Navigating Workplace Accommodations in Public Academic Libraries: A Study of Experiences

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While disability resources and accommodations for college and university *students* are often straightforward and/or have designated offices, the same cannot be said for *employees* of higher education institutions. Academic library workers who seek formal disability accommodations encounter unclear/non-existent and unsupportive paths. This study offers groundbreaking, honest, and meaningful insight drawn from 12 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with academic library workers. As stated in Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), "A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a job, the work environment, or the way things are usually done during the hiring process" (Office of Disability Employment Policy, 2023). Yet, this act provides the bare minimum regarding acknowledging and adequately supporting those with disabilities. This study illuminates that administrators, supervisors, managers, and colleagues must meaningfully and intentionally engage in this critical work and that ignorance and disregard for "disability," as well as the lived experiences of public academic library workers, still abounds.

Introduction

With the onset of COVID-19, the stark realities of working while disabled became more evident to many. Over the past decade, immunocompromised individuals exist in increasingly isolated environments and face ever-changing information about preventative and related healthcare measures (Islam et al., 2021); moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic heightened these challenges. Those with visible and invisible disabilities are keenly observant as they move among the public, seek reliable information, and assess their physical and mental "safety" (Spinner et al., 2024). Repercussions of the pandemic, including long COVID, introduced many people to the world of disabilities because of a devastating and persistent health experience (sometimes multiple encounters) with COVID-19 (Hereth et al., 2022). This "new" reality of living with a disability/ies provoked an increase in accommodation requests (Cohen & Rodgers, 2024). Alongside newly disabled folks, accommodation requests from others rightly continued as the world became less safe, less empathetic, and less accessible (Cohen & Rodgers, 2024).

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Based on library workplace experiences between 2019 and 2023, this study analyzes how library workers with disabilities at institutions of higher education began seeking an accommodation and what they encountered during that undertaking. The blunt and honest narratives of these library workers will deepen our understanding of accommodations, self-advocacy, ignorance regarding disability, and the widespread ableism characteristic among American educational institutions (Gibson et al., 2021; Oud, 2019). In this study, the researchers interviewed 12 academic library workers who both identify as disabled (inclusive of self-diagnosis and "official" medical diagnosis) and sought accommodations from their institutions. The researchers used semi-structured, in-depth interviews to collect, explore, and analyze the honest words, experiences, and insights of the study's participants. The process of seeking disability accommodations is regulated by a collection of laws, guidelines, and policies, primarily the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Department of Labor, 2025). However, these laws are the bare minimum required by law of employers. The researchers further focused on learning specifically about the experiences of participants when seeking accommodations in the current milieu, what this process looked like individually for participants, what advice and/or warnings they would share with others seeking or contemplating accommodations, and more. This study offers unique insights from disabled library workers, about both accommodations broadly and the accommodation-seeking process, and it provides a needed window into higher education.

A Note About Language

The researchers' choice of language both for their study and for this article is deliberate, inclusive, and representative of the disability community. There is no universal consensus on language, and preferences can be highly personal (Brown, 2011). Words are powerful and emotional. Language is critical for disability advocacy and representation (Field-Forte, 2018). This study uses the following language:

- Disabilities – In this plural form, the authors refer to a collection of distinct conditions or as they are medically and/or legally defined (Liebowitz, 2015).
- Disability – In this singular form, disability is a conceptual term. Often used within disability studies and critical disability studies to convey the social, cultural, and political aspects; the shared, lived experience of being disabled by societal barriers (Goering, 2015).
- Person-First Language ("person with a disability") – "using PFL is placing the person first, allowing others to disassociate the disability as the primary defining characteristic of an individual, and viewing disability as one of several features of the whole person" (Ferrigon & Tucker, 2019).
- Identity-First language ("disabled people") – Identity-first language commonly signals an individual's connection with disability rights, disability justice, disability advocacy, and the social model of disability. When identity-first language is used, an individual is affirming disability as a valid social and political identity (Olsen & Pilson, 2020; Pratt Institute Libraries, 2024).

Crucially, in this study, the researchers did not provide a definition for "disability" to participants. The researchers honored the language participants used to describe themselves alongside their experiences. The use of both identity-first and person-first language in this article is a direct reflection of the varied and personal preferences of the library workers interviewed.

Literature Review

Extensive literature regarding disability exists across many fields and areas of study, including in higher education (Maurya et al., 2025; Osuana-Juarez & Gonzalez-Castellano, 2024; Toutain, 2019), and more specifically within librarianship (Sherman, 2022; Whitt, 2024). Much of the scholarship, as well as practitioner/trade literature, is focused on the users of libraries. This includes topics such as digital accessibility (Beyene, 2018; Hamad, 2023); neurodiverse students and students with sensory needs (Landon, 2025; Magnuson et al., 2024; Seelmeyer, 2024); physical accessibility, digital accessibility, and technical services (Day et al., 2024; Lectenberg & Gold, 2024); and ADA compliance (Liu et al., 2024; Price, 2025), to name a few.

Research focused on the experiences of library professionals related to disability represents a vast minority of publications within the literature (Hollich, 2020), which is the focus of this current study. However, and directly relevant to this research, the literature does include the hard-won experiences of librarians who have encouraged library administrators to make libraries accessible to the professionals who make their services possible (along with other exhortations) (Hollich, 2020; Manwiller, 2022; Manwiller et al., 2025). Others exhort research to focus on experiences of library professionals, rather than rely solely on the outcomes for users and services (Folk, 2023; Moeller, 2019).

