Website helps faculty focus on disabilities' impact on classroom[1]

In the realm of teaching and learning, the impact of disabilities on students and faculty may not always be a top-of-mind topic. It may even be an unexpected consideration.

With that understanding, the Disabilities Committee at CU Denver has developed a website highlighting disability information for faculty[2].

Amy Vidali[3], an associate professor of English at CU Denver, specializes in rhetoric, writing and disability studies. She chairs the CU Denver Faculty Assembly committee, which launched the website about a year ago. Its development is ongoing, including the recent addition of a Syllabus Statement on Disability and Access[4].

"Faculty often have questions – 'I'm told that a student needs a note taker, but what do I do? How do I start these conversations?'" Vidali said. "If you're not thinking about disabled students until you start working with them, it can be really hard to shift. We're really trying to get faculty to think about disability while they're planning a course, rather than waiting for a student to present an issue."

Vidali calls the syllabus statement a faculty-to-faculty resource that's adaptable to many educational settings.

"We are trying to make it part of the conversation that faculty are having with students," she said. "My experience, and that of a lot of faculty, is that disability is not really a problem in the classroom, but is something that can enrich the classroom. It can make it exciting. I want to put the bigger frame on disability as a diversity issue. We want the legal and policy issues to be solved, but also want to celebrate the diversity of students on campus and celebrate disability as part of that. I'm always trying to balance those two things."

As both chair of the committee and a faculty member who works in disability studies, Vidali frequently fields questions about accommodating students with disabilities. The website – which also offers information for faculty who are disabled – is another resource.

"Someone might say, 'Oh my gosh, I have disabled students in my class – what do I do? I don't want to do the wrong thing,'" Vidali said. "Of course, we want to make sure people are compliant with the Americans With Disabilities Act and other regulations. But we're also really interested in, for lack of a better word, normalizing disability on campus. We're trying to raise awareness."

Vidali noted a National Council on Education estimate[5] that 11 percent of students nationally are registering for disability services at higher education institutions. Learning disabilities are most common, followed by psychosocial disabilities.

That 11 percent may be a low estimate of the total number. Many who qualify might fear the stigma that could accompany requesting such status. Also, many students do not register with Disability Resources and Services because of the cost of having their disabilities documented – sometimes around $1,000, though CU Denver offers some low-cost options.

For more information on the committee and the website, contact Vidali at amy.vidali@ucdenver.edu[6].

President, chancellors sign letter supporting DACA students[7]

The University of Colorado's president and four chancellors have joined hundreds of education leaders across the country in signing a letter of support for DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) students.

As of Wednesday, more than 600 college and university presidents and chancellors had signed the letter,[8] which

originated at California's Pomona College. The list of leaders includes CU President Bruce Benson and Chancellors Phil DiStefano, CU Boulder; Pam Shockley-Zalabak, UCCS; Dorothy Horrell, CU Denver; and Don Elliman, CU Anschutz Medical Campus.

"The chancellors and I feel it's important to sign on to this letter, which reflects the University of Colorado's commitment to access and success for all students," Benson said.

DACA took effect in 2012. Since then, the letter reads, "We have seen the critical benefits of this program for our students, and the highly positive impacts on our institutions and communities." The letter urges national leaders to uphold, continue and expand DACA.

There are an estimated 750,000 DACA recipients, also known to some as dreamers, in the United States.
[9]

Tuition benefit options to expand this fall[10]

The usefulness of CU's tuition waiver benefit is being expanded as part of a three-year pilot study launching in fall 2017.

The pilot program recently was presented to President Bruce Benson and all campus chancellors, who approved the implementation. The recommendation was advanced by a task force at the direction of President Benson and led by chair Susan Szpyrka, senior vice chancellor for administration and finance at UCCS.

A benefits-eligible employee at any campus will be able to use the proposed benefit – up to $2,400 per academic year – for a dependent enrolled at any other CU campus for undergraduate study. The employee's home campus will be responsible for payment of the benefit to the CU host campus chosen by the student.

Under the pilot rules, employees must waive their benefit to provide it to the dependent. The employee-only tuition benefit remains unchanged as it already includes a provision for attending classes, space available, on any CU campus.

Last April, President Benson charged the chief financial and human resources officers for the campuses and system to conduct a study to determine the financial feasibility of adding an intercampus tuition benefit for dependents to the tuition benefit plan. The task force began its work last summer.

"I appreciate the work of the task force to get us to this pilot program and I am looking forward to seeing its result," Benson said.

Szpyrka noted that the task force consisted of administrators who worked with faculty and staff who were appointed by their respective governance groups. Faculty Council and Staff Council for years have advocated for an improved dependent tuition benefit.

Specifics of the pilot's design and procedures will be detailed on the Employee Services Tuition Benefit webpage[11] in the coming weeks and months.

The pilot will be studied for usage, value and feasibility, specifically whether the model is sustainable financially.

Search committee will work to identify next UCCS chancellor[12]

The work of finding a successor to University of Colorado Colorado Springs Chancellor Pam Shockley-Zalabak, who is retiring from the university Feb. 15, has begun.

