

Leading the Way: Enhancing Utah's Workforce with Neurodiversity

UNWP is improving the higher education experience and post-graduation employment success for neurodiverse individuals

Working with Students with Autism or Similar Learning Styles

Tips and Strategies for Advisors

Students may have strengths in these areas...

- intelligent
- passionate about area of interest
- pursue areas of interest with enthusiasm
- appear as "experts" in their area of interest
- think outside the box to solving problems
- good visual and spatial learners
- excellent memories
- strong attention to details and accuracy
- reliable; once expectations are established
- rule and routine oriented
- honest and loyal

Student may not disclose, but may have difficulties in these areas...

Social Communication

- maintaining eye contact
- monopolizing conversations or staying on topic
- navigating social situations & group work
- understanding sarcasm & abstract language



Executive Functioning

- asking for help
- initiating appointments or homework
- following through on assignments & other tasks
- time management
- planning out course schedules
- multi-tasking



Sensory Behavioral

- high anxiety
- ritualistic & repetitive behaviors
- adjusting to change
- appear preoccupied with certain subjects/
narrow focus
- heightened sensitivity to sensory input



“REMEMBER YOU DON’T HAVE TO SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS, BUT HELP THEM FIND THE RESOURCES THEY NEED.” – ACADEMIC ADVISOR

1

PREPARING FOR APPOINTMENT

Send students outline: what to expect in appointment including questions & expectations

Send students reminders: appointment time & location using multiple mediums

Print hard copies of important documents: class schedules, calendars, & flow charts

Minimize sensory stimulators: fragrances, flashing lights, & noise

2

DURING APPOINTMENT

Use clear, unambiguous language (spoken & written)

Check for understanding

Provide step-by-step directions for basic processes

Written information for students to refer back to

Identity & focus on the student’s strengths

Help student identify & schedule good matches in courses

Use accommodations or disability services

Discuss scenarios students may run into with professors:

3

AFTER APPOINTMENT

Maintain consistency whenever possible

Send student follow-up with detailed summary of the appoint with next steps outlined

Initiate email introductions with professors or campus supports

Set regular check-in appointments or email check-ins to help ensure success

Remind student of important dates throughout the semester, including drop dates via email

Suggest additional resources on campus

RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS WITH AUTISM

Center for Disability and Access:

<http://disability.utah.edu>

Center for Student Wellness:

<http://wellness.utah.edu/>

University Counseling Center:

<http://counselingcenter.utah.edu/>

University Neuropsychiatric Institute: _

<https://healthcare.utah.edu/uni/>

TRIO:

<https://trio.utah.edu/>

Student involvement:

<https://asuu.utah.edu/>

Contact us @ UtahNWP@gmail.com

Visit us @ UNWP.utah.edu