CULTURAL LEADERSHIP INTERN

THE COLLOBRATIVE FOR THE COMMON GOOD

DISABILITY INCLUSION

2022-2023

PRODUCED BY
SARAH ANNE HART, CA, OTDS

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Sarah Anne Hart is a second-year Occupational Therapy Doctorate student at Wingate University with an interest in supporting neurodivergent adolescents and young adults. In addition to working as Cultural Leadership Intern, they served as co-president for the Wingate Chapter of the Coalition of Occupational Therapy Advocates for Diversity and an AHEC Scholar. They believe strongly in the importance of using research and community perspective to inform best practices and disseminate research to the broader community.

MISSION, VISION & VAULES

The mission of this project was to increase campus accessibility and inclusion in actionable ways on campus at multiple levels. The long-term vision is to help foster a campus climate and community that supports the needs of all students, including students with disabilities.

This project was centered around sustainable and collaborative service that works to make best practices easy to access and implement. Community stakeholders were interviewed to determine the best use of time, energy, and resources and to drive the agenda.

PHASE 1: NEEDS ASSESSMENT

FALL 2022

Background Research

A literature review was conducted to determine general best practices related to project goals. Knowable related to conducting needs assessments, disability, and outreach were combined with the unique needs of Wingate's campus to devise a project plan.

Interviews with Campus Leaders

Key stakeholders were identified and interviewed over the span of the semester to gather more intel. The priorities listed informed where resources and time were spent and helped to determine resources currently available for students.

Consultation with Students

Students were interviewed to determine where they felt service gaps existed and what barriers they identified as a priority to address. This was used to inform action items and shape the project agenda.

DISABILITY INCLUSION

PHASE 1: FALL 2022

COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS & PARTNERS

EVERY STUDENT SHOULD BELONG AND FEEL LIKE THEY CAN BE SUCCESSFUL ON CAMPUS.

- The Collaborative for the Common Good
- Wingate Accessibility Resource Center
- Wingate Student Success Center
- Wingate Lyceum Team
- Wingate students and campus leaders
- Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Students want more resources.

After discussing with students, the largest need that emerged is a desire for more resources and support. Students expressed a variety of barriers related to lack of access and awareness of resources. An emphasis on interconnected services and support with advocating and navigating accommodations also emerged as a need. These takeaways were the key driver in designing and implementing this CLI project.

Educators & faculty want to learn more.

Faculty and staff on campus expressed a desire and commitment to supporting the needs of students with disabilities. However, many educators indicated lacking knowledge or confidence related to supporting students with disabilities.

PHASE 2: EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

SPRING 2023

Lecture 1: Smarter Strategies for Working With Neurodivergent Students

A lecture was given to the staff of the Student Success Center on best practices for working with neurodiverse students including interactive case studies and a focus on making referrals to help students connect with the needed resources. The presentation was informed by interviews with stakeholders and a review of relevant research. As a result of this presentation, The Student Success Center updated their mission statement to include an inclusivity statement directly mentioning the needs of students with disabilities. Staff members were interested in learning about more resources for further learning and to give to students.

Lyceum 1: Making Sense of the Sensory System

An interactive lyceum was produced with the support of Accessibility Resource Services (ARS). To prepare for the presentation, a trial run was given to staff at ARS. The presentation included a goal setting worksheet, sensory game and a handout related to sensory strategies as well as education about the sensory system. The formal presentation had full attendance with a significant waitlist, indicating student interest in the topic. Several students stayed after to discuss their own sensory needs.

Lyceum 2: Making Sense of the Sensory System

Due to demand, the lyceum was ran for a second time with modifications to improve engagement based on participant feedback. In addition to the goal worksheet and sensory handout used previously, students were given the option between a sensory game and making TikToks related to one of the sensory systems as a competition. Students were highly engaged and one senior reported that "this was the best Lyceum I have ever attended" after modifying the interactive activity.

WORKING WITH NEURODIVERSE STUDENTS

Key Educational Takeaways

⯈ What is neurodiversity?

Neurodiversity is an umbrella term used to describe the variety of people whose brains operate differently than the brains society was designed to work for. This includes neurodivergent people with autism, ADHD, learning disabilities, and mental health and neurological conditions such as epilepsy or depression and seeks to fully include them in participation.

⯈ Neurodiverse students have needs that often go unmet.

Neurodiverse students experience the transition to college in a variety of ways but often experience barriers to success. Such barriers include reduced structure in the college environment, challenges establishing healthy routines, internalized ableism and stigma limiting participation, difficulty with stress and time management, and new environmental expectations.

⯈ There are actionable ways to support neurodivergent students.

Using intentional planning and design can help foster inclusion for all students. This can include using the Principles of Universal Design for Learning to support students and make appropriate environmental modifications. Metacognitive strategies can help students be successful, including the use of the CO-OP method and energy conservation. Believing in students, providing mentorship, and developing a growth mindset can all help students succeed. Holistic well-being can be enhanced by using Domains of Wellness. Recommendations specific to the needs of the Student Success Center were also made.

