

UNIVERSAL DESIGN: HOW DO WE MAKE IT HAPPEN

Kara James-Director, Disability Services

Jo Hopp-Associate Professor, Physics Department

UW-Stout

Learning Objectives

- Gain a better understanding of Universal Design and how it connects in education.
- Understand the social justice/socio-political model of disability.
- Be more aware of the assumptions we all make.
- Examine an assignment/activity/assessment and identify barriers and solutions

Collaborative Efforts



- Project ShIFT
- Faculty and Disability Services: **COMMON GOALS**

History of Disability:

- Smith-Fess Vocational Rehabilitation Act
 - ▣ Amended in 1943, 1954, and 1965
- Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and 1978
 - ▣ Section 504
- 1975 Education for All Handicapped Children Act
 - ▣ Mandated free and appropriate education for children with disabilities
- 1990 Americans with Disability Act was signed
 - ▣ September 25, 2008 ADAAA signed

An individual may become a member of this protected class at any moment!

What is the Social Model?

MEDICAL MODEL	SOCIAL MODEL
Disability is a deficiency or abnormality.	Disability is a difference.
Being disabled is negative.	Being disabled, in itself, is neutral.
Disability resides in the individual.	Disability derives from interaction between the individual and society.
The remedy for disability-related problems is cure or normalization of the individual.	The remedy for disability-related problems is a change in the interaction between the individual and society.
The agent of remedy is the professional.	The agent of remedy can be the individual, an advocate, or anyone who affects the arrangements between the individual and society.
<i>Carol J. Gill, Chicago Institute of Disability Research</i>	

What is Universal Design (UD)?

- According to the Center for Universal Design: Universal Design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.
- It benefits people of all ages and abilities.
- Universal Design for Learning or Instruction
 - ▣ Define
 - ▣ Example

Accommodation and Universal Design

ACCOMMODATION APPROACH	UNIVERSAL DESIGN APPROACH
Access is a problem for the individual and should be addressed by that person and the disability service program.	Access issues stem from an inaccessible, poorly designed environments and should be addressed by the designer.
Access is achieved through accommodations and/or retrofitting existing requirements.	The system/environment is designed, to the greatest extent possible, to be usable by all.
Access is retroactive.	Access is proactive.
Access is often provided in a separate location or through special treatment.	Access is inclusive.
Access must be reconsidered each time a new individual uses the system.	Access, as part of the environmental design, is sustainable.

Role of Disability Services Office:

- Ensure equal access for students with disabilities
 - ▣ Meet with students to identify barriers in the learning environment and determine appropriate means of equal access
- UW-Stout Approach
 - ▣ Meet with students to identify barriers and means of equal access
 - Documentation is used to verify students “story”
 - ▣ Resource for faculty and staff

Role of faculty:

- DS office not enough without the faculty
 - ▣ Without faculty “accommodation model” prevails
 - ▣ Faculty dictate the classroom environment – they are a critical piece
- One more thing for faculty to do??
 - ▣ NO!
 - ▣ BABY STEPS

Syllabus

- Welcoming Environment – environment conducive to learning
- Include a statement in the syllabus
- Syllabus Brainstorming

Possible Syllabus Components

- Learning for all students is a goal
- Encourage faculty/student dialogue
- Recognizing barriers is a goal
- Connects students to campus resources

Snowball Fight!!!!

- What are the barriers to infusing universal design in the classroom?

Identifying Assumptions

- Pick an assignment/activity/assessment you do in your course.
 - ▣ What's "required" to be successful on this assignment/activity/assessment?
 - ▣ What assumptions are you making about your students?

Addressing Assumptions

- What is the focus?
 - ▣ Learning objectives - goal
 - ▣ Assessment
- How can you break down the barriers you identified? What alternatives or additions can you do to make the assignment/activity/assessment more inclusive?

Strategies for faculty

- Syllabus
- Identifying Assumptions
- Being mindful is most important.
- Talk about it.

Summary:

- Remember the Angry Birds
- Collaborative Effort
 - ▣ Not just one person or one office.
 - ▣ Cooperative effort between disability services office and faculty.
 - staff, administration, facilities, ...EVERYONE.
- Not an Overhaul
 - ▣ Start small-even the smallest steps can have a great impact.
- Supportive environment that nurtures growth and change.



?? Questions ??