

Defining Hierarchy:

learning to navigate the concept between
those who respect it and those who do not

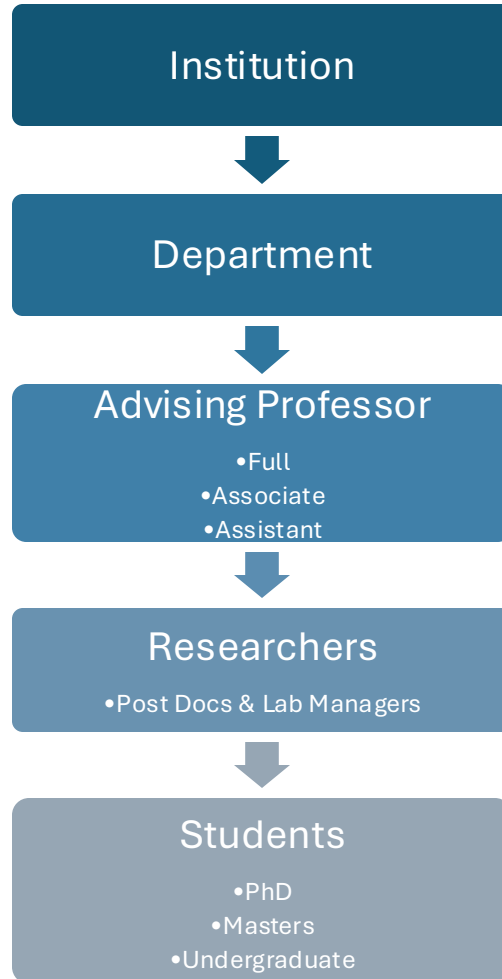
Nadine L. Grambling, Elizabeth Erickson, Kaitlyn Gauvey,
Tyler Grambling, Keren Levine



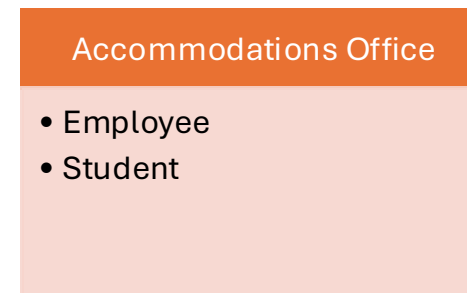
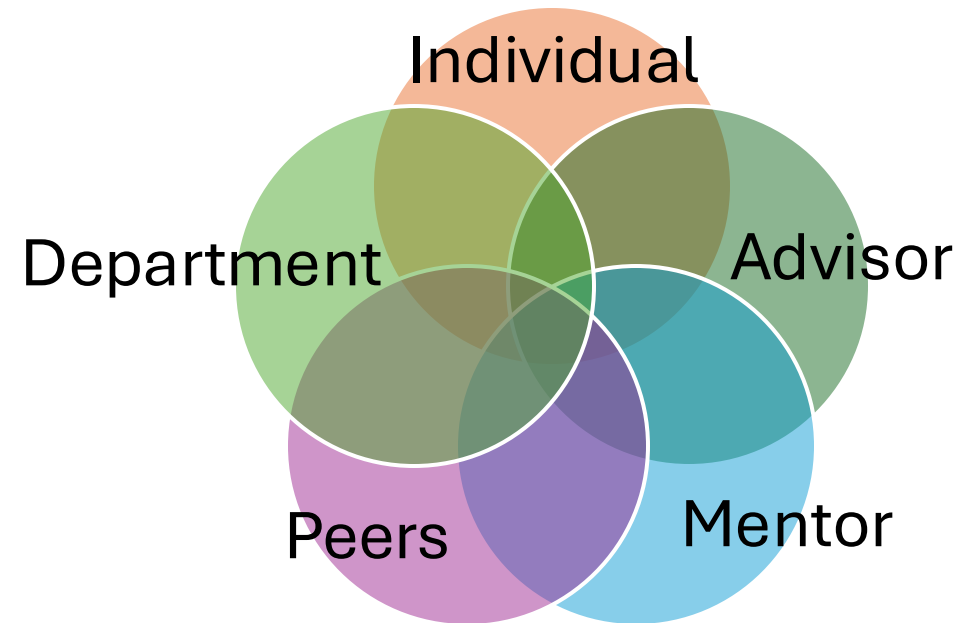
Division of Science,
Engineering and Math
PIKES PEAK STATE COLLEGE



