NCCSD
NATIONAL CENTER FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Assessing & Improving Your Campus Disability Climate:
A Toolkit for Colleges and Universities

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Suggested citation: Allegra, R. P. (2024). *Assessing and improving your campus disability climate: A toolkit for colleges and universities*. National Center for College Students with Disabilities. https://nccsd.ici.umn.edu/clearinghouse/training

Background

Colleges and universities in the US have a long history of admitting and matriculating disabled students (Madaus, 2011, Summer). The presence of students with disabilities has added to the increasing diversity of student bodies across the country. At present nearly 21 percent of undergraduates and 11 percent of graduate students reported having a disability in the 2019-20 academic year (NCES, 2023) Campuses that are welcoming to these students "...can contribute to improved social and educational outcomes for students with disabilities, support faculty and staff with disabilities, and lead to greater understanding and engagement with disability among the campus community." (Harbour & Greenberg, 2015, p.4).

The civil rights basis of disability law requires an individualized, case-by-case approach to environmental barrier removal and the determination of reasonable accommodations (U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2011, September). Most Disability Resources offices (DRO's) have been structured around this framework, addressing individual complaints that students might have in regard to campus facilities, academic programs and individual classes. Disability Resources (DR) staff who have worked for any length of time have often found themselves repeating the same conversations with campus personnel about the same access issues, for different students who register with DR.

In more recent years, many DRO's have tried to view campus accessibility through other kinds of lenses: social model, universal design, and equity and inclusion. (Behling, et al 2023). DRO's increasingly see the need to resolve common barriers in their environments by addressing the potentially inaccessible design of those environments. This approach can lead to more academic spaces, physical and programmatic, that are accessible to a variety of disabled students, enabling them to participate more fully in campus life.

Why the AHEAD Program Standards?

The Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) was founded in 1977 to address higher education institutions' obligations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Rehabilitation Act, 1973). Disability activists, educators and other college personnel took on the challenge of interpreting the law for their campuses and developing policies and procedures to address existing accessibility barriers.

AHEAD has grown to over 5,000 members representing colleges and universities in North America and beyond. Through the scholarship and evidence-based practices of its members, AHEAD has become an authoritative resource on issues related to disability in higher education.

To further guide its members and the field of disability resource management, in the 1990's AHEAD began to capture and codify the professional work of its members. Work was done to establish a code of ethics, competencies for professionals and standards to reflect best practices in service provision and accessibility in the postsecondary setting (Scott, Allegra, Dukes III, 2023, Winter). Beginning in 2019, AHEAD charged a task force to evaluate and update the AHEAD Program Standards (Association on Higher Education and Disability, 2021). The resulting *AHEAD Program Domains, Standards, and Performance Indicators* (the AHEAD Program Standards) moved "...beyond educational access to instead mitigate barriers to equity for disabled students." (Scott, Allegra, Dukes III, 2023, Winter).

Because AHEAD is not a regulatory agency, its various codes, competencies and standards should be regarded as aspirational reflections of best practices in the field of disability in higher education. Campuses would do well to step back and take an objective look at its various environments (physical, digital, programmatic and attitudinal) through the lens of these standards.

How to Use the Guide

This toolkit offers foundational suggestions for establishing a campus-based team to assess the climate of college and university campuses and identify ways to address impediments to the full equity and inclusion of persons with disabilities.

General suggestions are included here for establishing work groups and timelines. These can be tailored to your unique campus needs.

Guiding questions are offered for each Domain to help your work groups reflect on your current climate, policies and practices and identify gaps or areas that need improvement or change. These questions are springboards for your own questions. They can be developed into tools such as surveys and checklists.

Steps to Implementing the AHEAD Program Standards

Assessment of current state of disability on your campus
It's important to identify and establish a baseline of your campus' climate around disability. Decide which parties should conduct such an assessment. Should it be led by the Disability Resources office, administration, campus research department, etc.? Use data from previous assessments of knowledge and attitudes about disability among administrators, faculty, campus personnel and students. Develop surveys and other tools to research current awareness and practices.

For the physical infrastructure check to see when the most recent ADA audit was conducted. The campus ADA Coordinators office should have this. What environments are in compliance? What needs to be remedied?

Examine the accessibility of your campus' digital environments such as websites, online resources, are communication methods. Are they in compliance with the most recent accessibility standards?

