

# Case Studies: Navigating Complex Accommodations for Work-Based Learning and Workforce Programs

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Several case studies are presented below. Analyze how you would deal with the situation in your office, and if you have a similar predicament, describe how your office dealt with the situation.

## Guiding Questions

Standards set in *resolution agreements* from the Offices for Civil Rights (OCR) state that:

“Accessible” means a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use. **The person with a disability must be able to obtain the information as fully, equally and independently as a person without a disability.** Although this might not result in identical ease of use compared to that of persons without disabilities, it still must ensure equal opportunity to the educational benefits and opportunities afforded by the technology and equal treatment in the use of such technology.”

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*South Carolina Technical College System* (OCR Compliance Review No. 11-11-6002), *the University of Cincinnati* (OCR Compliance Review No. 15-13-6001), and *Youngstown State University* (OCR Compliance Review No. 15-13-6002)

1. **Eligibility:** Is the student an Otherwise Qualified Student with a Disability, with or without an accommodation?
2. **Reasonableness:** Does the use of the requested accommodation alter the fundamental learning objectives, technical standards, or program essential requirements? Does it raise safety concerns or a direct threat to self or others? Does it create an undue burden?
  - a. If yes, are there other alternatives that should be pursued?
  - b. If no other alternatives are available, consider:
    - Temporary or Provisional Accommodations
    - *Wynne v. Tufts* Internal Review for requests “unreasonable” or “preferential” in nature:  
<https://casetext.com/case/wynne-v-tufts-university-school-of-medicine-2>  
[Eastern Michigan University Resolution Agreement OCR Docket #15-21-2097](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/investigations/more/15212097-b.pdf)  
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3. **Procedures and Guidelines:** Do you have clear procedures, protocols, and guidelines?

## **Case Study #1: Hana's Journey from IEP Goals to Pre-Veterinary Sciences**

Hana is a student whose senior year of high school IEP goals included mastery of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts up through the number 5. She is enrolled in a pre-veterinary sciences program. She recently left class seeking out the Disability Services Coordinator (DSC) for help with an in-class assignment. She did not understand the instructions for the assignment, which had been provided both orally and in writing by her instructors. Hannah assumed that the DSC was the person who would “sit with me and help me do my work when it is hard”.

## **Case Study #2: Challenges and Support in Transitioning to College for Albert, a Student with Autism**

Albert is a student with autism who has 1:1 paraprofessional support for behavior and academics from kindergarten through to his graduation from public school. He is currently enrolled in five college courses, passing none of them, and disrupting other students every day. Instructors have not reported his behavior “because he has a disability”.

## **Case Study #3: Sarah’s Silent Struggles Navigating College as a First-Year Student with an Intellectual Disability**

Sarah is a first-year college student who received special education and related services as having intellectual disability since the age of 18 months. She is enrolled in four college courses. Sarah is exceptionally quiet during her classes. She has not turned in any assignments during the first five weeks of the semester.

## **Case Study #4: Tom's Educational Hurdles with PANDAS/PAN and Misophonia in a Plumbing Cohort**

Tom enrolled in a plumbing cohort during weekly afternoon classes. He had a diagnosis of PANDAS/PAN and Misophonia. Since 8<sup>th</sup> grade he was homeschooled. Tom is basically non-verbal only providing short phrases when asks questions. Disabilities services was contacted because of the student’s performance in his classes. It appears that Tom struggles in his classes both academically and with hands on exercises. He was unable to navigate CANVAS and he had poor preparedness habits for in class assignments/tests. The student’s tests results were averaged out to about 50% and the student usually refused to participate in any onsite plumbing exercises. Professor allowed for paper tests for this student and the class was able to use open book for tests. On one test the student was caught texting his mother for test answers because he forgot his book at home. After awhile the student appeared anxious in his classrooms. Tom would pace the room and struggle with sitting still. He had difficulty with establishing relationships in the classroom and ended up frustrated with another student because of the seating arrangement and raising his fist to the student.

## Case Study #5: Assessing Independence and Academic Performance

Professor contacted Disabilities Services to discuss a student whom was struggling in her class. The professor stated the student was incapable to work independently. It appears the student was unable to log into her computer and understand the assignments. Here the professor stated that she must be using a tutor because she has a solid “B” for the class. After reviewing the student’s documentation, notes, and emails it appears that several other instructors have expressed the same concerns. Even though there were several instructors expressing concerns of the student’s performance in class she has completed over 8 classes. In two of the courses she received “A”’s in the classes.

## Case Study #6: Navigating Career Standards with Behavioral Challenges for an Engineering Student with ASD

A program coach from the Engineering Department contacted the ACCESS Advisor because of a student’s behavior in the classroom. One of the Engineering students whom has a diagnosis of ASD was struggling in one of his classes. The student would take frequent breaks when he was frustrated in class. But in one situation he tore up his quiz, left the classroom, and went to the department suite laying on a sectional face down flapping his arms and legs. Here staff expressed concerns with the student’s behavior because they felt that the impulse control issues may lead him to not being employable for a job in the future.

### References:

Kauffman, J.M.; Anastasiou, D.; Felder, M.; Lopes, J.; Hallenbeck, B.A.; Hornby, G.; Ahrbeck, B. Trends and Issue Involving Disabilities in High Education. *Trends High. Educ.* 2023, 2, 1-15.

<https://doi.org/10.3390/higheredu2010001>

