

Accessible Advising

Reaching Students With Disabilities

Presented by Mobility International USA and
the University of Oregon

Europe/Eurasia EducationUSA Triennial Workshop
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Overview



- Introductions and welcome
- Context of disability and international exchange
- Disability services in higher education
- Tips and resources
- Question and answer/
case study

What is the NCDE?



- A **free resource** on disability inclusion in international exchange: consultation & referrals on access barriers, organizational policy solutions, and outreach strategies
- To **increase the participation** of people with disabilities in international programs



Sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

Global Disability Context



- 650 million people worldwide have a disability
- 80% of people with disabilities live in poor countries and there is a strong link between disability and poverty
- 10% of U.S. college students have a disability
- Less than 2% of disabled children worldwide attend schools
- Unemployment rates are typically 2–3 times higher for people with disabilities

People with disabilities are...



- Leaders in their communities
- Professors, lawyers, parents, educators, advocates, and students
- Advisers to the World Bank, ILO, USAID and other international organizations
- Working across borders on the rights of people with disabilities worldwide

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and International Students



- The ADA is a law that protects the rights of people with disabilities from discrimination.
- Because of the ADA, U.S. universities and exchange programs are required to provide students with disabilities equal access.
- International students are protected by the ADA when studying in the US.

Success Story: France

“I am back in France and everyone around me finds that I have changed, and especially that I am more autonomous. My year abroad enabled me to be more independent and made me more confident. My parents no longer hesitate to leave me alone in my apartment.”

Sophie Cicekli, who has a physical disability, spent a year as an undergraduate student at Georgetown University in Washington D.C., USA.

Success Story: Chile



“I was concerned before the first interview because I have a disability. My right arm has been paralyzed since birth and although I’ve learned to do almost everything on my own, I wasn’t sure if it would be a problem or interfere with my application. I discovered that regardless of a disability, if you commit your heart, mind and soul to your purpose and to others, you can gain much happiness.”

Dixie Olgún, a language teacher from Chile, who has a physical disability, taught at the precollegiate level in New Jersey, USA, as a Fulbright Exchange Teacher.

Disability culture issues

- Concern about **denial of admission** because of disability
- Incomplete or absent **documentation**
- **Family support** system may be missing in US
- **Hiding of disability**, need to make the disability as invisible as possible
- **Independence** may have different meaning
- **Undiagnosed or unrecognized disabilities** such as learning or mental health
- **Lack of opportunities** for equal education in the country of origin



What is disability?

Medical Model

- deficiency, abnormal
- in the individual
- improve individual
- professional is expert

Social Model

- difference, normal
- in the interaction
- improve interaction
- individual is expert

