



ACCESS NEWS

A Look at Invisible Disabilities

In this issue, we focus on invisible disabilities, encompassing a broad range of conditions not readily apparent to others. These can include chronic illnesses, mental health conditions, cognitive and sensory processing differences, and many others. Lack of understanding or recognition of invisible disabilities can lead to misconceptions, stigma, and inadequate support, both in the physical world and online spaces. In an effort to foster greater awareness and empathy, this newsletter offers tips on supporting individuals with invisible disabilities.

Supporting Individuals with Invisible Disabilities

Cultivate Knowledge: Invest time in learning about various invisible disabilities and their potential impact on daily life. Understanding the lived experiences of individuals with disabilities is crucial for providing meaningful support.

Respect Privacy and Autonomy: Recognize the importance of respecting individual privacy and autonomy. If someone chooses not to disclose their disability, refrain from probing questions or making assumptions. Conversely, if they choose to share, allow them to disclose on their own terms and at their own pace.

Embrace Patience and Understanding: Individuals with invisible disabilities may experience unpredictable symptoms or challenges. Approach them with patience

and understanding, recognizing that they may navigate experiences you cannot readily observe. For example, someone with diabetes might be managing fluctuating blood sugar levels, potentially causing dizziness, lightheadedness, fatigue, confusion, or nausea.

Prioritize Accessible Digital Content: Creating accessible digital content, including websites, documents, and multimedia, is paramount for an inclusive online experience. Here are some key ways to achieve this:

- Provide accessible presentation materials promptly, allowing individuals to review and process content before live presentations.
- Add captions to videos for improved information accessibility through multiple formats.
- Utilize readable fonts and sufficient color contrast for enhanced visual clarity.
- Implement a clear heading structure to facilitate navigation and content comprehension.
- Avoid overcrowding digital platforms and websites with excessive information.

Your Support Matters!

Recognizing and supporting individuals with invisible disabilities is essential for creating a truly inclusive digital and physical space. Your awareness, empathy, and support make a profound difference, enabling individuals to fully participate in all aspects of life, regardless of their abilities.



OUR NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the Winter Quarter edition of the Accessibility Newsletter, our first edition, presented to you by the Accessibility Committee. Each quarter, this newsletter will look at a single accessibility concept or skill, aiming to empower staff and faculty with the knowledge and tools to create an inclusive teaching and learning environment. Additionally, this newsletter will contain links to information and services to support an accessible campus.

Your Invisible Disabilities Challenge

Take a critical look at the spaces you create or frequent. Do they feel welcoming and inclusive? If not, consider potential modifications to promote inclusivity. For example:

- Could virtual meeting alternatives be offered alongside in-person options?
- Are physical spaces easily accessible and comfortable for individuals with diverse abilities?
- Can adjustments be readily made to accommodate different needs?

Remember, recognizing and supporting individuals with invisible disabilities makes the world a more welcoming and equitable place. Together, we can create a campus where everyone can thrive, regardless of their abilities.

About the Accessibility Committee

The Clover Park Community College Accessibility Committee, in support of college and state policies, will establish, review, and evaluate collegewide accessibility plans and advise the Student Learning Council in regard to promoting and providing appropriate, effective, and integrated access for students, employees and community members. To that end, the committee will:

- model and facilitate a culture of accessibility for all faculty, staff and students;
- provide training and support to improve the level of accessibility;
- serve as a clearinghouse for accessibility questions, resources, and issues for CPTC.

Accessibility Committee Membership

Co-Chairs

- Geoff Cain – Teaching & Learning Center
- Melissa Medina – Disability Resources for Students

Members

- Katie Bunney - Student
- Rachael Butler – Workforce Development
- Lisa Cutler - Learning Resource Center
- Pearl DeSure - Learning Resource Center
- Brady Hageman - eLearning
- Pamela Jeter – Information Technology
- Pam Munizza – Transition Studies- ABE
- Alix Nunke – Human Resources
- Harman Sidhu - Marketing
- Sheli Sledge -- Equity Diversity & Inclusion
- Iesha Valencia – Equity Diversity & Inclusion
- Leah Wilkins – Workforce Development
- **YOUR NAME COULD BE HERE!**

Disability Resources

- [General disability resources](#)
- [Disability resources for students](#)
- [Disability resources for faculty](#)

Events

- *Advocacy for Accessibility & Accommodations*
 - 1/25' 2/29 & 3/7
- *Join DRS & the Mosaic Center and Learn about the DRS office and advocating*

