Making Room for Excellence and Encouraging Overachievement for the Differently Abled in Academia

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- People with disabilities make up 12.6% of the US population

- In 2014, the largest proportion of workers with a disability (21.2 percent) worked in education and health services.

- Only 16.4 % of people 25 and older with a disability have completed at least a bachelor's degree vs 34.6 % with no disability

- About 1 in 5 people with a disability had less than a high school diploma vs 1 in 10 people with no disability.

Inclusion Benefits Us All By Increasing:

Exposure to all demographics in the classroom: Normalization for peers and moving beyond stereotypes

Enhanced socialization for the differently abled: reliance on peers rather than staff

Equal high levels of expectations for achievement

Establish Effective Inclusion Programs:

1. Physical Inclusion – Classroom setting
2. Academic Inclusion- high standards of achievement for all
3. Social Inclusion- peers are often the best teachers.

Programs should place value on diversity, belonging, multiculturalism.

Institutional Blockers

Understand that many of the barriers for achievement are within society not so much the differently abled individual. Be sure to *Check Your Privilege* prior to and after any interaction.

- Stigmas
- Perceived Limitations
- Willful Ignorance
- Pitty

Removing Limitations

- True Accessibility- Ask the community what it needs to succeed
- Rise to the challenge- Think outside the box on how lessons or course materials can be adapted
- Incorporate the skills and strengths the individual

Advocate & Allyship

allyship is not an identity—it is a lifelong process of building relationships based on trust, consistency, and accountability with marginalized individuals and/or groups of people.

- Create a more robust lesson plan that caters to all the senses when possible
- Enlist the help of online communities. Respect their experiences even if they make you uncomfortable
- Ask the hard questions and be ready to fail initially

Resources

Web based resources for Physically Handicapped students (and other special needs students)	http://www.emergingedtech.com/2009/08/web-based-resources-for-physically-handicapped-students-and-other-special-needs-students/
For parents and educators of Blind and Visually Impaired Children	http://www.wonderbaby.org/
What is IDEA and FAPE	https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/idea2004.html
Dropping the Ball on Disabilities	https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2014/04/02/students-disabilities-frustrated-ignorance-and-lack-services
GUIDE TO ALLYSHIP	http://www.guidetoallyship.com/
Creating an Inclusive Classroom	http://inservice.ascd.org/3-ways-to-create-an-inclusive-learning-environment/
15 Common Phrases That Are Way More Ableist Than You May Realize	https://everydayfeminism.com/2016/03/ableist-phrases-to-eliminate/

Sources:

(1) The American Community Survey (ACS) estimates the overall (2)(Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, The Economics Daily, People with a disability less likely to have completed a bachelor's degree on the Internet at https://www.bls.gov/opub/ted/2015/people-with-a-disability-less-likely-to-have-completed-a-bachelors-degree.htm (visited September 26, 2017).