

BURGUNDY ZONE – What is it?

There are many colored ribbons to bring awareness to different types of disabilities. For example, pink for breast cancer awareness, purple for ADHD, red for AIDS/HIV, etc. See [Disability Awareness Ribbons](#) for more info.

- Burgundy is the color for [Adults with Disabilities Awareness and Support](#).
- Awareness Training
- Goal: a campus that is inherently equitable, accessible, & inclusive ([OARS Vision](#))

Disability: Legal Definition

The ADA defines disability as:

1. a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities,
2. a record of such an impairment, or
3. being regarded as having such an impairment.

The ADAAA (2008) broadened this definition.

Major life activities include walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, **learning**, working, caring for oneself, writing, and performing manual tasks.

Presumptive Disabilities

- Deafness
- Blindness/Low Vision
- Speech
- Intellectual
- Autism
- Partial/Complete Missing Limbs
- Mobility
- Epilepsy
- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Cerebral Palsy
- Schizophrenia
- Major Depressive Disorder
- Bipolar Disorder
- PTSD
- TBI
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Muscular Dystrophy
- OCD
- Etc.

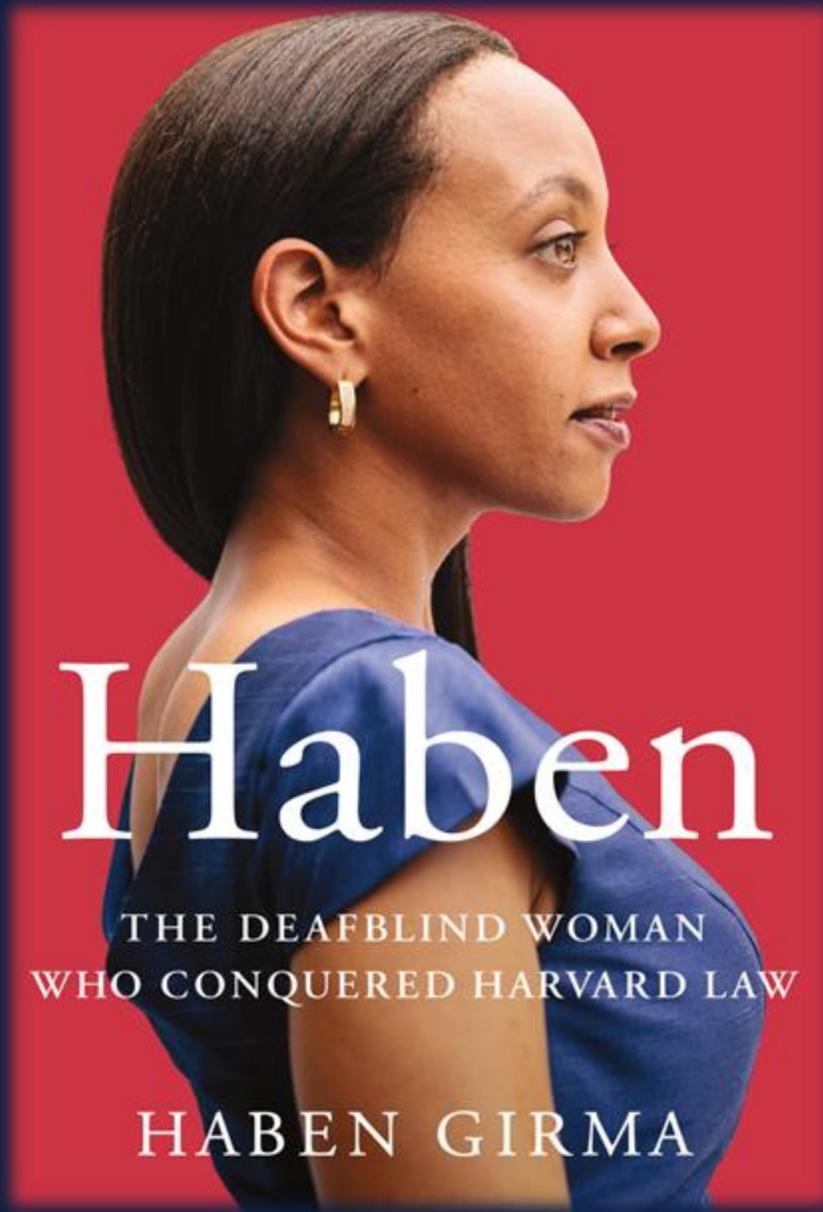
Why Talk About Disability?

- Colleges and Universities are striving to be more inclusive. When we talk about inclusivity, it's absolutely crucial to include disability alongside gender, race, sexuality, religion, socioeconomic background, and so forth. Disability is not an "accident," or "difficulty," or even a "special need." It is an identity.
- UNCG has a growing number of students with disabilities, with increasingly complex needs.
- UNCG has a wide range of disabilities on campus, and most of the disabilities are invisible.

