

PEPNet-South Hosts:

**An Inside Look: Creating Inclusive Environments  
with Universal Design**

TELETRAINING

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MODERATED BY: Amy Hebert and Michelle Swaney - PEPNet-South

>> AMY HEBERT: At this time it is a pleasure for me to introduce today's panelist. First of all we have Susan Foster. She's a faculty member and director of project access which promotes teaching strategies to mainstream instructors who have deaf or hard of hearing students.

Next we have Carol Funkes who is the president of higher education and disability which we call ahead and also the associate director of the University of Arizona's disability resource center. Carol is actively involved in exploring and supporting a Universal Design approach to full access in her work with faculty at the university and through involvement with ahead's vine initiative. Welcome, Carol to today's session.

>> CAROL FUNCKES: Thank you.

>> AMY HEBERT: And finally we have Melanie Thornton. She's member of Project Pace, a grant funded program at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. Melanie works to promote the creation of useable, equitable, inclusive and sustainable

environments through her collaborative relationships writing, presentations, and product development. Welcome Melanie.

>> MELANIE THORNTON: Thank you, Amy, I'm glad to be here.

>> AMY HEBERT: And welcome to all of you.

Well, to get started today, I guess, first of all, let's start off by talking about what is Universal Design?

>> SUE FOSTER: I just wanted to comment on the roots of Universal Design. It was initially developed in reference to physical spaces and architecture, the way we design our environments that we live in. For example, a good example of Universal Design in that area would be curb cuts. They were initially of course placed for people who use wheelchairs, but quickly became used by other people, mothers and fathers pushing babies, people pushing groceries, students on bicycles and so forth.

So they began to understand quickly that an accommodation for a group of individuals might carry benefits for other groups of individuals who often have no disability. That's where the concept of Universal Design comes in.

>> MELANIE THORNTON: Exactly Sue. Universal Design basically means designing environments in a way that makes them useable by all people to the greatest extent possible. The concept of Universal Design grew out of and supports the concept of disability. This is similar to the cultural view of deafness. Through this perspective, we see that problems arise, not because of the disability, but because environments don't account for the many differences that exist among us.

So when we look at disability in this light, through the social model lens, then inclusive design is just a natural response.

>> CAROL FUNCKES: I think Sue and Melanie have provided a great background in roots of Universal Design and Melanie gave you a clear definition, which I think is helpful. You may also know that the center for Universal Design has flushed out principles that help provided guidance in welcoming accessible environments. But also, when we think about Universal Design, we not think about a descriptive set of principles to follow like a cook book, but rather Universal Design in the strength it brings, we look at a philosophical approach to design, human centered and creative in considering the experiences of a variety of users.

>> AMY HEBERT: You know, it's really clear to understand the modification of architectural barriers to create an inclusive environment, but how is Universal Design applied to the educational setting.

>> SUE FOSTER: When we talked earlier about the idea of a curb cut for a person in the wheelchair then having applications for other people who have to cross the road or

enter the street, the same thing is if you envision the classroom with a curb cut, so to speak. If you take a particular student, I know a lot of us are focused on deaf students, if you look at having accommodation for a deaf student, instructor presenting material in several formats, or an interpreter, often other groups of students in the class benefit, that weren't directly targeted by that accommodation. We know for example, at RIT where I work, pace of instruction is listed as a teaching strategy that enhances communication for international students. We know turn-taking for example, in moderating discussion will help other groups of students who might not ordinarily participate can join in.

Take one accommodation for one group and look at ways in which it can be more inclusive for everybody.

>> MELANIE THORNTON: Thanks, Sue. Just to add, several different projects across the United States and Canada have focused on developing different models that apply the original principles in the educational setting and some of those models are provided in the handout that you were sent in the e-mail, but I just want to say that central to all of these models is really one idea. That's that we want to anticipate diversity and develop materials, design environments, and teach in ways that keep that diversity in mind.

>> CAROL FUNCKES: I also want to stress when we think about educational setting, we think about it globally, beyond the classroom. Sue provided a lot of information on how we can make learning more accessible through Universal Design, but I think it's important that we remember on a college campus, we have a microcosm really of the real world and there are things we can do to put in place on a college campus that may have originally been intended for deaf or hard of hearing users, but through universal perspective on looking at those changes we can see really fit for a variety of other people. Such as a door bell that uses light in addition to sound and how helpful that is to a student who might be using his iPod or captioning that is so helpful in a loud environment to a variety of users.

As we think of Universal Design educationally, I want to stress we don't limit our perspective of what postsecondary education is to just the classroom.

>> AMY HEBERT: And Carol, you just mentioned, and Sue briefly mentioned about providing services to individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing, I want to take my question one step further and ask how is Universal Design utilized specifically for students who are deaf and hard of hearing?

>> CAROL FUNCKES: I think that's a great question particularly in light of the emphasis we have today, but before I let Sue and Melanie provide specific examples for those students, let me again just stress that when we think Universal Design, we aren't really designing with one group of people in mind. Rather we're designing with the whole spectrum of human characteristics in mind. So again, things are useable by the widest range of people possible. Adaptive environments, which I don't think is a website that we provided for you, but if you have a piece of paper, make a note, adaptive

environments is a great resource and has a wonderful website. If I quote from them, I can say most simply "Universal Design is human-centered design with everything with everyone in mind." Just kind of harping on that little, soap box, I can stop there and we can get back to hearing impaired and deaf students.

>> SUE FOSTER: You remember before I gave an example of adaptation for deaf and hard of hearing students and how it might have application to ESL students, one of the ways to think about Universal Design for deaf and hard of hearing students is to turn the concept around.

So for example, they may benefit for adaptations for another group of users in the class. Those students are creating a situation that is universal or inclusive for the deaf and hard of hearing. Some low vision students might require a lot of lighting in the room or hands on activities for a disabled student who needs a multisensory way to get at the information. Those are strategies that might have been employed for those particular groups of students, but then we find there's an application, it's universally helpful for deaf and hard of hearing students. They're included in that.

