

Service Dawgs:

**REACH - Resource, Education,
Accessibility, and Community Hub**



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Problem Context

Currently, UW DRS (Disability Resources for Students) cannot meet student needs beyond providing accommodations.

- Students with disabilities (SWD)
 - feel **isolated** and **disconnected**
 - seek **community**
 - have **questions**, but don't know where to look

Students with disabilities are at higher risk of **mental health issues** and **academic hardship**



Problem Statement

How might **students with disabilities** find a community and resources comfortably so that they can succeed within **higher education**?

*Students with disabilities = SwD

Key Research Insights

1. SwD need **social support** and **academic assistance**
2. Make resources easy to find
3. Adhere to WCAG guidelines
4. Access to **resources** and **community** are vital
5. Include general and disability-related resources
6. Prioritize **transparency, education, community** and **self-confidence**

Personas



Maya: 20 years old, Junior at UW

- **Context**
 - Chronic migraines + Head trauma
 - Has DRS accommodations
- **Pain Points**
 - Frustrated with DRS counselor
 - Studying is difficult and time-consuming
- **Goals**
 - Advice/resources
 - To talk to people who understand what she is going through

Personas Cont.



**Drew: 21 years old, Senior
at UW**

- **Context**
 - Recently diagnosed with ADHD
 - No DRS accommodations
- **Pain Points**
 - Overwhelmed
 - Does not have time to spend with friends & family
- **Goals**
 - Improve quality of life
 - Support and/or advice people in similar situations

Solution approach / key feature:

Centralized hub of resources - On-campus, In Seattle, Online

A comprehensive and transparent list of resources and pre-existing communities

REACH Home Resources Discussion How-to Sign In with Google

Resources

UW Resources Seattle Resources Online Resources

Filter

- Support Group
- Therapy
- Housing
- Employment
- Club

UW Resources

D-Center

UW Resource

The D Center is a space and

UW Facilities - Accessible Routes

UW Resource

Disability Parking

UW Resource

Disability Parking is an

Alliance for Disability Law and Justice

UW Resource Club/RSO

The Alliance for Disability Law and Justice (ADLJ) at UW Law advocates for a more inclusive, accessible, and holistic approach to law school from a foundation of anti-racism, intersectionality, and anti-ableism.

GO TO RESOURCE

Ability

UW Resource Club/RSO

Ability's goal is to create disability community and accessibility awareness within the computing community. Our club is open to all UW students, but based in the Allen School for Computer Science & Engineering. The computing community at UW is a tight-knit community.

GO TO RESOURCE

UW ASL Club

UW Resource Club/RSO

We bring Deaf, hard-of-hearing, and hearing students together by communicating in sign language, learning about the Deaf culture, and providing support to the Deaf community.

GO TO RESOURCE

Solution approach / key feature: Community Discussion Forum

Ask and answer questions regarding DRS, disabilities, and college

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar with the REACH logo and links for Home, Resources, Discussion, and How-to. A 'Sign in with Google' button is in the top right. Below the navigation is a blue banner with a city skyline illustration. A dark blue 'Discussion' tab is on the left. The main content area is titled 'CATEGORIES' and features a search bar labeled 'Search Discussion'. Below the search bar are five category icons: All Posts (blue), Social (purple), Venting (yellow), Advice (green), and Questions (orange). Under the 'All Posts' category, there is a heading 'All Posts' followed by the text: 'You must be signed in to post. All posts are anonymous! Even if you are logged in, you can feel comfortable posting and commenting without people knowing it's you. You are free to disclose your name within your post or reply, but you don't have to!'

This screenshot shows a detailed view of a discussion post. It includes the same 'CATEGORIES' header and search bar as the previous screenshot. The 'All Posts' heading is present. The post content is: 'i don't know what i'm doing' with a 'Social' tag and a heart icon. Below the title, it says 'Posted on: 4/23/2024 7:54:02 PM' and 'how do i do this'. A second post is partially visible below, titled 'UW DRS' with a 'Questions' tag and a heart icon. It says 'Posted on: 4/23/2024 10:54:35 AM' and 'How do I apply for accommodations?'.

Solution approach / key feature:

"How-To" Page

Guidance navigating common issues or processes relating to disability accommodations

REACH Home Resources Discussion **How-to** Sign In with Google

HOW-TO

Take a look at common processes, issues, and questions that other students with disabilities have struggled with to discover digestible guides and answers for how to navigate these situations.

- ? How do I apply for accommodations?
- ? How do I schedule a test when I have DRS accommodations?
- ? How do I reach out to my professor or TA to talk about my accommodations?
- ? How do I request additional accommodations?
- ? I need to contact my DRS advisor, but I don't remember their name or email.
- ? I need to be better organized, where do I start?

DEMO VIDEO

Discussion

CATEGORIES

Q Search Discussions



All Posts



Social



Writing



Advice



Questions

Advice

You must be signed in to post.

All posts are moderated.

Don't forget to check out our [community guidelines](#) and [FAQ](#) for more information. If you have any questions, please contact our [support team](#).

Loading Posts...

User Testing & Validation

Concepts & Assumptions

- Centralized Resource Hub
- Reduced Feelings of Stress & Isolation
- Anonymity

Lessons & Insights

- Consolidating resources
- Talking to professionals
- Organization
- First-hand advice & connection

Design Direction

- Search feature & specific filters
- User suggested resources
- Categorize & clean forum

Ethical Considerations

Inclusive vs Accessible Design

- Going beyond the 'required' accessibility and not restricting to a single disability type

Misinformation/Disinformation

- Checking resource validity and bias

Data Privacy for Users

- Forum anonymization and securing personal profile data

Content Moderation

- What do we as moderators see as 'crossing the line'?

Next Steps Beyond Capstone

- **Open Source:** Allow students at other universities to host a version of our app, specific to their school & the needs of their peers
 - Provide future students with ideas to consider and implement to increase capabilities on REACH
- **Increase Resources:** Add more resources to our hub to make our site more inclusive & comprehensive
- **User Testing:** Continue user testing with a wider range of disabilities & iterate based on insights



Thank You!