

# THE DASS INSIDER

A NEWSLETTER FOR SMU FACULTY AND STAFF

INFORMATION ON DISABILITY SERVICES AND ACCESS ISSUES AFFECTING YOUR STUDENTS AND CLASSES



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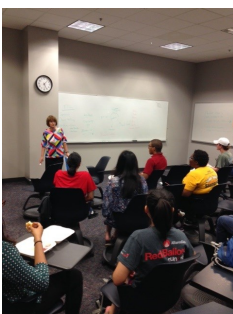
## Technology, Entrepreneurship, Creativity, and Dyslexia: A Chat with Tiffany Sunday

On April 18, DASS's student organization for students with dyslexia and ADHD, *Students for New Learning*, welcomed internationally known lecturer, author, and SMU alum Tiffany Sunday, for a fireside-style chat.



She began by directing the students, "Look around you. Everything you see in this room started as someone's idea." Tiffany then asked students to identify their "thing," that being what they've always, even as a child, loved to do and have done best. From there, the interactive and lively discussion shifted from developments in assistive technology, to quantum computing, to automation of jobs. Through it all, she returned to a common thread - the central role of creativity and creation to the happiness of those with dyslexia.

Sharing historical and personal stories helped students to see that success is exhilarating, but that failure is how we truly learn. Tiffany also challenged them to focus on their talents, gifts, or strengths, not weaknesses or shortcomings. She drove home the point that those who learn and think differently aren't "broken" and therefore don't need to be "fixed," but instead should be recognized and employed for their unique cognition.



Companies began years ago hiring students on the autism spectrum for their unique traits and talents, but recently, major corporations, especially engineering, tech, marketing, and communication companies have begun to actively look for new hires with dyslexia. Tiffany presented the students with a long list of these employers, including Ford, Audi, Apple, Roche, AT&T, Texas Instruments, and Lockheed-Martin. These companies offer careers that tap the skills that people with dyslexia tend to have in abundance: identifying patterns, using intuition, and thinking forward, differently, and outside the box. They are looking for employees with ingenuity and are finding them in those with dyslexia.

Her final advice to the students referenced Winston Churchill, himself a dyslexic, "Never, ever, ever give up." (cont. on page 2)

### Inside this issue:

Dyslexia and Creativity: Tiffany Sunday	1
Faculty Spotlight: 2018 Extra Mile Awards	1
Mobility Issues Across Campus	2
Final Exams Reminders	3
May Term Reminders	3
Technology on Campus: Firefly and C-Pens	4
Timelines for Sending Final Exams to DASS	4

### 2018 Extra Mile Awardees



**Conchita Villar Martin**

Dedman College  
Spanish



**Matthew Boulanger**

Dedman College  
Anthropology



**Adreana Julander**

Dedman College  
Statistics

## Faculty Spotlight: 2018 Extra Mile Awards

We are happy to announce the 2018 Extra Mile Award recipients! **Matthew Boulanger (Lecturer, Dedman College, Anthropology), Adreana Julander (Instructor, Dedman College, Statistics), and Conchita Villar Martin (Lecturer, Dedman College, World Languages and Literature, Spanish)** join the twenty-six other faculty members to whom SMU has awarded this honor since 2008.



Students for New Learning, an organization chartered by the Student Senate to provide support and networking opportunities for students with LD and ADHD, identifies deserving faculty members to receive this award at the Hilltop Excellence Awards each year. The President's Commission on the Needs of Persons with Disabilities (PCNPD) provides funding and support for this award, demonstrating how much SMU values faculty sensitivity to this somewhat vulnerable, yet very capable population.

Please congratulate your colleagues in their continuing pursuit of excellent teaching, while showing sensitivity, kindness, and a welcoming nature. It makes a difference!

## Mobility Issues Across Campus

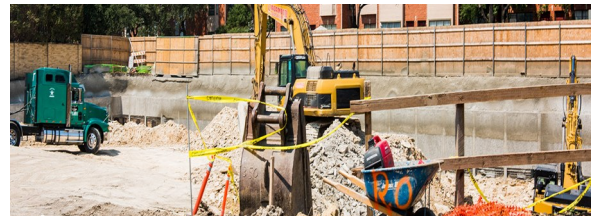
Construction can be a headache for anyone, but it is especially disruptive for our campus members with mobility impairments. If a student in a wheelchair or scooter has to reroute around a building, only to find sidewalks closed, this could lead to a tardy or even an absence. Equally frustrating, if an elevator is out of order, that same student (or faculty/staff member) might not be able to make it to class. DASS tries to stay informed about upcoming construction projects and we'd like to highlight some upcoming changes for you.



