

# Making Our Campus Welcoming and Accessible to Faculty with Disabilities

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# AccessADVANCE objectives

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- **For Institutions & Organizations**

Implement systemic changes within STEM departments & BP activities so that women with disabilities in academic positions are welcome & fully included & can achieve success.

- **For the Entire Community**

Developing resources regarding institutional practices to increase the successful participation of women with disabilities in academic STEM careers.

- [uw.edu/doit/programs/advance](http://uw.edu/doit/programs/advance)

# Today's topics

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- Experiences of women with disabilities in STEM
- An introduction to disability and the social model of disability
- Access approaches: Accommodations and universal design
- Practical strategies for disability inclusion
- Questions & Answers

# Discussion

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What access issues have you seen people with disabilities experience in STEM education and careers?

# Examples of access issues for faculty with disabilities

- Disability-related issues that impact productivity
- Inaccessible online tools related to HR & benefits, used for meetings & collaboration
- Uncaptioned videos
- Inaccessible grant portals, journal articles & review processes
- Concerns in requesting accommodations
- Disability-related issues related to scheduling courses
- Lack of mentors with disabilities

# In an inclusive environment everyone

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- who meets requirements, **with or without accommodations**, is encouraged to participate
- feels welcome
- is fully engaged in accessible & inclusive environments & activities



# What is the legal basis for access?

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- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 & its 2008 Amendments
- State & local laws



# Consider **ability** on a continuum



understand English, social norms

see

hear

walk

read print

write with pen or pencil

communicate verbally

tune out distraction

learn

manage physical/mental health



# One-minute history of the evolution of responses to human differences

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- Eliminate, exclude, segregate
- Cure, rehabilitate, accommodate
- Social justice:  
Inclusion & universal design





## Notes



- Most disabilities are not obvious to others
- Most people with disabilities do not report them
- Campus disability services primarily offer accommodations to individuals *after* an inaccessibility is discovered

# Accommodation-focused approach to access

Adjust an existing product or environment for a specific person:

- creating accessible documents
- captioning videos
- sign language interpreters



# AccessADVANCE practices embrace

- the social model of disability,
- social justice education,
- disability as a diversity issue,
- intersectionality, &
- universal design (UD)

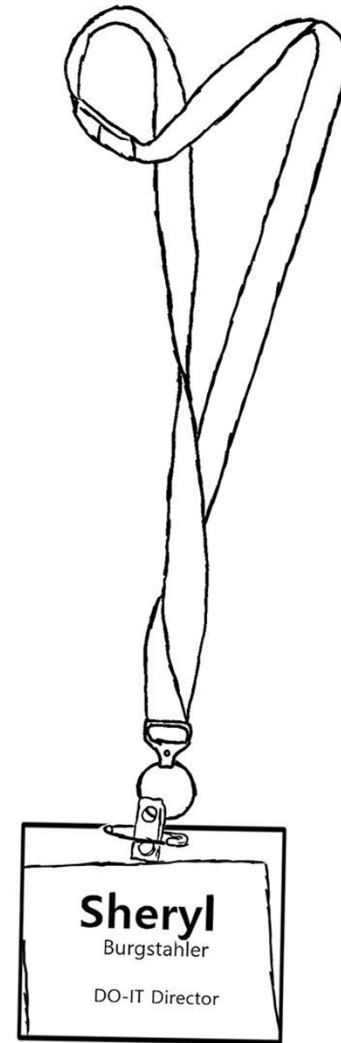
# Universal design (UD) =

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“the design of products & environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.”

