



The Synergy among Process Education, ADA, and Universal Design

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Abstract:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), passed in 1990, “prohibits discrimination and guarantees that people with disabilities have the same opportunities as everyone else to participate in the mainstream of American life.” To be protected under ADA, a person must have a recognized disability, with ‘reasonable’ accommodations available based on the documentation.

The participants in this workshop will explore the various recognized disabilities and the accommodations that are usually considered reasonable as well as the growing need for institutions of higher learning to provide accommodations under ADA. The participants will learn about the emerging trend of Universal Design that finds ways to create environments and pedagogy to reduce the need for accommodations. The workshop will help the participants see the ways Process Education and universal design complement each other.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Increased recognition of the types of accommodations that have and could be needed under ADA.
2. Increased awareness of ways to develop curriculum using Process Education principles that reduces the needs for accommodations under ADA.
3. Ability to create modifications in curriculum that reduces the need for some accommodations under ADA.

Facilitation Plan:

1. Break audience into groups of three or four, with the number of groups evenly divisible by three. In the groups,
 - a. Brainstorm a list of possible accommodations a student might need under ADA.
 - b. Brainstorm a list of possible disabilities that might be documented.
 - c. Reviewing the brainstormed list of possible accommodations, rank order them from ease in providing, with those on the list towards the end being the most difficult.
2. In a large group, share the findings from the small groups and create concatenated lists.
3. Using a short PPT, review the current climate for disability acceptance and reasonable accommodations. Summarize the differences a student finds when moving from K-12 entitlement to ADA “fair playing field.”
4. In the large group, review the list of possible accommodations, possibly modified after the PPT presentation, focusing on three groups: those that are easy to provide, those that have some difficulty in providing, and those that are difficult to provide.
5. Breaking back to the original small groups, have the same number of teams work on creating curricular modifications that could deal with each of the three focus areas.
6. As a large group, discuss the one or two ideas that could be easy to implement from each focus.
7. As a large group, discuss the benefits to all students if these implementations were done.

