

Recommendations about inclusive pedagogy for Spanish faculty members in the area of Social and Legal Sciences

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Abstract

This paper provides a useful guide of recommendations drawn from the experiences described by 25 Spanish inclusive faculty members of the area of Social and Legal Sciences. We used a qualitative methodology and data was gathered using interviews. The action guidelines and recommendations obtained are based on the implementation of an inclusive pedagogy that prioritises the participation and success of all students. The results are divided into six categories: faculty- student relationship, resources, methodology, reasonable adjustments, mentoring and evaluation. Lastly, this study shows that the teaching strategies that promote inclusion do not only benefit students with disabilities but have a general positive effect on all students.

Keywords: Recommendations; Faculty members; Inclusive pedagogy; Students with disabilities
Social and legal sciences

Introduction

Universities are essential spaces for improving the quality of life of people, increase employment opportunities and contribute to the struggle against social exclusion (De Clerc,

Galand & Frenay, 2020; Lipka, Khouri & Schecter-Lerner, 2020). Thus, in order to be inclusive, universities must promote social inclusion and prevent elitism, as it reduces their quality as higher education institutions (Israel et al., 2017).

In the academic year 2019–2020, there were 19,919 students with some type of disability registered at Spanish universities, of whom 8582 (approximately 43%) belonged to the area of Social and Legal Sciences (Universia Foundation, 2021). These data show that there is an increasing number of students with disabilities who decide to undertake university studies. However, their presence in the university does not entail full inclusion (Moriña & Orozco, 2021), as is shown by the testimonies of these students on the degree of inclusion in Spanish universities. According to a study of the Universia Foundation (2021), a considerable percentage of university students with disabilities asserted that they felt discriminated at some point throughout their university journey. The main reasons highlighted by them were related to the attitude of the faculty (disrespect, lack of attention to their needs, bad attitude, etc.) (38.2%) or accessibility problems, such as architectural barriers, not adapted exams, lack of curricular adaptation, etc. (37.9%).

In this sense, the studies of Carballo, Aguirre, & Lopez-Gavira (2021), Hewett, Douglas, McLinden and Keil (2017), Osborne (2019) and Svendby (2020) also indicate that students with disabilities do not feel welcome because the faculty has not received institutional training or guidance on how to adapt their practices with the aim of achieving inclusive learning experiences. In many cases, the response they receive from their faculty is a different treatment, tending to create unpleasant and excluding situations (Asikainen, Blomster & Virtanen, 2018; Spassiani et al., 2017; Vergunst & Swartz, 2021). Some of such situations derive not only from the lack of faculty training on how to attend to students with disabilities, but also from the faculty's lack of predisposition to learn more about the needs and rights of each student (Shpigelman, Mor, Sachs & Schreuer, 2021). Therefore, it can be asserted that faculty training is an element that favours inclusion, although it is not a fundamental requirement for the capacity of a faculty member to develop inclusive practices at the university (Carballo et al., 2021).

Consequently, to achieve the educational inclusion of students with disabilities in the classrooms, it is not sufficient to use different inclusive methodological strategies; it is also necessary to develop adequate affective and emotional skills (Kezar & Maxey, 2014; Moriña, 2020; Postareff, Mattsson, Lindblom-Ylanne & Hailikari, 2017). In fact, promoting a strong relationship between faculty members and students, and fostering the participation of every

student in the classroom is a fundamental route (Juma, Lehtomaki " & Naukkarinen, 2017). From this perspective, supporting the participation and success of all students is not just an option, but a matter of responsibility and social justice (Gibson, 2015; Liasidou, 2014; Perez-Carbonell, Ramos-Santana ' & Martínez-Usarralde, 2021).

