

ASPIRE-Academic Support Program for Inspiring and Reaching Excellence

Q: What is ASPIRE?

A: ASPIRE supports students academically to enhance the opportunity to be successful in their first year at John Brown University. As part of the Head, Heart, and Hand mission of JBU, we seek to come alongside students who may need additional academic assistance during their first year at John Brown in order to offer guidance, support, and accountability.

Q: Who is eligible to participate in ASPIRE?

A: ASPIRE is a program for students who are admitted to John Brown University on Special Action Admission; that is, students who have either a high school GPA below 2.5, a composite ACT score of 19 or below, or a combined SAT score of 950 or below.

Q: What are the benefits of ASPIRE?

A: The benefits of participation in ASPIRE are as follows:

- Student's class load is carefully monitored
- Strategies for College Success class (2 hours, required class)
- Bi-weekly grade checks
- Monthly individual meetings with the Director of the ASPIRE program
- Specialized advising
- Group and individualized tutoring

Q: Are there other requirements for participation?

A: Students who participate in ASPIRE must sign a commitment to participate agreement (along with their parents if they are a traditional undergraduate). Also, each student must pay a fee of \$500.00 for participation in the program. This fee is used to cover the expenses of the program.

Q: How do I know if my student must participate in ASPIRE?

A: If your student was admitted to the University on Special Action Admission, he/she must participate in ASPIRE. If you are unsure, you should contact your admissions counselor.

Q: Does participation in ASPIRE guarantee success at John Brown University?

A: While participation in ASPIRE does not guarantee success, we believe that students who combine participation in the program with hard work and personal commitment will greatly enhance their opportunity to fulfill their dream of a degree from JBU.

Disability Services

Institutions of Higher Education are governed by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008. Equal access to education is the governing

principle. No one is entitled to anything, but rather students have civil rights and they must advocate for themselves in order to enjoy those rights.

Q. How are disability services in college different from disability services in high school?

A. Section 504 upholds the institution's right to maintain academic standards, and no accommodations may be permitted to reduce that standard for any student. Thus, there is no "free" education, and accommodations must be reasonable and assure a student's **access**, not success. Colleges are required to provide reasonable accommodations, but receive no additional financial support to provide services or auxiliary aids.

There is an Accommodation Plan, but instructors are only contacted with the student's permission. Parents are not involved without the student's permission. **The student is responsible for advocating for the accommodations needed.**

Placement integration is assumed. Colleges adjust the environment through accommodations but don't provide alternative environments (e.g. a resource room) for students.

Disability Services never contacts a professor without express permission from the student. **The student must initiate all actions regarding accommodations with each professor, for each course, every semester.** In addition, students have the civil right to refuse accommodations they don't need or want; and **if they do not request an accommodation, it is assumed they do not want it.**

Q. What other responsibilities does the student have?

A. The student should **identify himself/herself** in person to the Director of Student Support Services if he/she is requesting accommodations. The student must **submit current and appropriate documentation** of a disability to the Director of Student Support Services. After the student and the Director have met to determine appropriate and reasonable accommodations, the student must **meet with each of his/her instructors to discuss implementation of the reasonable accommodations** for each class. It is also the student's responsibility to **bring to the attention of the Director any concerns about accommodations.**

Q. What documentation is needed for a student to receive accommodations in college?

A. The provision of all reasonable accommodations and services is based upon assessment of the impact of the student's disability on his or her academic performance at a given time in a student's life. This assessment must be made by a certified professional in the area of the disability. It is in the student's best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation relevant to the student's disability. All documentation must be submitted in writing. The documentation should be submitted on the professional's letterhead and be dated and signed. The documentation must be comprehensive, including (when appropriate) history, diagnostic interviews, test results (including standardized test scores when available), differential diagnosis, and details regarding the student's functional limitations. Strengths, weaknesses, and deficits should be specifically discussed. Clear documentation of deficit areas is necessary in order for colleges to provide appropriate accommodations.

Disability and Testing Services is located in the Learning Resource Center (LRC) 148. The Coordinator of Disability and Testing Services can be reached at JHeathcote@jbu.edu or 479-524-7464.