

FINDING BALANCE

14th Annual Disability Symposium

UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

WORKSHOPS

MORNING WORKSHOPS

A **Cultivating Balance through Mindfulness: Caring for Self and Others**
Diane Reibel, Ph.D.

This workshop offers a balance of didactic content and experiential learning. The didactic material emphasizes the evidence base for Mindfulness- Based Interventions with a wide range of populations including those with disabilities and professional care givers. Participants will directly experience key mindfulness practices that can be utilized to counteract compassion fatigue, improve personal wellness and increase therapeutic presence. Several short practices will be taught for use with students/clients.

B **The Extension of Microaggressions and Stereotype Threat to Undergraduates with Disabilities**
Alison L. May, Ph.D.

Microaggressions, studied most widely by Derald Wing Sue, refer to the “brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative...slights and insults to the target person or group.” Stereotype threat, first identified by Claude Steele, is the performance-diminishing apprehension of fulfilling an applicable, negative, ability-related stereotype in the face of a challenging/frustrating task. Although these constructs have been studied extensively in a wide range of populations, their effects on postsecondary students with disabilities have remained largely unexamined. This omission is especially surprising given that microaggressions and stereotype threat would be expected to play major roles in the academic experience of these students, who unfortunately frequently face discrimination, struggle to develop a sense of belongingness in college, and/or experience academic underachievement. This session will showcase emerging research in these areas, highlighting health factors such as elevated blood pressure and anxiety, which are common mediators of the stereotype threat effect.

C **Wake-up Call: Disability Concerns Associated with Sleep Disorders**
Ilene M. Rosen, M.D., M.S.C.E.

This presentation will review the basics of sleep health and the importance of sleep in college students in general as well as those with medical and psychiatric illnesses. Some of the common sleep diseases, including exacerbations and treatments, and how problems with sleep might affect a student’s daily activities on campus will be presented. The medical information often provided by a sleep specialist in response to requests for disability documentation as well as a review and the significance of the findings will be discussed. The workshop will be in a lecture format with ample time for questions and answers.

D Emotional Symptoms and Their Interference in Academic Performance: How do we Adequately Assess the Extent and Impact of Psychological Dysfunction?

Anu Asnaani, Ph.D.

College is a time that poses significant stressors and adjustment difficulties for many students, and the common emergence of emotional disorders during this time introduces particular challenges within this already challenging context. The Center for the Treatment and Study of Anxiety (CTSA) at the University of Pennsylvania is at the forefront of anxiety and depression clinical research and practice, providing the comprehensive assessment approaches of these symptoms, and the most empirically supported treatments for emotional disorders. This workshop will therefore explore the objective assessment techniques that disability offices have at their disposal to objectively determine severity of emotional symptoms and the extent of their functional limitations on various life domains for students. In addition, education will be provided on how to detect various common anxiety and mood disorders occurring in college-aged populations and participants will be informed about how to distinguish between significant or pathological symptoms versus symptoms within the norm of this population. Finally, the workshop will briefly review the most effective treatments for the commonly reported symptoms in college students, and resources that can provide this support for students in need.

AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS

E Medications and Accommodations: Issues, Conundrums, and Decisions

Manju Bannerjee, Ph.D.

These days, increasing numbers of college students with disabilities are on medication. Yet, ways to use information about medication, its side effects, and implications for accommodations remains a gray zone in disability services. This session will discuss issues such as: can medication use be used to confirm a diagnosis; what is the value of self-reported side-effects; and how disability service providers can make accommodation decisions without having to become MDs. Case studies will be used to illustrate the conundrums; with particular focus on psychiatric medications, sleep disorders, and allergies.

F Balancing Patient Safety and Reasonable Accommodation: Accommodating Students in High-Stakes Health Science and Medical Programs

Lisa Meeks, Ph.D., Gregory Moorehead, Ed.D., Tim Montgomery, M.A., Elisa Laird-Metke, J.D.

Undergraduate and graduate and professional programs like medicine, physical therapy, nursing, dentistry, and pharmacology present unique and specific performance and clinical environments, each requiring particularized solutions to accommodate students with disabilities.

DS providers have the daunting task of accommodating students in multiple performance-based settings, such as course labs, rotations, clerkships, internships, preceptorships, objective structured clinical examinations, and other standardized patient exams. Providing disability accommodations in clinical environments calls for expertise in a multitude of specialized topics including, but not limited to, clinical curriculum, clinical hierarchy, professional communication, assistive/adaptive technology, and program technical standards. In graduate and professional programs, patient safety also dictates the thresholds of reasonableness for any given program, with the potential for litigation, adding a high-stakes element to these challenges.

The presenters will take turns addressing the aforementioned concerns, while providing guidance regarding best and promising practices using case examples and OCR guidance. Additionally, they will unveil the results of a prevalence study citing the actual number of students with disabilities in medical education. Time will be reserved for a Q & A between the audience and panelists.

G Concussion & College: How to Rest the Brain While Educating it!

Nicole Otto, M.D.

Concussive injuries are being identified with increasing frequency in college and graduate students. This presentation will focus on the myriad of acute symptoms, clinical findings, and initial treatment of a concussed student. The process of providing initial academic support and accommodations for the student returning from a concussion will be discussed. Participants will learn about the longer term symptoms and limitations of students experiencing post-concussion syndrome as well as academic accommodations that can help the student during their recovery.

H Disability, Behavior & the Frontal Lobes

Lorraine E. Wolf, Ph.D.

A variety of disabilities impact brain systems linked to executive functioning, including ADHD, traumatic brain injury, mood and anxiety disorders, diabetes, schizophrenia, autism spectrum disorders, learning disabilities, cerebral palsy, metabolic disorders, brain tumors, stroke, alcohol and other substance use disorders. This session discuss the interplay between executive functioning and self-regulation in college students with and without disabilities and the role of neurodevelopment in controlling risky behavior.