

# An Introduction to Disability in Higher Education for New Professionals

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ACPA Annual Convention  
April 2014

## Foundations of Disability

- The individual's ability to participate in society is affected by physical, mental, and emotional disabilities
- The individual's ability

## Disability Law in Higher Education

- Title IX
- ADA
- Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Section 504
- ADA Amendments Act of 2008

## Disability Types

- Most students have a disability
- Specific Learning Disabilities
- ADHD
- Hearing Impairment
- Vision Impairment
- Physical Disabilities
- Mental Health Issues
- Chronic Health Conditions
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Intellectual Disabilities

## The Larger Campus Community

- Faculty
- Staff
- Students
- Administrators
- Parents
- Community

## Wrapping Up

- Q&A
- Adam Lalor adam.lalor@uconn.edu
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# An Introduction to Disability in Higher Education for New Professionals

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## Foundations of Disability

- 15% of undergraduate students are students with disabilities (NAD, 2008)
- History of Disability in Higher Education
- Framework for Disability

## Disability Law in Higher Education

- Variations in definitions
  - IDEA
  - Rehabilitation Act of 1973
  - ADA
- Shift in "Severe" definition of students

## Disability Types

- Most Prevalent Types in Higher Education
  - Specific learning disabilities
  - ADD or ADHD
  - Psychiatric disability
  - Health impairments/conditions
- The definitions of other types of disabilities, see handout.

## The Larger Campus Community

- Include disability services near campus in definition of diversity (from perspective of students) to ensure inclusiveness
- Many students with disabilities become aware of the legal changes that exist but they are not aware in Higher Education. (O'Leary in flow note)
- Making students become aware of campus resources
- Be aware

## Wrapping Up

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# *Foundations of Disability*

- ~11% of undergraduate students are students with disabilities (GAO, 2008)
- History of Disability in Higher Education
- Frameworks for Disability



## ***Modern History***

- 1944 - Veterans returning from WWII
- 1970s - Emergence of disability services professionals
- 1973 - Introduction of the Rehabilitation Act
- 1977 - Creation of AHEAD (Association on Higher Education and Disability)
- 1990 - Americans with Disabilities Act

Madaus (2011)

# *Foundations of Disability*

- ~11% of undergraduate students are students with disabilities (GAO, 2008)
- History of Disability in Higher Education
- Frameworks for Disability

# Frameworks of Disability

Medical Model	Social Model
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Disability is Intrinsic</li><li>• Disability is Negative</li><li>• Deficiency</li><li>• Disability is the Barrier</li><li>• Disability Needs to be Fixed</li><li>• Change Agents: Medical Professionals and Other “Fixers”</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Disability is Extrinsic</li><li>• Disability is Neutral</li><li>• Difference</li><li>• Society and Institutions are the Barriers</li><li>• Societal Obstacles Need to be Fixed</li><li>• Change Agents: Individuals with Disabilities, Advocates, and Others Believing in Equity, Access, Social Justice, and Human Rights.</li></ul>

Adapted from Rieser (2000)



# Disability Law in Higher Education

- Variation in definitions
  - IDEA
  - Rehabilitation Act of 1973
  - ADA
- Shift in 'disability' definition as students transition

Essential Disability Law

Questions	High School	Higher Education
What are the applicable laws? (What is Covered by the Law?)	IDEA & Section 504 Title IX Through IDEA School Rehabilitation Act Through Age 22	ADA & Section 504 ADA Student Disability Rights Title IX in Addition with Rehabilitation Act in the postsecondary Education
Who Has the Responsibility for Identifying and Troubleshooting Students with Disabilities?	School	School
What is Offered to a Student with a Disability?	Special Education Accommodations, Individualized Education Plans	Section 504 Accommodations
What Services are the Primary Focuses?	Special	Postsecondary
What is Responsible for Monitoring Progress, Outcomes, and Achievement?	School	Student

Adapted from: Thore College (2009)

## IDEA Definition

As it pertains to the term "child with a disability" means a child:  
 (1) who has a mental retardation, hearing impairment (including deafness), speech or language impairment, visual impairment (including blindness), serious emotional disturbance (as defined in section 300.8), orthopedic impairment, autism, traumatic brain injury, or any other disability that impedes educational performance;  
 (2) who has a learning disability, as defined in section 300.8;  
 (3) who is blind or visually handicapped, including such children, who, in the absence of the State and the local educational agency, are blind or visually handicapped;  
 (4) who are deaf or hard of hearing, including such children, who, in the absence of the State and the local educational agency, are deaf or hard of hearing;  
 (5) who are physically handicapped, including such children, who, in the absence of the State and the local educational agency, are physically handicapped;  
 (6) who are emotionally handicapped, including such children, who, in the absence of the State and the local educational agency, are emotionally handicapped;  
 (7) who are multiple handicapped, including such children, who, in the absence of the State and the local educational agency, are multiple handicapped;  
 (8) who are children with disabilities, as defined in section 300.8.

