



Re-conceptualizing Disability in Higher Education Using a Social Model Lens for Equity and Success

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PRESENTER INFORMATION

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URSINUS COLLEGE LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT STATEMENT

Ursinus College respectfully acknowledges that our campus rests on Lenapehoking, the ancestral and spiritual homelands of the following five nations: Delaware Tribe of Indians, Delaware Nation, Eelūnaapèewii Lahkèewiit (Delaware Nation at Moraviantown), Stockbridge-Munsee Community, and Munsee-Delaware Nation (Ontario).

Our community carries names derived from the Lenape language - names holding spiritual and cultural meaning while also bearing the remembrance of the systematic removal of the Lenape people over 250 years ago by European colonial powers, whose legacy still reinforces and benefits from the Lenape's disenfranchisement.

Ursinus College commits to collaboration, representation, and inclusion as we work together with the Lenape people to bring about healing and reconciliation between and among all our communities



Nothing has ever been
achieved by the person who
says, "It can't be done."
- Eleanor Roosevelt

THE LEADERSHIP THAT MATTERS TO US

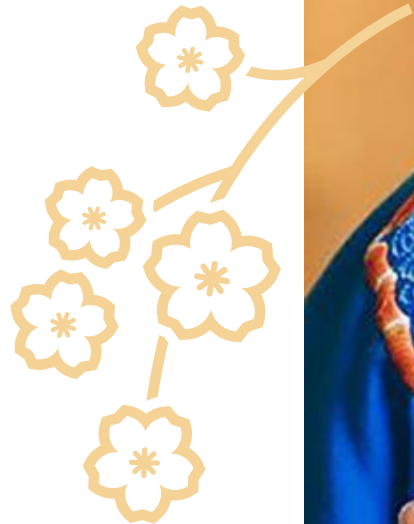


Heather Lobban-Viravong, PhD.
Transformative, Service-Oriented
Leads with: Integrity, Transparency,
Honesty, & Love



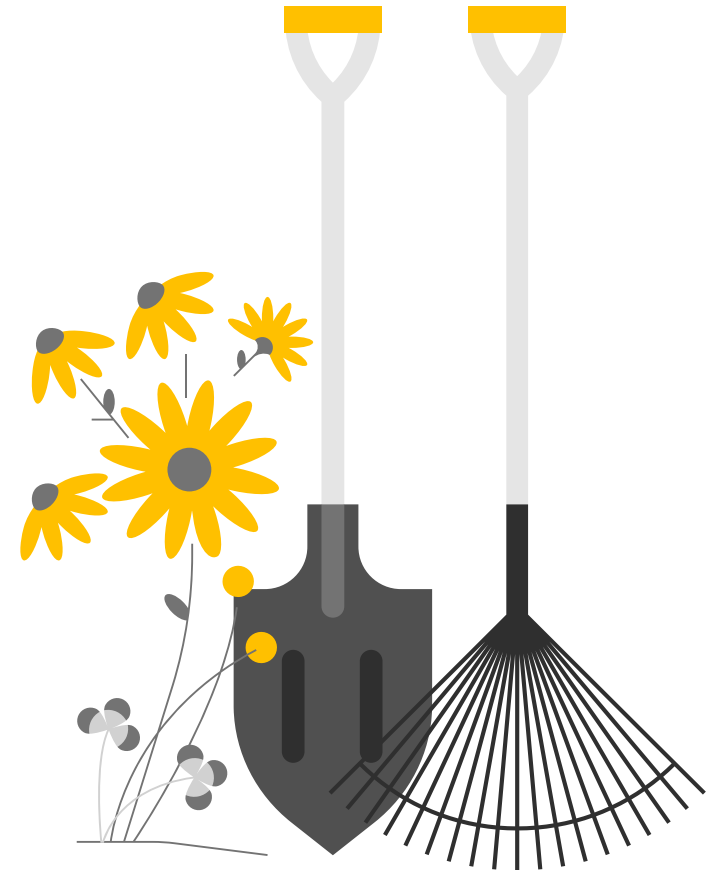
Malala Yousafzai
Embodiment of youth activism:
courageous, loving, and unwavering

Because she
made a fuss, Judy
Heumann made
everyone's life
better



LET'S DIG IN - LEARNING GOALS

- Understand the foundation of Ursinus' **leadership** model and the connection to social model of disability
- **Define** models of disability in higher education
- Identify key features of **implementation** of social model of disability
- **Review** barriers to success and areas of success for implementation of social model



What are the concerns facing higher education when it comes to the success and persistence of students?