The construction of the Indoor Performance Center on the corner of Bishop Boulevard and Binkley may pose some mobility issues for students over the coming months. In mid-April the sidewalk from Morrison-McGinniss to Binkley (along the Boulevard) will be closed. A temporary sidewalk will be established in the street, behind a barrier. DASS has requested that this sidewalk be wide enough for both a wheelchair and a person.

As the project expands, the sidewalk behind the former Barr Pool (across from the Binkley Parking Garage) down to Mac's Place will be closed. Additionally, some handicap parking spaces will be relocated when the construction begins on that side of the street.

The parking lot at Airline and McFarlin will also be under construction, which could block off one of the access points and move or limit handicapped parking spots for a time. Additionally, the parking lot at Expressway Tower is under construction and some handicap spaces will be moved for an undetermined time.



**ELEVATORS:** We have received notice from some faculty regarding elevators that have not been working in various buildings. Thank you for letting us know! Obviously, this impacts some students' and faculty's ability to access the classrooms. If you notice an elevator that is not working, please contact Facilities at 8-7000 and also let DASS know. We will contact our affected students so they may be proactive with their professors. Temporarily relocating a classroom is sometimes necessary.

If you have access or mobility concerns, please let both Facilities and DASS know.

Also, the President's Commission on the Needs of Persons with Disabilities stays abreast of ongoing access issues and helps disseminate information to the relevant campus offices.



## Tiffany Sunday

(conc.)

Tiffany Sunday is an author, conference speaker, and entrepreneur. She is internationally known for her book *Dyslexia's Competitive Edge* and 2015 TEDx Talk *Dyslexia 2.0: The Gift of Innovation and Entrepreneurial Mind*.

Her third book, *How Dyslexics Will Rule the Future*, will be published later this year. The book discusses how advanced technologies are creating new career opportunities for individuals with dyslexia. Tiffany presents at national conferences on the topics of digital technology, entrepreneurship, creativity, and dyslexia. She is also the author of *You Posted What!?*.

For more information about Tiffany's books, visit [www.tiffanysunday.com](http://www.tiffanysunday.com).

## Final Exams at DASS—Spring 2018 Reminders

Hopefully, you have met with any student who is approved for DASS-related classroom accommodations and advised each student on the best method for obtaining those accommodations for final exams. If you are UNABLE to accommodate your student within the department and need DASS to proctor a final, please review the following details.

Students must schedule their final exam(s) with DASS using our Online Scheduler.

The deadline for students to schedule with DASS is **4/30** in order for us to start our work on checking accuracy of test times, creating proctor forms, arranging proctor coverage for the heavy schedule, and planning for unique accommodation needs like

readers and scribes. ***If you have not already communicated with your DASS students about finals, please take time privately to discuss the plan with them. If testing at DASS is the only option, direct them to follow the procedures ASAP. Our time blocks fill up and we may not be able to accommodate students as it gets closer to the deadline due to limited seats in our testing room.***



DASS **cannot** administer:

- computer-based exams, such as those on ExamSoft, Canvas, or that require Excel;
- exams that require slides or a projector, such as many ARHS exams.

If students fail to follow our procedures for testing, we will direct them back to their instructors to work out the necessary accommodations. Just because DASS has denied a student to test at DASS because they missed our deadline does NOT mean the faculty member should necessarily deny the accommodation for the upcoming test. If it is reasonable for you to put the accommodation in place, then you should do so.

At DASS we have 3 blocks of time every day of finals for students to schedule an exam: 9—1:30 and 11:30—4 and 2:30—7. The exception is Saturday finals, which are only offered at 9:00 am. Our office needs approval from the instructor if the student books a final substantially different from the expected final exam time block.

For more information on test proctoring for final exams, please visit [HERE](#).