Assessment of current state of disability on your campus

⬇

Identify successes and needs

⬇

Set up a team to address needs

⬇

Planning for implementation

⬇

Review work of the team

⬇

Review long-term outcomes

Identify successes and needs
Once you gather all of this data, identify areas of success related to knowledge and attitudes about disability, inclusive policies and procedures, and physical and digital accessibility. Analyze these in light of the aspirational goals of the AHEAD Program Standards and campuses similar to yours. Note areas that need to be addressed to comply with guidance or laws or align with current thinking around disability.

Set up a team to address needs
Based on your data collection and analysis, determine which departments or individuals should be involved in working to resolve outstanding problems and needs on your campus. It is important to include disabled students and other representatives on the team.

Team members may be constant or fluid, depending on the kinds of areas of need. For example, if accessible parking spaces need to be identified, cataloged and redrawn that might be a short-term project, with some team members serving temporarily. In comparison, if the goal is to train all faculty on disability awareness, the team commitment might be longer.

Establish an oversight department or committee to outline the work of the team, timelines and monitor progress.

Planning for implementation
Your team should develop manageable timelines for the scope of work involved in making campus improvements. Prioritize the most pressing needs, including those which students or other disabled community members have identified or lodged complaints about. Categorize those that are low-cost or readily-achievable as compared to those which need larger budgets or time to resolve. Create a communications plan among team and committee members as well as members of the community (and public if appropriate).

Review work of the team
Periodically assess the make-up of the oversight team and sub-committees for appropriateness and efficiency. Is the team being proactive and staying on task? Does the team need additional areas of expertise?

Evaluate improvements, using AHEAD Standards as measures. Are campus operations in line with these aspirational goals?

Assess short-term accomplishments (quarterly or annual) and report to oversight team and administration. Re-prioritize tasks as needed.

Review long-term outcomes
Evaluate progress in light of the AHEAD Standards from an annual, 3-year, 5-year perspective. Has the campus adopted and incorporated the targeted practices?

Conduct assessment of the status of disability on campus from this long-term perspective. Repeat evaluation and remediation process as needed.

AHEAD Program Standards: Guiding Questions and Considerations

The full text of the AHEAD Standards can be found in the Appendix. The guide below focuses on each of the five Domains. Guiding questions and considerations reflect concepts based in the accompanying Standards under each Domain. These are included as tools to help you ascertain your campus' current consonance with each Standard, develop your implementation plan and assess progress.

These are not exhaustive questions. They can be springboards for you to develop your own questions based on the specific nature of your campus. Numbers in parentheses accompanying some questions relate to key underlying Standards or Indicators.

Domain 1: Leadership & Collaboration

Disability resource professionals provide institutional leadership in advancing the equal participation of disabled people through a collaborative process.

Does your college or university have a mission statement? Does it include language that conveys a sense of inclusivity to all students, including those with disabilities? (1.1.1)

Does your campus have a public statement of commitment to people with disabilities and accessibility? (1.1.1, 1.5, 2.3.1)

How does your campus evaluate and address the accessibility of various environments (physical, digital, programmatic, attitudinal)? Is this just the purview of the DRO or do other departments participate in this? (1.1.3, 1.2.2, 1.2.5)

Are campus virtual environments in compliance with accessibility standards such as WCAG? (1.2.5)

Does the DRO participate in development and review of academic policies and practices? Are there conversations about incorporating universal design principles for teaching? (1.3 *ff*)

Do academic units and individual faculty understand their responsibilities around accommodating disabled students? Do internship and other off-campus sites understand these obligations? (1.3.1, 1.3.4)

What is your campus attitude regarding people with disabilities? Are they regarded as part of the diversity of your campus? (1.4 *ff*)

Can you identify the presence of ableism in attitudes, programs, policies and practices? Where does your campus excel in disability representation? (1.4.2, 1.4.3)

Is the disability perspective included in research, campus initiatives, activities and celebrations? (1.4.2, 1.4.4)

Do disabled students and other individuals serve on advisory, planning and other decision-making committees? Do disabled students serve on Student Activities boards, Student Judicial panels and related bodies? (1.4 *ff*, 1.5 *ff*)

Are students with disabilities represented in marketing materials used by the institution? (1.5 *ff*)