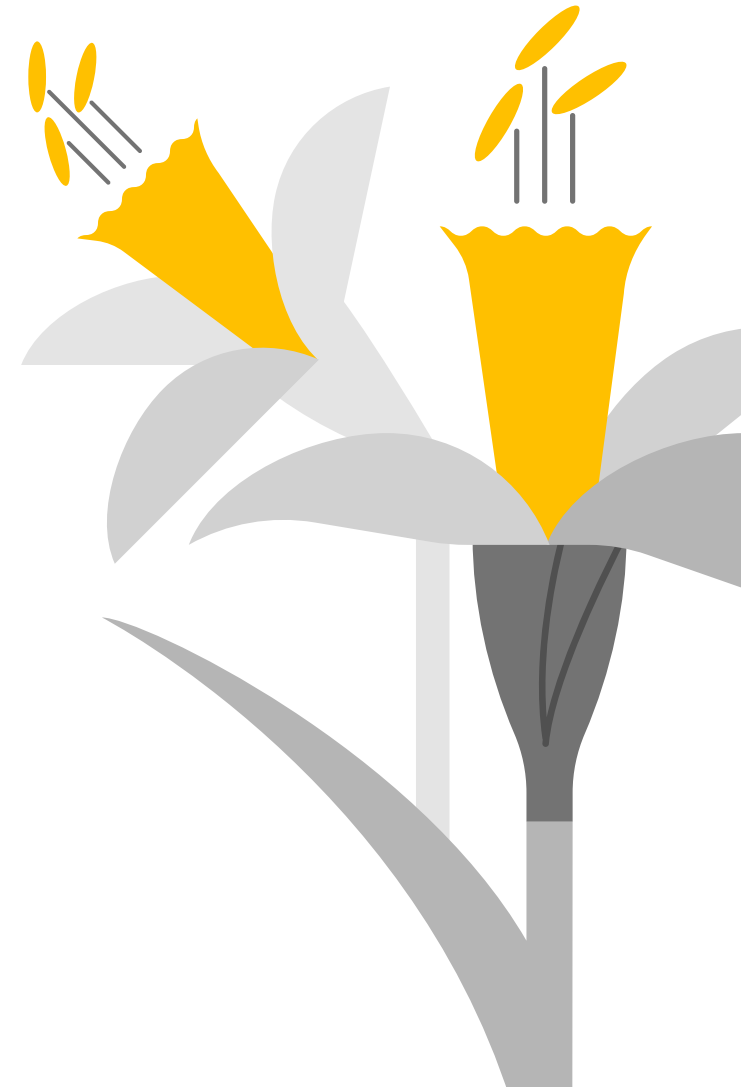
HISTORY OF DISABILITY

what we need to know

LAWS THAT GOVERN DISABILITY PRACTICES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- Section 504
- Title II of ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act 1990)
- Updated ADAAA (Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008)

CREATED TO PROTECT CIVIL RIGHTS



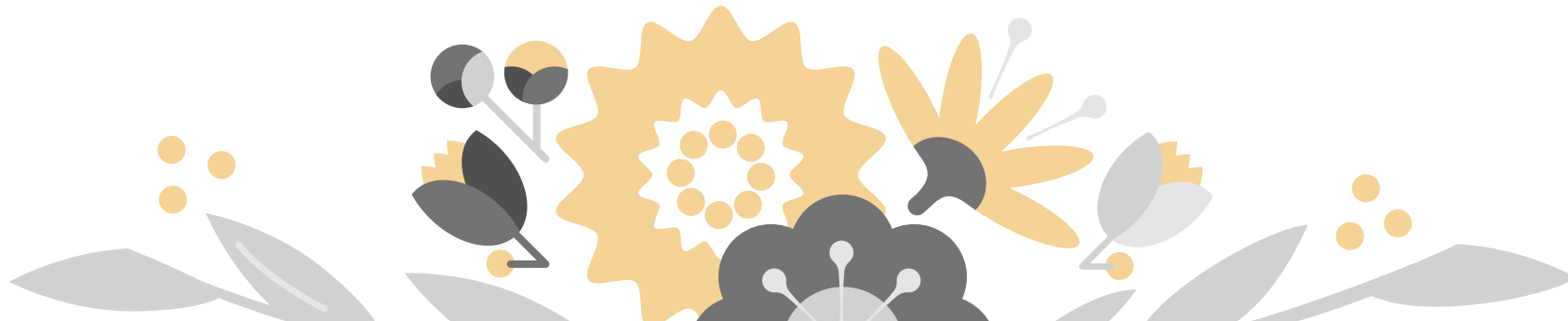
"..To be protected by the ADA, one must have a disability or have a relationship or association with an individual with a disability. An individual with a disability is defined by the ADA as a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, a person who has a history or record of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment. The ADA does not specifically name all of the impairments that are covered..." (ada.gov)