I would suspect if we look at adaptations made within the DSO offices for groups of students, we can find places where all the the circles overlap.

>> MELANIE THORNTON: I agree with both of you there and add that I guess the advantage of promoting Universal Design, ultimately does benefit students who are deaf and hard of hearing, when we can show captions for example, or the use of amplification or the use of transcripts or audio and a website, when these benefit a wide range of student, they become part of the design of the classroom rather than being afterthought or retrofit, so everyone benefits.

>> AMY HEBERT: So does that mean every classroom should have an interpreter and captionist in order to be universally designed.

>> SUE FOSTER: No, no. That wouldn't be the right answer. It's not so much about accommodations specific to one person. Those accommodations are necessary. If there's a deaf or hard of hearing student that needs an interpreter or captionist or note taker, those accommodations are there, but it's more about finding areas of benefit from one accommodation to another that will increase access for all students. It's almost as if you had a large circle on the paper and that was the classroom and within that you had individual students who had specific accommodations that were needed, that larger circle is all the things that would work for all the students in the classroom. That's the Universal Design. It doesn't preclude individual services to students, but nor does it mean individual services need to be in every classroom.

>> CAROL FUNCKES: I think Sue has answered this question, but I wanted to comment on the realities of technology and budget. Typically we think of Universal Design as the incorporation of design strategies that make an environment more accessible, and then of interpreting and captioning as accommodations that alter the

underlying design to add something to a particular group of individuals. In other words, those accommodations become retrofits to the existing design. Another way to think about captioning is as a design element that can be integrated into a course as it's developed providing another option for a variety of students. And that addition could provide a different way to acquire the same information that's presented orally for most students.

We can see the advantages of that addition, but in reality, our current technology and the costs currently associated with providing CART writing makes this less likely at this time. We may see this become more common design element for information and I think in so doing, we'll see deaf and hard of hearing students really become mainstream users of the designed environment.

>> AMY HEBERT: Well maybe now is a good time for us to discuss some common misconceptions about Universal Design?

>> MELANIE THORNTON: Sure. One misconception that we hear a lot is that we are expecting that Universal Design will create some kind of utopia and eliminate every barrier. That's just not the case. I don't know no one that is an advocate of Universal Design that has that expectation. We just, we know it won't solve every problem, but it does challenge us to think about design in new ways.

The other misconception I hear a lot is people use the term Universal Design and accessibility interchangeably and, as if they're the same thing, and that's not true either. For example, offering to provide alternate formats of handouts would be accessibility, but providing a digital version of handouts for everyone would be Universal Design. So there are differences in the way that the environment and the, the solution is approached.

>> CAROL FUNCKES: And another misperception is that Universal Design eliminates rigor. I think this comes from the false presumption that Universal Design advocates designing to the lowest common denominator, rather than maintaining the integrity at the end, but provides a variety of ways to get there, which is really what Universal Design is about.

>> MICHELLE SWANEY: We're going to take a question from the audience. We know we have a diverse group of participants from disability service coordinators to service providers. One question that has come in. What can service providers such as interpreters or captionists do to improve universal design in the classroom. Sue, you would like to answer that question?

>> SUE FOSTER: Sure, interpreters, captionists, those who provide support in the classroom can go a long way by pointing out, in a subtle and I know it's difficult sometimes to do this but point out in some way to the teacher and maybe to the students about the fact that some of the changes are quite likely going to influence more students in the class.

We did research here at RIT, we found we have sections of courses in the note in the bullet supported by an interpreter. We found hearing students on campus were picking those sections. When we asked them why, they said, when there's an interpreter in the classroom, the teacher is more aware of pace, and if they don't, the interpreter may ask them to slow down because they didn't capture everything. They said they like it because pace is always a problem for hearing students too. That's a tidbit of something that could be shared by a service provider.

The notes, again, I think Melanie talked about this, that providing notes to everyone in the classroom is a wonderful way to increase access for everybody in the room.

So I think that if that gentle education can occur, even in a note sent when you introduce yourself to the teacher in the classroom, you might find that the teacher's more motivated to make those adjustments and see themselves as doing something for everybody, not just for the deaf or hard of hearing student.

>> MICHELLE SWANEY: Carol, do you have anything you'd like to add here?

>> CAROL FUNCKES: I think Sue did a marvelous job of answering that question. I think education moments and grabbing the opportunity while you're in the classroom with an instructor is probably in a position to really want to learn at that time because he's confronted with a student who might have issues and provide opportunity for input.

>> MICHELLE SWANEY: Wonderful, and Melanie, would you like to add anything?

>> MELANIE THORNTON: I think they've covered it well.

>> MICHELLE SWANEY: Great, thank you.

>> AMY HEBERT: Thank you Michelle. I just want to remind all the participants who are listening in at this time, if you have questions, you can e-mail them to [PEPNet.south@gmail.com](mailto:PEPNet.south@gmail.com) or send an instant message on AOL instant messenger to PEPNetsouth.

All right, I want to ask the question, if Universal Design is implemented does that mean that accommodations are no longer needed?

>> SUE FOSTER: No it doesn't mean that accommodations are no longer needed. As we discussed briefly earlier, obviously there'll be people in the classroom who have specific needs. The needs of course have to be met, whether providing information in alternative formats, such as braille or providing an interpreter or providing a different kind of testing accommodation.

The issue is not so much, I think it was Carol who might have said at the beginning, you know, this isn't really a cookbook thing, that's good and bad, but it's more of an art. I think the art comes in finding the connections between specific accommodations made

for one individual and enhancements to access that are a secondary result from that for the others in the room.

