

Dear mother – started store several weeks I have grown considerably I don't look

like a Boy now Hows all the fold did you receive a Box of Books Memphis that he promised to send them languages

'Your son Al.




18 year old – considered MR –

turned out to be brilliant

really good tinkering

Thomas Alva Edison





A Guide for Faculty/staff Working With Students With Disabilities

What I Hope to Cover

- Definition of terms
- Attitudes toward disabilities – The Medical vs. Social model
- The role of students, faculty, and the Office of Disability Services in meeting the needs of students with disabilities
- A look at some types of Learning Disorders
- Several scenarios
- Your questions and concerns



Definition of Terms



What Constitutes a Disability?

A disability is defined in the Americans with disabilities act of 1990 and section 504 of the rehabilitation act of 1973 as:

A mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or major major life activities



What Is *Major Life Activity*?

According to section 504 of the rehabilitation act of 1973, a *major life activity* is defined as:

Caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, *learning*, and working



What Does *Substantially Limiting* Mean?

According to section 504 of the rehabilitation act of 1973, ***substantially limiting*** is defined as:

Being unable to perform a major life activity, or significantly restricted as to the condition, manner, or duration under which a major life activity can be performed, in comparison to the average person or to most people



Meaningful Access

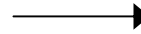
- Physical Environment
- Program/Policy Environment
- Information Environment
- Attitudinal Environment



Medical Model

Social Model

Disability is a deficiency or abnormality.



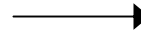
Disability is a difference. Being disabled, in itself, is neutral.

Disability resides in the individual.



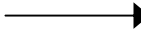
Disability derives from the interaction between the individual and society.

The remedy is cure or normalization of the individual.



The remedy is a change in the interaction between the individual and society.

The agent of remedy is the professional.



The agent of remedy can be the individual, an advocate, or anyone who affects the arrangements between the individual and society

**Carol Gill, Director
Chicago Institute of Disability Research**



Growth Within the Student Population With Disabilities

- Increase in students reporting disabilities
 - Greater awareness
 - Better treatment such as medications allowing them to attend classes
 - Longer history of receiving services due to earlier diagnosis
- Increase in types of disabilities
 - Aspergers/Nonverbal disabilities
 - Fibromyalgia and Chronic fatigue
 - AIDS/HIV
 - Psychological disorders





Disability Services

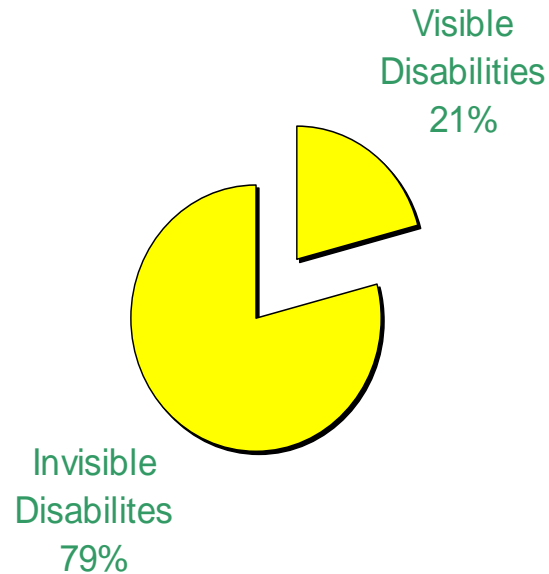
The College/University

Students

Faculty



Percentages of Students With Visible and Nonvisible Disabilities



What are Nonvisable Disabilities?

Nonvisable disabilities are physical or mental impairments that are not readily apparent to others.

Approximately four million students with disabilities are enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools in the US. Of these

- 43% are students classified as learning disabled,
- 8% as emotionally disturbed and
- 1% as other health impaired.

These hidden disabilities often cannot be readily known without the administration of appropriate diagnostic test (Office of Civil Right, 1995)



Examples of Nonvisible Disabilities

- Deaf/Hard of Hearing
- Learning Disabilities
- Attention Deficit Disorders
- Asperger's Syndrome and non-verbal disabilities
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Psychological Disorders



Issues With Nonvisable Disabilities

- “Passing”
- May not belong in either world
- Erratic nature of disability
- Need to “prove” disability
- Decision to disclose



Disclosure fears

- Will be treated differently.
- May impact getting a residency, job, or internship
- Will raise questions regarding being qualified





Student's Role

- Provide medical and/or psychological documentation to Disability Services.
- Participate in process of determining and implementing reasonable accommodations.
- Inform Disability Services when accommodations are not working, need to be modified or symptoms change.