Under the point of view of social justice, the faculty member is a key player, since his/her attitudes, skills and knowledge can favour the construction of inclusive learning contexts for all students (Inda-Caro et al., 2018). Different studies (Carballo et al., 2021; Hockings, 2011; Naz & Murad, 2017) show that one of the essential aspects for the inclusion of students with disabilities is related to a more humane and affective learning approach. The mentioned studies report that faculty members who do carry out inclusive practices in the university consider a close relationship with their students as fundamental. Similarly, it is necessary to be eager to help, to apply common sense, to have a fluid and open communication, and to show concern for the well-being and learning of the students (Ehlinger & Ropers, 2020). In this sense, following Potee (2002) and Falout, Elwood and Hood (2009), an accessible and friendly attitude toward the students has a positive influence on their involvement and learning.

Previous studies have detected that inclusive faculty consider it necessary to create a classroom climate based on respect, which guarantees that students feel confident in the classroom and willing to participate and ask for help (Moriña, 2020). Additionally, it is unquestionable that an open climate values diversity, and its possibilities benefit all students, not only those with disabilities (Dangoisse, De Clercq, Van Meenen, Chartier & Nils, 2020).

Some promising studies (Gale, Mills & Cross, 2017) show practices of inclusive faculty who usually develop active and participatory strategies that benefit all their students. These practical strategies are based on working *with* the students, instead of acting *on* them, and they can serve as an example to other faculty members (Carballo et al., 2021; Moriña, 2020; Perez-Carbonell et al., 2021).

Studies focused on the voice of students with disabilities (Griful-Freixenet, Struyven, Verstichele & Andries, 2017; Morgado, Moriña & Lopez-Gavira, 2017; Rodríguez, Izuzquiza & Cabrera, 2021) indicate that one of the main barriers that these students detect at university are related to inadequate teaching practices. Specifically, many of them refer to the use of technological resources and rigid, poorly motivating methodologies with no practical application

in the professional scope (Babic & Dowling, 2015; Morgado et al., 2017; Rodríguez et al., 2021). In most cases, this is accompanied by a lack of reasonable adjustments offered by the faculty and the little help that students receive from the disability support services of their universities (Hewett et al., 2017; Kim & Crowley, 2021; Shpigelman et al., 2021).

However, while the faculty can be a barrier, they can also provide decisive help to prevent students from dropping out of the university and guarantee their academic success (Couzens et al., 2015; Lombardi, Murray & Kowitt, 2016; Stein, 2014). To this end, it is recommended that faculty members use participatory and inclusive methodological strategies based on a student-centred approach (Cunningham, 2013; Moriña, 2020; Thomas, 2016). Likewise, it is crucial that they rethink their evaluation methods and offer different ways in which their students can show what they have learnt (Nieminen, 2022).

In this sense, to overcome the barriers encountered by students with disabilities, Universal Design of Learning (UDL) offers adequate teaching strategies to make reasonable adjustments in a proactive manner. Moreover, this framework considers that the adaptations in the design of the subjects benefit not only students with disabilities, but all students (Bunbury, 2018; Griful-Freixenet et al., 2017). These studies, as well as those of Osborne (2019) and Yusof, Chong, Hilma, Zailly and Mat (2020), further show that students with disabilities have a positive opinion about inclusive evaluation systems and continuous evaluations with alternative test modalities, such as feedback, cooperative learning and group discussions.

Regarding the voice of the faculty, there are relevant studies about the actions of faculty members who contribute to the inclusion of students. In this line, the results of Sandoval, Morgado, and Doménech (2021) highlight that these faculty usually care about the design of an accessible space, provide teaching materials in advance, resort to peer support and carry out exams with reasonable adjustments (changes of spaces, more time, oral exams..., etc.). Specifically for the area of Social and Legal Sciences, Carballo et al. (2021) point out the relevance of carrying out such adaptations, establishing a good mentoring system, coordinating with the disability service and exchanging opinions with other colleagues. Similarly, the mentioned authors state that active and participatory teaching methods are the most effective and beneficial, and they also underline the need for a solid institutional support and continuous evaluation. However, the access to inclusive teaching in the area of Social and Legal Sciences continues to be a pending issue (Wells