Does the campus and DRO regularly assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of polices, procedures and services related to disabled individuals? (4.4 *ff*)

Domain 2: Consultation & Information Dissemination

> *Disability resource professionals share information, educate, and consult with a broad cross section of the campus community to facilitate equity for disabled individuals in all services, programs, and activities offered by the institution.*

How does the DRO director, staff understand their role on campus? Is the expertise of staff and DRO valued as a resource? Is the DRO included in decision-making opportunities? (1.2, 1.3, 1.5)

How collaborative is your campus in addressing disability? Does it depend solely on the DRO or do other departments willingly engage in this work? (2.1, 2.2, 2.3)

How often does the DRO offer training to campus staff and faculty? (2.1 *ff*)

How effective are training efforts? Have campus units made changes as a result of such training? Do campus staff understand their role in designing accessible environments and accommodating people with disabilities? (2.1 *ff*)

What inroads have you made in promoting inclusive design and practices in the academic, co-curricular, built and digital environments? (2.2 *ff*)

Domain 3: Access and Equity

> *Disability resource professionals address individual situations and support the implementation of accessibility solutions, including design changes and accommodations.*

How prominent is disability-related information in your campus' communications, on your website? Do students know where to get help or register with the DRO? (2.3.2, 2.3.3)

Evaluate your DRO's registration, disability documentation and accommodations determination policies and process. Are they clear, easy-to-follow, nonburdensome? Do they include an interactive process? (2.3.2,3.1 *ff*)

Do students understand their rights to nondiscrimination and reasonable accommodations in all aspects of campus life? (3.1.10)

How effective are the DRO's communications with faculty (e.g. Accommodations Letter)? Do faculty understand their roles and responsibilities in the accommodations process? Have they considered universal design principles for teaching? (2.1.2, 3.2 *ff*)

How positive are student-faculty interactions on your campus?

What barriers (physical, digital, programmatic, attitudinal) have students reported? (3.3.1)

How positive are students' interactions with staff in units such as Housing, Dining Services, Library, etc.? (3.3.1)

Domain 4: Office Administration and Operations

> *Disability resource professionals are guided by a program mission, have appropriate resources to fulfill the mission, operate under practices consistent with the mission, and establish an ongoing process of assessment in achieving the mission.*

Based on the nature and needs of your campus, does your DRO have the appropriate staffing and resources to meet demands? (4.2 *ff*)

Does the DRO staff represent the diversity of your campus, including disability and have the appropriate training and experience for disability resource and service work? (4.2.3, 4.2.4, 4.2.5)

Is the DRO appropriately funded for the scope of work it is required to do? Is the budget based on "hard" funding with flexibility for additional funds to meet unexpected accessibility needs? (4.2.9, 4.2.11, 4.2.12)

Are there adequate and appropriate spaces and equipment for staff to perform work tasks, meet with students confidentially and offer services such as proctored exams? (4.2.8, 4.2.15)

Does the campus and DRO have well-articulated polices and practices for students and others to self-report disabilities and obtain reasonable accommodations? (4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.6)

Are there clear and consistent policies and practices concerning the provision of services by the DRO? (4.3.5)

Does the DRO have a positive relationship with faculty. Do faculty view the DRO as a valuable campus resource? (3.2 *ff*, 4.3.3, 4.3.4)
Does the campus and DRO have posted Grievance Procedures? (1.3.5, 2.3.4, 4.3.7)

Does the DRO assess its activities and report to administration on a regular and consistent basis? (4.4 *ff*)

Domain 5: Professional Development

Disability resource professionals maintain up-to-date professional knowledge and skill relevant to access and equity for disabled individuals.

Does your DRO director, manager or coordinator feel well-equipped for the job?

Does your DRO director serve in leadership roles on campus? (5.2.1, 5.2.2)

What areas does the DRO director feel the most knowledgeable or skilled in (e.g. individual disability types, accommodations process, civil rights law, etc.) (5.1.2, 5.2.1)

What knowledge or skill areas need to be enhanced? (5.1.2)

How does the DRO director stay up to date in the field of disability resources and services?

Are individuals or the institution current members of the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD)?

Does the DRO director attend AHEAD training events? Training events from other sources? (5.1.3, 5.2.3)

When was the DRO director's most recent professional development experience?

