Come Together: Barriers Students with Disabilities (SWD) Face and Strategies for Equity and Inclusion

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Who We Are

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Presentation Overview

- Defining Disability
- Breakout Activity
- Misconceptions
- Background Overview: Students with Disabilities (SWD) in Higher Education
  - Data from Basic Needs Grant
- What this Means & Why it Matters
An individual with a disability shall refer to:

1. Any person who has a physical or mental impairment that limits one or more of the major life activities of such individual
2. Any person who has a record of such impairment
3. Any person who is regarded as having such impairment

10 broad categories for reporting purposes
Breakout

In small groups, please discuss the following:

What has been your experience having SWD in your classroom?

What information do you need in order to better support SWD?

What are some of the barriers you’ve encountered?
Background

Individuals with disabilities are a health disparate group (Krahn, 2015)

- Experience poor health at a rate greater than other underserved groups and people without disability (Drum et al., 2011)

- Have higher rates of obesity, 41% compared to only 25.2% of their non-disabled peers aged 18 and over (Kraus, 2015)
College students with disabilities face barriers greater than their non-disabled peers in an overwhelming number of ways, including (but not limited to):

- Higher rates of sexual assault (Brown, Pena & Rankin, 2017)
- Lower employment rates post college (Moore & Schelling, 2015)
- Greater risk for mental health issues (Stockhom Youth Cohort Data, 2018)
- Students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) for higher reports of suicide ideation and attempts (Cassidy et al., 2014)
Misconceptions

- Accommodations take too much time
- Accommodations provide an “extra advantage”
- It is the SWD responsibility to talk to faculty and peers to get their needs met
- DSS (ARC) has the time, money and support, it’s not faculty/staff job to support these students
- SWD are less capable than their non-disabled peers
- I don’t know how to provide accommodations so I’m not going to try because I don’t want to mess things up
Access to Healthy Opportunities for College Students with Disabilities: A Mixed Methods Study

# of CSU Campuses Participated: 14
# of SWD who participated: 516

# of SWD in CSU System (2018): 15,785
% of SWD at Chico State: 5%
Access to Healthy Opportunities for College SWD

The terms *diversity, equity and inclusion* become empty rhetoric because disability is rarely part of these conversations outside of modifications to the physical space such as ramps, classroom seating, and classroom or instructional modifications.

**The goal:** to conduct a needs assessment of college SWD in the CSU system using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

**The central hypothesis:** to comprehensively understand the basic needs (e.g., food security, housing, college life participation, perceived wellness, and barriers and facilitators) of SWD
Methods: Design

Sequential explanatory mixed methods design

Survey Design:
- Designed using previous BNR survey questions (already validated through previous studies)
- Additional disability specific questions (not validated)
- Student focus group at Chico State for face & content validity
- Reviewed by staff at Chico DSS office
Methods: Recruitment

- Initial recruitment emails sent out to all CSU DSS offices (August)
- Follow up emails sent at two-week intervals totaling 4 requests (September-October)
- Follow up with Chancellor’s Office to request DDS offices not participating (November)
- Student qualitative interviews and focus groups (December)
- Participation from remaining CSU campuses (December-Feb)
- CHEBNA presentation and final data (Feb)
Preliminary Quantitative Data: The Universities

1. Bakersfield
2. Channel Island
3. Chico
4. Dominguez Hills
5. East Bay
6. Fresno
7. Fullerton
8. Los Angeles
9. Maritime
10. Northridge
11. Sacramento
12. San Francisco
13. Stanislaus
14. San Jose
Preliminary Quantitative Data: The Who

Male: 23.3%
Female: 69.9%

Transgender: 4.12%
African American: 31.34%
American Indian/Alaskan: 4.74%
Asian American: 10.31%
Mexican American/Mexican: 23.71%
Filipino: 2.89%
Mixed Race: 10.31%
Other Latino: 9.69%

Intersectionality
Part of Campus and Race

Race of those who reported that they “Somewhat Disagree”

- 2.27% of African Americans, Black
- 18.18% of Asian Americans
- 20.45% of Mixed Race
- 22.73% Mexican American, Mexican
- 31.82% of White, Non-Latino

24.51% of SWD reported negatively about feeling like they are part of campus
Part of Campus and Race Continued

Race of those reporting that they “Disagree”

- 3.33% of African Americans, Black
- 3.33% of Filipinos
- 10% of American Indians or Alaskan Natives
- 13.33% of Asian Americans
- 20% of Mexican Americans, Mexican
- 40% of White, Non-Latino
Race of those reporting that they “Strongly Disagree”

- 4.11% of Asian Americans
- 12.5% of African Americans, Black
- 12.5% of Mixed Race
- 12.5% of Other Latino
- 16.67% of American Indian or Alaskan Native
- 16.67% of Mexican American, Mexican
- 20.83% of White, Non-Latino
Before Attending College, I Received Disability Services (K-12 setting)

• 55% said YES
• 41% said NO
• 3% said MAYBE/ I AM NOT SURE
• 1% Preferred To Not Answer
How Much Difficulty Have You Had In The Past 30 Days Participating In College Life?

