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Crucial Community: Attention Deficit Disorder in the College Writing Classroom

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Crucial Community:

Attention Deficit Disorder in the College Writing Classroom

Introduction

For students with attention deficit disorder (ADD), processing and retaining information can be extremely difficult; therefore, students diagnosed with ADD require particular accommodations from their instructors and institutions. When I was growing up for instance I had issues paying attention and retaining information. My parents insisted I get tested for ADD, but I refused. I wanted to believe that I did not have ADD, nor did I want that stigma because I because I did not want to be known as the kid with a learning disability. Several years later, when I was a freshman in college, I finally decided to be tested. I finally made this decision when I noticed my difficulties focusing in class, or even focusing enough to do homework, and retaining what I read was extremely difficult. That following summer I was evaluated and diagnosed with ADD. I discussed medication with my doctor, and came to the conclusion that I was going to continue my undergraduate journey medication-free. I decided to go without medication because, in addition to having ADD, I also suffer from a heart condition, and most ADD medications are stimulants. But perhaps, more importantly, I decided against medication was in order to prove to myself that I could succeed academically without the use of medication.

Little did I know I would be continuing my undergraduate education and then going on to obtain my master's degree in English, focusing on Composition and Rhetoric. I identified a few tactics myself that were helpful, repeating ideas and theories out loud, or reading my paper aloud several times until it sounded correct to me. Looking back on

my education from a child until now, although my tactics helped, what truly made me succeed to this point was the importance of classroom community. By classroom community, I mean knowing my classmates, knowing my professors, and having an overall organized course structure. This classroom community is important to me because I am a student with ADD navigating through academics without any medication. To cope with my disability, I have been able to identify successful strategies and settings in order to flourish throughout college and my graduate program. I was able to feel that the idea of a stigma related to students with ADD that I believed in years ago has evaporated in my mind and I was at ease. Knowing I could go to my professors, or ask my classmates was an enormous building block in my academic success. Without a community-like classroom I would have never been as accomplished academically as I am today. Due to these experiences with community, as a future educator, I want to ensure my students are properly accommodated and comfortable.

In this paper, I argue that a sense of community must be established in the college classroom in order to accommodate students with ADD and help them to achieve learning goals set by their professors. In making this argument, I will evaluate the difficulties college students with ADD face academically, as well as how professors can bolster a student's confidence, and foster their overall academic success. First, this paper will show why community is important in college writing classrooms--especially for students with ADD. Second this paper will address how community matters in the college classroom, as well as how to establish a sense of cohesiveness in a college writing setting. Finally, this paper will provide an analysis of practices put to use today in John Carroll University's Writing Center. This argument about community is important

because without community in the classroom students with ADD may never achieve the goals of their professor thus succeeding in their course. This could translate through their entire college career, hindering overall academic performance.

Through the exploration of Walter E. Sawyer and Constance McGrath, I will support the importance of why professors must be able to identify ADD and how professors can aid their learning disabled students in the classroom. If a professor is able to detect ADD in a student, they can put specific strategies into motion in order to assist them in achieving the learning goals set out by the professor.

It was so important for me to have a comfortable environment where I could ask my professor or fellow student questions without feeling awkward or insufficient. Having that community setting was what essentially made me succeed. Walter E. Sawyer, author of “Attention Deficit Disorder: A Wolf in Sheep’s Clothing... Again” argues that some individuals classify a student as being disabled by ADD in order to slap on the label of learning disabled. He discusses a scale used in order to label a student “ADD related” (310). The scale starts with something as small as “restless and overactive” to “temper outbursts, explosive and unpredictable” (310). Sawyer then explores the diagnostic process for a child with ADD. He notes that an outside individual is brought in to observe the child, notes from the professor as well as parents are taken into account and when the professor and parents notes conflict, there is more reason to side with the professor because they are more trained to notice behavior amongst a particular age group. Using the observations of an “untrained observer” (311), Sawyer insists is untrustworthy and someone must have “serious reservations about using the reports of untrained professor observers to diagnose ADD, even when

