Learning impairments also of concern to OPI

By Lisa Holstein

"ON CAMPUS, 3-5-81"

The student comes into class that first day of the quarter accompanied by a guide dog or sitting in a wheelchair. Most faculty members already know that the Office for the Physically Impaired is a resource for integrating that student fully into the classroom.

But Warren L. King, director of OPI since November, believes it's also important for faculty to think of OPI in other contexts.

"If a student who seems highly intelligent and makes excellent contributions to class discussions 'blows' a midterm essay exam, the instructor should not automatically assume the student was partying all night," King said. "This could be a student with a hidden handicap."

Problems in translating thoughts to paper is one of the signs that a learning disability may exist, King said, and a clue that the teaching faculty is in an excellent position to notice.

"Faculty should not just attribute rotten handwriting, bad grammar and misspellings to 'typical freshman' writing, especially if there seems to be no problem when the student is talking," he said.

"We don't expect our faculty to be experts; but they must also not assume a problem would have been identified before college. Many schools are not well equipped to identify learning disabilities."

And, King added, "There are many types and degrees of learning disorders and often the transition to college emphasizes them for the first time."

The generic term "learning disabilities" includes a variety of disorders that occur on a continuum of severity, said Juliana Rogers, a speech pathologist in University Hospitals. Federal estimates of the number of learning disabled individuals based on grade school-age children having difficulties range from 12 to 20 percent of the population.

Dyslexia, a problem with organization and translation of language symbols, is the best-known learning disability and can include writing symbols in reverse — such as a "b" as a "d" or a "u" for an "n". This often is a result of poor visual memory letters and words.

An auditory memory disability could result in the inability to repeat or write sounds in correct order; tactile impairments may make it difficult to hold a pencil or know how hard to press down with a pen.

The most common accommodation needed for such students at the University is alternative testing, a typical area where OPI can provide advice and services.

"The student has the responsibility to learn about his or her disability and to inform the instructor of accommodations that may be needed, and it's a major cop-out for the student to wait until the day of the test," King said. "However, if a student is negligent in informing the instructor, be aware that embarrassment could be the problem."

Learning disabled students have formed a peer support group on campus to help each other deal with the frustrations and stigma of having a learning disability.

OPI also is currently working on improving the adaptive testing system to both insure testing integrity and security and eliminate possible misunderstandings, King said. The same concern for academic integrity extends to considerations of adjusting University requirements.

"Our first commitment is that a degree awarded to a handicapped student must be the same as for any other student," King said. "If a student has trouble writing, there is no implication that freshman English should be waived. Instead, the student might need to dictate work, and the instructor can assign a grade based on development of good grammar and articulate expression, just as with any other student."

The faculty need not fear that a faked learning disability will become the latest dodge for a generally poor student to justify lack of work or to avoid standard exams, King said.

The University uses a battery of more than 20 different tests to diagnose learning disabilities, plus evaluations of past academic and medical histories to determine what is the best adaptive situation for each student.

King says the University's accommodation philosophy is fairly straightforward:

"We ask the faculty member to look at the individual, take into account the disability, and look at the University and see how we can work together to meet both the student's and the University's goals," he said. "In some cases, we may need to encourage the student to reconsider career goals."

King noted that federal regulations and the University's commitment to affirmative action are extended to "the qualified handicapped."

"If reasoning is impaired, the student would not be college qualified," King said. "But with learning disabilities, generally the intellectual processing works fine. The problem is in getting the information in and out."

If a faculty member suspects a learning disability is keeping a student from performing to potential, King suggests a conference with the student as the first step. The faculty member should stress the positive aspects of the student's performance in class, express concern about the problem area and try to encourage the student to consider diagnostic testing," he said.

King also suggests a call to OPI, located in 339 Baker Systems, to alert the office the student may be coming in. Having the whole University — faculty, staff, counselors and administrators — working together to make full use of the services of the Office for the Physically Impaired is a major step in continuing its effectiveness, King says.
Understanding learning-
OSU works to improve public perception

By Kristi Ferguson

Even though Ohio State now has
one of the best learning disability
programs in the country, university
officials are working to improve cam-
pus understanding and appreciation
of the problems of learning disabled
students.