& Kommers, 2020). Concerns persist about how to make adjustments and train students with disabilities for their transition to the professional world (Anderson & Wylie, 2008). There are few studies aiming at offering useful recommendations and mechanisms to the faculty of this area that help them to implement inclusive strategies. Furthermore, a large number of studies focus on the detection of barriers for students with disabilities from the perspective of randomly selected faculty members (Johnmark, Orobias, Munene & Balunywa, 2017; Manley & De Graft-Johnson, 2013; Wells & Kommers, 2020). In the same vein, the study of Bunbury (2018) on the voice of faculty members of Legal Sciences in the UK highlights the need to use a non-traditional and varied methodology that welcomes all learning styles, a flexible and alternative evaluation based on debates, and the use of reasonable adjustments. Moreover, the study of Lorenzo-Lledo, Lorenzo, Lledó and Pérez-Vazquez (2020) quantitatively analysed the outlook of Spanish faculty members of different areas of knowledge (including Social and Legal Sciences) about inclusive teaching methodologies for students with disabilities. Some of their results indicated that faculty applied different strategies to promote inclusion. Nevertheless, they recognised that it is fundamental to make classes flexible and carry out continuous mentoring to support learning.

Thus, we aim to fill this gap in the literature about the inclusion of students with disabilities in the area of Social and Legal Sciences. Specifically, our aim was to explore, understand and describe adequate guidelines and recommendations to become an inclusive faculty members in this area of knowledge. Unlike other studies (Johnmark et al., 2017; Manley & De Graft-Johnson, 2013; Wells & Kommers, 2020), the present study is focused on inclusive faculty, as it has been demonstrated that their attitudes, practices, reasonable adjustments and support are factors that facilitate the academic success of students with disabilities (Gale et al., 2017; O’Byrne, Jagoe & Lawler, 2019; Strnadová, Hájková, & Květoňová, 2015). To sum up, although it is important to recognise the role of training on matters of disability in the attention to students (Cunningham, 2013), the aim of this paper is to offer a useful and practical tool to ensure that the faculty of this area of knowledge, despite a lack of pedagogical or disability training (Carballo et al., 2021), receive a set of specific action guidelines to attain the inclusion of their students. To this end, we proposed the following research question: What does an inclusive faculty member do to ensure that his/her students with disabilities can learn, participate and succeed in his/her subject?

Method

This study is part of a larger research project conducted by an interdisciplinary team and funded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness entitled “Inclusive Pedagogy at the University: Faculty Narratives’ (Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness of Spain, EDU2016-76587-R)”. This is a qualitative research that analyses which faculty members of different disciplines (Arts and Humanities, STEM, Health Sciences, Social and Legal Science) practice inclusive pedagogy and how and why they do so.

Specifically, this paper is focused on exploring, understanding and describing what action guidelines recommended by faculty members of the area of Social and Legal Sciences can be valuable for other colleagues to attain the participation and success of university students with disabilities.

Participants

The recruitment process for the participants of this study was aided by the disability support offices of 10 Spanish universities. The staff of these disability support offices sent information on the project to students with disabilities of all areas of knowledge and asked for their voluntary collaboration. Students with disabilities then nominated faculty members who had contributed to their inclusion in the university, by writing to the e-mail address of the research team. To guarantee the aptitude of the inclusive faculty, the students with disabilities were given a list of characteristics that should be found in the faculty member(s) they selected: he/she facilitates the learning process; promotes an active learning; uses a variety of methodologies; cares about the learning of all students; is flexible and helps when a student needs it; motivates his/her students; attains group participation and learning; and makes every student feel important.

Additionally, the snowball technique was used (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). In this sense, the students with disabilities that were previously known to the research team were asked to collaborate. Likewise, other faculty members known to the research team were also asked to collaborate in identifying students with disabilities.

A total of 119 faculty members of the different areas of knowledge from 10 Spanish universities participated in the study. 25 of these participants belonged to the area of Social and Legal Sciences. In the recruitment process for this area of knowledge we originally obtained a total of 35

participants. However, 10 faculty members finally did not participate due to personal reasons or lack of time.

