Welcome to the Student Accommodation and Resources (StAR) semester newsletter. This newsletter is sent at the beginning of every semester to update the JJC community on changes, and great things happening in the StAR Department.

**New StAR Students**

Since the last published Newsletter in August, 2015, StAR welcomed 175 new students into the program. StAR continues to meet and add new students to the program on a weekly basis. Every new StAR student must attend a mandatory StAR Orientation to familiarize the student with the StAR office, the use of their accommodations and communicating with their instructors who will play a vital role in accommodating the student.

**Thank you to all who used the new StAR Test Portal Submission**

StAR's new procedure for test submission through the JJC Portal has been a huge success. StAR administered 1,190 exams from July – December 2015! This new Portal submission allows for StAR to receive all the necessary information in order to administer the test with complete directions from the instructors. In the past, the StAR office was often left guessing as to instructors' directions. The Portal submission has really helped to clarify this. Instructors can continue to submit their tests to the StAR office via interoffice mail, hand delivery, email or the JJC Portal, however the Portal submission form must be completed. Thank you, again, to all who participated and provided feedback!

**StAR Satisfaction Surveys**

StAR gathered information from students, parents, faculty, and staff in the form of satisfaction surveys. StAR students reported on the quality of the StAR testing and tutoring services and their overall satisfaction with the StAR office. The results of the student surveys were extremely favorable with 93-100% satisfaction rates on all of the...
questions. Some comments students wrote include:

- “Everyone has been wonderful and friendly. They make you feel comfortable.”
- “STAR office has been great, no trouble, and everyone is friendly.”
- “I love the staff and the support I get from STAR.”

Results of the faculty/staff surveys indicated that 100% of responders are aware of STAR’s functions at the college. However, many responded that they would like additional information regarding Assistive Technology, STAR’s facilities, Disability Law, and how students are eligible for STAR services. 100% of the responders indicated that they would feel comfortable referring a student to STAR, and they felt that STAR staff is very approachable and helpful. Some faculty and staff were not aware of all the different accommodations that students receive. All faculty responders felt that students’ academic success improved because of the assistance they received from STAR. Based on this information, watch for upcoming educational opportunities from STAR to further educate faculty and staff of STAR’s services!

**ReadSpeaker – Screen Reader**

ReadSpeaker is a Text to Speech tool that was purchased with Carl Perkins dollars and integrated into the Canvas Learning Management System for the Spring 2016 semester.

Content simultaneously presented in both audio and visual formats enables students to improve reading comprehension fluency, accuracy, and concentration. ReadSpeaker benefits students in the following additional ways:

- Meets the needs of students with reading difficulties (dyslexia).
- Helps visually impaired students by reading the text out loud.
- Helps non-native speakers who may have difficulty reading English.
- Helps older and returning students improve their literacy skills.
- Content is accessible anytime, anywhere, and with any connected device.
- Increases retention (Audio format often helps students do better in school).
- Increases the accessibility of online courses and textbooks.

Students can use the service by selecting text on the screen and then clicking on the floating listen-button.

When the button is clicked on, the toolbar will expand.

By clicking on the orange arrow the text will be read aloud and highlighted simultaneously.

ReadSpeaker is compatible with Lockdown browsers, therefore students can take tests online without the need for a reader or for separate text reading software.

As a teaching and a learning aid both online and in the classroom, ReadSpeaker gives all students the option to listen to coursework via computers, mobile phones or tablets. They don’t have to download any extra software, but rather can simply just click and listen to the content.

Special thanks to Dr. Linden, IT, and iCampus for assistance with the implementation of this Assistive Technology.

Watch for upcoming trainings on ReadSpeaker through iCampus and STAR!

**Accessibility**

It is extremely important that all materials and documents are accessible for all students. iCampus continues to offer Professional Development Training sessions and online workshops for all faculty in creating accessible documents. Two previously held workshops, “Designing Word Documents and PDF’s for Accessibility” and “Course Design with Accommodation in Mind” have been recorded and are available to view on iCampus Central. Watch for upcoming sessions for Spring 2016!

**Accommodations – Note Taker**

Within each newsletter STAR highlights an accommodation that some of the STAR students are eligible to receive. This semester’s highlighted accommodation is note taking. Students receive this accommodation for a variety of disabilities. Students may need the assistance of a note taker for a fine motor issue, processing deficits, ADHD, and/or a Learning Disability. When students are granted this accommodation STAR usually requires that they attend one or two classes first to be sure that a note taker is absolutely necessary. Sometimes instructors put notes/power points on iCampus, which could eliminate the need for a note taker. When it is determined that a note taker is necessary, the student will bring the instructor a packet of information with a written announcement for the instructor to make to the class requesting someone to agree to be a note taker. This student note taker is compensated by STAR for his/her services. The note taker completes an orientation with STAR to learn the procedures and expectations of the job. Note takers are given carbonless paper to take notes so that immediately after class a copy of the notes can be given to the STAR student.

**STAR Statistics**

Some STAR statistics for Fall 2015 include:

- 1,074 tests administered
- 4,182 student visits to the STAR office.
- 76% of all STAR students are in “Good Standing” according to the Academic Standards of Progress

STAR wishes everyone a great Spring semester!