access

Job Corps Accommodation Support Newsletter

Summer 2021

Accommodations Distance/Blended Learning

Providing Accommodations in Distance/Blended Learning

As Job Corps centers continue to provide training to students with disabilities via distance learning settings and/or blended learning models, it is essential for center Disability Coordinators and instructional staff (both academic and career technical) to guide and implement agreed upon accommodations for students with disabilities. Students with accommodation plans are entitled to receive those accommodations no matter what learning medium or environment is used. This will require that each center be mindful of which accommodations will be needed in the various settings (i.e., which accommodations are built into online/virtual platforms or classroom environments and which ones may require alternative methods to provide).

A guide, "How to Get Started: Supporting Students with Disabilities in Distance Learning", along with several other distance learning resources are available on the Job Corps Disability Website. This guide provides basic steps to consider when implementing accommodations in the distance/blended learning environment.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in Distance/Blended Learning

To provide accommodations for students with disabilities in distance/blended learning settings, innovative thinking and an understanding of the resources and tools available are required. Instructors can ease some of the issues with distance learning by creating and/or providing lessons that are accessible in multiple ways. Distance learning can be more engaging and accessible by applying the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework. UDL – originally developed by researchers at the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) in collaboration with Harvard University – supports students with disabilities, but its flexibility, technology guidelines, and aim to individualize learning are best practices that can serve every student. UDL is a way of thinking about how to make instruction accessible for all.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in Distance/Blended Learning Settings

➢ **Engagement**: How can we use a variety of strategies to engage our students in distance learning?

➢ **Representation**: How can we offer multiple ways to present information to students in distance learning?

➢ **Expression**: How can we offer multiple ways for our students to complete tasks, assignments, etc. in distance learning?

Accommodations Distance/Blended Learning (cont'd)

Using a UDL approach to providing flexible, accessible learning for all students, the following table outlines common accommodations along with distance/blended learning alternatives.

Distance/Blending Learning Accommodations	
Accommodation Use audio recordings instead of reading text **Distance/Blended Learning Alternative** ➢ Provide Text-to-speech options ➢ Provide audio books (i.e., Bookshare) **Microsoft Education Tools** ➢ Immersive Reader ➢ Office Lens **Google Suite for Education** ➢ Immersive Reader (Chrome extension)	**Accommodation** Small group for learning/instruction **Distance/Blended Learning Alternative** ➢ 1-to-1 videoconferences or breakout rooms to allow students to ask questions/complete assignments with teacher/mentor support **Microsoft Education Tools** ➢ Microsoft Teams meetings **Google Suite for Education** ➢ Google Meet sessions
Accommodation Allow student to respond in preferred form **Distance/Blended Learning Alternative** ➢ Speech-to-text ➢ Uploaded audio or video recordings **Microsoft Education Tools** ➢ Dictation in Word ➢ Microsoft Teams meetings **Google Suite for Education** ➢ Voice typing in Google Docs ➢ Upload video/audio recordings to Google Drive	**Accommodation** Extended time to complete a task/assignment/text **Distance/Blended Learning Alternative** ➢ Explanations to students and mentors on how to "chunk" assignments and set due dates accordingly **Microsoft Education Tools** ➢ Assignments in Microsoft Teams **Google Suite for Education** ➢ Assignments in Google Classroom ➢ Google Keep to-do lists
Accommodation Use a calculator or a table of math facts **Distance/Blended Learning Alternative** ➢ Online calculator or built-in computer/smartphone tool ➢ Assistive technology tools for math **Microsoft Education Tools** ➢ Math Assistant in OneNote ➢ Math Solver app **Google Suite for Education** ➢ Google Docs equation editor	**Accommodation** Provide frequent breaks **Distance/Blended Learning Alternative** Brain breaks during distance/blended classes; use embedded brain break videos in digital assignments **Microsoft Education Tools** ➢ Microsoft Stream or screen share for brain break videos ➢ Chat feature to remind students to take a break **Google Suite for Education** ➢ Videos embedded in Google Slides

Spotlight on Assistive Technology

Google Assistant

Google Assistant is an artificial intelligence–powered virtual assistant developed by Google that is primarily available on mobile and smart home devices. Google Assistant is activated by voice; thus, individuals with limited or reduced dexterity can operate and control their phones via voice command to perform such tasks as calling or texting, sending emails, setting up alarms and much more.