Adapted from: Thore College (2009)

## Rehabilitation Act of 1973

The law defines a person as disabled if he or she:

Has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment.

(Rehabilitation Act 1973)

## ADA Definition

A person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment.

(ADA Section 101.12)

Adapted from: Thore College (2009)

# IDEA Definition

- (A) In general.--The term `child with a disability' means a child--
- (i) with mental retardation, hearing impairments (including deafness), speech or language impairments, visual impairments (including blindness), serious emotional disturbance (referred to in this title as `emotional disturbance'), orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, or specific learning disabilities; and
  - (ii) who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.
- (B) Child aged 3 through 9.--The term `child with a disability' for a child aged 3 through 9 (or any subset of that age range, including ages 3 through 5), may, at the discretion of the State and the local educational agency, include a child--
- (i) experiencing developmental delays, as defined by the State and as measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures, in 1 or more of the following areas: physical development; cognitive development; communication development; social or emotional development; or adaptive development; and
  - (ii) who, by reason thereof, needs special education and related services.

Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (2004)





# ***Rehabilitation Act of 1973***

The law defines a person as disabled if he or she:

"has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment."

Rehabilitation Act (1973)

# ***ADA Definition***

A person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment.

ADA Amendments Act (2008)

Disabilities covered by the ADA are intentionally not specified in the Act.

# Essential Disability Law

<b>Questions</b>	<b>High School</b>	<b>Higher Education</b>
<b>What are the Applicable Laws?</b>	IDEA & Section 504	ADA & Section 504
<b>Who is Covered by the Law?</b>	Infants Through High School Graduates (or Through Age 21)	All Student Meeting Eligibility Criteria for Admission with Documented Disabilities
<b>Who Has the Responsibility for Identifying and Evaluating Students with Disabilities?</b>	School	Individual Student
<b>What is Offered to a Student with a Disability?</b>	Special Education, Accommodations, Individualized Education Plans	Reasonable Accommodations
<b>Who Serves as the Primary Advocate?</b>	Parents	Individual Student
<b>Who is Responsible for Monitoring Progress, Outcomes, and Achievement?</b>	School	Student

Adapted from Think College (2012)

LS



# Disability Types

## 4 Most Prevalent Types in Higher Education

- Specific learning disabilities
- ADD or ADHD
- Psychiatric disability
- Health impairment/condition

\*For definitions of other types of disabilities, see handout.

### Specific learning disabilities

A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language, spoken or written, which disorder may manifest itself in an impairment ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations

#### Examples:

- Dyslexia
- Dyscalculia
- Dysgraphia
- Visual and auditory processing disorders

(Ballarín, Kaufman & Dellen 2008)

### ADD and ADHD

A persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactive-impulsive behavior that interferes with functioning or development.

- Hyperactive Type
- Inattentive Type
- Combined Type

(American Psychiatric Association 2013)

### Psychiatric disability (a.k.a. mental disorder/ disability)



### Health impairment and/or condition



# ***Specific learning disabilities***

A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language, spoken or written, which disorder may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations.

Examples:

- dyslexia
- dyscalculia
- dysgraphia
- visual and auditory processing disorders

Hallahan, Kauffman & Pullen (2009)

