Discussion of accommodation and advocacy for graduate student researchers

Catherine Wilhelm
Disclaimer

◦ This is not my field of study

◦ I am still learning and I may use incorrect language – I apologize in advance if I do

◦ SwD = students with disability
My experience

- Bad advice
- Uncaring professor
- Caring professor & trip to the ER
- Working with Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) Office
- New Health issues
- Two surgeries
Most SwD face difficulty obtaining accommodations

72.5% of 266 SwD did not find it easy to arrange accommodations they needed

70% of 245 SwD did not find it easy to implement accommodations they were granted
Barriers to support and accommodations

- Discussing disability and illness & obtaining accommodations is highly stigmatized
- The majority of graduate students do not know they can receive accommodations in the research lab
- Graduate students are somewhere between students and employees
- It is taxing on SwD to obtain and manage their accommodations
What can you do?

Graduate students with disability or illness
- Advocate for yourself
- Prioritize your health
- Continue talking to others to build a support network
- Push your department/school to make changes

Faculty, staff, and other graduate students
- Listen! :)
- Understand and be prepared to implement a variety of accommodations
- Support SwD by helping push the department/school to make changes
OPEN DISCUSSION