Hamline Disability Resources FAQ:

1. **What is the faculty’s responsibility in providing accommodations?**
   If the faculty has received an Accommodation Letter sent from the Disability Resources (DR) office, they are required to abide by the accommodation(s) stated in the letter. If faculty have questions or concerns regarding an accommodation, they should contact the Disability Resources office. This process should be outlined in the Disability Accommodation Letter sent to faculty at the beginning of each semester.

2. **Who should I talk to if I have questions, concerns or expectations surrounding student accommodations?**
   We encourage students to approach you to discuss accommodations, however, if they do not, please contact our office. Our office is always more than happy to answer any questions or concerns you may have. We should be your first resource if you are perplexed by an accommodation or something the student has requested.

3. **Can I work directly with students to reach solutions regarding the help they need to succeed in class?**
   Certainly! There have been students who, with the help of their faculty, find new, creative ways to manage elements of their disability in the classroom. However, anything not determined to be an accommodation by our office is not a binding accommodation, nor a required one. Furthermore, this process needs to be driven by the student. Faculty may suggest accommodations, however, if a student does NOT wish to use the suggestion, that is their choice.

4. **What are accommodations, and the legal requirements surrounding them?**
   Accommodations are processes or modifications put in place for students with disabilities, so that they have the same opportunities for success as their peers. There is a fine line between providing access or equal opportunity, as opposed to providing success. The DR office tries to think carefully about how to best support students registered with us, while allowing them to fail or succeed based on their own endeavors/efforts, as compared to a student without a disability.

5. **How many Hamline students receive accommodations?**
   Around 300 students are registered with Disability Resources, both from the undergraduate and graduate schools. We provide a wide array of accommodations, some of which are not readily visible to staff and faculty. For example, many students are registered with us for medical singles, some students receive alternative texts, and others receive smart pens from us to help them better process information. The most common accommodation that involves faculty is for extended testing.
6. **How are appropriate accommodations determined?**
We start with a discussion between Steve (the director of Disability Resources) and the student. After discussing the student’s specific disability, receiving medical documentation of the disability, and discussing the barriers a student may have in class, Steve and the student determine different accommodations that may assist the student. There are types of accommodations that are fairly common in the field of Disability Resources – for example, often students experiencing test anxiety will request accommodated testing, in a room alone and with a little extra time to alleviate their anxiety. Yet there may be some accommodations that are not so common.

7. **Do faculty have any say or input on what is an “appropriate” accommodation?**
Yes, to some extent. Disability Resources invites discussions with faculty on student accommodations, if the faculty member feels it compromises essential components or goals of the course. For example, if a student has anxiety when speaking in front of groups, and a large portion of a course is focused on oral arguments and public speaking, this may be an unreasonable accommodation for the class, which would be determined through a discussion with the student, our office and the faculty.

8. **Is Disability Resources unique to Hamline?**
No. Every college or university must have some form of a Disability Resources office. It is mandated by federal law under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, section 504 and the American with Disabilities Act (1990). As with any other area of higher education, staff members that work in disability resources collaborate with colleagues at other universities on professional development, in order to be up-to-date on what is new in our field, and so we can continue to serve our students, faculty and staff to the best of our ability.

9. **What does the DR office consider a disability?**
Disability refers to a broad group of conditions students may have, including emotional, psychological and physical disorders. The ADA defines a person with a disability as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Students can have temporary accommodations for certain medical conditions, such as concussions.

10. **Can faculty or staff come to Disability Resources to help manage their disabilities?**
Unfortunately, we cannot help faculty or staff. Any staff and faculty accommodations need to go through Hamline’s Human Resources department.