>> MELANIE THORNTON: I would agree totally with that. I think that while it doesn't mean that, Universal Design doesn't mean we'll eliminate accommodations and they are definitely two different things, there is a connection between the two and sometimes when a student enters a class and says, "oh there's a barrier here, I need this accommodation." The request for that accommodation can be seen as kind of a sign post that maybe we need to rethink the design of the class. So there is a connection, but they are two separate, separate things, just like accessibility and Universal Design are not the same.

>> CAROL FUNCKES: I think most of the people on the phone call are people who professionally have chosen jobs in which we work with human beings. I think that's the marvelous thing about working with people. We know there's no way we can ever say there aren't unique human characteristics that would necessitate something different being done for one person than other people. Accommodation is an important piece of accessibility.

The goal of Universal Design is to minimize the time from when we have to treat individuals differently but also to recognize that when that's necessary our ultimate goal is inclusion.

>> AMY HEBERT: So then, what happens when you do have people with two different disabilities who have conflicting needs? Like for example, if you install flashing fire alarms for deaf students, that might trigger a student with epilepsy. How would Universal Design address this issue?

>> SUE FOSTER: That's a great question. You didn't leave any wiggle room on that one. Clearly you're dealing with serious circumstances. You're dealing with life and possibly death situations. Clearly everybody has to be safe and everybody has to be well and you know, in some situations, I think what we have to do is be open to the idea that there may not be an answer that will satisfy everyone or come across in an easy fashion. What I would do, because I've had some background in mediation is try to bring everybody together, whether it be the instructor, the students, the service providers to sort of discuss the issues. Sometimes that will involve trying to make sure everyone understands that everyone here has a point of view. Everyone has probably learned to be a self advocate and feel determined that their rights and needs have to be protected. You might have to get people to recognize that either compromise is going to be needed or that there is no solution that's going to be simple. We have to put people in different buildings or what have you and then, you know, you might have some need for flexibility and creativity and obviously compromise.

That's never going to be an easy situation. As I said, you've created the perfect question because it really takes it right to the Nth degree.

>> MELANIE THORNTON: Those are great ideas Sue, that is a tough situation so I'd like to just kind of emphasize again what I said earlier that Universal Design doesn't remove every barrier or solve every problem. We always need to keep that in mind, but it challenges us to ask different questions and as Sue pointed out, maybe in the process of asking the questions, stepping back from the situation we can come up with creative ideas that make the environment more useable by everyone.

>> CAROL FUNCKES: I don't know that I can add anything. Sue and Melanie have done a great job responding to a difficult situation. The only thing I can add is to stress again the importance of consultation, creativity, and the value of designing options when we try to think universally.

>> MICHELLE SWANEY: Wonderful. We have several questions starting to flow in. Just as a reminder, if we're not able to get to all the questions today, we'll have those answered and have those available in a document for you at a later time to be posted on the PEPNet website along with this TeleTraining. One question is: Several institutions are not permitted to share CART notes with other individuals because it is deemed to be a "service" for the deaf student. Has this been an issue that any of you have seen?

>> SUE FOSTER: Absolutely it's an issue. It's an issue here at RIT. We have deaf students on campus and they're provided with a student note taker, a professional note taker or C-print which is a form of condensed text captioning. They're posted and of course, same argument, they're limited to the students who have them as a service. There's a lot of thought about this, Universal Design would say that's not a good idea. I work here and obviously it's the rules here and that's what we do, but within the world of Universal Design, every student gets those notes or have access to them. When we visited partner schools, we had a partner school in California, when we visited in follow-up, at that school, the class notes were delivered to the instructor who posted the notes online for all the students in the class, even though they were designed for the deaf student. Somehow they had the flexibility to do that.

On the day we were visiting she was passing back exams and noted that the students did better than in past classes when she posted the notes. She asked how many used the notes. Almost every hand went up. She was struck by the huge difference from the past. She was implementing Universal Design on her own accord and seeing a punch for it that worked. That's what we would advise. Don't know if it's possible and I don't know quite how to get around that.

>> MICHELLE SWANEY: Wonderful, thank you, Sue. Melanie, would you like to add anything?

>> MELANIE THORNTON: No, the situation here is pretty much the same, the faculty could share the notes, but that typically is not what happens, but certainly is a good approach to think about. And on occasion they are shared through web CT with other

students in the class. But that's the exception, not the rule.

>> MICHELLE SWANEY: Wonderful, thank you, Melanie. Carol, do you have anything you'd like to add?

>> CAROL FUNCKES: I guess there are two thoughts I have when I hear that question. The first is listening to the question and I'm trying to remember the exact wording, but I think it was something like "we're not allowed to..." and I would remind all of us, myself included, I'm often tripped by that, we're not allowed to, somebody's making those rules. Going back to concepts of consultation and creativity, I would say one of the important pieces of access and importantly pieces of Universal Design is that we have flexibility in policies and procedures. We often talk about accessible environments and one of those environments, I believe, is the policy environment. What is the reason for the policy? How do we rethink what we're doing and what our ultimate goal is? I would say that's one comment.

And as I started talking, I forget my second comment. If it comes to me, I'll let you know.

>> SUE FOSTER: Could I add one thing to that, when it comes to having notes available to all the students, I think real fear is that it would be abused. Concept is deaf students need them, but then it would be abused by other students who might not attend class and just look at the notes and so on and so forth. One of the things we do know is that taking notes is a very integral part of learning. Your brain wires the information and processes it and comes out in your hand in the notes. There are disadvantages in having those notes. They're a great back-up, but you should still take your own if you're hearing. It's a very complicated issue, but I agree with what Carol said, maybe we need to re-examine the policies that would instruct us not to share that information with other students.

>> MICHELLE SWANEY: Great, thank you. Thank you all. Now we have another question that has come in. This individual is saying that they agree service providers should take advantage of educational moments with instructors, they were wondering if you might suggest strategies for attitude barriers with instructors. Organization techniques or organizational approaches. Melanie, would you like to start off?

>> MELANIE THORNTON: Can I hear the question again please?