Rights and Responsibilities

Students have the right to

- receive accommodations in a timely manner
- confidentiality.
 - Students should have the opportunity to meet privately with faculty to discuss needed accommodations and any other concerns.
- the right to fail.
 - The student has the right to the same expectations held for the rest of the class.



Reasonable Accommodations

- A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a course, program, service, job, facility, or activity that enables a qualified person with a disability to have an equal opportunity to participate.
- Institutions are obligated to make reasonable accommodations only to known limitations of an otherwise qualified individual.



Accommodations are determined by examining

- Is the individual a “person with a disability”?
- Is the individual “otherwise qualified”?
- What are the barriers resulting from the interaction between the documented disability and campus environment?
- What are possible accommodations, modifications, or adjustments that might remove the barriers?
- Without these accommodations, would the individual still have meaningful access to the program, services, or activity?
- Would these accommodations compromise the essential elements of the curriculum?
- Would these accommodations require a fundamental alteration to the nature of the program, service, or activity?



Reasonable Accommodations Create an Equal Access to Education

- They are necessary because of the disability
- They enable a student to be “otherwise qualified”
- They do not pose an undue financial and/or administrative burden
- They do not require fundamental changes in the program
- They do not pose a danger to the student or others



The student is held to the same standards as other students.

- This includes admission standards, academic standards, Code of Conduct and behavioral standards, fiscal responsibilities, deadlines, etc..
- If there is no reasonable accommodation that will permit the student to achieve the standard, then she or he is not “otherwise qualified” to be in your program.
- The college is not required to provide “services of a personal nature” to the student with a disability.





Faculty / Staff Role

- If a student comes to the faculty requesting an accommodation without a letter from the Office of Disability Services, the faculty member should refer her/him to that office.
- Identify essential course components for accommodations to be determined.
- Participate in process to determine and implement reasonable accommodations.
- Request assistance (from Disability Services) with accommodations implementation, or consultation.



Faculty Have the Right To:

- Request an accommodation letter from the Office of Disability Services
- Expect the student to initiate accommodation requests in a timely manner
 - **Accommodations are not retroactive**
- Provide “accommodations” only to students who are registered with our office
 - Faculty can offer “academic support” to a student but this support must be available to any student in the class
 - Academic accommodations are only for those students who have presented documentation meeting the requirements of the law
- Expect the student to meet the requirements of the course



Don't rely on stereotypes

Students With Disabilities Are First and Foremost Students.

- Each student's request must be considered on an individual, case-by-case basis. Try not to generalize about people within the same disability group.
- Faculty are not expected to lower expectations or evaluation standards. The important thing is to provide effective and timely access to accommodations so that students have equal opportunity of participation.



Things to Keep in Mind as You Approach Situations Involving Students with Disabilities

- YOU ARE NOT ALONE
- Consult with the Disabilities Counselors (not the student) about any requested accommodation or situation which seems unusual to you.
- Do not ask the student to name his or her disability. You need to know their needs, not the diagnosis
- Remember that any documentation about the student's disability should not come to you, but should go to the Disability's Office, and is considered confidential
- Involve the student in decisions which concern him or her



Do the best you can

- The laws require a “good-faith effort”; it doesn’t ask you to do the impossible.
- Provide the accommodations as soon as possible. Ask for our help if you have difficulty.
- Keep communicating with the student.
- A reasonable accommodation does not change the integrity or nature of the course



Students With Disabilities Are First and Foremost Students.

- Faculty are not expected to lower expectations or evaluation standards. The important thing is to provide effective and timely access to accommodations so that students have equal opportunity of participation.
- Be certain to discuss needs related to testing accommodations, note taking, seating, reading materials in alternative format, computer access, lab procedures and physical accommodations.



What can you do?

Provide early syllabi and book lists so that students can have their books taped. This could conceivably be put on-line so that students could order materials over the summer.

When selecting text material try to find material already taped. Pressure can be placed on the publishers to provide taped material.

Provide accommodations as quickly as possible.



Suggestions for Making the Atmosphere Welcoming

- Make a statement to the following effect at the first class meeting: “students with disabilities who may need reasonable accommodations for any sort of visible or nonvisible disability are invited to make an appointment to see me.” A similar statement can be placed on your syllabus.
- Meet privately with the student as early as possible in the semester to discuss accommodation needs. Information about the disability that the student may disclose to you is confidential.



