Diversity in the Classroom: Accommodating University of Florida Students with Disabilities

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Disability Resource Center (DRC)
Dean of Students Office (DSO)
University of Florida
DRC Student Population Overview

- Currently this Fall ‘14 semester 1,480 UF students are utilizing DRC services
- Certificate, undergraduate, graduate, & professional students
  - Traditional (campus), distance education program, & distance learning students
Categories of disability by primary disability:

- 31% Students with AD/HD
- 24% Learning Disorders
- 21% Mental Health Disorders
- 13% Medical/Chronic Health Conditions
- 7% Other: Hearing, Vision, TBI, Asperger’s
- 4% Physical/Mobility Impairments

Comorbidity

Congenital or Acquired
Stigmas/Misconceptions & Barriers

- Stigmas/Misconceptions
  - Combat or industrial disabilities
  - Noble & working
  - Learning Disorders and Attention Deficit Disorder
    - Lower IQ---a misconception!
    - Not trying hard enough---a misconception!
- Mental Health Disorders
  - Willpower---a misconception!
  - Dynamic---challenging to manage
Stigmas/Misconceptions & Barriers

- Visible (V) vs. Hidden (H) Disabilities
  - (V) hyper-visibility, over-observation, loss of privacy
  - (H) option of disclosure, reluctance to accommodate, stigma

- Barriers
  - Physical Design/Access
    - stairs, doors, embankments, online courses
  - Attitudinal
    - Personal > Prejudice, misconceptions, discrimination
Executive Functioning

“A collection of interrelated functions or processes, which are responsible for goal-directed or future-oriented behavior, that control, organize and direct cognitive activity, emotional responses, and behavior” *

Disabilities with EF challenges: Autism Spectrum Disorder, Dyslexia, Attention Deficit Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injuries

*Gioia, Isquith, & Guy (2001)
Executive Functioning Features

- Ability to focus and concentrate on demand
- Initiating an activity or shifting to a new activity
- Working Memory
- Planning and organizing
- Controlling impulses
- Implementing appropriate problem-solving strategies
- Ability to regulate behavior and self-monitor
- Requesting feedback
The Accommodation Process

- A student self-identifies to the DRC and provides medical documentation of disability

- The DRC reviews documentation & determines if it meets [DRC Guidelines](#)

- The DRC conducts a collaborative interview with the student & appropriate accommodations are allocated according to the law

- The DRC prepares accommodation letters for the student to personally deliver to his/her instructor(s)

- Through a collaborative process, student & instructor discuss implementation of requested* accommodations

* Student should identify specific accommodations requested for your course
Instructor Responsibilities

- Inform students of procedures for accessing accommodations (e.g. syllabus statement)
- Provide and arrange for accommodations specified in the accommodation letter & requested by student
- Privately consult with the student to ensure there is a clear understanding of requested accommodations
- Keep accommodation-related information regarding a student confidential (FERPA)
- Do not make the students feel as if they are inconveniencing you (DRC Faculty Informational Guide)
Common Accommodations

- Note-Services*

- Permission to audio record lecture

- Access to course materials (e.g. copy of PowerPoint presentations)

- Access to course materials in an alternative format

- Accommodated Testing* (e.g. access to; extended time, low distraction environment, assistive technology, scribe, reader)

* Details on next slides
Note-Services

- Student is responsible for giving you a Note-Service Packet and adhering to your attendance policy
- Instructor assist in identifying note-supplier, completing note-service form, and directing note-supplier to DRC
- DRC handles behind-the-scenes coordination and trouble shooting
- Back-up: Permission to audio record lecture
- **How to administer** Note Services accommodation
Accommodated Testing

- Testing arrangement options: Instructor or DRC can administer testing/quiz accommodations
  
  - If Instructor administers, clearly communicate how, when & where
  
  - If the DRC administers, student is responsible for initiating a request to take tests at the DRC by using an Accommodated Testing Request (ATR) form
  
- You may list all tests for the semester on one ATR form

- Student is responsible for submitting completed ATR to the DRC at least 4 business days prior to the first test date
Accommodated Testing (cont.)

- Student and instructor are responsible for notifying the DRC of any changes in test dates/times

- Instructor is responsible for delivering tests by 5:00 pm on the day before the test via hand-delivery, e-mail or fax. **Do not** send tests through campus mail

- DRC returns completed test to you no later than the next business day to location you specify on the ATR

**How to administer** Testing accommodations
Concerned or in Doubt? Contact the DRC

- Outdated accommodation letter
- Accommodation letter left under office door
- Poor Attendance
- Student requesting accommodations not on letter
- Student is requesting accommodations without a letter
- Possible violations of Student Conduct & Honor Code
Instructor Fact Sheets

- Communicating & Teaching Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Epilepsy & Seizures - Types & Care
- Note-Service
- Teaching Students with Hearing Loss
- Teaching Students with Visual Impairments
- Testing Accomodations
- Working with an Interpreter
Remember---Person First!

- Value the individual!
- View the student as a person with a disability (not as a disabled student)
Contact Information

Disability Resource Center (DRC)
001 Building 0020 (Reid Hall)
P.O. Box 114085
DRC Testing Office: testing@dso.ufl.edu
DRC Note-Service: noteservice@dso.ufl.edu
General eMailbox: accessuf@dso.ufl.edu
352-392-8565 (voice) or 352-392-8570 (fax)
DRC Faculty (instructor) webpage: Click Here

Thank you for your support of University of Florida Students with Disabilities!