

The Department of Learning Support & Disability Services
is excited to announce our name change.



The Department of Accessibility & Learning Excellence:

- Seeks to ensure that all programs, services, and facilities are accessible to students on a non-discriminatory basis;
- Is committed to providing all students resources to support their academic journey, including providing students with disabilities the accommodations and support they need to have a rewarding and successful experience; and,
- Fosters a campus culture of acceptance, inclusion, and positive attitudes that respect the diversity of our student body.

Why are we changing our name?

Students with disabilities represent a significant percentage of our student body, and they are proud to identify as such. The College of Idaho takes pride in promoting a non-stigmatizing environment that is accepting of all diverse identities, including ability and neurodiversity, and each Yote's mental health. Accessibility goes beyond disability. Each student has a right to an education that is accessible and promotes excellence. Taking a strengths-based approach to student support, we recognize that EVERY student should strive to excel, and EVERY student deserves access to resources that ensure their academic success. We seek to end the notion that students should only reach out for "support" if they have a disability because all Yotes are encouraged to have a growth mindset that contributes to their ability to be responsible, resourceful, reflective, and resilient.

Accessibility is reframing how we provide accommodations and promote inclusivity in all aspects of a Yote's educational experience. Instead of just focusing on disability inclusion when it is requested or visible, we aim to consistently reflect on how we ensure accessibility and inclusion of all identities, including disabilities, in every part of our work.

Learning Excellence is reframing how we facilitate the holistic growth and development of Yotes. Instead of searching for gaps, barriers, and concerns, we also set our sights to recognize a Yote's strengths, skills, and passions. With our new outlook on learning excellence we can begin to consider the value of neurodiversity and each Yote's unique lived experience in our work.

What is Neurodiversity?

This is Pat
This is Pat's brain

Alex Drew Pat Lee Jess Sal

These are Pat's friends.
They all have brains too.
No two brains are exactly alike.
This is **Neurodiversity**.

neuro-
relating to nerves
or the nervous system

diversity
the state of being
diverse

diverse
showing a great
deal of variety;
very different

Some people's brains are similar enough that they behave in ways that are categorised and labelled. Some of these labels are typical, schizophrenic, bipolar, autistic, and epileptic.



All of these labels (except "typical") indicate neurodivergence, that is, a deviation of a brain from society's expectation of normality



Not all neurodivergence is diagnosed, or even diagnosable. This means that not all people who are perceived as neurotypical are in fact so.

Neurodivergence is neither "good" nor "bad." A person can be born with it, or it can be acquired. It is up to each neurodivergent individual to decide what help they desire.



Alex Drew Pat Lee Jess Sal

Pat and friends are comfortable with their individual divergences and their diversity as a group. They support each other's rights to self-determination, and they value the strengths they each bring to their group of friends.

For more resources visit hellomichelleswan.com

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We hope all staff, faculty, and students feel as welcome as ever to contact the Department of Accessibility & Learning Excellence.



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