



Student Accessibility and Accommodations Essentials: Addressing the Mental Health Needs of Students on Campus

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Agenda

- Introduction – Getting to Know You
- Centennial College and the Centre for Students with Disabilities - Who We Are
- Ontario Human Rights Code – New Guidelines on Mental Health Documentation and Accommodations
- The Impact of Changes to the Human Rights Code Guide on Accessibility
- Structuring Accommodations for Students with Mental Health Issues
- Connecting Student to Appropriate Supports on Campus
- Questions and Answer

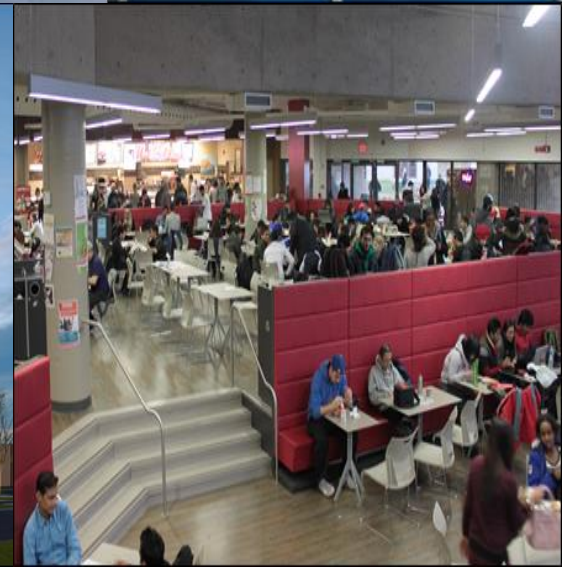


Please tell us if you are attending today as:

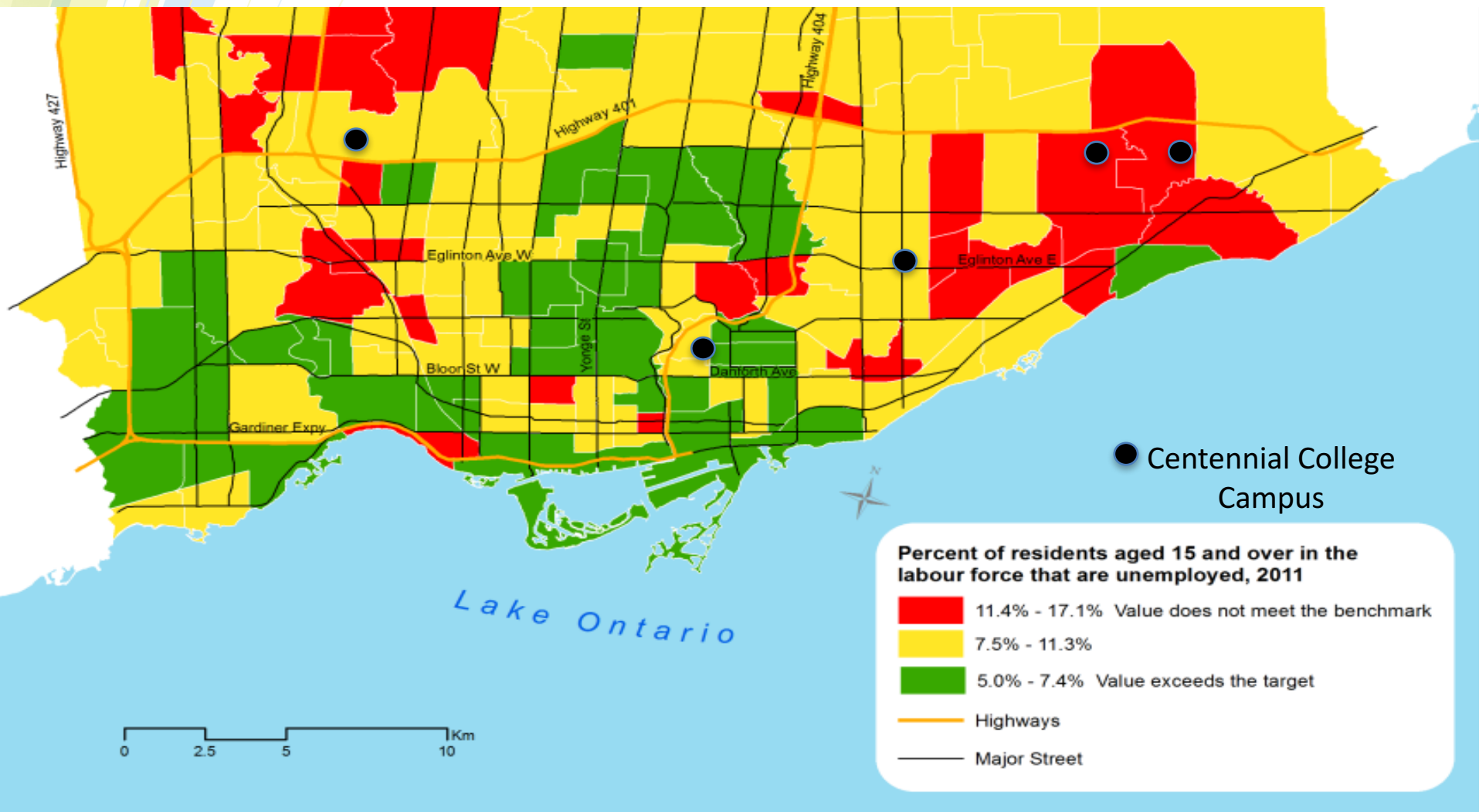
- ✓ Community agency member
- ✓ A student
- ✓ Faculty
- ✓ Staff from a Disability Services Office within a College
- ✓ Staff from a Disability Services Office within a University
- ✓ Student Services staff within a College or University
- ✓ Other



