## Student Accessibility Services (SAS): 2015-2016 Stats

Through collaborative efforts in the 2015-2016 academic year, Student Accessibility Services, Faculty, and the Nipissing community supported 451 students with academic accommodations and support services. We are pleased to share with you a glimpse at the support services we provided last year. Find our year-end report attached to this newsletter.

Thank you for your continued support and we look forward to another successful year!

## Student Accessibility Services: Overview of Processes & Glimpse of the Services We Offer

Based on the feedback received from our faculty survey, you will find below an overview of our processes and a glimpse into the services we offer. Should you have any general questions surrounding our supports and services, do not hesitate to contact us at sas@nipissingu.ca, drop in to see us in B210, or give us a call at 705-474-3450 ext. 4362.

## Letters of Accommodation

Over the next three or four weeks, Student Accessibility Services (SAS) will be releasing approximately 1,800 individual Letters of Accommodation (LoAs) to our Nipissing instructors. Letters of Accommodation are developed by the student and their Accessibility Consultant outlining recommended classroom, testing, and placement accommodations for faculty and support services. These accommodations are based on the functional limitations indicated on a student’s documentation completed by a health care practitioner.

At times there may be additional attachments to the LoAs. These attachments may include information relevant to that student’s specific accommodation and support such as a safety plan (for students with urgent or severe medical disabilities such as seizures or anaphylaxis) or more specific information about a classroom accommodation (such as audio recording agreements).

Note: Some students may not inform us of their needs for accommodations until later in the term (for example, if they only require accommodation for their final exams); in these instances you will receive these LoAs later in the term. This may also be the case for students who require temporary accommodation (e.g. sports injuries, mental health etc.).

Q: I have large classes and receive dozens of Letters of Accommodation each term; is there not a way that you can help us manage these letters more efficiently?

A: Yes, at last!! Please check out the end of this newsletter to learn more about our new SAS Faculty Portal.

## Adaptive Technology

Student Accessibility Services provides adaptive technology for registered students to accommodate a barrier free learning environment. Based on documentation, student’s may utilize computers, smart pens, digital recorders, FM systems, and other technology or assistive software. Training opportunities and equipment loans for various technology and assistive software is also available to students registered with SAS.

We will reach out to instructors for textbook information to help us support students that require their text and readings in alternate format. It can take up to 8 weeks to receive a response from a publisher in terms of obtaining an electronic copy of a text, which is why we reach out in advance of the term and appreciate textbook information as early as possible. All files are provided to students in a specialized format, to use with their assistive technology. If alternate format is indicated on a student’s LoA you are welcome to reach out to us to discuss how to make power points and classroom documents more accessible.

## Testing

SAS supports students studying at our North Bay campus, as well as students studying at a distance. Various testing accommodations including additional time, distraction-reduced writing space, assistive technology, etc. are available to all students registered with our office provided that their documentation supports the accommodation.

If a student has booked to use accommodations with SAS, we will reach out to you to obtain the quiz, test or midterm that will need to be administered. This communication is sent via an automatically generated email 4 days in advance of the scheduled class date. Instructors should ensure that a copy of the requested quiz, test or midterm be provided to SAS a minimum of 2 business days in advance of the scheduled date. We request all quizzes, tests and midterms be submitted electronically, to sastesting@nipissingu.ca, however, we do accept a hard-copy as well, if provided to our office.

Note: All final exams, as scheduled by the Registrar’s Office, are obtained from Print Plus, and provided to SAS in advance of the final exam. Therefore, you will not receive an email requesting a copy of a final exam.

Upon completion, SAS will send you a notification email informing you that completed quizzes, tests, midterms and final exams can be picked up from Student Accessibility Services in B210 (Office of Student Development and Services). Any one of the secretaries at the front of the office will be able to assist you.

## Note Taking

Effective note taking during lectures is a challenge for many Nipissing students with disabilities. There can be many reasons for difficulty from hearing impairments or lack of graphomotor abilities to deficits in attention or working memory.

In order to provide students equal access to the classroom, Student Accessibility Services coordinates note taking services for those students registered with Student Accessibility Services that require the support for disability-related reasons.

It is the student’s responsibility to complete a note taking request form each term, indicating to us in which courses they are enrolled and require support.

Our note taking program is a voluntary program facilitated by recruiting students registered within the required courses. Note takers share their notes with the eligible students through our secure online portal. From time to time we may have difficulty finding a note taker and therefore we may request to come to your classroom to make an announcement.

## New!! Faculty Portal

Why? As we recognize that receiving and managing numerous letters of accommodation (loas) can be onerous on some, we welcome you to test out our new faculty portal. This secure portal is an access point provided by our case management software, that provides instructors with a viewing and management tool for the letters of accommodation that have been released to you. Please note, you will continue to receive the LoAs via email or in person as well.

When can I view the LoAs? As students inform us of their need for accommodations, their loa will be released, and will be viewable within the portal.

Where can I find the link? The link can be found on our website, within our ‘[Faculty Resources’](http://www.nipissingu.ca/departments/student-development-and-services/accessibility-services/resources/Pages/default.aspxC%3A/Users/monicak/Documents/Fax) section.

Please review the additional attachment for step-by-step instructions on accessing the faculty portal

For any questions regarding the faculty portal, please contact sas@nipissingu.ca.