

# Navigating The College Search for Students Who Learn Differently

Lori Harding  
Director of LC Online Partnerships



*(Want to follow along the presentation at your own pace? Scan here for PDF!)*




College & Career Pathways 2025

# Agenda

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- **Definition of Terms**
  - **What We Can Learn From the Data**
  - **Levels of Support in College**
  - **How the Legal Landscape Changes**
  - **Finding the Right Fit**
  - **All About Disclosing – Why and When**
  - **Landmark College – Unique Support and Programming**
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“Everybody is a genius.  
But if you judge a fish by its  
ability to climb a tree, it will  
live its whole life believing  
that it is stupid.”

- Albert Einstein

# Key Terms

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- ” Neurodiversity is ALL of us.
  - All brains function differently
  - This diversity is natural and beneficial for our species
  - Differences should be accepted and valued, not viewed as a set of pathologies to be cured
- ” Neurotypical- what society considers “typical” brain development and cognitive/intellectual functioning
- ” Neurodivergent- what society considers “atypical” brain development and cognitive/intellectual functioning, e.g., dyslexia, dyscalculia, autism, ADHD, etc.

Change The Conversation:

Recognize and acknowledge your strengths!



# The Impact

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## PostSecondary Completion Data (young adults out of high school for 6 years)

- In the general population, only 51% completed a post-secondary education
- Among neurodivergent students:
  - 38% of students with learning disabilities
  - 35% of students with autism
  - 34% of students with other health impairments (includes ADHD) completed a post-secondary school
- In one study at a large state university, students who waited until after their first year to request accommodations had 3.5 times the risk of not completing their post-secondary education

You CAN improve the odds:  
Access and Utilize Support!



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# The Legal Landscape

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# How The Legal Landscape Changes

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# Finding The Right Fit

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# The Importance of Self Knowledge

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- Who am I and what do I want from my college experience?
  - What type of learner am I?
  - In what environment do I learn best?
  - What are my strengths & weaknesses?
  - What accommodations and supports will best ensure my chance of success?
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# The Process

## What Do You Need?

- What supports are in your IEP or 504 plan?
- Have you consulted your counselor, teachers, and family for input?
- Develop a list of accommodations and supports you're looking for

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# Disclosing

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# Disclosing: When and Why?

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## Why Disclose?

- It's the only way to receive accommodations

## When?

- Accommodations must be in place for the beginning of the semester
- Options
  - During the application process
  - After an admission decision

**My Recommendation** Disclose early. It provides the best opportunity to evaluate services, attitudes, and experience how easy or hard it is to access the services that will foster success.

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# Accommodations: An Ongoing Process

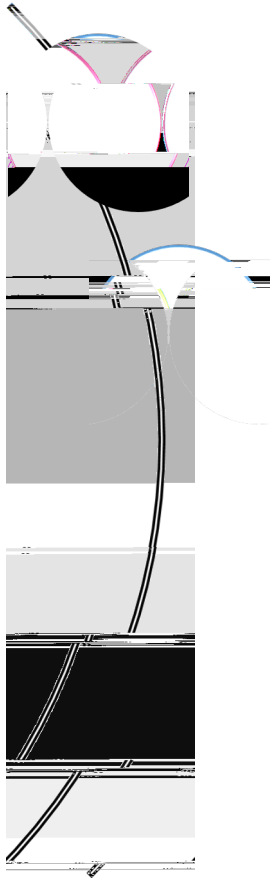
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- Every semester, you will need to request accommodations from disability services and inform your instructors
  - Schedule regular meetings to discuss the effectiveness of your accommodations
  - Be vigilant. Consistently monitor the extent to which your accommodations are providing access to course content.
  - If access is diminished at any point, **SELF-ADVOCATE**.
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# Beyond Academic Support

