The Changing Landscape of Learning Disabilities

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Discuss effective accommodation strategies that will motivate student learning
Eligibility - Colorado

- Two part process:
  - Intake interview
  - Review of current documentation
    - What is the diagnosed disability?
    - What are the functional limitations?
    - What is the impact of these functional limitations in an academic environment?
  - Apply ADA eligibility analysis.
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Disability Categories

- Learning /ADD/ADHD
- Physical
- Psychiatric
- Blind/VI
- Deaf/HOH
- Cognitive
- Temporary
Learning Disabilities

One theory - a neurological disorder that affects the brain's ability to receive, process, store, and respond to information.
Other Paradigms

Medical Response
- Disability as a defect

Environmental Response
- Disability as barrier removal

Sociological Response
- Disability as a culture of difference
Laws That Protect Students

There are three main federal laws that protect people with learning disabilities from discrimination:

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 2004

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (PL 93-112)

Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) – effective January 1, 2009
Students with disabilities are among the fastest growing minority populations at U.S. Colleges & Universities

Consistent with national trends, this population is expected to increase due to a variety of reasons including:

Revised ADAAA

Increased awareness of accommodations and civil rights

Increased identification of conditions which impact learning
Accommodations

Designed to insure abilities are measured and not disabilities

• Classroom Accommodations

• Clinic Accommodations
Accommodations

• Classroom Accommodations:
  • Alternative Testing – private room, extra time, reader
  • Alternative Textbooks – books in digital audio format
  • Flexibility with attendance
  • Use of assistive technology
  • Note taker or recorder
Students with Disabilities
2003 - 2012

University of Colorado Denver
Downtown Campus (03 – 12)
Anschutz Medical Campus (07 – 12)

Updated 10/30/12
Alternative Testing is a frequent accommodation provided to insure that testing measures the students abilities

Testing accommodations include:

- Private Room or Testing Center
- Additional Time
- Reader or Scribe
- Assistive Technology
Testing Summary By Academic Year

- Academic Year 03-04: 330 Tests Administered (Downtown Denver Campus)
- Academic Year 04-05: 363 Tests Administered (Downtown Denver Campus)
- Academic Year 05-06: 401 Tests Administered (Downtown Denver Campus)
- Academic Year 06-07: 319 Tests Administered (Downtown Denver Campus)
- Academic Year 07-08: 534 Tests Administered (Downtown Denver Campus, 6 Anschutz Medical Campus)
- Academic Year 08-09: 681 Tests Administered (Downtown Denver Campus, 55 Anschutz Medical Campus)
- Academic Year 09-10: 680 Tests Administered (Downtown Denver Campus, 217 Anschutz Medical Campus)
- Academic Year 10-11: 821 Tests Administered (Downtown Denver Campus, 383 Anschutz Medical Campus)
- Academic Year 11-12: 1522 Tests Administered (Downtown Denver Campus, 1459 Anschutz Medical Campus)

Updated 11/1/12
Any disturbance in reading greatly affects academic achievement

- Reading accuracy
- Reading speed
- Reading comprehension

To facilitate learning, CU’s DRS takes printed textbooks, course packets, etc. and reproduces them in digital audio format.
Education

- Achieve educational goals but without integrating assistive technology
- Limits application of education
- Limits employment opportunities

- Optimal access to an education
- Optimal access to employment
- Meet academic goals

Access to Assistive Technology

- Lack of access to education and employment
- Inability to envision academic goals

- Inability to understand assistive technology without training
- Difficulty with understanding applicability of assistive technology
Accommodations

• Assistive Technologies:
  • Smart Pens – note taking assistance
  • Class management software
  • Readers - software
  • Books in alternate format
  • Captioning
Smart Pens

Livescribe.com

ADHD – many times are poor note takers
Class management organization

*Evernote* – web based – free and subscription

*MS Onenote*

Note taking assistance
Readers – Alternate Format Books

“Print Disabled”

Bimodal learning – video and audio

Auditory processing is important

Text to Speech
Readers – APPS / Software

Software can provide synthesized voices customized to the individual Multicultural students
Accommodations

• Clinical Accommodations:
  • Preclinical labs – hand skill development
  • Alternative Testing – How will this work?
  • Flexibility with attendance/scheduling/patient assignments
  • Use of assistive technology
  • Preceptors – Community Based Education
Accommodations

University of Colorado Experiences to Date

- Resisted to some degree
- One student in pre-clinical Simulation Clinic
- One student in Clinic
Accommodations

When a simulation or lab experience involves ‘teaching’, which is considered a classroom experience, accommodations may be applied.

When a simulation or lab experience involves the evaluation or ‘grading’ of a student performance (technique) or knowledge, then it is considered a ‘clinical’ experience and would not normally be subject to classroom accommodations.
Clinical Accommodations

Pre-assigned day shift rotation

Clinical rotation with in 20 mile radius of Denver metro area

Extra time for donning sterile medical equipment

Breaks when standing in place for long periods of time

Limit standing to 10 min or less - availability to sit as needed
Clinical Accommodations

Breaks when available

Food/ drink as needed

Earlier access to review patient charts/patient information

Large monitor or text enlargement software installed

Reading software installed

Extra time on SOAP note (20-30 min per note)
Clinical Accommodations

Flexibility with daily schedule

Flexibility with attendance due to illness

Extension on assignment due dates, individual assignments
A Court Case

Extended time to complete clinic and didactic requirements

Didactic test taking increased to double time in a quiet proctored setting

Student will be allowed to use an alternative to the "clinic cart"

Clinic days to be limited to half days and will not be scheduled on consecutive days

Student's physical condition will be considered in the determination of the number of patients assigned
A hard chair with a hard back will be made available to student on each clinic floor while working on patients and in lecture

Student will be allowed to alternate between sitting and standing during some procedures

Dental assistant will be made available to student during some procedures

Student will be allowed to stand and walk during lectures

Student will need to utilize note-taking services available

Student may need to utilize test-taking in a DRS setting due to possibility of needing more than one test taking opportunity due to physical condition
Community Based Education

When requested and approved, any clinical rotation site shall have an obligation to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities.
Collaborative Decision-making Model

- Positive Climate
- Essential Functions
- Reasonable Accommodation
- Learning Activities
- Strengths & Challenges

(Ongoing Assessment)

(Sharby & Roush, 2009)
Considerations

• What are the essential functions in our profession? (Technical Standards)

• How does a student’s willingness or ability to ask for accommodations vary if it is a lifelong vs. new disability?

• How might accommodations change if there is a learning disability or a mental health issue?

• How can we collaborate to build a network of resources?
The Student’s Perspectives