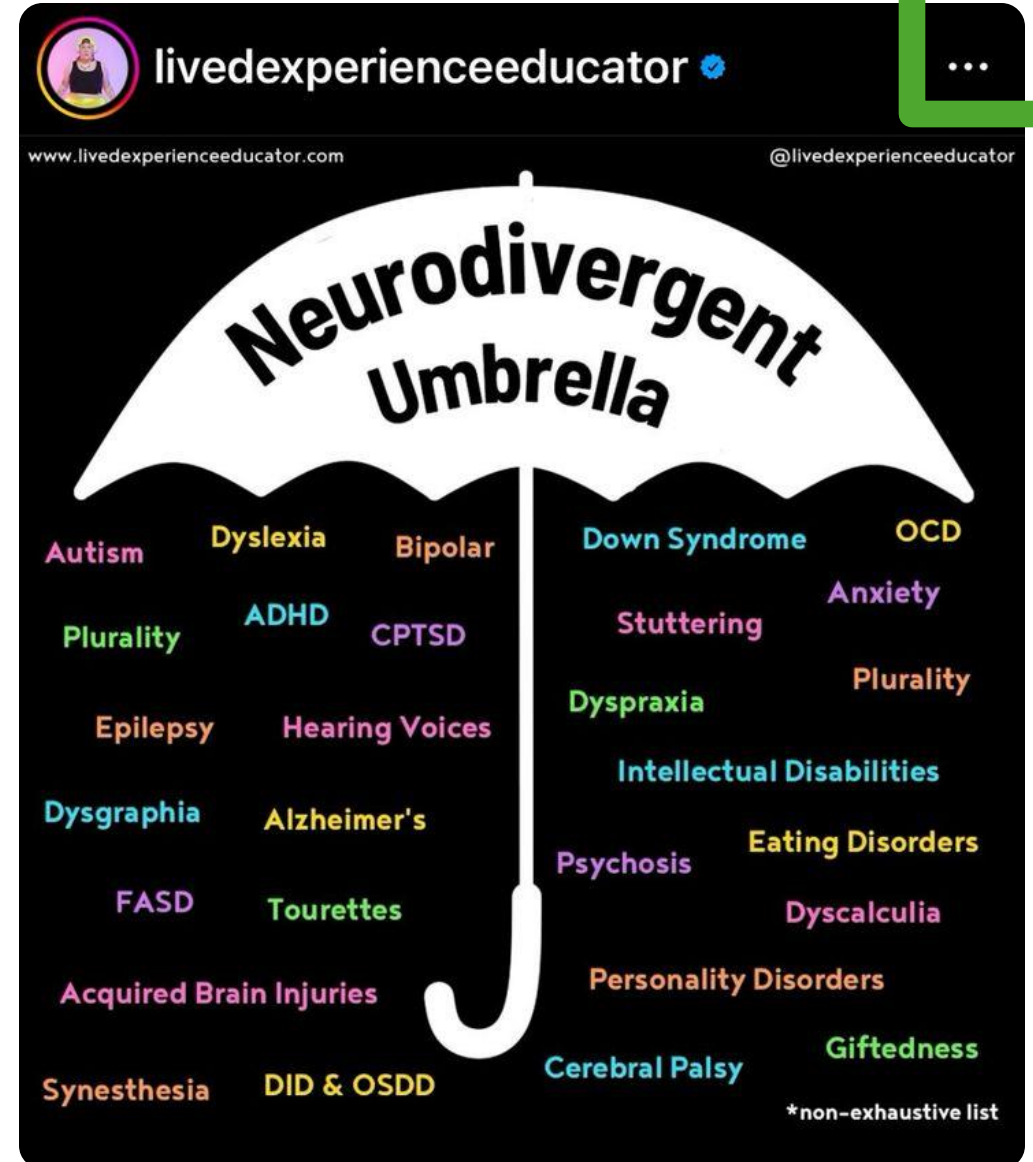
Neurotypical Hierarchy



Neurodivergent “Hierarchy”

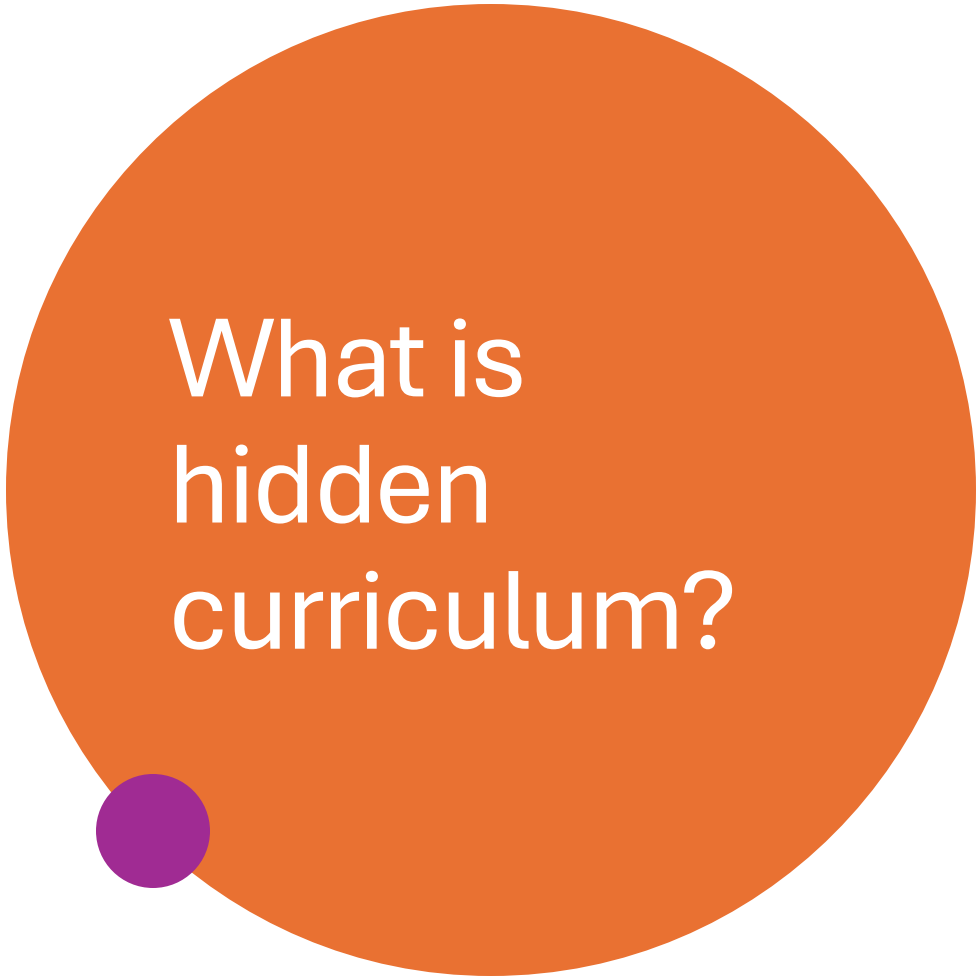


What is Neurodivergence?



