Retaining Students with Disabilities Through Universal Design & Barrier Reduction

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Center for Access-Ability Resources

- Resources for students include but are not limited to:
  - Assistance with identifying barriers and ways to reduce barriers
  - Identifying accommodations to create access
  - Advocacy skills
  - Testing services
- Resources for faculty/staff include but are not limited to:
  - Consultation
  - Presentations
  - Assistance with UD & accessible educational materials
Students with Disabilities

- Are qualified; have met admissions criteria
- Have varied learning styles
- Benefit from Universal Design

- Need accommodations when educational environment and/or materials are not accessible
Institutional Responsibilities

• Provide accessible education
  ▫ *Includes classrooms, technology, residential facilities, co-curricular activities, extra-curricular activities...*

• Decrease barriers

• Do not discriminate

• Promote reasonable and accessible policies and procedures

• Provide grievance process
Student Responsibilities

• Let faculty know about barriers
• Register with Center for Access-Ability Resources (CAAR) for accommodations
• Share accommodation information with faculty
• Know that accommodations are not retroactive
• Accommodations should not require alteration of the “essential elements” of the curriculum
Faculty Responsibilities

• Acknowledge that **every** student cannot access education in the same way
• Make education and related materials accessible
• Infuse universal design into coursework on the front end
• Work with students to provide accommodations
• Consult with CAAR staff as needed
Universal Design

• *Multiple means of representation*, to give diverse learners options for acquiring information and knowledge;

• *Multiple means of action and expression*, to provide learners options for demonstrating what they know; and

• *Multiple means of engagement*, to tap into learners' interests and offer appropriate challenges.
Decreasing Barriers

- Physical
- Attitudinal
- Systemic

- The interaction of the disability with each course’s content and format should be considered

- Plan ahead
  - Syllabus, Textbook, Exams, Technology, out of class experiences...
Additional Resources

- **Blackboard Accessibility:** www.blackboard.com/Teaching-Learning/Learn-Resources/Accessibility.aspx

- **Creating Accessible Documents and Websites:** www.cew.wisc.edu/accessibility/tutorials/
  www.webaim.org/articles/

- **Faculty Specific:** www.washington.edu/doit/Faculty

- **Legal Components:** www.ada.gov/

- **Universal Design:** www.cast.org/research/udl/index.html
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