# ***ADD and ADHD***

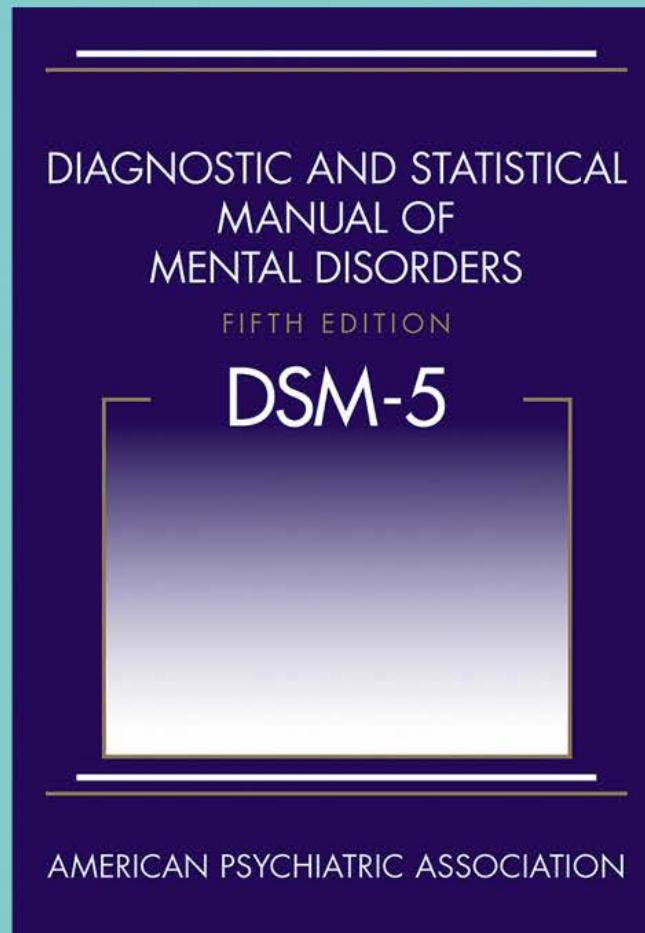
A persistent pattern of inattention and or hyperactivity-impulsivity that interferes with functioning or development.

- Hyperactive Type
- Inattentive Type
- Combined Type

American Psychiatric Association (2013)



# *Psychiatric disability (a.k.a. mental disorder/ disability)*



**Definition of a mental disorder**

A mental disorder is a clinically significant disturbance in an individual's cognition, emotion regulation, or behavior that reflects a dysfunction in the psychological, biological, or developmental processes underlying mental functioning. It is associated with current or past distress or disability that is not primarily a social problem. Mental disorders are defined by their characteristic clinical features, such as the presence of specific symptoms and signs, and the associated distress or disability. Mental disorders are defined by their characteristic clinical features, such as the presence of specific symptoms and signs, and the associated distress or disability. Mental disorders are defined by their characteristic clinical features, such as the presence of specific symptoms and signs, and the associated distress or disability.

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, Text Revision  
Copyright © 2013 American Psychiatric Association, Washington, DC

# *Definition of a mental disorder*

A mental disorder is a syndrome characterized by clinically significant disturbance in an individual's cognition, emotion regulation, or behavior that reflects a dysfunction in the psychological, biological, or developmental processes underlying mental functioning. Mental disorders are usually associated with significant distress or disability in social, occupational, or other important activities. An expectable or culturally approved response to a common stressor or loss, such as the death of a loved one, is not a mental disorder. Socially deviant behavior (e.g. political, religious, or sexual) and conflicts that are primarily between the individual and society are not mental disorders unless the deviance or conflict results from a dysfunction in the individual, as described above. DSM-5 (2013)

Examples: Major Depressive Disorder, Eating Disorders, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Suicidal Behavior Disorder, Alcoholism, Panic Disorders

American Psychiatric Association (2013)

# *Health impairment/ condition*

Having limited strength, vitality, or alertness, including a heightened alertness to environmental stimuli, that results in limited alertness with respect to the educational environment, that—

- (i) Is due to chronic health problems
- (ii) Adversely affects educational performance.

IDEA (2004)

## **Examples Include**

asthma   diabetes   epilepsy   heart conditions   hemophilia  
leukemia   sickle cell anemia



***Practice...***

***It starts with you...***

- Increase your own awareness
  - Use person-first language
  - Evaluate *and challenge* your own attitudes, comfort and understanding of issues surrounding disability
- Take a moment...

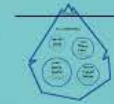
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# Strategies for Working with Students with Disabilities

- Help students identify strengths beyond challenges
- Assist in development of executive functioning skills
  - Developing schedules
  - Developing strategies to manage tasks and organize projects
- Universal design
- Foster self-determination/self-advocacy

## Practice... It starts with you...

- Increase your own awareness
- Use person-first language
- Evaluate *and challenge* your own attitudes, comfort and understanding of issues surrounding disability
- Take a moment...



**Universal Design  
(for Learning)**

Proactively increasing access:

- **Representation** - what individuals perceive (e.g., materials, lectures, etc.)
- **Expression** - how individuals approach learning and how they express what they know (e.g., through writing, drawing, etc.)
- **Engagement** - why individuals learn and stay motivated (e.g., oncoy therapeutic, cultural significance, etc.)