"Several administrators and faculty
members met Monday with the uni-
versity's authorities on learning
disabled students to raise their own
understanding and to generate sugges-
tions for improvement. One sug-
gestion was recruiting graduate asso-
ciates to serve as a pool of quality
tutors for learning-disabled stu-
dents."

"I was really impressed by the
amount of interest our administra-
tion has shown," said Edwin Shutt-
leworth, associate professor of neu-
rology. "We are enjoying community
interest in learning disabilities and
are going to benefit from that."

Shuttleworth was asked at the
Monday meeting to explain learning
disabilities to college office repre-
sentatives and answer any questions
they have. No date for that meeting
has been set.

A learning disability is a perma-
ent disorder that affects the way
people process and retain infor-
mation. Types of learning disabilities
can include dyslexia, deficiencies in reading
processing; dyscalculia, deficiencies in
mathematical processing; and dys-
phoria, deficiencies in writing pro-
cessing. The characteristics of these
disorders are poor spelling and writing
skills, poor basic math computation
and difficulty in distinguishing
main points from minor details when
reading.

"I think that more universities are
recognizing that they have to provide
accommodations for learning dis-
bilities and that learning-disabled
students belong in college," said
Patty Carlton, acting coordinator of
Learning Disability Services.

"This past weekend I got three
calls from different universities that
are just doing exploration as to how
to start a service," Carlton said.

Ohio State was also asked to make
a presentation about its learning dis-
bility programs at the national con-
ference for the Association of Hand-
capped Student Service Program in
Post Secondary Education this sum-
mer, said Jim Baker, resource spe-
cialist for the Office for Disability
Services.

Learning Disability Services was

Ohio State in 1980. Now they have
six full-time staff members and cler-
cal and work-study office workers.

More than 475 learning-disabled stu-
dents are being served this quarter.

Diagnostic testing, personal and
academic counseling, textbook tapes,
reading.scribes, tutoring referrals,

peer support groups and special test
scheduling are some of the services
available to learning-disabled stu-
dents.

"Once we started offering more
services, more students heard about
the program and came to it. Once it's
known that you have services, then
people will choose to come to your
university because they know their
needs can be served," said Debra
Knappke, diagnostician for Learning
Disability Services.

Baker said he is currently recruit-
ing student volunteers to read text
books onto tapes and read tests aloud.
After a short training program
volunteers, the office matches a
volunteer's and learning-disabled
student's course background for spe-
cific assignments.

Learning disabilities can vary in
intensity from day to day and it can
be frustrating to students who have
to prove the invisible disability is
handicapping and that they just are
dumb or failing it.

"We aren't talking about people
who are retarded or people who have
visual perception deficits or motor
coordination problems. We're talking
about language learning and pro-
sessing difficulties," said Julie Ro-
gers, a senior speech pathologist in
the university's speech and hearing
clinic.

"There are a great number of peo-
ple who do not learn best by the
methods required in traditional edu-
cation. It is a graphic language elite
who become the best students and they
are not necessarily the most intel-
ligent among us," Rogers said.

In 1984, President Edward H. Jen-
nings appointed Shuttleworth, Mar-
ling Languis, an associate professor
of education, and Rogers to an ad-
visory council for the Office of Disabil-
ity Services. The council's role is to
help evaluate students' specific
learning disabilities. The council
then provides recommendations ab-
out methods of scheduling and
learning to students and to their col-
lege offices.

Learning Disability Services evalu-
ates a possible learning-disabled stu-
dent with two-hour testing sessions
over three days. Next, staff members
review test results and determine if
the student has a learning disability.
Finally, a counselor explains the
results to students and discusses ser-
dices available and personal
strengths and weaknesses they have
to consider when approaching learn-
ing.

Support groups are the newest
program for learning-disabled stu-
dents. Students approached Carlton
last fall and wanted to know how they
could get together with students that
have similar problems.

Carlton organized a support group
that met throughout last year and
discussed such topics as explaining
disabilities to professors and the best
time to bring up learning disabilities
during job interviews.

Lois Burke, a learning disability
services counselor, helped summer
quarter students organize a support
group that plans to continue meeting
throughout this year.

