

# Come to your Senses! The Importance of Collaboration for Neuro-Inclusive Spaces

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Celebrate  
Neurodiversity



# Who Are We?

- 5 years exp. in education
- 1 year exp. in DS

Amanda



- Dyslexic
- ADHD
- 19 years exp. SA
- 16-year program

Amy



- ADHD+
- 22 years exp
- 5 - year program

Emily



- 30 years exp. in higher ed.
- 15 years exp. in DS

Sandy



- Autistic/ADHD
- Nonbinary
- 23 years exp.
- 14-year program

Sara





**Neurodiversity  
Navigators**



Where do we work?

# Agenda

Welcome & Introduction

Understanding Neurodivergent Student Needs

Campus Collaborations & Inclusive Practices

Sensory-Inclusive Initiatives

Action Planning and Q&A



# You Tell Us!

**Write on the sticky notes at your table:**

- Your name & institution
- A barrier you've noticed for neurodivergent students





# Understanding Neurodivergent Student Needs

- Defining Key Terms
- Discussing Intersectionality
- Identifying Common Campus Barriers



# Key Terms

**Neurodiversity** - Infinite neuro-cognitive variability within the Earth's human population

**Neurodivergent (ND)** - an individual whose brain functions in a way that diverge significantly from the dominant societal stands.

**Neurotypical (NT)** - an individual whose style of neurocognitive functioning falls within the dominant societal standards.

**Neurodiverse** - a group made up of both neurodivergent and neurotypical individuals.

# Medical Model of Disability

- Seeks to “fix”
- Sees the person/needs as the problem
- Believes there is one “correct” way of being
- Often separates person from the disability





# Social Justice Model of Disability

- Empowers individuals
- Sees the environment/barriers to access as the problem
- Believes there is more than one acceptable way of being
- Sees disability as part of a person's identity.



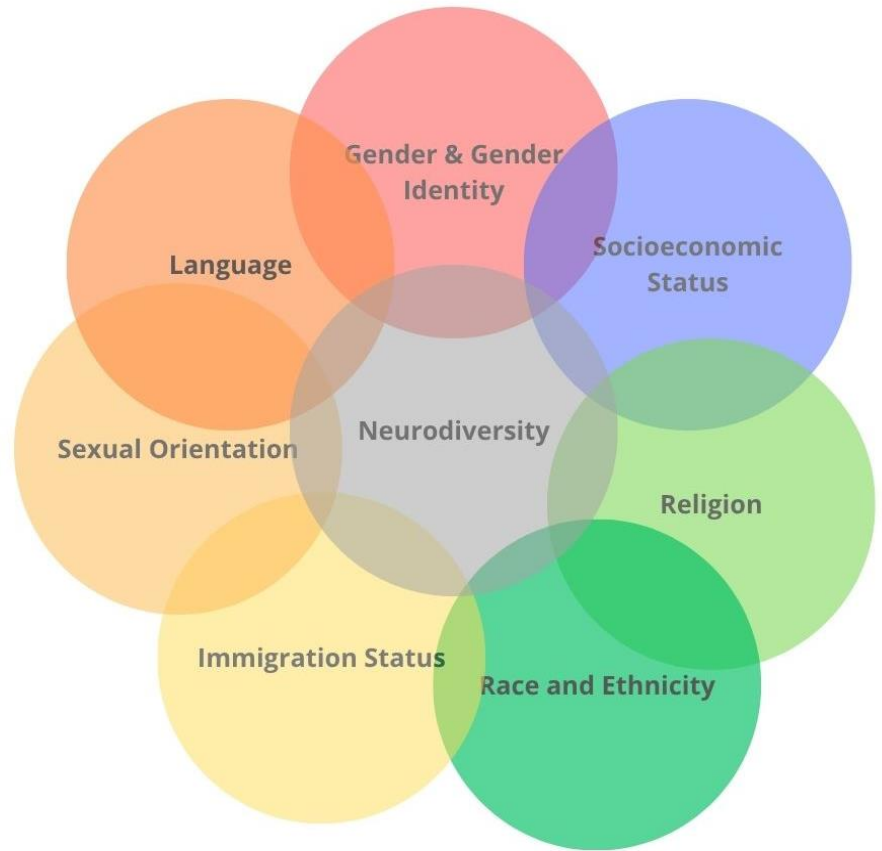
# Power and Privilege

- Access to resources
- Group membership
- “Helpful” Stereotypes
- Ableism
- Cultural Expectations



# Intersectionality

- Age
- Disability
- Religion
- Ethnicity
- Social Class
- Sexual Orientation
- Indigenous Backgrounds
- National Origin
- Gender



# Common Campus Barriers: Classrooms

## Classrooms

- Extended Time
- Note Taking
- Flexibility
- Technology
- Assignment Type
- Environmental



