

## Faculty Guide

that a person can move around an environment without assistance. An example of a barrier free door opener would be one that opens with an electronic sensor, not a push-plate. Removing environmental barriers, clearing aisles, lowering work surfaces and providing convenient locations can be very helpful to the student with a mobility impairment.

There are no instructional strategies that are specific to persons with mobility impairments. The following suggestions will enhance the learning experience for the student:

- locate equipment and supplies in close proximity to the student
- if the classroom is inaccessible or in a remote location request a change
- if the student uses an attendant, speak to the student, not the attendant
- choose field trips and activities that are accessible to the student with a mobility impairment
- be aware of the fire evacuation procedures for students with mobility impairments
- students who are mobility impaired may use adaptive equipment. It is not necessary for faculty to have an in depth knowledge of this equipment as the student is the expert. Common pieces of equipment include: computers with speech synthesizers, adapted keyboards and keyboard guards, tape recorders, specialized software.
- work closely with the disability support office to understand the educational implications of the student's disability

#### Points of Etiquette

- Always ask a wheelchair user if he or she would like assistance before you help.
- Check desk height to make sure the wheelchair fits comfortably underneath.
- If conversation lasts more than a few minutes, consider sitting down or kneeling to get yourself on the same level as the wheelchair user.
- Be aware of a wheelchair user's capabilities. Some users can walk with aid and use wheelchairs to save energy and move quickly.
- Don't hang or lean on a person's wheelchair because it is part of the wheelchair user's personal body space.
- Do not move the wheelchair without the user's consent
- Give clear directions, including distance, weather conditions and physical obstacles that may hinder the wheelchair user's travel when conducting field trips.

### **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

Students with disabilities are expected to accomplish the "core competencies" of their programs. To achieve this, accommodations are provided to minimize or eliminate any disadvantage their disability presents. Accommodations are unique to each individual. The disability support office in your college makes these recommendations based on confidential documentation that the student provides to the college. Some of the most commonly provided academic accommodations to students with mobility impairments include:

- access to adaptive technology, assistive devices and/or a scribe or notetaker
- allowance of break periods as needed for rest, taking medication and toileting
- ergonomically designed seating/furnishings
- advance book/reading lists
- preferential seating
- access to all learning activities and services
- provision of extended time for tests and exams. The amount of extra time is determined by the disability support office.
- reduced course load

- early access to timetable for transportation purposes
- punctuality should not be penalized where mobility is a factor
- attendant services (funded through MOH)

## **RESOURCES**