[Music]

Peter: I'm Peter Hubbard from CLAS Academic Programs, and I'm here with Carly Amour from Student Disability Services. Carly and her colleagues can help arrange accommodations for students with disabilities. [To Carly] Carly, when we hear "disabilities," we tend to think of sight or hearing loss, or students who use wheelchairs.

Carly: That's true. Physical disabilities may interfere with academic performance. We encourage the students who have a physical disability to register with our office if they have not done so. However, learning disabilities may be another reason why students may be struggling academically. Many students do not even realize they have a learning disability. Several things, such as writing, reading, or even staying organized may not seem so simple to them, and seems a lot more difficult when compared to their peers.

Peter: So they might be putting forth the same amount of effort as other students but just not getting the same results.

Carly: Exactly. So as a result, they feel very frustrated, or they may feel that they're not smart. But really, it's just that they have not been diagnosed with a learning disability.

Peter: Say I'm a student and I'm having problems keeping up with my work. How can I tell if I might have a learning disability? Are there certain signs I should look for?

Carly: Oh, yes. Absolutely. [Reads list.]

There can be many reasons for these symptoms, but if this list sounds a lot like some of these that you struggle with, then you may have an undiagnosed learning disability. So as a result, college may present an extra challenge for you. You could probably benefit from academic accommodations and our office.

Peter: What do you mean by "accommodations"? Could you give us a couple of examples?

Carly: Oh, yes. Certainly. Some examples are: you can get your books or articles reformatted into audio files, because some students are better at retaining information when they hear it instead of reading it with their eyes. You may have Exam Service accomodations, and that may include extra time on your exams; it may include being in a separate room to reduce distractions; it may also include having someone scribe for you, for those exams. They can scribe your Scantron. They can also scribe essays. There's a software called Dragon, where a student can speak into a computer and orally give the answers rather than putting it down on paper.

Peter: Say I'm a student, and I suspect I might have a disability that's interfering with my academic performance. Should I talk with someone here?

Carly: Not right away. We can't arrange for an accommodation until we have a diagnosed disability. So the first step would be to contact University Counseling Services to get tested, and they have low-cost testings there.

Peter: Then we come to you.

Carly: Yes, that's correct. College life is difficult as it is. You owe it to yourself to take advantage of the academic accommodations to make your classes a lot easier. That's what we're here for.