used for children...” (311). I found it interesting that some of the behavioral indications of ADD are also the same as childhood depression. The effects of labeling a student as learning disabled contributes to outside issues and can then lead to “misclassification” (312). When misclassification pollutes the classroom environment. The similarities between ADD symptoms and child depression are alarming and can clearly dismantle any type of environment that a disabled student is put into. If a student is incorrectly diagnosed it can disrupt an entire classroom environment, however if the classroom is already emitting a sense of community, that student will be able to flourish. Being able to identify ADD as well as being able to dispel any incorrect diagnoses, is vital for professors. If a student is misdiagnosed they could be dealing with depression as Sawyer suggests. Because students can be misdiagnosed it is important for the professor to be able to identify learning disabilities, specifically ADD in order to aid them in the classroom through providing a comfortable atmosphere which puts the student at ease.

As Sawyer has shown, it is extremely important for professors to be able to identify ADD and attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) in the classroom in order to establish a classroom environment and community suitable to aid these learners. In her book *The Inclusion-Classroom Problem Solver: Structures and Supports to Serve All Learners*, Constance McGrath describes behavior that may signify to an instructor that a student struggles with ADD. McGrath provides a background on ADD and ADHD at the beginning of her chapter “Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD/ADHD).” Some symptoms to identify ADD are an individual’s inability to pay attention, and control their impulses, such as a student who uncontrollably talks out of turn in class. ADHD, which is a bit complex, classifies students who have ADD with hyperactivity: it is difficult for

them to sit still let alone pay attention in a classroom. Students without this hyperactive component are “referred to as ADD-inattentive type.” (McGrath 17). Other characteristics to look for in a student who could be suffering from ADD are “a lack of motivation or interest,” “do[es] not read fluently,” and “cannot summarize important points.” (Patton, Polloway, Serna 261).

In order to apply McGrath’s findings, a professor is notified and receives detailed documentation about a student who has a disability, which helps them make appropriate accommodations. The easiest and most effective way to do this is through establishing a calm, confident community space for them to read, write, and revise, in order to succeed in the writing classroom. The correct environment, one where students feel they are a part of something where they feel a sense of community, will promote them to succeed.

Literature Review

To introduce my argument regarding the importance of community in the college classroom for students with ADD, I will provide a Literature Review to outline what the critics in the field say on the subject. When it comes to students with ADD in the college writing classroom most critics argue that community is a sure way in aiding them towards academic success. They also illustrate how professors can provide this sense of community as well as strategies that can be incorporated into their every day lesson plan.

In her article, “From Body Composition to Body Revision in First-Year Composition Classrooms,” Deborah Harris-More argues that community can improve classroom learning. She gives professors a better grasp of the disability and how to teach students with disabilities with community and daily tips for helping these students succeed.

Similarly, in her article, “Reflections on Writing and Teaching Disability Autobiography” Georgina Kleege confides to readers that she is a professor with a disability who is teaching students first-year writing. Because of my own disability and my goal to teach writing, I relate to her experience. She states that she does not mean to criticize other scholars on the subject of disabilities; rather she strives to use her personal experiences with disabilities in order to make the classroom more comfortable for her students. She even designs specific assignments for her students that are all disability-themed in order to educate her students about learning disabilities as well as the processes of writing. This assignment educated her classrooms as a whole, and incorporates group work in order for students to become more comfortable around one another, thus producing a sense of community.

In addition, Patricia Quinn, author of “ADD and the College Student” gives two first hand accounts from students with ADD. The students explain their experiences in college with ADD and how they overcame their struggles with the help of community. Along similar lines, Constance McGrath’s book *The Inclusion-Classroom Problem Solver: Structures and Supports to Serve All Learners* provides readers with the importance of community in the writing classroom. Other strategies are documented through James R. Patton, Loretta Serna, and Edward A. Polloway’s article “Strategies for Teaching Learners with Special Needs” such as giving students a predictable daily regimen. This article also identifies “good readers” and “bad readers” but ultimately discusses strategies and skills for professors trying to help students with ADD. Charles Babb’s “Identifying Good Teaching Practices” identifies additional techniques that can be used in the college writing classroom in order to help students with ADD feel

comfortable, with their classmates and their professors. He does this by requesting that students repeat out loud what is written so that the class as a whole will be more likely to remember what is discussed. In addition to these practices, having a relaxed space makes students comfortable and confident so they are able to achieve the learning goals established by their professor.

