



September 2020

Office of Equity and Inclusion

From Accommodations to Accessibility: Moving towards a systemic approach to create a fully accessible campus

MINNESOTA STATE

Introductions and Speakers

System Office

- Andriel Dees, Interim System Diversity Officer
- Paul Shepherd, System Director for Student Development and Success
- Brock Behling, Program Director for Instructional Technology, Education Innovations

Metropolitan State University

- Kristin Burgess, Director, Center for Accessibility Resources
- Vincent Peterson, Student Advocate on Accessibility

Common Language & Key Definitions

“First, we shape our language, then our language shapes us.”

Key Definitions

- **Diversity** encompasses acceptance and respect. It is understanding that each individual is unique, and our individual differences need to be recognized. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical/mental ability, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies.
- **Inclusion** promotes broad engagement, shared participation and advances authentic sense of belonging through safe, positive, and nurturing environments. It is about accepting and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual.
- **Equity** is the proportional distribution of desirable outcomes across groups. Sometimes confused with equality, equity refers to outcomes while equality connotes equal treatment. Where individuals or groups are dissimilarly situated, equal treatment may be insufficient for, or even detrimental to, equitable outcomes.

More directly, equity is when an individual's race, gender, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, etc. do not determine their educational, economic, social, or political opportunities.

Key Accessibility Definitions

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Enacted in 1990, the ADA is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation and all public and private places that are open to the general public.

The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else. The ADA is divided into five titles (or sections) that relate to different areas of public life - employment, state, and local government, public accommodations, telecommunications and miscellaneous provisions.

Key Accessibility Definitions Continued

- **Accommodations** are the process of adapting or adjusting to someone or something. A reasonable accommodation is a change in the way things are normally done that allows an individual with a disability to enjoy equitable access.
- **Accessibility** refers to the intentional design or redesign of technology, policies, products, and services (to name a few) that increase one's ability to use, access, and obtain the respective item.

Minnesota State: Prioritizing an Inclusive Environment

Minnesota State is committed to maintaining an environment that prioritizes dignity and respect free from discrimination and is supportive of all members of our community affected by this global health crisis. Bias, discrimination, and harassment are against our values and violate [Minnesota State policies](https://www.minnstate.edu/board/policy/1b01.html). For more information, please go to <https://www.minnstate.edu/board/policy/1b01.html>

Accessibility as a Community of Practice in Minnesota State

- Accessibility focused professional staff communicate regularly to provide ongoing support and share effective practices.
- Focus on effective practices in supporting students in achieving equitable access to the educational experience.
- Lending expertise to creating a more accessible campus environment through effective practices in teaching and learning, co-curricular experiences, and physical environments.

Accessibility Issues In the Time of COVID-19

- Virtual Environment Needs
 - Students
 - Faculty
 - Co-curricular Supports
- Leave Policies/ Exceptions
- Academic Technology
 - Availability/ Reliability
 - Knowledge/ Proficiency
 - Increased Volume in Utilization
- Potential Filter Bubbles
 - Less Modeling and Impromptu Conversations
 - Reduced Daily Exposure/Awareness
- Increased Stress

Education Innovations Accessibility Insights



Brock Behling
Program Director Instructional
Technology

Campus Reflection: Metropolitan State University



Kristin Burgess
Director, Center for Accessibility Resources, Academic and Student Affairs

Everyday Considerations to Consider vs. COVID-19 Issues

- **Moving from accommodations to operationalizing accessibility needs**
 - ASL Interpreters
 - Captioning
 - UDL
- **Collaborating across the system**
 - Shared resources
 - More perspectives

Student Perspective On Accessibility



Vincent Peterson

Student at Metropolitan State pursuing Computer Science Degree
Accessibility Means Opportunity

Resources

- [Campus Resources](#)
- [ASA Newsletter](#)
- [Network for Educational Development](#)

Reflections Q & A



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