Students with Disabilities
the DRC, accommodations, and UDL

Faculty Commons, 4/2/15
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Agenda

Part 1
- Students Served and Not Served
- DRC Process
- Accommodations, Typical and Atypical
- Apparent v. Non-Apparent Disabilities
- Working with Non-Apparent Disabilities
- Best Practices for Working with Students with Disabilities

Break

Part 2
- Universal Design: Visuals
- Universal Design: Small Group Discussions
- Universal Design: Canvas
- Universal Design: Assessment
This presentation role models Universal Design

Presenting in Universal Design is often the opposite of how people are taught to present, so this may be different...

Large-print & general copies going around - please pass along if you don’t need, take if you do
Students Served

- The DRC serves any student with a documented disability

  - “a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits major life activities; has a record of such an impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment.”

  - physical disabilities
  - mental health (including addictions)
  - learning disabilities
  - vision impairments
  - hearing impairments
  - language/communication disabilities
  - neurological impairments
  - chronic health conditions
Students Not Served

- DRC has just under 1,200 students currently
- Any idea the percentage of the US that the Census indicates has a disability?
  - 20% of general population, 16.6% for the age population on campus
  - means BC has estimated 5,644 students with disabilities
  - means an estimated 4,444 students with disabilities who are not registered with DRC
Our Process

1. Submit a 1-time DRC Intake Form
2. Submit Documentation
   - from the last 3-5 years
   - include a diagnosis
3. Participate in an Intake Appointment
   - discuss with a specialist which accommodations are appropriate
4. Submit a Quarterly Request for Accommodations Form
5. Submit Additional Forms (if needed)
6. DRC sends out Letter of Accommodation (LoA) to instructors
Accommodations

- reasonable, as determined by DRC Specialist and/or Director
- cannot fundamentally alter program, as determined collaboratively by DRC and faculty
- required by law
- are FERPA-protected
  - disclosed on need to know basis
  - disability diagnosis is also FERPA-protected and even more rarely disclosed without student approval
- DRC is always open to clarification or answering questions about accommodations
Typical Accommodations

- What accommodations have you worked with?
- What accommodations have you had questions regarding?
Typical Accommodations

- alternative testing
  - extended time, reduced distraction environment
- volunteer note taker or scribe
- text-to-speech or speech-to-text software
- alternative media
  - Braille, large-print, audio version
- copies of instructor notes
- copies of overheads/PowerPoints, etc.
- ability to audio or video record lecture
- ability to take breaks in classroom, group work, in exams
- ability to have instructor-approved note card for exams
Atypical Accommodations

- atypical because they’re **not required, but recommended**
- not uncommon but also not commonly given to students

**Advocacy**
- given to students for whom it’s difficult to discuss their situation or advocate for themselves
- difficulty may be from disability or history of negative experiences

**Flexibility**
- given to students who have a disability that unexpectedly ‘flares up’ causing them to miss class or work
- is **recommended, not required** because altering of classroom attendance requirements, assignment or exam dates **may** be considered fundamental
Apparent v. Non-Apparent

What would you consider an apparent versus a non-apparent disability?
Non-Apparent Disabilities

- Autism Spectrum: Asperger’s, Autism, pervasive developmental disorder - not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS)
- Mental Health: depression, bipolar, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), generalized anxiety
- Chronic Health Conditions: Crohn’s, irritable bowel syndrome, renal failure, migraines, diabetes, hypoglycemia, sleep disorders, epilepsy, allergies, multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis, cancer
- Learning Disabilities: dyslexia (understanding written language), dyscalculia (understanding math), dysgraphia (ability to write, organize), dyspraxia (coordination, movement), attention deficient disorder (ADD)
- Physical Disabilities: back injuries, chronic pain, low muscle tone, low vision
Apparent v. Non-Apparent

- What would you consider an apparent versus a non-apparent disability?
- How might the student experience differ if they have an apparent versus a non-apparent disability?
Your colleagues say:

- I work hard to take the students at their word when they come to me to explain accommodations or issues they are having. I also try to imagine what it would be like if I were in their shoes (although this is often hard because I only know that they are struggling with a disability but I don't know what it is, and likely wouldn't understand it fully if I did).