Susan De La Paz, in her essay “Teaching Writing to Students with Attention Deficit Disorders and Specific Language Impairment” examines the specific difficulties students with learning disabilities face while trying to accomplish writing for college professors. Some of these difficulties include: punctuation, grammar, and mechanical issues. This sheds light on why community in the classroom is vital in aiding students with ADD in succeeding. This idea of community pervades many of the critical discussions about ADD in the college classroom, and these works, as well as the interview I conducted, provide a meaningful framework for my argument.

Methodology

In this section, I will outline the major theories that I am using in my essay, as well as describe the role John Carroll University’s Writing Center plays in my argument about community when teaching students with ADD.

In order to show the importance community plays in the college classroom for students with ADD, Jay Dolmage, in his essay “Mapping Composition: Inviting Disability in the Front Door” and Linda Feldmeier White, in her essay “Learning Disability, Pedagogies, and Public Discourse,” provide theories about classroom community and a global understanding of ADD. They each provide a larger picture of

the college classroom and the sometimes perplexing issues of identifying the disorder, along with the common mistakes of identifying the disability.

Jay Dolmage strives to create a plan for composition with students with disabilities in mind. He talks about how the students were at one point outsiders, and then were accommodated by universities. Additionally, he illustrates how current professors should gain a deeper understanding of teaching by adapting to students with disabilities and creating a community in his classroom to avoid making students feel like “outsiders” (15). He sets up metaphors that explain his ideas in regards to disabilities. The first is Steep Steps. Steep Steps is the road students take in English classes to reach the top step where they can achieve their professors’ standards. In this model, the professor gives students something to work towards, and even posing this as a group effort to reach the top step creates a unity between students to work towards success. Dolmage makes this metaphor to "highlight not just how space and specialization are exclusionary" but to emphasize how the disabled and "able" have different structures of learning (20). This metaphor raises a series of questions for professors to pose to themselves in order to help disabled students adapt to their class structure and environment.

The next strategy Dolmage introduces is "The Retrofit". This is the idea that you can take an object that has already been produced and convert it into something more accessible (21). The third metaphor is "Universal Design." Students are not just excluded from classroom environments but also from "collegiate history" (21). What Dolmage means by “collegiate history” (21) is the college experience. What Dolmage attempts to convey is that the idea of Steep Steps and Retrofit are ideas that already exist.

These ideas must be adapted for students with disability in order to create an even playing field and a fair environment. A classroom must be accessible for all students and in any university environment. Whether a student has ADD or a physically altering disability, the classroom should always be a comfortable and communal place. Professors that maintain a relaxed classroom setting can foster an environment where students feel they can approach their instructor and disclose their disability.

In short, Jay Dolmage discusses how to integrate students with disabilities in a classroom with mainstream students who do not have disabilities. He also takes community to another level by discussing the classroom as a space, and how to make students feel a sense of community between each other. An example of how to convey a comfortable classroom is found in Linda Feldmeier White's article "Learning Disability, Pedagogies, and Public Discourse," where she discusses the importance of a contented classroom environment for students with learning disabilities. The section dedicated to classroom environment "Implications for the College Writing Classroom," articulates that discussion helps learning disabled students. It also unifies them, promoting a sense of community. She discusses a particular incident in which one of her students was turning in grammatically-sound papers all semester. However, towards the end of the semester, he then turned in a paper with significant grammatical errors. When the student was confronted he confessed to her that his girlfriend had been editing all his papers. Due to the comfortable classroom environment, he then felt that it was time to learn the editing process himself. The reason this student felt confident enough to be honest with Feldmeier White is because he was relaxed in her class. She commented on this saying this particular class "had become a community of learners in which my role was

important but no longer central” (729). In order to get a classroom to feel more like a community, it is vital that students feel relaxed around one another as well as relaxed around their professor. The professor can take a step back to acknowledge that by creating this community environment, her students are comfortable around them as well as one another. Both of these theories provide a backbone for my argument by Dolmage promoting comfort for every student, and Feldmeier White stressing unity in the college writing classroom.