The ADA is Civil Rights Legislation

- Remove barriers
- Provide equity of access
- Ensure equal opportunity for people with disabilities in society





Why should we invest in access and inclusion?

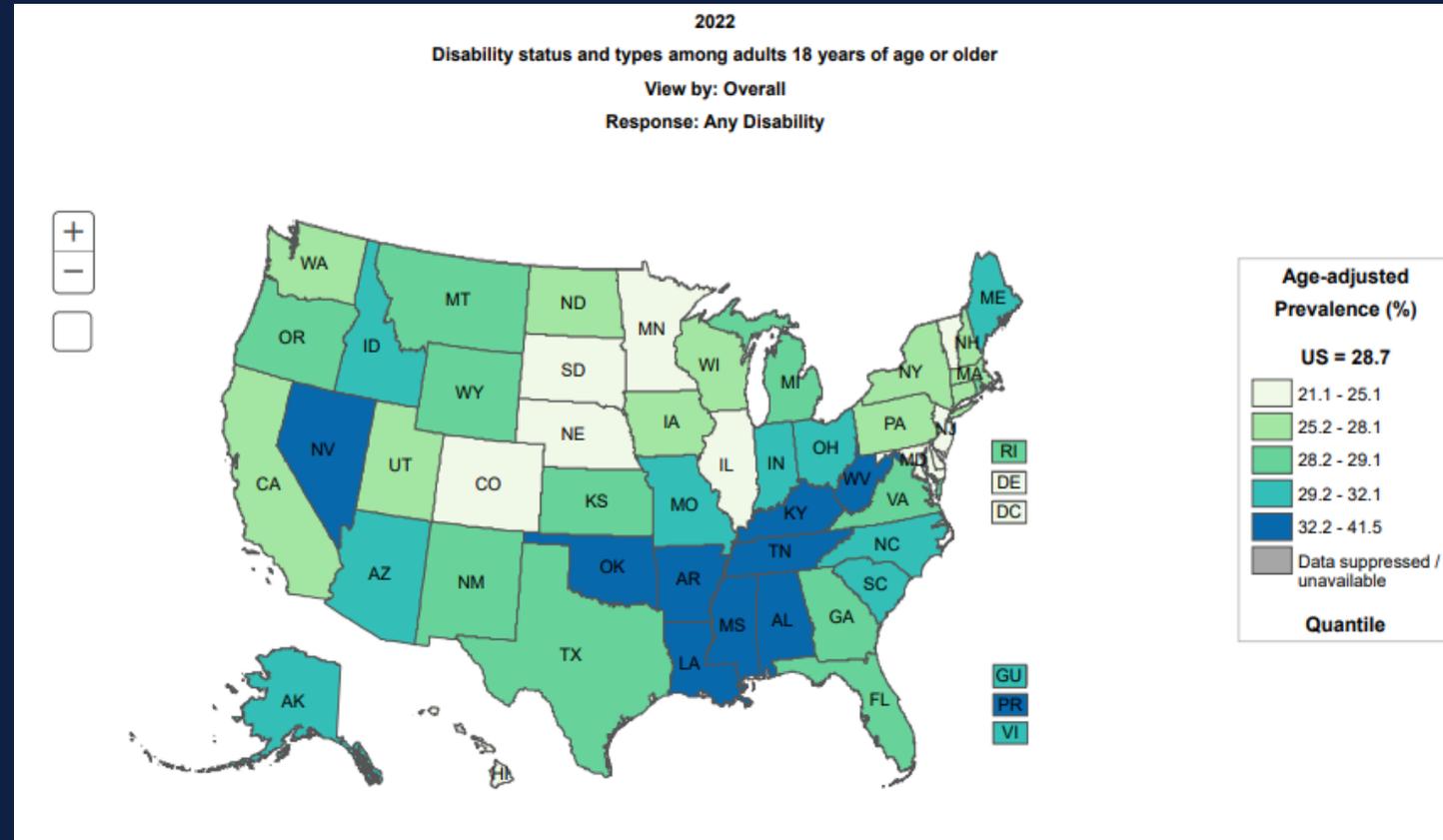
"I've sometimes heard people say, 'Oh, well there are no disabled people at my club or at my store.' If there are no disabled people in your community, that's a sign that there are barriers. Disability is something that touches all of our lives at some point, whether it's family members or friends, or coworkers. Our bodies are always changing and we deserve dignity and access at every stage in our lives. So it's not just for an imaginary other. It could be for your future selves. So it benefits all of us to invest in accessibility." –

Haben Girma

Statistics

- 1 in 4 individuals in the US identifies as having a disability (>28% or 70 million)
- 19% of undergraduate college students identify as having a disability
- >2,356 current UNCG students identify as having a disability (as of 3/04/25)

- [CDC Newsroom](#)



A Brief History of Disability

Public opinion, treatment, and rights

As “invisibles,” our history is hidden from us, our heroes buried in the pages, unnamed, unrecognized. Disability culture is about naming, about recognizing.