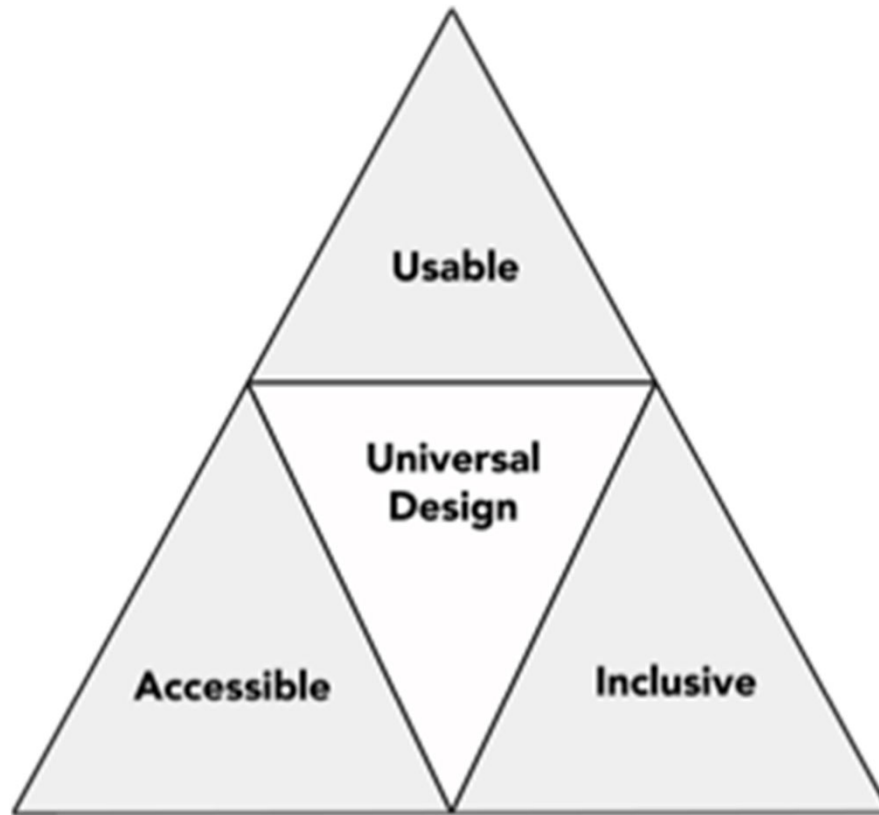
The Center for Universal Design  
[www.design.ncsu.edu/cud](http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud)

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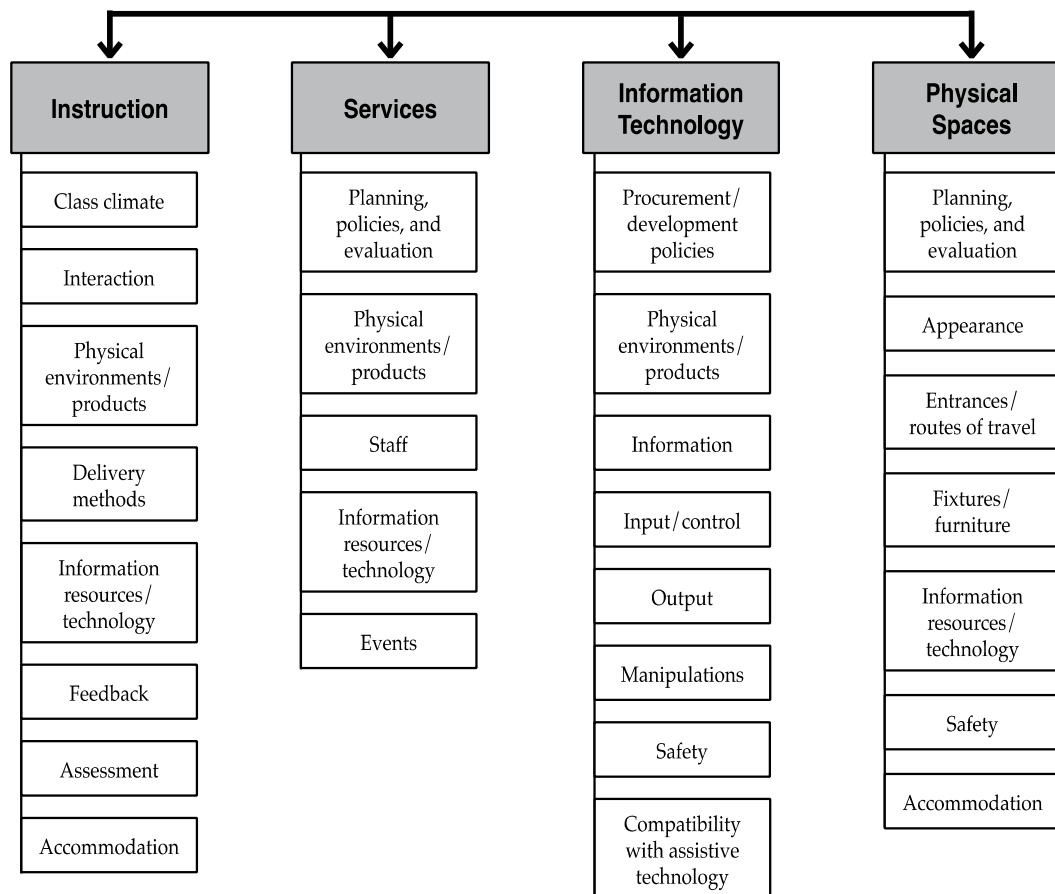
# 3 characteristics of UD practices