>> MICHELLE SWANEY: Sure. They are asking if you suggest strategies for approaching attitude national barriers that they may encounter with instructors, maybe strategies that might be personal communications techniques or organizational type approaches?

>> MELANIE THORNTON: Um, the one thing that, is this Melanie, the one thing that comes to mind for me, when I worked with people who were deaf and hard of hearing, I often got questions or comments that really just, I was just dumbfounded, I just was so

thrown off by the question that I wasn't able to respond in a way that was helpful. Those attitude barriers often come off in comments or questions. One thing that's helpful is to think about the things you've had people to say over the years and begin to formulate responses to those so that even if you're taken aback a little bit, you have something to pull out that just comes naturally because you've thought it through and that doesn't increase the resistance there, but responds in a helpful way to reduce the awkwardness of that particular moment. And I'll turn it to someone else.

>> MICHELLE SWANEY: Thank you, Carol, do you have anything you'd like to add?

>> CAROL FUNCKES: When the questioner includes the idea of what kind of interpersonal strategies might we be able to use, what comes to my mind is that we're sensitive to timing and to the status of the person to whom we want to provide this feedback. By timing I mean, if I'm an interpreter in a classroom and I have this idea of dropping notes at the end of class, that might not be the ideal time to do that. Or by inviting someone to lunch to strategize together, might be a more effective way to do that.

>> SUE FOSTER: This is Sue, I think it's a great question. I know there's a lot of teachers who want the service provider to come in, do their job and they can go about their business exactly as they would if there were no deaf student in their class. But, I think, I really agree with Carol. We might have to go out of an order interaction in order to find a way to get their attention. Even a handwritten note "I just wanted to thank you, I enjoyed being in your class today, I'd really love to share a few ideas with you if you have time." So few of us write notes to one another anymore. Or send them an e-mail and we actually have something that's part of the Class Act website that's part of your materials, but it's a little snippet of the person giving a lecture and there's no voice, there's only captioning. We use it with mainstream faculty who don't seem to be terribly interested yet in what they might be doing differently and after having to grasp the material through captions only, they sort of decompress and say "what do I have to do differently?" You might want to send a sampling of that.

>> AMY HEBERT: That's a great suggestion. Before we continue. I want to thank you Michelle for handling the live questions. I just want to let the participants know that there is a service problem with the recording feature for today's TeleTraining so there will not be an audio version available. We will have the transcript from the captioning and we'll have the PowerPoints, the PowerPoint as well as any other supplemental materials on, on the website. So just to let you know to pay attention if you want to take notes.

Um, okay, now we really have a clear understanding of what Universal Design is and is not. So now I have some questions relating to implementing Universal Design on our campuses. Who is responsible for the implementation of Universal Design in the classroom?

>> SUE FOSTER: I believe the responsibility lies with the instructor. The instructor is the conductor, if you will, for the orchestra, trying to make music. There's the core responsibility trying to make sure things work well and so forth. I do believe that others have the opportunity to play special roles. Obviously the students have to be aware of their rights and also how best to approach a teacher and what to do if things aren't going well and service providers naturally have a responsibility, those who are in the classroom and those who coordinate services outside the classroom. But in the end, the teacher, the instructor's being paid and has a job to ensure that all students have an opportunity to learn from them. They can't make them learn, but they need an equal opportunity. So they really have to treat this whole scenario as their canvas and see if it can be made to work effectively.

>> AMY HEBERT: Carol, did you want to add anything to that question?

>> CAROL FUNCKES: Yes, I totally agree with Sue. Whenever we think about design, we recognize that the primary person responsible for the application is the instructor. The instructor has designed the course, who decided what's important and so forth, but in a college setting, I think it's more important for us to remember that most instructors, most faculty are discipline-based. They're not experts in pedagogy, that gives us an opportunity to assist them with that. They can move beyond the "this is the way it's always been done" and teaching in ways they were taught. We can help them appreciate the research on millennials students to pick up strategies that take advantage of technology that perhaps they had experience with when they were students.

The other important thing is to remember that faculty also view themselves and are viewed on campus as the experts. Being an expert makes it really hard to ask for help and to recognize that you don't have skills or that you need some help in doing something. So I think that's one of the opportunities that Universal Design offers to us, is it might provide that doorway into conversation and consultation with faculty if we're teachers for deaf and hard of hearing students giving tools and strategies that would be effective to that group of students.

>> AMY HEBERT: So all three of you interact with faculty all the time, so maybe describe some common concerns that faculty have about implementing Universal Design in their classes and how can we start to begin to address these concerns?

>> SUE FOSTER: I find often that faculty are concerned that Universal Design is yet another new fad, new thing, and it's going to require them to make changes in their course materials, require more work and of course, they're doubly concerned because they think that this is something they'll only use once, the student's here now and I'll never have enough deaf student or blind student and I'll change everything for nothing. I think that feeling has been amplified. So often we've taken the role in providing services for students with disabilities that we kind of come in and do what's necessary so they can go on doing what they've always done. To some degree we've promoted that, and as we move more towards asking them to partner with us, we run into more

push-back from them. I know that's always been an issue. At NTID because we have a huge conglomerate of specialists in the field. We've done more than we should have in order to try to make everything work.

>> MELANIE THORNTON: As someone, I think it was Carol mentioned earlier, one of the concerns I hear often is that implementing Universal Design will water down the course. Again, that's just not the case. I think when we respond, as we promote Universal Design, we want to emphasize on the front end that we are not advocating for removing the challenges, but for removing the obstacles in the course or in the environment in general.

>> CAROL FUNCKES: I think Melanie hits on an important point, the whole watering down of the curriculum. I think faculty are indeed struggling to figure out how they can make a change without watering down curriculum if, and I think this is sometimes the case, they don't necessarily have a clear picture of what it is they want their students to achieve. Often times I think faculty have not taken the time to describe, even to themselves what the essential components of a class are and what secondary learning may occur, but isn't the essential piece, so helping them, walking them through that process on what could be accommodated and what couldn't and on the other hand we can look at design features that might be more inclusive without threatening any of the essential pieces of a class are really important.

