Assistive Technology to Support Learners and Create More Inclusive Campuses

AHEAD in Texas - 2024

texthelp®

Hello There!

Rachel Kruzel, *ATP*

Higher Education Specialist

Texthelp

Email: r.kruzel@texthelp.com

Phone: 651-245-3128

texthelp®

Today's Agenda

Introduction & Agenda

Our Campuses Today

Questions & Discussion

Our College Students Today

AT Tools to Support Your Students & Your Campus

Our College Students Today

Reality of our Campus Populations

- Who are our current students today?

  - Increase in variability

  - Graduation rates, learning loss[1], literacy levels

  - Tech focused world they grew up in + digital literacy levels

- What barriers are student still facing despite the work being done on campus?

Let's Dig Deeper

37%

of higher education students with a disability reported it to their institution.

37%

70%

of higher education students with a mental health condition do not register for accommodations.

70%

Mental Health America. (2020.). *2020 disability and Campus Mental Health Report*. 2020 Disability And Campus Mental Health Report. Retrieved from: https://mhanational.org/get-involved/2020-disability-and-campus-mental-health-report

National Center for Education Statistics. (2022, April 26). *A Majority of College Students with Disabilities Do Not Inform School, New NCES Data Show*. Retrieved from: https://nces.ed.gov/whatsnew/press_releases/4_26_2022.asp

Disability and Neurodiversity

Students with disabilities, those who identify as neurodiverse and those who have a mental health condition make up a large part of college and university populations

19.4%

of college students reports having a disability.[1]

11–30%

Number of college students who identify as neurodiverse.[2]

>60%

of college students meet the criteria for least one mental health condition.[3]

![texthelp]

"A large, diverse sample of undergraduates with and without disabilities **rated their academic functioning across multiple domains**... Overall, 95.5% of students with disabilities an 90.0% of students without disabilities reported at least one substantial limitation in academic functioning."

Weis, R., Waters, E.A. Evidence-Based Accommodations for Postsecondary Students with Disabilities: Beware the Base Rate Fallacy. *Psychol. Inj. and Law* 16, 213–226 (2023). https://doi.org/10.1007/s12207-023-09471-7

Academic Preparedness: Reading

	Reading too slowly	Understanding what I read	Need to re-read to get the main point
Students without disabilities	**11.1%**	**16.1%**	**33.1%**
Students with disabilities	**17.7%**	**25.9%**	**43.6%**

Academic Preparedness: Notetaking

	Taking organized notes that make sense	Taking good notes that prepare me for tests	Listening to a lecture/taking notes at the same time
Students without disabilities	**11.3%**	**13.1%**	**15.6%**
Students with disabilities	**24.2%**	**25.6%**	**32.2%**

Academic Preparedness: Overall

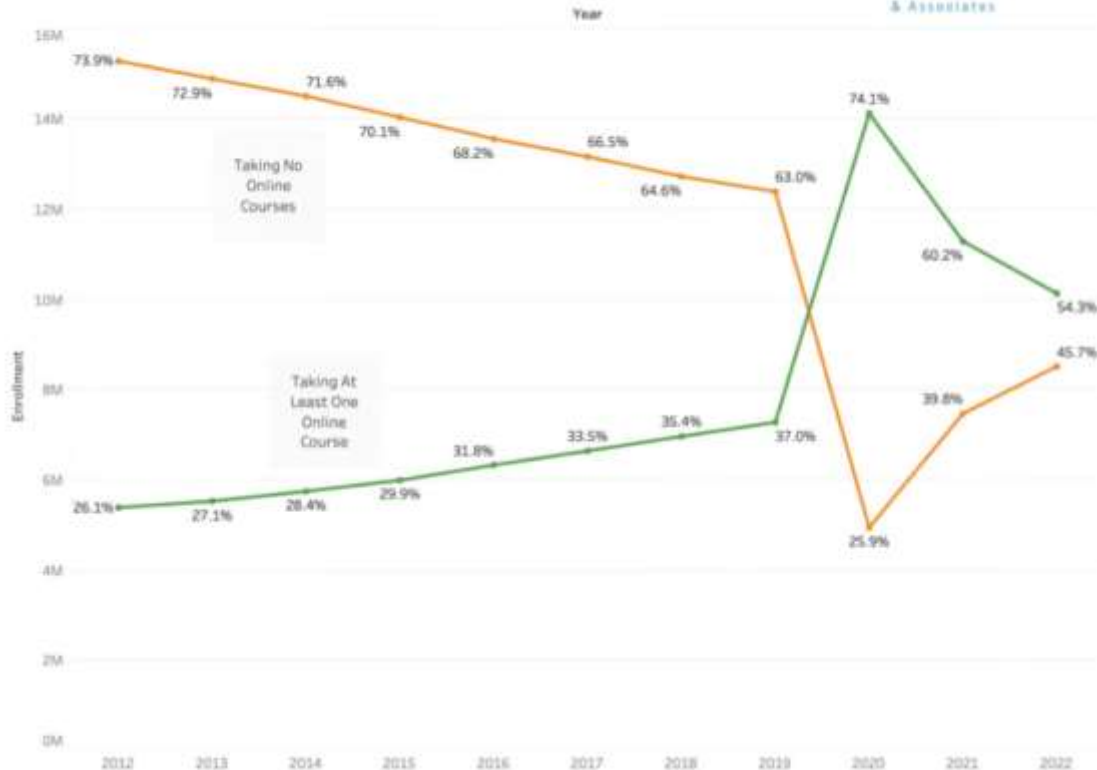|	More effort on academic tasks than others to perform well	More time on academic tasks than others to perform well	Any academic limitation
Students without disabilities	**16.6%**	**17.5%**	**90.0%**
Students with disabilities	**31.6%**	**34.5%**	**95.5%**

