July 2015

To: Faculty members
From: Kevin C. Kregel, Associate Provost for Faculty
      Georgina Dodge, Chief Diversity Officer and Associate Vice President
Re: Academic accommodations for students with disabilities

We write to refer you to resources available through Student Disability Services (SDS) for working with students you will likely encounter in your faculty role. If a student approaches you about disability accommodations without a Student Academic Accommodation Request (SAAR) form, it is important for you to refer that student to SDS before providing accommodations. In this way, students with disabilities receive the accommodations to which they are entitled and university standards are maintained.

As the university unit designated to work with students with disabilities, SDS reviews documentation to determine if a student has a qualifying disability and identifies reasonable accommodations based on functional limitations. At the beginning of each term, SDS advisors meet individually with students to review course syllabi and identify what, if any, accommodations are required. Students’ instructors are notified of classroom accommodations and/or exam accommodations through the SAAR form. It is the student’s responsibility to present you with this form. SDS advisors need to hear from you if you have any questions or concerns about necessary accommodations listed on the form (335-1462). You also may seek the assistance of your collegiate dean’s office.

Our strategic plan, Renewing The Iowa Promise, recognizes the link between diversity and educational excellence. Disability is an important dimension of diversity, and our goal is to be welcoming and supportive for members of our community who are differently abled. In addition, the university is required by law to provide access to all of its programs and activities to university students with disabilities and is prohibited from discriminating against these students on the basis of their disability. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is the specific requirement for faculty to provide reasonable academic accommodations for students with documented disabilities and the Americans with Disabilities Act requires making public accommodations available for persons with disabilities.

The guide, Assisting Students with Disabilities: A Guide for Instructors, provides additional background and helpful information (http://diversity.uiowa.edu/eod/assisting-students-disabilities-guide-instructors). Should you have questions or need assistance about working with students with disabilities, please contact SDS. You may also refer to the SDS website at http://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/.

Additionally, academic and instructional materials provided via the World Wide Web are subject to the University of Iowa Web Accessibility policy. Materials covered by this policy include webpages, electronic documents and presentations, video resources, and other online content. Contact your departmental IT support staff for assistance. You may review this policy at http://itsecurity.uiowa.edu/policy/webAccessibility.shtml.

Thank you for making the University of Iowa accessible for students with disabilities. Please feel free to contact us or the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (335-0705 or diversity@uiowa.edu) with questions.

cc: P. Barry Butler, Executive Vice President and Provost
      Tom Rocklin, Vice President for Student Life