# Common Campus Barriers: Social

## Social

- Communication Differences
- Unstructured Time
- Living Situations
- Hidden Expectations
- Inconsistency



# Common Campus Barriers – Events

## Events

- Environment
- Lack of Clarity
- Hidden Expectations
- Lack of Voices



# Universal Design in Action

- Proactive Solution
- Access needs aren't limited to disability
- Life is unpredictable



# Universal Design in Action: Tools

- [Ithaca College Guidelines](#)
- [Ithaca College Checklist](#)
- [Ithaca College Training](#)





# Campus Collaborations & Inclusive Practices

- CARE Team
- Case Study: Supporting Neurodivergent Students
- Partnerships & Inclusive Practices
- Developing Partnerships on Campus





# CARE Team

## November 2024 CARE Student Statistics

- 45/159 students (28.3%) registered with SDS
- 27/45 (60%) at least 1 mental health diagnosis
- 6/45 (13%) diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder

## Outreach process began

- GOAL: Gain feedback based on experiences
  - Academic Departments
  - Case Study: Supporting Neurodivergent Students

# CARE Team Outreach

## Academic Departments

- How is it going in the classroom?
  - Concerns about accommodations
  - Assumptions
  - Additional training (in general)

## Next Steps for SDS

- Incorporated additional trainings
- Provided additional resources





# Case Study: Supporting Neurodivergent Students

## FOCUS Group

- 6 out of 400 registered SDS students participated
- Four categories
  - Classroom Concerns
  - Campus Suggestions
  - Campus Events
  - Other

# CARE Student Statistics

## November 2024

- 45/159 (28.3%) registered with SDS
- 27/45 (60%) at least 1 mental health diagnosis
- 6/45 (13%) diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder

## April 2025

- 38/176 (22%) registered with SDS  
■ **6.3% decrease**
- 20/38 (53%) at least 1 mental health diagnosis  
■ **7% decrease**
- 4/38 (11%) diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder  
■ **2% decrease**

# Partnerships & Inclusive Practices



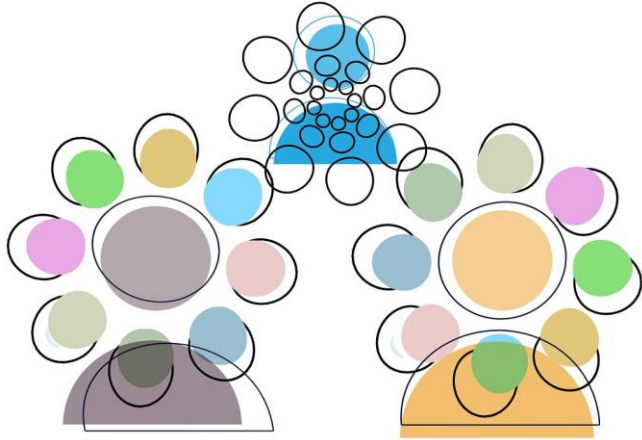
- Testing Center
- Student Solutions
- The WRIGHT Room (Permanent)
- Library – Denied Collaboration
- Outdoor Garden – Pending
- Biology – Denied Collaboration
- Math Lounge
- Board Meeting – 1 Day Pop-Up
- Exercise Science (Permanent)
- Athletics (Permanent)
- Residence Life – Miscommunication
- What's next?

# Developing Partnerships on Campus

## Pair and Share

- Use the provided [handout](#)
- Work with a partner
- List current & potential partners on your campus
- Be prepared to share!





# Share Out

- What did you discover?
- Any surprises?
- Commonalities?







# Sensory-Inclusive Initiatives

- Overview of Sensory Pop-Up Spaces
- Showcase of Existing Sensory Spaces
- Interactive Exploration

# Overview of Sensory Pop-Up Spaces

- Location
- [Budget](#)
- Materials





# Overview of Sensory Pop-Up Spaces: Consider

- Logistics
- Continued Collaborations  
with Faculty/Staff
- Student Engagement

# The WRIGHT Room



## Collaboration with Student Life

“I think this is  
a great  
resource for  
students!”

“Absolutely love the idea, I  
am someone who  
struggles with anxiety and  
this room really helped me  
to relax.”





# The WRIGHT Zone

## Collaboration with Student Life

“Personally, it is my favorite place to go on campus just because of how calming and peaceful it is, and that is something I value very heavily in my very active schedule.”



# The WRIGHT Space



Collaboration with Math Department

"I enjoy using these spaces to work or just destress from the day"

# The WRIGHT Fit Zone



Collaboration with Exercise Science

"I really enjoy the sensory rooms, they're a great place to decompress and relax between engagements. Using the sensory rooms lets me recenter myself during a stressful day"



# The WRIGHT Team



Collaboration with Athletics

“Having accessibility to the sensory room at Florida Southern has been key to my development throughout my college experience! With things constantly moving and hectic, having even a couple seconds to just rest and collect my thoughts after a jam-packed day of classes, work, assignments, clubs and even more, the sensory room allows me to slow down and really focus on me.”





