

English A02 Manuals:

Mental Health And AccessAbility Support Instructors Guide

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One-on-One Interactions with Students

Recommended Skills:

Instructor Boundaries

Instructor Self-Care

Active Listening to student

Validation of student experience

Open-Minded

Creating Safe Space for Students to Share

Communication Barriers

Student Consent

Instructor Boundaries

Please be mindful of the following elements of your own self care.

Clear Boundaries

- The process of self-reflection can help you determine your boundaries in supporting students.
- These boundaries need to be clearly conveyed to students, as applicable. For example, if you decide to not answer emails on weekends. It is important to clearly share this with students.
- Your boundaries need to be consistent and supported by your actions. For instance, if you decide to not answer emails on weekends, your behaviour needs to support this boundary.

Self Care

- The process of self-reflection can help you determine the self-care strategies, activities and experiences that have worked for you in the past or you are willing to try to ensure your own wellbeing.

Please refer to the Instructor's Resource Section for supports available for Instructors

Mental Health Support Resources for Instructors

- UofT Wellness Hub
 - Remote Access Resources
 - I.Volve for Depression and/ or Anxiety- Homewood Health
 - Phone Number: 1-800-663-1142
 - International (Call Collect): 604-689-1717

- Numéro sans frais- en français: 1-866-398-9505
- Availability- 24/7
- https://hrandequity.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2020/03/iVolve_Factsheet_EN_10_2018.pdf
- Life Smart: Stress Solutions- Homewood Health
 - Phone Number: 1-800-663-1142
 - International (Call Collect): 604-689-1717
 - Numéro sans frais- en français: 1-866-398-9505
 - Availability- N/A
 - <https://hrandequity.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Life-Smart-Stress-Solutions-.pdf>
- Life Smart: Grief and Loss Coaching- Homewood Health
 - Can Contact your Employee and Family Assistance Program at 1-800-663-1142 (available 24/7)
 - International (Call Collect): 604-689-1717
 - Numéro sans frais- en français: 1-866-398-9505
 - <https://hrandequity.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Grief-and-Loss.pdf>
- Individual Confidential Counselling- Homewood Health
 - Visit wellnesstogether.ca
 - OR call: 1-866-585-0445
 - Availability- 24/7
- Embracing Workplace Change
- Tri-Campus Resources
 - Health and Well Being Programs and Services
 - Family Care Office
- For more information about the listed UofT Resources:
 - <https://hrandequity.utoronto.ca/wellness-domain/emotional-well-being/>

More Information on Skills:

Active Listening to Students:

Please be mindful of the following elements of your communication with students

- Tone of Voice
- Volume and Pace
- Empathy
- Attentive to Student
- Open Ended Questions to understand student's experience.
- Closed Ended Questions to confirm your understanding of student's experience.
- Non-Verbal Communication
 - Body posture
 - Head nod
- Verbal Listening Cues
 - "Hmm"
 - Other words that verify listening, such as head nodding.
- Validation of student experience

- Communicating to students that their experience is valid, real, and true.
- Normalizing
 - Ensuring students their feelings are normal, and acceptable for their situation.
- Paraphrasing
 - Restating student's feelings and situation to confirm your understanding and listening of their experience.
- Prioritizing
 - Students may share many topics or issues. In this case, choose one to focus on at a time by prioritizing the most urgent or important. In addition, prioritizing the most urgent or important matter may limit the overwhelming feeling which an instructor may experience.
- Resources for students based on their situation.
- Empowerment
 - Create a space where students have an opportunity to make their own decisions about the situation at hand.
- Summarize
 - Briefly cover the key points of the conversation, which allows the students to hear the progress they have made during their conversation with you.
 - Focus on the positive strengths of the student, which can empower students
 - End on a statement of hope, which demonstrates to the student that you care about them and their wellbeing.

Communication Barriers

Please be mindful of the following elements of your communication with students that can be barriers to your communication with students.

