



Rowan University, Disability Resources

Faculty Fact Sheet- Visual Impairment

Definition: “Students with visual impairment have limited or diminished use of vision. This impairment will affect the students in various ways. Some will be totally blind, while others may have tunnel vision, peripheral vision or have some form of limited sight.”—Dean Traylor

Typical Symptoms:

- Cannot read printed text
- Reduction or complete loss of sight
- Eye pain / discomfort
- Possibly white corneas

Classroom Behaviors:

Students may:

- Squint, even in seats close to the professor or board
- Have difficulty navigating to and from their seat, or around the classroom in general
- May *not* look directly at those speaking
- Have difficulty reading materials (textbooks, anything written on the boards, computer screens)
- Become frustrated in class

(Please note: not every student with Visual Impairment will demonstrate all these Symptoms and Behaviors.)

Strategies:

1. DISCUSS WITH THE STUDENT *THEIR* NEEDS AND HOW *THEY* WANT TO BE ACCOMMODATED
2. Allow preferential front row seating
3. Provide large print materials
4. Allow student to audio-record lectures
5. Make physical accommodations in the classroom for service dogs
6. Keep classroom floor / paths unobstructed
7. “Students who have had no vision since birth may also have difficulty understanding verbal descriptions of visual materials and abstract concepts.” (Access STEM Knowledge) Do not rely on visual cues; provide relevant tactile cues
8. Face the class and enunciate clearly
9. Allow and help enable the student’s service staff (dog included) and other accommodating materials / processes

Contact: John Woodruff - Disability Resources, ext. 4234 or email /woodruff@rowan.edu

Access STEM Knowledge: <http://www.washington.edu/doit/Stem/blindness.html>

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Northern Illinois College of Education: Visual Impairments