

NMSU DISABILITY ACCESS SERVICES OFFICE

INSTRUCTIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH SEIZURE DISORDERS

(Note: Most students who have seizures will provide you with a checklist of what to do for them in the event they have a seizure. If they do not, ask them to do this for you.)

Seizures:

Seizures have different causes and vary considerably in appearance. Students with epilepsy or other seizure disorders should talk to you at the beginning of the semester to let you know what symptoms they have and what you should do. The degree of severity ranges from a brief staring episode to a grand mal seizure. The latter is the more frightening to observe. Being aware of the following will be of great assistance to you if this occurs in your class.

- ❖ **Call 911 immediately**—Be prepared to give the following information to the dispatcher and wait for instructions:
 - who is calling;
 - exact location of the emergency;
 - what has happened and what is being done.
 - Station someone outside the building to direct emergency personnel to the scene.
- ❖ Don't panic. Seizures are usually short and not life threatening.
- ❖ Protect the person from injury by removing sharp or solid objects, chairs or desks, not letting a crowd form, and placing a towel or coat under the person's head if needed for protection.
- ❖ Keep the person's airway open. If necessary, grip the person's jaw gently and tilt his or her head back.
- ❖ Do not try to force anything into the mouth, not even medicine or liquid. These can cause choking or damage to the person's jaw, tongue or teeth. Contrary to widespread belief, people cannot swallow their tongues during a seizure.
- ❖ If a person seems to be having trouble breathing, loosen any tight clothing around the neck, turn the person on his or her side; or from behind, push the lower jaw up and out; or tilt the head back to open the airway.
- ❖ Following a seizure, the person may be sleepy or confused.
- ❖ Stay with the person until a trained professional arrives.
- ❖ Email the Student Assistance Services Office at sasservices@nmsu.edu with a written narrative of information provided to 911.

(Updated Feb 2025)