, the program name Disabled Student Programs and Services is not person-first language; it highlights the disability first and the individual second.

Do you think we should be person-centered versus disability-centered? Should we keep our current name or change it while still keeping the word disability in it?

We want you to weigh in on this discussion. Please share your thoughts and feedback with us by completing a brief survey located at https://goo.gl/2urzbw.
DSPS APPOINTMENT TRACKER

**Step 1**
- Intake Appointment (REQUIRED)

**Step 2**
- Accommodation Orientation (REQUIRED)

**Step 3**
- Technology Training (optional)
  - Alt. Media - E-text
  - Audio Recorder/Smartpen

**Step 4**
- Student Educational Plan (SEP)

**Step 5**
- Update File (Fall/Spring)

**Step 6**
- Semester Planning Guide (Optional)

**APPOINTMENT POLICIES**
- 24 hour notice required to cancel an appointment.
- Same day cancellation is considered a no-show.
- 3 no shows result in restricted appointments (drop in only).
- No show to testing appointment will result in no testing for 2 semesters.

**Student Educational Plan (SEP)**
SEP must be completed and up to date to receive priority registration.
Students may also complete an SEP through another counseling department on campus.
See Counseling and Advisement on the second floor of the SS building or call (626) 914-8530 for appointments.

**Priority Registration**
Students must meet with a DSP&S counselor twice a year to ensure priority registration for the following semester/term.
- An update in the Fall will ensure priority for Winter and Spring.
- An update in the Spring will ensure priority for Summer and Fall.

**Semester Planning Guide (SPG)**
Students may schedule an SPG appointment for assistance choosing class times and instructors.

Disabled Students Programs & Services
Student Services Bldg.
Once upon a time there was a man
This man was determined to explore a distant land
One day, he decided to go on an adventure far away
He knew he had to move, at home he could not stay
His journey took him across many miles
He sailed on oceans and flew through skies
Making all attempts to get the most out of his life
The man had a hard time deciding, what to do and where to go
Late at night he pondered, staring out his window
He had come all this way and had some decisions to make
Finally, he decided a mountainous journey he would take
The man woke up early, dew still on the grass
And as the sun rose above he had his decision at last
He had decided, after much thought and consideration
That Citrus Mountain was the adventure he would be taking
As he arrived at the base, he looked around
Not another soul in sight, not a person to be found
He didn’t know where to begin or where his adventure would take him
But he was determined, there was a great journey in the making
The man began his trek, one foot after another
Sweat kissed his brow, and his mind began to wonder
After hours of climbing, one step at a time
The man came to a fork in the road, there was no straight line
He became overwhelmed, what would he do?
The man regretted his choice, dazed and confused
Feeling hopeless, had his plan fell through?
He wished he had others to help him know which path to choose
During his time of need, he looked up and shouted
“I need some help; the pressure has mounted!”
He was out of water, he was out of food
The man no longer had the resources he needed to continue
As the sun rose and moved across the sky
The man felt saddened, and soon he cried
He attempted to call out again
“I need some help; I feel I’m close to the end!”
And just as he spoke, a person appeared
At first he was hesitant, and a bit scared
But the person was kind
And came to the man while in need
Not to make his choices for him
But to guide him and put him at ease
They gave him some water, and shared their food
Before he knew it, he finally had resources and knew what to do
They spoke and discussed his great adventure’s goals
At this time the man made his choice
He discovered the path he wanted to follow
The end was in sight, he could see the top
Though it was not easy, the man knew he could not stop
He finally realized his goals so he could not give up
He took a deep breath and pushed himself to the top
The sun began falling and the sky turned to night
The man looked around and saw a glorious sight
He had made tough decisions, like all of us do
He was grateful that he had someone to guide him and help him choose
Now the man has moved on and lived quite a nice life
Because he had someone to guide him
And he chose the path he deemed right.

Poem by Rebecca Ferrelli, DSPS adjunct counselor

Having a plan can help you realize your dreams and achieve your academic and career goals. Schedule your student education plan (SEP) appointment with DSPS or the counseling department today!
LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT AND HOW DO I GET ONE?

At some point in your journey toward accomplishing your educational or career goals, you may find yourself in a position of needing to request a letter of recommendation. These letters should be written by someone who can describe your strengths, accomplishments and personality.

Letters of recommendation are valuable when applying for scholarships or trying to enter into a competitive program, internship, or job because they reveal things about you that grades can’t, like personal opinions about your character or who is willing to advocate on your behalf about your skills and abilities.

Tips:
• Ask a professor, counselor or other faculty member who knows you well and has known you for a while. Letters are stronger from people who have a current perspective on you, not from someone who knew you years ago or from someone who has met you only a few times.
• Build rapport with faculty and staff before asking for a letter of recommendation. A good way to do this is once you find a class that you enjoy, try taking other courses with the same professor. If you liked meeting with a particular counselor, schedule all follow-up appointments with the same counselor.
• If you’re unsure about asking someone in particular, politely ask if he or she feels comfortable recommending you.
• Be courteous by giving your references at least three weeks’ notice before your deadline to complete and submit your letter. The earlier you ask, the better.
• Consider other people, such as an employer, coach or mentor who have a good understanding of your strengths outside of a classroom environment, to write a letter for you.
• Take some time to email your references information about yourself to refresh their memory about your accomplishments. Briefly outline your activities, both in and out of the classroom, mention any challenges you overcame, and your goals for the future.
• To maintain rapport, don’t forget to write or email a thank you note telling your references how much you appreciate their support.

To learn more about how to request a letter of recommendation from a DSPS counselor, feel free to pick up a flier with detailed instructions from the DSPS lobby.