

Session Information

Probing Barriers to Accommodations and Inclusion in Academia for Learners with Physical Limitations

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We tend to assume that instructors are responsible for implementing accommodations for learners with physical limitations. In this view, nearly all control over accommodations (what, when, how and, how well) is presumed to belong to the instructor who is responsible for making learning situations where learners with physical limitations are “**included**”. This view doesn’t take into account the need for change in areas that are outside of the control and awareness of the instructor and the learners. Responsibility for “accommodations” and “inclusion” might be easier to grasp if the social construction of “accommodations” and “inclusion” was not imbedded in a changing discourse on power and inequality. Learners and instructors are seen as benefiting from working together to assess and develop strategies for operationalizing “inclusive” climates. This workshop focuses on a process that asks questions, and looks for information followed by the identification of strategies to test possible solutions.

Learning Outcomes

- Increased awareness of how “accommodations” and “inclusion” can address the needs of learners in higher education.
- A more definitive understanding of who the stakeholders in academia are when there are learners with physical limitations in a class, and how each of these stakeholders view the costs and benefits of “accommodation” and “inclusion”.
- An increased range of strategies for promoting equitable and “inclusive” learning environments that eliminate barriers for learners when there are learners in a class with physical limitations.

Facilitation Plan:

Pre-workshop needs: Before the session participants are to:

Review on the Internet <http://www.pacer.org/publications/adaqa/504.asp>
<http://www.unco.edu/cetl/TracyMueller/Inclusion/Accommodations.html>
<http://special.ed.about.com/cs/teacherstrategies/a/terminology.htm>

During the activity, participants should:

1. Develop short definitions for accommodations, inclusion, inequity, and physical limitations.
2. Creation of useful definitions for *physical limitations*, *inequity*, *accommodations* and *inclusion*.
3. Fill in the Problem Table that identifies the costs and benefits of accommodation and inclusion.
4. Answer the Critical Thinking Questions around strategies for the implementation of accommodations and inclusive learning environments.
5. Complete the skill exercise after the session.

Resources needed:

1. Computer and overhead projector with internet connections
2. Handouts for participants on definitions and tasks
3. Paper and markers for presenting and processing results of group activities
4. Work space