

in this newsletter

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Updates to Accommodate
Highlights of Landmark College



Office of Accommodative Services (OAS) - Spring 2025

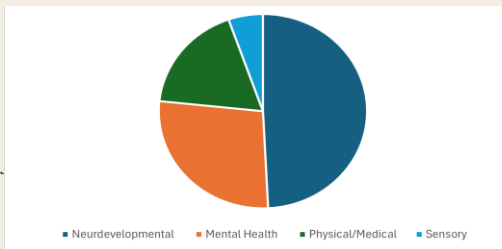
Director's Corner

Welcome to the third addition of this spring newsletter which encompasses a review of fall '24 and a look ahead to the spring '25. Thank you to both faculty and staff who are working to make this campus a more accessible space, we wouldn't be able to do it without you.



Self-Identified Student Population

Fall 2024 student body



Neurodevelopmental – 49%
Learning, Autism, ADHD, Speech

Mental Health- 27%

Physical/Medical- 18%
Chronic Medical Conditions, Mobility, Orthopedic, TBI

Sensory- 5%
Vision, Deaf, Hard of Hearing

Please note that some students have more than 1 disability. Graph shows only students with classroom accommodations.

OAS had 219 students registered for classroom accommodations with 330 different students registered for classroom, housing, or both types of accommodations.

Accommodate

Your portal to Accommodation Letters

Fall 2024 OAS launched “Accommodate” a one stop shop for Accommodation letters. The reaction to this system was positive from faculty and students and we hope that this helps you keep track of and review your accommodations easily.

Students are now required to request their semester accommodations through Accommodate every semester.

If you have a student that says they have accommodations but you do not have a request from them in Accommodate please remind them they have to request their accommodations through Accommodate.

OAS has created step by step tutorials for our students- [Student Accommodate Tutorials](#). Students are also welcome to stop by OAS in Sisson 131 to get direct help with requesting their letter and scheduling an exam.

718
of Accommodation letters sent out through Accommodate during Fall 2024

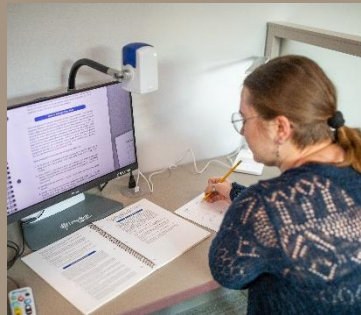
Have you found the “Resource Folder” yet? It contains information for how to increase students time in Brightspace, what to do if you see someone has a flexible attendance accommodation or seizure activity plan, and has tips for pop-quizzes

New for spring 2025

Students will request exam accommodations through Accommodate and you can see a student exam center requests in your [Accommodate portal!](#) Click on Courses & Exam Requests- Select the class – Select Exam Requests at the right top of the page. For step-by-step instructions view our [Faculty Accommodate Guide](#).

Accessible Technology

Onyx HD located in Sisson exam center enlarges any document for easier viewing by the student.



Enlarging Devices

Onyx HD Portable Magnifier is multi versatile and has a 3- in-1 flexible camera monitor which allows for document reading, distance viewing, and self-viewing modes. Students with visual impairments can sign this device out for use throughout the semester.

Cloverbook Plus (not pictured) is a smaller portable magnifier with a large 12.5 touchscreen video magnifier with three viewing modes of near, self, and distance. Students can also sign this device out during the semester.

Zeuschel Overhead Scanner

Located in the Crane Library this scanner can be used by any student, faculty, or student and scans documents quickly.

It can turn inaccessible documents that can not be read by a computer into readable files. The scanner offers a book cradle for large format items which makes scanning music and oversized books much easier!



Coming Soon!

OAS will have an E ink reader available for loan to students. This reader is ideal for students who may be suffering from a short-term concussion and are having a hard time looking at a computer screen for extended periods of time. If you have a student who is experiencing these symptoms, please refer them to OAS.



Kathy Sherwood- Administrative Assistant

Welcome >>>

Meet our New Staff

OAS welcomed two new staff members during the summer of 2024. Kathy Sherwood comes over from graduate studies and Jake Hammond is new to Potsdam relocating from Austria after living aboard for many years.

Jake's position is a new role thanks to the Incremental funding support. Jake meets with students and creates accommodation letters, teaches students how to use assistive technology, loans out equipment, acquires student's books in alternative formats, and will work with faculty for captioning and sign language interpreter needs, just to name a few.

Kathy is the backbone of our exam scheduling process and coordinators and returns all exams taken within OAS. If you need to pick up an exam you would see Kathy in Sisson 131. Kathy also helps OAS with administrative tasks and data entry.