- Why Questions
 - Rather, ask about *how* students feel in their current situation.
 - While the student shares their experience, use verbal listening cues and non-verbal communication so that the student feels heard.
- Should Statements:
 - Rather, ask about *how* students feel in their current situation.
 - Validating the student's experience is applicable in addition to verbal listening cues and non-verbal communication.
- Advice
 - Perhaps, the student asks you directly for advice. In this case, you can redirect the question to the student and offer to help work with them to find a solution.
 - Note: the pronoun "we" can be helpful to include both yourself and the student in the exploration stage of a solution.
 - For example, "Let's put our heads together and see what we can come up with."
- Quick Fix
 - Rather, Give the student space to share their experience before exploring resources.
 - When exploring resources, begin by asking the student for their consent that they wish to explore possible resources for their situation.
- Multiple Questions

- Rather, ask one question at a time.
 - Although closed ended questions are beneficial for clarification, asking open ended questions (*how* questions) helps the conversation progress while maintaining a welcoming environment.
- Interrupting
 - Rather, allowing students to finish their thought, and paraphrasing the student's statement gives the student an opportunity to clarify when needed.
- Judgments
 - Rather, use active listening skills to listen and understand the student experience. Validating the student's experience and maintaining an understanding tone of voice might be used.
- Dismissing and Minimizing the Students Experience
 - Rather, ensuring that the student's feelings are normal, and validating the student's experience can be used
 - Please be aware of your judgments and personal experiences, which may differ from the students. Instead, treat students with respect and sensitivity through the use of active listening skills.
- Assumptions
 - Rather, use an open-ended question to ask the student to elaborate. Or, use a close-ended question to verify your understanding of the students' experience.
- False Hope or False Reassurance
 - Rather, summarize the conversation and provide resources to the student when appropriate.
- Over-Talking
 - Rather, use open ended questions to encourage the student to discuss how they are feeling.
- Cheer-Up
 - Rather, paraphrase the student's feelings and situation to confirm your understanding and listening of their experience.

Practice Scenarios

What would an instructor do if a student expresses that they're planning on dropping the course due to their mental health state?

- Empowerment
 - "I would like to begin by letting you know that this is a safe space, where you can speak about your decision to drop this course.
- Validation of Student Experience
 - "I am hearing that you are experiencing mental health related difficulties and are considering dropping this course."

A student is requesting an extension. However, they are being vague with the details of their circumstances. Should I ask for more details?

- Tone of voice
 - Kind, Open, Respectful, We pronoun:
 - "We can talk about the situation and come up with a solution together."
- Open Ended Questions to understand student's experience

- “Would you like to share anything else about your situation that may help us determine how much more time you may need for this assignment?”

A first-year student came to my office hours and told me they have impostor syndrome from attending UTSC, and it is affecting their mental health. How should I respond?

- Validation of Student Experience
 - “The transition to university can have an impact on one's mental health.”
- Normalizing
 - “It sounds like your experience entering university has affected your mental health.”

Students Registered with AccessAbility Services

Contact information

- Arts and Administration Building- Room AA142
- Telephone Number: 416-287-7560

Student's Responsibility

- It is the student's responsibility to request accommodated extensions, book a test with AccessAbility Services, and to request a peer note-taker.

Motivating Peer Note-Taker Volunteers

- Students might be unaware of the benefits of volunteering as a note-taker and stating these benefits can help motivate students to volunteer as a peer note-taker.

Recording Lectures

- Where applicable, students are offered the option to record lectures. Before this accommodation is offered to the student, the student would have signed an agreement where the student will not send the recording to anyone, and that recording lectures are strictly for education purposes.

Using a Computer during Lecture

- Course Instructor's may have a preference regarding student use of computers for education purposes during lecture. A student registered with AccessAbility services can have an accommodation to use a computer during lecture.
- Furthermore, students who volunteer as a notetaker tend to prefer to type their notes for clarity, and for transferring their notes onto myAIMS.

Discussing Accommodations in a Private Area

- A student-Instructor discussion regarding the student's accommodations might be eavesdropped by a fellow classmate without the consent of the registered student. For this reason, it is best to either have a discussion regarding accommodations via e-mail, or during office hours with the door closed.