Providing a comfortable and communal environment is vital in aiding learning disabled students. Once a student is comfortable with their professor they will be more likely to ask for help, thus leading them to academic success. In addition to Dolmage and Feldmeier White, I interviewed Leah Tremaglio, a professional tutor of students with disabilities at the John Carroll Writing Center. Tremaglio provided my argument with common difficulties, such as organization, and others that these students must learn to overcome. She discussed specific tactics, confidence boosters, and more organizational skills that aid students with disabilities in writing and revising their work. When Tremaglio meets with students, the student does not always disclose their specific disability, but with extensive knowledge of various disabilities it is easy for her to spot tendencies that may make her suspect ADD or another disability. One sure way for her to promote success, regardless of the student’s disability, is to provide a pleasant, communal atmosphere during her consultations. It is significant for professors to provide a sense of community in their classrooms as well as during their office hours, and in the writing center. An overall sense of community should be felt by the student with ADD, particularly in the writing classroom.

The Importance of Community

Many students with ADD find their disability easier to deal with when they have the assistance of medication. It is important for the students, using a medication or not, to feel included and comfortable at the university and in the classroom. A first-hand account of two students in college with ADD, one who found out he had ADD in college and one who knew he had ADD since the second grade, tell how they managed their disability through Quinn's article "ADD and the College Student". The importance of Quinn's article is to show the importance of community from a college student's point of view. This way professors can see how important community is to the student from a first-hand account.

These accounts will show the importance of identifying ADD as well as the importance of providing community to students with ADD in the writing classroom. The first student is Erik, who struggled with his freshman year at Georgetown University and began taking Ritalin when he started his sophomore year. He wants readers to remember that the college experience is in our hands and readers should not forget to stay healthy and comfortable, inside and out. Being comfortable in the college classroom is one important factor for students and in Eric's letter he makes readers aware of how vital it truly is to be "comfortable" (63). Erick saw a dramatic change in his productivity, and his social life was not impaired. He stresses physical well-being and community as a part of the transition from home to college for a student with ADD or ADHD, more so than the average college student.

The next story is by Chris. I identified myself with Chris because much like him I discovered my ADD in my second year of college. This account was written while Chris

was a second year student at a college in North Carolina. He was diagnosed with ADD when he was in the second grade. He was prescribed Ritalin and he improved tremendously. He emphasizes building a relationship with instructors that produces trust and helps students acquire the assistance they need. Chris established a level of trust with his professors in order to have extra time on exams. He emphasizes the fact that you must never abuse the trust or aid you receive from professors. Chris had great difficulty with reading comprehension, as a result would miss important terms and was unable to pay attention or retain important facts. He discovered that a summary helped him when he missed a term or could not retain a long passage. At the end of Chris's letter, he writes about the importance of being open with your professors (21). Professors do the best they can in order to make their students comfortable in their classroom, but for students with ADD sometimes that is not always easy for them to feel this way. Hearing student's account of establishing trust, and gaining confidence in the classroom leads to that student feeling like they are a part of something, a part of a community.

Similar to Feldmeier White's theme of the comfortable classroom, the importance of a healthy classroom community is expressed by Deborah Harris-Moore. She takes the discomfort students may have with themselves, whether it is because of a disability or because of how they look physically, and incorporates it into her course theme. Harris-Moore also shows how some professors feel alone and vulnerable in front of their classrooms. Professors can often times feel frightened by a student body but a first year student is often times terrified by their professor, as well as the other students in their class. She makes the parallels between mind and body alongside writing and rhetoric. She suggests a variety of topics for a paper's focus such as "body modification, racial

constructions of the body, and others” (170).

Furthermore, another aspect of making students comfortable with their disability and medication is shedding the stigma that may accompany medication. Harris-Moore suggests an icebreaker when she asks students “what are the reasons for the popularity of fictional medical shows, especially among college-aged students like you?” She also suggests students choose an illness often times seen in the media and research it academically. By taking an academic approach to the illness, students learn more about actual medical aspects, as well as the language associated with illnesses and medication. This helps student distinguish between learning disabilities that require medication and those like ADD which can be aided with learning and writing strategies.

