

**Student #2: Serena Jones**

*(Image source: Flickr Creative Commons)*

Serena is a 19 year old who wants to be teacher. She is differently abled, lives independently, and works a part-time job at the corner market down the street from her apartment. She is a new student.

Serena focused all her efforts on her high school studies when she lived at home. She recognized the extra time she needed to be successful in the classroom. She challenged herself while in high school with general education classes. She has excellent verbal skills and her desire to gain knowledge of words and their meanings created a great foundation for Serena in her quest for academic success. However, Serena frequently forgot what she wanted to write because of the focus on spelling which was an area of academic concern. This is similar to a student being so focused on decoding words they miss their own comprehension.

In the tenth grade she started using a recorder to verbally record her written assignments and later transposed them into written documents using the computer with spell check. She struggled with numbers, geometric shapes, and spelling. Serena learned coping strategies that involved creating note cards and use of spatial integration techniques to grasp the concepts of geometry. She spent the summer of her senior year working at a nearby vocational education center and was successful in landing a job at her neighborhood corner market. She has her high school degree.

Serena is excited to be at Cabrillo, because no one knows she is differently abled. At the market where she works, she has been called "slow" because it takes her longer to learn a task. She is excited to be looked at as an equal in the classroom, and has decided not to use her recorder or note cards so people won't know about her disability.

​At her initial counseling appointment, Serena also did not disclose her learning challenges.​

Serena assessed into ENGL 100 and is carrying a full load her first semester, including English. When the semester started, Serena did not realize she needed to be eligible for services to receive accommodations. Her English class syllabus contained a paragraph about this, but she thought she could be successful in the class without ASC services. After a couple of weeks, she realized she had trouble keeping up with the pace of the instructor, and raised her hand a lot to ask questions. On timed essay assessments, she never finished because it took her much longer to process the information, and she wasn't able to check her spelling. ​ Because of Serena's high verbal skills, her instructors missed the red flags about her abilities and simply thought she wasn't working hard enough.​

Halfway through the term, Serena was passing her kinesiology and art classes, but not her English, history, and sociology classes. She didn't keep on top of her grades, and it was a classmate who showed her how to check her grades in Canvas just before midterms. She was losing her confidence fast, and instead of sharing her disappointment with her instructors, she stopped attending her English, history, and sociology classes. Serena received 3 failing grades because she didn't withdraw, and was not dropped for not attending class. She is facing academic probation. Her desire to continue at Cabrillo was disappearing.

What could Serena have done earlier in her Cabrillo career to prevent getting on academic probation and then dismissal? What services​ and/or ​interventions could have helped her? How could she have connected to these services?