

North Shore  
Community  
College



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### IMPORTANT DATES

#### FALL 2010 SEMESTER

Day Classes End  
December 17, 2010

Evening Classes End  
December 20, 2010

Final Exam Period  
Dec 20th-22nd 2010

#### SPRING 2011 SEMESTER

Classes Begin  
Jan 24, 2011

Add/Drop  
Jan 24-Jan 30, 2011

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# Disability Services Newsletter

A Publication for Students, faculty, and  
staff of North Shore Community College

## Director's Corner

It is my pleasure to welcome readers to the first Disability Services Newsletter. The Disability Services staff will be publishing a quarterly newsletter to provide valuable disability-related information to students with disabilities as well as NSCC staff and faculty.

In our issues, our readers can expect to find information on specific disabilities, on the determination of accommodations, on the laws that govern our decisions, and of course on the many services that we offer to our growing population of students. We will also be informing you of upcoming events and important dates.

We hope that you enjoy our newsletter, and we welcome your ideas for future articles. Please e-mail us at [disability@northshore.edu](mailto:disability@northshore.edu) to make your suggestions.

Have a healthy and happy holiday season!  
*Susan Graham*



## Reminder to Students

**Accommodation Activation Week**  
Monday, January 24 - Monday, January 31  
8:30am - 4:45pm  
Disability Services Office  
LW121 or DH101

It is always best to activate your services early each semester!

## Top Ten Ways to De-Stress for the End of the Semester and the Holidays

We've all been there: research paper due, final exam looming, readings and homework accumulating. Add our obligations outside of school and before we know it we're stressed out! It is, as they say, "a recipe for disaster"! As we approach the home stretch of the semester, which just happens to coincide with the holiday season, Disability Services thought we might put together a recipe for success. Wait, even better a "recipe for de-stress"!

Here are the top ten ingredients. Mix in your own amounts for a personalized treat!



**10. EXERCISE** - This doesn't have to mean hitting the gym. Even going for a walk will provide a physical boost to your well-being. However we choose to exercise, the biological benefits of exercise to our mood, as well as our body, are scientifically proven.

**9. BUDGET TIME** - One of the biggest mistakes we make as humans is over-extending ourselves. Whether it's setting aside time for homework, balancing our course schedules, or saying no to requests, managing our time is crucial to not feeling overwhelmed. We can even schedule down-time into our calendars to make sure we don't overbook.

**8. BE CREATIVE** - Being creative is open to interpretation. Paint a picture, write a poem, make a playlist (or mix CD or mix tape), cook a meal, play an instrument, wear two different socks, sing a song. Anything that brings us joy or happiness will work.

**7. EAT WELL**- We don't have to be perfect, but eating well will help us avoid bad feelings later. More importantly, the benefits of nutrition go a long way to improving our mental health. A balanced diet= a balanced person.

**6. APPRECIATE YOURSELF** - It's the little things in life that bring us the most joy. Most people haven't achieved everything they set out to achieve in their lives, but that doesn't mean that they are failures. "All or nothing" thinking can lead to a negative pattern which impacts our overall mental health. Try to find the little things that you are happy with and celebrate those.

**5. BE SOCIAL**- We all need time to ourselves, especially when we spend the majority of our time working, going to school, and/or taking care of others. That doesn't mean we should isolate ourselves. Hanging out with friends or family can be a good and needed distraction from all of our responsibilities.

**4. RELAX** - Does that mean staying in bed all day? Of course not! Relaxation techniques such as breathing exercises, yoga, and meditation all help us relax our minds and bodies.

**3. GET ENOUGH SLEEP** - Having trouble sleeping or falling asleep? Here are some helpful hints: Take a shower or bath, lie down and practice deep breathing exercises, meditate, listen to soothing music. Do not watch TV, use the computer, or work out. These activities stimulate our brains and make it harder to fall asleep.

**2. LAUGH** - Watch a funny TV show, read a humorous story, share jokes with friends and family. Several studies have been done on the benefits of laughter. We've all heard that laughter is the best medicine, but now we know it's true!

**1. BE POSITIVE** - Is the glass half-empty or half-full? How you answer this age-old question about positive thinking may reflect your outlook on life. Positive thinking is a key part of effective stress management. Benefits include: lower rates of depression, greater resistance to the common cold, better psychological and physical well-being, and stronger coping skills during times of stress.



