

SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITIES (SLD)

What is a Specific Learning Disability?

A **specific learning disability (SLD) or learning disability (LD)** is a disorder in one or more basic psychological processes that may manifest itself in certain areas of learning, such as **reading, written expression, or mathematics**. A SLD usually is a hidden disability, meaning not outwardly visible.

Specific learning disabilities are considered a **high incidence** disability. The U.S. Department of Education reports there are over **2.8 million students** being served for specific learning disabilities.

<http://www.projectidealonline.org/>

Best Practices for Instruction

- Highlight the important characteristics of new material.
- Break long tasks or assignments into smaller segments.
- Present limited amounts of information on a page.
- Gradually increase the amount of time a student must attend to a task or lecture.
- Use signal words to let students know they are about to hear important information.
- Have a student paraphrase directions and information to you.
- Chunk large strings of information into smaller, more manageable "chunks".
- Scaffold the material into a meaningful and memorable context.
- Recognize repetition supports memorization.
- Categorize information.
- Provide questions before reading to support with attending to important information.
- Use of accessible technology to support with writing, reading and organization of materials.

What are Possible Characteristics of a Learning Disability?

Learning disabilities vary from individual to individual and may present in one or more ways:

- Processing abilities for visual and/or auditory means may impact reading, spelling, writing, and understanding or using language
- Prioritizing, organizing, doing mathematics, and following instructions
- Storing or retrieving information from short or long term memory
- Difficulty using spoken language
- Difficulty with handwriting

Why Provide Accommodations?

Learning disabilities are **life lasting** impairments that may impact all areas of an individual's life. Providing services and accommodations that are **required by law**, benefits individuals with learning disabilities and society overall by **facilitating full participation** in all aspects of the college experience.

<http://ldamerica.org>