



Building Accepting Campus Communities

Accommodation Solutions Online

An Accommodation Support System for Higher Education

Christy A. Horn, PhD University of Nebraska—Lincoln

Under funding from the Office of Postsecondary Education, we are creating an interactive web-based program to provide just-in-time online technical support to faculty and service providers in the accommodation of students with disabilities. The Building Accepting Campus Communities project will result in:

- Accommodation Solutions Online (ASO), a web-based tool providing faculty and students the opportunity to work in collaboration to find tailored solutions to specific accommodation issues. Often, accommodation plans are general and based on categories of disability rather than a student's specific needs. ASO will provide a personalized menu of accommodations based on the student's cognitive and physical characteristics in conjunction with the essential activities or requirements posed by a particular course resulting in customized "fingerprints" leading to better understanding and provision of accommodations.
- The Accommodation Coach provides technical assistance in the form of information about various disabilities and how they impact a student's learning. Guidance is provided for accommodations such as the creation of raised line drawings or facilitation of a group discussion including a student with communication challenges. In addition, video cases and illustrations of the impact of a particular functional characteristic on student academic performance and examples of best practices in accommodation are provided.

The outcome of these efforts is a menu of customized accommodation solution options and authentic classroom best practices focused on the importance of faculty-student interactions. ASO will be disseminated to other institutions of higher education for the purpose of supporting and sustaining the incorporation of accommodations in postsecondary education. Most importantly, the project serves as a catalyst for change by providing an incubator for conversations about how best to develop and test potential accommodation techniques, policies, and practices that are vitally needed.

Collaborative Stakeholders

Accommodation Solutions Online (ASO) is designed for collaboration between three groups: students, service providers, and faculty. ASO supports the provision of accommodation by facilitating collaboration between stakeholder groups in identifying and implementing accommodation activities.

Service Providers

ASO relies upon the skills and expertise of service providers working in collaboration with students and faculty to create accommodation strategies specific to student needs and faculty course requirements.

Students

Students work directly with service providers and faculty to build customized accommodation fingerprints tailored to their individual needs. ASO supports students by increasing ownership and understanding of accommodations.

Faculty

ASO provides faculty, in collaboration with students and service providers, access to accommodation solutions relevant to their own course environment.

Rather than speaking about accommodation in abstract terms, ASO promotes collaboration and understanding about best practices in accommodation. For example, instead of providing an accommodation for a visually impaired student in a science class, ASO addresses the best accommodations for Jamie Smith's specific strengths and vision needs in Dr. Jones' Physics 101 course.

System Defined Templates

Functional Characteristics

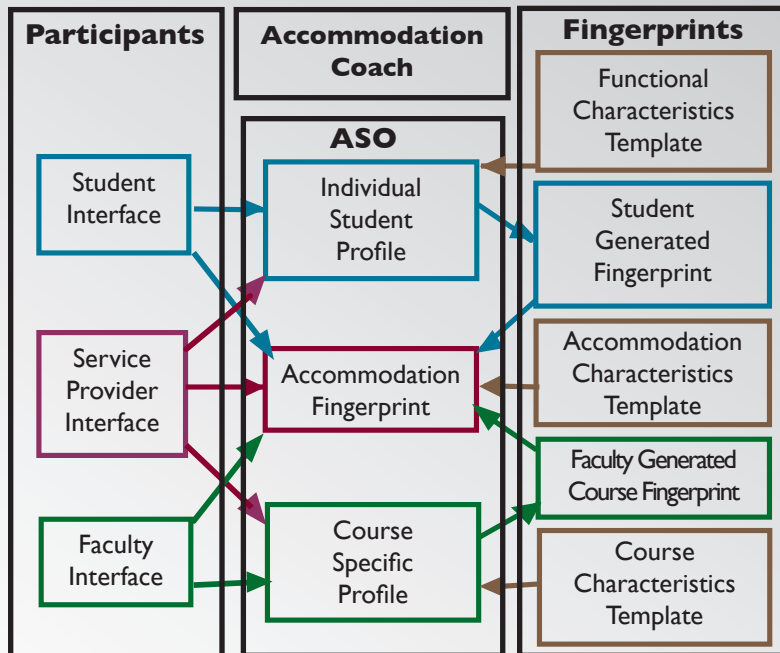
Research literature, diagnostics, and accommodation plans were used to develop a master list of functional characteristics—the most basic attributes that impact student learning.

Course Characteristics

Faculty members at both 2-year and 4-year postsecondary institutions were surveyed to form a comprehensive list of course characteristics (e.g. lecture, laboratory, discussion etc.).

Accommodation Characteristics

Authoritative literature on legal and best practices of accommodation was reviewed in conjunction with student surveys about the use and effectiveness of accommodations to form a comprehensive list of accommodation characteristics.



User Generated Fingerprints

Individual Student Fingerprint

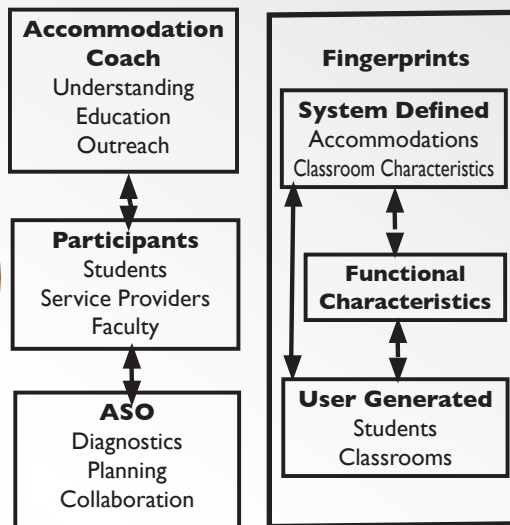
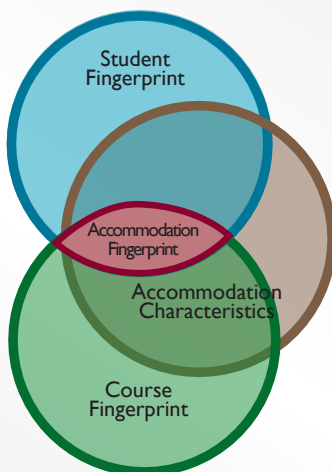
Service providers and students work collaboratively to develop individual profiles. This involves the use of student input and diagnostic information to capture the student's individual cognitive and physical characteristics.

Course Specific Fingerprint

Faculty members who have a student with a disability select from system-defined course characteristics to create a specific fingerprint based on essential course activities and requirements.

Accommodation Fingerprint

An accommodation fingerprint is the intersection among an individual student fingerprint, a course specific fingerprint, and available accommodations. The Accommodation Coach provides resources to assist stakeholders in implementing accommodation fingerprints.



Accommodation Coach

The Accommodation Coach provides just-in-time information about accommodations based on immediate stakeholder needs.

The Accommodation Coach provides:

- Definitions and characteristics of specific disabilities and accommodations.
- Characteristics and behaviors faculty might observe from a student with a specific disability.
- Examples for faculty on how to implement accommodations and best practices in a classroom.
- Clarified explanations for students on how their specific disability impacts their academic performance.
- Explanations why accommodation fingerprints are effective for addressing a student's specific needs.

How did we determine information in the system?

- Literature Reviews
- Student Accommodation Plans
- Diagnostic Information
- Stakeholder Surveys and Interviews

Project Staff:

Christy Horn, Ph.D.

Principal Investigator; BACC
ADA/504 Compliance Officer

Veva Cheney

Director;
UNL Services for Students with Disabilities

Kathie Smith

Project Coordinator; BACC

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