Implementing Clinical Accommodations for Students with Physical Disabilities in Nursing Education

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Introduction

Background
- More students with disabilities seeking degrees[10]
- Most nursing programs lack a developed framework for accommodation[4,7]
- Most nursing faculty lack knowledge on accommodation[7,8]
- Clinical accommodations are more often needed and less often provided in nursing education programs[5,6,9]

Significance
- Student success dependent on faculty's effectiveness during accommodation implementation[2,7]
- Nursing faculty lack resources and guidance on effective accommodation implementation[1,7]
- Without proper guidance many faculty struggle with effective accommodation implementation[7,8]

Purpose
- Uncover the process by which faculty make reasonable academic accommodations for nursing students with orthopedic impairments within the clinical setting of a pre-licensure nursing education program

Methods

Research Question
What is the process by which faculty make reasonable academic accommodations for pre-licensure nursing students with physical disabilities, specifically orthopedic impairments, in the clinical setting of a nursing education program?

Research Design
Constructivist Grounded Theory[3]

Recruitment
594 nursing programs across 20 states
29 potential participants identified

**Participants**
11 Full-time Nurse Educators

Results

Two Processes Emerged from the Data
1. Faculty Perceptions of Their Experience Navigating the Clinical Accommodation Process
2. Reaching the Bottom Line

Faculty Participants defined "The Bottom Line" as the importance of the student meeting the course objectives

Figure 1: Faculty Perceptions of Their Experience Navigating the Clinical Accommodation Process

Many "Players"   Navigating the Matrix   Finding your Way
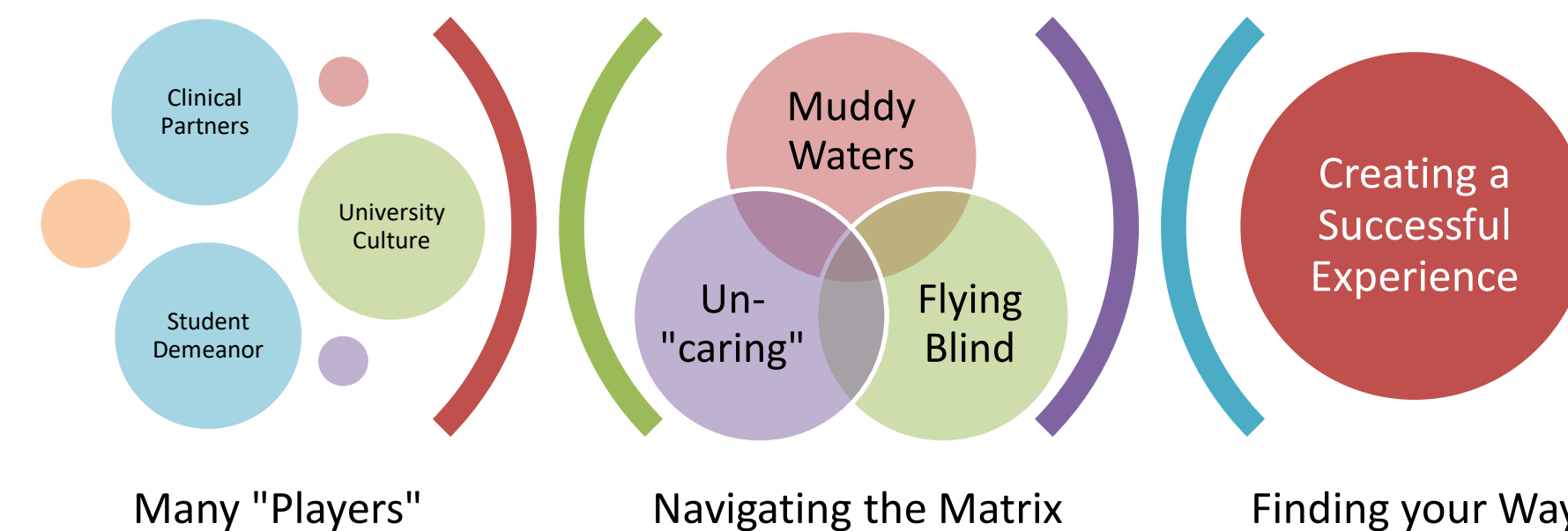
Themes

Many Players
- "We find that when it comes to clinical and accommodations for anything there are a variety of stakeholders who are the decision makers"
    - University Culture
   - Clinical Partners
    - Student Demeanor

Navigating the Matrix
- "It becomes muddy waters and it becomes very difficult to sort through how to be fair and equitable for all parties involved"
    - Flying Blind
    - Un-"caring"
    - Muddy Waters

Finding Your Way
- "Just wondering if we're doing it right? I mean, because we honestly don't- we don't have a [expletive]…clue"

