

**Proposal for Adding a New Faculty Position  
For the 2008-09 Academic Year**

Please enter your responses using the text boxes below and email this form to Susan Myers, Faculty Senate President [smyers@ohlone.edu](mailto:smyers@ohlone.edu) by 5:00 pm on April 13, 2007:

Department Making the Proposal:

Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS)

Author(s) of the Proposal:

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A. Provide a summary description of the position.

Pre-screen students for possible presence of learning disabilities. Administer learning disability assessment tests in accordance with the State of California mandated Eligibility Model. Interpret the results of testing done by this department or other professionals. Counsel students about the results of the tests and appropriate learning/compensatory strategies. Determine appropriate accommodations and advise regarding the use of these accommodations and assistive technology. Prepare participant's evaluation reports concerning their learning disability assessment and educational limitations. Generate the documents required by the Disabled Students Programs and Services for reporting and accountability purposes. Conduct in service trainings about learning related disabilities to the campus at large. Teach courses within the Learning Skills Program to remediate basic skills in math, reading and/or writing for learning disabled students. Teach courses or workshops to enhance study skills and personal/academic success. Maintain student records to include the student's educational contract and educational/ vocational plans. Provide academic counseling and disability management counseling to students with a wide variety of disabilities that impact learning such as acquired brain injury, autism, and psychological disorders. Make appropriate referrals to outside service providers such as the State Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, the East Bay Regional Center, adult ROP, Workability Programs, etc.

B. Relationship to College-Wide Needs

1. How does the position relate to our college goals?

Goal #2. *Develop across the curriculum the Learning College Model, utilizing methods and technologies that hold promise for improving student course and program completion success.* The Learning Disability Specialist position allows the Learning Skills program specifically and the DSPS program in general to be a model for the utilization of innovative teaching methods. In this program the mission is to build basic skills, imbed an attitude of success and enhance in students their ability to succeed in college. This population does not learn well through traditional instruction. By both identifying learning obstacles for students/ teaching them how to compensate for them, and teaching the courses designed to accomplish that, the LD Specialist is contributing to the goal of improving the successful completion of academic programs for this population of students.

Goal #3. *Develop strategies to increase the proportion of full-time students...and improve course availability.* Students with learning related disabilities are one of the groups most at risk of completing their

educational goals. They also represent a major challenge to mainstream instructors. By having an additional Learning Disability Specialist, the program would be better able to offer more courses designed to enhance the learning success of these students, thus making program completion more of a reality to them. It has the side effect of assisting mainstream instructors in providing a more user friendly and accommodating environment for LD students in mainstream classes.

Goal #4. *Provide continuous learning for all personnel...*

The Learning Disability Specialists are responsible for workshops, handbooks, and training for college faculty and staff to increase understanding regarding the needs of students with learning related disabilities. This has included flex activities, counselor training, Disability Awareness Week and orientation handouts.

## 2. How will classes offered meet student needs and goals?

The courses taught by this Learning Disability Specialist serve the goal of transitioning students from high school special education to mainstream college education. They assist the remediation of basic skills in math, reading and writing through the use of multi-modal, non-traditional instruction that takes into consideration the functional and educational limitations of this population of students. In addition, there is additional effort made to increase the success strategies of students, many of whom experience difficulty with self management, organization, planning, attention to detail and the systematic achievement of goals due to dysfunction of the executive function of their brain. Attention is also given to assisting students in the development of strategies that compensate for deficits in their ability to learn. This is not only accomplished through the format, curriculum and presentation of the Learning Skills courses, but also through the student's feelings of being part of a cohort of students with similar needs, supported by the availability of counselors/instructors who understand and assist with their learning difficulties. The LSP courses, including the Diagnostic Assessment course provide to students, definitive information regarding their unique pattern of learning disabilities, what the disabilities involve, how they impacts their learning and how to accommodate/compensate for the weaknesses.

## 3. How does the position address the needs of the campus or the Newark Center?

A large area of concern that currently exists for the campus is how to better support students who require instruction in basic skills areas before than can matriculate to the completion of our educational programs. This position is absolutely necessary to accomplish that goal for this specific population of students. In addition, the theory of Universal Design tells us that the instructional strategies that work with this population of students can also benefit all students. Therefore, again, the by-product of work accomplished through DSPPS by our Learning Disability Specialist also serves as a model to the greater "Learning College" at Ohlone.

In regard to the Newark Center it is important to note that by having another campus to serve students, it will also increase the need for disability services to serve that campus. Students with disabilities are in many of our degree programs, not just basic skills. The staff at the Ohlone campus is already stretched beyond their ability to serve students in a timely manner.

## 4. Does the position address an area of growth?

This position is most definitely necessary due to the growth experienced in the Learning Disability Resource Program. This program is relatively new (5-6 years old) and since it's inception the number of students needing to be served has experienced continued growth. When we hired our first Learning Disability Specialist we only had 35 students identified with learning disability as their category of disability. We currently have over 100 students with that categorization and that takes into account the graduation, drop out and transfer of previous

students.