President Bruce Benson has announced Leonard Dinegar, senior vice president and chief of staff, as chair of the committee. Benson said he hopes to have a new chancellor in place by summer.

Nominations [13]for committee members are due Monday, Jan. 23.

Individuals may nominate themselves or associates. The nomination form and more information is available at www.cu.edu/uccs-chancellor-search[13].

Per Board of Regents Policy 3.E[14], the chancellor search committee is to consist of:

at least four faculty (including one dean nominated by the campus deans' council);
one student;
one staff;
and one alumnus/a, or Colorado resident.

Faculty, staff and student governance groups, as well as alumni organizations, have been asked to nominate from within their memberships.

The president also may appoint additional committee members if deemed appropriate.

The process also will involve a search firm, DHR International[15], which was selected after interviews with several firms.

Shockley-Zalabak last month announced her plans to retire from UCCS[16] after 15 years at the helm and a 40-year-plus association with the campus. Benson communicated his appreciation [17]for Shockley-Zalabak and announced Venkat Reddy, dean, College of Business and associate vice chancellor, as interim chancellor while the search is conducted.

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New international employees must meet with tax specialist[18]

New international employees must meet with a CU international tax specialist before they fill out their W-4. Schedule an appointment here.[19]

Many international employees are restricted in how they complete Form W-4, which determines how much income tax is withheld from an employee's pay. CU specialists review these considerations and ensure employees fill out the form correctly.

For their appointments, new international employees should:
bring their passports, I-94 and immigration documents. prepare to review their entire history of presence in the United States, including previous visits in different immigration statuses.
Note: International employees do not need to have a Social Security number for these appointments.

For more information, see Employee Services' international employee webpage.[20]

What makes a great leader? Leadership minor, speaker series probe the question[21]

Village Center Dining and Community Commons now open[22]

Wind knocks tree onto Cragmor Hall[23]

UCCS earns gold-level Military Friendly Award[24]

Chancellor raises curtain on Next Stage Collaborative[25]

School of Medicine students defend physicians' right to recommend marijuana[26]

Meeks talks government relations, legislative involvement[27]

Block named associate dean for College of Business[28]

School of Pharmacy faculty highly read in 2016[29]

Faculty from the School of Pharmacy had three of the top 10 most read articles in Pharmacotherapy in 2016.

They are: Danielle Rhyne Fixen, Sarah Anderson and Laura Borgelt for the "Effects of Medical Marijuana on Migraine Headache Frequency in an Adult Population"; Allison Blackmer for "Management of Sleep Disorders in Children with Neurodevelopmental Disorders: A Review"; and Cindy O'Bryant and Ashley Glode for "Antibody Drug Conjugates: A Clinical Pharmacy Perspective on an Emerging Cancer Therapy."

Laura Borgelt and Kari Franson's paper titled "The pharmacologic and clinical effects of medical cannabis" published in 2013 was Pharmacotherapy's most downloaded paper in 2015 and is on track to be the most downloaded paper in 2016 as well.

CU Boulder researchers help develop self-healing material that could lead to 'soft' robots[30]

Hudson named head women's soccer coach[31]

Links
[1] https://connections.cu.edu/spotlights/website-helps-faculty-focus-disabilities-impact-classroom[2] http://clas.ucdenver.edu/disability/[3] http://amyvidali.com/[4] http://clas.ucdenver.edu/disability/syllabi/[5] https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=60[6] mailto:amy.vidali@ucdenver.edu[7] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/president-chancellors-sign-letter-supporting-daca-students[8] https://www.pomona.edu/support-daca[9] https://connections.cu.edu/sites/default/files/daca_letter.jpg[10] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/tuition-benefit-options-expand-fall[11] http://www.cu.edu/employee-services/benefits/employee-tuition-benefit[12] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/search-committee-will-work-identify-next-uccs-chancellor[13] http://www.cu.edu/uccs-chancellor-search[14] https://www.cu.edu/regents/policy-3e-searches-administrators-and-guidelines-appointment-chief-officers-university[15] http://www.dhrinternational.com/[16] http://communique.uccs.edu/?p=25288[17] http://www.cu.edu/article/president-benson-retirement-uccs-chancellor[18] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/new-international-employees-must-meet-tax-specialist[19] https://booknow.appointment-plus.com/43rspqeq/[20] http://www.cu.edu/employee-services/international-employee-0/[21] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/what-makes-great-leader-leadership-minor-speaker-series-probe-question[22] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/village-center-dining-and-community-commons-now-open[23] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/wind-knocks-tree-cragmor-hall[24] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/uccs-earns-gold-level-military-friendly-award[25] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/chancellor-raises-curtain-next-stage-collaborative[26] https://connections.cu.edu/stories/school-medicine-students-defend-physicians-right-recommend-marijuana[27] https://connections.cu.edu/people/meeks-talks-government-relations-legislative-involvement[28] https://connections.cu.edu/people/block-named-associate-dean-college-business[29] https://connections.cu.edu/people/school-pharmacy-faculty-highly-read-2016[30] https://connections.cu.edu/itn/cu-boulder-researchers-help-develop-self-healing-material-could-lead-soft-robots[31] https://connections.cu.edu/people/hudson-named-head-women-s-soccer-coach