Harris-Moore continues with a section titled “The Body and Disability” where Harris-Moore creates an assignment for students to examine their own campus to ascertain how the school is equipped for “accessibility, disability language, and segregation” (174). This is an easy way to make students aware of what their campus has to offer and also provides a sense of familiarity between the student and the faculty associated with the services for students with disabilities department. Understanding the services available for students with disability is a way for students to register their disability in order to have appropriate accommodations throughout their college years. Specifically, there are also several practices and strategies professors can employ in their classroom in order to assist any number of students with ADD. Harris-Moore takes ensuring a comfortable classroom environment to the next level by incorporating disability and morphing it into a theme for her class. This one assignment not only educates her students on the availability of resources and accommodations provided by

universities but also educates her students in a way that aligns with her own learning goals. If assignments like this are integrated into first year writing courses, this can not only provide students with learning disabled resources, but also to provide their classroom with a sense of unity. This sense of unity will only produce a communal ambiance within the classroom making students with learning disabilities feel more comfortable with their professor as well as their peers.

Students struggling with ADD may feel, as Jay Dolmage described them, like “outsiders” (Dolmage, 15). Creating inclusive assignments that also let students uncover the unknown about disability brings them together. Georgina Kleege’s assignments are intended to make students aware of disability around them. One assignment called “Seeing Disability Identity” prompts students to individually compose a list of celebrities or famous individuals who have a disability. She then assigns students into groups in order to compile their lists together to form a master list. Students may have a hard time coming up with ten famous people who have disabilities. From there a professor should ask “Why?” or more specifically, “What keeps us from seeing disability?” (123). Basic teaching techniques such as repeating what you write aloud, to specific assignments like this one by Kleege, can be helpful to students with ADD. Students with ADD may feel segregated because of their disability but creating an assignment that brings awareness to celebrities with disabilities not only shows students how successful individuals with disabilities can be. This assignment also educates all students on disability as a whole, unifying them and bringing a sense of community into the classroom through discovery.

How to Establish Community

I plan to show why establishing community in a classroom could be difficult if a professor does not facilitate an organized, purposeful course plan. Also I will show that if the professor does not provide clear learning goals, students may be confused on what is expected of them. By evaluating McGrath, Patton, Serna, Polloway and Babb, I will show the importance of everyday strategies in order to aid students with ADD in the college writing classroom.

Constance McGrath includes some fundamental and simple strategies in her chapter on ADD on how to aid students like Eric and Chris in day-to-day class without assembling the course around disability. She formulates a list of things that can be implemented to help the student and it includes: “Establish a predictable daily structure. Follow a schedule so that the student or students are prepared. Introduce and monitor organizational strategies. [And] Check that everyone understands the directions before beginning an assignment” (19). Admittedly these strategies seem basic, but implementing them into a classroom with students affected by ADD can make a huge positive impact. While the strategies seem minimal, they can be effective as long as there are specific requests made by the professor. Without clear professor expectations, students with ADD get off-task or become frustrated with that which is required of them. A daily structure, however, gives students with ADD a regimented idea of what they need to do each and every day. Having a routine can make a student feel comfortable, and that is the first step in establishing community in the classroom and between professor and student.

Patton, Serna, and Polloway, argue for to the immense significance implementing a daily regimen. If a professor uses specific strategies each class meeting, students will follow the pattern and become more confident and successful writers. Having a repeating factor, such as posing questions to lead a student to a conclusion will help them do this on their own. The repetition will show them the correct way to do this on their own and thus they will be able to draw their own, correct, conclusions (273).

Strategies by McGrath that may seem fundamental are taken to the next level by authors James Patton, Loretta Serna, and Edward Polloway. In their textbook there are several different strategies for reading such as work knowledge strategies, which helps a reader substitute difficult words with easier words, and uses indirect and direct methods of vocabulary. Another strategy is text comprehension, whereby a professor would ask simple questions to evoke understanding such as: What is the main idea? Who are the main characters? And what do you conclude about the story (280)? Yet another tool is scaffolding. Scaffolding is when a professor asks the student questions to lead them to a conclusion. This simple technique can be used in class to assure students understand the outcome that is expected of them. This assurance will only make students become more free from stress. Patton, Serna and Polloway assert that using these tactics each class will promote confidence in students and make them begin to recognize questions they should be asking themselves as they read on their own. If scaffolding is used daily, students will start to recognize the pattern and may begin working as a class to answer these questions, promoting a sense of community (300).