Figure 2: Reaching the Bottom Line
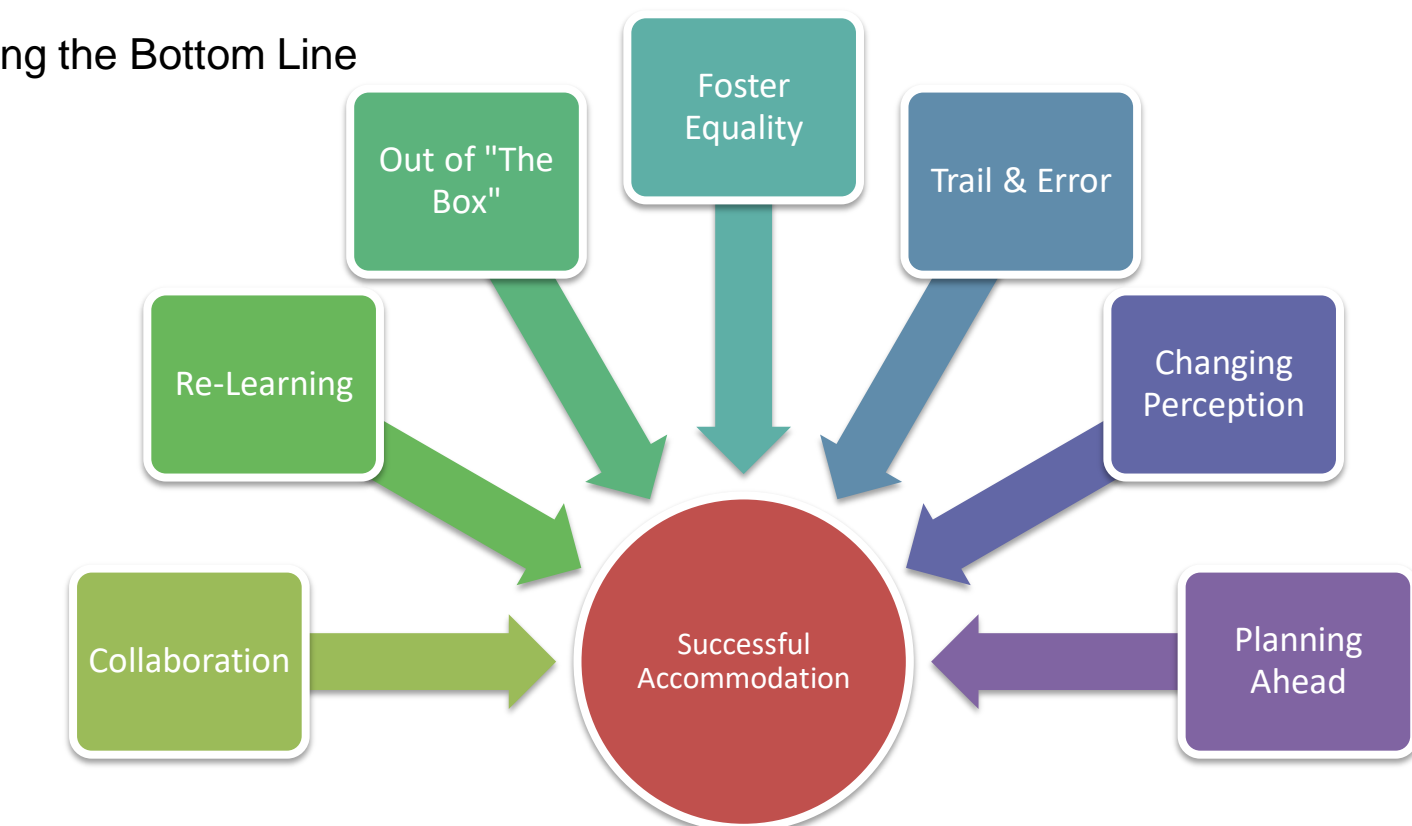
Themes

Planning Ahead
- "It's going to take additional time to figure out how to accomplish the course objectives in a way that you've not done before"

Collaborating
- "If you've never encountered how am I going to handle that? What am I going to do? I think that has helped a lot, having more than one perspective in the room to talk those things out"

Getting Out of the Box
- We see, "the stethoscope, and giving needles, and doing life saving measures type of role as a nurse when in fact there are so many other roles above and beyond just doing that"

Fostering Equality
- "Are we doing harm to her by not giving her the opportunity to take care of x? Are we and not knowing?"

Using Trial and Error
- "We don't know. We're going to be doing this all brand new and together"

Re-Learning
- "You have to adapt"

Changing Perceptions
- "It's probably our overall background that makes us more comfortable with accommodations; and our willingness to change"

Conclusions

1. Key steps in the accommodation implementation process identified
2. Accommodation implementation most effective when steps used in conjunction with each other
3. Accommodation process has numerous barriers, facilitators, and stakeholders
4. Additional research on the accommodation process in nursing education is needed

Contact

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