--Cheryl Marie Wade, “Disability Culture Rap”

It wasn't until the mid-1940s that society started to recognize that people with disabilities had value and deserved equal treatment.



President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, diagnosed with Polio at age 39 (now thought to have been Guillain-Barre syndrome).

Disability History

- 1867-1974: The Ugly Laws
- 1907: Indiana's state legislature passed an ordinance for involuntary sterilization; other states followed suit
- 1932: Social Security Act of 1935 was passed
- 1938: Fair Labor Standards Act
- 1943: Disabled Veterans Act
- 1964: Civil Rights Act
- 1968: Architectural Barriers Act

History II

- 1970: Urban Mass Transit Act
- 1970: **Judy Heumann** wins lawsuit against NYC public schools for employment discrimination
- 1973: Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- 1974: Repeal of Ugly Laws
- 1975: Education for All Handicapped Children Act (name later changed to IDEA in 1997)
- 1977: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act implementation begins



History III



1978: Gang of 19 –We will ride!



1990: Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)



Keelan- Climbing the Capital for ADA

ADA 1990

Civil rights law prohibiting discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life (e.g., jobs, schools, transportation, all public and private spaces open to general public).

Divided into 5 sections:

- Title I: Employment
- **Title II: Public Services** (includes state universities)
- Title III: Public Accommodations
- Title IV: Telecommunications
- Title V: Miscellaneous

Reasonable Accommodations

Both public and private institutions must provide equal access to otherwise qualified students with disabilities.

This is done through the provision of reasonable accommodations or modifications to practices, policies and procedures, and the provision of auxiliary aids and services.

Reasonable Accommodations II

"Reasonable accommodations" do not fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity or give rise to an undue financial or administrative burden.

An "otherwise qualified" individual is one who meets the program requirements and can perform the essential functions of the program or position with or without reasonable accommodation.

Quiz 1

Section One

Americans with Disabilities Act 101
Training





Determining Accommodations

Engaging the Interactive Process*

Access coordinators must engage in an interactive process to determine if reasonable accommodations are warranted. Includes:

- Case by case—Never said never.
- Student self-report
- History of accommodations
- Supportive documentation

*Per the Office of Civil Rights (OCR)



Implementing Accommodations

1. General
2. Provision of auxiliary aids and services
3. Alteration to policy/procedure*
 - May mean modification of a University's attendance policy or no pet policy, etc.

With or without reasonable accommodations:

- The individual must be able to meet the essential program or course requirements.

Academic Accommodations

- *Accommodations provide ACCESS; LEVELING the learning field, but not as an advantage... these may include:*
- *Early Registration*
- *Brick-and-mortar access*
- *Accessible Technology (AT) – (see next slide)*
- *Animals - TBD*
- *Modified attendance/deadlines - TBD*
- *Extended time/testing accommodations - TBD*



Accessible Technology



- **Recording devices – NC; a one-party consent state***
 - (pens, electronic devices, smart glasses, etc.)
- **Assistive listening devices**
- **Captioning services**
- **Laws on Recording in ALL 50 states**



Assistance Animals (see handout)



What's the difference?

Modified Course Expectation

- **When extending accommodations related to attendance and due dates, consider:**
- **Is the student doing adequate work/showing appropriate knowledge of the material?**
- **Are assignments being completed? (even if late)**
- **Is there a component of the course/program that would render absences a fundamental alteration, for which a reasonable alternative may not be provided?**

Excellent article by Katie Rose Guest Pryal, J.D., Ph.D. an adjunct professor of law at the University of North Carolina School of Law: [When Rigor Targets Disabled Students](#) (quiz question)





Testing Accommodations

- **Extended Time**
- **Distraction-Reduced Environment**
 - Instructor Space
 - Private
 - OARS
 - UPL in Forney 114 (& confirmation of parameters)
- **Confidential**



When Not to Accommodate

An accommodation is not considered “reasonable” if any of the following are affirmative:

1. Is the accommodation a fundamental alteration of course/program requirements? *(be able to defend rationale; see next slide)*
2. Would the accommodation constitute an undue burden? *(Rare - cost may not always be a factor; consider interpreters)*
3. Does the accommodation result in a direct threat? *(Rare)*



Fundamental Alteration

OCR: The process should answer the following:

- 1. Is the decision made by a group of people who are trained, knowledgeable, and experienced in the subject area?**
- 2. Have the decision makers considered any reasonable alternatives as essential requirements?**
- 3. Did the conclusion result from a careful, thoughtful, and rational review of the program requirements?**

Because something has “*always been that way*” does not equate to a fundamental alteration. 😊



Other Accommodations

- **OARS may assess needs and send accommodation letters for students experiencing temporary circumstances (concussions, injuries, hospitalization, etc.).**
- **OARS also partners with Title IX to aid in the provision of needed accommodations for pregnant and parenting students. Generally, we should kindly work with these students and an accommodation notice may not be required.**

Disability is not a brave struggle or
courage in the face of adversity.
Disability is an art. It's an ingenious
way to live.