## May Term 2018 Reminders for Faculty



For courses during May Term, consider these items when working with students with accommodations.

Be sure your DASS syllabus statement (see box p.4) is up to date. Encourage your students both verbally and in writing to get their letter of accommodation (LOA) to you as soon as possible. They do this by requesting the letters on our website and we will have them printed in a day or two for their pick up. Realize though that, once May Term starts, they have few hours during the work day to get to our office and we may have limited staff during that time. DASS suggests you contact your students BEFORE the course starts and encourage them to request their letters from DASS right away. DASS will also encourage May Term students to request letters promptly.

Beforehand, consider how you will accommodate any students who come to you with an LOA and request extended test time or a reduced distraction environment for testing (the most common accommodations). There should be available classroom space during May Term but your departmental support staff may be limited. DASS has very little opportunity to provide test proctoring so it is best for you to make plans to manage most accommodations within your department. If you have a unique circumstance, please contact our office early to discuss the situation.

Sometimes, instructors use part of class time to lecture and part of class time for an exam. Consider how that will impact a student with accommodations like extended time and how you can make it work for all students. For any questions, please contact Alexa Taylor [alexat@smu.edu](mailto:alexat@smu.edu) or brainstorm with May Term staff due to their experience with this unique semester.

## Technology Available on Campus

DASS, in conjunction with ADSA and Central University Libraries, funds an annual site license for the Kurzweil software program. This program allows anyone in the SMU community (faculty, staff, students) a username and access to listen to scanned text aloud. This can be helpful for students with reading disorders, visual impairments, and even student athletes who travel and need to read while traveling without transporting all of their books. The multisensory approach improves the reader's



If your program is considering online course offerings, these must be created in a way to be accessible to all. See your Academic Computing representative for more information.

comprehension as they hear the text being read aloud AND see each word or group of words highlighted as they progress through the paragraph. <https://www.smu.edu/Provost/ALEC/DASS/Resources/ForStudents/OnCampusResources>

In addition, DASS is purchasing a C-Pen to demonstrate the benefits to students. The C-Pen can scan words on a page and read it aloud immediately. This hand-held scanner can capture printed information quickly and without cumbersome equipment. <https://cpen.com/>



If you have suggestions for helpful technology for students, please contact DASS with your ideas.

## Timeliness of Submitting Exams to DASS By Candy Brown, DASS Administrative Assistant

DASS strives to make final exams run smoothly for students who test in our testing area. We rely on faculty to help us manage increased students and paperwork during this busy time of the semester. Remember:

DASS will send out a proctor form 3-5 days before the final exam.

We do this in waves so please be patient. *Please complete it fully, including a cell phone, in order to contact you during the test time if there are any issues. Be as explicit as possible on what is allowed during the test (e.g., hand-written 3x5 notecard, simple calculator) so our proctors administer the exam correctly.* For more details about having the test returned and other limitations, please review the details of finals on our website.

<http://www.smu.edu/Provost/ALEC/DASS/DisabilityAccommodations/TestProctoring>

Thank you for your help in making sure testing accommodations run smoothly for all concerned!

VISIT US ONLINE AT  
[WWW.SMU.EDU/ALEC/DASS.ASP](http://WWW.SMU.EDU/ALEC/DASS.ASP)

VISIT US AT DASS

**Please include this statement in your syllabus:**

**Disability Accommodations:** Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first register with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS). Students can call 214-768-1470 or visit <http://www.smu.edu/Provost/ALEC/DASS> to begin the process. Once registered, students should then schedule an appointment with the professor as early in the semester as possible, present a DASS Accommodation Letter, and make appropriate arrangements. Please note that accommodations are not retro-active and require advance notice to implement.

5800 Ownby Drive—Suite 202 Loyd Center  
2nd Floor - Altshuler Learning Enhancement Center  
Entrance near Gate 3 of Ford Stadium  
Parking in the Meadows Garage

Phone: 214-768-1470

Email: [dass@smu.edu](mailto:dass@smu.edu)



**DASS IS MORE THAN ACCOMMODATIONS.**

For resources that may be helpful to faculty and staff, please visit:  
<http://www.smu.edu/Provost/ALEC/DASS/Resources/ForFaculty>