STUMBLING FORWARD: CREATING A CULTURE OF DIGITAL INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY

BRIAN KLAAS
BKLAAS@JHU.EDU
1996: Walking Across the Street
Had to rethink our approach getting faculty on board
Had to offer them away out of the technical work
Had to learn to walk again
A LITTLE + A LITTLE = A LOT
2016: Unknown Unknowns
Had to rethink my assumptions

Had to learn to walk again
STUMBLING FORWARD: CREATING A CULTURE OF DIGITAL INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY

BRIAN KLAAS
bklaas@jhu.edu
DISCLAIMER:
I DO NOT SPEAK FOR JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY.

JHU DOES NOT SUPPORT OR ENDORSE MY VIEWPOINT.
The Challenges of JHU
JHU: 26,000 STUDENTS IN 9 DIVISIONS
JHU: 7,700 FACULTY
JHU:
OVER $2.5 BILLION IN RESEARCH
JHU: “The Entrepreneurial Spirit”
There are legal and moral obligations to creating a culture of inclusion and accessibility.
LONG HISTORY:
MAKING PHYSICAL SPACES
MORE ACCESSIBLE
LONG HISTORY:

HIGH ATTENTION TO PROVIDING ACCOMMODATIONS TO STUDENTS WHO NEED THEM
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION INITIATIVES

- JHU DIVERSITY ROADMAP
- Vice provost for diversity and inclusion / Chief Diversity Officer
- $25 million Faculty Diversity Initiative for new hires
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION INITIATIVES

- $50K yearly award for exceptional research that advances knowledge on issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion
- Systemic course review
ACCESSIBILITY IS A PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE!
But...
WHY?
Making digital spaces and digital content for those spaces inclusive and accessible
Attemp #1
aka “The Cudgel”
Policy
WCAG 2.0 AA Compliance
EFFECTIVENESS:

“I DON’T HAVE STUDENTS WITH ACCOMMODATIONS.”
EFFECTIVENESS:
Treating students as potential legal adversaries
EFFECTIVENESS:

Unclear DOE regulations
EFFECTIVENESS:

No focus on student engagement and success
EFFECTIVENESS:

Unfunded Mandate
EFFECTIVENESS:
HIGH FOCUS ON “RISK” AND NEGATIVITY
Had to rethink our assumptions

Had to learn to walk again
WebAIM's Hierarchy for Motivating Accessibility Change

Jared Smith

https://webaim.org/blog/motivating-accessibility-change/
BUT...
A LITTLE + A LITTLE = A LOT
ATTEMPT #2
aka “The Factory”
CENTER FOR
Teaching and Learning

CTL@JHSPH.EDU
The power of a PowerPoint template
EFFECTIVENESS:
Not Scalable
EFFECTIVENESS:
Not Student–Focused
BUT...
A LITTLE + A LITTLE = A LOT
WHAT?
ATTEMPT #3
aka “The Network”
What is UDL?

http://udlguidelines.cast.org/
Why UDL?
Why UDL: Inclusive
Why UDL: Focuses on Student Success
Why UDL: Built-in Accessibility
Why UDL:
Science of Learning
Why UDL: Good Pedagogy
Why UDL: Flexibility
SPONSORED BY THE OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

HTTPS://PROVOST.JHU.EDU/ABOUT/HUDL/
HIGH-LEVEL SUPPORT + GRASSROOTS IMPLEMENTATION
UDL AMBASSADORS
UDL Ambassadors:  
**Empower** through general principles and case studies
UDL Ambassadors: **Demonstrate applicability of specific principles**
UDL Ambassadors: Guide Faculty Toward Implementing a Tiered Rubric
UDL Ambassadors: Share Resources and Success
Sharing Success: Showcase and Symposium
SHARING SUCCESS:
SEMESTERLY STORIES
SHARING SUCCESS:

FACULTY "SHINING STARS"
UDL Ambassadors: Focus on options and opportunities
WebAIM's Hierarchy for Motivating Accessibility Change

Jared Smith

https://webaim.org/blog/motivating-accessibility-change/
Will this work?
Scalability? Sustainability?
Scalability: The science of learning is always changing
Scalability: The heavy lift of launch
SUSTAINABILITY: CENTRALIZED FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND PERSONNEL RESOURCES
We are not starting from zero.
A LITTLE + A LITTLE = A LOT
AND YOU?
Go Do!

Brian Klaas
bklaas@jhu.edu
@brian_klaas