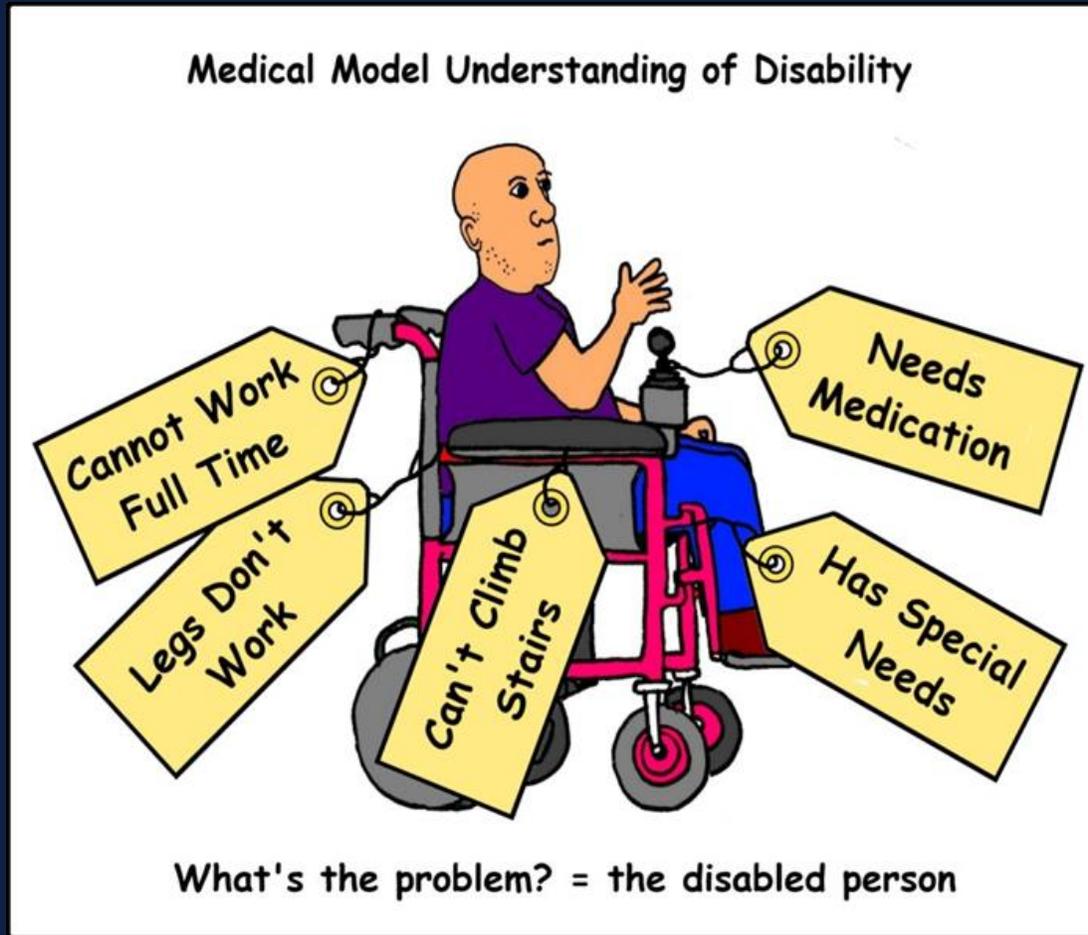
--Neil Marcus, actor and playwright

Models of Disability

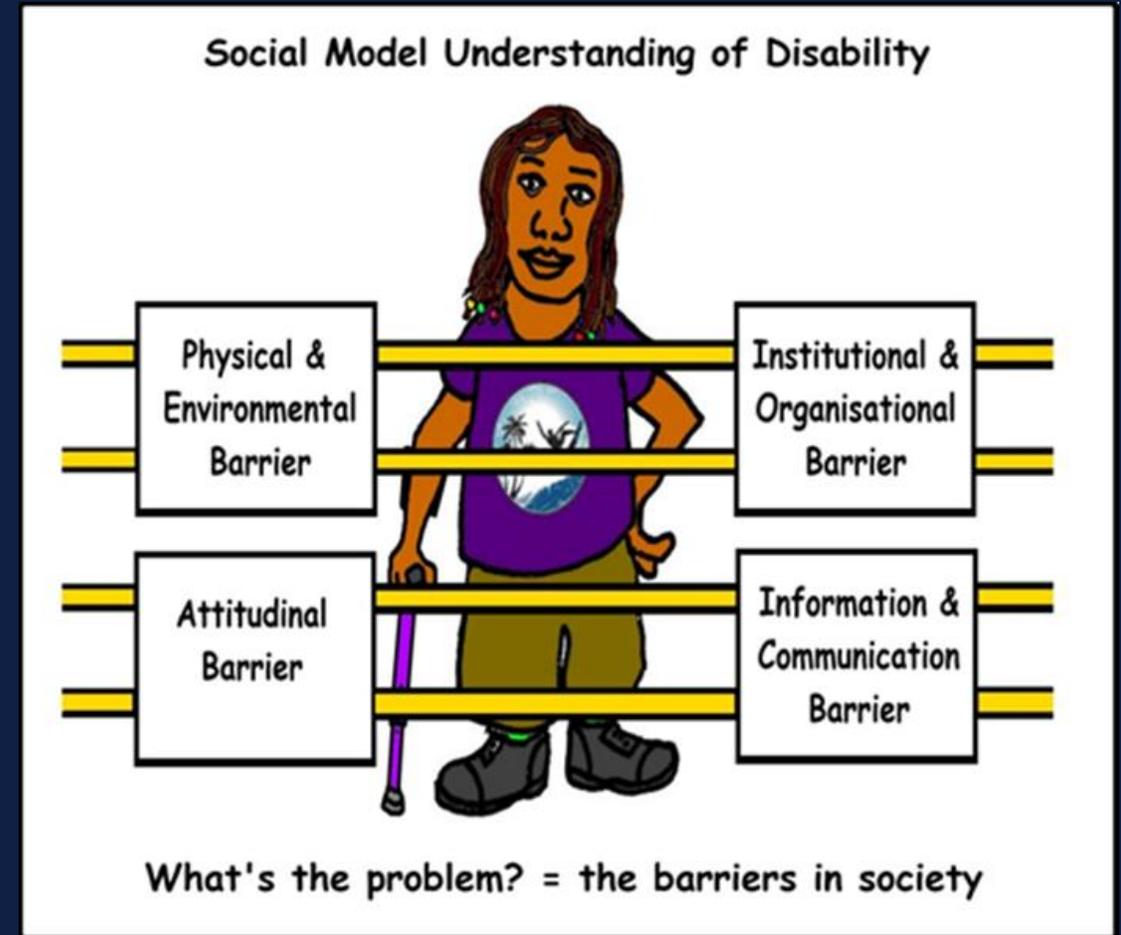
Approaches and Understandings

Models of Disability: Medical and Social

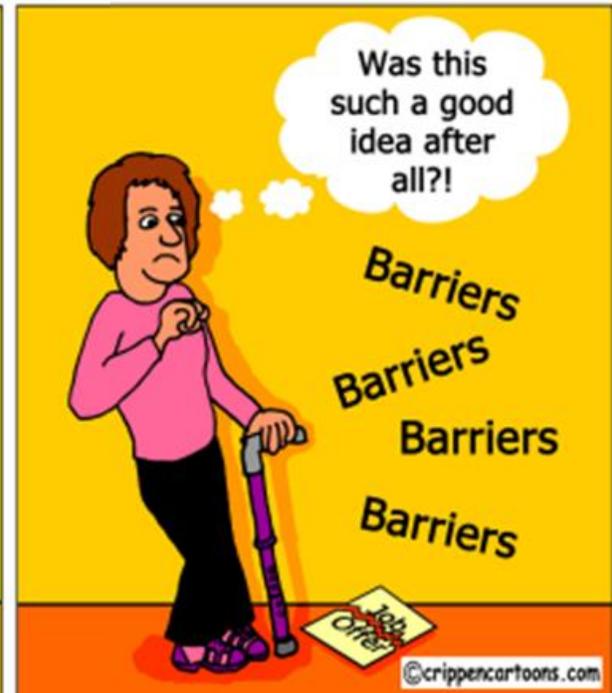
Medical



Social



Barriers in Action!



Example Model

Left-handedness

- To help demonstrate these models, we can use left-handedness as an example.
- Being left-handed is not a disability, of course, but we sometimes treat it as such.

Medical Model of Disability

- Problem with the person with a disability
- Aims to "fix" people with disabilities and "normalize" them
- reactive

Disability Studies Model of Disability

- Problem with how society perceives individuals with disabilities
- Nothing is inherently wrong with the person with a disability
- proactive

Example II

Medical Model

- Under this model, a child who shows left-handed tendencies might be coaxed into using her right hand and receive extra handwriting instruction or other correction.
- These are individual "fixes."

