



# Disability Services Newsletter

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## IMPORTANT DATES

Last day to drop  
credit course or with-  
draw with a "W"  
November 27, 2012

Day classes end  
December 14, 2012

Final Exams, day  
classes  
Dec 17—19, 2012

Evening classes end  
December 18, 2012

Grades due by  
December 21, 2012

Winter/Spring classes  
Begin  
January 22, 2013

Winter/Spring  
Activation Week  
Jan 22—Jan 28, 2013

## Director's Corner

Disability Services has been very busy servicing students with disabilities over the past several months. We have completed 170 student Intakes, mainly comprised of newly accepted students but also including some current and/or returning students.

Intakes are an important step in the process to request services. This is an interactive and collaborative meeting between a disability counselor and a student who has submitted documentation to request services. The meeting is approximately one hour in duration and is an opportunity to plan for an enriching and positive educational experience. Once the student completes the intake, the accommodations will follow the student throughout their career at NSCC.

Students are encouraged to activate those accommodations which have been approved as part of the intake meeting during the first week of classes each semester. However, students can choose to activate anytime throughout the semester. Students may also modify or request additional accommodations if needed.

The Disability Services Team has activated 197 students in Danvers and 112 in Lynn since the start of classes. The total number of students, presently at 309, will continue to increase this semester as more students request services for the first time. Although we prefer that students seek out our services early in the semester, students can document a disability at any point during the semester.

Our goal is always equal educational access for our student population. This involves effective communication, collaboration and engagement with all of you. I, along with the Disability Services staff, want to convey our appreciation to the college community as you all truly make a difference in lives of our students.

Sincerely,  
Susan Graham, Director of Disability Services





## *Holiday Stress and Depression*

The winter holiday season for most people is a fun time of year filled with parties, celebrations, and coming together with family and friends. For many people, however, it can be a time filled with sadness, self-reflection, loneliness and anxiety.

Sadness or depression during the holidays can be a reaction to the stresses of the season; shopping, family obligations, additional financial demands. People who might otherwise not consider themselves to be depressed or anxious may experience physical and emotional symptoms including, headaches, excessive drinking or eating, insomnia and low mood.

Increased social support during this time of year is an important part of dealing with holiday stress and depression. Additional improvement may come as a result of finding ways of reducing the stresses associated with the holiday such as sharing family responsibilities or taking extra time to rest.

There are also some techniques that can be used in an effort to prevent the stress and mild depression that may be associated with the holiday season:

- Pace yourself—do not take on more responsibilities than you can handle
- Make a list and prioritize important activities
- Do not put all your energy into just one day
- Live “in the moment” and enjoy the present
- If you feel lonely, try volunteering some of your time to help others
- Find holiday activities that are free
- Spend time with supportive and caring people
- Make time for yourself!

For some these symptoms may persist beyond the holidays or may be more severe. This could be an indication of Seasonal Affective Disorder or SAD. Symptoms of SAD include fatigue, crying spells and mood swings, irritability, difficulty focusing, body aches, insomnia and decreased activity level. Treatment for SAD may include the use of antidepressant medications or photo/light therapy. Light therapy involved the use of a very bright light mimicking the light from the sun. This appears to cause a change in brain chemicals which are linked to mood and has been shown to be effective in 85% of diagnosed cases.

### *Did you know...*

...that NSCC is home to a chapter of the **Delta Alpha Pi Honor Society**, or **DAPI**! The initials DAPI stand for Disability, Achievement and Pride. Members participate in activities designed to educate the community and society regarding disability issues. This semester we had 100 students who qualified for DAPI; 29 students accepted membership before the deadline. Additional students will be invited and added before the start of the spring semester (last spring, 45 students accepted membership). DAPI members have hosted Depression/Anxiety and Autism awareness events on both the Danvers and Lynn campuses. In addition, members have been tutoring kindergartners in basic reading skills at the Brickett School in Lynn. Please click [here](#) for more information about DAPI!



# Preparing for Final Exams

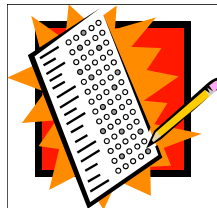
## Before the exam:

- Set a realistic schedule for studying. Be sure it allows enough time to study for each of your exams, keeping in mind that you may have more than one exam on the same day.
- Stick to your schedule!
- Find or create a place that is consistently quiet with as few distractions as possible.
- Look at the main ideas/key concepts from class material.
- Use study guides, flash cards, etc.
- Study in short increments of time; cramming is never a good idea!
- If you find yourself distracted, write down the distraction and return to the material.
- Review and practice the material until it feels comfortable.
- Put information into your own words.
- Gather all the information you can about your exams so that you know what to prepare for. What type of exam will it be (true/false, multiple choice, essay)? What topics will the exam cover? Is it cumulative or will it cover material from the mid-term forward?
- Tests that have been returned during the semester can be a good resource; look back over any you may have
- Mark areas in your notes where you may be unsure. Ask your professor, a classmate or tutor about these areas.

