Why is it so hard?

Advising and Supporting Students with Learning Differences

SESSION TAKEAWAYS

Postsecondary Education is a primary post-high school goal for more than four out of five secondary school students with disabilities. In 2015, 19.4% of undergraduate students in the US self-identified as having a disability. Some research indicates that only 28% of students who received accommodations and support in high school self-identify in college.

Below are a few key diagnoses from this session:

- **Dyslexia** - Connected to reading abilities
- **Dyscalculia** - Associated with difficulties in math
- **Dysgraphia** - Associated with disabilities in writing
- **Auditory Processing Deficit** - Characterized by a struggle to understand and use auditory information
- **Visual Processing Deficit** - A weakness in taking on and using visual information
- **Non-verbal Learning Disability** - Problems with sensory sensitivity, motor deficits, executive functioning, changing routines once established, and understanding concepts of time, distance, space, and direction
- **Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disability** - A chronic condition including attention difficulty, hyperactivity, and/or impulsiveness

IDENTIFYING THOSE STRUGGLING STUDENTS

It is never appropriate to ask students directly if they have a disability. However, these three signs can indicate that an underlying condition exists.

- Frustration
- Fatigue
- Failure
STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC ADVISORS

- Asking probing and open questions about their high school experience
- Include information about campus’s office of accessibility in early conversations with students
- Assisting student in identifying strengths and weaknesses
- Be personable and approachable
- Provide students with a summary of your conversations
- Plan and practice together
- Making yourself and your office accessible
- Check your emotional temperature before appointments

BUILDING CROSS-CAMPUS COLLABORATION

- Caucus meetings
- Campus professional development trainings
- University committee participation
- Graduate classes
- Get lunch
- Professional conferences

APPLYING FOR ACCOMMODATIONS

- Online Intake Form
- Medical Documentation
- Meeting with Specialist
- Collaborative Discussion