One of the examples, perhaps, in talking about this would be tufting. Often times we provide an accommodation for test time and we talk about changing the design of their tests so we don't have to accommodate particular students so we meet a variable across the population and everybody gets the time they need to take a taste. I think it's hard often times for faculty to recognize whether time is an essential component or whether it isn't. Is fast math better than slow math or is it not. They can make some decisions themselves and the concern of watering down the curriculum can truly be addressed.

>> AMY HEBERT: So what is the best way to support faculty who are interested in modifying their pedagogy?

>> SUE FOSTER: I would first of all find the information that demonstrates that the changes they make for this student or several students that we want them to support that they will benefit other students and try to make that clear to them, but then I would provide one or two small, specific, easy to implement strategies rather than give them a lot of theory or philosophy. One of the faculty who worked with us, she wanted to try to remember when she put up visuals, she used PowerPoints, she was an art teacher, she'd put up images and lecture on the material, we were trying to help her to give the deaf students enough time to actually move from the interpreter to look at the PowerPoint or the visual, digest it and go back. It was very hard for her to do that because silence was awkward for a hearing instructor. She ended up bringing in an old plastic clock with the big dial, the big second hand and kept it with her at the podium, when she put it up, she forced herself to wait until it went around once and then started

to speak. It really helped her to modify that one behavior. She had a feel of enough success with that that she was then prepared to say "okay, what can I do next?" So I think, give them the idea that we know to be true that it will be effective for more than one student, and then one little step, one idea, and get the pump flowing.

>> MELANIE THORNTON: I've often found if you catch someone doing something that illustrates the principles of Universal Design that is a good way to start. For example, let's say a professor is offering several options for a given assignment and those options reflect different learning styles, maybe students can read an article, watch a video, write a reaction paper, so there are different choices depending on the students preference is interacting and engaging with the material. Often when an example like that is pointed out, and the professor has complimented on how they've already begun to use Universal Design then they have kind of an ah ha moment and can apply the same concept within the course.

>> CAROL FUNCKES: Those are great ideas. Another idea that has started to happen here at the University of Arizona is taking the concept of preceptors. We usually think of students in the course who work with other students and kind of turning that on its head. Again, I'm going back to the question that says the best way to support faculty who are interested. This is really putting them out there. So they must be somebody who's really committed to improving their teaching, but if we have a preceptor, it could be a deaf or hard of hearing student or student with any other type of person characteristic to provide feedback to the faculty so that they can really appreciate how they're coming across to 18, 19, 20-year-olds in the classroom. What strategies are they using? I'm thinking about sue's example of the clock. My guess is that a lot of people in the classroom were feeling that the instructors pace was too fast and she probably benefitted from the feedback of slowing that down. If on a regular basis, she has a preceptor in the class who could meet with her weekly or monthly and really she can pull out ideas to modify her curriculum, I think it's extremely powerful.

>> AMY HEBERT: Wow, that's great tips and techniques for faculty members. I would like to move outside of the classroom and now start to think of the campus climate as a whole and think about what is the role of the disability support services office in the process of implementing Universal Design on their college campuses.

>> SUE FOSTER: I would imagine that a lot of folks in the disability support services office often feel like they're squeezed into two ends. One way to look at it is that they're in the center of what's happening in many ways with respect to Universal Design. I guess, given that model, I would expect there's opportunities to educate the students that you're supporting, they may be looking for specific accommodation, but if another student should say, "hey, I hear you're getting notes, or this or that, or an interpreter", the student might say "I notice the students like it too, because the instructor slows down." Students become aware. Again, facilitating instructors efforts and providing administrators with some kind of prioritized list of tasks or policies or changes they could make in the environment in new buildings. Again, finding at least initially, the biggest bang for the buck. The smallest change possible, that will have the largest impact so

that people become keen on the idea. And once they begin to get into the idea, then you can probably get in things that might more more expensive or difficult to do.

>> MELANIE THORNTON: Great ideas, Sue. I think in most cases the model that has been out there is that disability service providers kind of look across the campus and say "this course needs to be universally designed, this website needs to be more useable." But often disabilities staff don't take the time to look closer to home. When we as disability service providers take a closer look at the messages we're sending the language we use, we often see they run counter to Universal Design. I think it's important for us to pro good design in our own environments and also make sure that we're integrating the social model of disability in all that we do and sending those messages out there instead of messages that are more consistent with the accommodation model as opposed to the Universal Design model.

I'd like to take a minute and refer you to the handout you were sent that has the two tables. One compares the social model with the medical model of disability and the other that compares the accommodation model. Also, I believe it's on the handout and on the PowerPoint, there's a link that will take you to a part of the project pace website where we show some of the changes that have been made here at the university in Little Rock. We tried to change policies to be closer to the social model of disability.

>> CAROL FUNCKES: I think Melanie makes an incredible important point. As we as disability service providers start to change our language, I think it has that snowball effect of both pushing faculty through the words they hear to recognize ownership of disability issues and I think it also helps students to recognize their power and perhaps to question the way they viewed themselves previously. Maybe they can meet the student and ask what they need accommodations for, how it impacts the classroom. Maybe say, "what design features of the course are not accessible to you or present barriers to you?" We've just kind of flipped that question and I think in the process empowered the student to think not of herself as the problem, but to think of the environment, the course, the instructor's design as the problem and I think that goes a long way in getting your campus community to begin to look at its part also and access which as we continue to work in that direction can become Universal Design.

And then I'd also like to summarize Sue's comments in terms of the potential that it gives disability service providers to collaborate, consult and educate across campus. I think it's an exciting new role we can have instead of staying in our offices and working individually, but to change the way the campus community views us as becoming agents of sustainable change.