If the DRO has a staff, what are their areas of knowledge and skill? Where might they need additional training? (4.2.6, 5.1.2)

Is there a budget line to cover professional development opportunities? (4.2.14, 5.2.3)

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Appendix

AHEAD Program Domains, Standards, and Performance Indicators

Introduction

The Association on Higher Education And Disability (AHEAD) offers these Program Domains, Standards, and Performance Indicators as a guide for expanding the vision of disability equity at the postsecondary level. The Standards reflect an aspirational goal for disability resource professionals in addressing systemic and individual barriers for disabled people in all aspects of higher education. They are designed to guide campus administrators' understanding of the breadth of disability resource work, direct the development and evaluation of disability resource offices, and improve the preparation of professional personnel. These Standards may also inform audiences outside higher education about the nature and scope of disability resource management in the postsecondary setting. In line with higher education efforts towards diversity, equity and inclusion, the overarching goal of disability resources is the mitigation of barriers to access for disabled individuals in all institutional programs, services, and activities.

To realize the goal, disability resource personnel must:

- Provide leadership and collaboration in framing a commitment to disability access and equity as an integral aspect of their institution's culture (Domain 1),
- Advise and educate the campus community about disability and inclusive practices (Domain 2),
- Provide services, strategies, and accommodations to mitigate the barriers faced by individual disabled people (Domain 3),
- Administer office operations guided by a mission and with access to appropriate resources (Domain 4), and
- Enhance their professional knowledge and skills (Domain 5).

The five broad Domains provide an organizational framework for the Program Standards that relate to the work of disability resource offices. Beneath each Program Standard are multiple Performance Indicators that provide a non-exhaustive list of how each Standard can be implemented. Collectively, the Domains, Standards, and Performance Indicators provide benchmarks for colleges and universities related to the work of disability resource offices.

Domain 1: Leadership & Collaboration

Disability resource professionals provide institutional leadership in advancing the equal participation of disabled people through a collaborative process.

1.1 Provide institutional leadership to foster equitable higher education experiences for disabled individuals.

    1.1.1   Foster an institutional commitment to access and equity that positions disability as an integral and valued aspect of diversity.

    1.1.2   Promote the development of institutional policies that clearly demonstrate a commitment to access and equity in institutional programs, services, and activities in all physical, digital, academic and cocurricular spaces.

    1.1.3   Proactively advocate for the mitigation of barriers to access in all campus programs, services, and activities in physical, digital, academic and cocurricular experiences.

1.2 Collaborate with administrators, faculty, staff, students, and other relevant institutional personnel in the design of equitable campus environments.

    1.2.1   Foster collaboration on disability issues among key administrative personnel (e.g., deans, registrar, facilities, information technology, campus legal counsel, human resources).

    1.2.2   Work with the campus ADA coordinator or designated group to ensure a plan is in place for the regular review of physical accessibility (e.g., facilities, new construction and renovation, grounds) and the remediation of barriers.

    1.2.3   Ensure access is included in the institution's emergency and contingency planning.

    1.2.4   Work with administrators to ensure that all information and communication technologies (e.g., enterprise level systems, such as the student portal, HR systems, and emergency notifications, and local tools, such as library search engines and digital courseware) developed, procured, and implemented provide an equitable experience for all users.

    1.2.5   Ensure that all institutional communication and resources, including all websites and materials shared over the Internet, are provided in accessible format.

    1.2.6   In partnership with institutional leaders (e.g., administrators and staff from residence life, dining services, recreation center, clubs and organizations), review and revise cocurricular policies and procedures that create barriers for students based on disability.

1.3 Collaborate with academic personnel to ensure disability is considered in the development, review, and revision of academic policies.

    1.3.1   In partnership with academic leaders (e.g., deans, department heads, faculty senate), review and revise academic policies and procedures that create barriers for students based on disability.

    1.3.2   Work collaboratively with academic affairs on the development, review, and revision of policies regarding program modifications (e.g., course substitutions, extension of academic deadlines).

    1.3.3   Participate in the development, review, and revision of the institution's academic qualifications and essential technical, academic, and behavioral standards.

    1.3.4   Ensure that equitable policies and practices extend to practica, internships and clinical experiences on- and off-campus.

    1.3.5   Assist with the development, review, and revision of policies and procedures for making and settling complaints of disability-related discrimination.