MAKING SENSE OF THE SENSORY SYSTEM

Key Educational Takeaways

▶ We have more than 5 senses.

Our main sense are vision, hearing, taste, smell, balance, position in space. These systems all have unique neurological thresholds and every person's sensory system is unique to their brain. Our senses work together to help our bodies make sense of the world around us and make sense of ourselves. They help to keep us safe and feel alive.

▶ We all have sensory needs.

Just like we all need a certain amount of food to stay healthy, we need a certain amount of sensory input as well. Our senses give us helpful information about our sensory needs. In the same way, we would be grumpy if we didn't eat all day, we can feel off when we don't meet our sensory needs. Listening to our sensory needs helps us to stay in the "just right" zone of arousal. Participants were encouraged to think about what signs your body gives you that you are not receiving the sensory stimuli you need. One way to do this is to practice mindfulness and to live a sensory rich life using a "sensory diet".

▶ Our senses have an impact on our mental health and learning.

When we feel regulated we are ready to learn and take in new information about the world around us. Understanding our unique sensory profile can help us work with our brains rather than against them to learn more and stay physically and psychologically healthy.

SENSORY STRATEGIES

For Academic Success

VISUAL

- USE A VISUAL TIMER
- DIM THE LIGHTS
- GIVE BREAKS FROM VISUAL INPUT
- USE GUIDED READING STRIPS
- USE LED & COLOR-CHANGING LIGHTS
- LOOK BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN TWO OBJECTS
- PLAY MATCHING GAMES
- LOOK AT YOUR PETS
- PLAY WITH A YO-YO
- WATCH OBJECTS FALL FROM DIFFERENT HEIGHTS
- WEAR SUNGLASSES
- MAKE NOTES IN DIFFERENT COLORS
- PLAY WITH AN OIL TIMER OR LAVA LAMP

ORAL

- CHEW GUM
- DRINK FIZZY DRINKS WHILE STUDYING
- EAT SOMETHING SPICY OR SOUR
- DO BREATHING TECHNIQUES
- SIP THINGS FROM A STRAW
- HUM TUNES WHISTLE SONGS BACK AND FORTH
- USE A VIBRATING TOOTHBRUSH
- TALK ABOUT YOUR NOTES TO YOURSELF IN A MIRROR OR VERBALLY TO OTHERS

PROPROCEPTIVE

- CARRY IN GROCERIES FROM THE CAR
- JUMP UP AND DOWN
- DO SOME YOGA
- USE A WEIGHTED PENCIL
- GIVE FIRM HUGS
- CHAIR PUSH UPS
- PUSH / PULL A BOX OF LAUNDRY
- SQUEEZE A STRESS BALL
- USE A WEIGHTED BLANKET
- FIDGET WITH A SQUISHY BALL
- GIVE A MASSAGE
- WHEELBARROW WALKS
- WIPE DOWN SURFACES
- RAKE LEAVES
- LIFT SOME WEIGHTS

TACTILE

- PLAY WITH PUTTY, SLIME, FOAM OR PLAYDOUGH
- USE BRUSHING TECHNIQUES
- DANCE WHILE YOU STUDY
- TAKE A BREAK AND COOK SOMETHING
- CUDDLE WITH A SOFT BLANKET
- HOLD AN ICE CUBE
- DO FACE AND BODY PAINT
- PLAY WITH RICE OR OTHER ROUGH TEXTURES
- TAKE A SHOWER
- HOLD A MUG OF HOT CHOCOLATE
- WEAR FUZZY SOCKS
- MOVE YOUR BODY

VESTIBULAR

- GO ON A WALK AT THE LOCAL PARK
- SPIN AROUND ONE DIRECTION AND THEN THE OTHER
- SIT ON A ROCKING CHAIR
- DO YOGA POSES
- HOLD A STRETCH
- BALANCE ON A BOSU BALL
- DO TAI CHI
- STAND ON ONE LEG DO HANDSTANDS AND HEADSTANDS
- WALK ON A BALANCE BEAM BEING PULLED ON PLAY CATCH

AUDITORY

- LISTEN TO BINAURAL BEATS
- PLAY REPETITIVE SOOTHING SOUNDS LIKE TIBETAN SINGING BOWLS ON YOU-TUBE
- USE NOISE-CANCELING HEADPHONES AS NEEDED
- LISTEN TO CLASSICAL MUSIC
- LISTEN TO LECTURES
- USE WHITE NOISE TO SLEEP AT NIGHT
- MAKEUP SONGS ABOUT YOUR CLASSES
- COME UP WITH FUNNY MNEMONICS

ACCOMMODATIONS

AT SCHOOL

- Get a fidget toy to use during class time
- Ask to use alternative seating in the classroom
- Chew gum throughout the day
- Plan breaks to move throughout the school day
- Close a classroom door to limit excess noise

AT HOME

- Use a sensory diet incorporating multiple sensory strategies throughout the day
- Plan sensory breaks when you become overstimulated
- Do heavy work activities (moving heavy objects, use of deep pressure, pushing)
- Practice identifying when you are becoming over and understimulated
- Look at what kinds of input helps your body feel the best and practice using those things at the moment

WHAT ARE SENSORY STRATEGIES?