Social Model

- While a person's left-handedness might be a physical fact (or impairment), society turns that impairment into a disability with spiral notebooks, right-handed desks, can openers, scissors, and so on.
- Providing lefty-friendly materials ensures access

QUIZ 2

Section 2



Ableism

What it is and how to address it

“Staying alive is a lot of work for a disabled person in an ableist society.” –Alice Wong, editor of Disability Visibility: First-Person Stories from the Twenty First Century

Ableism

***Ableism* refers to the ideological hypervaluation of ableness and the ways in which such norms of abled and disabled identity are given force in law, social policy, and cultural values.**

Such norms shape and are shaped by claims about the impaired, non-abled body's legitimacy or fraudulency (for instance, in claiming social benefits), legal protections, and social status.

--Fiona Kumari Campbell, "Ability," from *Keywords for Disability Studies*

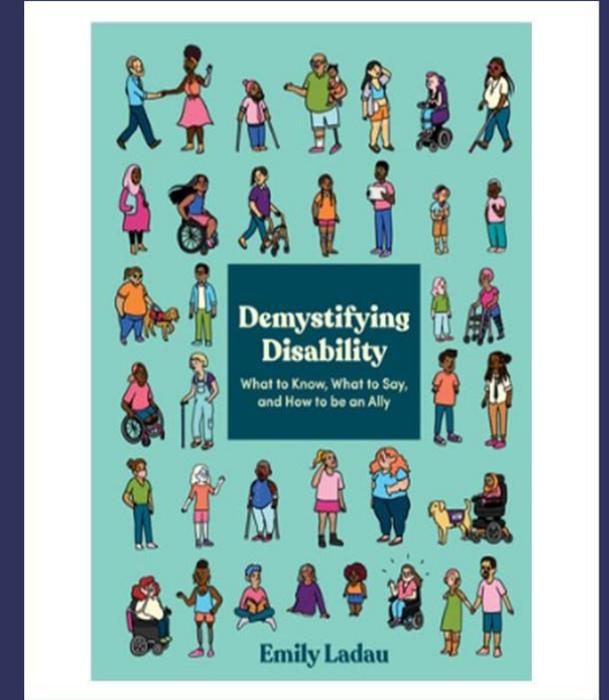
Ableism II

“Ableism is attitudes, actions, and circumstances that devalue people because they are disabled or perceived as having a disability.

To most of society, ableist beliefs and behavior don't raise any red flags because they're woven into the fabric of every life, simply accepted as the norm.

For disabled people, though, ableism is always there—a part of our lives that never disappears, manifesting in endless forms ranging from broad, system discrimination to individual responses. “

—Emily Ladau, *Demystifying Disability: What to Know, What to Say, and How to be an Ally*



Ableism III

It is the favoring of able neurotypical people and the exclusion and devaluation of people who are disabled and neurodivergent.

Ableism may not be intentional (in the same way that racism or sexism may not be intentional), but that doesn't mean it's not harmful.

Ellen Fraser-Barbour, ["We Need to Talk about Ableism"](#)

Ableism III

- In two-thirds of the US there are statutes in place that allow courts to deem a parent unfit on the basis of disability, which means their parental rights are terminated.
- Rideshare drivers regularly refuse rides to people who use mobility equipment or have a service animal.
- Because children with Autism are largely expected to adhere to arbitrary ideas of what's "normal", they are often subjected to potentially harmful behavior therapy to either reinforce or quell certain behaviors.
- Disabled people are frequently excluded from participating in large group meetings and events because of a lack of accessibility supports such as interpreters, live captioning, and Braille, large-print, or digitized materials.
- The median income from Americans with disabilities is less than 70 percent of the median earnings of those without disabilities.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, many states and countries issued guidelines explicitly calling for disabilities to be taken into account as a reason to not provide life-saving health care to sick people.

—Emily Ladau, *Demystifying Disability: What to Know, What to Say, and How to be an Ally*

Disability Etiquette

Best practices

Overthinking is one enemy of disability etiquette, but so is making assumptions about what a person wants and needs. Of course disabled people want to be treated like everyone else, but when we say that, we don't mean "treat every person exactly the same." We mean "recognize our humanity and meet us where we're at."

--Kyle Khachadurian, cohost, *The Accessible Stall* podcast

Etiquette

- Remember that disability doesn't define a person; it is only part of their story.
- Don't assume someone's disability status.
- Person-first language = "person who has a disability." Identity-first language = "disabled person." Ask before assuming preference.
- Use bias-free language: "wheelchair user" not "wheelchair bound" nor "person confined to a wheelchair." Never suggest that a person with a disability "suffers from" or "is a victim of" their condition.
- Presume competence. Don't talk down to disabled people. (infantilization = treating people as though they're significantly below their actual age)

Etiquette II

- **Don't be afraid to use common phrases that are part of the vernacular (e.g.: "see you soon" or "I should be running along").**
- **Speak directly to a person with a disability, not to their aid or assistant.**
- **Don't try to help without asking first.**
- **The person with the disability is your first and best resource. Do not be afraid to ask them a question about what to do, what language or terminology they prefer, and what, if any, assistance is needed.**

Etiquette – Blind/Low Vision Interactions

- Introduce yourself when you enter the room; announce when you leave the room.
- Always ask before helping; do not touch a person without their permission.
- Use your voice instead of nodding, pointing, or relying on facial expressions.

