

All services for students with special needs are coordinated through the Learning Assistance Laboratory (LAL) located on the second floor, room 218 of the Campbell Learning Resources Center.

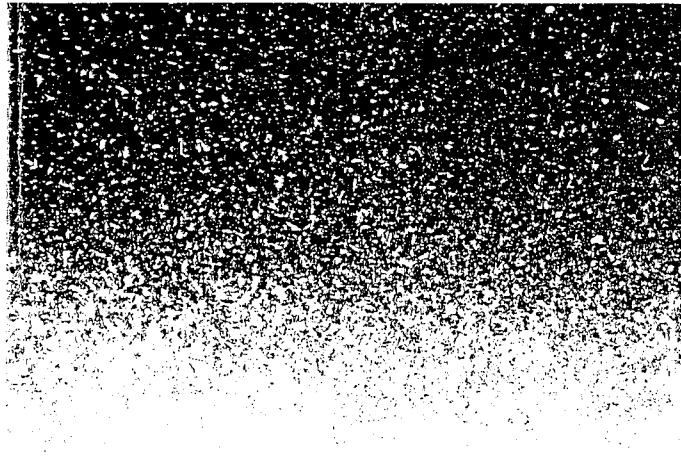
Our staff is ready to work with you to maximize student success and minimize instructor frustration.

For further information and assistance call Dr. Cindy Riedel, extension 4164.

*Helping students  
with*

# **VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS**

*To* **SUCCEED** *at*



## **Monroe County Community College**

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Monroe County Community College

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*Learning*  
*Assistance*  
*Laboratory*

# Visual Impairments

## Definition

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A visual impairment may be caused by a physical diminution or loss of vision or by an inability of a person to perceive what is viewed through the eye.

**Legal Blindness** – one who has visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye even with correction or whose field of vision is narrowed so that the widest diameter of his/her visual field subtends an angular distance of no greater than 20 degrees.

**Partially sighted** – those whose visual acuity falls between 20/70 and 20/200 in the better eye with correction.

## Common Characteristics of College Students with Visual Impairments

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- Such an impairment may cause a student not to see or comprehend written material which may include announcement of test dates, procedural information and content of the examination itself.
- Visual perception problems may preclude comprehension of printed test materials and/or completion of a standard answer sheet or essay exam in the usual manner.

## Suggestions for Helping Students with Visual Impairments to Succeed in the College Classroom

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1. Try to determine what the student can see (even totally impaired persons can see shadows and shades of darkness and light).
2. Use a black felt tip pen whenever possible.
3. Repeat verbal directions or descriptions. The student must rely heavily on memory and must tie thoughts together with few, if any, visual reference points.
4. Allow and encourage students to use a tape recorder to take class notes.
5. Consider using the LAL for alternative testing conditions where a reader, tape recording or print enlarger can be utilized. (As much notice as possible is appreciated.)
6. Welcome the assistance of a guide dog to your classroom. (They will not disrupt the class and will add to the comfort level of the student.)
7. Talk to the class, not the blackboard. Repeat and reinforce verbally every item that is written on the board.
8. Continue to use words like "see," "look" or "blind." These students use the same words.
9. Talk directly to the student. Don't "talk through" a third party.
10. Identify yourself by name as you approach a visually impaired student.
11. Avoid using colors as descriptions. Many visually impaired students have some difficulty distinguishing between colors.
12. Avoid standing with your back to a light source because of the glare.