

HIGH-INCIDENCE DISABILITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION CURRENT ISSUES AND BEST PRACTICES

MAY 10-11, 2012

RYERSON UNIVERSITY (ROGERS COMMUNICATIONS CENTRE),
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HOSTED BY

THE ASSESSMENT AND RESOURCE CENTRES OF ONTARIO (ARC)
(NOARC & RARC)

FOR

- PSYCHOLOGICAL PRACTITIONERS
- DISABILITY SERVICE PROFESSIONALS
- RESEARCHERS OF HIGH INCIDENCE DISABILITIES

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

WITH AN INCREASING NUMBER OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ENTERING HIGHER EDUCATION, MANY PROFESSIONALS ARE IN NEED OF RESEARCH-BASED GUIDANCE WITH REGARD TO THE IDENTIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT OF STUDENTS. THIS CONFERENCE WILL FOCUS ON STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES, ATTENTION DISORDERS AND RELATED HIGH-INCIDENCE PROBLEMS IN POST-SECONDARY SETTINGS, WITH A FOCUS ON CURRENT RESEARCH TRANSLATED INTO BEST PRACTICES.

MAIL-IN REGISTRATION: PLEASE FILL IN THE APPENDED REGISTRATION FORM AND MAIL THE FORM AND CHEQUE (PAYABLE TO QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY) TO RARC, c / o MARIE MCCARRON, QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY, MACKINTOSH-CORRY HALL ROOM B 100, 68 UNIVERSITY AVE, KINGSTON, ON K7L 3N6

ACCOMMODATION:

INTERNATIONAL LIVING AND LEARNING CENTRE · RYERSON: (416) 979-5296
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CONFIRMED SPEAKERS & SESSION TOPICS INCLUDE

- DR. DAWN FLANAGAN – RESEARCH BASED DIAGNOSIS OF LD IN POST-SECONDARY POPULATIONS
- DR. RICHARD SPARKS – THE CURRENT STATE OF LD DIAGNOSIS IN HIGH-FUNCTIONING POPULATIONS
- DR. JULIE SUHR – DIAGNOSIS THREAT AND ADHD
- DR. LAWRENCE LEWANDOWSKI – FACTORS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE ON HIGH-STAKES TESTS
- MS. CATHERINE PETERS – HUMAN RIGHTS AND POST SECONDARY ACCOMMODATIONS
- DR. BENJAMIN LOVETT – TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS: FROM RESEARCH TO PRACTICE
- DR. MICHAEL GORDON – RESEARCH BASED ASSESSMENT OF ADULT ADHD
- DR. PAUL GREEN – EFFECTS OF EFFORT AND MOTIVATION ON COGNITIVE TEST SCORES
- DR. ALANA HOLMES & DR. ROBERT SILVESTRI – EFFICACY OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY IN POST-SECONDARY SETTINGS
- DR. STEPHANIE TIMMER & MR. IAN MCVICAR – ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS: NEW DEVELOPMENTS

** NEW ADDITIONS **

- DR. ALLYSON HARRISON DR. ANTHONY ROSTAIN DR. KATE HARKNESS DR. JOSEPH CASEY

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: RARC – (613) 533-6311 OR NOARC – (705) 524-7397
MARIE MCCARRON: MARIE.MCCARRON@QUEENSU.CA

DR. ANTHONY ROSTAIN



Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Research-Based Practice

Anthony Rostain, M.D, Department of Psychology, Elmira College

There has been considerable media focus on the issue of prescription stimulant misuse and abuse among college and university students, which is becoming a growing public health concern. This presentation will review the history of misuse and abuse of stimulants in this population. It will describe the prevalence, signs and symptoms of stimulant misuse and abuse among these students. This talk will review studies linking nonprescription stimulant usage to student profiles, including risk taking, alcohol and other drug use, health status and academic performance. It will also discuss strategies to limit non-medical use of stimulants on college and university campuses.

DR. KATE HARKNESS



The 'epidemic' of mental illness in post-secondary education: Implications for Academic Accommodations.

Kate Harkness, Ph D, Department of Psychology, Queen's University

Current estimates suggest that 50% of post-secondary students have suffered from a psychiatric illness in the past year. Many of these disorders are associated with chronic cognitive impairments that represent a barrier to successful academic functioning and that would benefit from long-term accommodation. However, others involve time-limited and acute distress in the face of academic pressures (deadlines, exams). Paradoxically, accommodation in this latter context may serve to reinforce the distress and perpetuate the symptoms. Dr. Harkness will describe the most common psychiatric diagnoses that present in the post-secondary setting, and will discuss models for the treatment and accommodation of students who present with mental health issues so as to optimize their academic functioning.