Ontario's First Public College



Centennial College - Community Context

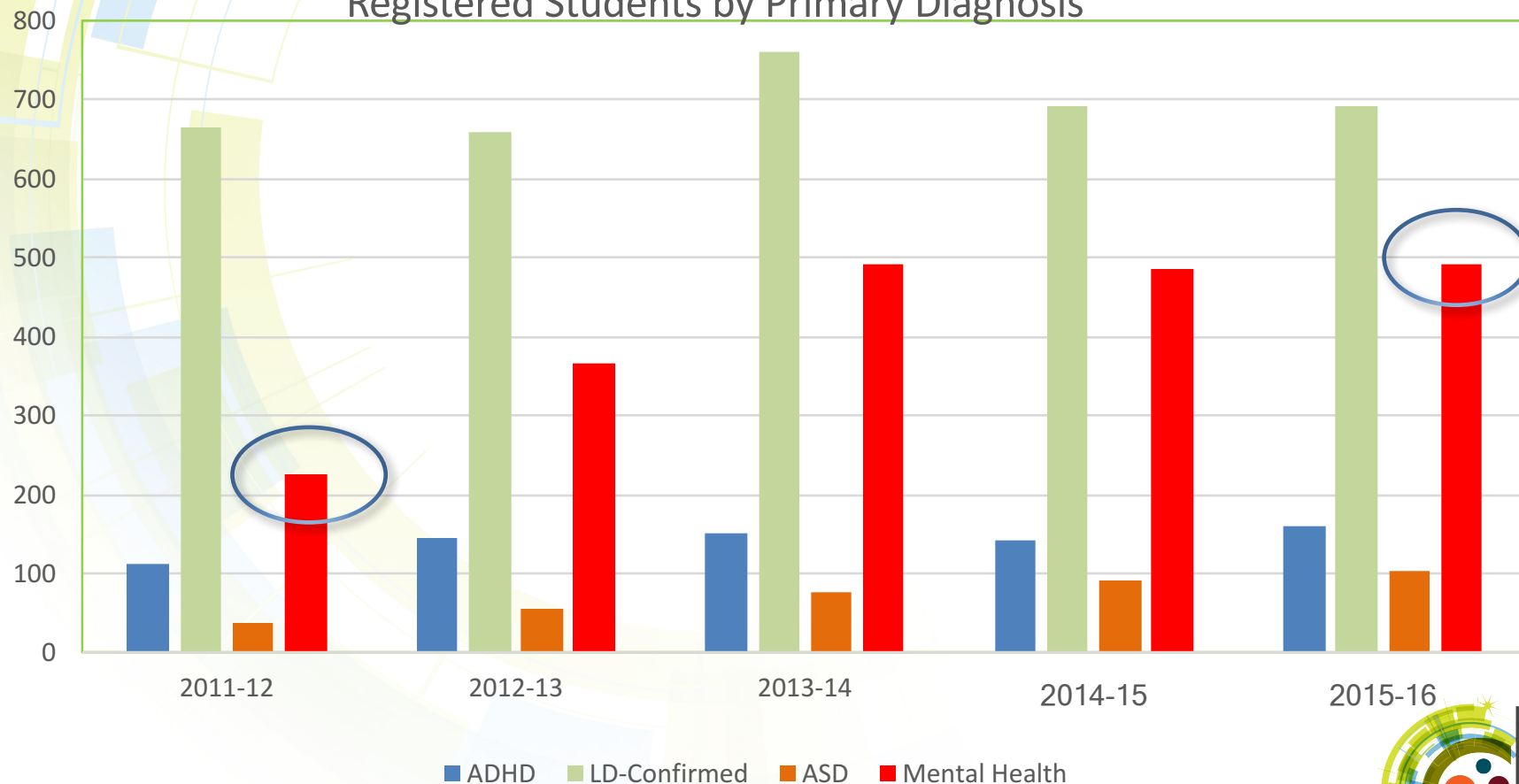


The Centre for Students with Disabilities

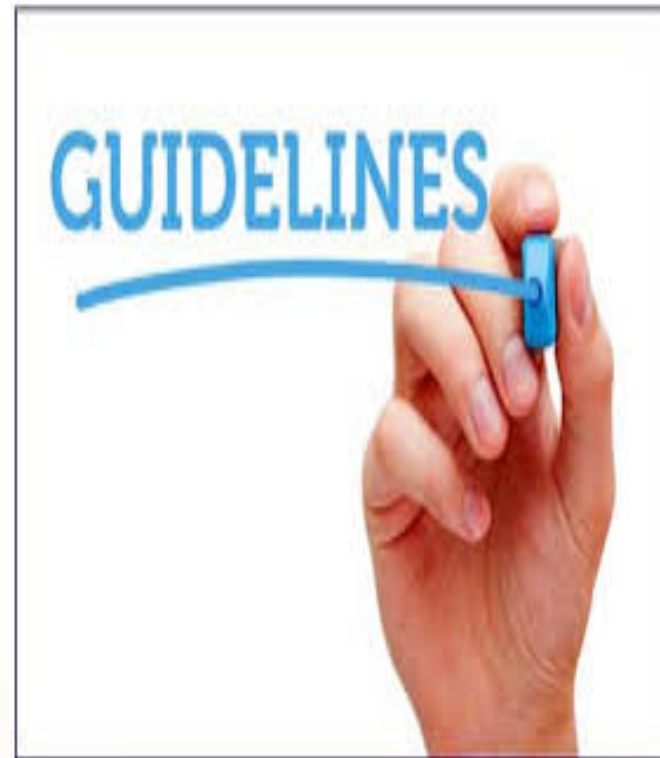


Students with Disabilities

Registered Students by Primary Diagnosis



New Guidelines on Mental Health Documentation & Accommodations



New Guidelines on Mental Health Documentation & Accommodations

In 2016, the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) determined it was discriminatory for post-secondary students to be required to disclose their mental health diagnosis to register for mental health accommodations and supports.

All provincial colleges and universities were instructed to change medical documentation guidelines and accommodation policies.

Six guidelines were developed by the OHRC for colleges and universities to follow and a number of recommendations were suggested.



