
The issue of accessibility in education and in other areas of society for persons with disabilities has rightly been a matter of concern for several decades, leading to important national legislation such as the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, both of 1990, and the Section 508 Amendment of 1998. However, as Brady Lund, the author of this book points out, “there is more to accessibility than just rules and guidelines.” (xii) He is forthcoming about sharing his own experiences with mental disabilities, explaining that his academic success in higher education was all due to the availability of accessible instruction.

The book has seven chapters divided into three sections: Accessibility, Content, and Evolution. In the first chapter, Lund reviews some important U.S. legislation related to accessibility, beginning with the National Mental Health Act of 1946. Also in Chapter 1 the distinction is made between accessibility and accommodation, with the former being an embedded philosophy in the functioning of a system or organization, while the latter refers to changes made in response to a specific need. (9-10) Chapter Two introduces universal design for learning (UDL) and its impact on educational systems, including three principles that should be incorporated into curricula: multiple means of representation, of expression, and of engagement. (18) Chapter Three contains practical guidance for integrating the three UDL principles into online learning design.

Part II consists of chapters on communicating effectively in person and online, and also on balancing engaging course content with accessibility. The author stresses that communication is one of the most important aspects of librarianship. (63-64) Part III looks to the future of accessibility in regard to technological innovations in instructional systems. Accessibility doesn’t always keep pace with the development of new technologies. The final chapter presents case studies of accessibility initiatives at various higher educational institutions. In some of the cases, an institution was prompted to act on accessibility because of action taken against it due to barriers encountered by individuals with disabilities.

Brady Lund is a doctoral candidate at Emporia State University’s School of Library and Information Management and has authored over two dozen published articles in several LIS journals. He has also presented on LIS topics at recent ALA conferences.

Robert J. Vander Hart
Electronic Resources Librarian
Lamar Soutter Library
University of Massachusetts Medical School
Worcester, MA
Robert.VanderHart@umassmed.edu