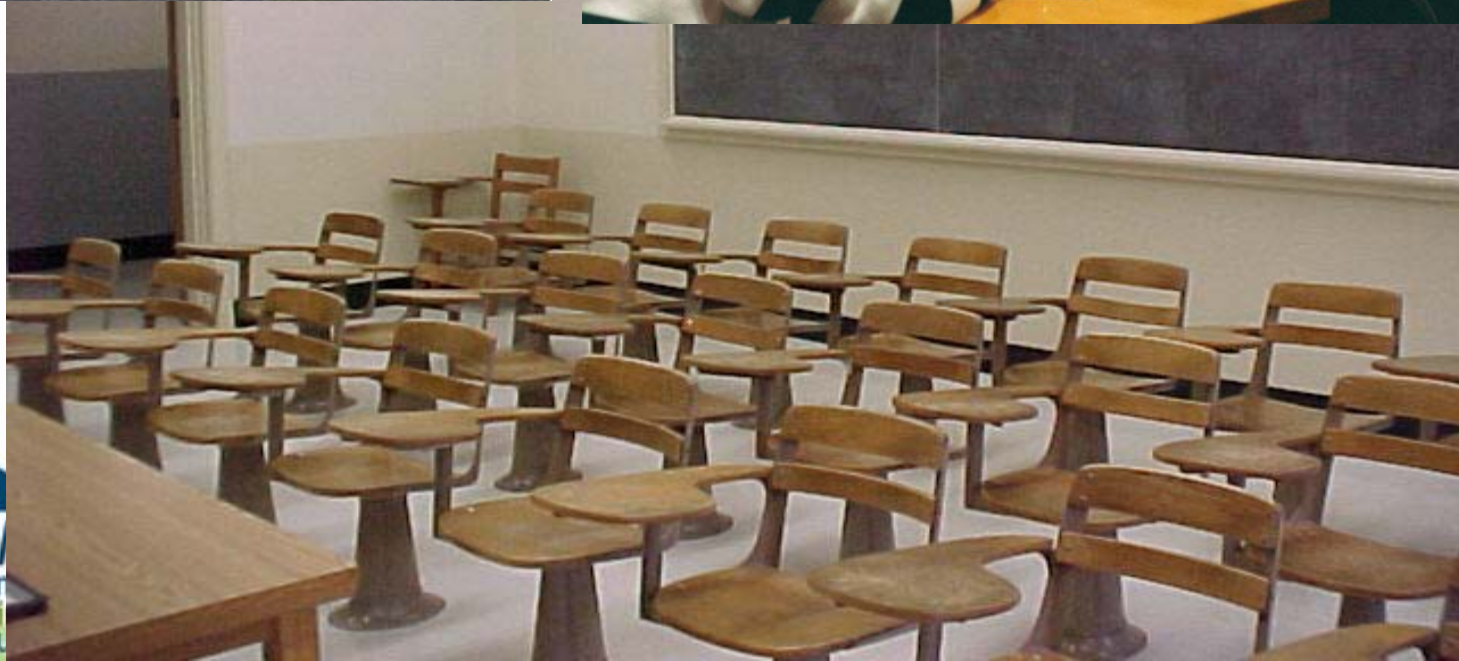
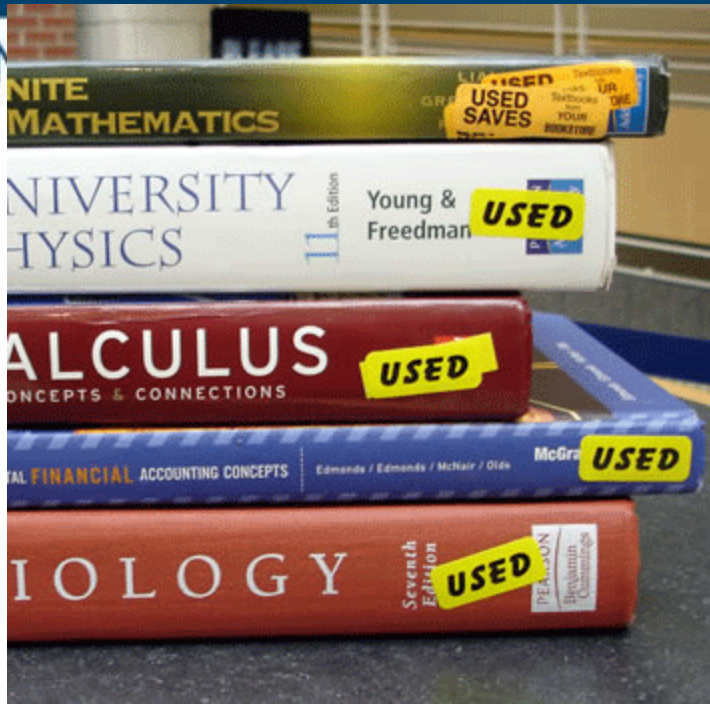
Human Variation Model

a *mismatch* between an individual's characteristics and society's ability to incorporate them



Mismatches





Disability Service Offices

Interpreting Services



Adaptive Technology



Classroom Accessibility

Specialized Equipment



Notetaking Services



Inclusive Design

The design of products and environments
to be usable
by as many people as possible
regardless of age, ability, or situation
without need for
specialized accommodation

Usable by some



Usable by many



Exclusive design/inaccessible



Inclusive design/accessible



Is my advising accessible?

