

Script for Recruitment Video

Introduction

Hello everyone! My name is Shiara Pyrrhus and I am an Accessibility Coordinator (or AC for short) that works for the Office of Accessible Education. There are more ACs on the team and you should always feel free to reach out to any of us; we are all happy to be resources to you as you interact with the office! Our job is to support and educate students about OAE and create and implement accessible programming for the college community and to create a culture of accessibility on campus. The purpose of this video is to tell you more about OAE, what it does, and hopefully get you comfortable to reach out with any questions you may have or resources you may need.

Before we begin, I need to explain some vocabulary and talk about OAE's mission.

OAE strives to provide appropriate, effective, and progressive accommodations for our students while shaping campus discourse around the concepts of accessibility, ability, and disability.

First off, we have to define "ability status"

Ability status includes physical ability, mental ability, and emotional ability. There are a wide variety of ways our experiences with ability status affect privileges we have and don't have outside of the classroom and how we move through Williams.

Physical Ability describes the ability to move around in daily life.

Mental Ability describes the ability to learn and retain information to deal with problems or situations

Emotional Ability describes the ability to monitor one's own and other people's emotions, to discern between different emotions and label them appropriately, and to use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior.

These terms are very important to be familiar with but are just scratching the surface.

What is OAE?

Simply put, I really want to emphasize that the main purpose of OAE is accessibility, we work with individuals on making reasonable accommodations that aid students in their educational journeys. Students can come to OAE without a formal diagnosis and we can even help you get a formal diagnosis if you want to do so. And students can interact with the office in many ways besides accommodations.

What is the purpose of OAE?

The Director of Accessible Education, G. L. Wallace, the Assistant to the Director of Accessible Education, Jean Grant, and its student staff, like me, are committed to providing support services and accommodations to any student who needs them. And our team is currently growing.

It is important that all students understand their rights. Williams College and all other institutions are required by law to provide students with disabilities with accommodations.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 (1973), the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title II (1990), and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1975) all state that it is illegal for any institution to discriminate against people with disabilities. Specifically, section 504 requires recipients to provide students with disabilities appropriate educational services designed to meet the individual needs of such students to the same extent as the needs of students without disabilities are met. An appropriate education for a student with a disability under the Section 504 regulations could consist of education in regular classrooms, education in regular classes with supplementary services, and/or special education and related services.

Who can use OAE?

OAE supports students with a variety of disabilities related to mobility, visual impairments, hearing impairments, attention deficits, and a variety of psychological and learning needs.

What resources are available at OAE?

This is not a comprehensive list but some examples of the services OAE provides. The most important thing to remember is that if you are struggling with anything, contact the office and we will work with you to find a solution and equip you with the necessary tools for success.

We can assist you with:

Note-takers for lectures

Audio recordings

Extended time on examinations

Separate room to take examinations

Dietary needs

Housing issues

Emotional Support animals

Transportation issues

With Covid we acknowledge that you might need unique accommodations to succeed in a remote learning environment. Again, do not hesitate to reach out!

How to contact OAE?

Prospective students are encouraged to consult with GL Wallace regarding any questions they may have regarding potential accommodations at Williams.

Seeking support is an important step in accessing the tools you need to get the most out of your Williams College experience!

We really want to encourage all students to take advantage of OAE and its resources, no matter your background.

What is to come for OAE?

OAE is working on virtual programming for the fall, improving upon its website to be more accessible, working on initiatives to make campus more accessible for current deaf & hard of hearing students, providing more virtual resources for students, so stay tuned! And be sure to follow our social media accounts!

Most importantly, Please remember that asking for help is not a weakness and the sooner you do so, the better your Williams College experience will be.