What are barriers to neurodivergent diagnoses?

Cost	Up to multiple thousands of dollars, even with insurance, for testing and diagnosis
Stigma	Preconceptions about abilities
Gender (and age) bias	Characterizations of many conditions were done using studies of males below the age of 18
Referral pathway	Only certain professionals within the psychology field are willing to diagnose ADHD and Autism
Wait times for testing	Depending on the region, age of individual, insurance, and type of diagnosis, initial appointments can have wait times of over a year, and that's just to start the testing process



What is hidden curriculum?

“The term “hidden curriculum” refers to an amorphous collection of “implicit academic, social, and cultural messages,” “unwritten rules and unspoken expectations,” and “unofficial norms, behaviours and values” of the dominant-culture context in which all teaching and learning is situated. These “assumptions and expectations that are not formally communicated, established, or conveyed” stipulate the “right” way to think, speak, look, and behave in school. Since the hidden curriculum invisibly governs academic achievement, it is vital for every student to learn its lessons.” –
bu.edu *Teaching the Hidden Curriculum*

Our (the co-authors)
lived experience with
neurodivergence:

Clinically diagnosed ADHD (4) and Autism (2)

- co-occurring psychological, physical, and neurological conditions such as anxiety, depression, PTSD, narcolepsy, endometriosis, and PCOS

Diagnostic timing

- Childhood
- Early adulthood
- During PhD
- Post-PhD/Early Career

Interventions/Accommodations

- Stimulants for ADHD
- Non-stimulants for ADHD
- Talk therapy

Survey of co-authors

How have you experienced academic hierarchy?

Looking back, what do you wish you could change about interactions where imposed hierarchy caused conflict? (Not a what you "should have" done differently... but more of what do you wish the other person understood about what was "going wrong"?)

What has caused tension in academic relationships that you attribute to neurotypical vs neurodivergent mentorship pairings or neurotypical standards being in place?

What successes do you have that you attribute to taking non-traditional or neurodivergent approaches to work relationships?

How have you experienced academic hierarchy?

I've been an undergraduate on a traditional timeline straight from high school. I was very fortunate that my undergrad was a very mutual respect-focused department. My professors treated me more like a still-learning peer rather than a lesser or subservient role. We also did not have graduate students, so academically, I was only one level below the professor, which destigmatized knowing my professors on a personal level as well as professionally.

I've been a graduate student during my late 20s into early 30s after working in private industry. My original advisor wanted an automaton lab minion who didn't question anything and accepted everything he said as perfect, correct, and the last word. However, he also failed to share that desire with me, so I was ultimately dropped as a student when I failed to heel. My second advisor valued my independence. However, I was already disenchanted with the department, which created a department-level hierarchy imbalance to attempt intimidation tactics to keep me quiet and not tell the truth to my peers or prospective students. From the department level, I was threatened with being kicked out, losing funding, and numerous petty attempts to create extra work for me. I broadly had the support of my second advisor and felt confident in how far I was legally protected, so pushed back and called their bluff as often as I was able.

And I've worked in academia post PhD as a non-professor. I feel mutually respected by my faculty, but it's clear that institutionally, I have no value despite my degree credentials and the department's consideration of my role. This is a new power imbalance between department and institution that I am not fully certain of yet.

How have you experienced academic hierarchy?

I've been an undergraduate on a traditional timeline straight from high school. I was very fortunate that my undergrad was a very mutual respect-focused department. My professors treated me more like a still-learning peer rather than a lesser or subservient role. We also did not have graduate students, so academically, I was only one level below the professor, which destigmatized knowing my professors on a personal level as well as professionally.

My undergraduate and masters experience was very inclusive as my instructors and advisors treated me as a peer/colleague. I felt as though my thoughts and ideas had meaning, and that I could survive in academia. However, that changed when I started my PhD at a larger university. I was not considered a peer and it was very exclusive. It was fairly obvious that there was a hierarchy of titles. There was also a sub-tier of hierarchy with funding. Major lab groups (advisor or PI) were able to secure large funds and that led to a pay disparity between PhD students. Advisor and advisee relationships can also be strenuous. Some advisors would actively talk about their advisees to their other advisees (hope this makes sense).

broadly had the support of my second advisor and felt confident in how far I was legally protected, so pushed back and called their bluff as often as I was able.

And I've worked in academia post PhD as a non-professor. I feel mutually respected by my faculty, but it's clear that institutionally, I have no value despite my degree credentials and the department's consideration of my role. This is a new power imbalance between department and institution that I am not fully certain of yet.

How have you experienced academic hierarchy?

I've been an undergraduate on a traditional timeline straight from high school. I was very fortunate that my undergrad was a very mutual respect-focused department. My professors treated me more like a still-learning peer rather than a lesser or subservient role. We also did not have graduate students, so academically, I was only one level below the professor, which destigmatized knowing my professors on a personal level as well as professionally.

My undergraduate and masters experience was very inclusive as my instructors and advisors treated me as a peer/colleague. I felt as though my thoughts and ideas had meaning, and that I could survive in academia.

Terribly. I am more likely to respect people based on the way they treat me and their long-term demonstration of excellence on a topic than on their institution/what journals they've published in/what awards they have/what their pedigree is.

PhD students. Advisor and advisee relationships can also be strenuous. Some advisors would actively talk about their advisees to their other advisees (hope this makes sense).

broadly had the support of my second advisor and felt confident in how far I was legally protected, so pushed back and called their bluff as often as I was able.

