THE NEURODIVERSITY ALLIANCE

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Practical strategies for faculty and staff

CLEAR EXPECTATIONS

- **Include deadlines and suggested timelines of completion.**
- **Use headings, visuals, symbols, colors, and highlight key info.**
- **Never assume all written instructions are understood.**

SIMPLIFICATION

- **Provide checklists of what students need to do or gather.**
- **Identify a clear first step to get students started.**
- **Show what an ideal finished project may look like.**

VISIBILITY

- **Move the accommodations statement to front of the syllabus.**
- **Provide calendar invitations and/or reminders when able.**
- **Incorporate progress checks throughout semester**

REVIEW

- **Briefly recap previous information provided for classes.**
- **Reiterate what is important for students to focus on.**
- **Summarize key information visually, including any appropriate examples.**

FLEXIBILITY

- **Clarify priorities for projects, papers, studying, etc.**
- **Offer alternatives for approaching learning if provided material is not working.**
- **Help students identify where the barrier of misunderstanding is present and troubleshoot**

SELF-REGULATION

When starting feels impossible:

- Identify one tiny, manageable first step.

When students become distracted:

- Explore changes to the environment that may reduce distractions.

When everything feels overwhelming:

- Pause, reduce load, and identify the immediate priority.

AVOID:

Vague instruction

Micromanaging

Assumptions of disability

Drastic changes in syllabus and due dates

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS:

"Which part of this process feels most difficult?"

"What feels manageable, and what feels overwhelming?"

"What kind of support or format would make the next step clearer?"