# Exceptional Students with Disabilities Help Other Students



Disability Services is excited to announce the creation of a **Peer Mentoring Program** to start in the Spring 2011 semester. The program will create pairs of mentors and mentees to promote academic success.

A **mentor** is a student who has a self-identified disability and demonstrates academic excellence and leadership at the college.

A **mentee** is a student who has a self-identified disability who is newer to the college, who has struggled to excel academically, or who thinks working with a mentor will increase his or her success.

The pair forms a mutually beneficial relationship: the mentee gains strategies and confidence from the mentor, and the mentor grows from the opportunity to share his or her compensatory strategies and methods to persevere through difficult experiences.

We recognize that students at NSCC are busy and often have limited time to commit outside of class. For this reason, we require only three meetings to occur on campus between each pair. Mentors will also be asked to attend one mandatory training session to prepare them to define their role and guide conversations to provide the maximum benefit for both mentees and mentors.

**You can help!** Do you have student who provided you with a Faculty Letter this semester who would make a great mentor or mentee? Please encourage the student to participate; a faculty member's recommendation makes the student feel great and shows personal interest in the student's success. You can also forward the student's name to Aillie McKeever ([aillie.mckeever@northshore.edu](mailto:aillie.mckeever@northshore.edu) / x4461). We welcome students to explore this free, student-centered resource for achievement, support, and community connection.

# Resources, Resources, Resources

Knowing which resources to use and when to access them can help you in completing class assignments, preparing for exams, and guiding you in acquiring the skills you need to be successful. As a student with a disability, you can self-identify to Disability Services to obtain appropriate and reasonable accommodations, academic guidance, and related supports. Presently, Disability Services offers a Peer Support Group on the Lynn campus and is developing a Peer Mentoring Group on the Danvers Campus. Disability Services is only one resource at the College that can be helpful to students working to achieve college success.

How can you find other resources you need? One resource which may be helpful to you with your writing, reading and math assignments would be the **Tutoring Center**. Other offices such as **Student Support, TRiO, Health Services, Career/Job Placement Services, Computer Labs, Student Life**, and the **Library** offer additional services and supports. Find information about these offices on the main page on the North Shore Community College’s website. You can also find on-campus workshops and fairs to help you in your college career.

Connecting with college resources for personal development, academic support, and career preparation will enhance your current college experience as well as your future professional success!



***"Keep steadily before you the fact that all true success depends at last upon yourself."*** Robert Collier

## Using the Tutoring Lab Proves to be a Success! One Student’s Story

North Shore Community College’s Tutoring Lab for math has been a key factor in my recent success in Elementary Algebra 2. As a student who has always struggled with mathematics, I am on a mission to keep my grades above average. Due to my work schedule, I had to register for an evening math course that only meets once a week. Taking an evening class was extremely daunting for me since I struggle with this subject. I felt that I needed to keep in step with the flow of math in order to be successful.

Once I found out about the services at the Math Lab, I gathered enough courage to walk through the door. I was greeted by several tutors who were very willing to work with me. They made me feel very comfortable, and it was then that I knew I would be a regular visitor. Like many other students, I was incredibly nervous to use this service, and I wondered how these tutors could even help me. I am proud to say that I have built knowledge and confidence by going to the Lab. I encourage students who struggle with math to stop by the Lab, even if it is to introduce themselves or to just see what it looks like. The subjects offered in the Tutoring Lab include: Math, Business Math, Economics, Physics, Chemistry, Science, Computers, and English.

When utilizing the Lab, you should bring your assignment. Students should have their books and questions ready so the tutor has somewhere to start. A suggestion from the Tutoring Lab Coordinator, Tom Mahoney is: “Visit the Lab early in the semester.” I can agree with this comment because I have been a regular visitor since the beginning of the fall semester which has helped me keep up with the pace of my class. Tom also said “Learn about all the services we offer including online tutoring.” This is a free service that the College offers, and part of my success is due to the tutors in the Math Lab. “The tutors on my staff are patient, have a strong educational background, and are a great asset to the college,” says Tom. As a result of working with the tutors , I have passing grades on ALL of my quizzes! Most of all, I give myself credit for seeking the help when I really needed it as well as dedicating several hours a week to visiting the Lab.

Christen Spacer

**Tutoring Lab Schedule (Lynn & Danvers)**

**9:00am-2:00pm Monday-Thursday**

**9:00am-12:00pm Friday**

**5:00pm-7:00pm Monday-Thursday**

# What is Adaptive Technology?

**Adaptive Technology** is any device that allows people with disabilities to access computers, the internet, and other information resources.

