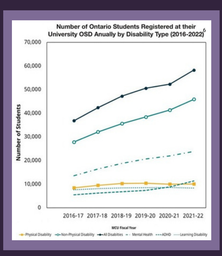
ACADEMIC ACCESSIBILITY ROADBLOCKS

WHAT ARE ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS?

- Academic accommodations are supports implemented by a university's Office for Students with Disabilities (OSDs).[3,6]
- Ensures students with disabilities can fully participate in their courses.[3,6]



Graph showing the number of students with various disabilities registered with their university's OSD from 2016 to 2022.[5]

58,245

FULL TIME UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN ONTARIO

were registeredwith their Office for Students with Disabilities (OSDs) from 2021-2022.[6]

THIS REPRESENTS

11.7%

of all full-time university students in Ontario.[6]

COMMON BARRIERS

Stigma Surrounding Academic Accommodations[8,11]

- Some students do not want to disclose their disability out of fear of being looked down on by peers and faculty.
- Fear and stigma create barriers, preventing students from accessing support.

Delays in Response Times[1,4,7,11]

- Long response times for accommodation requests delay academic support.
- This increases stress and negatively affects students.

Lack of Awareness[7,8,11]

- Many students are unaware that academic accommodations exist or do not know how to access them.
- This prevents students with disabilities from getting proper support.

BARRIERS ACROSS BORDERS

Lack of Continuous Care[4,9,10,11]

- Students without family doctors depend on walk-in clinics, which lack continuity needed for proper accommodation documentation.
- Transferring medical records or travelling home for required tests create delays in receiving accommodations.

Limited Funding for Disability Support Technologies[5,11]

- Out-of-province students receive limited OSAP funding for assistive technology, and home-province funding is restricted.
- Creates barriers to accessing needed learning supports.

Financial Barriers for International Students[11,12]

- International students must pay out of pocket for psychological assessments.
- UHIP does not cover psychologists, therefore these costs delay diagnosis and access to accommodations.

Barriers in Submitting Overseas Medical Documentation[2,11]

- International students with existing disability diagnoses need official translations or extra documentation to meet university standards for accommodations.
- Creates added costs and delays in receiving accommodations.

CALL TO ACTION

Increase Awareness

- Students are not aware of accessibility services until problems arise.
- Universities should promote these services through orientations and social media campaigns.

Standardized Level of Funding Across Provinces

- Students should receive disability funding from their home province wherever they study.
- Provinces should coordinate to standardize support.

Inform High School Guidance Counsellors

- Inform high school counsellors about university accommodation processes.
- Allows students to apply early and receive timely support.

Provide University Subsidized Diagnostic Assessments

- Universities should offer subsidized psychological assessments through on-campus clinics or approved external providers.
- Reduces delays in obtaining documentation.

References