Disclosing of Mental Health Disabilities

Disclosing of Mental Health Disability

Interim Accommodations

Temporary Accommodations

Requests after Deadline, Test or Course Completion

Private Medical Information

Guidelines & Procedures

Impacts student's autonomy, dignity and may deter students from requesting accommodations

The OHRC states our focus should be on determining “functional restrictions” and “functional limitations”

Offices for Students with Disabilities (OSDs) forms now request medical professionals suggest “appropriate accommodations”

Students can voluntarily share information related to diagnosis



Interim Accommodations

Disclosing of Mental Health Disability

Interim Accommodations

Temporary Accommodations

Requests after Deadline, Test or Course Completion

Private Medical Information

Guidelines & Procedures

A diagnosis may not have been confirmed yet (especially with transitional aged youth)

While a student is waiting to be assessed by a health care professional, the disability offices must use the best information available including **how the student identifies their own needs**, pending an assessment

More control given to students in sharing their information and needs



Temporary Accommodations

Disclosing of Mental Health Disability

Interim Accommodations

Temporary Accommodations

Requests after Deadline, Test or Course Completion

Private Medical Information

Guidelines & Procedures

Temporary accommodations for conditions such as concussions, diabetes, fibromyalgia, PTSD, etc.

OSDs and College faculty will work together to develop a clear process for accommodating temporary disabilities (case by case)

The OSDs should ask for updated medical information where a disability is temporary or where academic accommodations need to be revisited over time



Retroactive Accommodations

Disclosing of Mental Health Disability

Interim Accommodations

Mental Health Disability Accommodated

Requests after Deadline, Test or Course
Completion

Private Medical Information

Guidelines & Procedures

The institution has an obligation to consider retroactive accommodations if a student has failed to meet performance

These requests should be “meaningfully considered”



Private Medical Information

Disclosing of Mental Health Disability

Interim Accommodations

Mental Health Disability Accommodated

Requests after Deadline, Test or Course Completion

Private Medical Information

Guidelines & Procedures

Students are not required to reveal their personal medical information

Within Colleges and Universities, accommodation letters are either being delivered directly from the OSDs or (as with Centennial College) we provide students with the option to have the accommodation letter delivered directly by the student or by the OSD



Guidelines & Procedures

Disclosing of Mental Health Disability

Interim Accommodations

Mental Health Disability Accommodated

Requests after Deadline, Test or Course Completion

Private Medical Information

Guidelines & Procedures

Clear policy changes need to be communicated

There needs to be improved awareness and communication of available services and supports

Training for faculty and staff on mental health and faculty's role in the accommodation processes have been rolled out at most colleges and universities.

Offices for Student with Disabilities must disseminate information to students and faculty on an **ongoing basis** to ensure guidelines and policies are clearly communicated



The Impact of Changes to the OHRC Guidelines on Accessibility



Structuring Accommodations for Students with Mental Health Issues

- Connecting with CSD
- Documentation – functional limitations
- Student self-report
- Accommodation letter
- Ongoing discussion of accommodation arrangements



Letter of Accommodation

- Counselling support
- Extra time tests/quiet space
- Assistive technology
- Music during testing
- Extensions on assignments
- May occasionally miss class
- Reduced courseload
- Schedule (ie afternoon classes when possible)
- Instructor notes, handouts, PowerPoints in advance
- Recording lectures
- Alternative presentations (ie one-on-one, video)
- Breaks as necessary
- SAD lamp
- If on OSAP – bursary for students with disabilities for therapy



Are there other accommodations or supports you have found to be successful/useful?

The Impact of Changes to the OHRC Guidelines on Accessibility

Many of the suggestions in the OHRC Guidelines were already in place:

- Temporary/Interim accommodations
- Retroactive accommodations (case by case)

New Guidelines:

Students have more choice in what and how disability information is shared

- Diagnosis optional – pros/cons
- Students vs. CSD informing faculty – student requirements to self-advocate – pros/cons
- Discussions with Disability Counsellor very important – identifying these pros/cons

Retroactive accommodations - case by case

- “F” grades removed from record, “I” (Incomplete) grades
- Tuition fee credit/refund

The Impact on Faculty, CSD Staff and Students

Movement toward more accessible provision of services for all students



Accessible Learning

The process of designing programs, courses, teaching styles, and learning environments to meet the needs of people from a variety of backgrounds, abilities and learning styles.

