Accessible Learning

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Accessibility Defined

"…a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally integrated and equally effective manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use."

Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education

Access is Crucial to Success

- The first step towards student success is access.

- The mission of Disability Services is to facilitate physical, academic, and programmatic access for students with disabilities in higher education.

What is a disability?

- The Americans with Disabilities Act defines a disability as a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

- A clinical diagnosis is NOT synonymous with a disability.

- An individual must demonstrate that his/her diagnosed condition meets the definition of a disability.

Categories of disabilities

- Acquired Brain Injury
- ADHD
- Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Blind and Low Vision
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Learning Disabilities
- Mobility
- Psychological
- Speech
- Systemic and Chronic Health

Barriers to access are not the same for everyone

- One size does not fit all when it comes to accessibility.

- Access needs vary between:
  - categories of disability
  - individuals within the same category
  - course format
  - technology requirements

Accessible for who?
Example 1

- Deaf
  - Sign Language Interpreter or real time captioning
  - Videos with captions and transcripts available
  - Clear masks

- Blind
  - Course materials in a digital format with JAWS or braille
  - Course materials with navigation and alternative text descriptions
  - Videos with audio description

Accessible for who?
Example 2

- Learning Disability
  - Electronic textbooks with screen reading software
  - Access to instructor lecture notes or power points
  - Extended time on tests

- Mobility
  - Adaptive equipment – alternative types of keyboard and mouse
  - text to speech software and private testing room
  - Elevator malfunction may require class relocation

Creating Access

- Since barriers to access are not the same for every student, solutions for access are not all the same.

- We need a variety of tools, strategies, resources and teamwork.

Partnerships for Accessibility

Disability Services works with others on accessibility:

- within Georgia Highlands College

- community agencies

- systemwide

Takeaways

- One size does not fit all when it comes to accessibility

- Teamwork is Key – across departments, schools, programs, campuses and the USG

Thank You!

For questions, please contact:

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