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Transcription Clara

Introduction: A video in which Clara describes her experience with accommodation for dyslexia.

What impact has your disability had on your college or university experience?

I didn't have any assistance prior to coming to university. I had been diagnosed with dyslexia when I was 12 so entering university in first year when there is all this pressure and things are kind of stressful. That was just another layer of stress initially but I found especially outside of the classroom in particular that having this diagnosis was more so of a drive than a problem, so it gave me this motivation. When you are entering university you don't know what you're taking, what you want to do, having that motivation that I want to do really well in spite of this disability I have been diagnosed with was a really useful tool to start university with. Inside the classroom it was definitely an adjustment to learn how to take notes, to learn how to interact with lectures, and all that stuff because everyone is really learning that, when you're not really prepared for that coming out of the high school system to do that. Having that as another piece I would say was more of a challenge at the beginning but definitely contributed to the outcome overall as time went on.

What accommodation measures have you received to help you succeed in your studies?

The main accommodation that I work with is having a separate room with a computer and Spell Check. I do get extra time, but that's not really something I use a whole lot, but having Spell Check and typing on a computer because I do have some fine motor difficulties as well. I find it makes me able to express myself more fully instead of worrying about "Is this word legible?" "Is this spelled right?" having to pick different synonyms because I know how to spell them versus being just able to go with what I want to say because the computer will fix it for me. I also have a note taker during the year who takes all my notes during lectures, and just being able to go to the Centre if I need help with anything. So it is pretty minimal in terms of assistance.

What other things have helped you overcome your challenges and be successful in your college or university life?

I guess sort of like I said earlier, having this additional motivation to organize and centre and look through my whole learning experience through that lens. Another big thing that helped—any challenges I came through was before high school, I was home schooled so that's how my whole education was framed. With dyslexia I was able to take reading at my own speed or when I needed a lot of assistance I was able to go for reading classes for 3 hours a day instead of having to go to school and I think learning how to learn that way and learning how to incorporate the disability into my everyday experience with education really helped me be able to not see it as something that affects me, it's just sort of part of how I go about all of my learning processes.