With respect to the participants' profile, all of them had experience with students with disabilities. Psychic disabilities were the most frequent (27.9%), followed by physical disabilities (25.5%), sensory disabilities (visual and auditory) (20.9%), learning difficulties (18.6%) and organic disabilities (6.9%). Regarding gender, 56% were men and 44% were women. The age was varied, since 12% of the participants were under 40 years of age, 40% were between 41 and 50 years of age, 44% were between 51 and 60 years of age, and only 4% were over 60 years of age. In relation to the teaching experience, 28% had less than 10 years of experience, 32% had between 11 and 20 years, 28% had between 21 and 30 years, and 12% had over 30 years. Most of the participants taught in Economics and Business (60%), followed by Law (20%), Journalism (12%) and Social Work (8%).

Data collection instruments

Semi-structured individual interviews were used as data-gathering technique. Each interview was carried out based on an interview script, which was piloted by Spanish faculty members who did not participate in the study. Based on the considerations of Florian (2014) and Gale and Mills (2013), this script contained four dimensions of inclusive pedagogy: beliefs, knowledge, designs and actions. Beliefs and knowledge of the participants were explored in a first interview, whereas designs and actions were addressed in a second interview. Doing two interviews instead of one helped to deepen the relations and trust with the participants, offer them flexibility and allow enough time to delve into each of the dimensions.

The following questions were used in the interview to obtain the information presented in this article:

- When you know that there is a student with a disability in your subject, what steps do you follow?
- What practices/strategies do you use to foster the relationship with your students?
- Do you use different resources to present contents (printed texts, technological media, presentations, videos...)? If so, why?

- How do you make available to your students the resources to be used in class (copy shop, virtual platform, delivery in class, by e- mail, search by the student...)? Why do you use that/those way(s)?
- Which of the teaching methodologies you use are the most effective for all students to learn? Why? And for students with disabilities?
- What is your opinion about the need for adaptations in your subject so that students with disabilities can learn?
- Do you make any modifications to the subject matter when there is a student with a disability? Why? What kind of modifications have you made? (if applicable) Why?
- How do you assess? Is the assessment the same for all your students or do you make any changes or accommodations for students with disabilities. If so, why?

Every full interview lasted approximately 90 min, and most of them were carried out face-to-face. However, due to personal reasons, preference, lack of time, and distance of the participants, four interviews had to be conducted via phone call and three via Skype videoconference. All interviews were recorded in audio and transcribed textually for subsequent analysis.

Data analysis

All information was qualitatively analysed using an inductive system of categories and codes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The data analysis was performed in two phases. The first phase (coding) was characterised by a broad and generic system of categories. The second phase generated new subcodes about the fundamental topics and ideas. Each subcode was analysed in depth for possible decomposition or fusion with other codes. The process of categorisation of all the information was carried out by the research team in order to discuss the information and perform a group analysis that helped to organise doubtful information. Lastly, the authors analysed again the categories and codes that responded to the specific research objective proposed in this article.

To facilitate the processing of the information, the MaxQDA 12 software was used. Table 1 represents the categories and codes used for the analysis of the information presented in the results section of this article.

Ethical aspects

The research project was ethically approved the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness. Before interviews were carried out, all participants read and signed an informed consent, which presented the objectives of the study and the participants' rights and tasks. They agreed to be recorded in audio for the transcription of the interviews and were free to abandon the study whenever they wished to.

Table 1

Categories, definition and codes system.

Categories	Definition	Codes
Starting the relationship	Attitude or actions that faculty adopts when initiating the relationship with the students	Show closeness Respect their privacy Offer them help Ask for help from the disability services Institutions or other professionals
Resources	Variety of resources used by the faculty to teach the subject	Barrier-free spaces Accessible and available teaching materials Use of technological tools
Methodology	Methodological actions used in teaching	Plan teaching with disability in mind Teach dynamic and practical classes Repeat important concepts at the beginning Do not force them to participate
Reasonable adjustments	Procedure used to make reasonable adjustments by adapting to the students.	Make necessary adjustments Apply motivation Will and good practice Design the learning in a universal manner
Tutorial action (Mentoring)	Strategies for conducting student mentoring.	Show willingness and flexibility Establish a systematic plan Conduct a follow-up
Evaluation	Assessment methods used and strategies applied to adapt them to the diversity of students.	Establish different systems Use continuous evaluation Promote team evaluation Offer more time Adjust exam types and formats Adapt spaces

In the transcriptions of the interviews, the real names of the participants were replaced by numbers (Faculty 1 to Faculty 25). These transcriptions were returned to each participant via e-mail in a Word document, allowing them to read their testimonies and make any changes they wanted.