MODELS OF DISABILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Social

Medical

Functional



What do you
know about the
Medical Model
of Disability?



The Medical Model of Disability




This is a diagram of the traditional Medical Model of Disability, which the Social Model was developed to challenge.

What are the consequences of the Medical Model?

Students with disabilities may feel...

- Socially excluded
- Undervalued



Let's quickly recap about the state of higher education and what our students, staff, faculty are faced with

What do you
know about the
Social Model of
Disability?



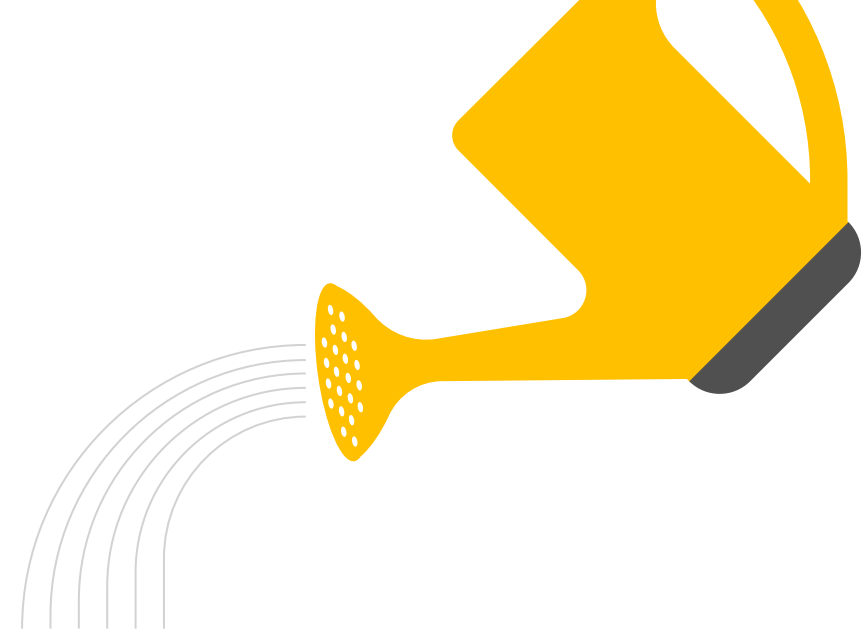
The Social Model of Disability



The Social Model of Disability states that the oppression and exclusion people with impairments face is caused by the way society is run and organised.

Exclusion: “Fixing the Person”

- Specialist treatments
- Inaccessible spaces
- Different curriculum
- 1:1 supports
- Ableism



Inclusion: “Dismantling the Barriers”

- Integrating community wide supports
 - Accessible spaces
- Standard but flexible curriculum
- Distributing resources
 - Assuming capacity

Can we implement universal design and break barriers for students *without* the social model?

