# Autism Spectrum Disorder

# Autism Spectrum Disorder is the name for a group of developmental disabilities that now includes the following conditions:

# Autistic Disorder

# Pervasive Developmental Disorder, not otherwise specified

# Asperger’s Syndrome

# Rett Syndrome

# At one time, these conditions were diagnosed separately. They now all fall under the umbrella of Autism Spectrum Disorders.

# Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is often an “invisible disability” that can cause severe social and behavioral challenges. One cannot assume that a person with ASD will have low cognitive ability. Students with ASD vary in terms of academic ability. Often people with ASD are superior in one or more academic area.

# Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder often have trouble with communication and social interactions. Functional Limitations include, but are not limited to:

# Poor verbal and nonverbal communication skills

# Poor comprehension of oral communication

# Poor organization

# A fixation on a specific activity or task

# Difficulty with abstract thinking and concepts

# Difficulty with transitions and changes in routine

# Suggested accommodations for Autism Spectrum Disorder Include, but are not limited to:

# Testing/assessment modifications including additional time, alternative tests, assessment menus, distraction reduced test space, performance task assessments

# Reduced course load

# Access to class notes, a note-taker, or use of a tape recorder for lectures

# Faculty may find the following strategies helpful in working with students with Autism Spectrum Disorder:

# Provide support for students making transitions in schedule and environment

# Use verbal and nonverbal communication

# When presenting abstract ideas, utilize concrete notes and graphic organizers

# Monitor student behavior for changes that may signal an increase in stress

# Avoid the use of idioms and sarcasm that may be misunderstood

# Be specific and consistent regarding expectations