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**Prevalence:**
- 1 in 110 births on average
- 1 in 70 for boys
- 1 in 315 for girls

**Autism Spectrum Disorder**

Asperger's Syndrome

Social Dyslexia
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Neurotypicals

Neurodiversity

Shy vs. Bold

Limited Interests & Self Stimulating Behaviors

Accommodations
- Flexible scheduling
- Extended time on tests
- Access to note takers
- Use of personal assistants
- Access to assistive technology

Presence in Student Affairs & Enrollment Management
- Housing & Dining
- Career Services
- Alumni Office
- Student Life
- University Events
- Enrollment Management
- Student Life
- Accessibility
- Student Life
The Make-up of Neuro-Diversity

This is a document for discussion. Concentrating mainly on the difficulties of those with neuro-diversity. It must however, be pointed out that many people with neuro-diversity are excellent at maths, co-ordination, reading etc. We are people of extremes.

Dyspraxia/DCD
Difficulties with planning movements, co-ordination and practical tasks as well as tracking & balance, poor spatial awareness & muscle tone

Over & under-sensitive to light and noise, touch, temperature, Speech & language difficulties

Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) inc. Asperger’s Syndrome
Social & communication problems, Obsessive, difference of Imagination.

Dyscalculia
Difficulties with calculation & Number concepts

Word finding & speech problems

Dyslexia
Difficulty with reading writing, spelling word recognition and sequencing

Lack of concentration, distractibility

AD(H)D
Impulsive, temper outbursts, hyperactivity
Low frustration threshold
Easily distracted or over-focused, lack of inhibitions

Oppositional Defiant Disorder

Neuro-Diversity
Difficulties with organisation, memory, concentration, time, direction, perception, sequencing
Poor listening skills - leading to Low self-esteem, Anxiety depression but creative, original, determined

Tourette’s Syndrome
Verbal & physical tics
Neurotypicals
Cognitive Issues

- Normal or high intellect.
- Narrow range of interests, with trouble concentrating on things not connected with favorite subjects.
- Black & white thinking.
- "Mindblindness" - inability to speculate about what another person is thinking/feeling.
- Rigidity in thought interferes with problem solving, planning, impulse control, and ability to focus to completion.
Limited Interests & Self Stimulating Behaviors

• Narrow range of interests and obsessions; may refuse to engage in other activities.

• Self-stimulatory behavior, such as hand flapping, rocking, pacing, or twirling.

• Strict schedule, which produces anxiety when interrupted.
Communication Issues

- Trouble making a decision or answering a question.
- Language rituals, such as certain word scripts that s/he repeats often.
- Literal interpretation of words, missing abstract meanings.
- Little eye contact.
- Facial expressions either absent or inappropriate to situation.
- Monotone speech without emotion.
- Unusual gestures.

Lack of emotional expression is NOT the same as lack of emotion.
Social Interaction Issues

May not comprehend the give-and-take nature of social interactions, particularly:

- eye contact,
- facial expressions,
- body language,
- conversation turn-taking,
- perspective taking, and
- matching conversational and nonverbal responses to the interaction.

- Empathy as a learned behavior
Sensory Input Issues

- Limited food choices; choose and reject foods based upon smell or texture.
- React strongly to certain smells.
- Hypersensitive to certain sounds.
- May not want to be touched, at all.
Academic Challenges

- Analysis; compare & contrast
- Time management; term projects
- Using personal perspective
- Slowed processing speed
- Sensory struggles
- Perfectionism; rigidity
- Managing distractions
- Taking notes
- Answering questions
Accommodations

- Extended time
- Reducted distraction
- Use of computer
- Taking breaks
- Using sensory objects (rubber balls, rubber bands, pencil vs. pen, sunglasses)
- Tape recording lectures; note takers
- Assistive technology (etext, speech to text software, noise reduction earphones)
Co-Curricular Challenges

- Difficulty with organization
- May not get processes/routes on first try (may need to practice)
- May struggle to find/join/manage group expectations
- Navigating and negotiating peer relations may raise anxiety
- May have difficulty with dealing with off-campus or novel situations
Presence in Student Affairs & Enrollment Management

- Housing & Dining
- Community Standards & Student Conduct
- Career Services
- Student Legal Assistance
- Admissions
- Orientation & First Year Experience
- Student Involvement & Leadership Development
- Student Threat Assessment Team
- Center for Access Ability
- Resources
- Counseling & Student Development Center
Areas of Difficulty: H&D

Navigating Expectations:
- Orientation (e.g. student safety, fire drills) - may not learn first time
- Roommate conflicts - may not know how to disclose; may not want to
- Sharing communal space
- Socializing - may result in bullying, victimization

Overstimulation from "Everyday" Items:
- Fluorescent or flashing lights
- Loud music/noise
- Crowds & parties
- Smells
- Fire alarms & lock downs
- Changing furniture arrangements
- General mess

Things to "watch" for:
- Ice breakers may be too fast or have unclear rules
- Bullying is common & is often not reported
- Personal care may lack
- Room preferences may cause conflicts
  (e.g. temperature, sleep cycle)
Barrier Reduction

- Reduce distractions
- Provide concise, written and oral instructions.
- Develop scripts
- Scaffold ideas
- Work with family/student to assist in transition.
- Provide self-advocacy training
- May need support to organize their time and tasks
- Build in time for practice
- Connect early and often
- Use direct communication

Try play-doh to reduce sensory sensitivity
Role play difficult interactions in advance
Walk and talk to reduce anxiety
Tips for Student Affairs

Parent Interactions:
- Remind them their goal is to have an independent, functional student
- Frequent intervention sends a message that the student needs rescuing
- Parental interference in solving issues fosters dependence by the student
- Reinforce the message and support provided by sending the student to college
- Support that mistakes are learning opportunities

"Dangerous" Behavior:
- Not common; Be prepared for but don't expect
- May surface when overwhelmed, bullied, or interrupted mid-routine
- May strike out, swing arms, yell, run away
- Behavior may seem to be an over-reaction

Developing Strengths:
- What are areas of interest? Particular areas of expertise?
- Does area(s) of interest/expertise fit with any groups or employment opportunities on campus?
- Encourage student to take advantage of resources AND help them find a way to do so
Now what?

- Seek additional training
- Check your understanding often (reflective listening)
- Seek information and set boundaries
- Include students with concrete projects
- Identify student strengths and use them!
- Use inclusive design
References and Additional Reading

Melanie's list