

Accessibility is key for Disability Services. True to that, the office has an open door and visitors are greeted by an enthusiastic staff member ready to answer questions and connect them with resources they need to succeed.

Disability Services provides reasonable accommodations for people with qualified, documented disabilities. Examples of accommodations include sign language interpreters, large print, e-books, quiet rooms to take tests, extended testing time and peer note takers.

An individual with a disability is defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as a person who has an impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, who has a history or record of such an impairment, or who is perceived by others as having such an impairment.

Impairments can be physical or mental and visible or invisible. Disability Services Coordinator Susan Sacco encourages people to not make assumptions and to always be respectful and kind. One in four U.S. adults is a person with a disability that impacts major life activities according to the CDC.



Disability Services staff, including office assistant Alisa Kotaska and Disability Services director Susan Sacco pictured here, are available to help students.

At the Quad-Cities Campus, the Disability Services office is located in Building 1, Room 241. Hours are Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. If you are at the East Campus, visit Rachael Weeks who is an educational advisor and works for Disability Services. Her office is Building A, Room 249, and hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

Confidentiality is in place, with disabilities not disclosed to anyone. Even if you do not have a documented disability, you can still go to Disability Services. Staff can share information on resources and where to get diagnosed or tested. Black Hawk College is also able to help people with temporary conditions.

Community members who need an accommodation to attend an event or program at Black

Hawk College can seek out help through Disability Services as well. They can visit or call 309-796-5900 for Quad-Cities Campus events or 309-854-1713 for East Campus events.



BHC student Logan Habel's accommodations include taking tests in a quiet room at Disability Services. He is shown here with office assistant Renae Just.

First-year BHC student Logan Habel of Rock Island receives accommodations through Disability Services and knows firsthand that it can be hard to seek help.

"I was hesitant to come in here," he said. Habel is glad he did, however.

He encourages any students who are unsure of stopping in to do it to discover what help is available. He said staff is super helpful and easy to talk to.

Accommodations Habel receives are a peer note taker sharing math class notes and the ability to take tests in Disability Services. Habel has been diagnosed with ADHD and autism. Distractions like loud noises make it incredibly difficult for him to concentration.

He remembers how in high school people would finish their tests and start whispering, then eventually talking, while he was still trying to finish his test. This led to him trying to speed through tests, which wasn't effective.

In the testing rooms at Disability Services, it is completely quiet, and timing is adjusted to match his pace. "I can focus," Habel said.

Sometimes people have a misconception that students receiving accommodations are getting unfair treatment, although all students do the same work and take the same quizzes and tests. Accommodations do not guarantee success, but instead create possibilities for persons with disabilities.

“We only give access to education, the same education that non-disabled students are here for,” Sacco said.

Sacco noted that persons with disabilities are part of diversity, which is one of Black Hawk College’s core values. She really enjoys educating people about disability awareness and empowering students by helping them understand their disabilities and advocate for themselves, and seeing them graduate.

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