Social Model of understanding disability



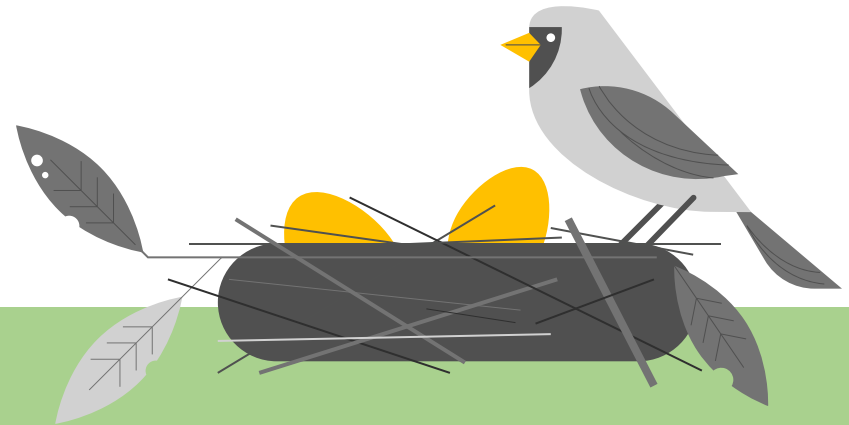
Focus on environment



KEY FEATURES OF SOCIAL MODEL WITHIN DISABILITY SERVICES

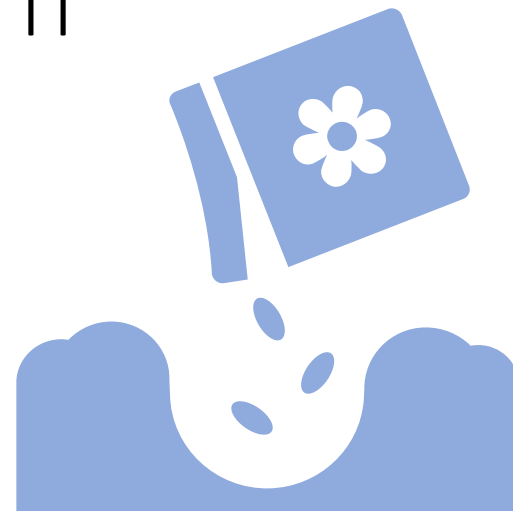
Intentional removal of barriers

- Attitudinal
- Environmental
- Institutional
- Communication



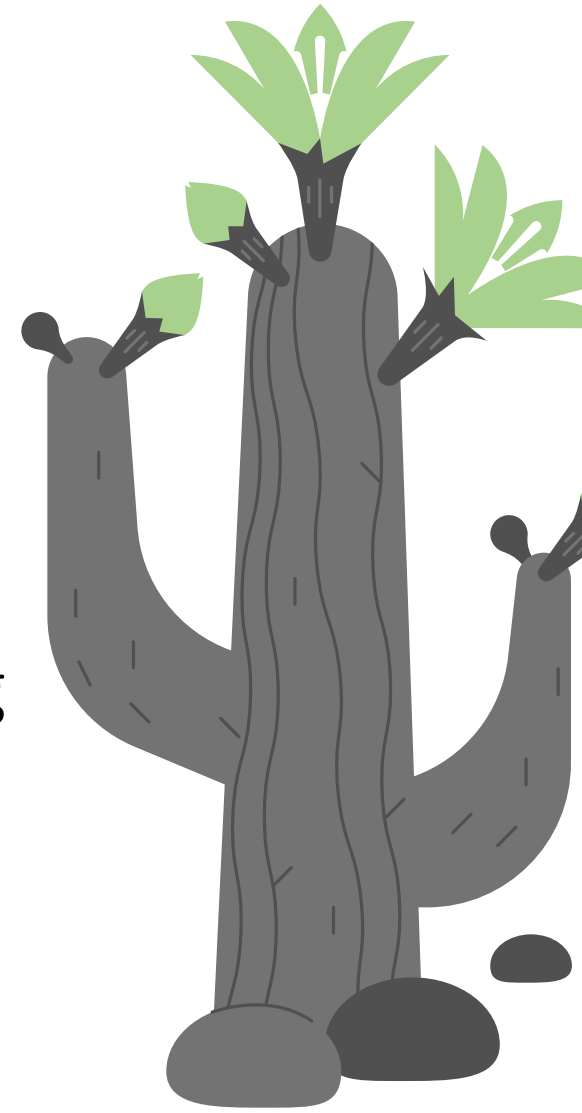
Dismantling Attitudinal Barriers

- Defining and discussing ableism
- Including disability focus during MLK Reflection Weeks
 - View disability as diversity/culture
- Discussing universal design in the classroom with faculty
 - Highlight faculty 'champions' of inclusive and equitable design
- Collaborating with key stakeholders: Sustainability & IT
 - Accessibility is part of everyone's work



Dismantling Environmental Barriers

- Connection & collaboration with Facilities is KEY
- Decreased use of typical doorknobs
- Increased awareness of lighting
- Increased signage
- Collaborative and accessible classroom design (facilities, registrar, dean's office)
 - Example: Worked closely with dean's office during time of COVID; had outside tents; included options, fans, etc.



