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STUDENT **PAPER** 6

Use of Inclusive Language and Coordination of Bias Reporting Mechanisms Creates a Better User Experience

Elizabeth E. Ingram

ABSTRACT

This study researches the effect of inclusive language when used in online bias reporting mechanisms as defined by forms-based data intake webpages specifically, and how it increases or decreases the reporting of these incidents. In dialog with prior research, a correlation has been found where victims are more inclined to report bias and feel more encouraged to report such incidents when inclusive language is used. Non-reporting can also be based on fear of reprisal or vaguely worded privacy statements. Title IX regulations delineate data privacy requirements and, as such, are a valuable educational resource in best practices for data collection and dissemination. ADA Law, enacted in 1990, has roots deeply embedded in the fair housing, civil rights, and disability rights movements, which serve to ban bias, harassment, or discrimination based on race, ethnic origin, sex, or ability. Guidelines from these laws, along with a comparison of the University of California at San Diego (UCSD) Office of Students with Disabilities (OSD) and the Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination (OPHD), are the basis of this study. Thus, inclusive language, coordination between relevant webpages, and greater transparency regarding data privacy will result in more inclusive and positive experiences for students with disabilities.

Keywords: Inclusion, Bias, Disability, Harassment, Reporting, Data, Privacy, Gender, Discrimination, Accommodation

The effect of inclusive language, when used in bias reporting mechanisms, is crucial to enhanced student involvement and comfort in reporting bias incidents. This research project aims to raise awareness of the current state of interdepartmental communication on the UCSD campus and offers recommendations on how to increase inclusiveness and student empowerment when using these mechanisms. While this paper is a case study based on observational research, it is also interactive. It includes live links and images of various webpages and forms discussed herein. This design strategy allows the reader to interact with webpages in the same way a student might and explore the other governmental and regional websites included herein. Inclusive language in this context, is defined as using language as "inclusively as possible, inviting communication while also attending to the specific texture of individual experiences" (Price 2011). Literature regarding the use of inclusive language in bias reporting mechanisms is surprisingly scarce, especially so when discussing experiences of disabled students in settings of higher learning. Therefore, this study aims to add knowledge to this area of research.

METHODOLOGY

This study examines existing webpages, documents, archival records, data privacy issues, and how these pertain to students seeking disability accommodation. Using the Insider Research Method, the study of the bias reporting mechanism at UCSD is based on field research used to gather primary observations, specifically the interaction between the OSD and OPHD departments and how these departmental webpages interacted with and channeled users to a bias reporting mechanism (Kirpitchenko & Voloder, 2014). This research was conducted by visiting and interacting with currently operating websites: the UCSD OPHD, ODS, TritonLink and My TritonLink, UCSD Blink Human Resources, CARE, and CAPS, as well as conducting a literature review which included different policies and laws that pertain to inclusiveness and campus violence reports in keeping with Title IX and Clery Act legislation--see Appendix A.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this paper, many definitions may be found in the body of the paper itself. For further reference and clarification, the definitions of special terminology and acronyms used are to be found in Appendix A. For images of specific forms used in this paper, please refer to Appendix B.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Price, Margaret (2011). Mad at School (Corporealities: Discourses of Disability). University of Michigan Press. Kindle Edition. Location 373.

This book describes the conceptions of disability, illness, and mental illness in the setting of higher education. Although much of her research addresses mental disability, this book asks how education practices might change if we understood disability to incorporate the disabled mind. Mental disability affects areas of American culture, including academics. Price asks that we reconsider the long-held values of academic life, including participation, security, and independence. She concludes by stating that academia produces and perpetuates a privileged "able mind" paradigm and that U.S. students in higher education would benefit from practices that create more inclusion and accessibility for disabled students.

Kirpitchenko, L., & Voloder, L. (2014). Insider research method: The significance of identities in the field. SAGE Publications, Ltd.

Kirpitchenko's work outlines processes and mechanisms underlying knowledge creation and how it is researched. This case study focuses on insiderness and outsiderness as research methodologies. A researcher's insiderness not only bears personal characteristics but can also reveal certain suppositions, assumptions, biases, beliefs, and expectations; with insider researchers tending to have inside knowledge about a particular group. This case study provides a theoretical overview of the importance of insider research method and its origins in the early social sciences. It also expands on the positive ethical and practical implications of researching as an insider to the social groups, processes, and practices under study.

Singer, Simon I. "The Fear of Reprisal and the Failure of Victims to Report a Personal Crime." Journal of Quantitative Criminology, vol. 4, no. 3, 1988, pp. 289–302.

Singer examines the reasons why people fail to report their victimizations to the police. Victims state that the reason for not reporting was because determinations had been made that the incident not serious enough to warrant official

intervention, or that nothing could be done. However, a segment of victims also stated that they did not report due to their fear of reprisal. Reprisal, or retribution, is more often a factor when victims are female and acquainted with their abuser. Often, reprisal is the stated reason for not reporting a crime, based on the perceived danger from the perpetrator or situations surrounding the assault. Singer's analysis strongly suggests that in certain social environments the fear of reprisal is a major factor in the nonreporting of crime. For the purposes of this paper, I applied this research to a university campus setting.

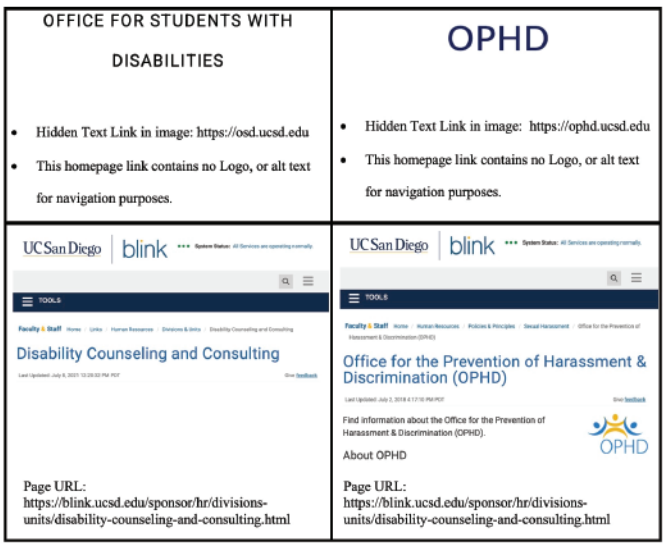
Existing Issues – A Lack of Inclusive Language and Coordination of Webpages

Interdepartmental coordination is crucial in the service of a diverse student body. Personal safety is supported by the interconnection of laws and policies pursuant to the reporting mechanisms of universities that receive Title IX funding (University of California, 2020). The Clery Act, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (United States, Dept. of Education, 2020), as well as state and local laws, govern institutional policies and reports around campus violence (Clery, 2021; Police, 2021).