There are two types of Adaptive Technology: high tech and low tech:

Examples of high tech Adaptive Technology include speech recognition software, battery-powered word processors, screen magnification software, and alternative format reading material. Examples of low tech Adaptive Technology include large-print keyboards, adjustable height tables, and alternative mice.

The **Adaptive Labs**, in contrast to other computer labs at the college, provide specialized assistive technology for students with documented disabilities who have been formally approved by Disability Services. Learning Specialists in the Danvers and Lynn Adaptive Labs provide demonstrations of equipment and software as well as one-on-one training and support to eligible students.

## Adaptive Lab Tip for Faculty

Did you know you can send tests to the Adaptive Lab through email?  
Simply download the Faculty Request Form through Pipeline.  
Fill out the form and save it to your computer.  
Attach the form and the test to your email message.

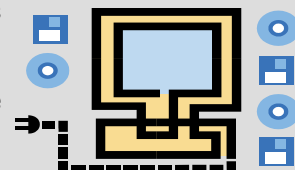
**Quick tip:** Verdana font, which is the font used in this newsletter, is the most accessible font for everyone to read. Students will find it easier to read your classroom materials if you use this font!

## Adaptive Software in the NSCC Adaptive Labs Dragon Naturally Speaking

For students who have been formally approved to use the Adaptive Lab, **Dragon Naturally Speaking** can provide an alternative to typing. Dragon Naturally Speaking is a voice recognition software program designed to convert a student's spoken words into written words. "Dragon," as we call it, helps students who have limited mobility, low vision, and dyslexia to write papers and complete exams. Dragon can also assist people in creating documents, browsing the Internet, and communicating through email. The software allows users to generate text about **three times faster than typing** and has become a popular tool to minimize the effects of carpal tunnel syndrome and arthritis.

Students using Dragon in the Adaptive Lab work with the Adaptive Lab Learning Specialist to calibrate and familiarize themselves with the software. The first step involves reading a few paragraphs of text aloud. Dragon automatically adjusts the volume settings to match the voice. Next, the student trains Dragon to recognize his or her voice. The student dictates a short passage and Dragon produces the passage in writing on the screen. The student reads the text that Dragon has produced and corrects any errors. This helps Dragon to learn the student's enunciation. The more the student uses Dragon and makes corrections, the more quickly and accurately Dragon converts the student's speech to text.

Once Dragon is trained, students can get started using the program. It can be a great asset for students who may have previously struggled to express their ideas in writing. While students must meet certain requirements to use Dragon in the Lab, this program is also relatively affordable for purchase and installation on home computers and laptops. We encourage you to explore Dragon and other types of adaptive technology that can help you demonstrate all you have learned.



## Vital Community Resource for Eligible Students with Disabilities

**Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC)**, a state-based agency, provides a wide range of supports and services to assist individuals with disabilities to live more independently and achieve optimal vocational success. Based on a student's disability criteria and needs, MRC provides supports to students with disabilities to access needed services, guidance, and vocational training.

### What is Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)?

MRC's VR Program assists individuals with physical or mental disabilities to obtain employment and live more independently through the provision of supports such as counseling, medical and psychological services, and job training. Services may include funding for college, career exploration, vocational training, and assessment for and provision of assistive technology such as customized computer interfaces for persons with physical or sensory disabilities.

### Who is eligible?

To be eligible, a person must

- Have a physical or mental disability that prevents him/her from employment consistent with his/her abilities.
- Be able to benefit from VR services in terms of employment and require VR services to prepare for, enter, engage in, or retain employment.

Financial assistance is determined based upon the individual's financial need, the severity of the disability, and the availability of funds. Assessment, career development, and job placement services are provided to all eligible clients as needed.

### What services are available that can benefit students with disabilities?

- Guidance and counseling to identify skills, limitations, aptitudes, and appropriate job goals after college
- Job Placement assistance including resume-writing, interviewing skills, and follow-up on job applications
- Skill training or education at schools, colleges, workshops, on-the-job training, and supported work programs
- Restorative treatment and equipment such as physical, occupational, and speech therapy, wheelchairs, hearing aids, or braces
- Interpreter and telecommunications for the deaf
- Personal care assistance

Visit: <http://www.mass.gov> and search for Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission to find your local office.

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