

Understanding Terms and Expressions in our Special Report (Summer 2012 Issue of *Pédagogie collégiale*)

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ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER (ADD)/ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER (ADHD)

A neurological disorder often accompanied by hyperactivity or impulsiveness. In young adults, hyperactivity often disappears, making detection of this disorder difficult. There are three predominant sub-groups of ADHD: inattentiveness, hyperactivity/impulsiveness and mixed.

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS (ASD), SOMETIMES CALLED “PERSISTENT DEVELOPMENT DISORDERS” (PDD)

These neurodevelopmental disorders, which fall into a range of conditions including autism and Asperger syndrome, typically affect social interaction, verbal and nonverbal communication and unusual preoccupations with narrow interests. Asperger's can be distinguished from autism by the lack of delay in early language development. In many cases, ASD are associated with anxiety, sensory hypersensitivity and poor adaptive behaviour, especially as concerns change and transition.

DYSLEXIA

A specific learning disability affecting the ability to read and related in particular to problems with accurately decoding letters, syllables or words in the “usual” time taken by someone of a given age group and academic level. This disorder has repercussions on any academic subject requiring the ability to read.

DYSORTHOGRAPHY

A specific learning disability affecting the ability to assimilate orthographic characteristics and typified by numerous spelling mistakes and slowness in writing. This disorder has repercussions on any academic subject requiring the ability to read.

“EMERGING” POPULATION

Designates a population characterized by a disability (LD, ADD, MHP and PDD or ASD) whose occurrence at the postsecondary level is increasingly prevalent and relatively new (i.e., anywhere between two and 15 years).

FUNCTIONAL IMPAIRMENT

Expression used by Quebec's Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (Department of Education, Recreation and Sport), inter alia for the purposes of student financial assistance, as a synonym for “disability” or “special need”.

HANDICAP SITUATION

A concept that takes account of the facilitators and obstacles involved in student life. The “handicap” that formerly characterized the individual is now a “situation” that results from the interaction between personal factors, environmental factors and lifestyle. If disabled students are not given the accommodation measures required, they are said to be in a “handicap situation” or unable to fully participate in society.



INCLUSION

In addition to ensuring that all stakeholders can co-exist, academic institutions and educators are responsible for ensuring that disabled students are included in all aspects of postsecondary life. The ensuing practice is opposed to any form of education in a “special-needs” environment, advocating instead the participation of all students as members of the academic community.

INTEGRATION

A process in accordance with which disabled students must adapt to the demands of the academic community if they wish to pursue an education. To facilitate participation in academic activities, these students are offered services and accommodations suited to their needs.

LEARNING DISABILITIES (LD)

Neurological disorders affecting a varying number of functions and permanently affecting the acquisition and use of knowledge related to academic learning. These disorders are not related to intellectual or sensory disabilities, lack of motivation or unfavourable socio-economic conditions. The most well-known learning disabilities are dyslexia and dysorthography.

MENTAL-HEALTH PROBLEMS (MHP)

Persistent disorders that negatively affect biopsychosocial functioning, mental-health problems are not attributable to a temporarily difficult situation such as grief, but may be cyclical in nature. The MHP most frequently found at the postsecondary level are anxiety disorders (such as obsessive-compulsive disorder and generalized anxiety disorder) and mood disorders (depression, bipolarity, etc.).

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

The legal obligation to counter discrimination by granting the disabled differential treatment with a view to ensuring their full academic participation—for example, the use of Quebec Sign Language interpreters for students with hearing disorders, or writing software for dyslexic students.

“TRADITIONAL” POPULATION

A population with motor, auditory, visual, organic or neurological disorders (paraplegia, deafness, Crohn's disease, traumatic brain injury, etc.). This population has been present and identified in the province's CÉGEPs and universities since the early 1980s.

UNDUE HARDSHIP

Limit to beyond which an academic institution cannot be expected to go after exhausting all means of accommodating disabled students to allow them to participate in courses, programs or activities. The criteria for evaluating undue hardship must be examined case by case by disability service providers. These criteria involve accommodation costs, repercussions on the academic environment, security and safety issues and possible adverse effects on the rights of others.