- ✓ place
- ✓ materials
- ✓ processes
- ✓ information

What You Can Do: Inclusion Strategies



- Promote inclusive policies and practices with staff and in your materials
- Remove and prevent architectural and design barriers, include alternative formats of print materials
- Engage with organizations of people with disabilities
- Establish relationships between the student, international student services and disability services
- Provide equal access to the application and screening process

Examples of Inclusive Language

- We encourage people with disabilities and others of diverse backgrounds to apply.
- We provide reasonable accommodations as needed to people with disabilities. Please disclose early so arrangements can be made.
- Our application materials and program forms are available in accessible formats upon request.

Advising Tips

- Be encouraging from the beginning!
- Advise people with disabilities to apply early, and to take any necessary English language test as soon as possible if they will need accommodations
- Dialogue together and ask specific questions about abilities and barriers; they are the experts on their disability
- Provide factual and objective information as much as possible so the individual can make an informed choice
- Avoid stereotyping a person because of the equipment they use
- Don't base your opinion of the person or their abilities based on another person with "the same disability"

Case study – two students with visual disabilities

Brigette (Ivory Coast)

- Lawyer
- Blind for 3 years
- Strong reliance on phys. asst
- No cane use
- Needs all auditory input
- No Braille
- No adaptive tech experience
- Goals: to become more independent; to increase English language skills

Svetlana (Russia)

- Educator in disabilities tech.
- Blind since birth
- Minimal asst needed
- Uses cane
- Auditory and tactile input
- Braille proficient – wants to learn contracted Braille
- Adaptive technology proficient – Braille reader, JAWS
- Goals - to become more aware of opportunities for blind people; to increase English lang skills

Brigette



- Worked with Mobility Specialist
- Learned to use a cane
- Needed an assistant at all times - in classes and outside of classes
- Reading assignments - ass't read to
- Writing assignments - dictated to ass't who read back for editing
- Teacher stressed oral/aural in class
- Teacher was flexible with assignments, testing, due dates

Svetlana



- Worked with Mobility Specialist to learn to get from Pt A to Pt B
- Teacher sent handouts, text materials for Braille “conversion” ahead of use
- Took notes in Braille in classes
- “My tactile memory is better than my auditory memory”
- Used adaptive equipment for assignments (JAWS, Braille reader)
- Did not want to be excluded from any activity

Insurance and disability



- Have information available for all students that explains the need for health insurance in the United States
- **Pre-existing conditions** are an important consideration in insurance coverage for people with and without disabilities. Pay attention to the time period that defines a pre-existing condition and any exclusion waiting period or general exclusion.
- Look how the policy covers treatment for unforeseen changes, unexpected reoccurrence or aggravation in a condition.
- Though traditional medical insurance coverage will be sufficient for many participants with disabilities, some may request or need alternative options due to limitations on coverage.
- Disability is not always considered to be a pre-existing condition and students should ask for clarification on this from their insurance provider.

Making it Work

- **Call us** before, during and after a specific case for advice, ideas and referrals
- Maintain a practice of yes i.e. **“let’s figure out *how*, (*not if*) to do this”**
- **Work as a team** and remember people with disabilities live in every country of the world



Website Resources from NCDE



- Tipsheets on types of disabilities, accommodation forms, alternative formats, guide dogs, medications, host family, insurance, TOEFL testing and more!
- Success stories, blogs and links
- Database of disability organizations worldwide

www.miusa.org/ncde

clearinghouse@miusa.org



Question and Answer



Discover a World of Opportunities

Go online for:

Tipsheets and Accessibility Checklists
Guides on specific disabilities, making accommodations and traveling internationally with a disability

Funding and Scholarships
Funding opportunities for specific disabilities, countries or interests

Disability Organizations Worldwide
Searchable database of organizations from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe

Success Stories

Stories by and about people with disabilities who have successfully studied, volunteered, researched, interned or worked abroad



Challenge Yourself and Change the World®



Established in 1995, the goal of the National Clearinghouse on Disability and Exchange is to increase the participation of people with disabilities in the full range of international educational opportunities.