"Some of the students were identi-
fied as learning disabled at the col-
lege level and some of the students
were identified in first or second
grade. However, they all talked about
how inferior they felt or how rejected
they felt because they couldn't spell
or read as well. They could really
empathize with each other," Carlton
said.

Rogers said part of her work as an
advisory council member includes re-
viewing petitions for foreign lan-
guage substitutions to the College of
Arts and Sciences. Sometimes stu-
dents can satisfy the foreign lan-
guage requirement orally, but other
times they must substitute foreign
language linguistic and cultural his-
tory courses that are taught in Engli-

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disabled students

Marling Languis, an associate professor of education, brain-maps one of his patients to help determine the

ish, she explained.

"Learning-disabled students didn't acquire their native language on a par with the regular language milestones in certain aspects, so many are unable to academically succeed in learning a second language within the framework of the university.

"More consistent identification of students who have learning disabilities is needed so they can learn early in their educational experiences how to learn in spite of their personal learning differences," Rogers said.

Languis, who is also director of the Brain Behavior and Research Lab, is currently involved in research to make earlier diagnosis possible and to develop the best strategies for individual learning-disabled students to approach difficult subjects.

With the aid of the Bio-logic Brain Atlas III computer, Languis is working with the Central Ohio school system to determine a database of normal brain maps of elementary school-age children. Brain mapping shows how different parts of the brain work when doing specific tasks.

"By putting together the brain maps with the performance on a task and with the subject's own introspection about what was going on, we can help the subject determine the best strategies to use in learning."

Languis has also used brain mapping to help learning-disabled college students discover their best strategies for learning.

"It's more than just a variety of little techniques to try, too," Languis said. "It's a whole approach to teaching you to take charge of your own learning and to reflect."

The database for young children can serve as a comparison so that earlier diagnosis of learning-disabled students may be made. The earlier the diagnosis, the more likely the disorder can be solved, Languis said.

Languis also organized a study group this fall for area teachers, specialists and graduate students. The focus of the group is to build a comprehensive approach in education to utilize brain mapping and early learning disability diagnosis.

The local Orton Society for Dyslexia is sponsoring a seminar on campus later this month and has asked Languis to make a presentation.

Learning Disability Services is in Bevis Hall 297. The telephone number is 292-3959. The Office for Disability Services is in Baker Systems Engineering Building 339. The telephone number is 292-3307.
New test spots language disabilities

By GEORGE VONTSOLOS
Lantern staff writer

Language disabilities prevent some intelligent students from working up to their potential.

One OSU professor has developed a clinical test to help these students and other adults identify their problem. Wayne Secord, assistant professor of human services education, said he and Elisabeth H. Wiig of Boston University designed the Test of Language Competence to identify adults who suffer from a language-based learning disability.

"I think a lot of kids that fail out of college are language learning disabled," Secord said.

While tests exist that measure language competence in children, Secord said few have been developed to detect the unique language disabilities found in adults.

Secord said language disabilities seen in children aren't the same as those of adults. "Children tend to have problems with language skills, while the problems adults face are thinking-based."

Children's disabilities include improper use of grammar and syntax, Secord said. Adults may have mastered these skills, but they have problems with the subtleties of language, such as symbolism, metaphors, jokes, sarcasm or ambiguity, he said.

For example, someone may use the expression, 'She casts a spell over me.' Secord said a language-disabled adult may interpret that as literally meaning "she casts a magic spell on him," rather than "he is enamored with her."

Secord said because the disability is so subtle, it will often go undetected in childhood. He said the problem, however, is severe enough to prevent a person from being successful in college, careers or social interaction.

"Adults with language-learning disabilities often come across as social klutzes," Secord said, because they aren't able to respond appropriately to jokes, sarcasm or metaphors.

The causes for these disabilities stem from a variety of factors, Secord said. He said some are physically based and some are not. Providing an accurate figure of those suffering from this disability is hard to pinpoint, Secord said, but the numbers are definitely growing.

Debbie Kanapke, diagnostician at the office for disability services, said her office offers various services for those students suffering from a learning disability.