And I've worked in academia post PhD as a non-professor. I feel mutually respected by my faculty, but it's clear that institutionally, I have no value despite my degree credentials and the department's consideration of my role. This is a new power imbalance between department and institution that I am not fully certain of yet.

How have you experienced academic hierarchy?

I've been an undergraduate on a traditional timeline straight from high school. I was very fortunate that my undergrad was a very mutual respect-focused department. My professors treated me more like a still-learning peer rather than a lesser or subservient role. We also did not have graduate students, so academically, I was only one level below the professor, which destigmatized knowing my professors on a personal level as well as professionally.

My advisor has been in the field and my department for a very long time. When I finally tried speaking with the DGS and others in the department who were supposed to help me navigate my relationship with my advisor and help me succeed, they immediately shut me down. They said they didn't believe he would ever do anything like that. I felt like anything I said would get back to him, and he could continue discrediting me as a scientist and intelligent person. There was no one I could go to in the department that I trusted had my best interest because they were also scared of backlash from the older faculty.

broadly had the support of my second advisor and felt confident in how far I was legally protected, so pushed back and called their bluff as often as I was able.

And I've worked in academia post PhD as a non-professor. I feel mutually respected by my faculty, but it's clear that institutionally, I have no value despite my degree credentials and the department's consideration of my role. This is a new power imbalance between department and institution that I am not fully certain of yet.

How have you experienced academic hierarchy?

I've been an undergraduate on a traditional timeline straight from high school. I was very fortunate that my undergrad was a very mutual respect-focused department. My professors treated me more like a still-learning peer rather than a lesser or subservient role. We also did not have graduate students, so academically, I was only one level below the professor, which destigmatized knowing my professors on a personal level as well as professionally.

Most significantly, I've experienced this in writing. Senior co-authors take the perpetual role of "advisor" and contribute very little to the manuscript other than comments on a finished product.

Additionally, I have experienced this as an early career academic, where there is an expectation that everything is in preparation for "the next stage" without consideration that I just want stability in my life and career.

broadly had the support of my second advisor and felt confident in how far I was legally protected, so pushed back and called their bluff as often as I was able.

And I've worked in academia post PhD as a non-professor. I feel mutually respected by my faculty, but it's clear that institutionally, I have no value despite my degree credentials and the department's consideration of my role. This is a new power imbalance between department and institution that I am not fully certain of yet.

Accommodation through personalisation: ensuring the autistic student has an equal opportunity for success in the PhD viva voce

Barbara Sandland ^a, Andrea MacLeod ^a, Mr Neil Hall^a and Nick Chown ^b

^aThe Department of Disability, Inclusion and Special Needs. University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK; ^bSocial Justice and Inclusive Practice. London South Bank University, London, UK

Supervisor's reflections: constructing an autism friendly viva

Park (2003) describes viva practice as a socially constructed activity in which multiple agendas are in play, the cultural practice of which has generally evolved locally and is not transparent to the student. Couched in these terms, it is apparent that this will be a challenging environment for any student, but for those who commonly experience communication barriers and higher levels of anxiety, it can represent insurmountable barriers. We all want the best outcomes for our students, so ensuring these barriers are minimised would seem to be a key responsibility of the academics involved. Perhaps surprisingly, there is relatively little consistency in viva practice (Hartley and Fox 2002), and research indicates that elements commonly understood to be good practice in terms of preparation and outcome, such as mock/practice vivas (Hartley and Fox 2002) happen in only a minority of cases (Share 2016). Student evaluations and quality assurance procedures, now deemed essential within undergraduate, and postgraduate taught, studies, are largely absent within doctoral research procedures (Watts 2012). There seems to be a missing link between best practice guidance and actual practice and very little research that considers student experience. This is the case for the whole student population, but it carries additional connotations for disadvantaged students such as those diagnosed autistic. If existing disadvantage is compounded by opaque and inaccessible systems, the lack of current research renders it invisible.

Accommodation through personalisation: ensuring the autistic student has an equal opportunity for success in the PhD viva voce

Barbara Sandland ^a, Andrea MacLeod ^a, Mr Neil Hall^a and Nick Chown ^b

^aThe Department of Disability, Inclusion and Special Needs, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK; ^bSocial Justice and Inclusive Practice, London South Bank University, London, UK

Working with the individual

As a first step, the second supervisor and I tried to hold back from making assumptions about what was needed or wanted. There is some literature suggesting that autistic people benefit from online formats, and this can be true, but it is likely to be different for everyone, and individuals might have different preferences depending on specific circumstances. During the Covid-19 pandemic, for example, autistic individuals appreciated the opportunity to receive virtual support but often expressed a preference for face-to-face meetings (Spain, Mason, and Capp et al. 2021; Pellicano and Stears 2020). It is therefore important to ask rather than assume. D. E. Milton (2014), an autistic academic, refers to the need for non-autistic allies to develop ‘interactional expertise’, by respecting and learning from autistic collaborators, and this conscious withholding of assumptions is a valuable means of creating a respectful space, through which to learn.

Options for practice are important for all students, and offering different types of practice gave some flexibility to this process. It proved useful to hold a practice viva, in which we paused to explore the implied meaning behind each question, and to discuss what the examiners would be looking for within the response.

An open discussion about personal reactions to stress was an essential part of our preparations, which needed to be handled sensitively. We talked about what might happen in the worst-case scenario and what information should be provided to the viva team.

Looking back, what do you wish you could change about interactions where imposed hierarchy caused conflict?

(Not a what you "should have" done differently... but more of what do you wish the other person understood about what was "going wrong"?)

