Inclusion, Access, & Accommodations for Students with Disabilities/Disableld Students

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☆ Checking Access

- We all have access needs!
  - Recognizing wholeness
  - Disrupts assumptions of ability
  - Collective responsibility
- Address barriers preemptively
  - Do whatever helps you engage!
  - Share your name/pronouns before talking
  - Other access needs?

The Future is Accessible

☆ Agenda

- Welcome and introductions.
- Reframing disability, addressing the Social Model of Disability & acknowledging how Ableism shows up on our campus.
- DRC overview and accommodation processes.
- Unpacking the high school to college transition and how accommodation may different in both environments.
- Connecting with the DRC
- Q & A

☆ Community Grounding Assumptions

- We respect each other's confidentiality; pay attention to what yours to share and what's not. Speak from your own personal experiences.
- There are no quick fixes. This is hard, but okay. We need to accept non-closure and continue to grow when it's accessible for us.
- Unlearning is hard, but important to lean into.
- Self-work, healing, and self-love are necessary for the acceptance of others.

☆ Defining Terms

- **Invisible/Invisibilized disability**: disabilities not readily visible when you see or meet a person, for example, debilitating pain, fatigue, cognitive impacts, brain injuries, mental health impacts, as well as hearing and vision impacts.
- **Neurodiversity**: the idea that there is no single, perfect ideal of what a human mind or brain should be: that, on the contrary, the existence of diversity of minds and brains is necessary for human societies to flourish.
- **Neurodivergent**: having brain that functions in a way that diverges significantly from the dominant societal standards of "normal."

☆ Defining Terms

- **Neurotypical**: having a single neurocognitive functioning that falls within the dominant societal standards of "normal."
- **Ableism**: systematic, institutional devaluing of bodies and minds deemed deviant, abnormal, defective, subhuman, less than.
- **Disability Justice**: challenges the idea that our worth has to do with our ability to perform as productive members of society. It insists that our worth is inherent and tied to the liberation of all beings.

☆ Perceptions about Disability

Yes👍🏾
No 👏🏼

- I was taught that most disabled people are born with their disability.
- I was taught that most disabilities are visible.
- I was taught that disability conditions are stable and consistent.

☆ Two Important Factors about Disability

People often have multiple disabilities.

For example, someone with cerebral palsy could have impaired speech, mobility and manual dexterity.

83% of disabled people were not born with their disability.

Instead, they acquired it through their life by illness or accident. This can happen to anyone.
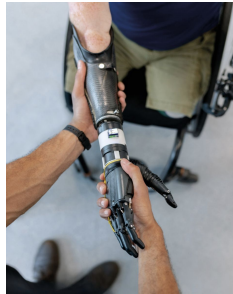
☆ Different Models of Disability

- **Moral Model**: disability = wrong — Ugly Laws, Faith Healing.
- **Charity Model**: disability = tragic — telethons, pity, institutional "care."
- **Medicalization/Medical Model**: disability = sick — DSM, idea is to cure/fix/prevent
- **Rehab Model**: disability = abnormal — FDR, normalization surgeries

☆ The Social Model of Disability

- The disabling features of disability stem from societal assumptions, stigmas, and environments that are systemic and physical, rather than the disability itself. These structures may exclude, allow violence, discriminates against, and stigmatizes individuals.

- It's vital to remember that individual and cultural experiences, natural human differences, and oppression/violence can impact/inform disability.

What Disability Advocates Know

- **Disability is a commonly occurring aspect of diversity**
- **Ableism is the problem**
- Disability is determined by society
  - Environments dis-able
  - Ableist norms dis-able
- Society needs fixed, not necessarily diverse bodyminds
- Access is a right, not a "special" need
  - Access is not enough

☆ The Definition of Disability

The Americans with Disability Act as Amended states that a disability is a physical or mental impairment that **substantially** limits one or more major life activities that can include:

sleeping, walking, self-care, breathing seeing, learning, standing, reading, etc.

☆ Disability in Higher Education

Yes👍🏾
No 👋

- I've been in chats where the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is discussed as allowing disabled people can be hired/admitted with different standards.
- I've been told that students are required to provide DRC letters to instructors at the beginning of the semester and instructors are required to accommodate.
- I've been in conversations where colleagues discuss accommodations as unfair advantages.

☆ Understanding Ableism

"A system of assigning value to people's bodies and minds based on societally constructed ideas of normalcy, productivity, desirability, intelligence, excellence, and fitness. These constructed ideas are deeply rooted in eugenics, anti-Blackness, misogyny, colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism...You do not have to be disabled to experience ableism."

- TL Lewis, with BIPOC disabled community, 2022

☆ Four Levels of Ableism

1. **Internalized** - Student who thinks "there is something wrong with me because I am the last student to finish the exam. I'm just not smart enough." Consequence: Student does not seek access support, hinders self-advocacy, persistence is jeopardized

2. **Interpersonal** - Course policy stating that late work is disrespectful and will not be accepted because students need to learn how to prioritize and manage their time "in the real world." Consequence: Attitudinal barrier preventing accommodations from being leveraged

3. **Institutional** - 13+ credit course load expectations with 4 year time to degree. Consequences: unmanageable course loads, failing grades, drop out.

4. **Systemic** - An accommodation process requiring: time, energy; access to resources; diagnostic processes; bureaucratic knowledges; allowance and entitlement; self-advocacy skills. Consequences: The most marginalized remain unsupported.

