**Faculty Guide: Rights and Responsibilities**

The number of students with disabilities attending colleges and universities continues to increase with each passing year. Faculty need to be well-informed about the roles, rights and responsibilities postsecondary institutions have towards supporting students with disabilities. These are supported by several federal laws which entitle students with disabilities to the full opportunity to enjoy the benefits of a postsecondary educational experience. For further explanation of disability laws, please see the FAQ under Faculty Resources on the DSS website: [http://www.shu.edu/offices/disability-support-services/frequently-asked-questions.cfm?#C2](http://www.shu.edu/offices/disability-support-services/frequently-asked-questions.cfm#C2).

**Faculty members have the right to:**

* Maintain the rigor and the fundamental nature of their course content.
* Require students to demonstrate their knowledge of crucial course content.
* Determine course content and how it will be taught.
* Confirm a student’s request for accommodations and ask for clarification about a specific accommodation with DSS.
* Only provide those accommodations approved by DSS. Requests for other accommodations may be denied.
* Award grades appropriate to the level of the student’s demonstration of mastery of material, including failing a student who does not perform to passing standards.

**Faculty members do not have the right to**:

* Refuse to provide an approved accommodation for a documented disability, unless it compromises an essential standard of the course. In this case, the faculty member should communicate with DSS and the student in order to discuss alternative accommodations that may be appropriate.
* Challenge the legitimacy of a student’s disability.
* Review a student’s documentation, including diagnostic data.

**Faculty members are responsible for:**

* Providing handouts, videos, and other course materials in accessible formats upon request.
* Providing requested accommodations and academic adjustments to students who have documented disabilities in a timely manner.
* Implementing best practices in teaching to reach a diversity of learners.
* Sharing information on how students can request an accommodation. (Instructors will find it useful to include a statement on their syllabus which directs students with disabilities about the steps they need to take to receive classroom accommodations.)
* Having an awareness of campus resources available for students and faculty.
* Understanding university/DSS procedures for implementing accommodations.
* Maintaining appropriate confidentiality of records concerning students with disabilities, except when disclosure is required by law or authorized by the student.