How websites sometimes do not coordinate or interconnect is illustrated on the homepages of the OSD and OPHD: the first being the logo, or lack thereof. Specifically, the OPHD page for students does not explain the OPHD acronym, nor is there an inclusive logo[1]. Webpages designed for student use differ from those designed for UCSD faculty and staff. A quick Google search brings up the UCSD Blink OPHD webpage, where an immediate comparison may be made to the site used by students. As an example of inclusive design, the use of verbiage and logos is indicative of the paradigm of inclusion concerning staff and faculty (Blink pages), as compared to the lack of such on webpages intended for student use. The student landing page (the page students see first when "landing" on the OSD webpages) contains no inclusive logo link, and the homepage title, Home, is difficult to see in a small font in lowcontrast gray, which may confuse a first-time or sight-impaired viewer. The BLINK OSD page includes a list of helpful contacts for faculty staff members, is well designed and instructive. There is no such list on the corresponding page for student use (see fig. 1 below).

FIGURE 1:

OSD and OPHD designed for student use (black-top), and UCSD Blink faculty website homepages (blue-bottom). Note inclusive logo used on OPHD Blink page, lower right.



Note: Differences between student and faculty/staff homepages.

Another example of non-inclusive design occurs on the OPHD Make a Report[2] page. Noted as a best (design) practice on crime reporting websites, specifically those that deal with bias reporting, sexual violence, or partner abuse, is to include an oversized safety button (graphic) to allow a quick exit from a page for a victim's

[1] UCSD OPHD homepage: https://ophd.ucsd.edu

[2] OPHD Make a Report page: https://ophd.ucsd.edu/report-bias/index.html

privacy and safety. This feature should be used consistently on each page that discusses topics like the above. At first glance, this Quick Escape button may seem innocuous, but the placement and subtext point to another meaning entirely (see fig. 2 following). A victim, specifically a victim with disabilities, cannot usually make a "quick escape." Words like these can act as trauma triggers, psychological stimuli that prompt involuntary recall of previous traumatic experiences, further contributing to emotionally triggering incidents in certain individuals (Center, 2014). A more thoughtful and inclusive rewording of the button could be Quick Exit, as seen below (see figs. 2 and 3).

Obstacles to Filing a Bias Report and How Web Design Effects Reporting

Unfortunately, even with improved coordination between departments and quick exit buttons, filing a Bias Incident Report can be a confusing experience, especially for someone who has recently been victimized by harassment or a discriminatory incident. Creating an inclusive and equitable space for students to address and report bias incidents in terms of language and proactive design strategies results in a higher reporting compliance rate and a more positive experience for the complainant (victim) or advocate reporting a bias incident. Further, although the term bias is present in the page URL (useful when searching for a bias reporting mechanism), the word is not used until halfway down the page in the Why Report? section. The addition of the word should be made to the first paragraph of the page for easy identification by the student user.

As challenging as filing an actual bias report is, the TritonLink[3] landing page, the information entry point for all UCSD incoming students, does not make things clear for students either.

FIGURE 2:

Logos used as navigation buttons

Note: Different well-known logos used as decoys to quickly switch pages. Difference in inflections and meanings of the words escape in comparison to exit.

FIGURE 3:

Two optional designs (although still using phrase "Quick Escape").

Note: Use of a floating quick exit button[4] that moves with the reader on the CARE page.

Although this page includes drop-down menus containing links grouped into the helpful categories of Academics, Finances & Jobs, Student Life, Well-Being, and Campus Services, the links to Disability Services and Personal Safety are hidden in the Well-Being menu. To view their personalized student information such as Webreg, enrollment, and financial aid status, a student must log in to their My TritonLink page. Once there, the drop-down links change, and there is no longer a Well-Being menu available. Also of note is that the My TrintonLink page contains a link back to TritonLink itself, titled Current Students. Perhaps a relabeling of this to TritonLink would be a helpful addition. On these TritonLink pages critical department links are listed. The Disability Services link should be added

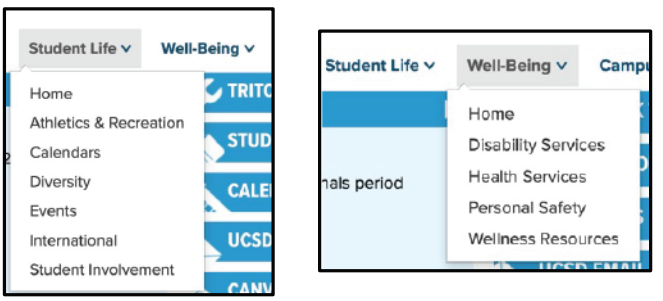
[3] TritonLink Sign-in Homepage: https://students.ucsd.edu

[4] UCSD CARE About Us page: https://care.ucsd.edu/about/index.html.

to the Student Life drop-down menu along with Athletics and Recreation, Diversity and Student Involvement (see fig. 4 below). This design is a missed opportunity to present diversity and inclusion of students with disabilities as part of student life to the thousands of UCSD Triton students perusing these webpages.

FIGURE 4:

TritonLink page, Student Life and Well-Being drop-down menus



Note: Placement of Disability Services not placed in Student Life menu. .

Personal Safety and Confusing Verbiage

The Personal Safety @UCSD page is also contained in the Well-Being menu. This link should also be moved to the Student Life menu to represent inclusive student life on campus. Listed last on this page under the heading of sexual harassment is a short description of the OPHD, inferring that this office covers sexual harassment issues only. Then, a quick scan of the terminology used on this page shows that the topics are primarily weighted toward "sexual" assault: with specific terms repeated multiple times such as assault (8), sexual (7), harassment (4), discrimination (3). The term "bias" is not used or defined (Bias). It is important to note that the definition of a hate crime is a crime with a bias component (United States, Dept. of Justice, 2021). This emphasis is significant with the current upsurge in hate crimes, including those toward the Disabled Community. If the term "bias" is not going to be used in parallel to sexual harassment or in context with other crimes like sexual assault, perhaps the term "hate crime" along with "sexual assault" would be more in accordance with the definition of the term "hate crime" the first use of which occurred in 1960 and is now part of the common vernacular (Hate).

Also found on the TritonLink page is a link broadly proclaiming the Center for Advocacy, Resources, and Education (CARE). It should be noted that due to the text on this webpage CARE seemingly does not provide advocacy for victims of sexual harassment, bias, or discrimination--only sexual assault. Calls to CARE regarding sexual harassment are referred to Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) when they should be referred to the Office for the Prevention of Harassment & Discrimination (OPHD) first. No mention is made on any of these pages of this interdepartmental procedural hierarchy, or lack thereof.

Importantly, the terms “sexual harassment” and “sexual assault” are not interchangeable (Rape 2021). As defined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), sexual harassment includes:

- Unwelcome sexual advances
- Requests for sexual favors
- Other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature in the workplace or learning environment

It is essential to understand that sexual harassment does not always have to manifest as sexual behavior or be directed at one person. For example, negative comments about women may be considered sexual harassment (Sexual). Currently, there is a link to the OSD homepage to this page. However, there is no reciprocal link back to this vital Personal Safety @ UCSD page, which means that a student reading about personal safety who may have been a victim of a crime does not have a direct access link to the OPHD from this page.