Q&A section

- What if a student asks for an extension in addition to their accommodated time?
 - ENGA02 students are asked to CC their AccessAbility disability consultant with the e-mail. Feel free to contact their disability consultant if you have any questions regarding the additional extension.
- How do I send a test/exam to UTSC test and Exam services?

- A list of the students who are writing, their start times, and locations will be sent to the course Instructor.
- For more information, please see “myAIMS Instructor Information-Test/Exam Request Process.”
- What is a memory aid? What should be included in a memory aid?
 - Some students have difficulty remembering certain words/ phrases and having a memory aid helps “trigger” the student’s memory. The memory aid is not intended to provide the student with the answer.
 - A student will develop a memory aid for themselves and will send the memory aid to the instructor. The instructor will receive further information regarding the memory aid process.
 - Memory aids are commonly mistaken as a “cheat sheet”. A memory aid can include a typed/ hand written page and will either include drawings, initials, or words that does not directly apply to the course material.
- Who can I notify about a student’s disability?
 - The student’s personal Information cannot be shared or disclosed without written consent from the student.
- Where can a student request an accommodated extension? How often are students allowed to ask for assignment extensions within the semester?
 - A Student can either request an extension in person, or via e-mail.
 - The number of times which a student may request an extension is up to the discretion of the student.
- My course includes in class writing assignments. How can I accommodate the students with extra time?
 - Both the student and course instructor are encouraged to get in contact with each other to discuss a plan. Usually, if a student does not have a class schedules right before your class, the student will write the test with AccessAbility Services and will end the test in accordance with the class.
 - Example:
 - The lecture starts at 1:10pm (included the UTSC 10 minute grace period) and the test is designed to be completed in 30 mins (1:40pm).
 - The student is accommodated for 50% extra time on quizzes/tests/exams. The Accommodated student will therefore have 45 minutes to complete the test.
 - Since the student does not have a class before this one, the student may begin writing the test at 12:50pm and will end at 1:35pm.
 - It is recommended to leave time for the student to gather their belongings, and to walk from the test room to the lecture room.
 - What if this isn’t an option? How can I ensure that the student will receive their accommodated time without missing lecture material?
 - In this situation, the instructor might receive an audio recording device and would record the lecture for the student.

Crisis Resources in the Greater Toronto Area:

Distress lines:

When in need of someone to talk to. Operated by various agencies. Open 24 hours a day (unless otherwise indicated):

- Toronto Distress Centres: 416 408-4357 or 408-HELP
- Gerstein Centre: 416 929-5200
- Spectra Helpline: 416 920-0497 or 905 459-7777 for Brampton and Mississauga residents
TTY: 905 278-4890; *Languages: English, Punjabi, Hindi, Urdu, Spanish, Portuguese*
- Assaulted Women's Helpline: 416 863-0511; Toll-free: 1 866 863-0511
- Kids Help Phone: 1 800 668-6868; Languages: English and French
- Community Crisis Line Scarborough and Rouge Hospital: 416 495-2891 for 24/7 telephone crisis support.
Service borders: south to the lake, north to Steeles Avenue, east to Port Union Road, and west to Victoria Park
- Durham Crisis and Mental Health Line: 905 666-0483
- Oakville Distress Centre: 905 849-4541 for residents of Halton Region
(*Burlington, Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville*)

Mobile Crisis Response Teams (24 hrs/7 days) Toronto

Toronto:

- Gerstein Centre Crisis Line: 416 929-5200 service borders: south to the lake, north to Eglinton, and then north to Highway 401 (between Bathurst and Bayview), east to Bayview to Danforth and then to Victoria Park, west to Islington Ave.
- St. Mike's Hospital Mobile Crisis Team via Police Department (911) accessible through police (no direct number). Response team consists of a police officer and a mental health nurse.
- St. Joseph's Hospital Mobile Crisis Team via Police Department (911) accessible through police (no direct number).

