# TRANSCRIPT: Connecting With SAS: Course Selection Webinar (Recorded June 24, 2024)

Alright, good morning everyone, and welcome to our connecting with Student Accessibility Services session focusing on course selection. We're happy that you're able to join us today. Today we will be welcoming you to SAS services, reviewing our supports and services, and things to consider as well as some of our summer events. Feel free to ask questions in the Q&A and we will get to them as soon as we can throughout the presentation. Please ensure that general questions about our processes, as we can't answer individualized questions in the Q&A. I will put a message in there shortly so you know where you can ask questions, and I'll hand it over to Sonia now to get us started.

Thanks, Kayen. Hi everyone, again a warm welcome to our session on course selection information. My name is Sonia White and I am one of the intake advisers with SAS. I would just like to have a big thank you to a lot of our staff that are behind the scenes. As Kate was mentioning, we have a number of SAS staff members who are helping out in the background with some Q&A, so we have lots of people that are helping out today so let's get started. What are we going to review today? Our main focus on this session isn't about your specific accommodations but it's really about connecting with us, making sure you know how to register, some things to consider around full-time or part-time studies, what does that mean for reduced course load, how can you get help, what are the resources that are available to you on campus, and any next steps. There are some other sessions that are more specific around connecting with SAS around accommodations and I would encourage you to check out some of those dates on our website that are happening in July as well. This will just be kind of a general overview.

So, what is SAS? Well first of all, sometimes some people are maybe a little uncomfortable with the word disability but for today and for our purposes, we're using it in the legal sense. There is something going on with a person in terms of their health or the way that they learn that may affect them in their academics and it presents some kind of barriers. Therefore, it's appropriate to have accommodations for that particular person in their academic environment. Here's a list of some of the examples of disabilities. Some are permanent, some may be temporary, and obviously this isn't an exhaustive list but just to give you some kind of idea of some of the disability types for people that we support. Essentially, we help address structural barriers when a disability is affecting a student's functioning. Some of those things that we would talk to you about are how courses are set up, some of the academic policy work, how does the disability maybe interfere with all of the jobs really that are associated with being a student like getting to class and learning in class, following those policies, and understanding those procedures. It would involve maybe helping to arrange some of the academic accommodations. Now, for new students to the University, this might feel a little bit different than how things were done in high school so we aren't going to just decide and tell you what accommodations you're eligible to receive but we discuss those accommodations and it's based on your documentation, what your concerns are, certainly you provide some input into what has worked in the past and just keep in mind, we may not be able to duplicate all of the accommodations that you received in high school but we'll talk to you about other ways that we can help.

So, why you might be wondering is there a difference between, well how come I can't just have the accommodations that I had in my last year of high school and so it's important to understand there's a different mandate between the Ministry of Education who looks after sort of the responsibilities of secondary school and your IEP compared to the way things are done at the post-secondary level where we have to use guidelines from the ministry of colleges and universities. Accommodations are based on you and your unique disability needs and the course demands. They're not based on what your friends get and so we work together to get this set up. The key thing for accommodations is we do not change the academic requirements of a course or your degree. You still have to meet the same requirements as a student registered with Student Accessibility Services as any other student who isn't registered with our department. There are some accommodations we cannot put in place because that would change the requirement of the course and so ultimately you want to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts or Science or Commerce and nowhere will it say with accommodations. For that reason, the expectation is that everyone has met the same requirements for their degree. Again, this is just one of the key distinctions between the ministries that I've mentioned.

Sonia, I just wanted to let you know quickly that we can't see your slides progressing so we just still see the title slide, thank you.

Okay, how's that?

Great, now we see that, what we're gonna review today, what is SAS, thank you, Kate. Sorry, it was advancing on my screen but I didn't realize you weren't seeing that, so thank you for letting me know. Sorry, everybody. So from now, now that you can see all the slides, let's carry on, what are the steps. So let's quickly review registering with SAS. We again, we have some other sessions. There was a session at 12:00 this afternoon that was specifically on courses but let's take a look at what do you need to do in order to register with SAS. There is an online application that you would submit as step one. How do we know you've completed this 14 question application? Some people get quite nervous, they click submit and they're not sure if we've received it. You will receive an automatic email with a confirmation that says yes, we've received your application. It takes about 10 to 12 business days for us to look through the applications and your supporting documentation. In that email, let's say you haven't had a chance to get your particular form filled out from a healthcare professional for your disability, there's going to be a customized link that you can go back to in that email so that you can upload that documentation at a later time if you need to. Ideally, steps one and two are done together but again, don't panic if you need a little bit of extra time to get some of the required documentation, you can always go back and upload that. If you're not sure about what documentation to provide, we will certainly send you an email once we've had a chance to look at your application just to confirm we need this kind of form or this kind of report. Those are steps one and two, really important. Step three would be to attend orientation. There are two kinds of orientations. There's one that will happen on campus for every single first-year student, that's kind of the main orientation but when we refer to our department's orientation, it's called Start Accessible and it happens on August 29th and the 30th. This is a great opportunity to connect with things on campus and SAS in general, become familiar with some of our procedures, plus, if you're approved to move into residence, you can move in early, which is really great so you're not running up and down the steps with 750 other students. You get to move in a little bit early which is kind of a nice bonus as part of the orientation. You will also get to meet your advisor, again, so you'll receive that email if you've submitted all your documentation with the name of your advisor and you're going to have information to say I want you to book an appointment to meet with this particular person. You'll call the front desk, there'll be a phone number and an extension that you can call to book your appointment to see that advisor so please make sure you wait until you get that email with that information because if you call the front desk now and you haven't been assigned, it'll just get quite confusing. You want to make sure you know who your assigned advisor is and those advisors have different availability so the front desk will be able to book you in as soon as it works for you.

When all of those steps are completed, so you've completed your application, you've submitted your documentation, you're going to get your email that says hey, here's your advisor, I want you to book an appointment, that's when you'll decide with your advisor what accommodations you're eligible to receive and then you'll be able to activate some of those accommodations. We'll talk a little bit about that in a few more slides. Just wanted to pause just to make sure, are there any questions from any of the audience members or maybe our staff is... okay, anything that's happening in the background, one really common question that comes up is about, well, what if I don't submit my application until July or the end of August and of course, we will continue to receive applications for students to register with us. Obviously, if you reach out to us maybe in the first week of September, that would not give us enough time to get everything set up for you for exams in the fall semester so that's why we encourage you to make sure you get this completed as soon as you can. Thank you.