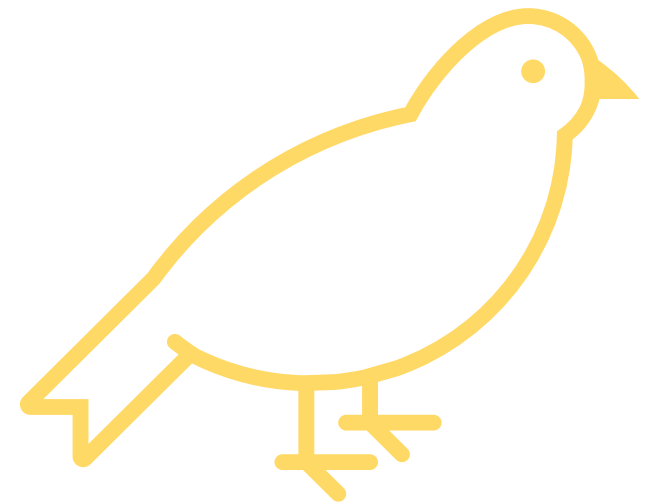
Dismantling Institutional Barriers

- Moved disability services under division of inclusion and community engagement
- Re-conceptualized documentation guidelines
 - AHEAD provides a model for a foundation



Dismantling Communication Barriers

- Microphones at all campus events; extra tech or event person to pass microphone
- Captioning
- Various ways to connect to build communication (virtual, in-person)
- Electronic versions of materials
- Training on writing succinctly (e.g., emails-limiting technical language and long sentences)





BARRIERS TO OUR SUCCESS

Our world lives
in the medical
model

We “need”
proof (but the
burden of proof
is too high for
some)

Deviance
model of
disability

Limited
resources
equals
increased
documentation

AREAS OF SUCCESS

Success Area #1

Being under the Division of Inclusion and Community Engagement has helped to position us to engage in intentional work

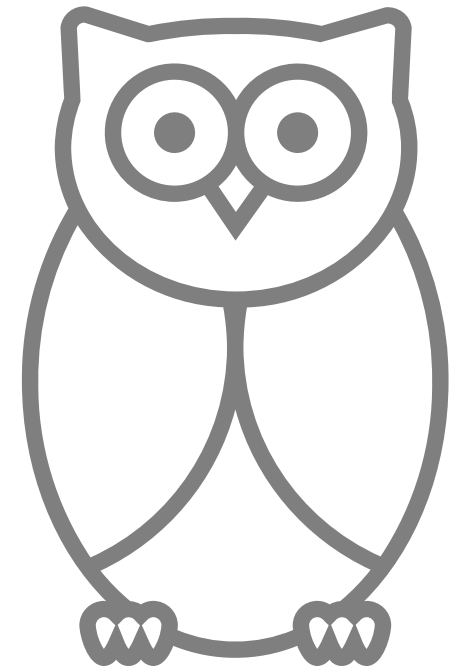
- Have support of vice president who also understands importance of social model of disability



Success Area #2

Faculty at Ursinus are experiencing (and embracing) the benefits of universal design

- Increased academic achievement for ALL students when moving to untimed exams (math professor)
- Increased flexibility when using collaborative notetaking and accessible access to information (e.g., recording and publishing class lecture)



Success Area # 3

Intentional collaboration is paying off

- Inclusive Design Navigators (Co-Chairs includes Director of Disability & Access, Associate Director of Research, Teaching, Learning Services, and Director of Institute for Inclusion and Equity)
- BASE events programming with Sustainability Director

Check us out during Workshop #3!





What are your
key take-
aways?

Resources/References

- https://www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/FactSheets_TheSocialModel.pdf
- <https://www.thesocialcreatures.org/thecreaturetimes/the-social-model-of-disability>
- <https://www.ahead.org/about-ahead/about-overview/affiliates/connecticut/documentation>
- [Mole, 2012 Social Model and Universal Design Disability-Models-Article.pdf](#)
- [Applying the Social Model of Disability_ A Phenomenology of Initi.pdf](#)
- <https://www.afdo.org.au/social-model-of-disability/>