Students Have Varied Histories

- Remember that some students have had experience in explaining their disabilities and accommodation needs, while others may be reluctant to discuss it with faculty for fear of being treated differently or stigmatized
- Some with recently acquired or diagnosed disabilities have never had to discuss such issues with faculty
- Some students may be new to our campus and apprehensive about faculty time and willingness to talk
- Some have experienced being denied reasonable accommodation
- Others have never been given the responsibility to talk with faculty about disability accommodation needs



Disability Services Role

- Maintain medical/psychological documentation in a confidential manner
- Determine if condition(s) is a disability in accordance with state and federal laws
- Identify and assist with implementation of reasonable accommodations
- Request updated documentation when symptoms change to determine if accommodations need to be modified



What Is Acceptable Documentation?

The Office of Disability Services Is the Only Office Designated to Review Disability Documentation and Determine Eligibility for Appropriate Accommodations

- Should be current (within the last three to five years)
- Should have a specific medical or psychological diagnosis
- Should have a medical and educational history related to the disability
- Needs to state level of severity of the disability
- Statement of current medications/treatment
- Should state functional limitations due to the disability
- Recommended academic accommodations

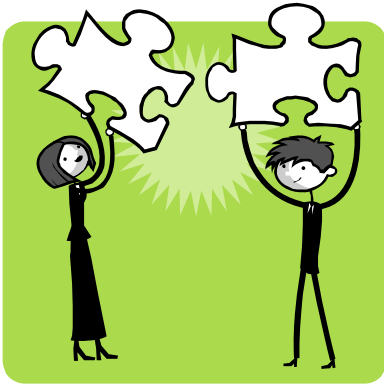


What the Office of Disability Services Provide

We provide educational access.

Educational access is the provision of classroom accommodations, auxiliary aids and services to insure equal educational opportunities for all students regardless of disability.

This should be a collaborative effort between the student, the faculty and the Office for Disability Services.



Formal Services

- Taped texts
- Note takers
- Testing accommodation
- Access to learning opportunities and materials in the classroom
- Sign language interpreters