Multiple Means Of:

Representation

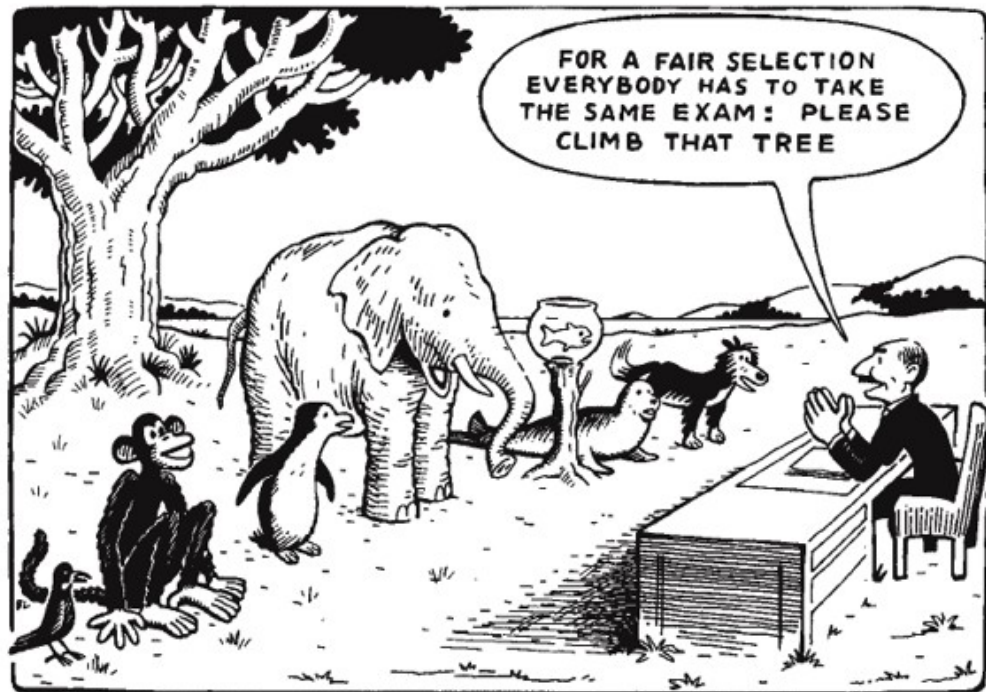
Gives learners various ways of acquiring information and knowledge (lecture, video, experience, group work, activities, hands-on etc)

Engagement

Taps into learners' interests, challenges them appropriately, and motivates them to learn

Expression

Provides learners alternatives for demonstrating what they know



Accommodation and Accessibility: Universal Design for Learning

Accommodation

- Individual issue, centred around disability
- Addressed by the student and the disability services office
- Achieved retroactively through accommodations or retrofits
- Consumable because it is reconsidered for each student
- Few options for delivery, engagement and expression of learning
- Students with accommodations must negotiate what they need

Accessible Education

- Collective issue, centred around design
- Addressed by the designer of the learning experience
- Achieved proactively by designing the learning experience to be accessible by all
- Sustainable because it's built into the learning experience
- Options for delivery, engagement and expression of learning
- All students – including those with disabilities – benefit



Connecting Student to Appropriate Supports on Campus

- Connecting with CSD/Accessibility Services
- Register early in semester – getting connected in a timely manner and staying connected
- Appropriate documentation – Medical Information Form
- Transition Programs – began as Learning Disability program but has expanded to all disability groups – 1 day to 4 days
- Visit the college or university website for requirements and more information
- Services:
 - Internal: Working Collaboratively with Faculty, Counselling, Security, Student clubs etc.
 - External: Good2Talk, CMHA, Community Organizations



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