Kanapke said depending on the disability, there are several types of tests that are administered. In addition, each student may have a tutor as well as individual counselors to help them cope with the academic setting.

Secord hopes his test will "provide a means to identify kids who are having problems and who think it may be a function of their ability to express themselves or use their language appropriately," he said.

These are the people who "slip through the cracks," Secord said. Many of these people flounder through the school system without their problem being detected, he said.

Secord said the test has six sections, in which participants must complete various tasks involving language competence. The participants are required to understand ambiguous sentences, make inferences, recreate conversations, describe a living space and rewrite a paragraph.

The test has been piloted and is being tested around the country, he said.

Patricia Smith, president of the Ohio School Board of Education, said intervention is not adequate in Ohio schools and more sophisticated testing is definitely needed.

She said lack of exposure to literature in Ohio schools may be a problem.

"Students are not exposed to enough reading. Young children are spending too much time with TV and video games," Smith said.
Tips for Successful Learning

- Sit in front of the class, in close proximity to the teacher.
- Use a schedule booklet, designate study times and stay with the schedule.
- Study with a classmate and exchange information about class notes and readings.
- Ask a classmate to take notes for you. Provide the classmate with a notebook and carbon paper. Take notes yourself to remain attentive and involved in the learning process.
- Discuss your learning disability and appropriate accommodations with your instructor at the beginning of each quarter. Agree upon testing accommodations.
- Meet with your instructor to discuss academic problems. He or she may be able to explain an unfamiliar concept, refer you to a tutor, or be willing to meet with you more regularly.
- Find a quiet study area. Eliminate distractions.
- Plan ahead for exams. If you are going to use a studio or require testing assistance, make arrangements at least five days before the exam.
- Spend time studying throughout the day. Do not leave all studying to evening hours. Make use of time before and after classes.
- Plan a realistic schedule. If reading is a problem, do not schedule all reading classes during the same quarter.
- Work with a counselor to find out how you learn most effectively.
- Devise effective study aids or techniques. Using flash cards or highlighting notes in different colors for different types of information may be helpful. Try using an approach that best suits your learning style.
- Schedule a well-balanced day and week. Plan fun activities, get enough sleep, exercise, and eat right.
- When a class is difficult, seek out help immediately.

Hints for Faculty

- Provide students with a syllabus indicating due dates for assignments, topics covered, exam dates, and criteria for evaluation.
- Provide plenty of opportunities for students to meet with you.
- Assist learning disabled students in getting appropriate test accommodations, such as readers, scribes, and/or extra time on exams. (This can be coordinated by Disability Services.)
- When feasible, use a multi-modality approach to instruction. Lectures may be enhanced with transparencies and pictures, and by writing main ideas on the chalkboard.
- An outline of the material to be covered is helpful.
- When reviewing for exams, provide an auditory approach and a visual approach. A review session with a question and answer period will help clarify last minute confusion. A study guide or study questions will help students to focus on the correct material.

Talk to Us

For more information on how a learning disabled student can make the most of his or her college years, contact the Office for Disability Services, 153 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue, Columbus, OH 43210-1297, or call (614) 292-3307.
Maximize Potential, Maintain Independence

When a student is learning disabled, it means he or she does not acquire, integrate, process, or express knowledge in the ways of most other students. As a result, the student is continually challenged to maximize his or her learning potential.

The Office for Disability Services (Disability Services) understands that challenge and provides services to meet the needs of disabled students. The Office for Disability Services coordinates accommodations and programs for all disabled students, including those who are learning disabled.

As a result of institutional needs and priorities, the Office for Disability Services was established in 1974. A legal mandate came later in 1977 with the implementation of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Section 504 guarantees the rights of all students to equal access to an education which is limited only by personal ability and not by physical or psychological disability. The goal is to maximize a student's educational potential while helping him or her develop and maintain independence.

The philosophy of the program is one that encourages self-advocacy. Services are available on the main and regional campuses of The Ohio State University and at the Agriculture Technical Institute.

Who is Eligible?

Students who are diagnosed by Disability Services as learning disabled, as well as those who can provide documentation of a current diagnosis of a learning disability, are eligible for services. Additional testing may be required to confirm eligibility and can be provided by Disability Services.

