

Changing the Narrative: Building Capacity to Align with Our Values

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 Association on
Higher Education
And Disability[®]



Conference Civility Statement

We ask you to join us in creating a culture that reflects...

Access and Inclusion

and

Civility and Respect

...this week and in all aspects of our organization.

Agenda

- Introduction
- Small Group Discussions & Share-out
- Building Capacity
- Brainstorming Activity
- Session Closing & Shared Document

Introduction: Core Values

- Disability is a natural part of human variation and vital to the development of communities
- Disability is a social/political category that includes individuals from diverse backgrounds
- Equal access can not be achieved through accommodation alone
- Design that promotes inclusion is a matter of social justice and civil rights
- Person-centered approaches demand leveraging creative solutions

Cultivate a Mindset: Framing Work through Defined Values (continued)

- Intentional shift *away from compliance to culture* as a way to promote student success
- Focusing on accommodation alone *limits access* and perpetuates systemic ableism
- Prioritize work that *promotes access and disability awareness* across the college

Cultivate a Mindset: Framing Work through Defined Values

- Recognition that *elevating disabled voices* (students and community) is essential for our work
- Foster *belonging and leadership* (away from stigma) by creating opportunities and community for students

Our Roles

Accessibility
Specialists

Advocate
Coordinator

Student
Advocates

Small Group Discussion

Reflect on efforts to increase accessibility and belonging at your institution - then share out (20 min)

Consider:

- What are your values? How do they frame your work?
- What are your department's stated values/mission (are they different, do they align with your own)?
- What prevents efforts to increase accessibility and belonging?
- Where have you found successes?

Examples in Action

Framing Work Around Values

Disability Cultural Alliance

Elevating Student Voice

- Disability/Accessibility Advocates
- Student leadership roles
- Programming, workshops, and events

Collaborative Partnerships

- Intersectional, disability-centered positions in student resource centers
- Internships & participation with subject departments
- Collaboration and support from State Independent Living Centers

Disability Cultural Center: Accessibility Hub

- A cultural and community space, focused on students with disabilities, modelled after similar cultural centers on campus
- Staffed by student workers trained as peer advocates
- Resources and connection for the whole school and for community members
- Events, activities, support, culture, community

Advocate Roles & Community Engagement

- Virtual Town Halls
- ADHD Peer Resource Group
- Accessible Hikes & Day Trips
- Accessibility First Job Fair
- Book Clubs
- Bulb Forcing Project (with Learning Gardens)
- Study Seshes
- Community Engagement - building bridges with area universities and community organizations

Let's Talk Podcast Collective

The podcasts started as an Advocate project, for disabled students to tell their stories and bring in stories from the college and community.

- Internships for Multimedia students
- Creating content and editing
- Live broadcasts and podcast recordings on two local community radio stations

Let's Talk! Podcast Page

- Audio clip from the **Autism Series** (discussing representation in the media)
- Transcript

Student/Faculty STEM Group

The STEM group began as a student advocate project

- Student had struggled in STEM classes, but returned to school and was successful
- Virtual group for students to discuss experiences, concerns and strategies for success in STEM classes
- Instructor group to share student feedback

Result: Emphasis on communication, listening to students

Created a group of instructors interested in hearing from students

Faculty participated with students in conference sessions and podcasts

Committee for an Accessible College Culture

CACC was formed to promote a welcoming college culture for all members of the community with disabilities

- Committee brings up and discusses a wide range of ideas, concerns, and actions
- Participation across the college - faculty, staff, students
 - Employee Affinity Groups
 - Delta Alpha Pi Honor Society

Partnership with ESOL instructors

“DESOL” Committee has been meeting since 2018

- Disability impacts students from other countries, but they do not connect with our offices
- Accommodations and strategies look different in ESOL classes and in different cultures
- ESOL instructors are used to adapting to students needs, DESOL addresses issues and ideas collaboratively
- College-wide initiatives around multiple language translations, plain language

Brainstorming Activity

You know your institution best, so consider: “What kinds of shifts in values might facilitate more effective work and what might that look like?”

- What is your vision to shift the narrative?
- What successful strategies do you want to focus on?
- What areas/initiatives show the most promise?
- Where can you collaborate or find support?

Thank You for Joining Us!

Do you have any final
thoughts as we close?

QR CODE: Shared
Brainstorming Document

Questions?

Ideas for how we can
support each other?

Session Evaluation



tinyurl.com/AHEADFeedback

Your feedback helps shape future programming.

Thank you for attending!