I would say that despite almost 14 years in academia as a student through employee, I still do not understand academic hierarchy. It feels illogical. It isn't only based on degree and time. There's also perceived pedigree value based on what institutions and PIs you were affiliated with, as well as preconceived notions about your sex, race, able-bodied status, and other identities in terms of what your capacity and potential are and how much credit you should be allowed for your achievements. Also, perceived pedigree isn't uniform, it's very centered on the person or persons in charge and what they value. And all of that is erroneous and beneath my mental capacity to try to figure out, so I struggle with finding the balance, learning the "rules," and wondering if it's even worth the effort.

The only difference I would make looking back, is being even more outspoken to bring up conflict sooner and not wait for it to play out. The end conclusion would likely be the same, but I would have wasted so much less time trying to understand if there was something I could do to circumvent the hierarchy trying to maintain the power imbalance. I would encourage all people to focus less on pedigree and more on whether they feel respected by a prospective advisor. I think I tried to work within the system for too long, and ultimately would and will always fail. But had I given more credence to finding the right connection to "superiors," it would not matter as much if I was neurodivergent. I guess I'm saying lean into seeking respect and not getting bogged down in the expected academic path. It doesn't end in success for most people, and we struggle needlessly.

Looking back, what do you wish you could change about interactions where imposed hierarchy caused conflict?

(Not a what you "should have" done differently... but more of what do you wish the other person understood about what was "going wrong"?)

I would say that despite almost 14 years in academia as a student through employee, I still do not understand academic hierarchy. It feels illogical. It isn't only based on degree and time. There's also perceived pedigree value based on what institutions and PIs you were affiliated with, as well as preconceived notions about your sex, race, able-bodied status, and other identities in terms of what your capacity and potential are and how much credit you should be allowed for your achievements. Also, perceived pedigree isn't uniform, it's very centered on the person or persons in charge and what they value. And all of that is erroneous and beneath my mental capacity to try to figure out, so I struggle with finding the balance, learning the "rules" and wondering if it's even worth the effort.

More inclusive language (peer to peer). Acknowledgement of the hierarchy and disparity between labs (e.g. pay scale differences). Overall how the language that we use with others can affect productivity and well-being.

to play out. The end conclusion would likely be the same, but I would have wasted so much less time trying to understand it there was something I could do to circumvent the hierarchy trying to maintain the power imbalance. I would encourage all people to focus less on pedigree and more on whether they feel respected by a prospective advisor. I think I tried to work within the system for too long, and ultimately would and will always fail. But had I given more credence to finding the right connection to "superiors," it would not matter as much if I was neurodivergent. I guess I'm saying lean into seeking respect and not getting bogged down in the expected academic path. It doesn't end in success for most people, and we struggle needlessly.

Looking back, what do you wish you could change about interactions where imposed hierarchy caused conflict?

(Not a what you "should have" done differently... but more of what do you wish the other person understood about what was "going wrong"?)

I would say that despite almost 14 years in academia as a student through employee, I still do not understand academic hierarchy. It feels illogical. It isn't only based on degree and time. There's also perceived pedigree value based on what institutions and PIs you were affiliated with, as well as preconceived notions about your sex, race, able-bodied status, and other identities in terms of what your capacity and potential are and how much credit you should be allowed for your achievements. Also, perceived pedigree isn't uniform; it's very centered on the person or persons in charge and what they

I wish I had told my PhD advisor sooner that his constant variation in mentorship style was causing me so much trouble because I thrive on consistency. I didn't get diagnosed until my last semester of my PhD, when I was 31 years old, and I had a hard time verbalizing why his approach to mentorship made me so obstinate. If I had been able to communicate with him sooner, I may not have decided to light our entire professional relationship on fire. Every time I told him things weren't working for me, or that I needed to do things differently, he wouldn't give me time to try things on my own, he would jump into problem solving.

people to focus less on pedigree and more on whether they feel respected by a prospective advisor. I think I tried to work within the system for too long, and ultimately would and will always fail. But had I given more credence to finding the right connection to "superiors," it would not matter as much if I was neurodivergent. I guess I'm saying lean into seeking respect and not getting bogged down in the expected academic path. It doesn't end in success for most people, and we struggle needlessly.

Looking back, what do you wish you could change about interactions where imposed hierarchy caused conflict?

(Not a what you "should have" done differently... but more of what do you wish the other person understood about what was "going wrong"?)

I would say that despite almost 14 years in academia as a student through employee, I still do not understand academic hierarchy. It feels illogical. It isn't only based on degree and time. There's also perceived pedigree value based on what institutions and PIs you were affiliated with, as well as preconceived notions about your sex, race, able-bodied status, and other identities in terms of what your capacity and potential are and how much credit you should be allowed for your achievements. Also, perceived pedigree isn't uniform; it's very centered on the person or persons in charge and what they think. I wish I had told my PhD advisor sooner that his constant variation in mentorship style was causing me so much trouble.

I wish there was a refreshment seminar for advisors on how to be good advisors. I also wish that people in academia didn't look at neurodivergent women as stupid and as an excuse. After telling my advisor I had ADD and was not a good exam taker, he immediately made up his opinion about me, saying I was not good enough and not smart enough.

into problem solving.

people to focus less on pedigree and more on whether they feel respected by a prospective advisor. I think I tried to work within the system for too long, and ultimately would and will always fail. But had I given more credence to finding the right connection to "superiors," it would not matter as much if I was neurodivergent. I guess I'm saying lean into seeking respect and not getting bogged down in the expected academic path. It doesn't end in success for most people, and we struggle needlessly.