Etiquette – Blind/Low Vision II

- When giving directions, be as clear and descriptive as possible. Use directional clues relative to the person when possible (e.g., "left" and "right" instead of "over there"). Avoid referring to color, shape, or other visual clues.
- Be mindful of hazards such as clutter, doors partly open, furniture.

Etiquette – Deaf/Hard of Hearing

- **Gain the person's attention before starting a conversation (e.g., use a hand signal or tap them gently on the arm).**
- **If the person uses a sign language interpreter, speak directly to the person and keep your eyes on them, not on the interpreter.**
- **Face the person directly when speaking; avoid shouting or speaking excessively slowly.**

Etiquette – Speech Disabilities

- Be attentive and patient; wait for them to complete their communication; do not speak for the person or guess what they are trying to say.
- If you don't understand something, ask the person to repeat what they said. Rephrase what you heard and ask if it is accurate.
- If the conversation is not working for one or both parties, consider asking if you can try with writing (e.g., pen/paper, electronic communication devices, etc.).

Just Use the Mic: Speak Up

Inclusive

- Speech-to-text 📄
- Sign language 🖐️
- Text chat 💬
- Assistive tech (e.g., hearing aid or voice assistant) 💡

Accessible Language & Design

- Speeds up communication 🕒
- Adds tone and emotion 😬
- Supports speech-to-text tools for easier access
- Enables real-time captions for others
- Inclusive Options • Use voice, text, or sign—whatever works best for you
- Enable live captions or transcripts
- Use voice commands with screen readers or smart assistants
- Respect others' preferred communication methods

Etiquette – Non-Apparent/Invisible Disabilities

Not all disabilities are apparent or visible (e.g., learning disabilities, ADHD, mental health conditions, chronic health conditions, autism, and more).

If an interaction seems strained, consider some of these strategies:

- Move to a quieter area
- Rephrase what you said
- Change the pace of the conversation
- Offer to follow up via email and provide more information in written or digital format

Etiquette – Mobility Disabilities

- Don't touch a person's mobility equipment without permission. Equipment is part of an individual's personal space.
- Always ask before assisting someone in a wheelchair. Moving a chair without permission can be dangerous to the user.
- When possible, put yourself at the same eye level when talking to a wheelchair user. Sit in a chair to avoid kneeling or stooping.
- Don't assume that everyone using a wheelchair has the same limitations. People use mobility equipment for a variety of reasons, and some do not use them all the time.

Etiquette – Service Animals

- **Service animals are working. Do not touch, pet, feed, or speak to the dog. Unnecessary distractions may interfere with the dog's ability to tend to the needs of the handler.**
- **Don't inquire about the nature of the handler's disability or assume the purpose of a service animal; service dogs can be trained to mitigate for a wide variety of disability needs.**

Etiquette – Service Animals II

- **When walking with an individual and their service animal, walk on the side opposite the service animal. As you are walking, describe the setting, noting any obstacles or hazards along the way.**
- **If you see a service dog off-leash or not under the control of the handler, bring your concerns to an Administrator.**

QUIZ 3

Section 3



What to Say

Say This 😊

disability/disabled

person with a disability/disabled person



Not This 😞

differently abled

handi-capable

handicap/handicapped

special needs

has a disability

is disabled



afflicted by

suffers from

victim of

Adapted from Emily Ladau, *Demystifying Disability: What to Know, What to Say, and How to be an Ally*

What to Say II

Say This 😊

person who is able

person who is unable to...

person with high support needs



Not This 😞

high functioning

low functioning

Adapted from Emily Ladau, *Demystifying Disability: What to Know, What to Say, and How to be an Ally*

What to Say III

Say This 😊

neurodivergent

person with Autism/Autistic person

person with a cognitive disability/cognitively disabled person

person with an intellectual disability/intellectually disabled person

person with a learning disability/learning disabled person



Not This ☹️

mentally challenged

mentally handicapped

mentally retarded

slow

special ed

Adapted from Emily Ladau, *Demystifying Disability: What to Know, What to Say, and How to be an Ally*

What to Say IV

Say This 😊



Not This ☹️

abled-bodied (if not physically disabled)

normal

does not have a disability

regular

neurotypical (if not neurodivergent)

nondisabled

Adapted from Emily Ladau, *Demystifying Disability: What to Know, What to Say, and How to be an Ally*