The following guidelines are used to diagnose a learning disability:

- Average or above-average intelligence.
- A permanent disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes. The disorder selectively interferes with integrating, acquiring, and/or demonstrating verbal and/or nonverbal abilities.
- Not primarily the result of auditory, visual, or motor impairment; inadequate learning opportunities; cultural deprivation; or emotional illness.
- Frequently associated with some type of processing and/or memory deficit.
- Frequently characterized by a wide discrepancy between ability and achievement.

To document a previously diagnosed learning disability, a student should provide a psychological assessment, educational testing results, and a copy of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) which specifies placement in a learning disabilities program. These documents will be reviewed by Disability Services staff to determine eligibility.

All students requesting academic services are interviewed by Disability Services counselors before a service plan is developed or initiated.

When to Ask for Help

The college curriculum amplifies a host of problems common to learning disabled students. These problems may be manifested in the following ways:

- Reading comprehension. Reading at a slow rate, rereading materials many times, or skipping lines of words.
- The main point of a passage may be missed, and subtle ideas may be extremely confusing.
- Written expression. The technical aspects of writing (spelling, punctuation, and syntax) frequently present difficulty. Organization may be a problem, weakening otherwise good ideas.
- Mathematics. Remembering the steps necessary to solve problems or transferring learned techniques to new situations may be difficult. Numbers are often reversed. Understanding and retaining symbolic information is troublesome. For example, "x" and "c" and "t" and "u" are often confused.
- Attention span. Sitting and studying for long periods of time may be difficult. Some students are easily distracted by even slight extraneous noise.
- Memory. Both short-term auditory and visual memory may suffer.
- Time management. Realistically organizing time on a daily and long-term basis can be a problem. Studying is not approached systematically but in spurts.
- Self-expression. Expressing ideas verbally and in an organized fashion may be troublesome. As a result, only fragments of relevant information are expressed, and in-depth and lengthy conversations are difficult to maintain. Responses are often ill-timed or inappropriate.
- Socialization. Social skills may be inadequate. Students may not maintain eye contact or have difficulty interpreting non-verbal messages, hand gestures, and auditory cues. As a result, the learning disabled student may respond inappropriately to others.

Not every learning disabled student will have the same problem, nor experience it to the same degree. Students experiencing academic difficulty can refer themselves, or advisors and professors can refer students to Disability Services. By working with Disability Services, each student can map an individual learning strategy designed to compensate for his or her specific difficulty.

What to Expect

Disability Services can arrange one or all of the following services for learning disabled students:

- Quiet studio space for examinations
- Extended examination time, usually time and a half, but up to twice the time typically allotted based on diagnosis
- Taped examinations
- Scribes who write down word-by-word verbatim during exams
- Oral examinations
- Individual academic and personal counseling
- Peer support groups for the development of academic strategies and psychosocial adjustment
- Computer resources for additional academic skill development and assistance
- Taped textbooks
- Priority academic scheduling
- Peer tutoring
- Diagnostic testing

In addition, Disability Services can provide information about other student support services sponsored by the University. Disability Services also serves as a liaison between students and the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation.
Students succeed in classes despite learning disabilities

By Marilyn Rinker
Lantern staff writer

Kathy Binau does well in English and reading comprehension but has problems remembering what she hears.

"I get the first part of a sequence, but miss the last part," said Binau, a sophomore from Loudonville.

She is not alone.

Reversing of numbers, loss of short-term memory, lack of expression of ideas, or difficulty with spelling or writing are some signs of a learning disability.

People with learning disabilities may not always be aware that they are not performing at their levels of intelligence, said Patty Carlton, a learning disabilities counselor.

Bright, educated people can have learning disabilities. It is a permanent disorder that can be compensated for by using various techniques.

The ability to excel in some areas and the lack of ability in other areas are often another disguise of the disorder.

Many students with disorders are reluctant to talk about it.

"I have a learning disability in auditory processing," said a psychology major, who did not want to be identified. To compensate for the disability, he said, "I write things down immediately and will borrow notes from other students to cross-reference with mine."