Looking back, what do you wish you could change about interactions where imposed hierarchy caused conflict?

(Not a what you "should have" done differently... but more of what do you wish the other person understood about what was "going wrong"?)

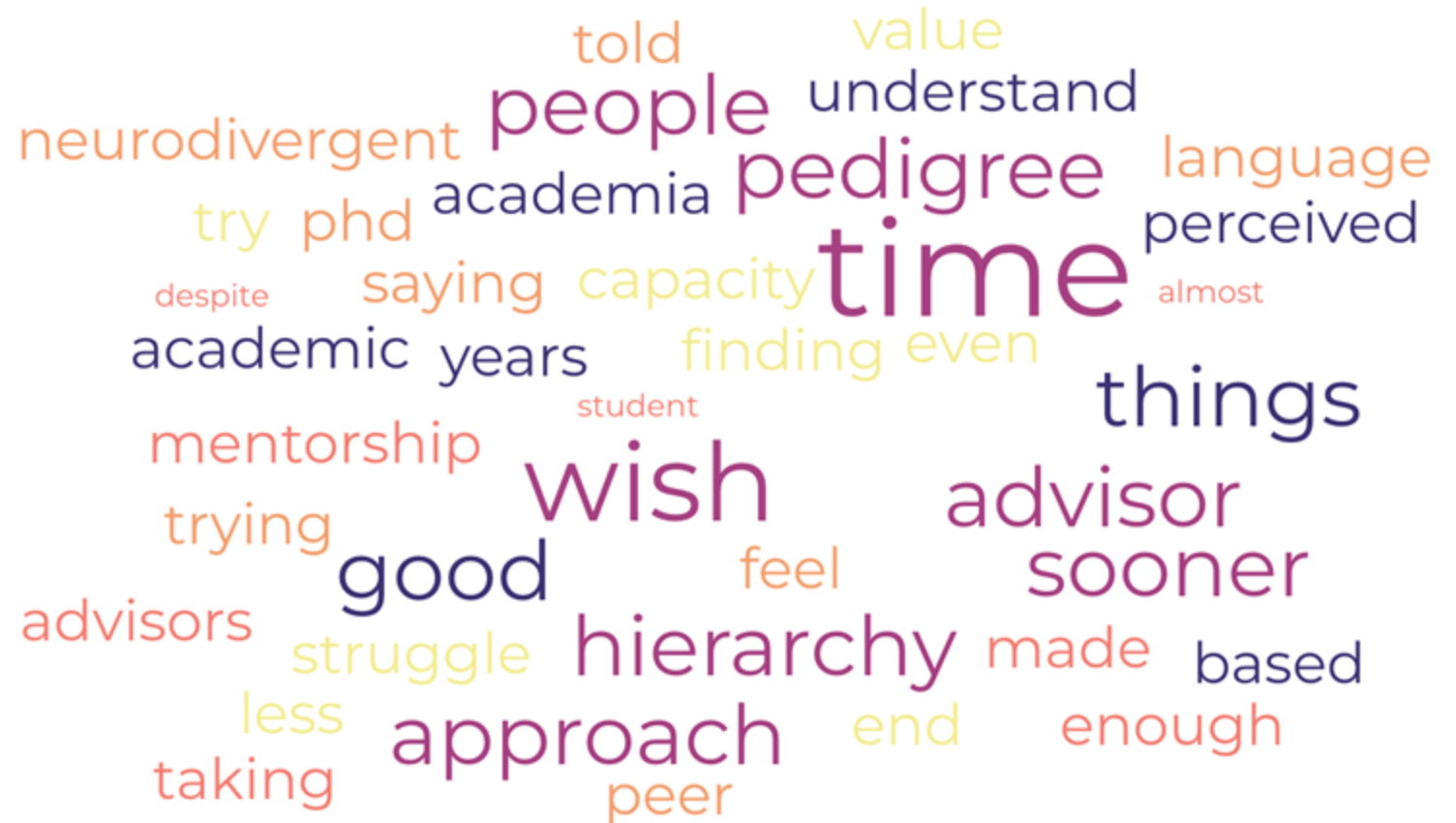
I would say that despite almost 14 years in academia as a student through employee, I still do not understand academic hierarchy. It feels illogical. It isn't only based on degree and time. There's also perceived pedigree value based on what institutions and PIs you were affiliated with, as well as preconceived notions about your sex, race, able-bodied status, and other identities in terms of what your capacity and potential are and how much credit you should be allowed for your achievements. Also, perceived pedigree isn't uniform; it's very centered on the person or persons in charge and what they think you should be capable of. I wish I had told my PhD advisor sooner that his constant variation in mentorship style was causing me so much trouble.


I wish I were more assertive. I feel that taking a direct approach would clarify mismatches in expectations, but I worry that taking this approach will come off as disrespectful or combative, resulting in me being labeled as a bad collaborator.

into problem solving.

people to focus less on pedigree and more on whether they feel respected by a prospective advisor. I think I tried to work within the system for too long, and ultimately would and will always fail. But had I given more credence to finding the right connection to "superiors," it would not matter as much if I was neurodivergent. I guess I'm saying lean into seeking respect and not getting bogged down in the expected academic path. It doesn't end in success for most people, and we struggle needlessly.

Looking back,
what do you wish
you could change
about
interactions
where imposed
hierarchy caused
conflict?





Why does this matter to you?