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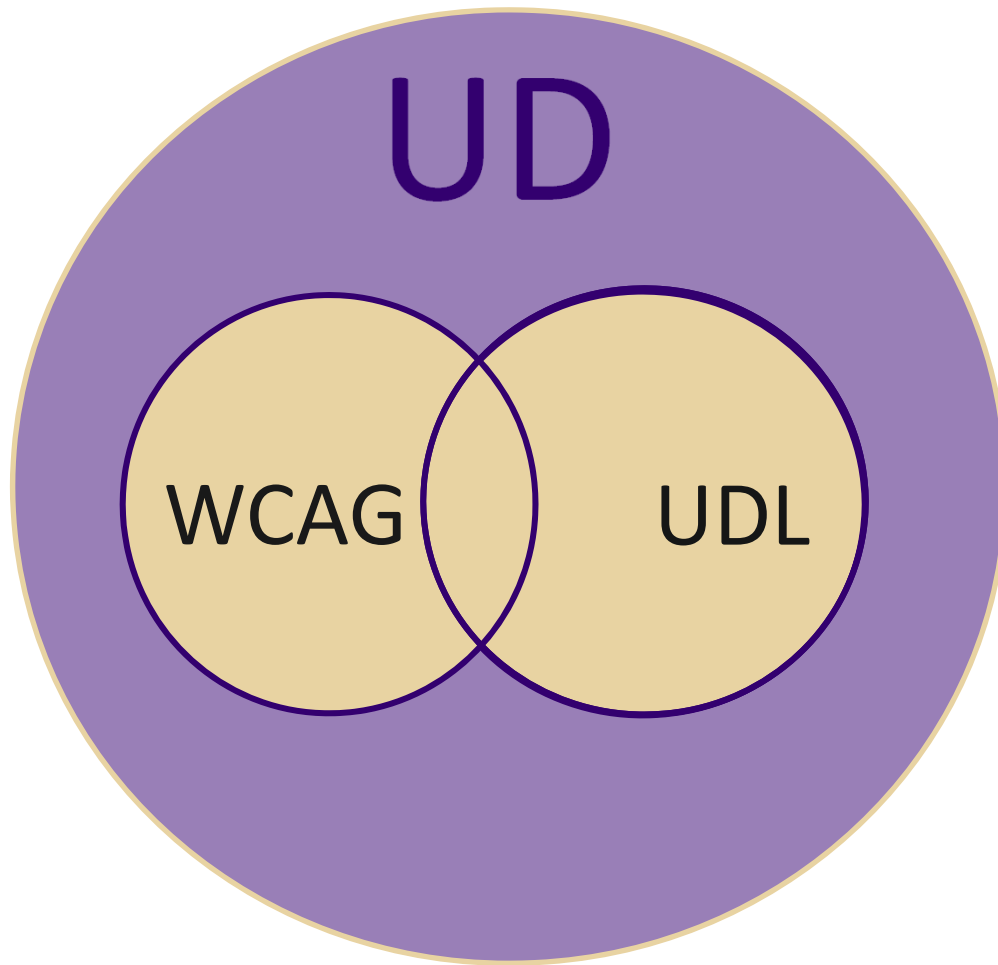
# Scope: Applications of UD

## Applications of Universal Design in Education



# 3 sets of principles underpin UDHE guidance for all aspects of education

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- 7 Universal Design
  - 3 Universal Design for Learning
  - 4 Web Content Accessibility Guidelines



