

DISABILITY SUMMIT REPORT

Disability in Higher Education

September 20, 2024



Health Promotion, Engagement, Accessibility, & Accommodation
University Health and Wellbeing
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY



Sponsored by:

The Office for Civil Rights, Title IX Education and Compliance's, Office of the ADA Coordinator
University Health & Wellbeing Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities Office
MSU Libraries and the Office of Employee Relations

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Introduction and Table of Contents



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The first Disability in Higher Education Summit was held at the MSU Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center in East Lansing on September 20, 2024. Sponsored by the Office for Civil Rights and Title IX Education and Compliance's Office of the ADA Coordinator; the University Health and Wellbeing's Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD); MSU Libraries; and the Office of Employee Relations, the summit served as a cornerstone event that highlighted MSU's commitment to accessibility, equity and inclusion across its campus and community.

The summit featured a keynote address by Jay Dolmage, founding editor of the Canadian Journal of Disability Studies and a leading advocate for disability rights. Dolmage challenged attendees to rethink accessibility in higher education, emphasizing that "disability is a culture, not a separate group." A student panel brought firsthand experiences to the forefront of the conversation and shared challenges, such as facing skepticism when requesting accommodations or navigating spaces unprepared for service animals.

The summit agenda featured three breakout sessions on topics including neurodiversity and unapparent disabilities; fostering disability identity in higher education; and exploring campus career accessibility and supporting employees with disabilities.

180 people attended the Disability Summit in person and over 120 people attended virtually.

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Keynote Speaker, Jay Dolmage



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Jay Dolmage is the Founding Editor of the highly impactful Canadian Journal of Disability Studies. Winner of the 2015 PROSE award, Dolmage's work brings together rhetoric, disability studies, and critical pedagogy, in an accessible yet ground-breaking body of articles, talks, and workshops. A fierce advocate for disability rights, Dolmage is committed to publishing Open Access and accessible material and helped to author the international guidelines for accessible electronic books.

-Office of Civil Rights

“ We need to move beyond temporary changes and plan for systemic accommodation ”

-Jay Dolmage

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Presentations and Panel



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- **Keynote Speaker - Presentation**

- Jay Dolmage spoke on Universal Design in buildings and education that allows all students different ways to learn

- **Student Panel “Exploring Disabled Students’ Experiences at MSU” -Panel**

- 4 students answered specific questions about campus

- **Moving from Compliance to Inclusion - Presentation**

- A timeline of Disability laws, milestones, and indignities people with disabilities experienced

- **Image Description Workshop - Presentation**

- Learning how to use alternative text and image description technology

- **Planning & Hosting Accessible Events - Presentation**

- What are best practices and legal obligations for hosting events

- **Managing Accommodations - Faculty Panel**

- 3 professors paneled about accommodations in the classroom

- **Neurodiversity and Non-Apparent Disabilities - Presentation**

- What it means to be neurodivergent

- **Fostering Disability Identity in Higher Education - Presentation**

- The social identity of disability and how to support it in Higher Ed

- **Exploring Campus Career Accessibility and Supporting Employees with Disabilities - Presentation**

- How to accommodate employees and best practices in the work place

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Event Feedback and News Coverage



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Attendee Testimonials:

- "This is one of the best summit/conferences I have been to in years."
- "All of the other people at my table agreed, we all think this should be mandatory for any member of our campus community. There is not a single person that would not benefit greatly from this information, and hearing these stories, topics, resources, and overall education on the subject."
- "Since attending I will definitely be more thoughtful when working with students, presenting, setting up events, etc. as I have learned more about what to consider to make these events inclusive for all!"
- "I thought the whole day was excellent! I could tell the care attention that went into anticipating access needs (water on the table, fidgets/coloring, candy, breaks in the schedule, etc.) and I felt like I learned a lot. Thank you for all you did in organizing this event!"

In the News! Read more about the event:

[MSUToday Article](#)

[Disability Summit Website](#)