A main issue for students with ADD is retaining information, whether that be textual or verbal. Having a sense of community where students feel comfortable is

important if they need to ask a professor to repeat what they said, or to ask a classmate to repeat it for them. Charles Babb's "Identifying Good Teaching Practices" recognizes some additional techniques that can be used in the college writing classroom in order to help students with ADD succeed. One practice is repeating what is written on the board aloud. This reinforces what the student reads and gives them another form for the information; they have it visually in text, and now hear it audibly. Next is to have the student talk about what they are doing. Babb elaborates on students recite what they are doing by giving an example. He requests that the student list out loud the steps in completing a math problem. Third is to provide as many different forms of the information as possible. Babb stresses that learning is up to the student; however, professors are responsible to help make that possible, and that these tips can be applied to students with various disabilities in different types of classrooms. Babb makes the point that it is up to the professor to make it possible for the student to succeed (33). Where the student must succeed on their own, the professor has to establish strategies in the classroom to help the student become confident and succeed. Requiring the class to do this individually aids each student, and when asking the class to do this as a whole, it provides a sense of cohesion amongst students making them not only comfortable with their professor, but with one another as well.

Analysis of the John Carroll Writing Center

It is common to see students being accommodated with extended times to complete exams; however all of these strategies and knowledge about the disorder itself are key in being able to develop a sense of community in the classroom. In this section I

will emphasize the importance of professors educating themselves on ADD in order to provide a comfortable classroom setting. In De La Paz's study students with ADD are documented to have a specific insufficiency in the composing of a research paper. She specifies that students with ADD do not have issues with the act of writing per se, but with writing something coherent.

A test was conducted where a group of students with ADD, a group of students suspected to have ADD, and a control group of students were given three writing prompts. The students in the control group did significantly better than the other two groups in productivity, yet there was no objective way to determine the difference in the writing ability amongst the groups of students. Another study was conducted where students with ADD/ADHD and a control group were to write the digits 0-9 and the letters of their first name for a minute. The results showed that there was no difference in number or letters per minute. The analysis concludes that students with ADD/ADHD have insufficiencies with the written language. She identifies some of the main issues students have as: grammar, punctuation, difficulty in making thoughts coherent, and mechanical issues. Students with ADD struggle in writing for several reasons, but when a specialized, specific rubric, outline, or description is provided for them by the professor they are given the key to meet the professor's standards. When a professor gives students a clear cut idea of the goals they are required to reach that student will better understand what is expected of them. Through this study it is clear that students struggling with ADD do benefit from being able to pose questions in the class period, attend office hours, or even turn to classmates for help, but these aids will never be accessible for them without establishing trust and a sense of community in the classroom.

Students who struggle with ADD strongly benefit from one-on-one attention. The one-on-one attention establishes a sense of community between the professor and student allowing the student to feel more comfortable asking for help, or disclosing information about their disability. Different tactics and strategies for learning disabled students are applied first-hand at John Carroll University's Writing Center by Leah Tremaglio, a specialist for students registered with Services for Students with Disabilities. Tremaglio does not assume anything about the students writing abilities, as she is purposefully not informed of their specific disability when she tutors students in writing. Since she meets with the same students multiple times a week she grows to learn more and more about the students' strengths and weaknesses in order to assess how she will be able to aid them each consultation.

When she finds a student who she suspects may have ADD, she does her best to only focus on one or two things throughout the paper. By only targeting small parts of the paper at a time, instead of bombarding the student with points of improvement in a single meeting, she can typically accomplish more in that appointment as opposed to an appointment that illuminates all the student's weak points. She also does this so that she does not overwhelm the student. Listing several points rather than just one or two does not distract the student from the intended goal of their meeting. Tremaglio describes this situation as "choos[ing] your own battle." Another tactic she implies in her consultations is leaving a pause in conversation she calls "processing time", and also uses these pauses as an opportunity for a student to ask questions.

Tremaglio expressed that all students with disabilities – not just those with ADD – need support and encouragement. She expressed that many of her students are great

writers, but lack of self-esteem which deters them. This relates back to Sawyer when he discussed students who lack confidence and support and how they are labeled learning disabled. These individuals can share the same effects of an individual with depression. Tremaglio acknowledges that everyone needs feedback in their writing, but she spends a great deal of her time helping disabled students realize their writing strengths, and treating their weaknesses as hurdles they will jump together.

