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"I've got a blank space, baby" - The teaching space and its impact on pedagogy

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“I’ve got a blank space, baby” - the teaching space and its impact on pedagogy

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Agenda

01 **Common Ground**

Models, stats, and some caveats and limitations

02 **Instructors/Learners**

Shared and unique needs of instructors and learners

03 **Pedagogy**

Specific pedagogical techniques to consider

04 **Future Planning**

Ideas for future planning (‘know better, do better’)

A quick story to set the stage

A note on language choices and positionality

Language choice is made here with deliberate intent. If an audience member would like to offer correction, please feel welcome. No one person can accurately represent the full spectrum of disability; we learn together. I speak today from the relative privilege of someone who is neurodivergent, with a chronic illness, and temporarily physically disabled.

01

Common Ground

Two (of a few) Models of Disability

Medical model

Disability is a physical or mental defect to be cured

Socio-political Model

“Nothing about us without us”
It’s about the environment, not the person

Friedensen et al. (2021)

Some Numbers*

*a caveat first: in higher education, where only about ⅓ of students choose to disclose (and staff and faculty are rarely asked), our numbers of people with disabilities are not terribly *accurate* - but they are a starting point for further discussion

NCES (2022)

Some (US) Numbers

General Population

Between 13-26% (depending on how you define disability and whether you ask Census or the CDC)

Students

19% (in 2015)

NCES

Faculty

4% (in 2004)

NCES

Staff

~5% (best guess based on 2022 BLS numbers)

Most Common Student Disabilities

1. ADD/ADHD 15%
2. Learning Disability-5%
3. Blindness/low vision -4%
4. Autism -3%
5. Deafness/hearing loss 2%
6. Mobility/Dexterity -1%
7. Speech or language disorder -1%

ACHA-NCHA (2022)

02

Instructors/ Learners

An intersection

Important to remember

A person can have more than one disability (and more than one *type* of disability). It is not helpful to assume that a person will only have one need or will only require assistance along one axis. And of course, people of color with disabilities have a very different experience than white people with disabilities

Library Instructors with physical disabilities

Who?

Includes people with visible (low vision, Deaf, mobility impairment) and non-visible disabilities (chronic fatigue, etc.)

Challenges

Accessibility; last-minute schedule changes; lack of support aids

Unique Needs

Knowledge of space; back-up or substitute instructor; computer software/AV needs

Library Instructors with mental disabilities

Who?

Includes people with neurodivergence (autism, executive function disorders, etc.), learning disabilities, etc.

Challenges

Internalized and external bias; lack of support aids

Unique Needs

Training and understanding; quiet space or other aids

Learners

“Accessible Library Instruction in Practice”

“Higher Education Students with Disabilities Speaking out: Perceived barriers and opportunities of the Universal Design for Learning framework”

“Improving Distance Education for Students with Special Needs: A qualitative study of students’ experiences with an online library research course.”

“Classroom Accommodations Checklist”

03

Pedagogy

A Checklist to Start Us Off

Padlet

https://padlet.com/rz2qx7d6mr/checklist

Competing Needs

What happens when a learner or instructor with one type of need is in the same space as a learner or instructor with a *diametrically opposed* need?

For example, a low vision instructor needs bright lights and strong contrast to be able to see - and a learner with autism needs dimmer lighting and a lower contrast to be able to focus

Remember: there is no one correct answer here

What would you do? (*Note: the Autism Self Advocacy Network resource in the Works Cited has some good ideas for how to grapple with this issue!*)

So how does this change things?

Some common sense points to consider as you start to work on your pedagogy for a given course, tutorial, or curriculum:

1) Teaching a one-shot? *Ask* the instructor for relevant information on any learner who might have a specific need(s)
2) Be prepared to address the needs of learners who *don't* disclose
3) Think thoughtfully about your *own* needs as instructor and any co-instructors

Pedagogical Techniques

Active learning

Inclusivity

Frame active learning in terms of *activities*, not the active body

Multiple means of represen-tation

Options

Verbalize *and* visualize, etc. Describe objects, search results, etc.

Agenda and takeaways

Repetition

Set an agenda, offer content + takeaways, repeat agenda and takeaways at the end

Scaffold tasks

Steps!

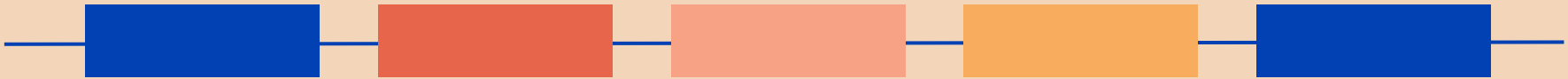
Break tasks down into discrete steps and offer students the chance to view steps one chunk at a time

Mind/Topic mapping

Options

Also offer students the chance to use a list or outline. Offer technology but don't require it

Pedagogical Techniques



Tutorials

Think-Pair-Share/Fishbowl

Group Discussion

Timed Activities

Assessment

Accommodations

If there are timed or quiz-based sections, students may need accommodation

Alternatives

Give alternatives so students don't have to have a specific role or do mandatory sharing

Inclusion

Offer multiple ways to participate (chat, verbally, etc.)

Remind

Offer a timer and reminders for students who might need them

Alternatives

Offer students multiple ways to complete (not just handwritten) and time after for it

04

Future Planning

Building an Inclusive Space

Renovating

1. Go beyond ADA compliance
2. Determine what isn't possible
3. Ask your users (and non-users)
4. Ask your experts (including staff)
5. Conduct an accessibility audit

From the ground up

1) Pick your architect carefully
2) Be involved early and often
3) Ask your users, non-users, experts, etc.
4) Be prepared to make hard choices

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Thanks

Let's chat more?

I'd love to continue the conversation

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