DR. ALLYSON HARRISON



The Effects of Effort and Motivation on Cognitive Test Scores

Allyson Harrison, Ph.D Director, Regional Assessment and Resource Centre, Queen's University

Research has indicated that a large percentage of Disability Services Staff often feel uncomfortable interpreting results from psychological and neuropsychological test data when determining reasonable accommodations for a student. Often, too, they feel obliged to provide the accommodations listed in the report even when common sense might dictate otherwise. This interactive workshop will allow participants the opportunity to review actual documentation, discuss the meaning of specific tests and scores, explore research regarding appropriate accommodations, and examine what evidence is required in order to provide requested accommodations.

DR. JOSEPH CASEY



Understanding Nonverbal Learning Disorder through Clinical Cases

Joseph Casey, Ph.D, Department of Psychology, University of Windsor

Although many learning disability types are formally recognized in major classification systems such as DSM IV TR and ICD-10, Nonverbal Learning Disorder (NLD) is not despite over 40 years of literature addressing its theoretical foundation, its major features, and the methods by which to assess and diagnose it. This workshop will provide a description of NLD within the context of the World Health Organization's *International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health* (2001) with case examples to illustrate key features and to provide a framework by which to discuss assessment and diagnostic issues.

PANEL OF SPEAKERS

DR. MICHAEL GORDON
ANNE COGLAN
SHELBY KEISER
DR. KATHRYN BUGBEE



Requirements for Accommodation on High Stakes/Licensing Exams:

The panel discussion will focus on accommodations on high stakes examinations, and should include information for clinicians regarding documentation requirements for accommodation, and what helps or interferes with a candidate receiving accommodation on such tests ..

DR. DAWN FLANAGAN



Learning Disabilities in Postsecondary Students: An Empirically Supported Diagnostic Model

Dawn P. Flanagan, Ph.D., Department of Psychology, St. John's University

Since its inception, the construct of specific learning disability has evaded clear, objective diagnostic criteria. In this talk, Dr. Flanagan presents her operational definition of LD that combines clinical utility and research support. She discusses empirical studies of clusters of cognitive abilities and academic skills, and how to integrate data from cognitive and academic testing to make judgments about LD diagnosis.

DR. RICHARD SPARKS



High-Functioning Students with Learning Disabilities: Who Are They?

Richard L. Sparks, Ed.D., Department of Education, College of Mount St. Joseph

Learning disability diagnoses were, at one time, restricted to children who lacked basic academic skills. Today, the diagnostic category has been broadened considerably. Dr. Sparks reports the results from his research with large samples of college students and other high-functioning individuals who have learning disabilities, to see whether these individuals, who often present to disability services offices, actually meet objective criteria for having a specific learning disability. He also discusses implications for diagnosticians as well as disability service providers faced with learning disability labels in his population.

DR. JULIE SUHR



So You Think You Have ADHD? Differential Diagnosis and a Social Cognitive Perspective

Julie A. Suhr, Ph.D., Department of Psychology, Ohio University

Many young adults seek an ADHD assessment of their own volition, after coming to believe that they have ADHD and could benefit from services for students with the disorder. Dr. Suhr discusses her research into the dynamics of this process, considering how diagnosticians should respond when faced with clients who believe that they have a psychiatric disorder, and when these individuals actually merit a diagnosis.

DR. LAWRENCE LEWANDOWSKI



Postsecondary Students with Disabilities and High-Stakes Tests: What Determines Performance?

Lawrence J. Lewandowski, Ph.D., Department of Psychology, Syracuse University

Dr. Lewandowski discusses his research on the factors that affect performance on the high-stakes tests used increasingly for admissions, certification/licensure, and outcomes/accountability assessment. As he discusses, these tests usually involve reading comprehension skills deployed under a strict time limit. Some of the factors affecting performance on these tests (e.g., general mental ability) are difficult to change, but others (e.g., test anxiety, reading fluency) are amenable to interventions. Moreover, certain factors that form the basis for testing accommodation requests (e.g., processing speed) actually have little to do with performance on these tests.

