

## WORKING WITH STUDENTS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

### Tips and Strategies for Faculty and Staff

Teaching strategies useful for students on the spectrum may be useful for everyone

#### First day of class

- Set boundaries and classroom expectations regarding classroom policies
- Provide clear, detailed information (both oral and written) about course structure, assignments and assessment requirements
- Provide clear and concise syllabus with clear deadlines as well as information about how, when and where a student can contact or meet you
- Clearly refer to accommodations statement in syllabus
- Develop a consistent and predictable classroom environment whenever possible

#### During class

- Use clear, unambiguous language (both oral and written)
- For group work, assign and create groups in which student roles are identified
- Maintain a structured teaching style when possible
- Give advance notice of changes in course schedule
- Remind students of important dates throughout the semester
- Remind and prompt students about classroom expectations
- Identify and focus on each student's strengths
- Minimize sensory stimulators such as fragrances, flashing lights and noise

#### Outside class

- If you notice a student is struggling, schedule a meeting with the student
- If necessary, remind student of contact boundaries
- Give prompt feedback throughout the semester
- Check for understanding
- Provide written information for students to reference
- Utilize accommodations and articulate any questions to the Office of Disability Services
- Suggest additional resources on campus

#### Students may have the following strengths

- Passion and knowledge about area of interest
- Ability to think outside the box to solve problems
- Heightened emphasis on visual and spatial learning
- Excellent memory
- Strong attention to details
- Reliability, once expectations are established
- Focus on rules and routines
- Honesty and loyalty

***Though students may not disclose, they may have the following difficulties:***

#### Communication

- Maintaining eye contact
- Staying on topic
- Navigating social situations and group work
- Understanding sarcasm and abstract language
- Monopolizing classroom discussions

#### Executive function

- Asking for help
- Initiating appointments or homework
- Following through on assignments and other tasks
- Managing their time
- Conceptualizing their course progress
- Multitasking

#### Sensory behavioral

- Navigating circumstances that produce increased anxiety
- Adjusting to change
- Managing their heightened sensitivity to sensory input
- Participating in ritualistic and repetitive behaviors
- Appearing preoccupied with certain subjects and narrow focus

#### Resources for students on the spectrum

##### Office of Disability Services

[marquette.edu/disability-services](http://marquette.edu/disability-services)

##### Student Wellness Center

[marquette.edu/wellness/students](http://marquette.edu/wellness/students)

##### Counseling Center

[marquette.edu/counseling](http://marquette.edu/counseling)

##### Campus Programming

[marquette.edu/student-development](http://marquette.edu/student-development)

##### Campus Ministry

[marquette.edu/cm](http://marquette.edu/cm)



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Visit us at [marquette.edu/disability-services/on-your-marq](http://marquette.edu/disability-services/on-your-marq)