Learning disabilities are often inconsistent, obvious one day but not the next, causing problems in one area but not in another, Warner said.

Academic difficulties include:
- Dyscalculia — Inability to do math
- Dysgraphia — Inability to write
- Dyslexia — Inability to read

Carlton said through proper counseling and training, students are able to develop ways to help control their disability.

Textbooks recorded on tape and readers for exams are some of the services provided in the Office for Disability Services. Students can use the disability office's services and learn in a different way.

"I use the taped textbooks, which let you hear it while you read it," said a sophomore from Long Island, N.Y. with dyslexia, who did not want to be identified.

Another service available for the students with learning disabilities is the possibility of having time and a half on exams.

Mary Gerlow, assistant professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics, said she has had students use the exam service.

"I just send the exam to the disability services office signed and in a sealed envelope," she said.

"The test is administered, signed, and sent back to me, usually on the same day."

Student volunteers, usually from honors programs, provide extra help to students by serving as their scribe, tutor, or reader for an exam.

Carlton said, "The learning disability never goes away, but you can learn to compensate for it and people can become very successful."

Ohio State offers testing to students who have been referred by an academic adviser or a faculty member who recognizes a student’s problem.

The testing procedure is a three-day process, for two hours at a time. Sometimes additional testing is necessary for a final diagnosis.

A family history, medical history and a session with a counselor are included in the testing process.

An executive board in the Office for Disability Services reviews each case separately and determines if the student needs the services that are available.

Of the 350 students who use OSU’s learning disability services, about 75 percent are diagnosed as learning disabled by the Office for Disability Services, and only 25 percent enter the university already having been previously diagnosed, Carlton said.

Carlton said students with learning disabilities take the same classes as other students; however, they have access to the learning aids.
Disabilities show in college

By Kristi Maines
Lantern staff writer

Of all the OSU students who have a learning disability, 75 percent of them don’t find out until they get here.

"Approximately 450 students at Ohio State have a learning disability, probably more," said Debora Knapke, diagnostecian for learning disabilities at Ohio State.

A ten-week quarter in college is equivalent to one year of high school, so it is easier to get by with a learning disability in high school, Knapke said.

She said when students enter the university, it is a shocking experience because high school was so much easier.

One OSU freshman did not know he had a learning disability in high school.

On the first day of his English 050 class, his teacher referred him to the learning disability center for tests.

"We were taking a diagnostic essay to determine our level of ability, and my sentence structure was out of order," he said.

He went through a series of tests at the center and the diagnosticians discovered his problem.

"I have an auditory and visual learning disability. I see and hear everything, but I don’t process it completely, and it comes out differently on paper," he said.

He said when he visited his high school teachers after being diagnosed, they were surprised to find out his problem.

"A lot of them were shocked when they found out I had a learning disability. They just thought I was lazy and didn’t want to put forth the effort to learn," he said.

If his problem would have been discovered in high school, he said, he thinks he would have been more academically and emotionally prepared for college.

"I would have learned how to deal with it," he said.

Knapke said most students who are tested for learning disabilities do not have one.

"A learning disability is the least likely reason of academic difficulty," Knapke said.

She attributes most academic problems to a lack of basic learning skills and lack of motivation.

Some high schools, however, do not have learning disability programs, Knapke said.

She said most of these schools do not have the time or professionally trained staff to test all students.

As a result, only students who are suspected of learning disabilities are tested, she said.

"Approximately 25 percent of the students are diagnosed in high school," Knapke said.

Public schools are required by law to test all persons suspected of having learning disabilities.

Bishop Ready High School, a private school, does not have a learning disability program.

"We don’t have the staff to develop a program," said Joe Palazzo, guidance counselor.

Palazzo said he thinks small schools have the flexibility to make some kind of adjustment in a student's learning program.

"Most schools don’t have this kind of flexibility," he said.

One student who has a learning disability at the school takes regular classes.

"We just indicate to the teachers that his learning programs must be modified, and that he will be learning at a slower rate than other students," Palazzo said.

Knapke said parents should take their children to an educational specialist or psychologist if their high school does not have a learning disability program.