>> AMY HEBERT: Yeah, but you know it's easy as an individual, maybe not easy, but certainly I can look at my own attitude in language about persons with disabilities, but you know, how can then, I take what I know and help institutions begin to change their policies and college compliment to impact Universal Design. It seems like a bigger challenge.

>> SUE FOSTER: I think it's an enormous challenge and depending on the degree of awareness on campus or not on campus, I know it's overwhelming. I would start small. Actually, if you can find faculty interested in this, we're aging and have disabilities ourselves and finding our way around campuses with increasing difficulties, if you can find faculty who can get involved with it for their own needs and find your way into a council, I guess I'm saying it's a lot to take on on your own. Having said that, you can get folks to focus on things that might have immediate impact. Captioned videos is always a serious issue for deaf students and many other students, ESL as well. So trying to get a policy in place. Even if it's a policy the university is shooting towards, rather than having it done tomorrow. Saying "look, we'd like everyone to submit your top three videos for classes, we'd like to get them captioned." They're using something that's not accessible. And secondly, to send out to the students, a message that we actually care, we're trying to make this thing happen for you. I think that would be one strategy that the disability service personnel could do to work with their institution.

>> MELANIE THORTON: I agree with that. There are so many ways this can be approached. Any change we make usually has a ripple affect and leads to other changes, but one thing we can do is to make sure that disability and deaf culture are included as a part of discussions. Disability and deaf culture are seen as a part of the campus diversity in general. Also want to mention that several universities are adopting Universal Design as a campus philosophy. Including those are University of Wisconsin and Arizona State University. They're writing a proposal that shows how Universal Design can be implemented on the campus at large.

On the PowerPoint there is also a link that will take you to the University of Arkansas, Little Rock's commitment to Universal Design and you can get an idea how that might be approached.

>> CAROL FUNCKES: Great ideas, I don't have much more to add in that area, I would just suggest that sometimes changing up our language can be helpful to take out the mystery of something. We talk a lot about Universal Design and I think that we can, if we're not careful, end up getting ourselves in a position where our campus is seen as just incredibly repetitive and if we can change up our language to continue to talk about access, inclusion and welcoming environments and good teaching and all those things that we know we think of as Universal Design, but not necessarily harp always on that particular concept, that we may get campus community moving in that direction without necessarily knowing that they have to use that term. We remove that mystery and we give them permission to just look at making sure they're doing things in inclusive ways.

>> AMY HEBERT: Those are all great suggestions, but what can be done to increase buy-in on the college campus by constituents including classroom instructors, support services personnel and providers, and campus administrators.

>> SUE FOSTER: Instructors will want evidence that there's going to be some change in all of their students performance if they do some of these things. It's said that Universal Design is good teaching, to some degree that is true. That might result in

better ratings from students, other things they would find helpful for themselves. I also think what we've done here is try to get recognition that the deans of the various colleges will recognize the achievements of faculty who have been very effective in working with deaf and hard of hearing students. That's important, particularly for younger faculty in the middle of trying to move ahead for promotion or tenure. I try to focus on instruction, but I would clarify for them the benefits and try to make sure they get recognition. I think often it's really important that that, if it's not recognized, they're not going to want to continue.

>> MELANIE THORNTON: Just kind of reiterating some of the things we said before. I think modelling Universal Design in what we do is important, promoting social model of disability and cultural views of deafness, I think also it's helpful, as we talked about with one of the audience questions, it's helpful to kind of anticipate the concerns that you expect to hear from your colleagues about Universal Design and go ahead and develop responses to those concerns. During a session in 2006, I co-presented a session and we brain stormed some of the concerns that colleagues had about Universal Design and developed responses to them. You can view those questions or concerns and responses on the website going to the link that's on your PowerPoint handout.

>> CAROL FUNCKES: Another thing that we talked about, is the concept of diversity. I think a lot of us see, in our campus mission statements in a real movement in the last 10 years toward campuses that really value diversity. They've come to recognize that by bringing a diverse group of people together and providing opportunities for people to learn from one another, diversity is a valuable aspect on a college campus in regard to education. And I think as we tie disability and Universal Design as a way to bring disabled people to a campus community, we can start to encourage the campus to recognize that we're just looking at a different edge of the same sword they're already wielding.

>> MICHELLE SWANEY: Thank you, Carol. We have more questions from the audience. There's a lot of great questions coming in. Just as a reminder, the questions we're not able to get to today, we'll put together a document available on the PEPNet.org website along with the other documents from this TeleTraining. Now in thinking about this issue from the perspective of the student, how can a student advocate for Universal Design principles with a faculty member when the faculty is not willing to incorporate Universal Design principles?

>> SUE FOSTER: That's a tough question. I appreciate the person who wrote it. I think it often happens a great deal. We know from our students that the instructors attitude is the most central thing in making them feel welcome in the class or conversely unwelcome in the classroom. I think it's extremely difficult for a student to make that happen with a faculty member who either, is not interested in understanding their needs or in making changes, and there are faculty out there who do that, and in fact they're not helpful to the hearing students either. I think all students with disabilities need to recognize that a teacher may be profoundly disinterested in helping them learn in the classroom, but they're probably not alone in that.

Having said that, I think students who have a special need in the classroom have to find ways to get the attention of the faculty member. If the person is literally rude or completely disengaged from meeting students needs, then I think that student has to go back to the disabilities service office and say "I'm having a real problem." I don't understand the overheads. Sometimes if you have a member of that person's team, the faculty member who's worked with you or been effective, they might be able to be an intermediary. Sometimes somebody from the main office will have to get involved.

>> MICHELLE SWANEY: Great, thank you. Melanie, do you have positive ideas here?

>> MELANIE THORNTON: Actually, I've heard Carol respond to a similar question and I'm going to hand off to Carol here.

>> CAROL FUNCKES: Oh dear Melanie, you had me set up. Here I had this great idea I was going to share, now I don't know what I said so far.