## In a nutshell,

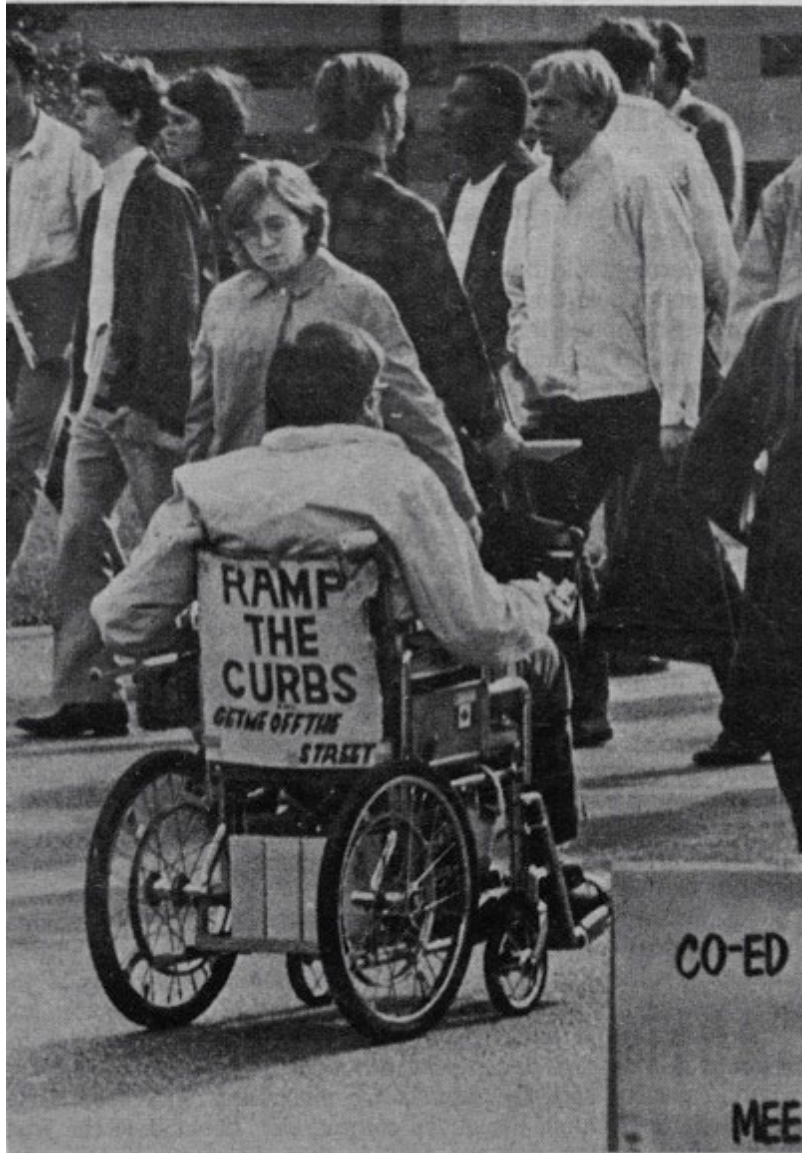
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1. Provide multiple ways for participants to learn, demonstrate what they have learned, & engage.
2. Ensure all technologies, facilities, services, resources, & strategies are accessible to individuals with a wide variety of disabilities.

# We need a paradigm shift

- from reactive to proactive design of products & environments
- from design for the “average” to design for everyone
  
- Once upon a time we already did it...

# *Ramp The Curbs*



**Forging** a stream of humanity, this silent protester carries his campaign on his back. His goal: to end high-rise sidewalks. (photo by grant haller)

## A paradigm shift in sidewalk design

-The Daily, UW, 1970

How could we apply  
this approach to  
aspects of the  
workplace that  
involve technology?