Results

Analysing the opinions of the faculty of the area of Social and Legal Sciences allowed us to identify six general guidelines that favour inclusion in university classrooms. These guidelines are related to: 1) the idea of establishing links from the first days of class, 2) resources, 3) methodology, 4) reasonable adjustments, 5) mentoring, and 6) evaluation.

Step one: Starting the relationship with the students: the importance of a good beginning

The participants stated that the student is the main source of information that allows the faculty to provide an inclusive response. In this way, it is recommended that, from the first day of class, the faculty member shows a close attitude and the willingness to help the student to prevent a situation of disadvantage with respect to the rest of the students. They also claimed that it was important for the students to have the guarantee that their faculty members will respect their privacy, especially the personal aspects about their disabilities. Thus, they would feel more confident to share their personal circumstances, thereby providing the faculty with the necessary information to help them.

The first day of class I tell them that, if there is any person with some special need or difficulty, they should contact me. Then, we meet some other time, they explain to me what their needs are, and we see what we can do to prevent additional barriers (Faculty 4).

In this initial process, the faculty members pointed out that some students required additional tutoring and support, although they did not simply make things easier for them.

The aim is not to lower the level of demand with these student, but to adapt the communication with them and the development of the lectures taking into account their difficulties. If they need more tutoring, then I give them more tutoring; if they need another type of activity, then I give it to them... So, I believe that a first personal approach is very positive (Faculty 8).

Once the faculty identified that they had students with disabilities in their classrooms, they were recommended to visit the disability services of their universities in order to receive general counselling and instructions on how to adequately attend to these students and specific guidelines

for each type of disability. Likewise, they also expressed that it was necessary to have external support from social foundations and organisations (e.g., ONCE, the Spanish National Organisation of the Blind) and other professionals, such as healthcare professionals, psychologists, etc.

Step 2: The use of appropriate resources

After receiving the necessary information about the students and their disabilities, the participants considered that it was essential to be equipped with the adequate resources. Firstly, the spaces (buildings, furniture, lighting, acoustics, etc.) must be free of physical barriers. In this sense, the participants explained that it was important for the faculty to evaluate whether the students' environments were adequate to carry out their learning and participation.

In my university, there are classrooms with unlevelled floors, where the desks are in full rows and the chairs are fixed, whereas in other classrooms the chairs can be moved. In this case, I make sure that there is a free space for this person to work there, in the same way as the rest of the students are sitting on their chairs (Faculty 13).

Furthermore, according to the faculty, it was necessary that the teaching materials were accessible and available in the adequate formats. Similarly, participants emphasised that it was very recommendable that these were at the disposal of the students in advance, in order to help them organise, plan and keep up with the subject. Additionally, this aspect could result in a general benefit for all students.

I give them the materials in advance. I upload them on the virtual platform, so that they can prepare them before coming to class and then bring them printed in paper or in the computer. I also upload the exercises so that they are not overloaded and have enough time to do them (Faculty 9).

Therefore, the use of the different technological tools available favoured the attention to the students with disabilities. In this way, the use of the virtual platform and the electronic blackboard, the lectures and the off-line tutorials, among others, became strategies that the faculty used to promote the participation of these students.

Some students use the platform much more than others. Some of them, due to their disability, cannot come to the lectures regularly, because they need treatment or do not have the same work pace as their classmates. For that reason, I consider that this tool is fundamental (Faculty 23).