[5] TritonLink Personal Safety @UCSD page: https://students.ucsd.edu/well-being/personal-safety/index.html

Bias Reporting and Privacy Infringement

When a student does find their way to the OPHD, and has decided to file a Bias Report, the wording on the webpages again becomes vague. The OPHD is a UC Title IX compliance office, tasked with investigating sexual harassment and sexual assault on campus. Title IX 2020 guidelines are currently in flux, which may be why the online form previously titled as Filing a Bias Report, has been recently renamed as the OPHD Incident Report Form (Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination, Filing a Report).[6] In another example of the lack of webpage coordination, the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response (SVPR)[7] homepage contains instructions on "Filing a Report, noting that there are four different reporting options available: Administrative, Criminal, Civil, and Non-Reporting." There is also a link to Privacy and Confidentiality,[8] which delineates the difference between the filing a report and making a claim. Also, on this Privacy and Confidentiality page, the Title IX Coordinator/Sexual Harassment Office is referenced as obligated to respond to reports, and confidentiality of these reports, as such requests will be considered in the "dual contexts of the university's legal obligation to ensure a working and learning environment free from sexual misconduct and the due process rights of the accused to be informed of the allegations and their source" (University of California, San Diego, 2020).

Unfortunately, the UCSD Annual Reports (aka Annual Security Reports) still have not been updated past 2015. The OPHD has not released an annual report since 2015, as noted in a 2018 article in The Triton (Borrelli, 2018). These annual reports include the number of sexual harassment and discrimination complaints filed with OPHD in coordination with other departments such as the UC San Diego Police Department and CARE. In particular, the 2015 report lists 185 Harassment Allegations, of which fifteen were noted explicitly as relating to a disability or medical condition. Most complainants were undergraduate and graduate students, and most respondents were listed as other, with faculty listed as the second-highest respondent. The summary of allegations quoted disability discrimination as occurring most often, using the similarly worded phrases "bias based on disability" and "harassment based on disability" as equally reported. Glaringly apparent is that a majority of the actions categorized as taken in these situations are listed as "insufficient evidence," meaning not acted upon due to lack of evidence. In a 2018 article in The Triton, then Director of the OPHD, Elena Dalcourt, stated that the OPHD Annual Report had been canceled in 2015 in favor of a new format to "more strategically support their effort and mission." She then estimated that complaint statistics for the 2017-2018 school year totaled 630 complaints, a 252 percent increase compared to the 2015-2016 report (Borrelli, 2018).

The most efficacious and legally binding reporting mechanism format of the three choices given is the online form[9] (although this is not mentioned on the form itself). What is mentioned is that the information a complainant provides will be shared with the appropriate university officials involved in any monitoring, investigation, or resolution of the incident, even if the complainant does not want a university response. These conditions act as a deterrent to reporting, which skews the data from reflecting the actual rate of bias incidences on campus. An example of this complex and confusing situation is referenced in the current and newly published UC San Diego 2021 Annual Security and Fire Safety Report, reference is made to an agreement dated November 6, 2015. It reads:

> ***...in accordance with California law and by a Memorandum of Understanding, the UC San Diego Police Department will disclose to the San Diego Police Department any report of a violent crime, sexual assault or hate crime received by the UC San Diego Police Department, either reported directly or***

[6] OPHD Incident Report Form: https://ucsdcms.i-sight.com/portal
[7] UCSD Sexual Violence Prevention and Response: https://sos.ucsd.edu/filing-a-report/index.html
[8] UCSD Privacy and Confidentiality: https://sos.ucsd.edu/resources/privacy.html
[9] OPHD Incident Report Form: https://ucsdcms.i-sight.com/portal

through a Campus Security Authority, and made by the victim for the purposes of notifying the University or law enforcement. These reports will not identify the victim, unless the victim consents to being identified after they have been informed of their right to have their personally identifying information withheld. If the victim does not consent to being identified, he alleged assailant shall not be identified in the information disclosed to the San Diego Police Department. (---Police, 2021, p. 10)

Lack of Advocacy and Questions of Data Privacy

Additionally, a student is referred to the CARE office on campus if they have experienced sexual violence and would like to learn more about their "options." As a victim, not just an experiencer, one would need guidance and probably consultation as well as intervention. As a disabled student, this CARE contact is reported to the OSD office. How this information is used is unstated. Psychologically, filling out a form dictates a confident presence of mind usually not found in someone who has recently experienced victimization for perhaps the first time. In terms of the options mentioned above, the complainant already has been told in no uncertain terms, quite harshly in fact, that all expectations of privacy will be given up by reporting the Bias Incident (Bias). The CARE website does, however, offer support and advocacy services, although there is included a odd disclaimer that internet communication is not secure, with no further explanation but that all communication with users of CARE services is somehow "privileged and confidential."

As mentioned previously, the OPHD Incident Report Form webpage has been replaced. The latest iteration of this bias reporting mechanism shows via a timy icon at the very bottom of the scrolled webpage that it has been outsourced to i-Sight Case Management, headquartered in Ottawa, Canada. Their homepage describes i-Sight Software as "a powerful case management platform that streamlines your investigative process and provides the data you need to analyze results, prevent incident and losses, and protect your employees."[10] No mention is made of the protection of complainant's (e.g., students) data unless, of course, student and employee complaints are treated in the same (unstated) manner. In a YouTube video, i-Sight describes itself as Investigative Case Management Software.[11] In this video, Joe Gerard, COO, describes how the software compiles incident data, then parses and distributes this data on a need-to-know basis. No information regarding data privacy laws for this situation is listed on the UCSD site, nor is information regarding international data-sharing norms or the broader field of personal data protection regulations between countries addressed. Perhaps the UC system sees student data as customer data and as such ascribes to rules based on international consumer data rules. As such, data type and international data storage rationale may be understood based on the tax status of the UC department, or affiliate, involved. The tax status of the regents of the University of California is at once listed as a public trust, a public corporation, self-governing and not subject to California nonprofit public benefit corporation law, is qualified for tax exemption as an organization, and is also classified as a public charity (Tax).

Two Different Models of CARE: Adjudication vs. Investigation

In addition, the Sexual Violence & Prevention pages contain a CARE Advocates FAQ.[12] This FAQ is very detailed and includes jargon that hinders comprehension in the general reader and separates related subjects into two different models: one for investigation and adjudication for cases involving students and the other for cases involving faculty and staff. The favored emphasis for both appears to be adjudication. Perhaps this information would better serve students if listed on the CARE webpages themselves.

[10] i-Sight Homepage: https://i-sight.
[11] i-Sight YouTube Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9AykO-ZF7AEU
[12] SVPR CARE Advocates FAQ: https://sos.ucsd.edu/faq/care-advocates.html#Who-are-CARE-advocates,-and-how

Also included in this FAQ under the section, Why were these CARE advocate positions created?, is described CARE advocacy services. It states the following:

> ***The advocate office, CARE: Advocate Office for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Misconduct, was created at every UC campus to provide dedicated, full-time support to survivors of sexual violence, both immediately and over the long term. These dedicated offices ensure that survivors can reach an advocate whose sole responsibility is to support their needs.***

The page then includes a link to a Get Help page, which conversely advises calling 911 for immediate support or to contact the UC San Diego Police Department to ask to speak to an advocate. Students may even be referred to CAPS services in lieu of advocacy services from CARE, referencing yet another example of confusing rhetoric.

Underserved Students: UC SHIP and CAPS

The UCSD Student Health Services (SHIP) is only available to students with approved insurance, i.e., UC SHIP administered by Anthem Blue Cross. It should be noted that some lowincome or students with disabilities may have other forms of insurance such as Medi-Cal community-based programs. CAPS "invites" these unserved students to utilize alternative CAPS Groups and Workshops[13] , iFlourish self-improvement programs[14] , and local Urgent Care[15] (offcampus) clinics. CAPS is a brief intervention model and as such students will be referred to other practitioners off-campus. If a student is already under the care of a therapist outside the CAPS purview, the student will not be able to receive therapy on-campus but will be referred back to their own therapist. Based on these observations and criteria, the only alternatives left to a student experiencing harassment or a mental health crisis or is to call 9-1-1 San Diego Police Department/UCSD campus police, San Diego's Center for Community Solutions, or the National Sexual Assault Hotline (neither being listed in plain view on the CARE webpage). This situation is not tenable nor indicative of inclusive advocacy serving a diverse population of students.

Lack of Transparency: The OSD and the OPHD

The OSD describes itself as working closely with all students, including those with temporary and permanent conditions and their families. In fact, they state that they work with all students. This is inclusive yet vague verbiage that needs to be clarified.

The OPHD is the University's Title IX representative office and oversees UCSD's compliance with the sexual violence and sexual harassment policies. However, the OSD Disability-Based Grievance Procedures page states, "to treat students with respect, a timely response and to ensure against reprisals, and to deal confidentially with these issues to the greatest extent possible" as their goal.[16] Although the complainant has already been routed to this form, the complainant is then encouraged to contact the OPHD if they believe they have experienced discrimination because of their disability, specifically regarding accommodations and interactions with the OSD office itself. This specific use of non-focused user instructions can be very confusing for a bias report claimant as nothing is stated about acts of harassment or bias, and is inconsistent with the use, or lack thereof, on other university webpages (see fig. 5).

OSD Intake Procedures: Ableism

Ableism, the discrimination in favor of non-disabled people, is specifically showcased in terms of the intake procedure of the OSD. A student seeking accommodation must provide the OSD with multiple forms, letters, and medical

[13] Groups, Workshops and Forums at CAPS: https://caps.ucsd.edu/services/groups.html
[14] iFlourish Online Self-Improvement Program: https://caps.ucsd.edu/_-files/flyers/flyer_iflourish_spring21.pdf
[15] UCSD Urgent Care Medical Clinics: https://bit.ly/3bvfY0e
[16] OSD Disability-Based Grievance Procedures page: https://osd.ucsd.edu/-students/appeal-process.html

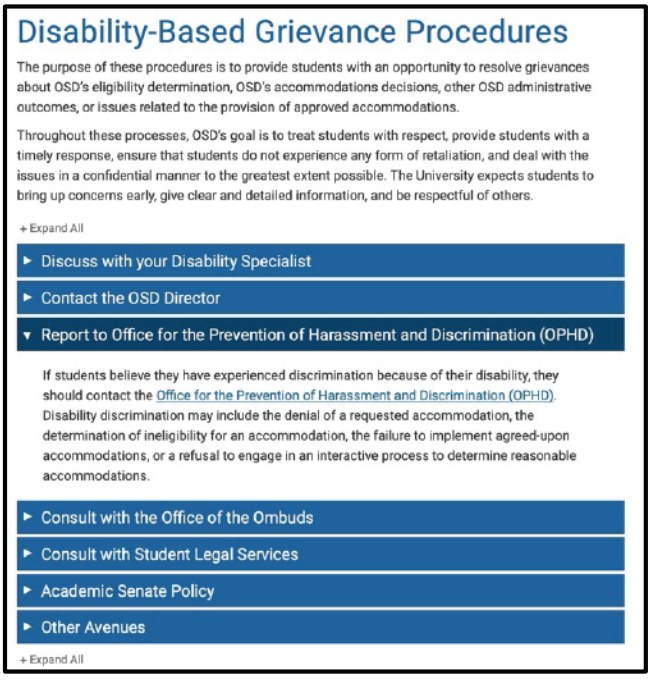
reports as proof of their disability (see fig. 6 below). Disability Counseling and Consulting (DCC)[17] is the division of Human Resources responsible for providing disability management and job accommodation consultation services to UCSD faculty and staff who have a medical condition (physical or mental) that interferes with their ability to work, i.e., disability. A document included on the Academic Personnel Services website, states that "records are kept strictly within the DCC office, assuring protected information is not released without written consent" (Department Chair). In comparison, there is no such information regarding student rights to data privacy after the signing of Authorization to Release or Exchange Confidential Information forms.

Additionally burdensome is that these documents are required to be resubmitted at least once a year for permanently disabled students and quarterly for those students with temporary disabilities or mental health issues. The OSD General Policy FAQ states that paper and electronic records are kept for five academic years after the last contact with the student, then destroyed. Why then are these records required for resubmission, specifically for permanently disabled students?[18]

The OSD webpage Reminders for Students Obtaining Accommodations Through the OSD Student Portal[19] is long and complicated (see fig. 6 below).

FIGURE 5:

OSD Disability-Based Grievance Procedures (see footnote 13 for URL)



Disability-Based Grievance Procedures

The purpose of these procedures is to provide students with an opportunity to resolve grievances about OSD's eligibility determination, OSD's accommodations decisions, other OSD administrative outcomes, or issues related to the provision of approved accommodations.

Throughout these processes, OSD's goal is to treat students with respect, provide students with a timely response, ensure that students do not experience any form of retaliation, and deal with the issues in a confidential manner to the greatest extent possible. The University expects students to bring up concerns early, give clear and detailed information, and be respectful of others.

+ Expand All

- ▸ Discuss with your Disability Specialist
- ▸ Contact the OSD Director
- ▾ Report to Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination (OPHD)

If students believe they have experienced discrimination because of their disability, they should contact the Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination (OPHD). Disability discrimination may include the denial of a requested accommodation, the determination of ineligibility for an accommodation, the failure to implement agreed-upon accommodations, or a refusal to engage in an interactive process to determine reasonable accommodations.

- ▸ Consult with the Office of the Ombuds
- ▸ Consult with Student Legal Services
- ▸ Academic Senate Policy
- ▸ Other Avenues

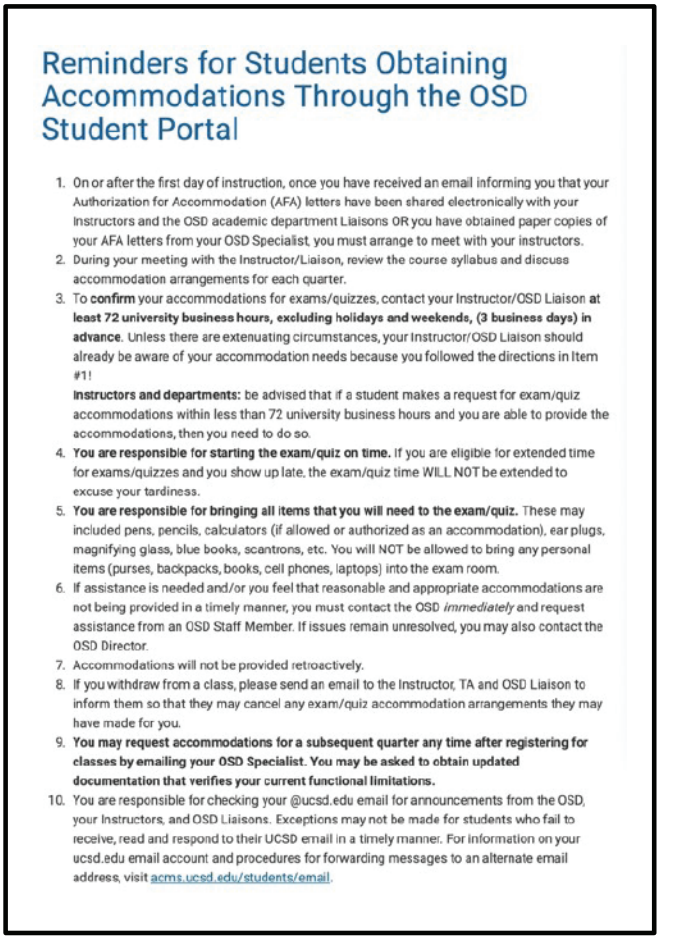
+ Expand All

Note: Data privacy information is not included on this listing of procedures

[17] https://aps.ucsd.edu/_files/chairs/dcc-department-chair-info-sheet_dcc_12.6.17.pdf

FIGURE 6:

OSD Forms and Reminders, please see Appendix B



Reminders for Students Obtaining Accommodations Through the OSD Student Portal

1. On or after the first day of instruction, once you have received an email informing you that your Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letters have been shared electronically with your Instructors and the OSD academic department Liaisons OR you have obtained paper copies of your AFA letters from your OSD Specialist, you must arrange to meet with your instructors.
2. During your meeting with the Instructor/Liaison, review the course syllabus and discuss accommodation arrangements for each quarter.
3. To **confirm** your accommodations for exams/quizzes, contact your Instructor/OSD Liaison **at least 72 university business hours, excluding holidays and weekends, (3 business days) in advance**. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, your Instructor/OSD Liaison should already be aware of your accommodation needs because you followed the directions in Item #1!
   Instructors and departments: be advised that if a student makes a request for exam/quiz accommodations within less than 72 university business hours and you are able to provide the accommodations, then you need to do so.
4. **You are responsible for starting the exam/quiz on time.** If you are eligible for extended time for exams/quizzes and you show up late, the exam/quiz time WILL NOT be extended to excuse your tardiness.
5. **You are responsible for bringing all items that you will need to the exam/quiz.** These may included pens, pencils, calculators (if allowed or authorized as an accommodation), ear plugs, magnifying glass, blue books, scantrons, etc. You will NOT be allowed to bring any personal items (purses, backpacks, books, cell phones, laptops) into the exam room.
6. If assistance is needed and/or you feel that reasonable and appropriate accommodations are not being provided in a timely manner, you must contact the OSD *immediately* and request assistance from an OSD Staff Member. If issues remain unresolved, you may also contact the OSD Director.
7. Accommodations will not be provided retroactively.
8. If you withdraw from a class, please send an email to the Instructor, TA and OSD Liaison to inform them so that they may cancel any exam/quiz accommodation arrangements they may have made for you.
9. **You may request accommodations for a subsequent quarter any time after registering for classes by emailing your OSD Specialist. You may be asked to obtain updated documentation that verifies your current functional limitations.**
10. You are responsible for checking your @ucsd.edu email for announcements from the OSD, your Instructors, and OSD Liaisons. Exceptions may not be made for students who fail to receive, read and respond to their UCSD email in a timely manner. For information on your ucsd.edu email account and procedures for forwarding messages to an alternate email address, visit acms.ucsd.edu/students/email.

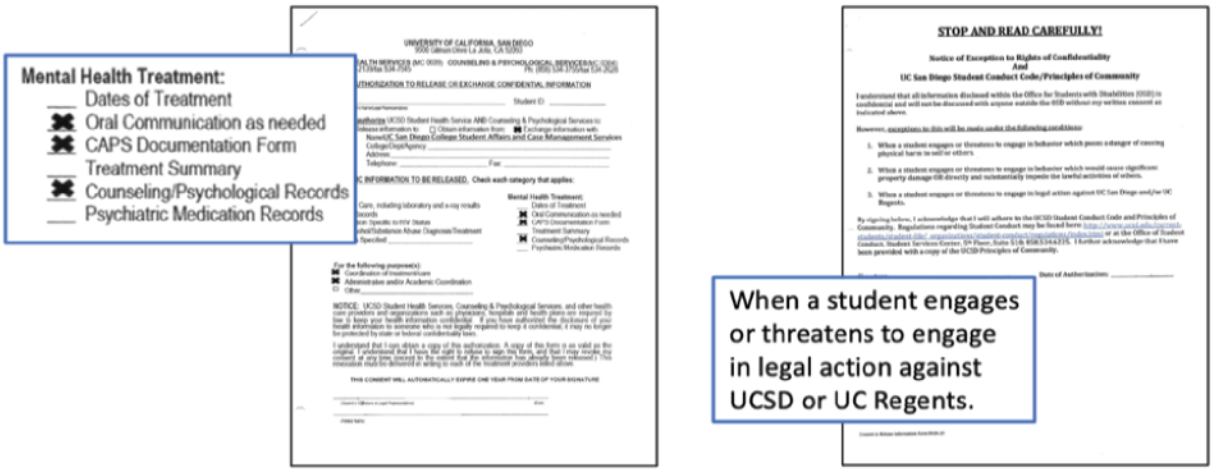
Note: Length and detail of steps required of students seeking disability accommodations.

[18] OSD General FAQ: https://osd.ucsd.edu/faq/index.html#Q:-How-long-are-student-records

[19] OSD Forms and Reminders19 https://osd.ucsd.edu/students/reminders.html

FIGURE 7:

OSD Authorization Release and Exceptions to Rights of Confidentiality Forms – Please see Appendix B.



Note: These blow-ups (taken from actual forms) are required accommodations

Upon requesting accommodations, a specific form for the Authorization to Release or Exchange Confidential Information is received by the student which includes a pre-filled checklist using large, bold, capital Xs. The ostensible reason for this information requirement is the coordination of treatment or care, and administrative and or academic coordination. There is no explanation given as to why mental health records (CAPS) are required when requesting accommodations for a non-mental health issue. Unlike the Bias Reporting form mentioned above, there is a disclaimer included warning the signee that if they have spoken to a third party about the incident, they forfeit their right to be protected by state or federal confidentiality laws. This is odd in light of the requirement of students without UCSD SHIP coverage after being sent by CAPS to their third-party therapists for help with something that occurred on campus. Further, on the form Notice of Exception to Rights of Confidentiality and UC San Diego Student Conduct Code/Principles of Community, Exception 3, states that a student will also lose all rights to data confidentiality if they "engage in legal action against UC San Diego or its Regents." Specifically, a student with disabilities is required by the UCSD OSD to sign these forms in order to receive accommodations and are left with no right to privacy over their medical records or records involving a bias reporting incident as reported to the OPHD, CAPS, or CARE (see fig. 7).

Data Privacy and the Fear of Reprisal: The Direct Consequences

Legally, it is harder to establish a claim if there are no witnesses and due to the fact that UCSD Responsible Employees[20] (Mandatory Reporters) must not report anonymously, additional privacy issues are created for a student in terms of retaliation. Interestingly, while no longer found on the student site; verbiage describing retaliation is still included on the Blink Faculty and Staff pages.[21] Of note, the Involved Parties Information section encourages the complainant to list as much information as possible, then uses the words "prohibited behavior or retaliation." Corresponding research states that the more dangerous the incident, the more often reprisal is the stated reason for not reporting said incident (Singer).

[20] SVPR FAQ: Responsible Employees: https://sos.ucsd.edu/faq/responsible-employees.html

[21] Blink OPHD Information for UC San Diego Faculty and Staff page: https://blink.ucsd.edu/HR/policies/sexual/OPHD.html

Federal laws currently protect against certain crimes motivated by race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, and disability while defining hate crimes as those crimes with a bias component; however, bias categories defined in state laws vary. Additionally, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) became law in 1990 and prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places open to the general public. According to the US Department of Justice Bulletin of 1988, crime victims with disabilities have a higher risk of victimization than crime victims without disabilities and face a greater risk of being revictimized. Due to the lack of research regarding the fear of retaliation in settings of higher learning, this paper utilizes a criminology study in reference to this phenomenon, that victims may not be in a position to report the crime without fear of retaliation from their care provider (United States. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, 1988). For the context of this study, UCSD students are not in a position to report crime without fear of retaliation from their (campus-based) abuser and are not offered any safeguards as to mandatory forms needed for disability accommodation or data privacy.

The Hidden Students with Disabilities: Deferred Needs

When we consider research conducted by the Pew Research Organization, we find the numbers of students with disabilities in higher education is sizable. According to the latest report of 2015-2016 data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), students with disabilities make up 19.4% of national undergraduate enrollment. About two-thirds of disabled students are male at 67%, while 33% are female (Schaeffer). At UCSD, the data collected for the numbers of students with disabilities is only representative of those who register as such with the OSD. We can calculate the number of these hidden students based on the NCES statistic of 19.4%, and the number of new and transfer students admitted to UCSD for the Fall 2021 quarter of 52,946 (Admits). Based on these metrics, one could postulate that the true number of disabled students in the latest cohort alone could be as high as ~10,000 students. For various reasons, only a fraction of students with disabilities request accommodations. Without accurate data, how can equitable decisions be made regarding policies or project funding for students with disabilities, such as a community meeting room, or health-promoting, barrier-free campus landscaping which will improve accessibility for all students? Inclusive language may be the first key step in creating a more equitable campus and student body where all feel included.

RESULTS

On a broader note, when inclusive language is added to existing webpage interface design, users will engage with visual and linguistic signals referencing students with disabilities, thereby possibly creating a more empathetic and inclusive mindset in said user. When inclusive language is used, the student body is no longer divided into a "typical" community and a "disabled" community. This practice creates a more empowering environment for all students, not just those most visible or socially involved. It is also essential to remember that the definition of communication is to share or exchange information. Intercommunication takes many styles, most particularly the action of engaging in two-way conversation. It is this interaction between people, and point-to-point communication between different departmental processes, that is so important. Inclusive language in bias reporting mechanisms encourages victims to come forth and acknowledge these incidents, resulting in a sense of individual agency and of belonging to a greater whole—their university or alma mater. Interdepartmental coordination aligns this process with information dissemination that informs and does not confuse a reader or end-user.

CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The essential elements of web design are content, usability, aesthetics, visibility, and the most important, interaction with the user interface. Although the websites of UCSD still show the need for inclusive language, transparency, and coordination, there have recently been steps toward improved design and increased inclusivity. However, a concerted effort is still needed to create a cohesive, centralized online information resource, tested with panels of student endusers, including the disabled. Interface design testing utilizing panels of student end-users (including the disabled) is still an issue and a missed opportunity. This research needs to continue because the university website is in constant flux, with webpage content changing often without visible revision dates.

A personal challenge, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, was that the ability to remotely conduct research during the 2020-2021 academic year was greatly complicated by not having access to a functioning UCSD library, either in person or through a reliable VPN connection.
Data for this research study was gleaned directly from online content providers such as JSTOR, and much later ProQuest, as they became available to individual users outside university VPN confines. In terms of a future research direction, I hope to design a survey study with students with disabilities as willing participants in an effort to expand on this study's hypothesis.

CONCLUSION

Although the described UCSD webpages have progressed toward improved design, these pages still demonstrate the need for the addition of inclusive language, interdepartmental webpage coordination, and improved policy transparency. The subject of the use of inclusive language is a very important one when used specifically in bias reporting mechanisms but is also important to be used throughout student-life websites campus-wide in encouraging and supporting a diverse and inclusive student body. Improving advocacy options and webpages will empower victims of bias and other crimes to come forward and acknowledge these incidents, further encouraging students to utilize these reporting mechanisms. Both paper and website forms should be reworked to coincide with data transparency guidelines as outlined in Title IX, the Clery Act, and federal and state policies.
As part of my ongoing research, I hope to collect and analyze the report rates before and after significant website changes. I am currently compiling and refining research questions and expanded methodologies for use in the next phase of this study through survey research methods including qualitative and quantitative data gathering via random sampling, interview questionnaires, and case study methods. In keeping with the UCSD four-pillared strategic plan of public service, sustainability, integrity, and ethics; and its imperative of diversity, equity, and inclusion, I recommend the presence of students with disabilities, as well as faculty and staff with disabilities, to serve on Inclusion and Diversity panels, focus groups, end-user studies, and other groups influencing UCSD Disability policy. I also feel that unless actual data of students with disabilities on campus is known, not only those who come forward to be registered with the OSD, the true number of students with disabilities will not be known, thereby negatively influencing policy regarding these students, such as campus accessibility and resource allocation. By starting with inclusive language in collaboration with website design and the recommendations discussed above, the conclusive result will be an increased sense of individual agency for all students, complemented by the feeling of belonging to an inclusive student body, so crucial to personal well-being and happiness.

