

Authentic Inclusion: Highlighting Inclusive LIS Pedagogical and Professional Practices

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ABSTRACT

This year, the SIG session embraces the theme of authentic inclusion, that is, inclusion not equated with compliance and implemented out of fear of repercussions and legal consequences. It is inclusion motivated by the genuine belief that workplaces, educational environments, and social settings welcoming to disabled and neurodiverse individuals are richer, more vibrant, more positive, and more creative. In the spirit of inclusion, this session will feature four 10-min lightning talks followed by an interactive audience engagement that will build on the delivered talks and allow session attendees to hone the newly acquired knowledge and implement some practical advice. Rathbun-Grubb will report on the results of a 2024 survey of library managers and supervisors, the goal of which was to elicit their perspectives on individual and organizational support for employees with disabilities, as well as the respondents' corresponding training and information needs. While confident in their abilities to support their employees with disabilities, managers desire more structural support such as clear policies and formal training, and there is interest in creating employee resource groups such as those created for others by race or veteran status. The research indicated the need for more robust organizational strategic plans for supporting employees and their managers. The session will then move from the field of

practice into higher education. In their IMLS- and university-funded study focused on Blind, Visually Impaired and Print-Disabled (BVIPD) students, Copeland, Kawooya, Robinson, Swartzendruber, Reisz, and Stitz will explore how disability services can work with university libraries and instructors to maximize access to content in accessible formats. They also examine how such collaborations can be facilitated through the Campus Accessibility Partnership Model developed by the authors. Tobin, Copeland, and Lucas Walling will examine the notion of accessibility beyond physical spaces and propose potential opportunities for integrating accessibility education more broadly in existing MLIS curricula. Based on their teaching experiences in MLIS programs, the presenters will introduce practices for creating inclusive, accessible collections for children and youth. The impetus for the presentation derives from the fact that numbers of students receiving special education services due to disabilities have increased significantly, with every indication that the trend will continue. This reality, coupled with the fact that many students in our schools and libraries have undiagnosed disabilities and accommodation needs, has resulted in an increasing and critical need for accessible collections, spaces, and services in school libraries. To wrap up this discussion and focusing on asynchronous online education, Smith will identify the problems related to perception, organization, and reading by students with disabilities, some of whom may not have formalized their disability accommodations. He will propose the ways in which course adjustments could be made to aid students in understanding the course structure, managing time and successfully completing course assignments. The lightning talks will be followed by four interactive engagements whereby attendees will have the chance to interact with all four groups of presenters, should they so desire, or to maintain a longer interaction with fewer presenters.

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

education; students; social justice; specific populations.

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

accessibility; disability; employers; inclusion; neurodiversity; students.

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