Scarborough/East York

- Scarborough Hospital Regional Mobile Crisis Team via Police Department (911) accessible through police (no direct number).
- UTSC Campus Police: 416-978-2222

York Region:

- Community Crisis Response Service, Distress Centre: Toll Free: 1 855 310-COPE (2673)

Peel Region:

- Mobile Crisis of Peel: 905 278-9036, 24 hours, 7 days a week (Mississauga, Brampton, Caledon)

- Credit Valley Hospital; Emergency Department: 905 813-4141. Hours: Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Saturday, Sunday and statutory holidays, 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. The mobile crisis team only meets with individuals who are registered in the emergency departments at either Credit Valley Hospital or Mississauga Hospital. Note: Emergency Department is unable to offer medical advice over the phone. Please call Telehealth for medical advice at 1 866 797-0000.

Hamilton:

- St. Joseph's Hospital Crisis Outreach and Support Team (COAST): 905 972-8338

Halton:

- Crisis Outreach and Support Team (COAST): 1 877 825-9011. Covers: Oakville, Milton, Georgetown, Acton and Burlington.

Website:

<https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/crisis-resources>

AccessAbility Student Manual

By James

A Note on Confidentiality

- Anything related to your accommodations that you disclose with your course instructor or AccessAbility Services will remain confidential.
- Statement from UTSC AccessAbility Services Regarding Confidentiality:
 - “Information provided to AccessAbility Services is protected in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA). Personal information provided to us cannot be used, or disclosed to others, without the student's written consent, except where required by law.”

UTSC AccessAbility Services Home Page

- <https://www.utoronto.ca/ability/welcome-accessability-services>

Scheduling a quiz/test/exam

- go to the UTSC myAims website and click “registered student log-in”
 - <https://www.utoronto.ca/ability/myaims-0>
- input your UTORid and password

- click “manage my Quizzes, Tests, and Exams” and follow the guidelines to schedule your test.
- Assessment must be scheduled at least 2 weeks prior to the assessment date. However, AccessAbility Services provides an alternative schedule IF the assessment date is within the 2 week limit.
 - Tip: once you receive your syllabus, login to myaims and schedule all of your Quizzes/Tests at once.
 - If you have further questions regarding test scheduling, you can contact the Accommodated Test and Exam Office:
 - Phone Number: 416-208-8152
 - E-mail- accessexams@utsc.utoronto.ca

Requesting a Peer-Notetaker

- go to the UTSC myAims website and click “registered student log-in”
 - <https://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/ability/myaims-0>
- input your UTORid and password
- click “Manage my Notetaking” and change the “I require a notetaker” from ‘No’ to ‘Yes’
 - Tip: wait between 1-2 weeks before choosing a notetaker. This allows more time for students to participate in the peer note taker program, which creates a larger pool to choose your preferred notetaker.
- In the event where no notetaker participated in your class, contact your Disability Consultant and discuss your concern. A member from AccessAbility Services will visit your lecture and encourage students to participate in the notetaking program. In the event where no notetakers participated after a lecture visit, course notes from previous years would be provided to you.
- Your identification will not be disclosed to the notetaker you choose, and notetaker’s anonymity will remain throughout the semester.

Requesting an assignment extension

- Get in contact with your course instructor (via e mail or during office hours) and request an accommodated extension.
 - Tip: ALWAYS request your full allotted extension time. This will help plan your time to work on the assignment. Even if you feel confident in finishing the assignment before the extension due date, requesting your full allotted extension time averts unnecessary stress if you underestimated the time to complete the assignment.
 - If you have any concerns, feel free to contact your Disability Consultant, or UTSC Accessibility Services to schedule a meeting with your Disability Consultant.
 - Remember to request an accommodated extension while using a respectful tone. Doing this will help create a positive relationship with you and your instructor.
- Can I request an extension, in addition to my accommodated time?
 - Instructors are obligated to follow your accommodation letter. However, requesting an extension in addition to your accommodated time is up to the instructor’s discretion. In addition, CC your disability consultant when asking for an extension in addition to your accommodated extension.

Post UTSC AccessAbility Community Events

- AccessAbility Services will send e-mails regarding social events, workshops, and other community events that are helpful as a university accessibility student.
 - ability@utsc.utoronto.ca

Who Should I Share my Accommodation letter with?

