



STUDENT SUCCESS TIPS

TALKING TO PROFESSORS ABOUT YOUR DISABILITY

Lebanon Valley College acknowledges, understands, values and celebrates differences among people. Having a disability is only one aspect of an individual, and learning about and accepting a disability is different for everyone. As an adult with a disability, you have the choice whether or not to share disability-related information with others. Unlike high school, professors will not automatically be told that you have a disability or that you require accommodations. You are the only one who can initiate the disclosure process in order to receive academic accommodations and adjustments. If you wish to use approved accommodations authorized by the Center for Disability Resources, you must have a conversation with your professors after receiving your accommodation letter. Knowing what to say and how much to share during these conversations will help you advocate for yourself.

THE BENEFITS OF SHARING INFORMATION

Sharing information about your disability can help professors understand and build strong relationships with you. When you talk about your disability in a positive manner, professors can see your strengths while also learning about ways that you learn and function best academically. It opens the door for you to get necessary accommodations and to find additional resources that may be helpful. Before you share your disability, think about how much information to share. For example, if you have a seizure disorder, you may want the professor to know what to do should you have a seizure during class. Be prepared to briefly inform and educate. Some professors may have little experience with persons with your specific disability or may have no knowledge about disabilities. They may have questions. Others have taught many years while providing meaningful accommodations to LVC students. Just as the student population at LVC is diverse, so is the College faculty.

TIPS FOR GETTING STARTED

Set up a meeting with your professor to talk about your accommodation letter. Examples:

- Visit the professor during office hours (hours are usually posted in the syllabus).
- E-mail your professor to set up an appointment.
- Ask your professor after class to arrange a meeting time.

PLANNING AND PRACTICE

Be prepared when you talk with your professors by having an idea of what you want to say.

- Read your accommodation letter.
- Know what each accommodation means and why it is helpful to you.

DURING THE MEETING

Give the professor a copy of your accommodation letter. Your letter will not identify your specific disability.

- You do not have to share specific disability information. You may just want to share that you are a student with a disability and describe your accommodation needs.
- If you decide to share specific disability information, be sure to use brief, positive everyday language that focuses on your strengths and abilities.
- Be prepared to answer any questions the professor may ask about your accommodations.

AFTER THE MEETING

Share any concerns you may have about receiving accommodations with the director of disability resources.