% of US Higher Ed Enrollment, Fall 2012 - 2022
of Students Taking At Least One (ALO) Online Course
Source: IPEDS database

PHIL HILL
& Associates

Year

Taking No Online Courses

73.9% 72.9% 71.6% 70.1% 68.2% 66.5% 64.6% 63.0% 25.9% 39.8% 45.7%

74.1% 60.2% 54.3%

Taking At Least One Online Course

26.1% 27.1% 28.4% 29.9% 31.8% 33.5% 35.4% 37.0%

54%

of college students took one or more of their classes online in fall 2022

SOURCE: Proof Points: Most college kids are taking at least one class online, even long after campuses reopened

Satisfaction with Technology

Figure 5. Overall Satisfaction with Technology Supports and Services, by Reported Disability
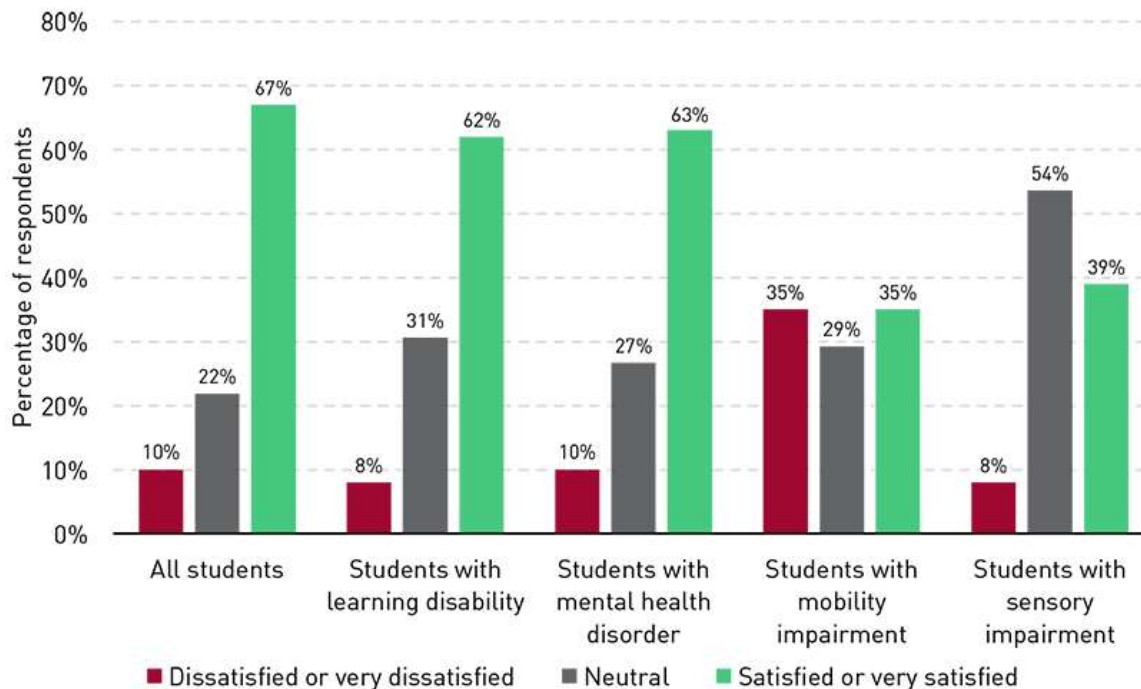
"Advancements in technology have opened up opportunities for individuals who may have previously faced barriers to education, although they still aren't equal to the experiences of students without disabilities..."

From EDUCAUSE: Educational Technology Research in Higher Education: New Considerations and Evolving Goals - Information, Tools, and Access at All Levels

Students of today

- Students with disabilities

  - Connected and not connected with DS

- Un and underdiagnosed students

  - Finances, stigma, documentation, disclosure, awareness of disability or resources, lack of connection

- Struggling learners, academic preparedness, skill preparedness, executive functioning, literacy, variability

Depth and breath of student access

- Students with disabilities

- Undiagnosed, underdiagnosed or lack of connection with DS

- Neurodiversity

- Mental Health

- Academic preparedness & students of today entering our institutions

- Dual enrollment and returning learners

- Online & hybrid learning

Our Campuses Today

Campus Evolution

- Campuses - fully online or hybrid

- Digital learning environments - LMS robustness, digital textbooks, third party software

- Classes - flipped classroom

- Assignments - discussion boards, assessment platforms

Evolution

In order to stay relevant and support the evolution of our campus, **we also need to evolve.** Our jobs, the work we do, the way our offices run, the way we support and advocate for students, and **create change on campus**.