- Teaching
 - You probably have diagnosed & undiagnosed students at all levels
- Mentoring
 - Whether disclosed or not, you are statistically likely to mentor multiple neurodivergent scientists over your career
- Co-authoring
 - Variable skill sets that lead to great scientific collaborations can also lead to communication issues at different research stages
- Advising
 - With increased racial, gender, and cultural diversity we are likely to see an increase in neurodiversity and variability in academic strengths resulting from this
 - Reasonable accommodations from disability services offices are often only applied to the classroom
 - Lack of clarity over when graduate students are *students* vs. *employees*
 - Role of department is not well defined in offering accommodations for faculty and graduate students

What has caused tension in academic relationships that you attribute to neurotypical vs neurodivergent mentorship pairings or neurotypical standards being in place?

Predominantly this happens when my academic partner fails to fulfill their role, be it from negligence, overwork/burnout, or ignorance. My undergraduate advisor revealed multiple times that he did not expect to stay in the life of his advisees, despite the well-established practice within academia to need letters of support from your advisors for the rest of your career. I think the neurotypical way is to accept that you failed, not your "superior," and to not question the glaring discrimination and inequity of who receives support.

But it also happens when I learn the neurotypical expectation but that still isn't the missing component. For example, in graduate school, despite being the same age or older than a few of the younger faculty and having worked an industry job for several years where I'd already advanced to a management role, I was continuously treated like a 22-year-old (I was in my 30s for the majority of grad school) in terms of what I should be happy with for pay, work-life balance, living situations, and respect. This especially was noted when my original PhD advisor created conflict because I refused to be an automaton lab minion, and instead demanded autonomy and spoke up. That advisor wanted an undergrad's naivety and complete compliance while seeking out highly motivated people with advanced skills. I still don't understand how I'm supposed to learn an illogical system, and why that becomes my fault instead of the person being illogical.

What has caused tension in academic relationships that you attribute to neurotypical vs neurodivergent mentorship pairings or neurotypical standards being in place?

Predominantly this happens when my academic partner fails to fulfill their role, be it from negligence, overwork/burnout, or ignorance. My undergraduate advisor revealed multiple times that he did not expect to stay in the life of his advisees, despite the well-established practice within academia to need letters of support from your advisors for the rest of your career. I think the neurotypical way is to accept that you failed, not your "superior," and to not

Task organization and time management. Academic expectations require me to be in longer than the typical '9am-5pm' job, and on weekends. My brain typically works better in the afternoons. I also have sensory processing differences, in that I process questions differently and have to re-iterate questions when speaking with advisors or colleagues. Shared work spaces has also been a point of tension as potent smells or loud sounds during important tasks can really affect my productivity. I also hyperfocus on minute details that I cannot let go or move on from until I have a plan to correct present issues. It is reasonable for a neurotypical person to move on to a different task, but if I am to move on to a different task then I will not complete the task and have complete avoidance of the 'hard task'. Academic networking and collaboration is also a point of tension as social norms are hard to adhere to.

understand how I'm supposed to learn an illogical system, and why that becomes my fault instead of the person being illogical.

What has caused tension in academic relationships that you attribute to neurotypical vs neurodivergent mentorship pairings or neurotypical standards being in place?

Predominantly this happens when my academic partner fails to fulfill their role, be it from negligence

My PhD advisor thought that the things I was struggling with just needed troubleshooting from his end and he would google solutions for managing people and try to apply them with no input from me. His constant frustration with me turned to verbalized disappointment and shaming, combined with off the cuff suggestions for how to do things. This was prior to being diagnosed, so I felt the need to prove I was trying, even when I knew his recommendation wouldn't work. Towards the latter half of my degree he would impose deadlines without reason, which I wouldn't respect due to a need for rational explanations. In the end, I didn't respect his approach to mentoring because he seemed to expect some inherent regard for his abilities when I felt he was completely untrained in advising and not taking a scientific approach to our collaboration.

I also had trouble with the institutional switch to open offices. At first it was due to the distractions and sensory overwhelm, but as we had grad student turn over I became increasingly aware of my inability to integrate socially with the rest of my office. For the remainder of my final year I had to be moved to an individual office space (i.e. converted study room) because of bullying and aggression from my peers. They did not have an option for smaller office spaces for graduate students which resulted in numerous problems during my 4+ years in graduate school.

regret.

What has caused tension in academic relationships that you attribute to neurotypical vs neurodivergent mentorship pairings or neurotypical standards being in place?

Pre-dominantly this happens when my academic partner fails to fulfill their role, be it from negligence. My PhD advisor thought that the things I was struggling with just needed troubleshooting from his end and he would google solutions for managing people and try to apply them with no input from me. His constant frustration with me turned to verbalized disappointment and shaming, combined with off the cuff suggestions for how to do things. This was prior to being diagnosed, so I felt the need to prove I was trying, even when I knew his recommendation wouldn't work. Towards the latter half of my degree he would impose deadlines without reason, which I wouldn't respect due to a

My "Advisor" did not think it was real; he thought I was stupid and not good enough because he couldn't relate to how my brain works and how I work. Also, the fact that I am a woman does not help. Instead of working with me, he undermined me, tried to embarrass me in public, and talked down to me. After disclosing my ADD, he did not look at me as a scientist; he made his decision about me, and he did not let my work speak for itself. he only saw what I am doing wrong and what I don't know.

the rest of my office. For the remainder of my final year I had to be moved to an individual office space (i.e. converted study room) because of bullying and aggression from my peers. They did not have an option for smaller office spaces for graduate students which resulted in numerous problems during my 4+ years in graduate school.

my great

What has caused tension in academic relationships that you attribute to neurotypical vs neurodivergent mentorship pairings or neurotypical standards being in place?