- 35% said NONE
- 30% said MILD
- 23% said MODERATE
- 8% said SEVERE
- 3% said Extreme Difficulty/Cannot do
How Much Difficulty Have You Had In The Past 30 Days Participating In College Life? Continued

Moderate To Extreme Difficulty:

- 18.39% accessing classrooms/buildings
- 32.25% receiving accommodations
- 33% communicating with faculty
- 30.73% communicating with staff
- 36.18% communicating with peers
- 24.82% accessing recreation or gym on campus
- 35% getting to and from classes
- 38.75% leisure time with peers
SWD reported their GPA as:

- 1.9% below 1.5
- 1.98% between 1.51-2.0
- 8.44% between 2.1-2.5
- 22.33% between 2.51-3.0
- 36.7% between 3.1-3.5
- 23.57 above 3.6
- 5.71% preferred not to answer

89.39 % definitely or probably will pass their classes this semester
I Feel Supported By My Professors

- 20% Strongly Agree
  - 37% Agree
  - 25% Somewhat Agree
  - 9% Neither Disagree or Agree
  - 5% Somewhat disagree
    - 2% Disagree
    - 2% Strongly Disagree
Moderate to Vigorous Physical Activity By Day and Disability

For Those Who Reported Their Disability As:

- **ASD**: 9% did 6-7 days, 14% did 4-5 days, 36% did 2-3 days, 41% did 0-1 days
- **Blind/low vision**: 12% did 6-7 days, 12% did 4-5 days, 35% did 2-3 days, 41% did 0-1 days
- **Mobility**: 5% did 6-7 days, 11% did 4-5 days, 32% did 2-3 days, 52% did 0-1 days
- **Psychological/Mental Health**: 1% did 6-7 days, 13% did 4-5 days, 31% did 2-3 days, 55% did 0-1 days

Approximately half of on-campus college students (non-disabled) report meeting recommended mod/vig PA
Why Does This Data Matter?
“It is so complicated and difficult to set up accommodations. I find it very stressful and sometimes I don’t do it because of that. I’ve also had teachers ask me what my disability is and I become embarrassed and don’t want to ask for the accommodations.”
The Real Life Examples

Sarah Gentle
A Little About Me

- Second oldest of 7 children, 3 of which are visually impaired
  - Been VI since birth
- First to attend and complete college
  - Obtained both AA from De Anza Community College & BA from CSU Chico
- Student with disability (SWD)
- Former Foster Youth
- ASPIRING ADVOCATE
How Has College NOT Been Equitable or Inclusive

- No one teaches us about our rights as students, what equal opportunity looks like, or that we deserve an equitable and inclusive education.
  - Dropped classes because of teachers unwilling to accommodate me
- Many clubs, sports, and extracurricular activities are not inclusive of all ability levels
  - Wanted to join so many things but felt uncomfortable whether I tried or not
How HAS College Been Equitable and Inclusive

- Been able to learn what equal opportunity and an equitable/inclusive experience look like through the staff and faculty who go the extra mile
  - Cheer and Dance Coach taking the extra time and effort
  - Sociology professor taking the initiative to be prepared
  - Psychology professor collaborating to take the extra steps
My Suggestions

- The resources are there
- Success is a two-way street
- Be open to the possibilities
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ACCOMMODATIONS: PROMOTING ACCESSIBILITY FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

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TIPPING POINT STUDENT SUCCESS SUMMIT 2020
“A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a course, program, service, job, activity, or facility that enables a qualified student with a disability to have an equal opportunity.”

“An equal opportunity means an opportunity to attain the same level of performance or to enjoy equal benefits and privileges as are available to a similarly-situated student without a disability.”
CONDUCT FIELD OBSERVATIONS AT THE LAB SCHOOL

**OBSERVATIONS**

D. is at the sensory table. She is scooping beads up with a cup and pouring them into a funnel. Says, "This is going to be medicine." The girl sitting next to her is doing the same activity and says, "This is going to be medicine, too." D. says, "Yes, maybe." D. continues to scoop and pour, and says some things that are unintelligible. The teacher says, "Keep it down." D. says "OK." D. says, "I think we need more, a

**INTERPRETATIONS**

Fine motor movement – coordination of eyes, hand, and arm to pour into a specific spot

Pretend/symbolic play – using beads and calling them medicine

Attention – sustained play and focus

Pragmatics – use of appropriate conversation to adult

Syntax (simple with phrases) – two phrases, not strung together.

**WRITE PAPER**

- Background
- Methodology
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusion
1. Met with student, collaborated, and asked to meet with her again the following week
2. Connected with university resources
3. Met with student to ensure our equal opportunity accommodation was a good fit.
4. Executed plan
The target child sits on a wooden bench with a peer. She then runs to look in the window of a small play house. A teacher sits outside the house on the sand, as the target child speaks through an open door on the house.

>> Target Child: Don't want me inside her house.

>> Peer: But I want you.

>> Target Child: I know, but I want to go inside [inaudible] house.

>> Peer: My house, my house.

>> Target Child: I want to play with you in your -- in your house.

>> Teacher: She wants to know if she can come in the house.

>> Peer: You made me so mad!
PROJECT TAKEAWAYS

This project was initiated by my student.

It was empowering to ask my student for a week to brainstorm.

No one told me, “No, I can’t help you.”
BREAKOUT SESSION

How can we promote students’ engagement and educational experience, especially when considering diversity, equity, and inclusion?

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Closing
Faculty, Staff, & Student Services: Things to Consider

- Explore your own unconscious bias
- Review policies & procedures - were they developed out of fear or were they developed to help the SWD be successful & access services
- Do you know where to go when you have a question about disability accommodations or other disability related issues?
- Do you know the differences in needs of students with different disabilities?
- Are you placing the burden on the SWD?
- Implement Universal Design Practices in Class
Coming Soon to Chico State:

- Survey about how to support faculty and staff on serving students who are neuro-diverse
  - Survey coming out in February or March
    - This will help inform a guide being developed for faculty & staff to better support students who are neuro-diverse

- OATS Announcement
Questions or Comments

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