The National Clearinghouse on Disability & Exchange is sponsored by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State and administered by Mobility International USA.

Since 1981, Mobility International USA (MIUSA), a nonprofit, cross-disability organization, has been serving those with cognitive, hearing, learning, psychiatric, physical, systemic, vision and other disabilities.

MIUSA is dedicated to empowering people with disabilities around the world through international exchange and international development.

www.miusa.org/ncde



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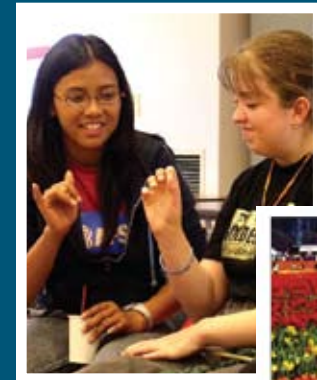
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National Clearinghouse on Disability & Exchange



Mobility International USA

What We Can Do for You

Publications

•Advice, Tips and Referrals

Choosing a program to go abroad or to come to the United States, problem-solving disability questions, connecting to resources

•Technical Assistance and Training

Consultation on participant issues, legal and policy information, outreach materials, and organizational strategies for inclusion

Building bridges between the international exchange and disability communities



•Rights and Responsibilities

A Guide to National and International Disability-Related Laws for International Exchange Organizations and Participants - FREE

•Survival Strategies for Going Abroad

A Guide for People with Disabilities - \$16.95

All publications are available online and in alternative formats.

www.miusa.org/publications



Roundtable Consortium

The Roundtable Consortium is comprised of highly respected disability and exchange organizations that advise NCDE on needs and priorities in the field.

- AFS Intercultural Programs
- Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange
- America-Mideast Educational and Training Services, Inc.
- American Association of People with Disabilities
- Association on Higher Education And Disability
- AYUSA Global Youth Exchange
- Center for International Rehabilitation Research, Information and Exchange
- Council on International Educational Exchange
- Council on Standards for International Educational Travel
- Cross Cultural Solutions
- Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund
- Disabled Peoples' International
- HEATH Resource Center
- Institute of International Education
- International Education and Resource Network
- International Volunteer Programs Association
- NAFSA: Association of International Educators
- National Council on Independent Living
- National Council for International Visitors
- National Youth Leadership Network
- PACER Center
- Partners of the Americas
- Sister Cities International
- SIT / World Learning
- University of New Orleans - Training, Resource and Assistive Technology Center
- United States Department of State - Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
- World Institute on Disability
- Youth for Understanding USA

Travel with a Purpose®

Volunteer
Study
Teach
Research
Intern

www.miusa.org

•A Practice of Yes!

Working with Overseas Partners to Include Students with Disabilities - FREE

•A World Awaits You (AWAY)

Journals of Success in International Exchange for People with Disabilities - FREE online magazine

•Building Bridges

A Manual on Including People with Disabilities in International Exchange Programs - \$24.95

•Preparing for an International Career

Pathways for People with Disabilities - FREE

“*Together, we can build a world of international exchange that is accessible to all - in which participants with diverse abilities are fully welcomed and engaged.*”

*Peggy Blumenthal,
Executive Vice President & C.O.O.,
Institute of International Education*

“*I feel that my participation added perspective and diversity to our group dynamics. It was perhaps a more intense and broader experience for everyone involved to get to know someone with a disability as part of an exchange group.*”

*Mike Meier,
wheelchair user who studied in Spain*



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UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

Accessible Advising: Reaching Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are underrepresented in international educational exchange. Accessible advising can change that starting with a new way of thinking about disability combined with an understanding of U.S. disability rights laws, disability services offices, and the ECA-sponsored National Clearinghouse on Disability and Exchange.

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ADVISING TIPS

Encourage any student with a disability to study abroad

Make sure you know of a wheelchair accessible location to meet for advising if needed

Have brochures or informational materials available in a digital format

Use email or text messaging for communicating with students who are deaf or hard of hearing if preferred

Consult with Olivia or Molly (contact information above) to get information on how to best support students with disabilities to study abroad or with any related questions

Never think never