

Department Chair Bag Lunch Session

Managing academic disability issues:
THE CHAIR'S ROLE

Office of the Vice Provost – Academic Affairs
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PRESENTERS

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AGENDA

- Introductions
- Overview
- Top 10 – best practices
- Scenarios
 - Legal and Policy Considerations
 - Interactive Process
 - Reasonable Accommodation
 - Best Practices
- Resources

INTRODUCTIONS

Overview

- A reasonable accommodation is a change to the job, the way the job is done, or the work environment based upon a faculty member's own disability or medical limitations.
- UC is required to provide reasonable accommodations and Disability Management Services can help you and your faculty member.

Overview

- A faculty member's request for an adjustment based upon age, non-medical risk factors, a family member's health condition, or vaccination status is not a reasonable accommodation.
- A Chair can explore ideas/options with a faculty member but decisions are based upon operational needs.

Top 10 list – Best Practices

1. Start with “How can I help you?”
2. Avoid asking or receiving medical diagnosis or specifics about the illness.
3. Engage in the interactive process and document the engagement.
4. Use your resources, DMS, dean, Acad Affairs.
5. Provide the appointee with resources and information.
6. Listen to the appointee.
7. Maintain the appointee’s privacy.
8. Remain open-minded about options.
9. Provide a consistent approach to engaging on these cases, even if they have a different outcome.
10. Document, document document!

Communication tips

- Recognize a request for accommodation
- Let them know you are willing to help them even if you don't have all the answers
- Ask what job functions they are having difficulty performing
- Ask what their disability/medical related limitations are – not diagnosis
- Include a resource partner to help you and your faculty member

POLL QUESTIONS – SET 1

A graphic with the words "QUIZ TIME" in a colorful, 3D, blocky font. The letters are multi-colored (green, yellow, red, blue) and have a dotted pattern. The text is set against a white rectangular background.

QUIZ TIME

POLL QUESTIONS REVIEW

TRUE OR FALSE?

1. Knowing the faculty member's medical diagnosis/condition is important in providing an effective accommodation.
2. Faculty have Essential Functions within their role.
3. If you have a question about the functional limitations and restrictions the faculty member has provided to you, you should call the healthcare provider for clarification.
4. Reasonable Accommodation applies only to reasonable department members.

SCENARIO #1 – PROFESSOR SMITH

Professor Smith is a senior faculty member who asks to discuss a personal issue with you. When you meet, Professor Smith tells you that they have noticed a definite change in their hearing. This is causing a lot of frustration in class, since Professor Smith can't always hear what students say and ask. Professor Smith tells you that they have been seeing their doctor and that they are currently undergoing tests to try to understand what's going on. Professor Smith is noticeably uncomfortable discussing this.

SCENARIO #1 – PROFESSOR SMITH PART TWO

Professor Smith is very productive and always gets consistently positive teaching evaluations. However, Professor Smith is not the most beloved member of the department. Other faculty members complain about Professor Smith's brusque and often demeaning style of communicating in meetings, and staff have used the word "bully" to describe Professor Smith. You, too, have generally found it very challenging to interact with Professor Smith – both as a colleague and now as department chair -- and you tend to limit your dealings with them as much as possible.

POLL QUESTIONS – SET 2



POLL QUESTIONS REVIEW

TRUE OR FALSE?

1. Faculty receive paid medical leave based on their rank and title.
2. Once you have come to an agreement with the faculty about an accommodation, it's important that you document the agreement back to the faculty member.
3. Providing medical leave is required by federal and state law.
4. The Interactive Process should begin only after the faculty member approaches you.
5. The Interactive Process ends at the end of the academic year.

SCENARIO #2 – PROFESSOR JONES

Professor Jones is a tenured member of the department. He is a respected campus citizen, is active within the department, mentors junior faculty well, has been an active teacher, regularly has several graduate students working with him, etc.

Lately, he's been missing department meetings, hasn't been showing up for office hours, and hasn't been as visible on campus. You have heard that he's been ill, but he hasn't requested any medical leave. Rumor has it, he's "very sick." This happens to be a non-teaching quarter for him.

POLL QUESTIONS – SET 3

QUIZ!

POLL QUESTIONS REVIEW

TRUE OR FALSE?

1. A Reasonable Accommodation must be effective for the department and the faculty member.
2. The role of the faculty member's healthcare provider is to provide suggestions for the required accommodation.
3. Disability Management Services (DMS) should arrange potential accommodations with the faculty member.
4. When a faculty member has temporary restrictions, essential functions can be temporarily excused.

SCENARIO #3 – PROFESSOR SCHMIDT

Professor Schmidt is an assistant professor who's in her first year here. She was a very popular hire and the department looks forward to great things from her.

Earlier this week, she came to meet with you to share that she has been diagnosed with Stage IV breast cancer. She is scared, but she tells you that she plans to fight this with everything she can. She doesn't want to adjust any of her teaching load or other service. She wants to do it all and is proposing a schedule that allows her to keep up with her duties between chemo treatments.

Reminder – Best Practices

1. Start with “How can I help you?”
2. Avoid asking or receiving medical diagnosis or specifics about the illness.
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5. Provide the appointee with resources and information.
6. Listen to the appointee.
7. Maintain the appointee’s privacy.
8. Remain open-minded about options.
9. Provide a consistent approach to engaging on these cases, even if they have a different outcome.
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RESOURCES

The image features the word "RESOURCES" in a bold, green, sans-serif font. Each letter is a thick, 3D block. The letters are held up from below by a variety of human hands and forearms, suggesting a collective effort or shared resources. The background of the central image is plain white, which contrasts sharply with the dark blue gradient background of the overall slide.

THANK YOU!