

# Disabled Student Programs & Services Informational Report

## Background

Disabled Student Programs & Services (DSPS), established in 1973, is designed to meet the needs of students with professionally documented disabilities who need accommodations and services in order to access instruction and other college activities. DSPS is heavily regulated by state and federal laws and guidelines. Approximately two thirds of DSPS' funding comes from categorical allocations for DSPS programs and one third is funded by the College. DSPS serves all students who have medical or psychological conditions that limit their ability to fully participate in the general college curriculum and activities. Students must voluntarily apply and request services from DSPS. The overarching goal of the program is to work with students wherever they are toward the goal of independence and integration into the general campus community.

## Current Trends

Over the last 10 years, the program has experienced three major shifts. The first change is in the **types of students served**. Compared to 1997-98, there are fewer students classified as "learning disabled," but students classified as developmentally delayed learners more than doubled. There is a significant increase in students who are psychologically disabled and those classified as "other medical," which includes an increase in students with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD); Asperger's (part of the Autism Spectrum Disorder) and medical conditions such as HIV, Cancer, and Multiple Sclerosis. There is a significant decrease in the number of students classified as "mobility" due to the change in accommodating these students' parking needs.

### Hourly Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students

Academic Year	Number Students	Interpreting Hours	Captioning Hours	Costs
1997-98	92	6518	0	\$85,961
2002-03	125	11,720	632	\$273,530
2007-08	141	21,099	2,800	\$768,845

The table on the left shows a slight increase in students who are deaf or hard of hearing (DHH). Currently, they make up almost 10% of the total DSPS population.

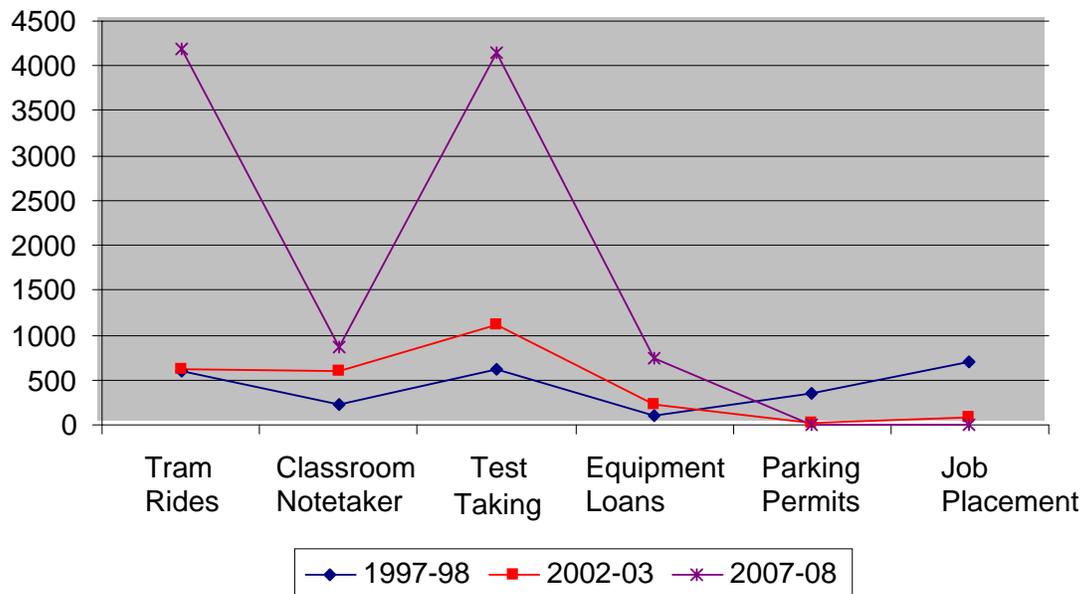
Hourly services for deaf and hard of hearing students alone cost more than 27% of the entire DSPS budget. Mt. SAC ranks 6<sup>th</sup> in the highest number of DHH students served among all community college districts.

Another change to the type of students is an increase in students with multiple disabilities, sometimes with duo and triple diagnoses who have some very specialized needs and require multiple services.

The shift in the types of presenting disabilities has created a shift in the **type of services** that are required to be offered. This, then results in the second trend: higher program costs. As technology becomes more sophisticated, so do accommodations. For example, print media can now be converted into seven different types of electronic text also known as "alternate media." Four years ago, there were only two types of requests: e-text/Word and Kurzweil. Ten years ago, Braille and books on tape were the only types of alternate media readily available. The number of students requiring alternate media has also increased dramatically in the last three years (14 students in 2004-05 to 56 students in 2007-08). Alternate media requests doubled in the last 5 years (from 84 to 177 requests). Five years ago, alternate media was produced by current staff as part of their duties. Due to the increase in demand and the increase in time involved in creating the many types of alternate media, DSPS had to hire two full time Alternate Media Technicians. This resulted in an added ongoing expense of \$116,274 per year, not including the technology, equipment and material needed to produce the work.

The types of service contacts that have increased in the last ten years are shown below: tram rides, accommodated classroom testing, notetakers and scribes in the classroom, and equipment loans. The most decreased service contacts are adapted parking and job development and placement. Cost

increases in services are due to the need for newer technology and more human resources to provide services.



The final shift to highlight is a **change in the overall philosophy of DSPS**. As recent as five years ago, the major themes in DSPS were segregation, dependency, and accommodations. As society advances and recognizes the potential in every human being, the need to provide cost effective solutions, and serve an ever-growing diverse world, the major themes have evolved to integration, empowerment, and universal design.

### Future Trends

Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design" to create a more accessible and useable world ([http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/about\\_ud/about\\_ud.htm](http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/about_ud/about_ud.htm)). In essence, this trend provides for individuals' needs to be met throughout the campus, such that students will be less dependent on one particular department to meet their needs. Universal design concepts range from the design of spaces to the delivery of instruction to meet a diverse student population with diverse abilities and disabilities. Disability, along with age, size, gender, and culture are examples of characteristics that designers should take into account when designing spaces, products, services and instruction. Technological advancements will enable disabled students to be served more directly across all areas of the college campus. Although keeping up with developments in adaptive technology may be costly, students needs will be more directly met.

Transfer goal: DSPS has identified transfer as an area of emphasis. Approximately 8.6-9.5% of DSPS students (135) are considered "transfer-ready," having completed a minimum of forty (40) transferable or baccalaureate level units and a minimum of three (3) courses completed in the "Golden Four" (ENGL 1A, SPCH 1A, Critical Thinking, and Mathematics). According to Chancellor's Office MIS data, the percentage of DSPS students transferring is higher than the general college population. Working in concert with the Career and Transfer Center, targeted interventions will be initiated to raise the number of transfer-ready students and to ensure their successful transfer acceptance to baccalaureate-granting institutions.

Increase in students: A rise in the number of returning veterans with multiple disabilities and students who are deaf or hard of hearing is expected. A good portion of the increase in DHH students is due to the excellent reputation of the program. An increase in the "other" disability category will continue as more medical conditions and disabilities emerge and are diagnosed with educational limitations.