Step 3: The use of adequate teaching methodologies

Initially, the faculty indicated that it was very recommendable to make a thoughtful and organised planning, especially considering the possibility of having students with disabilities in their classrooms. In this respect, for instance, according to the participants, it was positive to incorporate a section in the teaching projects that highlights the willingness of the faculty to support all students regardless of their situation, as well as the existence of a disability service in the university from which the students can receive support.

They also mentioned the importance of teaching dynamic, participatory, practical and motivating lessons, which were greatly valued by their students, especially those with disabilities. They considered that it was fundamental to develop a methodology focused on the student and on learning-by-doing. They understood that the faculty could not be a simple transmitter, and that they should play the role of facilitators in the teaching-learning process. Thus, according to them, it was very convenient to use active and participatory methodologies, such as case studies, group work, dialogic learning, experiential learning, and problem-based learning, among others.

I try to maintain the attention of all the students by asking questions constantly, and introducing real situations. I want the lectures to be participatory, so that each student feels stimulated to follow the lectures day by day (Faculty 12).

Therefore, these faculty did not use special teaching methodologies for some specific students, but adequate methodologies for all students, which are especially beneficial for students with disabilities. In this sense, a very positive practice was to repeat, at the beginning of each class, the key concepts that had been previously tackled.

However, despite all the advantages of the active methodologies, faculty members did not consider it adequate to force students with disabilities to participate. According to them, it was positive that these students felt that they had such opportunity, without exerting excessive pressure on them. Being flexible, respecting the learning paces, and showing the students that the faculty cared about them and were willing to help them were effective strategies for students with disabilities to feel comfortable in the classroom.

I did not want to put the student in a situation that would pose additional stress to her. Half-way through the academic year, she raised her hand and volunteered to go to the blackboard. I believe that the fact of being integrated gave her a lot of confidence, knowing that she had constant support for whatever she needed (Faculty 8).

For the participants, it was crucial to use methodologies that promoted the interaction among students, which prevented them from being isolated or feeling excluded. In fact, the faculty indicated that, in this way, the students felt that they could rely on the group for support.

Step 4: Making reasonable adjustments in the curriculum

Firstly, the faculty clarified that they never aimed to make adaptations in the objectives or contents of the subject, but some adjustments in the planning and development of the lectures, with the aim of adapting to the needs of the students with disabilities.

In my opinion, it is fundamental that all my students have the same situation and start from the same conditions to address the challenges involved in my subject. My experience has been that they want to have the same conditions. So, I must work to ensure that, but the demand and contents must be the same for everyone (Faculty 1).

For these faculty members, training was important for making reasonable adjustments, and they also pointed out that it was not an essential requirement, since their eagerness, will and good practice helped the students to follow their subjects with no additional barriers.

To sum up, the participants assumed that, rather than making reasonable adjustments every time a faculty member realises that there is a student with a disability in his/her classroom, the aim is to make an initial inclusive planning that takes into account the diversity of all students. In this way, the subjects would be prepared from the beginning to include everyone and, moreover, such adjustments would be beneficial for all students.

Step 5. Personalised mentoring action: a fundamental element for dropout and success

The willingness of the faculty to offer personalised and continuous mentoring to the students was fundamental in the attention to their students with disabilities. According to the participants, it was important that the students felt free to make use of this additional resource, solve doubts, reinforce contents and/or communicate their needs. To this end, it was convenient that the faculty had a flexible schedule and were open to attend to their students in their offices, before and after the lectures, in other working areas, via e-mail, etc.

Communication is fundamental to know the needs of the students, speak with them, ask them how they are doing, what problems they have, etc. I do everything I can to help them cover their

needs. I speak with them before the lectures, after the lectures, they call me at my office, they write to me via e-mail. I'm in constant contact with my students (Faculty 19).

In the case of students with disabilities, the participants showed that it could be recommendable to establish a fixed and continuous schedule of tutorials, in order to show the students that they can always rely on that support resource.