# Zen Dens on MU's Campus



Collaboration with Counseling Center



# Zen Dens on MU's Campus



Collaboration with College of  
Communication



# Zen Dens on MU's Campus




Collaboration with College of Communication





# Zen Dens on MU's Campus



Interfaith  
Prayer and  
Meditation  
Room

Collaboration with Campus Ministry




# On Your Marq's Spaces



Sensory Room



# On Your Marq's Spaces




## Welcome to the Regulation Room

### Why This Room Exists

The Regulation Room is a calming space designed to help you:

- Feel **safe, grounded**, and **in control**
- Regulate emotions and **manage stress**
- Restore **focus** and **energy**
- Practice **sensory** and **self-regulation** skills

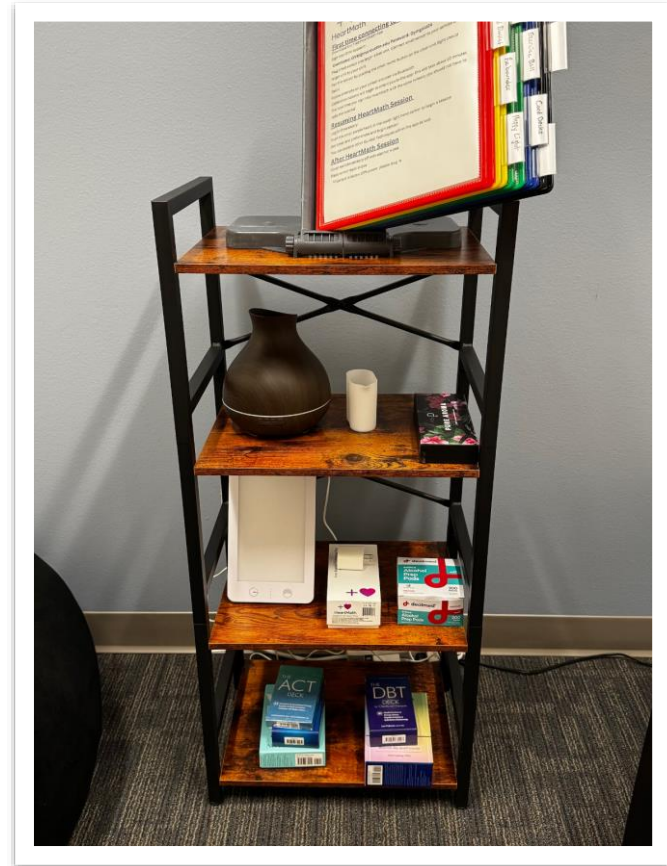


### When to Use It

You can use the room:

- When you're feeling **anxious, overwhelmed, overstimulated, or frustrated**
- If you're feeling **shut down, distracted, or unfocused**
- Even when you feel okay-**practicing skills in calm moments** builds strength for the harder ones

Regulation Room

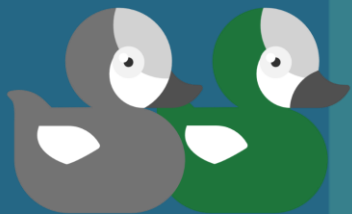


# On Your Marq's Spaces

Regulation Room

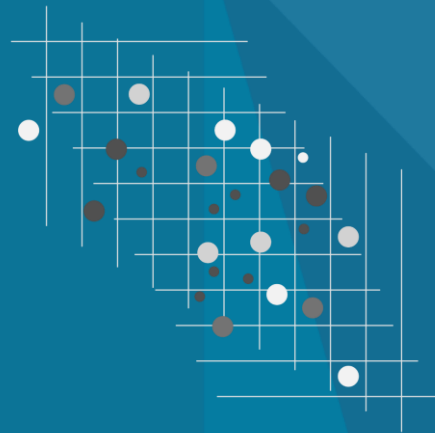






# Explore & Discuss!

While you are engaging with the provided sensory-friendly materials, let's discuss how you might implement similar initiatives on your campus.







# Action Planning & Q&A

- Monitoring the space
- Rules and expectations
- Develop one actionable step for your campus
- Group Discussion
- Open Q&A

# One Actionable Step

- Use the provided handout
- Work with your team, with a partner, or solo
- Create one step you can take back to your campus
- Be prepared to put it into action!



A series of overlapping geometric shapes on the left side of the slide, including a dark blue triangle, a green triangle, a large blue triangle, a purple triangle, and a red triangle, all pointing towards the center.

# Group Discussion



# Resources

- [Ithaca College Guidelines](#)
- [Ithaca College Checklist](#)
- [Ithaca College Training](#)
- [Developing Partnerships Handout](#)
- [Budget](#)
- Actionable Step Handout

Amazon  
Supply List:

