

Top Ten List for Creating Accessible and Inclusive Meetings, Events, and Classrooms

[When possible include people with disabilities during all stages of event planning]

Philosophy of Access Statement, adapted from Syracuse University: As universities become increasingly diverse, we must consider how to make all events accessible and engaging to a broad audience. This audience includes a wide range of social identities based upon race, ethnicity, language, country of origin, religion, political affiliation, gender, sexual orientation, ability, class, age, etc. Our community aims to move beyond simply *accommodating* people's differences to instead creating spaces that are *universally designed*—accessible to *everyone*.

1 Conduct an early site visit to evaluate and determine access related to: entrances and elevators, restrooms (accessible, all-gender), parking, and wheelchair accessible seating/paths.

2 Consider the date and time of your event to minimize access barriers related to length of event, number of breaks available throughout the day, availability of transportation, and religious observances.

3 Identify specific people who can help with immediate access needs that arise during an event: for example, space navigation, microphone runner, contact with WITS.

4 Use the University Access Statement on all promotional materials: **“If you require disability accommodation for this event, contact the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at 503-370-6195.”** Indicate how access will be provided via interpreting captioning, listening devices, audio description, golf cart transportation around campus, various dietary options, etc.

5 Always use a microphone, even if you only have a few attendees.

6 Include text description of all images in PowerPoints; describe images and explain slide content when presenting the material. If playing a video, make sure the captions are turned on.

7 Accommodate technology: laptops, tablets, and assistive technologies are basic accessibility features and should not be limited.

8 Consider bodily movement: can people make bathroom visits, sit on the floor or stand in alternative locations? When you begin an event, tell attendees to make themselves as comfortable in the room as they can and provide examples such as “stand up, stretch, sit on the floor.”

9 Repeat names and questions during any Q&A: state your name, repeat questions into microphone, face your fellow participants, and avoid covering/gesturing super close to your face.

10 Consider signage and event marketing that indicates your event aims to be as allergy and scent free as possible. If serving food, work to accommodate guests' dietary restrictions.