The thing I want to share, and Melanie, if I'm not hitting where you hope I will go, sometimes that consultation with the disabilities service office is so very important. For students to be out there on their own is incredibly powerful and empowering for them, but they need that. This is what we do professionally, so to help give the students strategies and to engage with them I think is important. I think the resistant faculty are a challenge for us. What I would suggest for the disability service staff and try to engage with a faculty member is to bring other faculty, on our team, packs of thieves who've seen the light and bring them into strategizing. Sometimes faculty will listen to other faculty long before they'll listen to the rest of us.

And I guess the other thing I hate to admit, but know as reality is that we are really not empowered to require Universal Design. What our laws have given us the ability to really require of our faculty and our systems is access. And we know we can get that far. We know we can keep pushing. We know that small changes make a difference. We're looking for strategies and we're not satisfied with simple access. I think the bottom line is, if we can't engage this particular students or this particular faculty this particular day that we move on, we assure access and look at how we can put steps in place that will get us closer next time.

>> MICHELLE SWANEY: Great, thank you all. Those are wonderful ideas, now on the reverse end, most of our discussion today has focused on Universal Design for students. The question that has come in is how do you see Universal Design in terms of the educational environment that includes deaf faculty, staff and students?

>> MELANIE THORNTON: That's an excellent question, I'm glad that issue was raised because we do often talk about students with disabilities, students who are deaf or hard of hearing, when in reality we're talking about people. We're talking about faculty, staff and administrators and students, who have disabilities or who are deaf or hard of hearing and I think that the nice thing about approaching or having a climate change on the campus where Universal Design is adopted is that you begin to look at all

environments through that lens, so it does have ripple affects and I think also that's really powerful language we can use as we talk about the changes that we see that need to be made on our campus is to remind folks that we are talking about faculty staff administrators and students who are hard of hearing or have disabilities.

>> MICHELLE SWANEY: Carol, do you have anything you'd like to add?

>> CAROL FUNCKES: No, I don't at this time.

>> SUE FOSTER: Can you just rephrase that question one more time for me? Make sure I understood where we were going with that?

>> MICHELLE SWANEY: Sure, the question is, how do you see Universal Design in terms of the educational environment that includes deaf faculty, staff, and students?

>> SUE FOSTER: Ah, okay yes I agree with what Melanie was saying, I think that you know, we are creating a community, hopefully in the best possible world on our campuses and so everybody is to be included in that community. In terms of faculty, it has to do with faculty meetings, there's been a huge movement to try to make sure that all who know sign do sign and all the public places, many of us hearing fall back into you run into the hearing colleague in the hall and you start talking and no one's around. That's not right. If we're working in a building with deaf colleagues, and we know sign, we should be using it. It's a great teaching tool. It takes more effort, more thought. We have to get sometimes out of our comfort zone, but I think the same thing applies to being on a campus with anybody who has a disability, just being aware of it when the easier thing seems to go another way.

>> MELANIE THORNTON: Michelle: Can I add something else?

>> MICHELLE SWANEY: Sure, go ahead.

>> MELANIE THORNTON: I think this is a really good point to talk about the medical model versus the social model as well. In the medical model, we think of the expert as the person, I mean, traditionally, people often think as the expert as someone without a disability and the person receiving services having a disability and when we promote the social model of disability and get away from the medical model, we're creating an environment where we're more likely to be a campus that welcomes hiring people who are deaf or hard of hearing and disabled people more. So I think that attitudinal change that occurs has very powerful ripple effects in terms of the makeup staff and administrators.

>> AMY HEBERT: Melanie, I know that you have been and other co-workers have been very effective and successful in having Universal Design start to change the campus climate there, could you maybe tell us how Universal Design benefits the disability support services office?

>> MELANIE THORNTON: As we've begin to make a shift on our campus, we find that our efforts are directed more toward sustainable activities, what I mean by that is that there's a sense that we're spending less time putting out fires and more time acting as agents of change, acting as collaborators with people across the campus. Our staff has become more passionate about what we do and as we see the ripple effects of the changes we make, we become that much more energized. I see us being more enthusiastic about the kinds of things we're involved in on a day-to-day basis.

>> AMY HEBERT: And Melanie, I just wanted to say before anyone else adds, maybe you can tell the participants a little about what you're going to be doing in your preconference session at the PEPNet conference this April. I know I caught you off guard, but I thought it was perfect timing.

>> MELANIE THORNTON: I'm drawing a blank on which presentation it is. Are you co-presenting on that one, too? We'll be presenting on Universal Design and looking at changing this whole idea of moving from social model -- I mean from medical model to social model and having discussions about how we can act as an agent of change in our campus environment. And for a much better description, go to the PEPNet website and look at the conference materials.

>> AMY HEBERT: PEPNet.org. That will be the, one of the preconference sessions. So we're very excited that we're going to have this preconference session on Universal Design. So thanks, Melanie.

I'm sorry, Carol, I didn't mean to cut you off, but I would love to hear what you can add on how Universal Design benefits the offices?

>> CAROL FUNCKES: That's quite all right. I always like to hear Melanie and if you are going to be at PEPNet, I strongly encourage people to go here, Melanie, I think she'll do a wonderful job. It's ideas we haven't been thinking about that gets me back to the answer of the question, which is really how does Universal Design benefit us as service providers. I think Melanie put her hand on it. It gives enthusiasm, it gives opportunities to do new and exciting things and to be recognized across our college campuses for what we know and what we bring to the table. We hear constantly from disability service providers who feel undervalued or feel their budgets aren't anything, nobody recognizes them as having skills, I think Universal Design and thinking differently about our jobs gives us all the opportunity to start breaking through some of those stereotypes and to start being invited to be on committees and to participate with faculty development and to have that, what? Excitement of not traditionally student after student, but some things that will lead to sustainability.

