

Learning Disabilities and You

By: Paul Campbell & Erin Peterson

Do you read slowly and have lots of reading to do? Do you prefer to use auditory and visual cues when you read? If so, please read on. A growing number of today's university students are coping and succeeding with learning disabilities. Unfortunately many university students are still suffering and struggling unnecessarily because they are unaware that they indeed have a learning disability. Just as unfortunate is the lack of awareness of the student body here at UPEI concerning the assistance available to students to deal with such challenges. We here at Student Services can help you identify your learning disability (should you have one), your area(s) of weakness, as well as your academic strengths. We offer individual consultations, arrangements for identification of the learning disability, individual program planning for accommodations, providing and arranging for assistance with learning, providing assistance with self advocacy, providing access to specialized technology, and providing educational and professional information.

If you can say "that's me" to a number of the following statements, or if any of them significantly interferes with your ability to learn at university, you may have a learning disability:

- You are as smart as your friends, but you still have trouble keeping up with schoolwork.
- You have succeeded in other areas, but you still cannot spell.
- You know what you want to say, but cannot get the words out.
- You are excellent with mechanical things, but have trouble reading and writing.

- You read and write well enough, but cannot remember basic math functions.

- You can talk your way out of almost any situation, but cannot express your thoughts on paper.

- You learn well when someone demonstrates, but cannot follow written directions.

- You understand almost everything you read, but have difficulty listening or vice versa.

- You put in twice the effort but obtain lower grades than your peers.

The staff at Services for Students with Learning Disabilities are capable, friendly people who are more than willing to assist you in developing learning strategies to help you make the most of your learning experience here at UPEI. We also make available a variety of learning software programs and technology in our Adaptive Technology Resource Centre (located in Student Services) which may help you with your schoolwork in ways that you may not have been previously aware. For instance, we offer:

Kurzweil 3000 - a reading application that allows a the user to view a scanned document (books, articles, etc.) on the computer screen while listening to the text being read aloud.

Dragon Naturally Speaking - a voice recognition software that enables users to use Speech-to-Print technology to dictate work.

Jaws for Windows - a screen reader that will enable visually impaired persons to be functional computer users.

Inspiration - a mapping tool that enables users to organize ideas and information.

Co:Writer and Write:Outloud - assists students with the writing

process.

Closed Circuit TV (CCTV) - enlarges print.

ZoomText Xtra - a screen magnifier and reading application that provides easy access to all Windows programs and the Internet.

We also offer access to **IntelliKeys** (alternate keyboard access) and the **Quicktionary II Reading Pen**.

We may also be able to direct you to services or programs provided by other universities located on the Internet such as:

www.ucalgary.ca/success/learningstrategies/main.html

(University of Calgary)

www.lib.umn.edu/help/calculator

(University of Minnesota)

So, if you think you may have a learning disability or would

just like to see if our reading software could benefit you, please drop by. We are located in the Department of Student Services, second floor, North End of the WA Murphy Student Centre. Our standard weekly hours are from 8:30am - 4:30pm but evening and weekend hours are available.

For more information feel free to contact:

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