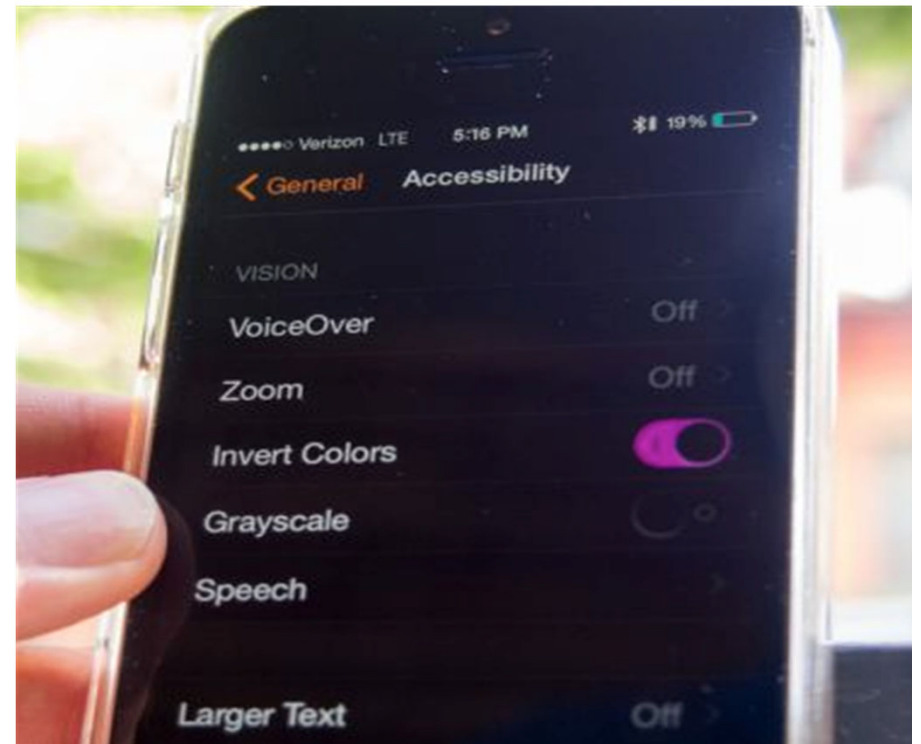
UD provides **inclusive** access



# UD of technology

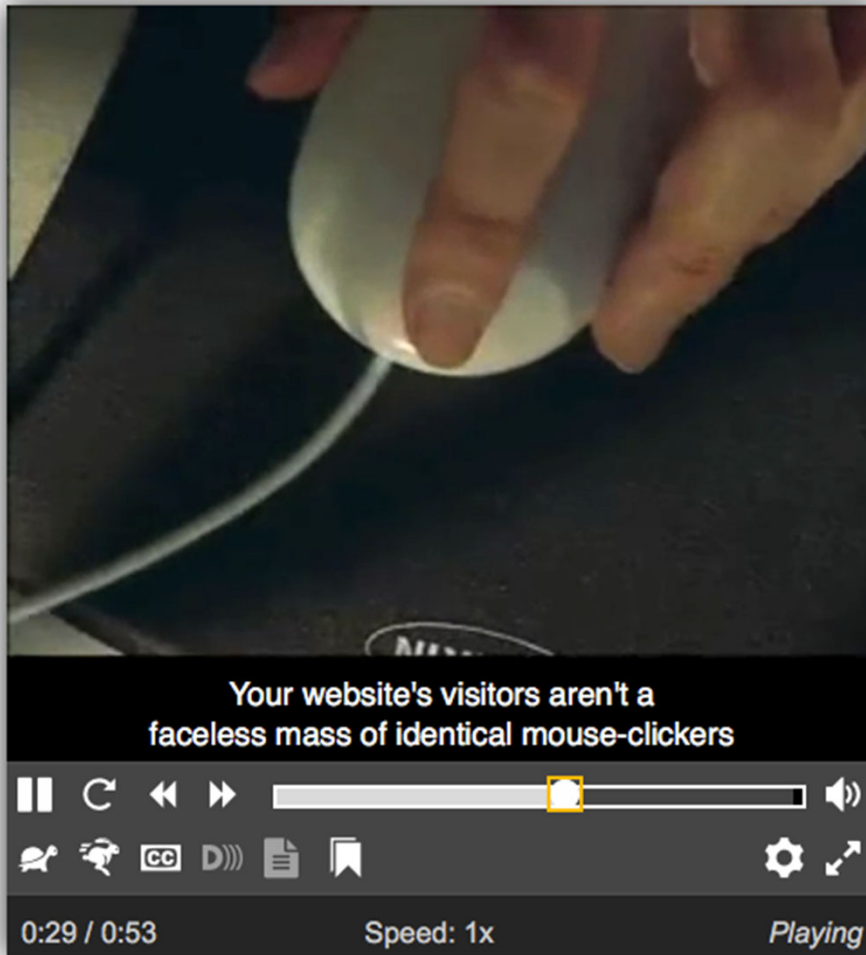
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- builds in accessibility features