    1.3.6   Partner with administration and faculty to ensure disabled students have equitable assessment experiences, including that appropriate space and resources are available for providing testing accommodations.

1.4 Foster a positive disability narrative that informs the campus culture and climate.

    1.4.1   Provide opportunities for students to explore disability identity in ways that acknowledge intersections with other types of personal and group identity.

    1.4.2   Encourage collaboration and campus level engagement among diverse sources of disability knowledge, including offices, research centers, or scholars with expertise in disability studies.

    1.4.3   Support campus events and initiatives that foster dialogue, understanding, and exploration of anti-ableism, disability history, and disability culture.

    1.4.4   Include disability in the collection and review of institutional metrics, such as admissions, retention, graduation, financial aid, veteran status, and campus climate assessments, to understand and improve the experience of disabled students.

    1.4.5   Partner with academic leaders to expand or explore the development of classes that focus on or integrate disability studies scholarship.

1.5 Promote disability representation at all levels of institutional decision making.

    1.5.1   Participate on campus-wide advisory committees related to equity and diversity.

    1.5.2   Participate on a campus-wide disability advisory committee consisting of faculty, staff, students, administrators, and community representatives.

    1.5.3   Serve on decision-making bodies (e.g., such as faculty senate, general studies curriculum committee, strategic and financial planning committees, diversity initiatives, community relations) to ensure disability and access are considered as changes are proposed and contingency plans developed.

    1.5.4   Foster opportunities for disabled students, faculty, and staff to contribute to campus decision-making processes.

Domain 2: Consultation & Information Dissemination

Disability resource professionals share information, educate, and consult with a broad cross section of the campus community to facilitate equity for disabled individuals in all services, programs, and activities offered by the institution.

2.1 Advise and educate regarding disability, barriers, accommodations, and the institution's responsibility for providing access.

    2.1.1   Provide information and training to faculty, staff, and administrators regarding institutional policies and procedures for ensuring equitable experiences for disabled students.

    2.1.2   Inform faculty of the procedures they and disabled students must follow in arranging for accommodations.

    2.1.3   Provide information and training to campus units (e.g., residential life, facilities, academic support, library, information services, human resources) to increase understanding of accessibility, disability and their role and responsibilities in designing inclusive and accessible services.

    2.1.4   Advise campus personnel (e.g., information services, human resources, marketing and communications, academic departments) regarding the institution's obligation to procure and implement only accessible technologies and applications.

    2.1.5   Provide training and feedback to facility and grounds personnel to foster a physically accessible campus environment.

    2.1.6   Ensure key administrators are informed of legislative changes relative to access standards, promising practices in higher education disability services, and accessible technologies.

    2.1.7   Advise campus student affairs regarding the intersection between disability and campus practices (e.g., student discipline, campus behavioral intervention team, student activities) that may require modification.

    2.1.8   Advise, inform, and consult with cocurricular office administrators and staff regarding procedures and their role and responsibilities in providing, or supporting the provision of, accommodations.

2.2 Through proactive outreach, consultation, and training, foster an institutional commitment to inclusive design that minimizes the need for individual accommodations to achieve access.

    2.2.1   Partner with instructional support staff to provide learning opportunities and encourage faculty to incorporate inclusive teaching and assessment strategies.

    2.2.2   Provide training and technical assistance to student success personnel (e.g., academic success, supplemental instructional resources, career services, veterans services) to ensure their services are accessible to disabled students.

    2.2.3   Collaborate with online learning personnel to ensure faculty is trained in the creation of accessible instructional materials and the use of accessibility tools within the learning management system.

2.2.4 Partner with campus instructional technology (IT) personnel to train all members of the campus community in the preparation of accessible materials.

2.2.5 Contribute to new faculty and staff orientation and training to increase awareness of disability, disability-related barriers, and inclusive design.

2.2.6 Provide training and technical assistance to student affairs personnel to ensure student programming is designed to be accessible and inclusive.

2.3 Disseminate information regarding disability resources and how to access them in accessible format through all institutional channels.

2.3.1 Encourage the inclusion of disability in the institutional statement of nondiscrimination.

2.3.2 Distribute information on availability of services via relevant campus publications (catalogs, programmatic materials, websites, etc.).