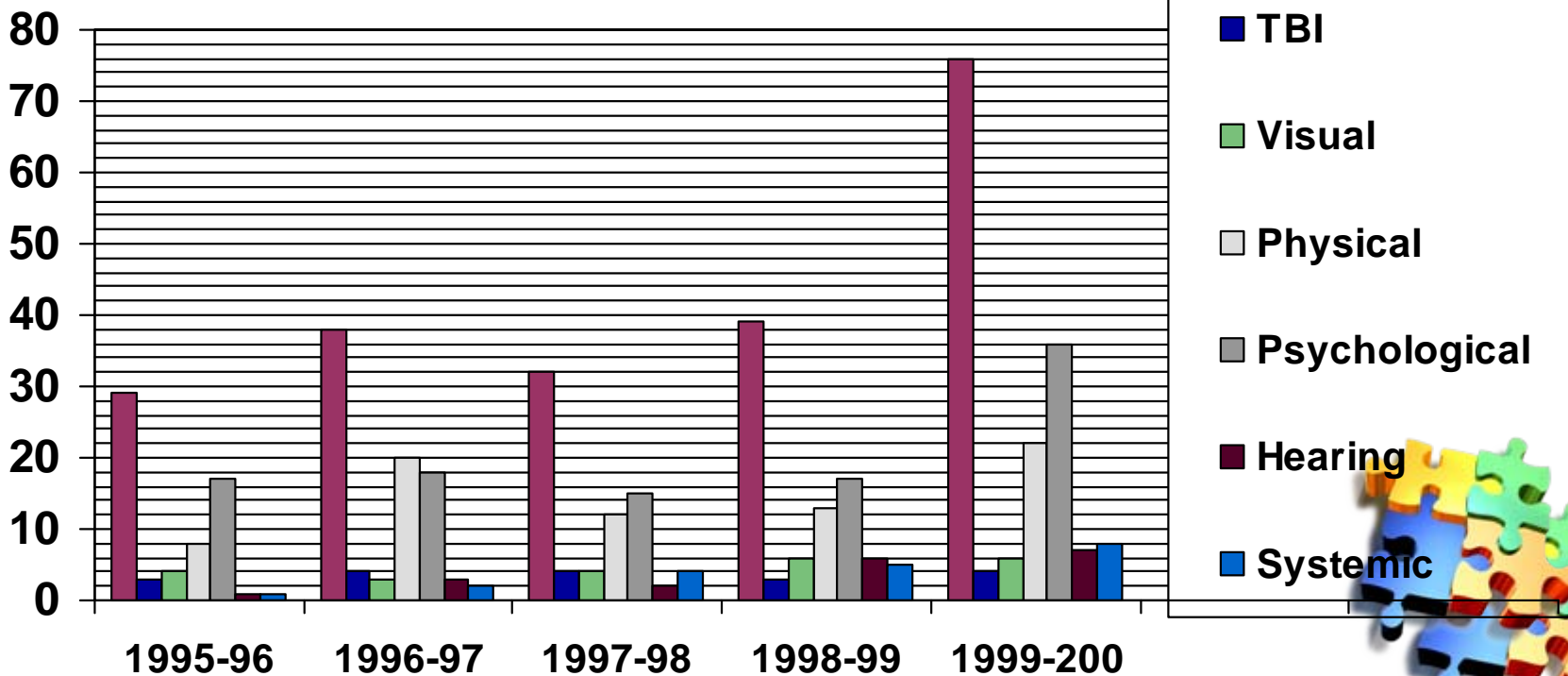


Supportive Services

- Tutoring
- Counseling
- Learning Strategies Help
 - Coaching for deficits in executive functioning
- Career Counseling
- Access to Professionals
 - Referral for additional testing



Populations Over Time



“It feels like people are saying,
‘We let you in; why do you need
anything more?’”



Learning Disabilities

- Language Based

- Dyslexia
- Dysgraphia

- Other

- Dyscalculia
- Non Verbal LD

- Attention Based

- Inattentive
- Hyperactive
- Executive Function

- Memory Issues

- Short Term
- Long Term
- Active working



Academic Signs of Language Based Issues

- Needs extra time to read/write
- Produces written work that is
 - Sparse
 - Filled with mechanical and spelling errors
 - Messy, immature handwriting
 - Doesn't seem to reflect the caliber of thinking shown in class
- Has difficulty organizing thoughts in speaking/writing



ADHD Definition

Core Symptoms:

Inattention Hyperactivity Impulsivity



Other characteristics: distractibility, difficulty with executive functions, mental effort depletion, and performance inconsistency



Academic Signs of Attention based issues

- Distractible/fidgety in class
- Impulsive comments and actions
- Great difficulty keeping appointments, meeting deadlines, balancing personal and academic demands
- Failure to complete assignments, despite obvious command of necessary skills
- Disorganized materials



Characteristics of Non Verbal Disability

- Difficulty with fine motor skills
- Lack of image, poor visual recall
- Faulty spatial perceptions
- Difficulties with spatial relations
- Lack of ability to comprehend nonverbal communication
- Difficulties adjusting to transitions and new situations
- Significant deficits in social judgment and interaction
- Has difficulty with math and courses relying on visual symbols such as chemistry



Characteristics of Students who have a non-verbal disability or have Aspergers Syndrome

- May be insensitive to social cues, implicit messages and oblique or implied communications
- May fail to understand sarcasm, humor, irony, metaphor, simile or figurative language
- Might be perceived as 'aloof,' or inappropriate in interactions with others
- May avoid eye contact
- May have extensive spoken vocabulary, but words may be used incorrectly or idiosyncratically
- May seem to talk 'at you' rather than 'with you'
- **May be vulnerable to harassment or exploitation by others**
- May tend to be very concrete in interpretations of spoken or written language
- May be obsessively interested in a few topics
- May be very distressed by changes in routine, especially if unexpected
- May sometimes neglect personal care
- May dress inappropriately for the occasion



Why does he/she act this way?

- Imagine if you processed pieces of the environment in the order they came in and could not organize these bits?
- Imagine if you screened out many of the bits because they confused or overwhelmed you?
- What if you could not rely on consistency in your sensory environment?
- How could you imitate behavior if you could not fathom how other people do it any differently”
- What if everyone is expecting or demanding that you comply with things you don't understand?



Classroom Behaviors

- Interruptions and speaking out
- Correcting the instructor
- Asks too many questions
- Coming in late and then takes breaks
- Eating in class
- Difficulty following multi step directions
- Difficulty filling in the “scan tron” sheets on exams
- Difficulty working on maps and graphs



Interaction with Student:

- You may need to be very concrete... the student may not understand sarcasm, humor, or implied meanings
- If your time working with a student is going to be limited, make that known clearly at the outset.
- Don't use absolute words such as always or never unless that is exactly what you mean



Use clear, detailed directives when...

- A student invades your space or imposes on your time
- A student needs to go make revisions before she comes back to the writing lab
- If the student's conversational volume becomes inappropriate



Universal Design

Universal design is an approach to designing course instruction, materials, and content to benefit people of all learning styles without adaptation or retrofitting.

- Universal design provides equal access to learning, not simply equal access to information.
- Universal Design allows the student to control the method of accessing information while the teacher monitors the learning process and initiates any beneficial methods.
- It should be noted that Universal Design does not remove academic challenges; it removes barriers to access.
- Simply stated, Universal Design is just good teaching.



Who Benefits:

- Students who speak English as a second language.
- International students.
- Older students.
- Students with disabilities.
- A teacher whose teaching style is inconsistent with the student's preferred learning style.
- All students.

