

Changing Landscapes
19TH ANNUAL **DISABILITY** SYMPOSIUM
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Symposium Schedule **March/April 2021**

March 11, 2021 (12pm - 1pm EST)

Understanding the Needs of College Students with Autism

**Presenters: Jessica Monahan, Ph.D., Brian Freedman, Ph.D., Wes Garton, M.S.,
Kerry Pini**

Through describing the results of a survey sent to autistic individuals on one college campus, we seek to engage attendees in innovative problem solving that directly relates to the issues they see on their campuses for students on the autism spectrum. The University of Delaware (UD) conducted a survey of current students with autism in preparation for developing a comprehensive support system. 22 students shared their experiences. Some supports (e.g., tutoring) were found to be more helpful than others (e.g., counseling center). Students also identified challenges (e.g., noise in residence and dining halls) and concerns (e.g., lack of awareness among professors). The presenters will discuss environmental and systemic barriers to the postsecondary education environment identified by autistic college students, as well as possible solutions to these barriers. Finally, the presenters want to discuss how to implement solutions through campus partnerships or collaborations.

March 18, 2021 (12pm - 1pm EST)

Integrating Access and Inclusion into the Remote Learning Environment

Presenter: Shelby Acteson, M.Ed.

After the sudden shift to remote learning for many institutions this past Spring, many schools expanded their knowledge of online learning pedagogy and practice as they moved forward with fully remote and/or hybrid course delivery methods this Fall. This new approach combined with new technology platforms, however, has proven both advantageous and challenging for students with disabilities. With the uncertainties of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will likely see the continuation of remote learning on some level in most of our programs through 2021. With this in mind, we will explore this new landscape and learn about how the integration of the principles of Universal Design into course content creation and instruction (as well as remote meetings, events, webinars, etc.) can address some of the challenges and further enhance the access and

inclusion of the remote learning environment – not just for students with disabilities, but for all participants in the learning process.

March 25, 2021 (12pm - 1pm EST)

Advocating for "Beyond Compliance" through Partnerships between Faculty and Disability Service

Presenters: Justin E. Freedman, Ph.D., Alicia M. Drelick, Ed.D., Casey L. Woodfield, Ph.D., John Woodruff, M.S.

Research in the field of Disability Studies has documented the evolving meaning of disability. The presenters draw on this work to share an example of disability services staff and faculty collaborating to promote non-binary, sociocultural perspectives of disability on a university campus. The presenters detail events organized by the disability services office to bring together students and faculty to foster inclusive attitudes and practices. The presenters will highlight a series of student-led presentations proposing strengths-based representations of disability and rethinking how disability-related accommodations are addressed in postsecondary settings, such as universally designed, flexible course policies that anticipate the diverse needs of college students. A lesson from this experience is how integrating disability and action-based projects into course curriculum can promote the goals of disability services, including modeling approaches that center holistic understandings of disability

April 1, 2021 (12pm - 1pm EST)

The Necessity to go Beyond Accommodations: When the Match to Functional Impacts Fail

Presenters: Alexandra Schmied, M.S., Dolly Singley, Ph.D., Michelle Koch, Ed.S., Katie O'Brien, M.S.

Do accommodations truly meet functional impacts of students identified for accommodations under the Americans with Disability Act (ADAAA)? The presenters will discuss the need for additional services and supports to address the persistence and retention of students with disabilities in the post-secondary setting. Academic Coaching may be an effective intervention to increase the use and knowledge of learning and study strategies, academic engagement, self-efficacy, confidence, and academic achievement of students with disabilities. The presenters will provide resources that will assist audience members in implementing coaching programs within their own areas of expertise at their respective institutions. Academic Coaching is an intervention based on reflection, planning, goal setting, and individual support. In sum, the presenters will propose models of group and peer academic coaching as future considerations for students with disabilities in order to maximize resources to increase the persistence and retention rates of students with disabilities.

Thursday, April 8, 2021 (12:00pm - 1:30pm EST)

Where We Were, Where We Are, Where We Are Going: Disability Services in the Age of the Pandemic

Presenters: Jane Jarrow, Ph.D., and Jamie Axelrod, M.S.

This session will review key policies and practices in the field of disability services as they were before March, 2020, and as they are being carried out now, in the midst of a school year dominated by changes and adjustments in response to the pandemic. Then we will gaze into our crystal ball and offer some predictions of how the year we are living will impact on the future of service delivery in disability services. It is not all bad news, as we have learned some valuable lessons about alternatives. A return to healthy programs and services will depend on recommitting to the basic guiding principles of the field, coupled with acknowledgement of how things have changed.