2.3.3 Ensure information on disability services (e.g., documentation requirements, statement regarding self-disclosure, processes for requesting and using services, individuals responsible for access) is on the institution's website.

2.3.4 Provide disability related grievance and complaint procedures on the institution's website.

2.3.5 Provide information about the availability of assistive technology on campus including the location of specific software and hardware.

Domain 3: Access and Equity

Disability resource professionals address individual situations and support the implementation of accessibility solutions, including design changes and accommodations.

3.1 Work with individual students to identify disability-related barriers and strategies for mitigating them through design changes and accommodation.

3.1.1 Determine individual student rights to accommodation through a nonburdensome and ongoing interactive process that considers student narrative and appropriate, relevant documentation of disability.

3.1.2 Assess, through an individualized, interactive process, whether requested accommodations are necessary to ensure access in individual contexts.

3.1.3 Determine whether requested accommodations are reasonable.

3.1.4 Communicate to students their right to access and privacy and their role in implementing effective accommodations.

3.1.5 Explain to students and faculty what makes an accommodation appropriate or "reasonable."

3.1.6 Consider student preference in deciding on specific accommodations and evaluate alternative access solutions.

3.1.7 Consider assistive technology (AT) solutions in the mitigation of identified barriers; provide/ refer student for training as necessary.

3.1.8 Communicate the denial of a requested accommodation to students in writing and include information on how to grieve the decision.

3.1.9 Follow up with students to ensure agreed upon accommodations are effective.

3.1.10 Refer students to campus and community resources (e.g., counseling services, academic support, multicultural centers, vocational rehabilitation) as needed.

3.2 Consult with faculty members to mitigate disability-related barriers for individual students through design strategies and reasonable accommodations.

3.2.1 Consult with faculty on accommodation decisions when there is a potential for a fundamental alteration of an academic requirement.

3.2.2 Inform faculty of accommodations that should be provided to their students and the faculty role in implementing them.

3.2.3   Collaborate with faculty to ensure that design changes or accommodations are effective in providing access and are implemented efficiently.

3.2.4   Follow up with faculty when students report that an accommodation is not available or is ineffective.

3.2.5   Address concerns about student behaviors perceived as potential conduct code violations in light of disability.

3.2.6   Consult with department representatives and community agency personnel to ensure accessibility in internships, field placements, and other community-based academic experiences.

3.3 Consult with administrators and staff to implement design strategies and reasonable accommodations that mitigate barriers identified by individual disabled people.

3.3.1   Collaborate with on- and off-campus partners (e.g., admissions, career services, residence life, dining services, library, event management) to address barriers to access identified by disabled individuals.

3.3.2   Follow up with campus units when individuals report a lack of access or unavailable/ineffective accommodations.

Domain 4: Office Administration and Operations

Disability resource professionals are guided by a program mission, have appropriate resources to fulfill the mission, operate under practices consistent with the mission, and establish an ongoing process of assessment in achieving the mission.

4.1 Develop and publicize a program mission that advances the institution's commitment to access.

4.1.1   Develop and disseminate a program mission statement and philosophy that is aligned with the mission of the institution and with the values of the profession, including accessibility, equity, and diversity.

4.1.2   Use the mission statement for strategic planning, establishing specific goals, and reviewing progress regularly.

4.1.3   Promote understanding of and support for the mission by office personnel and institutional stakeholders.

4.1.4   Advocate for a reporting structure that strategically positions the office to fulfill its mission.

4.1.5   Develop a staffing plan appropriate to achieving the mission and advocate for its implementation.

4.1.6   Ensure the mission aligns with a service delivery model that respects students' experiences, autonomy, and responsibility.

4.1.7   Regularly review the mission for its alignment with emerging best practices and as a tool to assess progress.

4.2 Ensure the institution has committed appropriate resources for coordinating services for disabled individuals.

Staff

4.2.1   Establish staffing at the level necessary to address individual and systemic barriers in a timely manner.

4.2.3   Prioritize hiring a diverse staff that represents multiple identities and demonstrates understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

4.2.4   Provide services by personnel with training and experience in working with disabled college students (e.g., student development, relevant degree programs).

4.2.5   Ensure staff has knowledge of the applicable laws that provide for an accessible higher education experience for disabled students.