"Any program is beneficial depending upon how much the student uses the resources available to him," she said.
Special teachers help push Watson

While sitting out the basketball season under Proposition 48, the OSU freshman is trying to beat a learning disability.

By Mike Sullivan
Dispatch Sports Reporter

The Antonio Watson All-Stars are coached by Warren King.

One of their strongest five-player rotations features Patsy Carlton, Mark Maxwell, Lydia Block, Lois Burke and Jim Baker.

They don't play basketball, but they spend a lot of time slamming-dunking obstacles to academic achievement for Ohio State students.

And if Watson, a 6-foot-9 freshman from Eastmoor, plays basketball for the Buckeyes next season, the All-Stars will be due a massive high-five.

"Warren King is the director of the university's Disability Services," said Larry Romanoff, OSU director of academic/athletic counseling. "They couldn't do more for the kids. They go out of their way."

"I wish I could give you all their names, because they're that good. People don't know how much they do for students and for their self-esteem. They're so attuned to helping students find themselves, finding a way to get that intelligence out."

Watson has a learning disability that was a factor in keeping his entrance test scores below the minimum required for athletic eligibility.

Under the NCAA's Proposition 48 legislation, he cannot go on scholarship until next season and cannot practice with the Buckeyes.

"It's a kind of dyslexia," Watson said. "It was recognized back in the fifth grade, but I don't think they knew as much about it back then.

"I have a reading problem with words and numbers, but mostly with numbers. Coming out of high school, I was behind. I almost failed the entrance exam, but I prepared myself for the consequences if I didn't."

"With the help I'm getting now, I'm going to catch up and keep up, with my math and with everything else. There was a time when I thought about going to a junior college so I could play right away. But I know that a lot of guys from Columbus Public Schools go to juco's and you never hear about them again.

"Watson was heard about a lot last season. Bob Gibbons, a national recruiting analyst, compared him to James Worthy at a similar stage, and his name grace the top 20 of several best-prospects lists."

It has been a different, much quieter scenario lately.

This fall, Watson was dropped off five days a week at the OSU campus at 7 a.m. by his mother, Mrs. Gloria Watson, on her way to work. With his first class at 10 most mornings, he would spend the time studying and waiting.

Watson lifts weights on his own three days a week. Prop. 48 rules prohibit him from even watching practice.

"I'm not playing in intramurals," Watson said. "Coach (Randi) Ayers wants me staying strictly with the books, so all I do is shoot on my own, I'll say one thing -- it's made me a three-point threat."

Romanoff said Watson's first-quarter grade-point average for 18 hours of courses was in the range -- 2.5 to 3.0 -- needed to establish a solid foundation.

"If you can get that or go above it, you're not fighting uphill as much," Romanoff said. "It's the most critical quarter because you go from high school study habits to the ones you need in college."

"It's going to be a struggle, because it's not like somebody who comes in with a 3.8. He has to do more than the average kid. But Antonio has shown that with help he can go a long way."

"These students do have average and above-average intelligence, and they can perform at the university level. I could go on and on about the ones who have made it, who have graduated."

Watson said the last time he stayed away from basketball this long was the year before he entered fifth grade at West Broad Elementary.

"It hurts to sit out," he said. "I watch the games and I can see myself fitting in with all the guys. Your desire builds up, but you've got to keep it on hold. Even though it's frustrating, you suck in your gut and dedicate yourself to the books.

"My mother and I talk a lot about my goals, about what I want to get out of school. I told her I'm going to work hard until I can do both ends of it. Next year, it's going to be books and basketball."

Romanoff said OSU's Academic Support Program, headed by Michelle Davis, teams with Disability Services to help students in Watson's situation.

"Michelle has made herself very aware of all students who come in at risk," Romanoff said. "She's selected some great teachers who push these kids to learn without giving them anything, and that takes a special teacher."

"There isn't a better retention program in the country. Everything is covered -- study habits, stress management, how to take tests."

Watson, who has used weight lifting to go from 195 pounds to 210, said the stress is something he can handle.

"Taking those 18 hours wasn't easy, but I got through it," he said.

"I'm looking forward to the next couple of quarters. I'm going to cheer the guys on and wait my turn."

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