

**Disabled Student Council**  
**Newsletter**  
**“A Voice for the Disabled”**  
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Please remind students about the importance of registering for classes for the spring semester.

**Shanickey Kirkwood**, project coordinator for the statewide self advocacy organization, My Voice My Choice of Mississippi will be our speaker on November 18, 2009 in the Student Development conference room .Shanickey is a former student of NWCC. The mission of the organization is to empower individuals with disabilities to believe in themselves, gain life skills needed to be productive citizens in their communities, and to overcome everyday challenges.



If you have received correspondence from me, Brenda Holmes, Michael Butts, or Kitt Albritton concerning a student with a disability in your class/classes and have not submitted your meeting report with the student, please send us a copy for our file. These are very important documents of each student's file.

**Reaching Online Students with Learning Disabilities**

Students with disabilities are drawn to online courses for many of the same reasons as everyone else, but it's often the anonymity that makes learning online particularly attractive to someone who's spent his or her life trying to mask a disability. For online instructors, this can present new issues.

It's hard enough distinguishing whether someone you see in class a few time a week has for example Attention Deficit disorder (ADD) or is simply disorganized. Put that same student in an online course, and it's even more challenging. Below are five ways to teach students of all abilities online. These ways comes from Mary Beth Crum, Ed. D. an online instructor at the University of Wisconsin-Stout.

- Contact all students by phone before class begin. Use the introductory call to discuss the goals of the course. If the student has a learning disability, they might tell you at that time. If so, you can recommend they seek accommodations through your school's department of student disabilities.
- Facilitate throughout the entire class and course. Be visible on the discussion boards every day so your students know their posts are being read.
- Divide large class into small group and visit each group daily. A few groups of 10-12 students each will have much better discussions and ne more manageable than one large group.
- Make accommodations. Help Struggling students succeed by making them aware of assistive technology, as well as providing such accommodations as extending deadlines, reinforcing directions verbally, or chunking information for better understanding.

- Communicate. Encourage phone calls, post clarifications when something is unclear, answer email within 24 hours, and explain when you will or will not be available.

Source: Faculty Focus: Focused on Today's Higher Education Professional, September, 2009

***“Develop an attitude of gratitude, and give thanks for everything that happens to you, knowing that every step forward is a step toward achieving something bigger than your current situation.”***

***Brian Tracy***