Sensory strategies help people better orient themselves in the world and have a better tolerance for unexpected stimuli. They can also help to have a "just right" arousal level and properly emotionally regulate.

If you have any questions about sensory strategies and how they can be communicated at home and at school, ask your occupational therapist for clarification.

PHASE 3: CONCRETE RESOURCES

SPRING 2023

ARS Accommodation Video

Based on the reported needs, in collaboration with Wingate ARS, a short video was produced that helped students navigate the accommodations portal.

Resource Guide

Prior interviews with stakeholders were used to target resource priorities. The resource guide is included below.

Resource Guide Dissemination

Based on established community partnerships, the resource guide was distributed to help meet gaps in student needs.

DISABILITY RESOURCE GUIDE

Here are free and mostly free resources that can help you make the most of your college experience and being a young adult.

➤ Life Skills

- **Sweepy**: keep housecleaning chores in order
- **Upkept**: tips and maintenance routines for appliances
- **Do it Now**: gamifying habits
- **Habitify**: gamifying habits
- **Streaks**: makes keeping your habits into a competition
- **Zogo**: financial literacy
- **Mint**: budgeting, real-time tracking of your bank account expenses
- **YNAB**: budgeting
- **Planta**: keeps track of types of plants and when you need to water them
- **RealWorld**: Simplify Adulthood: provides classes and action steps on "adulting" skills
- **Napkin Finance**: youtube channel with videos on financial literacy

➤ Health & Wellness

- **Plant Nanny**: encourages you to drink water by keeping plants alive
- **Bearable**: tracks moods, symptoms, health conditions, and triggers to stay well
- **Mango**: tracks and reminds you to take and refill medications, warns of possible contraindications
- **Alarm Mon**: great alarm clock for heavy sleepers that requires math and games to turn it
- **Cue**: mensural tracker
- **Calm**: guided meditations
- **Headspace**: guided meditations

DISABILITY RESOURCE GUIDE

Here are free and mostly free resources that can help you make the most of your college experience and being a young adult.

Note Taking

- Goodnote 5
- Nebo
- Microsoft One Note
- Use Voice Memos
- Notability
- Notepad
- Evernote
- Sonocent
- **Otter.Ai**: voice-to-text for note taking
- Glean
- **Livescribe Pen**: can record the audio of classes into notes

Reading & Writing

- **Bee Line Reader**: helpful for dyslexia, makes all words into a color gradient
- **Grammarly**: helps to edit grammar
- **Hemingway Editor**: helps with readability
- **Google Translate**: can read documents out loud to help catch errors

Studying Smarter

- **Pomodoro**: breaks study sessions down into evidence-based time blocks
- **Plant Nanny**:
- **It's Study Time**: phone app that limits social media and game usage within set parameters
- **Owl Clock**: chrome extension that restricts and limits distracting websites when turned on to help you stay on task
- **Hourly Chime**: clock goes off hourly to help with time blindness
- **Khan Academy**: catch up on class content you may have missed

DISABILITY RESOURCE GUIDE

Here are free and mostly free resources that can help you make the most of your college experience and being a young adult.

❯❯ Organizing

- Productive:
- **Wanderlust**: makes ascetically appealing and useful to-do lists that sync with your calendrer
- WatchMinder:
- **Canva**: make visually appealing graphics and calendars
- **Google Keep**: a visual sticky note board that transfers between devices
- **Google Tasks**: an extension that makes checklists you can take with you anywhere
- **SlidesGo**: visually appealing PowerPoint templates

❯❯ Accessability

- Petralex
- **Be My Eyes**: app for seeing items if you are blind or have low vision
- Wheelmap / Wheelmate
- Voice-it

❯❯ Mental Health

- **WoeBot**: CBT-based chat bot that can track your moods and help you feel better
- **Calm Harm**: DBT-based app to help manage emotional dysregulation
- Move Mood:
- **Clear Fear**: anxiety management app for
- **Stepping Stones**: visually calm images that can help when you feel dysregulated

DISABILITY INCLUSION

CONCLUSION

This project worked at several levels to help improve accessibility on Wingate's campus. The project was in alignment with community needs as evidenced by high levels of engagement with lectures and expressed interest during the needs assessment.

Sustainability was a key component of this project. Community partners that offered their time and energy received resources related to disability access to help foster long-term relationships. Materials used in this project were passed along to the CCG for future reference and use. Resources and handouts have been provided here and distributed within the campus and community to offer concrete resources and support. Additionally, my work was completed with a focus on skill development and maximizing impact by focusing on solutions aligned with personal expertise and community needs.

Disability Training

Many stakeholders expressed interest in disability training for faculty members. As a result of this feedback, a preliminary outline was written. Future directions include developing and implementing such training to continue the mission of increasing accessibility on campus.

Recommendations

Resources should continue to be distributed and revised as needed. The lectures showed strong student engagement and could be continued on an ongoing basis with support. To improve this project further, collecting more rigorous outcome measures is advised.