MS. CATHERINE PETERS



Human Rights and Accommodation at the Post Secondary Level

Catherine Peters, LL.B., Partner, Hicks Morely Law Firm

Ms. Peters serves as a lawyer for various colleges and universities in Ontario and works closely with the Human Rights Code. Ms. Peters will be present on the duty to accommodate students with disabilities in the postsecondary realm in particular, and when accommodation may or may not be required by human rights legislation. She will also provide guidance with respect to the content and breadth of recommendations made within psychological assessment reports.

DR. BENJAMIN LOVETT



Testing Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: Research-Based Practice

Benjamin J. Lovett, Ph.D., Department of Psychology, Elmira College

Increasingly, students with high-incidence disabilities request and receive accommodations on classroom tests as well as high-stakes standardized exams. In this talk, Dr. Lovett reviews his research on the most common accommodations (for instance, extended testing time; reading the test aloud; taking the test in a separate room, etc.) and discusses the effects of these accommodations on interpreting students' scores. In addition, he outlines the relationship between disability diagnoses and qualification for accommodations, recommending clear

guidelines for accommodation policies.

DR. MICHAEL GORDON



ADHD Diagnoses in Postsecondary Students: Science and Common Sense

Michael Gordon, Ph.D., Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, SUNY Upstate Medical University

Assessing students in higher education for ADHD is a difficult business, since our conception of ADHD is generally based on young children, where most of the research is. Dr. Gordon discusses how ADHD is to be diagnosed in adults, using the DSM criteria as a base, and finding ways to operationalize the criteria that are supported by empirical research. He emphasizes how formal laboratory tests and observations are only an adjunct to data from the real world, and he discusses how to locate the most relevant real world evidence. He also discusses specific implications for ADHD related impairment in academic settings.

DR. PAUL GREEN



The Effects of Effort and Motivation on Cognitive Test Scores

Paul Green, Ph.D. Neurobehavioural Associates, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Although it is intuitively obvious that people exerting full effort on a test will score higher than people making less effort, it is not obvious to what degree poor effort will affect psychometric or self-report test scores. Dr. Green will review data from recent research demonstrating: that level of effort has a greater effect on test scores than severe brain injury; that failure on published effort tests almost never occurs when there is no external incentive to obtain a diagnosis and that in university or college there are sometimes external incentives to do poorly on cognitive tests; that the effects of effort on test scores tend to apply to all psychological tests; that there are distinct performance patterns found in persons with known neurological impairments (e.g. ADHD or LD) and how these differ from those investing low

effort; and that failure on effort tests is often linked with over-reporting of specific symptoms on self-report inventories. Dr. Green will conclude by discussing empirically supported strategies for identifying low effort during evaluations to ensure accurate diagnosis of persons with learning or attention disorders.

DR. ALANA HOLMES & DR. ROBERT SILVESTRI



The Efficacy of Assistive Technology in Postsecondary Settings: Does One Size Fit All?

Alana Holmes, Ph.D, and Robert Silvestri, Ph.D. Northern Ontario Assessment and Resource Centre, Cambrian College, Sudbury, ON.

An increasing number of students with Learning Disabilities (LD) are enrolling in postsecondary education (PSE) and being provided Assistive technology (AT) to circumvent academic deficits. Drs. Holmes and Silvestri will review research conducted at the PSE level pertaining to: AT service delivery practices, most frequently utilized ATs, and efficacy of AT to circumvent academic deficits. The use of AT by PSE students with

LD appears to have moved ahead of research proving or even testing the effectiveness of ATs in supporting the learning needs of this population. Suggestions will be provided for formulating recommendations within psycho-educational reports.

DR. STEPHANIE TIMMER & MR. IAN MCVICAR



Understanding How Students Use Assistive Technology

Dr. Stephanie Timmer & Mr. Ian McVicar, Premier Technologies

Students with learning challenges have had access to assistive for more than a decade. The technology used by these students can have a tremendous impact on student success. To continue maximizing this impact, it is necessary to examine what we have learned and what students have learned.

This presentation will address the following topics:

- Improving independence, including topics like being efficient and effective learners, not just readers
- The pitfalls of Text To Speech
- Teaching students to learn with assistive technology not just me it
- Integrating assistive technology into the learning process

This research-based presentation will examine the research behind effective use and design of assistive technology in the classroom to prepare the student for life. Specifically, the presentation will focus on the research that led to the development of tools for life. Tools that improve graduation rates in post-secondary as well increase long term employment of students with disabilities.

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(FEES INCLUDE BOTH CONFERENCE DAYS, LUNCH AND SNACKS)

PLEASE CIRCLE THE CATEGORY AND FEE THAT APPLIES TO YOU.

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