

Disability at the Intersection of History, Culture, Religion, Gender, and Health

Social Safety and Disability Erasure:

The Sacrifice of the Disabled Body



Hunter Duncan

(she/her)

Access Consultant
Purdue University



Danielle Clapham

(she/her)

Writing Center Director &
Assistant Professor of English
University of Jamestown



THIS QR CODE INCLUDES...

- A PDF of these slides
- A PDF and Word doc of our short paper
- Our contact information

**The COVID-19 pandemic
helped make disability more
publicly, socially, and
culturally visible.**

**Non-disabled oriented society
has not, does not, and will not
reform itself for the disabled
body mind**

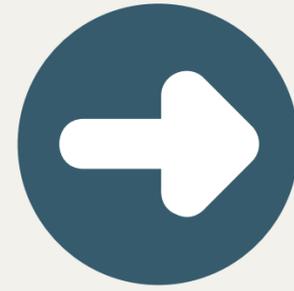
Motivating Question

How can we leverage the opportunities provided by increased attention to access during the pandemic while not diminishing the ongoing discrimination and challenges faced by disabled people in large part because of the pandemic?

Our Goals

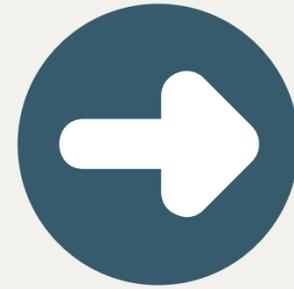
- To raise questions about the role of disability in higher education as it relates to the pandemic
 - To encourage reflection on disability in your own campus spaces
 - To generate conversation around possible changes to higher education environment to re-center disabled experience post-COVID
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Intersection of Higher Education and COVID-19



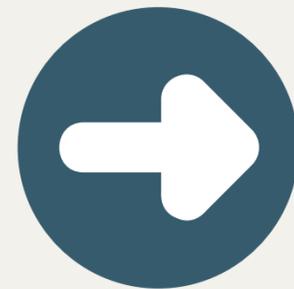
Higher Rates of Anxiety and Depression in college-age populations

- Lederer et al (2020)



Higher rates of thoughts and behaviors of self-harm for People with Disabilities

- Job, Steptoe, & Fancouert (2020)



Higher risk of social isolation for college-age people with disabilities

- Wang, et al. (2022)
-



"We are already seeing the emergence of new technologies and socialities that have come into being as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic...In the midst of physical isolation, we have been granted levels of intimacy and access that some of us have never experienced before"

(Block, et al., 2021)

Silver Linings in Higher Education

01

Access Became a Shared Responsibility

Multiple departments collaborating to address accessibility needs

02

Increasingly Accessible Classrooms

New policies and technology to adjust to online and hybrid learning

03

Proactive vs. Reactive Approaches

Accessibility measures for ALL students, not just disabled students

COVID: The Manufacturer of the Access Myth

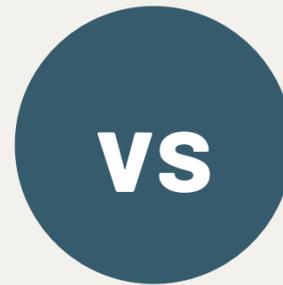
COVID powerfully reshaped how we create access in a classroom, it simultaneously complicated and blurred the distinctions between access needs and personal preferences.



ACCESS VS. ACCOMODATION

Accomodation

Case-by-case modification of policy for people with disabilities



Accessibility

Broader approaches to achieving equity for disabled and non-disabled people

"Return to Normal"

Remarginalizing Disabled people by...

- Mandating in-person attendance
- Rescinding telework and telehealth options
- Relaxing public mask and vaccine requirements



There is a casual acceptance that the pandemic will turn into something endemic, an inevitability that 'everyone' will get COVID eventually...Leaders, medical professionals and public health experts have said something along those lines with zero acknowledgement that people will still die and those deaths will be disproportionately from high-risk groups.

Alice Wong, 2021



A Note of Hope

By attending to the ways in which access, accommodation, disability, and the concept of normalcy are defined and shaped within the purview of the pandemic and in the idea of a post-pandemic future, we suggest ways that higher education can continue to adapt to this ever-changing environment.

Ideological

University administrations have the capacity to make accessibility a priority on campuses.

Practical

We need to prioritize continued funding for student support services.

Social

We need to nurture new and existing campus partnerships inside and outside of Disability Studies.



Thank you!

Questions? Feel free to email us at...

Hunter Duncan
hduncan1@purdue.edu

Danielle Clapham
danielle.clapham@uj.edu