Another method that is helpful for her is having students begin their session by making a list of what they want to accomplish during that consultation. In this way, the student can try to keep these things in mind during the remainder of their appointment. Typical Writing Center appointments are only 30 minutes, but Tremaglio has an hour with each learning-disabled student, so that she feels that they are able to accomplish most of what is on their list for the session. At the end, she lets students make another list of what they want to focus on for next time, which makes them accountable for their own goals and responsibility to make those changes the next appointment. This relates to Dolmage's idea of "Steep Steps" in giving students something to look forward to for their next meeting. She also added that the next time to-do list gives students a summary of what they have accomplished and what needs to be conquered (16). A concrete list is important to students with ADD in particular because it is an aid for them that is not medication, or even a professor if they are not comfortable there. Meeting with Leah Tremaglio is a completely different environment for students to meet privately with the same person repeatedly in order to reach success. These meetings give students another outlet to find a sense of community and thus help them achieve academic success.

Conclusion

As I have shown in this essay, establishing a level of trust between student and professor, as well as establishing a comfortable classroom environment, will make that student more at ease when going to speak with a professor. First year students will more than likely be timid and reluctant to participate, so it is easy to imagine how difficult it would be for a student to visit a professor, during office hours, to disclose to them that they need accommodations for their disability. Feldmeier White promotes unity in her classroom and this idea eradicates Dolmage's point about students with disabilities feeling like "outsiders" (15). In addition, an educator who can incorporate a small amount of information on disabilities in their classroom could go a long way with students in making them more comfortable. In the end what becomes most important is the education about this disorder and being aware of the strategies and practices in order to use in classrooms today. The more a professor knows about the disorder, the more they can create a comfortable space filled with a sense of community in order to help these students succeed. A concern is also that professors do not know enough about learning disabilities such as ADD. The more professors know about how students with ADD learn, the more aware they will be if a student is struggling in their class. Professors may interpret behavior such as the inability to focus or the inability to summarize a piece of writing as a student's general disinterest in their course when they could be dealing with ADD. If a professor is unaware of a student's disability but suspects the student has a difficulty or disability, they can employ the simple tactics by Babb, such as reciting out loud what they write on the board, or ensuring that students understand an assignment before they begin the task.

Through careful analysis of Dolmage and Feldmeier White I was able to give my argument a backbone. With Dolmage I provide evidence that students with ADD can feel like outsiders. Through Feldmeier White I emphasize that unifying the classroom into a community can evaporate those feelings of isolation students with ADD may be feeling. Through Sawyer, I showed that professors must be aware of the proper indication signs of ADD ensuring a student always feels welcome and a sense of community in the classroom. Through the first-person accounts Quinn related, I showed importance of community in the college classroom from the students' perspective. In Quinn's article, two students attributed their success to several things but first and foremost, the comfort they felt with their professors, in their classrooms, and with their peers. I established that the careful design of assignments revolving around learning disabilities can help students become educated and bound communally with one another and Harris Moore and Kleege demonstrate that. Specific strategies that teachers can use in their every day classroom were portrayed by McGrath, Patton, Serna, and Polloway. The art of scaffolding which carries through to the John Carroll Writing Center was examined with Babb and Tremaglio. I showed that through careful analysis of De La Paz's article, there is proof that students have difficulties with the written language, which is all the more reason to promote community and comfort in the college writing classroom. I ended my analysis with the example of Leah Tremaglio's work because she shows first-hand what tactics students today are responding to in the Writing Center. She finds a great deal of success with providing a sense of community and boosting the learning disabled student's confidence.

Finally, from first-hand experience I can say that I owe my academic successes to

my professors who made me feel confident. The professors who made me feel comfortable and confident in their classroom are easier to approach, attend office hours, and come to with questions. Becoming comfortable with that professor often times meant I was happy and comfortable around my classmates in that room too. If a professor was unavailable, I relied on my classmates who were able to help me with whatever I needed. The courses in which I succeeded in most were always courses where I felt a strong sense of community, belonging, and confidence. As a future professor I will habitually promote a communal and pleasant atmosphere.

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