

Accessibility at William & Mary



Today's Goals

1. Challenge assumptions and spread awareness
2. Highlight resources and improvement areas
3. Convey lived experiences of students at William & Mary

Thank you
Questions?

Beyond Compliance

- Real-world, real impact
- Bolster student confidence
- Begin with simple fixes



Major Hurdles

Navigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent signage • Inconsistent wayfinding • Inconsistent accessibility • Inconsistent wayfinding • Parking • Inconsistent signage 	Viability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited resources • Limited staff • Limited funding • Limited staff • Limited funding • Limited staff • Limited funding
Classroom Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent signage • Inconsistent wayfinding • Inconsistent accessibility • Inconsistent wayfinding • Parking • Inconsistent signage 	Community & Connection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited resources • Limited staff • Limited funding • Limited staff • Limited funding • Limited staff • Limited funding

A Day at William & Mary



Student Accessibility Services

- "Dean Herdeson has been a great ally... she's won over a lot of students"
- Building community by connecting students together
- Golf cart program



Student-Led Initiatives

- CORPUS Disabled Student Advocacy Group
- Student Veterans Visiting Group
- Spearheading Golf Cart program

combat-related injuries
ADHD
broken bones
Celiac's disease
Invisible Disabilities
Lyme disease
chronic joint pain
mobility & more
permanent limited mobility
& more

What does accessibility mean?

- Creating barrier-free environments
- Providing reasonable accommodations
- Promoting inclusion, connection, and access

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1. Challenge **assumptions** and **spread awareness**
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*No one single experience,
but there are common themes*



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but there are common themes*



A Day at William & Mary

Scenario 1.

Lunch hour at Cosi



Scenario 2.

Pencil breaks during exam



"Perpetual cycle of distractions"

Scenario 3.

Laptop for lecture notes



"If I can tell the professor
won't be accommodating, I
just drop the class"

Scenario 4.

Finding a place to study in
Swem



"Going with friends to study is
supposed to be a group activity.
But not for me."

Scenario 5.

Procession through the
Wren at Convocation



"Convocation assumes a level of
ability for incoming students"

Photo by Stephen Salpukas
William & Mary, Flickr

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What does accessibility mean?



- Creating **barrier-free** environments
- Providing reasonable **accommodations**
- Promoting **inclusion, connection,** and **access**

combat-related injuries

ADHD

mobility

Lyme disease

chronic joint pain

broken bones

& more

Celiac's disease

permanent limited mobility

Irritable Bowel Syndrome

& more

Major Hurdles

Navigation



- Inclement weather

"If there is snow, I can forget about going to class- the sidewalks are never shoveled enough for me to get by"

- Historical and inaccessible

"Two-thirds of the academic buildings that I needed to use were inaccessible to me"

- Parking

"I feel like I got the run-around"

Inaccessible Places

- Wren Building
- Upstairs in PBK Hall
- Multiple language houses
- College Apartments
- Reves Center
- & More



Visibility



"You try to blend in but once you're found out, there is no going back"

"There's a stigma with getting accommodations, especially if you don't have a visible reason for it."

"If one person had stood up 4 years ago and shared their perspective, I could have avoided my worst experiences at the College"



Classroom Environment



"The willingness of professors to be accommodating varies based on what you're asking the professor to do."

Concentrating in class is not as easy as one may think

Community & Connection



Campus tours and orientation send signals of who is welcome here

"All I ask for is an even playing field"

"How can I feel like a part of a family or a community when this school fails me so often?"

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*buildings that I
can go to me”*

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How do we keep moving forward?

Understanding and action

Student-Led Initiatives

- CORPUS: Disabled Student Advocacy Group



- Student Veterans Working Group
- Spearheading Golf Cart program

Student Accessibility Services

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Golf Carts

Launched Fall 2015

Monday - Friday, 8 AM - 5 PM

3,480

rides to date

26.3

rides per day

250

rides during Orientation



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Photos: Hannah Ritsema

Thank you!

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