- Allowing an explanation can make a difference of a satisfactory conclusion or an unhappy student, and when a student is really trying hard it can help to slow down and listen. It's important to remember that many of our neurologically diverse students are the brightest students in the room, they are just sometimes less successful at communication.
Best Practices for Working with Students with Disabilities

- What best practices do you have?
Best Practices for Working with Students with Disabilities

- assume competence
- assume best intentions
- patience
- observation
- ask appropriate questions for clarity and to build rapport, listen
  - “What is your disability?” is not appropriate
- offer alternate means of communication (e.g. writing down, email communication)
- respond to the individual, not the disability or behaviors
- be flexible instead of ‘This is how things are done.’
- Universal Design
Best Practices for Working with Students with Disabilities

- What best practices do you have?
- How many of the best practices discussed are truly different for working with students versus working with students with disabilities?
Working with Non-Apparent Disabilities

- Get into groups of 3 or 4 and review the situation given to you. You’ll have 10 minutes to discuss these questions:
  - What potential disabilities could be involved?
  - How might you respond to the situation?
  - What resources do you have available to you?
Break

- Take five minutes
- When we come back: Universal Design!
Universal Design for Learning

- Originated in architecture, adapted to educational settings
  - courses are built to be inclusive from the start - not a retrofit
  - inclusive teaching designed to lessen the need for accommodations
  - does not get rid of all needs for accommodations
  - helps address vision- and hearing-related disabilities
  - easy to implement
We’re taught:
- to put major points on slides, minimal details
- elaborate verbally
- don’t describe pictures
- find a video online for support
- refer to graphs generally

Who might this negatively impact?
- Deaf students: can’t hear your verbal points or video
- English language learners: harder to learn a language when only seen or heard
- visual learners: since most information is given in auditory format
UDL: Visuals

- **Best Practices**
  - put all points on slide (don’t need full sentences)
  - cover each point (don’t have to read verbatim)
  - describe pictures briefly
  - describe the graph trends you’re referencing
  - use captioned videos
  - use break-apart pie graphs if possible
  - Think of something new? Write it on the board in large print!
UDL: Visuals

- Pictures
  - instead of “You can see from the picture people were interested in a suicidal ideation study”
  - use “Here we have a flyer and the main line reads, ‘Are you feeling suicidal but resisting harming yourself? We want to hear from you!’ Along the bottom are tear off papers with contact information and three of them have been taken.”
  - don’t have to describe pictures that don’t relate to content
UDL: Visuals

Your turn!

Patrick Family Budget

- Clothing: 10%
- Transportation: 15%
- Rent and Utilities: 35%
- Savings: 10%
- Food: 25%
- Other: 5%
UDL: Visuals

- We’re taught
  - students can take their own notes
  - sustainability - reduce paper printing

- Who might this negatively impact?
  - Blind or low vision: can’t see the board
  - English language learners: may get behind focusing on writing in new language instead of noting important/focus points and taking in information
  - students who need more time to process information, visual learners: may get behind taking full notes instead of noting important/focus points and taking in information
UDL: Visuals

Best Practices

- print double sided
- print out a few copies (3 per 10 people)
- print out fewer large print copies (1 per 10 people)
- send around handouts, “take one if you need one” or have in two piles upon entry
UDL: Visuals

- We’re taught
  - be creative with background and fonts

- Who might this negatively impact?
  - Visual impairments: can’t read low contrast or complicated fonts
  - anyone who has difficulty focusing in general or finding pertinent information (incl. ADD/ADHD, anxiety, Autism)

- Patterned Background
- Green Font
- Smaller Font
- Low Color Contrast
- Serif Font

- Solid background
- Black or Dark Font
- Larger Font
- Higher Color Contrast
- Sans-Serif Font
UDL: Visuals

