



DO-IT Prof: **A Project to Help Postsecondary Educators Work Successfully with Students Who Have Disabilities**

DO-IT

This publication describes promising practices and resources funded through the *DO-IT Prof* project. It is expected that, ultimately, such efforts will result in greater postsecondary educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities and enhanced postsecondary classes with the perspectives of people with disabilities. Others are encouraged to replicate its successful practices.

Background

The DO-IT Center at the University of Washington has, since 1992, worked to increase the success of individuals with disabilities in postsecondary education and employment. DO-IT, which stands for Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology, has been recognized for its efforts through several awards including the 1995 National Information Infrastructure Award in Education; the 1997 Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring; the 1999 Golden Apple Award for excellence in education; the 2001 AHEAD Recognition Award for outstanding work for students with disabilities; and the 2007 Innovation Award for Career Opportunities for Students with Disabilities.

The *DO-IT Prof* project applied lessons learned by DO-IT and other researchers and practitioners nationwide to implement a comprehensive professional development program for college faculty and administrators. It was initially funded by the U.S. Department of Education (Grant #P33A990042, 1999-2003). *Prof* was selected as part of the project name to represent two project characteristics—"professional," the quality of project materials and strategies, and "professor," its primary target audience.

DO-IT Prof was designed to improve the knowledge and skills of postsecondary faculty and administrators in order to make them better prepared to fully include students with disabilities in academic programs on their campuses.

Responding to the diverse content and scheduling needs of faculty and administrators, the *DO-IT Prof* team has created and continues to deliver six models of professional development.

Model 1: A 20-30 minute presentation to introduce participants to basic legal issues, accommodation strategies, and resources specific to their campuses.

Model 2: A 1-2 hour presentation with special focus on providing accommodations to students with a variety of disabilities.

Model 3: A tailored workshop for more in-depth training on topics selected for a specific audience.

Model 4: A televised instruction option using a series of video to deliver on public television.

Model 5: A distance learning "anytime-anywhere" course that provides lessons and discussion delivered via email and is available at www.uw.edu/doit/Faculty/Presentations/Distance/.

Model 6: Self-paced, web-based instruction in *The Faculty Room* at www.uw.edu/doit/Faculty/.

The *DO-IT Prof* team included faculty, disabled student services staff, and administrators at institutions of higher education in twenty-three states. The nationwide recruitment process was highly competitive, attracting more than one hundred applications. DO-IT's Academic Advisory Board selected applicants that had the potential to contribute to project efforts and to create a team with diverse characteristics.



Project partners included representatives from AHEAD (Association on Higher Education and Disability), the National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Educational Supports, the HEATH Resource Center, and WAPED (Washington Association on Postsecondary Education and Disability).

Project team members chose institutional partners in their states. If a team member was from a four-year institution, the partner school was a community or technical college; if the team member is from a community or technical college, the partner school was a four-year school.

Project team members participated in three-day collaborative meetings in Seattle in 2000 and 2001. Before the first meeting, team members conducted focus groups with students who have disabilities, teaching assistants, and faculty members. At the working meetings, team members discussed faculty and administrator support issues and strategies. They developed professional development materials, data collection plans, and timelines for their home institutions.

All team member and partner campuses delivered professional development programs, disseminating materials, providing technical assistance to faculty and administrators, and institutionalizing successful strategies in their schools. Some continued these efforts as part of subsequent projects, *DO-IT Admin* (www.uw.edu/doit/Brochures/Academics/admin.html) and *AccessCollege* (www.uw.edu/doit/Brochures/Academics/access_college.html), also funded by the U.S. Department of Education (Grant #P333A020044 and Grant #P333A050064, respectively).

Completion of this project made faculty and administrators better prepared to fully include students with disabilities on their campuses and contribute to systemic change within postsecondary institutions across the nation. The DO-IT Center continues to maintain *The Faculty Room* and other resources created during the *DO-IT Prof* funding period.

The Faculty Room

Campuses nationwide are encouraged to link to *The Faculty Room* at www.uw.edu/doit/Faculty/ and refer faculty and academic administrators there to learn how to accommodate students with disabilities in their on-campus and distance learning courses, field experiences, and international studies programs. Useful training videos and materials can also be purchased from the DO-IT Center; request the *DO-IT Videos, Books, and Training Materials* publication for more information. All project materials, including online resources, videos, and printed materials, are offered in formats that are readily accessible by individuals with disabilities. Permission to copy and further distribute project products is granted for noncommercial, educational purposes.

DO-IT Prof Team

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Model Demonstration Projects

DO-IT Prof was one of twenty-two Model Demonstration Projects to Ensure Students with Disabilities Receive a Quality Higher Education. Funded by the Office of Postsecondary Education of the U.S. Department of Education, 1999-2003 their purpose is to develop innovative, effective, and efficient teaching methods to enhance the skills and abilities of postsecondary faculty and administrators in working with students who have disabilities. Links to all of the projects can be found at www.ed.gov/programs/disabilities/awards.html.

About DO-IT

DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology) serves to increase the successful participation of individuals with disabilities in challenging academic programs and careers. Primary funding for DO-IT is provided by the National Science Foundation, the State of Washington, and the U.S. Department of Education.

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