Every week we met for an hour. The student came to my office and told me how he was advancing with the subject, whether he had any doubts, and whether he had felt frustrated at some point due to the fact that my lectures are very interactive and there are many students in the classroom. I also do it for the rest of the students (Faculty 8).

Thus, regardless of whether the student had a disability or not, mentoring was an essential communication tool to offer support throughout the subject and make reasonable adjustments in due time. Additionally, the participants emphasised that the tutorials offered enough space and closeness to ensure that the student felt confident to express what he/she needed to undertake the subject under conditions of equity.

Step 6. A fair and heterogeneous evaluation

The evaluation of the subject, considering students with disabilities, was an opportunity for the faculty to improve the evaluation system for all their students. In this sense, the participants stated that it was recommendable to establish a system that contemplates different types of evaluation, always from a perspective of continuous evaluation.

I have tried many evaluation systems in my class: self-evaluation, co-evaluation, group work, etc. I constantly ask them to participate in the class, to go to the blackboard (Faculty 1).

Therefore, it was important to consider learning and teamwork in the evaluation system. It was an additional opportunity for the students with disabilities to feel as part of the class and to learn with the help of their peers.

Without losing the objective of evaluating the adequate learning of the students, the consideration of participation in the classroom and the continuous feedback of the assimilated knowledge, in contrast with the evaluation method based solely on exams, posed a very appropriate way of evaluating the learning of the students.

I have implemented a system of on-line questionnaires. They open as we finish the lectures and they solve the tests from their computers with very specific feedbacks. They have to search for the

solutions in order to obtain the highest score and, at the end, I solve the doubts they couldn't solve on their own. The students with disabilities also participated in this, sharing with their classmates (Faculty 13).

To sum up, the faculty indicated that it was very positive to establish a flexible evaluation approach that took into account all students. For this reason, they saw that it was very convenient to make some adjustments on the time for completing exams, the type of exams depending on the type of disability (written, oral, multiple-test, essay, etc.), the space where an exam is taken (it could be convenient for the student to take the exam individually), and the exam format (font type, paper size, face-to-face/online, use of specific software, etc.).

Discussion

Establishing action guidelines that enable faculty members to carry out inclusive practices allows advancing toward more equitable and fair universities for all students. In this sense, delving into the role of the faculty is fundamental, as they constitute one of the elements highlighted by students as a barrier to inclusion in the university (Babic & Dowling, 2015; Hewett et al., 2017; Kim & Crowley, 2021; Morgado et al., 2017; Rodríguez et al., 2021; Shpigelman et al., 2021). To date, the studies that have been conducted on the voice of the faculty have been focused on identifying barriers and facilitators to students with disabilities (Moriña & Orozco, 2021; Biggeri, Masi & Bellacicco, 2020; Griful-Freixenet et al., 2017; Kilpatrick et al., 2017; O'Byrne et al., 2019; Taneja, 2021), as well as on detecting inclusive practices that promote the inclusion of all students (Carballo et al., 2021; Pérez-Carbonell et al., 2021). However, there is a gap in the literature about the development, from a practical perspective, of a framework of action guidelines that can be useful to faculty members who lack specific training to attend to students with disabilities at the university. In this sense, the present study provides fundamental elements that were identified by inclusive faculty of the area of Social and Legal Sciences, and which can serve as a guide for faculty members in general to adequately attend to their students with disabilities.

This study shows that, regardless of whether the faculty have or lack specific training in disability, it is essential to establish a close and humane relationship from the first day. Our results indicate that nurturing that initial contact is essential to determine the type of faculty-student relationship that will develop throughout the academic year. These observations had already been

made in studies reporting the importance of this relationship as a key element for the inclusion of students with disabilities (Moriña & Orozco, 2021, Carballo et al., 2021; Vergunst & Swartz, 2021).

Thus, taking care of the first contacts and dedicating time to understand the real needs of all students will help to establish a more reliable relationship of trust. Our results show that knowing the personal characteristics, needs and particularities directly from the students themselves complements the indications that are gathered in the reports provided by the disability services. Similarly, as such relationship is positively established, it will impact the development of the classroom practices and, therefore, the climate and learning of all students (Griful-Freixenet et al., 2017; Moriña, 2020).