>> AMY HEBERT: So what are the benefits for faculty to implement Universal Design?

>> SUE FOSTER: They may find higher levels of satisfaction when they do evaluations at the end. They may find they are able to, in some ways make changes they can take from one course to the next whether or not there's a student with a disability in the

class. They can make a modification they can live with overtime rather than scrambling to fit one student. I suppose they'll see higher levels of success in their class. We really do love to see our students succeed. If we do something and it works and students are getting the material better than they did before, we're going to feel pleased. I have a colleague who teaches in the Liberal Arts program, she's been doing Universal Design practices in terms of turn-taking in her classroom and she has the, I suppose too much benefit, her classes are all oversubscribed they're lining up to get in there. Students with various disabilities or no disabilities, so she's become a very, very popular teacher and you know, she may say it could be too much of a good thing, but I think in the end she's very pleased that she's well respected by the students who take her classes.

>> CAROL FUNCKES: In reaction to that question, what I'd like to do is just share with you a story that the director of our faculty development center here at the University of Arizona tells. It's eye-opening to me. She does workshops to offer strategies for teachers and one of the questions she begins with is "how many of you..." she'll ask them how many read the newspaper. The only thing they find successful is to ignore it and keep going. That's just because they don't have strategies. As we start talking about Universal Design, as we start talking about good teaching and engaging students with a variety of options and strategies, I think we empower faculty who again are not pedagogically oriented. As Sue says, that's really what you're looking for, that's what you're doing the majority of your day.

I guess the other point I might make and I'm going specifically to a Universal Design to student assessment is the concept and I mentioned it earlier is that, sometimes the instruments that our faculty designed because they don't know how to design anything differently is not necessarily the essential pieces they wish they could measure. For example, it measures how quickly a student could do something. I think if we can help faculty to recognize that not only are they better teachers in reaching their students, but they're more empowered in terms of appreciating what they've been successful in teaching, that will help to encourage them and to develop them.

>> AMY HEBERT: Well then what is the benefit of Universal Design for a student who is deaf and hard of hearing?

>> SUE FOSTER: I think one of the most important ways in which it helps that the students comes away from the situation feeling less like they stand out in the classroom. A modification is being made that benefits not just them, but other students in the class. They recognize they have a special need in the class, interpreter, note taker, what have you, many of the changes the faculty member might make are going to benefit everyone. They're not the only one. It sometimes is helpful for them to just know they're not the only student who wishes the teacher would leave the images up a little bit longer before they race on with the descriptions of them or they're not the only one who feels they haven't had enough time to process a question before someone is called on to answer. So I think having the knowledge of Universal Design helps them understand it's not always just about them, it can be about everyone else. It makes

them feel like they're most on even footing with everyone else in the classroom.

>> CAROL FUNCKES: I totally agree with you Sue. It's that inclusivity, the one in the group standing out as the one needing special attention. How powerful is that? Melanie talked quite a bit about diversity and the social model of disability and as we move toward the social model of disability that really supports Universal Design, we move again away from that individual who's deaf or hard of hearing having to identify as the problem and having to have all these additional responsibilities placed upon them in regards to navigating the situation, requested interpreters and looking for note takers and doing other things for whom the environment has been designed don't have to do.

>> AMY HEBERT: Well I know that you touched on this already Carol, but what are the benefits of Universal Design for a student with another disability or a student who doesn't have a disability at all?

>> CAROL FUNCKES: We have touched on the concept of the benefit of Universal Design for students who are deaf and hard of hearing and have other kinds of differences. We can use the term disability, but I think we are also impacted students who are learners of English. In the regard to students who fit into the hole, I think we can see a benefit in that I go back to the concept of diversity and value that it gives to each of us to meet people who have different life experiences, who view the world differently and how that enriches our lives. So I would say that Universal Design can benefit those of us with differences in terms of making them unsequential, not barriers to participation, and for those who don't have barriers already, it can benefit us by appreciating that there's more than one way to look at the world.

>> SUE FOSTER: I think an additional thing is that it helps students who might not have, they might have been struggling with something in the classroom and just not understood why. Thought it was all their fault. They don't have a disability, they haven't gone to the disability service office, they don't have a special accommodation, but yet they're struggling. As some of our hearing students found, they did better there was modification, there was better use of visuals and certain things just happened. I think they begin to understand that maybe the reason they were struggling wasn't their fault. Maybe the material wasn't being presented effectively. For non-disabled students, those who are having difficulties assimilating the information, the pressure might be off them. It's not all about me, it's about the teacher, the way the material's prepared or shared. I think it's a relief. It might be a relief for many students to be in a situation where there's an explanation that doesn't require the illness on them.

>> AMY HEBERT: Melanie, did you want to add to our final question of the day?

>> MELANIE THORNTON: Sure, I just would like to emphasize the term usability as a part of the discussion. We've used that term some of the day, but I think in regard to this question, just want to emphasize that Universal Design is really just good design and it increases usability for everyone and as the environment becomes more useable then everyone is able to focus more on what is important and that is learning, engaging,

interacting and participating in the course or the environment or the activity at hand.

>> AMY HEBERT: Well, thank you all very much. I know that we have several questions that have come in through e-mail or instant messenger and unfortunately we will not be able to get to those today, but we will answer those questions at the conclusion of this TeleTraining and have that posted to the PEPNet.org website.

I would like to thank my co-moderator, Michelle Swaney, you did an awesome job, thank you very much. I would like to thank Carol, Susan and Melanie, thanks to all of you for joining us today as our panelists. I want to thank you so much for all the information you shared. And of course I'd like to thank all of the participants for joining in. PEPNet provides training and technical assistance for professors and support staff who serve students who are deaf and hard of hearing. PEPNet also demonstrates how technology can be used to provide access and accommodations within programs for individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing. This information is provided for you on the PowerPoint slides. If you're in the PEPNet South region, please contact the pep note coordinator in your state.