# EDITORS' NOTES

The second National Longitudinal Transition Study noted that the number of high school students with disabilities who are attending college has more than doubled since the 1980s (Wagner et al. 2005), and roughly 11 percent of college students are now identified as having disabilities (National Center for Education Statistics 2009). As several authors in this volume observe, the diversity of these students and the complexity of their disabilities are increasing over time. With greater inclusion occurring in K–12 education, the media, and society in general, a college education is becoming a goal for more people with disabilities. It is also a legitimate way to improve employment outcomes in a difficult economy, where only 18 percent of people with disabilities are employed (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2010). Similarly, as more students with disabilities graduate, they are joining the ranks of staff and faculty in higher education, meaning that disability services is not just for students anymore.

Thus history repeats itself—as each wave of students with disabilities breaks ground in higher education, colleges and universities adjust accordingly, with the federal government mandating better access and services through legislation. Administrators and faculty are now seeing a new generation of people with disabilities on campus. They arrive in higher education with knowledge that the law is on their side, ready to learn or work on any campus that is right for them, whether or not the campus itself is ready. Students with a variety of disabilities who have traditionally been excluded from higher education (e.g., students with intellectual disabilities, students with significant psychiatric disabilities) are knocking on the door of higher education, wondering why that door is not accessible. In response, campuses are turning to disability services for guidance on legal compliance, reasonable accommodations, classroom instruction issues, and strategies to improve the campus climate. This *New Directions* volume examines what disability services may have to offer, and how campuses and disability services professionals may need to collaborate or expand traditional notions of disability and disability services.

This volume is divided into four sections. In the first chapter, Joseph W. Madaus provides an introduction and overview of the field of disability services, explaining how it developed as a profession. The chapter provides useful definitions of disability services, as well as background and context for other chapters.

The second section continues to define disability services, complicating views of what disability services may provide to campuses. In chapter 2, Donna M. Korbel, Jennifer H. Lucia, Christine M. Wenzel, and Bryanna G. Anderson from the University of Connecticut explain how collaboration with other units on their campus has improved disability services' outreach and services to students, with creative ideas for reaching prospective and

first-year students in particular. Then Rebecca C. Cory explains some basic procedures and terminology related to disability services, including the process for determining reasonable accommodations. She further encourages campus administrators and faculty to not only consider legal mandates, but also ethical matters that may go beyond compliance. In chapter 4, Dave Edyburn provides an additional example of this "beyond compliance" attitude, explaining how technology can enhance service provision and instruction, creating campuses that are universally designed for diverse learners, including students with disabilities. Addressing the common assumption that disability services is only for students, Dave Fuecker and Wendy S. Harbour use chapter 5 to explain how the disability services office at the University of Minnesota is also serving faculty and staff. Serving not only employees with disabilities and chronic illnesses, the office also handles workers' compensation and insurance-related cases, centralizing services in one location. For campuses that need to expand or enhance services, the authors in this second section offer creative and varied recommendations.

The third section examines legal compliance in greater detail. In chapter 6, Salome Heyward discusses the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments, students with psychiatric disabilities, and federal interest in accessible campus technology. Analyzing these issues using recent legislation and court cases, Heyward shows how campuses must continually respond to legal compliance—an ongoing journey rather than an end point. Anne Lundquist and Allan Shackelford take a similar approach in chapter 7. They also recommend that campuses examine their compliance with the law carefully, focusing on the development of risk management policies that are consistent with the needs of students, faculty, staff, and the institution as a whole. Taken together, these authors guide campuses toward more thoughtful proactive compliance.

Providing a counterpoint to legalities, the final section takes a more philosophical approach, looking at the bigger picture of disability itself, and how that relates to disability services. In chapter 8, Wanda M. Hadley considers how students with disabilities may change over the course of their college career, maturing in their identity as students with disabilities and in the ways they use services. In chapter 9, Robert A. Stodden, Steven E. Brown, and Kelly Roberts explain their research of campus assessment tools, and strategies for learning about campus climate for students, faculty, and staff with disabilities. They also make recommendations about how the results of these assessments may inform policies and programs in disability services and across campus. Sharing his perspective as a pioneer in his field, the final chapter by Steven J. Taylor comes from a Disability Studies perspective. Like African American Studies, Women's Studies, Queer Studies, and other fields that examine issues of oppression, difference, and societal norms, Disability Studies uses disability as a lens for looking at culture, society, and politics. It can also turn its lens on disability services and higher education, providing insights into how disability is defined on campus. These chapters

start with an assumption of disability as part of campus diversity, and then ask how the campus can be more welcoming of this diversity.

This volume illustrates how the nascent field of disability services is still growing, and how even definitions of disability services change depending on one's perspective. In editing this volume, we hoped to provide a snapshot of the field in its current context, addressing what administrators may need to know in addressing disability-related needs of their institutions (we occasionally referred to this volume as "Disability Services 101"). We are painfully aware that some questions will not be addressed in this issue; because the field is so new, many gaps exist in research and commentary about disability services, especially with traditionally demarcated groups (e.g., students of color who also have disabilities). We hope this volume provides a reference point for determining what those gaps may be, as well as inspiration for campuses and researchers to address them with innovative approaches.

We thank the authors of these chapters for their contributions to an ongoing dialogue about disability services and disability on campus. We dedicate this volume to students, faculty, and staff with disabilities who push the field forward by expecting the ivory tower to be welcoming and accessible. We also dedicate it to disability services professionals and other allies who share the same vision for higher education and are working to make it a reality.

## References

National Center for Education Statistics. 2009. "Number and Percentage Distribution of Students Enrolled in Postsecondary Institutions, by Level, Disability Status, and Selected Student and Characteristics: 2003–04 and 2007–08." *Digest of Education Statistics*. Accessed July 20, 2010. http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d09/tables/dt09_231.asp.

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Employment Situation Summary." Washington, DC: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, December 10, 2010. Accessed December 20, 2010. http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm.

Wagner, M., Newman, L., Cameto, R., and Levine, P. 2005. "Changes Over Time in the Early Postschool Outcomes of Youth with Disabilities: A Report of Findings from the National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS) and the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2)." Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

<div align="right">

Wendy S. Harbour
Joseph W. Madaus
Editors

</div>

*WENDY S. HARBOUR is the Lawrence B. Taishoff Professor of Inclusive Education at Syracuse University, where she directs the Taishoff Center for Inclusive Higher Education.*

*JOSEPH W. MADAUS is the Co-Director of the Center on Postsecondary Education and Disability and is an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Connecticut.*