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Appendix A – Definitions and Descriptions

Term	Definition
Bias	a preset, unfair, attitude of mind that favors someone over another. Hate crimes are those crimes with *a bias component*
Complainant	a victim or advocate who is filing a bias incident report
Harassment	unwelcome, offensive conduct that impairs equal access to university programs, resources, or opportunities
Inclusion	not excluding any of the parties or groups involved in a structure
Microaggressions	hostile, or negative verbal and nonverbal messages that target persons based solely on their perceived group membership
Trigger Words	words and phrases that cause a listener to feel strong emotions because of previous experiences

Acronym	Description	Level	Type
ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act	• The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and Revised ADA Regulations Implementing Title II and Title III • https://www.ada.gov/2010_regs.htm	Federal	Law
ADEA - Age Discrimination	• Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 • https://www.eeoc.gov/statutes/age-discrimination-employment-act-1967	Federal	Law
BLINK	• Information for UC San Diego Faculty & Staff • https://blink.ucsd.edu/	UCSD	Portal
CA STATE EDUCATION CODE	• Article 3. Prohibition of Discrimination [220-221.2] • https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displayText.xhtml?lawCode=EDC&division=1.&title=1.&part=1.&chapter=2.&article=3.	State	Law
CAPS - Insurance-based	• Counseling and Psychological Services • https://caps.ucsd.edu/	UCSD	Office
CARE at SARC - Federal compliance to receive Title IX Funding	• Campus Advocacy, Resources, and Education at the Sexual Assault Resource Center • https://care.ucsd.edu/	UCSD	Office
Clery Act - Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act	• Requires colleges and universities to report campus crime data annually, support victims of violence, and publicly outline the policies and procedures they have put into place to improve campus and off-campus safety	Federal	Law

Acronym	Description	Level	Type
- In conjunction with Title IX legislation	• https://clerycenter.org/policy/the-clery-act/		
EEOC - Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	• Federal laws that prohibit employment discrimination • https://www.eeoc.gov/	Federal	Laws
FERPA - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act	• Protects the privacy of student education records • https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html	Federal	Law
GINA - Title I - Title II	• Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 • Title I prohibits discrimination based on genetic information in health coverage. • Title II prohibits discrimination based on genetic information in employment. • https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/special-topics/genetic-information/index.html	Federal	Law
Medi-Cal	• provides medical services to low-income people, administered • https://www.healthforcalifornia.com/covered-california/health-insurance-companies/medi-cal?gclid=CjwKCAjwj8eJBhA5EiwAg3z0m8RaFyPclbOqBxWfGVdDAt2cD5gKvynpu1HyETF5tiXf9qot9TndmhoCLvAQAvDBwE	Federal and State	Plan

OPHD
- Federal compliance required to receive Title IX Funding
	• Office for the Prevention of Harassment & Discrimination
	  • Title IX Reporting
	  • UC SVSH Compliance
	• https://ophd.ucsd.edu
		UCSD	Office

OSD
- Federal compliance required to receive Title IX Funding
- Requires Eligibility
	• Office of Students with Disabilities
	• Disability Registration for Accommodations
	  • Civil Rights Law Rehabilitation Act of 1973 – Sect. 504
	  • ADA
	• https://osd.ucsd.edu/
		UCSD	Office

Acronym	Description	Level	Type
SVPR - Federal compliance required to receive Title IX Funding	• Sexual Violence Prevention & Response • https://sos.ucsd.edu/	UCSD	Office
SVSH - UCSD - See also UC SVSH	• Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment • Note: Investigations and Adjudication Framework of revision to Senate Bylaw 336.F.3 for Senate and Non-Senate Faculty Interim Revisions currently under UC Systemwide Review • https://sos.ucsd.edu/resources/policies-law/index.html	UCOP	Policy
Title IX and Title IX 2020	• Prohibits discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities, are legally requirement to respond and remedy hostile educational environments. Failure to do so risks loss of federal funding. • Title IX 2020: reduces protections for student survivors • https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/tix_dis.html	Federal	Law
Title VII - Civil Rights Act of 1964	• Prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin • https://www.eeoc.gov/statutes/title-vii-civil-rights-act-1964	Federal	Law
UC SHIP	• Student Health Insurance Plan • https://shwadmin.ucsd.edu/uc-ship/index.html	UC Sys	Plan
UC SVSH	• University resource page on Sexual Violence Prevention and Response • https://sexualviolence.universityofcalifornia.edu/index.html	UC Sys	Policies
USERRA - Veterans Rights	• US Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Acts • https://www.dol.gov/agencies/vets/programs/userra	Federal	Law
VAWA - 2000 - 2005 - 2013 - under congressional review	• H.R.1620 - Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2021 • Current revision to close "boyfriend loophole" • https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1620/text	Federal	Bill

Appendix B -Forms

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO
9500 Gilman Drive La Jolla, CA 92093

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES (MC 0039) Ph: (858)534-2139/fax 534-7545

COUNSELING & PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES(MC 0304) Ph: (858) 534-3755/fax 534-2628

AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE OR EXCHANGE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

I, _____ Student ID: _____
(Student's Name/Legal Representative)

Hereby authorize UCSD Student Health Service AND Counseling & Psychological Services to:
☒ Release information to: ☐ Obtain information from: ☒ Exchange information with:
Name**UC San Diego College Student Affairs and Case Management Services**
College/Dept/Agency:_____
Address:_____
Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

SPECIFIC INFORMATION TO BE RELEASED. Check each category that applies:

☒ Medical Care, including laboratory and x-ray results
___ Billing Records
___ Information Specific to HIV Status
☒ Drug/Alcohol/Substance Abuse Diagnosis/Treatment
___ Other As Specified _____

Mental Health Treatment:
___ Dates of Treatment
☒ Oral Communication as needed
☒ CAPS Documentation Form
___ Treatment Summary
☒ Counseling/Psychological Records
___ Psychiatric Medication Records

For the following purpose(s):
☒ Coordination of treatment/care
☒ Administrative and/or Academic Coordination
☐ Other_____

NOTICE: UCSD Student Health Services, Counseling & Psychological Services, and other health care providers and organizations such as physicians, hospitals and health plans are required by law to keep your health information confidential. If you have authorized the disclosure of your health information to someone who is not legally required to keep it confidential, it may no longer be protected by state or federal confidentiality laws.

I understand that I can obtain a copy of this authorization. A copy of this form is as valid as the original. I understand that I have the right to refuse to sign this form, and that I may revoke my consent at any time (except to the extent that the information has already been released.) This revocation must be delivered in writing to each of the treatment providers listed above.

THIS CONSENT WILL AUTOMATICALLY EXPIRE ONE YEAR FROM DATE OF YOUR SIGNATURE

_____
(Student's Signature or Legal Representative) (Date)

_____
(Printed Name)

Version of form necessary to obtain accommodations from the UCSD Office of Students with Disabilities (OSD).