- ensures compatibility with assistive technology

# Beneficiaries of captions on videos



People who:

- are unable to hear the audio
- are English learners
- are in a noisy or noiseless location
- have slow Internet connections
- want to know the spelling of words
- need to find content quickly

# As an attitude, a framework, a goal, & a process, UD:

- Values diversity, equity, & inclusion
- Promotes best practices & does not lower standards
- Is proactive & can be implemented incrementally
- Benefits everyone
- Minimizes the need for accommodations

# Discussion

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What practices do you already engage in that encourage the participation of people with disabilities?



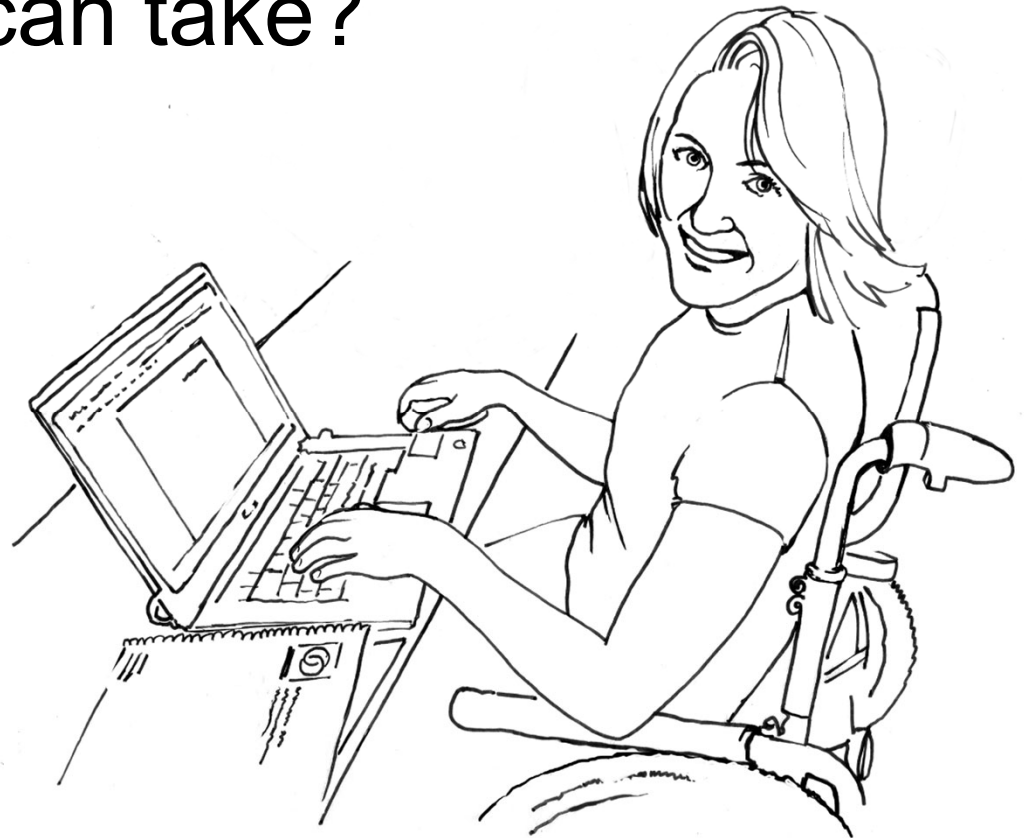
# Questions?

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# When it comes to accessibility....

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What are some practical steps you can take?