What to Say V

Say This 😊

person who uses a wheelchair
wheelchair user

little person

person of short stature

person with dwarfism/dwarf



Not This 😞

wheelchair-bound
confined to a wheelchair

midget

Adapted from Emily Ladau, *Demystifying Disability: What to Know, What to Say, and How to be an Ally*

What to Say VI

Say This 😊

Person with a mental health disability

Person with mental illness/mentally ill person →

Person with a psychiatric disability/psychiatrically disabled person

Not This 😞

crazy

disturbed

insane

lunatic

mad

psychotic

Adapted from Emily Ladau, *Demystifying Disability: What to Know, What to Say, and How to be an Ally*

What to Say VII

Say This 😊

person with a physical
disability/physically disabled person



Not This ☹️

cripple

gimp

invalid

spaz

Adapted from Emily Ladau, *Demystifying Disability: What to Know, What to Say, and How to be an Ally*

What to Say VIII

Say This 😊

accessible parking/restroom



Not This ☹️

disabled restroom

handicapped parking

Adapted from Emily Ladau, *Demystifying Disability: What to Know, What to Say, and How to be an Ally*

Calling In, Calling Out

- Public call outs in the moment often aren't as effective or not possible. Calling out assumes the worst.
- Following up privately (calling a person in) is often more effective. It invites the person into a conversation.

I'm sure you had good intentions here. Still, I just wanted to let you know that [word, phrase, action] was discriminatory toward [disabled people, people of color, women], and that's not okay. (Suggest or offer to brainstorm a positive alternative for future usage.)

Wrapping Up

“I challenge you to take all your stereotypical preconceived notions about what disability does or doesn’t look like and throw them out the window. Skip the assumptions and instead focus on incorporating disability etiquette, and prioritizing accessibility into all your interactions.”

—Emily Ladau, *Demystifying Disability: What to Know, What to Say, and How to be an Ally*

Final

Americans with Disabilities Act 101
Training (Section 4)



Resources

- [Report an Accessibility Issue Form](#) – links are also found at OARS.uncg.edu and Accessibility.uncg.edu
- Questions about ensuring online courses are accessible - accessibility@uncg.edu
- Questions about other accommodations - oars@uncg.edu
- Referrals: Starfish, chat box at oars.uncg.edu, [Welcome Form](#) for students
- [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#)
- [Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#)
- [ADA Title II and III Fact Sheets](#)

Resources II

Campus Accessibility Information – many resources, including how-to instructions/demos

Learning Disabilities Handout

Introduction to Universal Design - Section508.gov offers an overview of Universal Design

ADA - Service Animals

UNCG Policy - Animals on Campus

Legal Cases

- **NCA&T OCR Complaint 11-20-2024 Case Resolution and OCR Letter to NCA&T** (timely provision and do not negotiate with student)
- **U.S. v. Morvant** (personal liability for failure to accommodate individual with disability); see also **Howe v. Hull**
- **Sjostrand v. The Ohio State University, No. 13-3449 (6th Cir. April 2014)** – (rejected program application due to disability)
- **Settlement Agreement between USA and Louisiana Tech University, DJ #204-33-116 (June 2013)** – (inaccessible internet-based application)
- **Kennesaw State University, No. 04-16-2114 (OCR 2017)** – (physical inaccessibility and inadequate grievance procedures)

Legal Cases II

- **Arapahoe Community College, No. 08-11-2052 (OCR 2012)** (need to address F/A appeal relevant to disability)
- **Schneider v. Shah, No. 12-2055 (3rd Cir. 2012)** (need for prompt engagement of interactive process)
- **Globe University, No. 05-10-2165 (OCR 2011)** (communication with university officials indicated need for potential accommodations even though student did not notify DS office – essentially, university was “on notice” that a student had a disability)
- **Antelope Valley College, No. 09-11-2281 (OCR 2012)** (need to follow accommodations; need for adequate and timely grievance procedures)
- **United States vs. University of Nebraska Kearney (Sept. 2015)** – (UNK fined \$140,000 for failure to allow ESA); see also **United States vs. Kent State University (Jan. 2016)**

Legal Cases III

- **University of Utah, No. 08092024 (OCR 6/24/2009)** – (failure to provide notice of designated Section 504/Title II coordinator)
- **Kennesaw State University, No. 04-12-2275 (OCR 1/29/2013)** – (Faculty must provide accommodations on a timely basis)
- **North Carolina State University, No. 11-10-2054 (OCR 09/09/2010)** – (appropriate alternative if an accommodation is not available – e.g., note taker is absent, etc.)
- **City University of New York Queensborough Community College, No. 02-12-2058 (OCR 2012)** (tape recorder not permitted in class; it was requested but DS office didn't list it on accommodation notice)

Questions