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO
9500 Gilman Drive La Jolla, CA 92093

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES (MC 0039)
Ph: (858)534-2139/fax 534-7545

COUNSELING & PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES(MC 0304)
Ph: (858) 534-3755/fax 534-2628

AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE OR EXCHANGE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

I, _____ Student ID: _____
(Student's Name/Legal Representative)

Hereby authorize UCSD Student Health Service AND Counseling & Psychological Services to:
☐ Release information to: ☐ Obtain information from: ☐ Exchange information with:
Name:_____
College/Dept/Agency:_____
Address:_____
Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

SPECIFIC INFORMATION TO BE RELEASED. Check each category that applies:

___ Medical Care, including laboratory and x-ray results
___ Billing Records
___ Information Specific to HIV Status
___ Drug/Alcohol/Substance Abuse Diagnosis/Treatment
___ Other As Specified _____

Mental Health Treatment:
___ Dates of Treatment
___ Oral Communication as needed
___ CAPS Documentation Form
___ Treatment Summary
___ Counseling/Psychological Records
___ Psychiatric Medication Records

For the following purpose(s):
☐ Coordination of treatment/care
☐ Administrative and/or Academic Coordination
☐ Other_____

NOTICE: UCSD Student Health Services, Counseling & Psychological Services, and other health care providers and organizations such as physicians, hospitals and health plans are required by law to keep your health information confidential. If you have authorized the disclosure of your health information to someone who is not legally required to keep it confidential, it may no longer be protected by state or federal confidentiality laws.

I understand that I can obtain a copy of this authorization. A copy of this form is as valid as the original. I understand that I have the right to refuse to sign this form, and that I may revoke my consent at any time (except to the extent that the information has already been released). This revocation must be delivered in writing to each of the treatment providers listed above.

THIS CONSENT WILL AUTOMATICALLY EXPIRE ONE YEAR FROM DATE OF YOUR SIGNATURE

_____
(Student's Signature or Legal Representative) (Date)

_____
(Printed Name)

092710

*Note: In comparison to the version of this form required for disability accommodations, this version is currently posted on the UCSD Academic Affairs forms server. Note the absence of pre-filled (**X**) answers, and blank area under Hereby Authorize section Name.*[22]

[22] *https://academicaffairs.ucsd.edu/_files/uged/uaac/Authorization_to_Release_Confidential_Information.pdf*

STOP AND READ CAREFULLY!

Notice of Exception to Rights of Confidentiality
And
UC San Diego Student Conduct Code/Principles of Community

I understand that all information disclosed within the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) is confidential and will not be discussed with anyone outside the OSD without my written consent as indicated above.

However, exceptions to this will be made under the following conditions:

1. When a student engages or threatens to engage in behavior which poses a danger of causing physical harm to self or others.

2. When a student engages or threatens to engage in behavior which would cause significant property damage OR directly and substantially impede the lawful activities of others.

3. When a student engages or threatens to engage in legal action against UC San Diego and/or UC Regents.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I will adhere to the UCSD Student Conduct Code and Principles of Community. Regulations regarding Student Conduct may be found here: http://www.ucsd.edu/current-students/student-life/ organizations/student-conduct/regulations/index.html or at the Office of Student Conduct, Student Services Center, 5th Floor, Suite 510; 858.534.6225. I further acknowledge that I have been provided with a copy of the UCSD Principles of Community.

Signature: _____ Date of Authorization: _____

Note: Exception 3 – When a student engages or threatens to engage in legal action against UC San Diego and or UC Regents.

Reminders for Students Obtaining Accommodations Through the OSD Student Portal

1. On or after the first day of instruction, once you have received an email informing you that your Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letters have been shared electronically with your Instructors and the OSD academic department Liaisons OR you have obtained paper copies of your AFA letters from your OSD Specialist, you must arrange to meet with your instructors.
2. During your meeting with the Instructor/Liaison, review the course syllabus and discuss accommodation arrangements for each quarter.
3. To **confirm** your accommodations for exams/quizzes, contact your Instructor/OSD Liaison **at least 72 university business hours, excluding holidays and weekends, (3 business days) in advance**. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, your Instructor/OSD Liaison should already be aware of your accommodation needs because you followed the directions in Item #1!
   Instructors and departments: be advised that if a student makes a request for exam/quiz accommodations within less than 72 university business hours and you are able to provide the accommodations, then you need to do so.
4. **You are responsible for starting the exam/quiz on time.** If you are eligible for extended time for exams/quizzes and you show up late, the exam/quiz time WILL NOT be extended to excuse your tardiness.
5. **You are responsible for bringing all items that you will need to the exam/quiz.** These may included pens, pencils, calculators (if allowed or authorized as an accommodation), ear plugs, magnifying glass, blue books, scantrons, etc. You will NOT be allowed to bring any personal items (purses, backpacks, books, cell phones, laptops) into the exam room.
6. If assistance is needed and/or you feel that reasonable and appropriate accommodations are not being provided in a timely manner, you must contact the OSD *immediately* and request assistance from an OSD Staff Member. If issues remain unresolved, you may also contact the OSD Director.
7. Accommodations will not be provided retroactively.
8. If you withdraw from a class, please send an email to the Instructor, TA and OSD Liaison to inform them so that they may cancel any exam/quiz accommodation arrangements they may have made for you.
9. **You may request accommodations for a subsequent quarter any time after registering for classes by emailing your OSD Specialist. You may be asked to obtain updated documentation that verifies your current functional limitations.**
10. You are responsible for checking your @ucsd.edu email for announcements from the OSD, your Instructors, and OSD Liaisons. Exceptions may not be made for students who fail to receive, read and respond to their UCSD email in a timely manner. For information on your ucsd.edu email account and procedures for forwarding messages to an alternate email address, visit acms.ucsd.edu/students/email.

Note: Length and detail of steps required of students seeking disability accommodations

Elizabeth E. Ingram

URS Cohort: 2021

Biography:

Hello, my name is Elizabeth E. Ingram. I am currently a third-year undergraduate transfer student at the University of California San Diego, Thurgood Marshall College, majoring in Literature/Writing with a minor in Health Care/Social Issues. I am a non-traditional, first-generation, disabled student majoring in Literature/Writing, with a minor in Health Care/Social Issues. My career goal is to advocate for the disabled through my writing and research activities. My research interest is the benefits and effects of inclusive language with proactive information design strategies to create equitable information and communication spaces, thereby improving student life. In terms of UCSD involvement, my plan for the 2021-2022 academic year is to advocate for the designation or construction of an inclusive student involvement center for disabled students to meet each other and access and share information regarding campus resources.

"I hope to continue my research into inclusive language and how it impacts the daily life of students like me in terms of bias reporting, seeking accommodations, and our overall experience of academic life.

I hope to prove that creating a more equitable, inclusive, and coordinated design of bias reporting mechanisms will positively engage those students who are currently afraid to report bias due to fear of reprisals and lack of data privacy."

Through my work, I hope to create empowering settings for vulnerable students to find the help and support they need.

Acknowledgements:

I am grateful to Dr. Artis, Dr. Tsai, the organizers of the 2021 Summer Research Program, and for the generous Chancellor's Research Scholarship for Social Sciences, which allowed me to continue my research over the summer. I would also like to thank my advisor, Dr. Leslie Carver, Provost at Thurgood Marshall College, for her words of wisdom, academic advice, and unwavering support of my research project. I am also very grateful to the mentorship of Valerie Saiag of the McNair Challenger Journal, who kept me focused and on track.

Fiat lux: Let there be light