## During the exam:

- Take a moment before you start, to close your eyes and breath deeply. If you start to feel anxious during the exam, take a short break by closing your eyes and breathing deeply again.
- Read the whole test before answering any questions. Sometimes subsequent questions can trigger information to earlier questions.
- Go through the test again and answer what you know.
- Go back to any skipped answers.
- Re-read everything to check your work and ensure that you answered each question.

*Good luck on all your finals!*



**Final exam time does NOT mean panic time! Eat well, get plenty of sleep, and relax!**

# Assistive Technology at NSCC



## What is JAWS?

JAWS for Windows is the world's most popular screen reader. It was developed by Freedom Scientific for computer users with visual impairments that may prevent them from accessing screen content. JAWS provides accessibility for these users by reading information on the screen through synthesized speech. The program provides many useful commands, or hot keys, that make it easier for the user to read documents and Web pages as well as to edit documents. An array of versatile features and customizable options lets each user tailor the program for their individual needs and preferences. JAWS is compatible with the most frequently used workplace and classroom applications including Microsoft Office Suite, MSN Messenger, Corel WordPerfect, Adobe Acrobat Reader, Internet Explore, Firefox and Chrome. It is also compatible with Lotus Symphony, a suite of IBM tools for word processing, spreadsheets, and presentation creation software, as well as Lotus Notes by IBM.

## JAWS Features

- Installation is fast, easy and available in several languages
- Two multilingual speech synthesizers, Eloquence and Vocalizer, for natural sounding speech
- DAISY-formatted basic training in text and audio
- Compatible with Windows for over 15 years
- Distributed in 55 countries
- Translated into 24 languages
- Version 11.0.1467 supports dual monitors
- It's fast and simple to look up information including definitions, sports scores, area codes, etc.
- Optical Character Recognition which allows, with just a few keystrokes, access to any image on screen that includes text

Please visit the JAWS website for more information and to download a demo version:

<http://www.freedomscientific.com/jaws-hq.asp>

This link will allow you to access archived training webinars:

<http://www.freedomscientific.com/training/Free-Webinars.asp#FreeArchive>



## *Universal Design in the Classroom*

### What does Universal Design for Learning look like in the Classroom?

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an approach to creating course curriculum, materials, and instruction to benefit students of various learning styles and abilities. UDL is a set of principles for developing a course which provides equal opportunities to learn and includes diverse learners. When designing a UDL course, course content may include various methods of learning such as representation (alternative means of presenting information), engagement (varied options for learning based on skill and interest level), and expression (providing multiple methods of assessment).

Please visit the videos below to view how to implement UDL strategies in the classroom!

This video depicts a Biology Professor from a community college demonstrating how she utilizes manipulatives to explain key concepts which benefits all students, including individuals with disabilities.

<http://ctfd.sfsu.edu/sites/default/files/video/UDL-Online-Training-Module-Dawn-Tamarkin.mov>

This video demonstrates a Professor, of Technical and Professional Writing at a State University, using various methods of delivery to include multiple learning styles. Please visit the tab which reads Teaching Methods.

<http://elixr.merlot.org/case-stories/understanding--meeting-students-needs/universal-design-for-learning-udl/multiple-delivery-methods-of-course-content--pause-and-respond-small-group-activity2>

These series of videos depict various teaching modalities, such as using manipulatives and visuals, in an Introduction to Music Course.

<http://elixr.merlot.org/case-stories/understanding--meeting-students-needs/universal-design-for-learning-udl/rhythm-and-pitch-introduction-to-music-class3>

For additional resources about UDL and implementation in the classroom, please visit:

<http://www.udlcenter.org/aboutudl>

<http://www.cast.org/udl/faq/index.html>

[http://elixr.merlot.org/merlot\\_elixr?noCache=929:1352481149](http://elixr.merlot.org/merlot_elixr?noCache=929:1352481149)

**Please contact Disability Services to share your success stories with implementing UDL strategies and/or inclusive teaching techniques to meet students' diverse learning styles and needs. We will share your best practices in future newsletters.**

### *Disability Services Staff*

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***Lucy Bayard***, Disability Counselor

***Carolyn Burke***, Disability Services Assistant

***James Goodwin***, Disability Counselor

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