Moreover, this study demonstrates the importance of making reasonable adjustments in the different subjects, showing that such adjustments do not depend so much on a specific training or on great changes and methodological transformations, but rather on the true will of the faculty to do so and their common sense to make decisions about it (Carballo et al., 2021). The results of this study indicate that, with eagerness and predisposition, it is possible to make flexible designs in the subjects, provide all students with the necessary resources, and establish methodologies that benefit everyone. In fact, the faculty of the present study highlighted the importance of the will and commitment to learn, as they claimed that their lack of pedagogical training did not prevent them from designing their lectures in a proactive manner, applying the principles of UDL unknowingly, and accommodating all their students from the beginning.

Similarly, mentoring has an important potential regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities (Horden, 2015; Lorenzo-Lledo, Lledo, Lorenzo, & Arraez, 2017; Sanahuja-Gavalda, Muñoz-Moreno & Gairín-Sallan, 2020). We learned that this element has been somewhat forgotten in higher education, although, if organised and potentiated through the mechanisms facilitated by the university itself, it becomes a key element to reinforce the learning of all students. In fact, as pointed out by Sanahuja-Gavalda et al. (2020), mentoring at university gives students the right to belong to a group and to not be excluded for their disability, and it is essential for the attainment of the objectives of the university institution and more normalised societies. Tutoring is a flexible tool in the university scope, and it has a highly positive effect on the participation, learning and success of the students.

Lastly, in addition to the above mentioned, there is another necessary element: the approach on evaluation. As was stated by Boud and Soler (2016), evaluation must recognise and foster the

learning of the students and prepare them for their professional future. However, previous studies show that certain evaluation systems pose a barrier to students with disabilities (Grimes, Southgate, Scevak & Buchanan, 2019). Therefore, we consider that teaching in the university scope must provide flexible evaluation that can be accessed by all students (Dalton & Khurana, 2020; Nieminen, 2022; Tai, Ajjawi & Umarova, 2021), in which different options are offered based on the particular characteristics of each student. This approach will help to overcome the segregating evaluation that currently exists in higher education, thus fostering a more formative and inclusive evaluation for all students.

Conclusion

Although many studies have been focused on the barriers encountered by students with disabilities (Griful-Freixenet et al., 2017; Morgado et al., 2017; Rodríguez et al., 2021), few works have addressed “inclusive faculty” and explored how to promote inclusion in a specific area of knowledge (in this case, Social and Legal Sciences). Furthermore, most studies focus the inclusive strategies on specific students and do not provide clues about how to promote inclusion in the class group, regardless of the situation or circumstance of the student. This was the main contribution of our study, since treatment with the student during the first days, resources used, methodology, reasonable adjustments, mentoring and evaluation are considered under a broad perspective of diversity. Although the faculty members of our study were selected by students with disabilities, they stated that everything they do for the sake of their inclusion is equally beneficial to the group as a whole.

In this line, the present study highlights the urgent need to re-think the faculty training plans at universities. These should be compulsory (regardless of the area of knowledge) and designed as theoretical-practical workshops that help to exchange ideas among colleagues and, at the same time, to plan the sessions from a more inclusive perspective.

To sum up, our aim was not to show a compilation of guidelines to follow, but some possible routes that demonstrate good practices and serve as a model. Each faculty member should consider the most suitable routes to apply in each specific situation. We hope that these guidelines help faculty members to implement an inclusive teaching for all students.

Limitations and future research lines

This article explores the voices of inclusive faculty members, but it does not include the voices of students with disabilities or classroom observations. Future studies should combine both voices, in order to identify the best routes to follow with the aim of carrying out inclusive practices in the classroom. For example, this could be carried out through focus groups to show the main conclusions obtained from the observation of the sessions. Lastly, it would be interesting to include inclusive faculty members also from beyond the Spanish context. This would be valuable for the analysis of similarities and differences between countries and the identification of the inclusive practices that are carried out in each context.

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