Common Institutional Priorities

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Digital Accessibility

- Retention, Student Success, Graduation Rates

- Financial sustainability

- UDL

- Mental Health/Well-being

- Enrollment

- Sustainability

- Assessment

Strategic Priorities on Your Campus

- What are the priorities your campus focused on this year or will focus on next year?

- What is your campus is focused on?

- Are there similarities between your campuses?

What can we tie ourselves to?

Our Office Priorities

● Think about your office priorities:

    ○ How closely does your mission, vision and/or priorities align with the those of campus?

    ○ How easily can you link or draw a connection between the two sets?

Priorities as a catalyst for change

● Due to resources and attention:

○ How do you more closely align your office work to these priorities?

○ How do you make this work more visible to campus leaders and your line managers to help allocate and advocate resources?

○ How can tying these together create buy-in for your priorities and work?

AT Tools to Support Your Students & Your Campus

Transformational Support

● In order to impact and create positive change

  ○ Find tools that work where and how students work

  ○ Find tools that meet students where they are at with prior experience - easy to use!

  ○ Find tools that provide transformational support for all learners, no matter disability or digital learning environment

Thinking Back to Strategic Priorities

- Technological tool adoption which supports reading, writing, studying, STEM content and digital accessibility tie back to campus and our office strategic initiatives & priorities

- Inclusion, accessibility, UDL, retention, student success, etc.

- In the technological world we live in, why wouldn't we capitalize on these resources to be more inclusive?

Supporting the components of literacy

- Reading course content & studying

- Writing and written work

- Research

- Showing mastery through assignments & assessments

- Variability of platforms and course content type and location

Help students understand, engage and express themselves

Read&Write is a literacy support tool that offers help with everyday tasks like reading text out loud, understanding unfamiliar words, researching assignments and proofing written work.

OrbitNote

Create, convert, connect: Take your documents to the next level

OrbitNote allows you to transform and interact with documents in a completely different way. Create an accessible, dynamic and collaborative space that works for everyone.

Supporting the creation and consumption of math/STEM content

- Creating accessible content

- Remediating post-product content

- Engagement and consumption of course content

- Innovative teaching tools for digital environments

- Digital accessibility
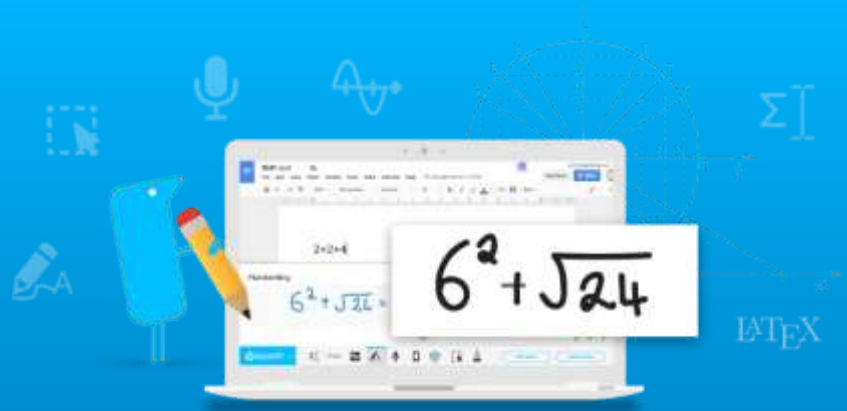
Make math digital

Equatio allows you to create equations, formulas, and more, digitally. Helping to make math and STEM classes more accessible and engaging for every student.

Integration in education is key

For education to truly be inclusive and equitable, tools should be available for all learners in all environments, no matter the place or assignment given.

Let's Take a Peek!
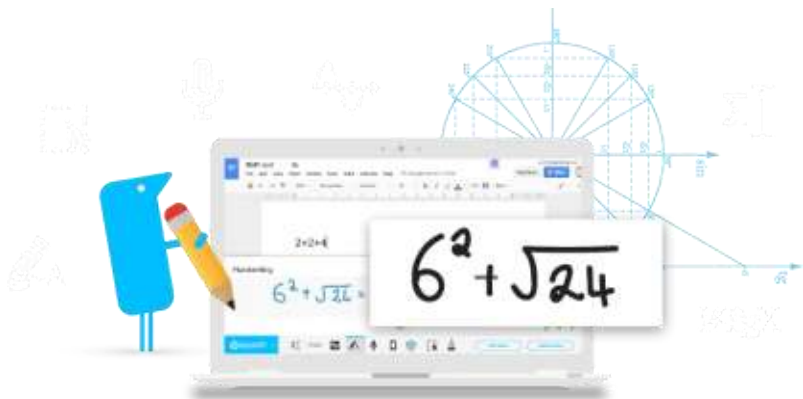
Questions & Discussion

Let's Connect!

Rachel Kruzel, *ATP*

Higher Education Specialist

Texthelp

Email: r.kruzel@texthelp.com

Phone: 651-245-3128