



Expanding Access & Support for Students with Disabilities

Forum on Education Abroad
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Introductions

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Session Outline

- Participation trends
- Value of inclusion
- Factors influencing participation
- Framework for best practices
- Implementation strategies
- Case Scenarios
- Additional Resources
- Next Steps

Current Trends and Participation

Category		Year					
		11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Disability Status*	Disability	.1	5.0	5.1	5.7	5.3	8.8
	No Disability	.9	95.0	94.9	94.3	94.7	91.2
Type of Disability	Learning Disability	.3	43.4	46.4	43.8	42.1	34.4
	Mental Disability	.9	28.0	27.9	25.9	27.0	27.7
	Chronic Health Disorder***						23.2
	Other Disability	.6	17.2	16.0	20.6	20.7	4.9
	Sensory Disability	.3	3.8	3.8	5.0	5.0	4.4
	Physical Disability	.9	7.6	5.9	4.7	5.2	3.6
	Autism Spectrum Disorder**						1.8

"Profile of U.S. Study Abroad Students, 2004/05- 2015/16" Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange. Retrieved from <http://www.iie.org/opendoors>

Why Does This Matter?

- Provide education abroad opportunities for all students
- Expand perspectives of all program participants
- Continue to improve our programs
- Ensure that we are offering quality, inclusive programming
- Developing global citizenship among all participants

The Big Picture

Who is impacted?

- Student
- Program participants
- Student body
- Institution
- Community and society

Framework: Factors that affect student experience

- Resources
 - Policies
 - Communications
 - Process
 - Programs
- For each of these:
- Identify
 - Evaluate
 - Strategize
 - Implement

Resources: Questions to Identify & Evaluate

- Are there scholarships or grants that can help a student with disabilities go abroad or pay for support staff to accompany a student?
- Do we have access to professional staff able to participate in a program to support a student?
- Is there a funding pool available to support student accommodations? If so, what are the parameters/limits?
- What cost saving measures can we take without diluting the quality of services or experience?

Resources

Some examples:

- Professional support staff such as captionists, note takers, interpreters, mobility trainers, personal care assistant, etc.
- Vocational Rehabilitation funding
- Professional support offices on campus or in country
- Gilman Scholarship, Diversity Abroad Scholarships
- Country or cultural information

Resources Scenario: Strategize & Implement

- The home university provides student employees to take notes for deaf students in class. These student employees are thoroughly trained and paid by the hour. A deaf student wants to participate in a study abroad program where a trained note-taker is not attending.
- How can you assist this student?
- What options are available?

Policies: Questions to Identify & Evaluate

- What current policies are making it more challenging for students with disabilities to go abroad?
- How do our policies interact with the policies of stakeholders like international partners, governments, etc. ?
- Are our policies clearly stated and easily accessible?

Policies

Some examples:

- How do you define reasonable alternative accommodations
- If/how/when a student should self-disclose
- Outline the role and expectations of interpreters/aides during “off-hours”

Policies Scenario: Strategize & Implement

- The home university's legal office has advised that the Education Abroad Office remove the question “do you have any special needs?” from the application. The legal office advised that students should not be asked to self-disclose, but should rather be proactive about their own concerns.
- What kind of practices encourage early self-disclosure?
- How do you manage disability disclosure?

Communications: Questions to Identify & Evaluate

- Are students with disabilities represented in your marketing and student communications?
- Are your electronic and printed materials accessible to all students?
- Are your eligibility requirements and expectations clearly stated?
- What kind of pre-departure information do you provide?
- Are you and your staff using inclusive, respectful language?

Communications

Some examples:

- Marketing to and recruiting students with disabilities
- Advising and pre-departure training that prepares students for experiencing stereotyping or discrimination in another culture
- Communicating with family members who may have different opinions about a student's needs

Communications Scenario: Strategize & Implement

A student with a learning disability meets with Access Services to request the services she thinks she will need abroad. She is confident she will perform well with just note taking. Her parent calls separately and explains to Access Services that her daughter is overconfident, points out that she's actually not performing well currently in her classes and requests additional support services abroad.

- What are some things to consider when making your decision about services to provide?
- Who is it your responsibility to communicate with?

Process: Questions to Identify & Evaluate

- Does our advising plan support students with disabilities?
- Do we offer accommodations for students with regard to the application and follow-up materials?
- How are we educating and preparing advisors, staff, and faculty?
- How can we strengthen our relationship with support offices on campus, such as Disability Services?

Process

- Some examples:
 - Consider how and where you meet with students
 - Discuss accommodations in initial advising appointments or have information available
 - Hold staff and faculty training
 - Review materials for accessibility and consult with Disability Services

Process Scenario: Strategize & Implement

A student with a physical disability is interested in participating in a faculty-led program in Italy.

- What are some things to consider when trying to accommodate this student?
- What responsibilities belong to the student and what responsibilities belong to the university?
- What steps can you build into the participation process for all programs that might better support this student, and future students with mobility disabilities?

Programs: Questions to Identify & Evaluate

- Will my itinerary be manageable for a person with mobility challenges? If not, are there appropriate alternatives I can manage?
- Is my host culture generally accepting of people with disabilities?
- Have you consulted with the Disability Services Office regarding the program schedule?

Programs

Some examples:

- Itinerary must be detailed and planned early so that a person with disabilities can accurately plan for the types of support services they need
- Survey your partners regarding their accessibility and services
- Arrange for accessible housing and classroom locations early

Programs: Value of On-Site Partners

- Strong connections with overseas partners are key
- Early, clear communication is essential
- Have direct access to resources in-country
- Experience with host country laws and practices
- Support staff on-site available to assist

Additional Resources Available

- Mobility International USA
 - National Clearinghouse on Disability & Exchange
- Diversity Abroad
- Forum
 - Standards of Good Practice Toolbox
- NAFSA
 - *“Promoting Inclusion in Education Abroad: A Handbook of Research and Practice”*
 - International Education for Persons with Disabilities Member Interest Group (MIG)

Share Your Insights

- What other ideas or suggestions do you have?
 - Resources
 - Policies
 - Communications
 - Programs
 - Processes

Next Steps

- Review worksheet on table

- How can you strengthen support at your own institution/organization?
- What ideas could you implement?

Thank you for joining us!