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# Ask Lots of Questions

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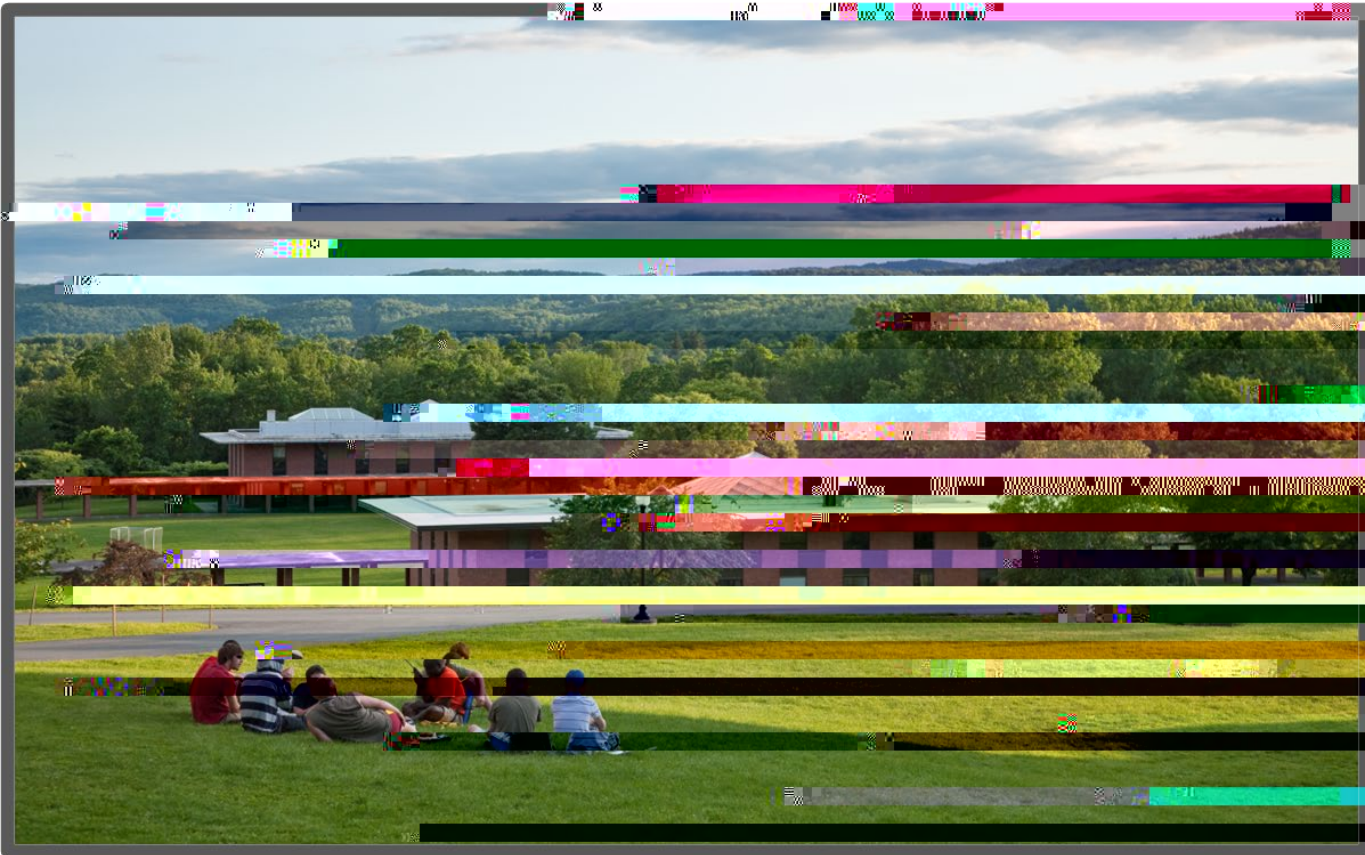
- 9 Is assistance 1:1 or in a group?
  - 9 Who does the academic advising for students who have LD's?
  - 9 Can students take a reduced course load?
  - 9 Is the college test-optional?
  - 9 What are the college's retention, graduation & placement rates for students with LD's?
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# Landmark College