# Think about accessible meetings and events



# Preparation

- Develop and share accessibility guidelines with presenters
- Make it clear how to request accommodations
  - May differ online and in-person
- Know how to respond to requests
  - Accessible presentations
  - Sign language, captioning
  - Automatic captioning tools



# Event spaces in person

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- Wheelchair accessible space
- Adequately well lit
- Microphones for presenters and for questions
  - Use the microphones without exception!
- Accommodate food restrictions
  - Well labeled buffets



# Event space online

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- Not all meeting software is accessible
- Captioning
- Become familiar with accessibility features of your software
- Share relevant accessibility information with participants



# Presentation materials

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- Use a high contrast color scheme
- Large fonts
- Keep text brief and graphics simple.
- Use more than color coding to communicate information
- Use captioned videos



# Presentation materials (cont'd)

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- Prepare & share accessible versions of your agenda & any presentation materials
- Provide materials to interpreters or captioners ahead of time

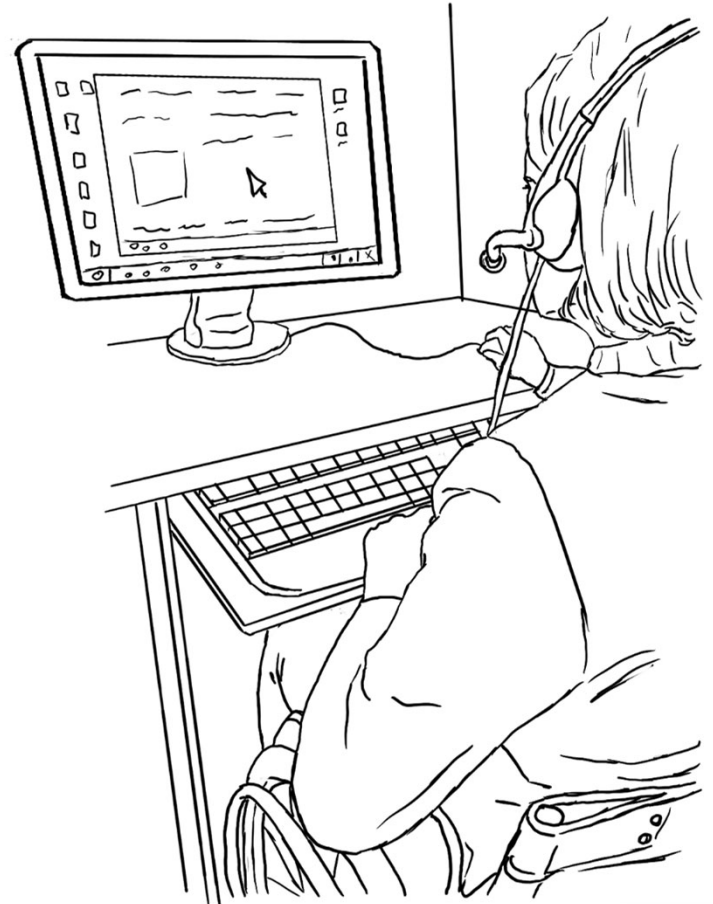




# Delivery

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- Incorporate a variety of instructional methods
  - Polls, breakout discussions, chat
- Speak all content on slides
- Verbally describe images and graphics
- Pause after changing the slide
- Use understandable terms



# Follow up

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- Follow up with URLs, resources, & action items
- Gather feedback about accessibility
- Make adjustments to future meetings



# Evaluation

1. Do you identify as having a disability or other chronic condition?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Prefer not to disclose
2. How would you describe your disability or chronic condition?
  - a. Attention deficit
  - b. Autism
  - c. Blind or low vision
  - d. Deaf or hard of hearing
  - e. Health-related disability
  - f. Learning disability
  - g. Mental health condition
  - h. Mobility-related disability
  - i. Speech-related disability
  - j. Other (please specify)

Blaser, B., & Ladner, R. E. (2020). Why is data on disability so hard to collect and understand? RESPECT 2020.

# Discussion

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What steps can you take to make your department more accessible, welcoming, and inclusive of people with disabilities?

# Resources

Visit [uw.edu/doit](http://uw.edu/doit) for a variety of practical resources related to:

- UD of instruction, presentations, services, ...
- Accessible technology
- Accessibility in STEM education

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