- UTSC and AccessAbility services advises the student to strictly share your accommodation letter to course instructors, and Teaching Assistants when applicable.
 - **Although I remember a faculty member sharing this information with me, I cannot ensure that the administration advises its students to do this.**

Elevator Locations

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Know your Rights: *Ontario Human Rights Commission- Policy on education for students with disabilities*

- The Ontario human rights commission outlines the protected grounds for students with disabilities. 2.1.1 under the *Ontario Human Rights Code* for instance states, “Under section 1 of the *Code*, people with disabilities are protected from discrimination in “services.” This protection includes education services.” Faculty members are legally obligated to follow a student’s accommodation letter, which should be disclosed to all registered accessibility students. The OHRC outlines the Ontario Commission’s initiative to create an inclusive environment for all Ontarians, including people with disabilities.

E-mailing a Professor

- Attach your accommodation letter regarding a course accommodation to your professor for convenience.
- When a professor has yet to reply within a reasonable manner, you can kindly re send an e mail just as a follow up. Professors are human, and the professor may have missed the initial email you sent them.
- Tip: send your accommodation letter to each professor at the beginning of the semester. Feel free to introduce yourself! Remember, your Accommodation letter will remain confidential.

Test Centre

- Bring in a clear bag with you belongings.
- For drinks- If you are unable to bring a clear water bottle/ mug, a staff member would usually ask you to remove the lid.
- Beverage sleeves
 - For hot beverages, you must throw out the coffee sleeve
 - This also applies to sleeves on plastic bottles.
- Food- the Test centre is a nut- free facility
 - Tip: have a small snack near you just in case you get hungry during your test/exam.

ENGA02 Peer Facilitators Mental Health and Accessibility Manual

Written by Alaina

Disclaimer to the peer facilitator:

This is just a handbook guide for reference to follow as a checklist to keep yourself aware of such situations .

Peer Facilitators-Mental Health and Accessibility

Recommended skills for peer facilitators:

- Attentive listening skills
- Immense self-awareness towards yourself and others
- Be open-minded
- Create a safe space for students to share their concerns and questions
- Set boundaries with the student if you feel uncomfortable to complete the task at hand that is beyond your limitations

Attention listening skills and awareness

Please be aware and mindful of how you present yourself when speaking to others and take note of any discomfort that may arise from the student. Below are things you should notice when speaking to a student:

- Awareness: Notice the student's sudden behavioural changes (e.g. do they look haggard? Fatigued or "zoned out" more than usual? Things are left incomplete often? **It's time to check in**)
- Awareness: Notice the student's sudden physical appearance (e.g. Their hair is unkempt and they look like they haven't slept in days. Their clothes appear very wrinkly. **It's time to check in**)

- Volume and tonation of voice (e.g. are you too loud or too quiet when speaking and does your tone sound too negative or condescending?) example: Why didn't you complete your homework? You had over 2 weeks to do it.
- Pace yourself (don't speak too fast as the student may be unable to follow along with what you're saying)
- Have empathy and try to understand where the student is coming from
- Pay attention to your non-verbal communication skills. Students will notice your body language first and know whether or not you're present in the conversation (e.g. are your arms and legs crossed? Are you sitting up straight and facing the student at all times?)
- Give silence as an answer to show that you're listening so that the student can have time to gather their thoughts. You do not need to always respond to every comment they say.
- Validate the student inside and out. (e.g. whatever they disclose to you, you are to keep true and confidential, but also believe in their concerns and worries.) Example: From my understanding, you must be going through a stressful time at work and it is affecting your performance. Am I correct to say this?
- Give empowerment (e.g. provide a safe space where the student feels in control and has calmed enough to disclose their concerns to you)
- At the end, summarize the information shared to you to show you have been listening and give out resources when appropriate (e.g. after the student has disclosed their story, offer them the most appropriate source of help they can hold onto for contacting anytime

Bibliography

Harveer's Instructor Guide template (Yeates, 2021)