4.2.6 Assign staff with appropriate training to each aspect of service delivery (e.g., assistive technology, communication access, digital access, accommodation implementation, etc.).

4.2.7 Ensure that personnel adhere to a relevant code of ethics (e.g., AHEAD, APA).

Space

4.2.8 Operate from a welcoming, accessible office space appropriate to meet service needs and ensure appropriate confidentiality.

Budget

4.2.9 Administer a budget to support office operations.

4.2.10 Administer, or participate in the administration, of a budget to support individual accommodations.

4.2.11 Ensure adequate budget is available to support the timely implementation of accommodations determined to be reasonable.

4.2.12 Communicate budgetary needs and strategies, expense projections, and budget updates to institutional administrators.

4.2.13 Advocate for additional internal and external funds as needed to address individual situations and create equitable campus environments.

4.2.14 Ensure that professional development funds are available for staff.

Equipment

4.2.15 Acquire, maintain, and update appropriate technology to support effective staff productivity (e.g., computers, assistive technologies, service coordination software).

4.2.16 Implement a secure, computerized database to maintain and organize confidential student records; facilitate coordination of services; support communication with students and faculty; and support development of reports.

4.3 Create, review, and revise professional practices for the effective and efficient delivery of services.

4.3.1 Create written procedures and practices for determining student status as a "qualified individual with a disability" eligible for accommodations; review and revise as needed.

4.3.2 Create written procedures and practices for determining reasonable accommodations; review and revise as needed.

4.3.3 Establish a process for conferring with faculty to determine whether an accommodation would fundamentally alter an essential course or program objective.

4.3.4 Establish a process for notifying faculty (and/or others with a need to know) of the accommodations determined to be reasonable for individual students.

4.3.5 Create, written procedures for managing common accommodations (e.g., test accommodations, interpreting); review and revise as needed.

4.3.6 Develop procedures for determining when provisional accommodations are appropriate; review and revise as needed.

4.3.7 Develop an internal procedure for students to grieve accommodation decisions; review and revise as needed.

4.3.8 Maintain professional, FERPA-protected records that document eligibility, availability of accommodations, and services provided for each student.

4.4 Design and implement a rigorous program of ongoing assessment to improve service delivery and demonstrate institutional impact.

4.4.1 Establish a written assessment plan that aligns with the program mission statement and philosophy and includes qualitative and quantitative data and measurable goals; review and revise the plan as needed.

4.4.2 Collect data to track use of accommodations and services.

4.4.3   Collect data to identify campus barriers, track outreach activities, and guide development of technical assistance and collaboration.

4.4.4   Collect data to assess student, faculty, and administrator satisfaction with the quality and effectiveness of services.

4.4.5   Collect data to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of services and identify areas for improvement.

4.4.6   Collect and utilize data from all relevant campus units to evaluate services, improve practices, and identify additional resource needs.

4.4.7   Develop an annual report of activities, achievements, and needs to document institutional impact and share with administrators.

Domain 5: Professional Development
Disability resource professionals maintain up-to-date professional knowledge and skill relevant to access and equity for disabled individuals.

5.1 Provide disability resource professionals with ongoing opportunities for quality professional development.

5.1.1   Provide orientation to new staff.

5.1.2   Determine professional development needs of staff members on an individual basis, including disability, access, technical, executive, and leadership knowledge and skills.

5.1.3   Support staff in accessing on- and off-campus professional development activities with release time, coverage of work assignments, and funding.

5.2 Provide opportunities for disability resource professionals engage in professional communities to contribute to the growth and development of the field.

5.2.1   Recommend staff for service on institutional committees and work groups.

5.2.2   Nominate staff for leadership positions in disability organizations (e.g., governors' councils, AHEAD Affiliate groups).

5.2.3   Provide staff with funding, release time, and coverage to contribute to the growth and development of the field.

Note. AHEAD Program Domains, Standards, and Performance Indicators developed/revised in 1999, 2006, 2021.

The *AHEAD Program Domains, Standards, and Performance Indicators* were last updated in 2021 with input from the AHEAD Program Standards Task Force, AHEAD Leadership, and AHEAD Members.

Suggested citation:
Association on Higher Education and Disability (2021). *The AHEAD program domains, standards, and performance indicators*. https://www.ahead.org/professional-resources/information-services-portal/data-collection-and-management/performance-indicators