Best Practices

- use white, light grey or light tan background for text area, put fun background elsewhere
- use dark colors for fonts
- use sans serif fonts: Arial, Futura, Helvetica, Tahoma, Trebuchet
  - serif fonts: Times New Roman, Bookman Old Style
- don’t go below font size 22
- turn off PowerPoint autofit functions to preserve accessible font sizes
  - right click textbox > Format Text Effects > textbox icon > Do Not Autofit button
  - creating slides from original will apply this to all slides
- don’t cram information on one slide - use multiples to space out
UDL: Small Group Discussions

- We’re taught discussions...
  - can be done with any question
  - can be done on the fly, with no structure

- Who might this negatively impact?
  - people with hearing-related disabilities: cannot participate in group as readily as others
  - visual learners: since group discussions are auditory format
  - people with cognitive disabilities: difficult to process multiple speakers or jumping from one topic to the next that occurs more often in group discussions
UDL: Small Group Discussions

- Take two minutes to write down your thoughts on these questions:
  - How do you currently take into account people with disabilities when conducting a class discussion?
  - What ideas do you have, but don’t currently use, to include people with disabilities when conducting a class discussion?
  - What’s holding you back from using those ideas?

- be prepared to share orally or write down on a note for collection
UDL: Small Group Discussions

- Forms groups of 3 to 4
  - each person gets 2 minutes to share their thoughts
  - be prepared to share an overview orally or write down on a note for collection
ALL faculty are required to publish information on their Canvas sites

if you will not be using Canvas for your course, publish that on Canvas, along with other pertinent information
UDL: Canvas

- a Getting Started module is an integral part of a well-designed Canvas site

- What should be included?
  - syllabus - either in the Getting Starting Module or under the Syllabus Tab (or both)
  - course expectations
  - orientation lecture and/or quiz (extra credit?)
  - instructor bio
  - outcomes
  - college resources
  - book info

- What else do you include?
UDL: Canvas

- Canvas calendar
- Use the Canvas Calendar tool to post important dates
- All assignments in Canvas will appear on your Calendar if they are published through the Assignments Tab
Think of each assignment as one-stop shopping for your students...

What information do you think should go on each assignment page?

- assignment details
- outcomes
- submission directions
- links to outside information and/or readings
- grading rubric
Think about different ways students can submit assignments...

What are different ways a student could submit something?

- on paper
- online
- as an attachment
- audio recording, etc.
UDL: Canvas

- use **Text Headers** in the Modules for ease of organization and understanding.
- include information regarding course materials, assignments, additional content, etc. in each module for ease of access.
- if you make FILES and PAGES visible to your students, ensure that only what you want them to access is open for their viewing.
  - min 18 point font needed to ensure pdf is accessible.
UDL: Assessment

- 6 strategies you can start using now
  - change the name of the assessment to reduce anxiety
    - check-ins, reviews, inquiries, quizzes, practices
  - set clear expectations
    - provide both written and verbal deadlines, a grading rubric, an example of an A assignment
    - others?
  - provide multiple ways to demonstrate knowledge
    - multiple choices, essay, short answer, true/false questions, written paper, group work, take an oral assessment, record responses orally, take assessment online
    - others?
UDL: Assessment

- 6 strategies you can start using now
  - monitor and adjust instructional content and methods
    - plan for all types of learners to start
      - auditory (learning by hearing)
      - visual (learn by seeing)
      - kinesthetic (learn by doing)
    - do a learning styles test at the start of the course
  - assess time constraints
    - Announce assignments and post due dates well in advance
    - highlight or bring attention to assessment dates
    - when possible, allow as much time as possible to complete assessments
UDL: Assessment

- Plan for accommodations
  - always read Letter of Accommodations to understand each student’s accommodations, or call the DRC to ask for clarification
  - have your textbook list to be available to students prior to registration (Higher Educational Opportunity Act of 2008 requires this)
    - students may ask for this list so they can submit their Request for Alternative Media
  - be ready to make a paper copy of an online assessment, and vice versa
  - be sure to get the Test Proctoring Form and the assessment to the DRC prior to the student taking the assessment
  - What other ways do plan for accommodations?
Questions?

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