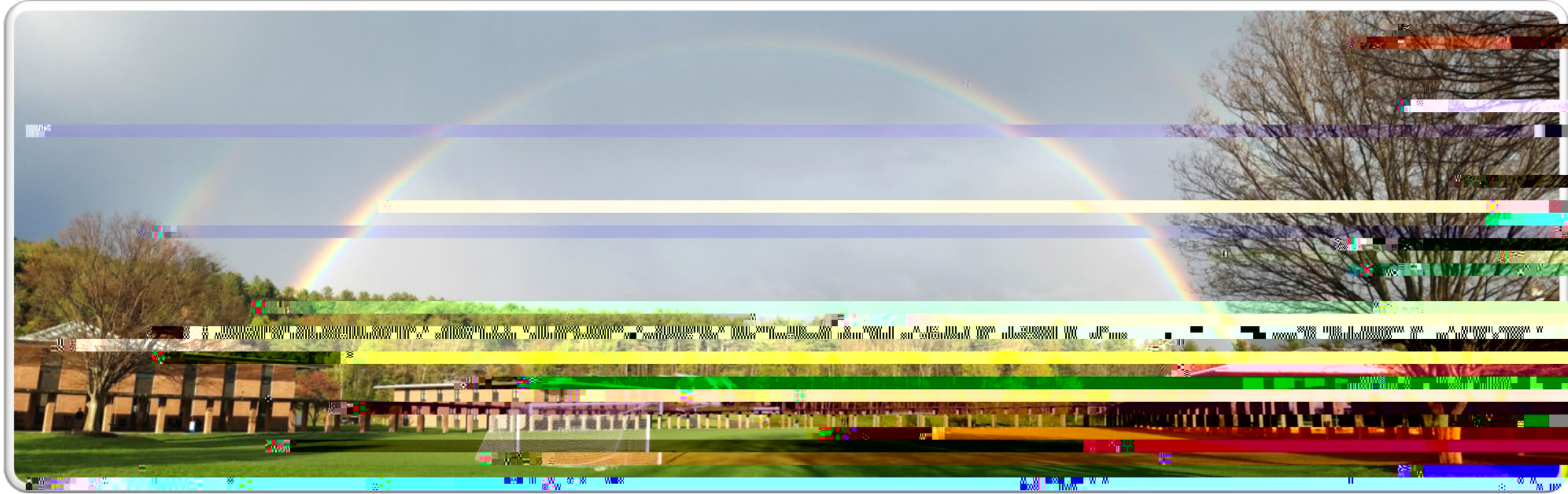
Devoted exclusively to Students Who Learn Differently

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“The barrier to accessing education is not intrinsic to the student but is created by a mismatch between the student and the educational environment.”

Shea, Hecker, Lalor, “From Disability to Diversity” (2019)



# Landmark Fast Facts

Location:  
Putney, VT  
125 Acres

450 Students  
Representing 28 States  
and 12 Countries

7:1 Student/Faculty Ratio

11 Associate & Bachelor's  
Degree Programs &  
Concentrations

50%- Number of Students  
who Transferred to LC in  
Search of a Better  
Experience

87% of Bachelor's Degree  
Recipients are Employed  
or in Graduate School

# Landmark Support

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- 9 Wraparound, fully integrated support services
- 9 No additional fees
- 9 Academic advising with weekly meetings
- 9 Drake Center for Academic Support, providing faculty-run executive function coaching
- 9 Cutting-edge educational technology
- 9 Counseling & health services
- 9 Residential support system
- 9 Therapy Dog Program
- 9 Social Pragmatics support for Students with Autism
- 9 Career Connections, building pathways to successful careers



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9 Multiple Paths: Online Dual Enrollment, Summer Programs, Bridge Experience, College START & Online Associate Degrees, TaC, Associate & Bachelor's Degrees  
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