How Ableism Shows Up On & Off Our Campus

- Ableist language is used by many of us everyday, often without realizing it: words like lame, crazy, crippled.
- We often share the stories of disabled people without their consent, and we often ignore the disabled person's ability to communicate.
  - Looking at an ASL interpreter instead of the Deaf person
  - Pushing someone in a wheelchair/helping without consent
- Often ignoring intersectionality

How Ableism Shows Up On & Off Our Campus

- Stairs being the normative way to travel/"short" five minute breaks (physical access).
- Information only being available in print (informational access).
- "Common sense" (attitudinal access).
- The 13 Credit policy (programmatic/policy access).
- Can you identify any others on our campus?

☆What Comes to Mind when You Think About your Student Progressing in their Education?

- Are there things you're/they're excited for?
- What there things you're/they're anxious about?

☆ High School to College Transition

- Things to keep in mind when you're thinking about/planning for college
  - Institutional fit
  - Skill development
  - Capital — social, resource, etc

☆ Notes of Skill Building

- How do you define self-advocacy? Self-determination?
- Why is skill important, and why is it essential to start exploring building these skills now?
  - It disrupts the notion that we all have the same needs and is an act of social justice.
  - You get to make your own decisions and determinations.
  - Learn that no is a full sentence.
  - Express disagreement respectfully and work through conflict.

☆ Importance of Addressing Skill Building While Moving Through the Educational System

- Supports in addressing barriers early.
- Develop connections with resources.
- Allows for a more meaningful connection to the best institutional fit.
- Builds self-advocacy skills.

☆ K-12 vs College

K-12 (IDEA)	College (ADA)
IEP or 504 Plan	Accommodation Letter
Accommodations are determined and arranged by your IEP or 504 Plan case manager.	Accommodations are determined through the interactive process (student, faculty, and AC).
School's responsibility to share IEP or 504 Plan with teachers.	Student's responsibility to share accommodation letter with instructors.
Parents/Guardians are usually involved.	Parents/Guardians are not usually involved (unless you fill out a ROI form).
School is responsible for arranging interpreting and captioning services.	Student is responsible for arranging interpreting and captioning services
Personal tech & services (i.e batteries, devices, supports) provided by School	Personal tech & services (i.e computers, PCA's, hearing devices, etc.) provided by the student

☆ The Disability Resource Center (DRC):

Facilitates access via accommodation support and encouragement to explore resources/strategies and skill-building.

- ○ Student Access — Currently supporting over 6,500+ students
- ○ UReturn — Currently supporting over 2,500+ staff/faculty
- ○ Also supports University guests/visitors

Support can include: connecting students to resources, testing, access assistants, document conversion, interpreting/captioning, accessible technologies, physical access.

☆ DRC Role

- The Student Access team focuses on confidential consultations focusing on:
  - Self -report
  - Impacts and barriers
  - Accommodation history
  - Documentation
- Building compensatory strategies/skills
- Determine reasonable access

☆ Common Barriers & Accommodations

Barriers	Accommodation
Distraction, attention, worry, intrusive thoughts, noise, overstimulation	Low-distraction testing environment
Slow processing speed, symptom management, focus, concentration	Deadline extensions
Unpredictable episode	Attendance modifications
Difficulty with social interactions	Modification of participation
Need for clear guidance, feedback on independent processes and paper topics, being accountable	Regular feedback sessions
Distraction, difficulties with sequencing information, or listening and writing at same time	Peer note taker/notes in advance

☆ Connecting with the DRC

- We're located in suite 170 of the McNamara Alumni Center.
- Email DRC@umn.edu to schedule a consultation appointment.
- Bring documentation if it's available.
- Learn more about the DRC at disability.umn.edu

☆ Disabled Student Cultural Center

- Room 213 CMU
- 11 am- 9pm on Tuesdays
- 11 am- 7pm M,W,T,F
- Sensory Room, Game nights, Caffeine Connection

dscc@umn.edu
linktr.ee/DSCC
discord.gg/rWPTndy9r6
@dscc_umn

Questions?

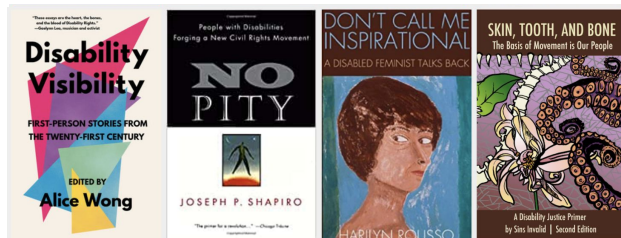## Thank you for sharing space with us.

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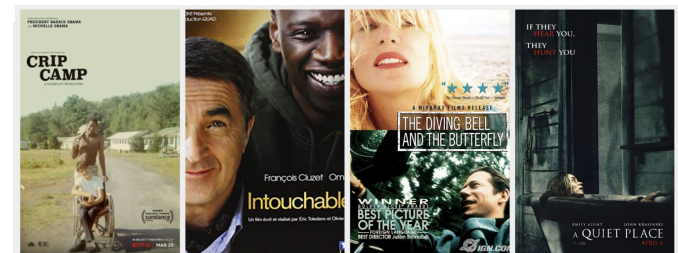Access Consultant, Student Access

Disability Positive Books for Students

Disability Positive Books for Adults & Educators

Disability Positive Movies

Podcasts on Disability Justice