Jacob Hammond- Program Coordinator & Assistive Technology Specialist



Incremental Funding

In April 2022 Governor Kathy Hochul and the Legislature in SUNY's operating budget passed a bill to provide \$10 million per year to support its state- operated campuses to support students with disabilities.

Potsdam is using this funding to:

- Hire additional staff to address barriers to access
- Purchases new software and equipment to help with creation of accessible materials.
- Renovate its exam center to offer students with disabilities a space for a wide range of needs.

Sisson 142- OAS Exam Center

OAS administrated 258 exams this past fall for 61 different instructors amounting to 278 hours of exam proctoring time.



This new space now houses 6 different exam rooms which can accommodate up to 20 students at one time.

- 1 large room which seats up to 9 students.
- 1 large room which seats 5 students and has longer desks to provide students with a bigger working area.
- 1 computer area equipped with 3 computers.
- 3 individual rooms each equipped with its own computer.

Remodeling of the conference space in Sisson 142 during the spring/summer of 2024 lead to the creation of a new exam center for our students with disabilities.

Located in a quiet location it makes an ideal space for an exam center. Students enjoy the center and find the changes a welcoming addition to Potsdam. We would love to show you the space if you would like a tour!

Additionally, students have personal desk lamps, sound machines, stress balls, noise cancelling headphones and a few balance ball chairs to provide a range of seating options.

Ask OAS >>>

Q: *How am I notified that a student would like to take an exam in your office?*

A: *Email and the Accommodate Portale*

When a student requests to take an exam through their Accommodate portal you will receive an email notification with a link to fill out the [Instructor Exam Scheduling Form](#). Starting in the spring of 2025 you can see exam requests in your accommodate portal allowing you to quickly see if a student would like to test in OAS without having to go through your emails. A link to the Instructor Exam Form is available in Accommodate.



ReadSpeaker Stats

Launched in 2021 ReadSpeaker is a built-in reading tool embedded into all students Brightspace account. It allows for student's exams to be read, as well as accessible documents.

281,640 clicks

from August – December 2024.
Overall usage of ReadSpeaker has increased nearly 40% from 2023-2024. Going from 394,361 clicks in 2023 to 553,300 in 2024.

Did you know....

The exam center has a lounge area for students who are waiting to take their exams. The space is equipped with lockers which holds students cell phone and electronic devices while they are testing.

Students with disabilities can come to the lounge area before an exam to study in a quiet area or use as a space to hang out during the day.



Landmark College ...

SUNY Potsdam welcomed Landmark College during the DEI symposium this past fall.

Landmark College is designed exclusively for students who learn differently, including those with a learning disability, ADHD, autism or executive function challenges.

SUNY Potsdam welcomed Rick Bryck who presented two workshops. “An Introduction to the Link Between Executive Function” and “Student Behavior and Creating Inclusive Campuses through Universal Design for Learning.”

Supporting Executive Functioning:

What students can work on:

- ❖ “What’s one small step I can take right now?”
- ❖ Practice shifting between big picture and details (“tree vs. forest”)
- ❖ Automate > use routines
- ❖ Multi-modal: use visuals, diagrams, mind maps
- ❖ Separate the set-up from the task
- ❖ Identify and plan for hindrances

What Professors can do to help:

- ❖ Break down activities and assignments into clear steps. “Micro-unit”
- ❖ Be as direct and clear as possible about expectations and your use of language to convey your expectations
- ❖ Provide rubrics and samples of “A” work versus “D/F” work

Help Students with their Working Memory

Reduce their cognitive load

- ❖ Write it down – all of it !
Detailed syllabus or directions on Brightspace
- ❖ Create visuals and diagrams
- ❖ Automate as much as possible
Use Brightspace due dates and reminders
- ❖ Micro-unit (break steps down)
- ❖ Keep instructions clear and concise: visual and verbal

Universal Design

Promotes the notion that one-size fits all is not the best practice

- Mindset that suggests pro-active design of instruction from the beginning, rather than retrofitting accommodations
- Increases access opportunities for everyone

Learn more about [how to apply Universal Design](#) in your class.

Share Your Thoughts!

Do you have a training topic, or a professional speaker centered around disability that you would like to learn more on or hear speak? Please email Jessica Burnett at burnettjj@potdam.edu to share your ideas. Our goal is to bring in a guest speak every fall for faculty professional development.



Did you know >>>

ADHD/ADD Executive Functioning

Students with ADD effecting their executive functioning are 30% behind their peers in organization. So, a freshman who is 18 has the executive functioning of a 12- or 13-year-old.