

Justification for Accessibility Specialist

1. Describe the specific needs for the position requested and the duties of this position in a brief statement.

This position is a full-time position to be shared across the three colleges in the district, with 33% of the salary to be paid by Cañada, 33% by the College of San Mateo, and 33% by Skyline.

This position is needed across the entire district, as all courses taught must comply with accessibility standards, as set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. In addition, with an increase in courses being taught via distance education, and the implementation of the OEI Rubric with an emphasis on Universal Design and accessibility being at a premium, this position is of need across the district, and more specifically at Cañada College. While there is an Alt Media Specialist at all three campuses, that position is dedicated to providing 504 accommodations to requested materials- not 508 accessibility. Additionally there is a lack of consultation for instructors on how to approach accessibility and Universal Design. Furthermore, an expert on the OEI Rubric standards for accessibility is needed to improve all distance education courses taught at Cañada College, as well as our sister colleges.

At each of the three campuses, the requirements of this position are the following:

- a. Consult with faculty with respect to accessibility issues in their courses. This would include supplying support for all course materials and instructional elements.
 - b. Hold workshops with faculty, in consultation with the Instructional Designer and instructional faculty, to improve accessibility on distance education courses.
2. Explain how this position aligns with and supports the mission and strategic goals of the college.

This position aligns and supports the mission by ensuring that all of our students, regardless of their learning abilities, are guaranteed a learning environment that is accessible to them. It connects with the strategic goals numbers 1, 2, and 3; the position will create an environment that allows students, regardless of their learning abilities, to work on the degrees, certificates, and skills necessary to complete all pathways. By ensuring that accessibility standards are maintained, it will lead to success, retention, and persistence rates to increase; this position speaks to that directly. Additionally, the needs of the community would be more fully met.

3. Explain how adding this position will strengthen the department or division.

An Accessibility Specialist would further compliment the Instructional Designer, the Instructional Technologist (also up for justification this session), and the Director of Professional Development and Innovation in addressing the needs of faculty and students. The position would reside under the Office of Instruction, the same as the Instructional Designer and Instructional Technologist, and would directly work with faculty to improve their instruction with respect to accessibility.

4. Explain how this work will be accomplished if the position is not filled.

The work is currently being split between the Instructional Designer and the Alt Media Specialist, although informally and when they have the time to do so; the same is true at the other two colleges in the district. This position would greatly free up time for these positions.