Pre-dominantly this happens when my academic partner fails to fulfill their role, be it from negligence. My PhD advisor thought that the things I was struggling with just needed troubleshooting from his end and he would google solutions for managing people and try to apply them with no input from me. His constant frustration with me turned to verbalized disappointment and shaming, combined with off the cuff suggestions for how to do things. This was prior to being diagnosed, so I felt the need to prove I was trying, even when I knew his recommendation wouldn't work. Towards the latter half of my degree he would impose deadlines without reason, which I wouldn't respect due to a

While not possible to confirm, I worry that my lack of success during job interviews has often resulted from failing to pass the "vibe check" by not managing personal interactions at the expected level. My successes in this realm have come when the hiring committee is dominantly individuals who are also neurodivergent.

I've also encountered challengers with co-authors and collaborators where my approach to communication is not clear, but comments on how to correct this issue are unclear to me.

the rest of my office. For the remainder of my final year I had to be moved to an individual office space (i.e. converted study room) because of bullying and aggression from my peers. They did not have an option for smaller office spaces for graduate students which resulted in numerous problems during my 4+ years in graduate school.

my great

What successes do you have that you attribute to taking non-traditional or neurodivergent approaches to work relationships?

I think I've excelled because I don't view any one person as the answer holder or omnipotent. So when a person fails me, I seek out a new information/assistance source to work on problems myself. This causes me to be fiercely independent, which has opened opportunities I would otherwise not have acquired or possibly have been afraid I wasn't qualified for.

I think I've also excelled because I'm not afraid to cut off a relationship. So I don't waste precious mental capacity trying to build false relationships or dwelling on failed ones. My neurodivergence also enables me to delete a person from my mental agenda, so I can work beside caustic or useless people while ignoring their existence and minimizing their impact on my working capacity.

What successes do you have that you attribute to taking non-traditional or neurodivergent approaches to work relationships?

I think I've excelled because I don't view any one person as the answer holder or omnipotent. So when a person fails me, I seek out a new information/assistance source to work on problems myself. This causes me to be fiercely independent, which has opened opportunities I would otherwise not have acquired or possibly have been afraid I

Having very open and direct communication about expectations that help reduce misunderstandings. Better work-life balance as I prioritize my own health by being flexible with work environments (like at home or remote work) to be more productive.

from my mental agenda, so I can work beside caustic or useless people while ignoring their existence and minimizing their impact on my working capacity.

What successes do you have that you attribute to taking non-traditional or neurodivergent approaches to work relationships?

I think I've excelled because I don't view any one person as the answer holder or omnipotent. So when a person fails me, I seek out a new information/assistance source to work on problems myself. This causes me to be fiercely

I have a very open relationship with all of my mentees. I fall into the standard model of autistic oversharing, which can deter some people from me, but I find that I wouldn't want to collaborate with these types in the long run any ways. I have found a solid group of science friends that respect my process and often come to me for advice on things when they want an alternative perspective.

from my mental agenda, so I can work beside caustic or useless people while ignoring their existence and minimizing their impact on my working capacity.

What successes do you have that you attribute to taking non-traditional or neurodivergent approaches to work relationships?

I think I've excelled because I don't view any one person as the answer holder or omnipotent. So when a person fails me, I seek out a new information/assistance source to work on problems myself. This causes me to be fiercely

When working with my collaborators and other professionals who value my work, I feel comfortable being my creative self. I bring a new outlook and ideas to solving problems, and together, we can develop new ideas that are not the traditional way people used to look at these problems or how people have worked in my field in the past.

from my mental agenda, so I can work beside caustic or useless people while ignoring their existence and minimizing their impact on my working capacity.

What successes do you have that you attribute to taking non-traditional or neurodivergent approaches to work relationships?

I think I've excelled because I don't view any one person as the answer holder or omnipotent. So when a person fails me, I seek out a new information/assistance source to work on problems myself. This causes me to be fiercely

My students seem to sincerely appreciate my approach to lecturing, teaching, and assessment. I'm consistently working to integrate inclusive practices into my pedagogy, which is motivated by my own experiences throughout my education.

from my mental agenda, so I can work beside caustic or useless people while ignoring their existence and minimizing their impact on my working capacity.

ALL
COMMUNICATION
IS VALID

NO FORCED EYE CONTACT

PRESUME COMPETENCE

CELEBRATE
DIFFERENCES

BODY
AUTONOMY

ALL PLAY IS
VALID

PROVIDING SENSORY
BREAKS WHEN NEEDED

NEURODIVERSITY AFFIRMING GREEN FLAGS

STRENGTH BASED APPROACH

CONNECTION
OVER COMPLIANCE

INCORPORATING SPECIAL
INTERESTS

PROVIDE ACCESS TO SUPPORTS
AND ACCOMMODATIONS

ALLOW STIMMING

CHILD LED AND PLAY
BASED THERAPIES

@ABCsofAUTISM

How can we be inclusive in mentorship and advising?

- Believe your advisees/mentees/peers when they say something isn't working
- Don't require a diagnosis to accommodate someone
- Recognizing that your inferred hierarchy might not be accepted by all
- Work with students and mentees rather than over or under them
- Be aware of resources
- Implement Universal Design practices in your advising

Where can we go from here?



Understand the prevalence of neurodivergence in our field

Clinical diagnosis vs. self-diagnosed vs. suspected
Disclosed vs. undisclosed
Institutional accommodations vs. unaccommodated



Build a framework for Universal Design in mentorship and management

How do we mentor so that all individuals can benefit from relationships?



Develop resources for advisors to provide a neurodiversity affirming research space

Network of mentors
Identifying common miscommunications and teaching mentors how to assist in clarifying concepts for individuals with different neurotypes



Thank You!

nlgrambling.wordpress.com

- Resources on neurodivergence and mentoring