Khan Academy

This free education app was designed for everyone (students, teachers, parents). The user can access free instructional videos on just about every topic—no matter how basic or advanced. The app contains thousands of interactive exercises, videos and articles. Khan Academy for iOS and Khan Academy for Android.

Toodledo

Toodledo is a free iOS and Android app designed to help users increase productivity and organization. It provides space to store notes, outlines, custom lists, and habits (to help with positive behavioral change). The user can access their data across devices and browsers with automatic syncing. Customizable alarms and reminders can be set for tasks and appointments—including reminders when the user is near a location where they have a task to complete.

Photomath

Photomath is a free iOS and Android app designed to help students read and solve math problems instantly. The app helps students check their work for any printed or handwritten problems by scanning printed text and handwritten math problems using their device's camera or type and edit equations with the scientific calculator. It breaks down every math problem into simple, easy-to-understand steps so the user can really understand core concepts. Photomath works without Wi-Fi or data.

Regional Disability Coordinators

- Boston: Kristen Philbrook (philbrook.kristen@jobcorps.org)
- Philadelphia: Angela Jenkins (jenkins.angelak@jobcorps.org)
- Atlanta and San Francisco: Stephanie Karras (karras.stephanie@jobcorps.org)
- Dallas: Alyssa Purificacion Olivas (purificacion.alyssa@jobcorps.org)
- Chicago: Sharon Hong (hong.sharon@jobcorps.org)

Disability Resources: Distance/Blended Learning

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM)

The U.S. Department of Labor has announced the theme for 2021 National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) as "**America's Recovery: Powered by Inclusion**." Held each October, the annual commemoration raises awareness about disability employment issues and celebrates the many and varied contributions of America's workers with disabilities. Each year, Job Corps staff and students are encouraged to conduct and participate in NDEAM activities. Past year center celebrations and disability awareness activities have included NDEAM poster contests, disability-related guest speakers, virtual displays, presentations, and much more. Now is a good time to begin planning for NDEAM on your center!

Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology (DO-IT): Distance Learning

The DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology) Center is dedicated to empowering people with disabilities through technology and education. It promotes awareness and accessibility—in both the classroom and the workplace—to maximize the potential of individuals with disabilities and make communities more diverse and inclusive. DO-IT has a dedicated webpage, Accommodations for Distance Learning, that includes adaptive technology for several specific disabilities (e.g., visual impairments, learning disabilities, mobility impairments, and speech impairments).

Google Workspace User Guide to Accessibility

Google Workspace User Guide to Accessibility provides resources that can help staff and students get started with Google Workspace using assistive technology. Accessibility resources are included for Gmail, Google Calendar, Docs, Sheets, Slides, Forms, and much more. Also included is a specific Accessibility Blog Webpage that features articles, discussions, stories, and ideas on how Google Workplace users have discovered, created, and used various accessibility features (e.g., audio and video captioning, screen readers, tips on building independence, etc.). For instructors using Google Classroom that work with students who may have reading-related disabilities or visual impairments, there is an article for both students and teachers on Using a Screen Reader with Google Classroom.

Upcoming Webinars

➢ Disability Coordinator Orientation Part 2
➢ Disability Coordinator Orientation Part 3
➢ Accommodating Reading Disabilities
➢ Accommodating Multiple-Level Learners

To register:
➢ Go to WebEx

Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) Remote Learning Resources

Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) created the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework and guidelines. CAST and Remote Learning Resources includes teaching strategies, ideas for accessible materials and technologies, UDL tips for inclusive online lesson planning, and several other resources to provide accessible learning experiences for students in distance/blended instructional models. Job Corps instructors can also learn about how to support students' executive functioning (working memory, flexible thinking, and self-regulation) in distance/blended environments.