

Anastasia Sofianopoulou, Alejandro Pino, Georgios Kouroupetroglou and Anastasia Kalantzi-Azizi

Accessibility Unit for Students with Disabilities: mission, services and the 3-year experience from the psychological counseling service

The Accessibility Unit for Students with Disabilities of the University of Athens was established in 2007. The mission of the Accessibility Unit is to actively realize coequal access to academic studies for students with different abilities and needs, through environmental modifications, Assistive Technology and access services. The Accessibility Unit is addressed to the about 1000 students with disabilities of the University of Athens. The following services are provided in a regular basis: evaluation of students' abilities, provision of personal Assistive Technologies, accessible workstations in University libraries, organization of volunteer work for helping the disabled students, Video Relay Service for deaf students, production and distribution of accessible educational material, everyday transportation to the University of students with severe mobility impairments, and personal and group psychological counseling. The Psychological Counseling Service aims to facilitate students' academic adjustment and performance, by offering psychosocial support, counseling and psychotherapy. Students with disabilities, who face difficulties in their personal and social relationships, academic difficulties, exam stress, anxiety and other difficulties, can be referred to the service. Individual counseling sessions (face-to-face and web-based) as well as structured group intervention programs (e.g. stress management, anger management, social skills training) are offered. Experiences from the Psychological Counseling Service are discussed and future activities are presented.