Other types of Universal Design (e.g., UD for architecture, UDI)

Useful for students with and without disabilities

National Center on TDD (2018)

**Self-determination/  
Self-advocacy**

**Self-determination** - the ability (and right) to make personal choices, control one's own life, and be a self-determining individual. (Fletcher, 2010; p. 10)

**Self-advocacy** - an individual's ability to speak for oneself and advocate needs (Fletcher, Cohen, Liu & Yano, 1991, p. 4)

**Benefits**

- Right to self-determination
- Rights of self-advocacy
- Executive functioning skills



# *Universal Design (for Learning)*

Proactively increasing access:

- **Representation** - what individuals perceive (e.g., materials, lecture, etc.)
- **Expression** - how individuals approach learning and how they express what they know (e.g., through writing, drawing, etc.)
- **Engagement** - why individuals learn and stay motivated (e.g., enjoy the topic, cultural significance, etc.)

Other types of Universal Design (e.g., UD for architecture, UDI)

Useful for students with and without disabilities

National Center on UDL (2013)



# ***Self-determination/ Self-advocacy***

**Self-determination** - the ability [and right] to make personal choices, regulate one's own life, and be a self-advocate (Hallahan, Kauffman, & Pullen, 2009, p. 574)

**Self-advocacy** - an individual's ability to speak for oneself and one's own needs (Furney, Carlson, Lisi, & Yuan, 1993, p.1))

## Reminders

Right to self-disclosure

Dignity of risk

Executive functioning difficulties



# **I am a Student with Dyslexia**

I struggle with finding content for bulletin boards, doing research for my events, reviewing handbooks and reading emails.

**I am a Student with Dyslexia**

*I struggle with finding avenues for learning, doing research for my needs, retaining facts/words and reading results.*

**I am so Much More...**

**I am an Artist**

*If I pair up with another team member, we will create the most visually appealing, and informative bulletin board ever!*

**I am a Natural Leader**

*I am great at organizing and motivating team members to play off of each member's strengths so that we can accomplish anything.*

**I am a Strong Teacher**

*I can help others make connections between different curricular and cocurricular experiences. I am a multimodal presenter.*

**I am an Engaged Listener**

*The students I mentor feel like I am invested in them and know that I am a resource for them. In this way, I am an important ally in student affairs.*



# *I am an Artist*

If I pair up with another team member, we will create the most visually captivating, and informative bulletin board ever!

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# *I am an Engaged Listener*

The students I mentor feel like I am invested in them and know that I am a resource for them. In this way, I am an important ally in student affairs

**I am a Student with Dyslexia**

I struggle with reading, writing, and math. I have trouble with spelling, grammar, and punctuation. I have trouble with organization and time management.

**I am so Much More...**

**I am an Artist**

If you go with another group member, you'll create the most visually appealing, and collaborative, to have heard ever.

**I am a Natural Leader**

I am great at organizing and motivating team members to play off of each member's strengths so that we can accomplish anything.

**I am a Strong Teacher**

I can help others make connections between different curricular and cocurricular experiences. I am a multimodal presenter.

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The students I mentor feel like I am invested in them and know that I am a resource for them. In this way, I am an important ally in student affairs.

# The Larger Campus Community

## ***Strategies for Working with Students with Disabilities***

- Help students identify strengths beyond challenges
- Assist in development of executive functioning skills
  - Developing schedules
  - Developing strategies to manage tasks and organize projects
- Universal design
- Foster self-determination/self-advocacy

**Practice...**  
**It starts with you...**

- Increase your own awareness
- Use various Test Strategies
- Evaluate and develop your own strategies, routines and understanding of issues surrounding disability
- Take a moment...



- Include disability within your institution's definition of diversity (from prospectives to students to alumni to employees)
- Help students with disabilities become aware of the legal changes that shift how they are supported in Higher Education. (Madaus & Shaw, 2004).
- Helping students become aware of campus resources
- Be aware.



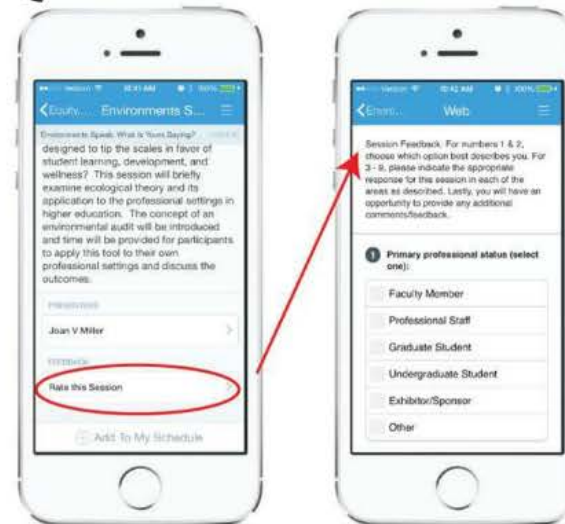
# Wrapping Up

• Q&A

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- Marie Lalor mlalor@conncoll.edu

## Evaluation

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