In addition, the nature of this program and position presents an unusual circumstance in relation to growth. First of all our program grows each year in two ways

1) We have an automatic influx of new students each fall coming from high school special education programs in our area. Due to our positive reputation we are now pulling students from not only the Tri-City school districts, but from Milpitas, San Jose, San Leandro, Pleasanton, San Ramon, and Oakland. In five years we have grown from approximately 20 new students a year to a record 70 new students this past Fall, 2006. We can serve these students based on a history of special education, but we cannot count them as “LD” unless they have gone through the state mandated process of assessment through the State of California Learning Disabilities Assessment Model process. This means we have to serve them, but receive less than half the amount of money we are entitled to through the state categorical funds. (Every disability served provides categorical funds to us at varying levels. An LD classification pays us one of the most). In addition to the 100+ students we currently have identified as LD we have another 100+ that remain in the category of “other”. We receive less money for them, but we still counsel and teach them and eventually have to test them if for no other reason than to provide documentation to the next college they transfer to. In essence we only get to receive the higher amount for one semester before they leave because we couldn’t test them in time.

2) Every week we receive an average of 2 referrals (from students themselves or from staff) to have testing done in order to ascertain if there is the presence of a learning disability when the student has not been previously identified. This can easily add 20+ students each semester to the roles of those needing testing. The vast majority of these students does end up qualifying for services and yet can’t receive them at all until we have finished the assessment process. The amount of time needed to complete the assessment process for each student is roughly 10 hours/student. WE CURRENTLY HAVE A WAITING LIST OF OVER 125 STUDENTS. This means that the current LD Specialist has approximately 1250 hours of assessment needing to be handled each year in addition to courses being taught, counseling and record-management needing to be done as well as liaison with/troubleshooting/education of faculty and staff and outreach and recruitment of new students.

### C. Relationship to Department Needs

#### 1. Does the position reflect department goals resulting from program review?

The DSPTS just finished their program review in Spring, 2006. One of the specific goals listed was to “Add one full-time Learning Disabilities Specialist” to the staff for all the reasons previously stated. This would best enable us to meet the needs of current (and future—yet to be identified) students on a more timely manner. In addition, it allows us to expand our course offerings and special services to our population of disabled students within all categories.

#### 2. What is the ratio of full time to part time faculty?

Currently DSPTS has only 2 full-time faculty and 1 part-time faculty member that deal with the majority of students with learning related disabilities. This includes students with LD, Autism, Acquired Brain Injury, Psychological Disability and most categorized in “Other”. For us this represents a static 250 students and growing. The other full-time faculty member works primarily teaching adaptive PE and counseling students with physical/disability and mobility issues. There is only 1 LD Specialist and therefore the only person qualified to do LD assessment. Unlike the organization at most community colleges, every faculty member in DSPTS has to multi-task teaching (LSP courses are mostly academic and not just personal development), counseling,

program management, record-keeping, doing LD testing and outreach/recruitment.  
Special note: At most community colleges the counseling function for disabled students is a separate position from the teaching/LD assessment function. Separate individuals exist for each position (and function)

\*\*For example: Chabot College, Hayward campus

2.5 LD Specialists to serve 360 LD students and also 2 FTE DSPTS counselors to perform only counseling functions for a static 460 students with learning related disabilities

3. What is the current WSCH/FTEF in the department?

WSCH/FTEF is 253.85 for this semester Spring, 2007. Enrollment in LSP classes is higher in the Fall

4. Is this position related to a new program?

Not per se. It is needed even to maintain the status quo. However, it could assist us in new program development in the future

D. Any other rationale to support the position proposal:

- Currently there is no way to serve all the students requesting it in a timely, effective manner. Students are waiting over a year to be tested. LSP courses have had to be cancelled because of lack of available faculty to teach them.
- It is extremely difficult to attract and/or retain qualified adjunct LD Specialist to fill in the gaps because there is actually a shortage in the labor market. If someone is hired adjunct they usually leave within 1-2 years because they receive offers of full-time positions.
- It is difficult to find experienced adjunct LD Specialists. The market consists mainly of those seeking their first employment opportunity. They are not usually up to speed in their ability to handle the more technical parts of the job. Training of this population of adjuncts is time-consuming and is counterproductive to managing the workload of the current LD Specialist.
- The current faculty are on overload and very burned out by the end of the academic year, because certain services are mandated by law to be executed. The program is currently providing only the basic services provided by most community colleges in the state.
- We are seriously understaffed in comparison to the faculty/student ratio of other DSPTS programs in community colleges locally/throughout the state.
- We need to maintain/ expand our reputation as a leader in the provision of disability services. Currently our program continues to expand whereas many other colleges are experiencing a decrease in students.
- Our community demands a higher level of services at Ohlone College than other communities.
- The provision of services in a responsible, timely, effective manner has a direct correlation to the retention of students and greater certificate, AA degree and transfer success.
- The services provided through DSPTS and the Learning Disability Resource Program benefit the college community at large by assisting faculty, staff, and administration with the identification of students with disabilities, assisting in the management of their behavior, and enhancing their academic success. It also helps with compliance of the many state and federal laws governing equal access.
- *See attached charts for further clarification of these points*