Regarding disability and library professionals, Moeller (2019) argued that "the experience of library workers remains largely unexamined" (p. 455). Similarly, Folk (2023) showed how Long COVID research failed to illuminate the experiences of library workers, a pattern in the literature, for years after the beginning of the pandemic though other aspects of library services were covered in depth:

> Despite the prevalence of studies exploring the effects of COVID-19 on our profession, the prevalence of Long COVID and the experiences of employees suffering from Long COVID have not yet been explored in libraries of any type, including academic libraries. While many of us are now reflecting on what we learned during the pandemic and planning for the endemic period, the effects of Long COVID are still present globally. Long COVID and its effect on library employees need to be part of these considerations about the future, especially given that library employees who are experiencing Long COVID could be subject to legal protections. (p. 2)

The health of the institution is a topic of great interest, but that of the professionals who work at these institutions seems to lag. What other experiences are lagging and must be urgently explored?

Experience is paramount to this study; it adds to the literature and helps correct these "largely unexamined" areas by uplifting new voices and allowing library professionals to examine and share their experiences through first-person stories. These stories are essential because, as Moeller (2019) poignantly observes,

> People with disabilities are imagined as an exception rather than as the ideal type of body and mind, and their needs are addressed as exceptions that are handled on an individual basis. The academic environment is neither designed nor constructed

> to acknowledge the possibility of anyone with disabilities, except as necessary to remain in compliance with legal mandates. (p. 458)

Until we hear these stories, the disabled will continue to be seen as exceptions. This study adds new voices to the literature, a significant contribution that will benefit future researchers and readers alike.

Methodology

The researchers conducted qualitative interviews with 12 adult participants currently working in academic libraries. Each participant was employed by a publicly funded college or university within the United States and had sought an accommodation for a disability/disabilities between 2019 and 2023 through their current or a recent employer. The researchers' approach to the study's design was rooted in the qualitative approach of grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Both researchers have a strong background using grounded theory in past research (Phillips, 2016). For one of the researchers, the scholarship of Charmaz (2006, 2007) has long been influential and played a pivotable role in the research presented here.

The researchers were guided by two research questions:

1. What experiences have librarians and library workers encountered while seeking accommodations in their workplaces?
2. What could library administrators do to improve the accommodation-seeking process for librarians and library workers?

Prior to conducting interviews, a call for participation (CFP) was circulated via listservs of professional organizations (e.g., ALA Connect, ACRL) and social media platforms, adding tailored hashtags and some targeted outreach (see Appendix A for the full "Call for Participation"). The CFP functioned as the first step toward scheduling interviews and data collection and featured a link to the study's Qualtrics survey (see Appendix B). This survey included minimal but needed demographic questions (e.g., personally identify as race, personally identify as gender, and age range) and closed with an open text prompt, a brief description of the respondent's experience with the accommodation process at their (current or previous) workplace. The CFP drew 20 responses to the online screening survey. After reviewing these responses, 18 of the 20 responses proved to be potential participants; two submissions were excluded because the survey was not complete. The researchers initially prepared to interview 8 to 12 participants, but they opted to invite all 18 who responded to participate, while anticipating some attrition from the time of volunteering to an invitation to participate. This proved to be a truly self-selected study. Of the 18 survey respondents invited to participate, 12 interviews were scheduled (see Appendix C). Six respondents were unresponsive to emails or had scheduling conflicts.

The interviews were carried out and recorded using the video-calling software Zoom. The interviews lasted between 45 and 90 minutes. As is common with semi-structured interviewing, the researchers prepared a set of questions (see Appendix D) while following the lead of the interviewees, using probes and/or asking clarifying questions as needed (Smith, 1995). One researcher posed the questions for each interview, while the other researcher took observational and exploratory notes, at times seeking clarification or further explanation. While the researchers provided the scripted questions in advance and answered questions prior to recording, they also responded to questions and probes during interviews. Once completed, transcrip-

tion began of the 12 recordings using the subscription software Temi and then was carefully reviewed by the researchers for errors or other hiccups caused by the software. If questions arose during this assessment of transcripts, the researchers referred questions to interviewees. Shared transcripts allowed participants to make clarifications. The participants were invited to add additional information, giving them the chance to expand their recollections and make any corrections. Once agreed upon, the transcripts were anonymized and finalized with the interviewees. All recorded videos were then deleted. The researchers noted several emerging themes from the 12 interviews, which this article will explore in more depth. Names, locations, and other identifying information were removed to protect the confidentiality of participants; the researchers rely heavily on amalgamated themes rather than simply extracted quotes.

Discussion

Each experience shared by the participants was unique, though there are noteworthy similarities among the narratives. The researchers chose the selected topics for discussion in this article based on the universality of these shared experiences by interviewees. Conversations were lengthy, rich in detail, and, at times, visibly difficult for interviewees to share.

Themes

The Discussion section of this article cannot exhaustively explore the numerous and memorable observations expressed by participants. However, the researchers believe that the three major themes detailed below are a useful starting point for understanding the experiences of interviewees. The researchers identified three main themes as pervasive among all 12 interviews. There were also numerous sub-themes drawn from the interviews, including conversations about masking and unmasking a disability; informal and formal accommodations; the role of human resources (HR) and the institution; what success and failure may look like at the close of seeking an accommodation; how seeking accommodations impacts tenure and job security; and the role(s) of supervisors and managers. Other recurring sub-themes include retaliation, the invasiveness of the process, vocational awe, the perception of favoritism, and collegial benefits. This article first explores the three identified themes of process burden, the relational aspect of seeking accommodations, and the academic library itself as an institution, while addressing sub-themes as part of the major themes when appropriate. The researchers chose to focus on the three most universal themes to elevate the experiences of the participants and to illuminate what was shared honestly and purposefully about their journeys. The article then highlights recommendations from the interviewees before moving to implications and conclusions from the authors.

First Theme: The Process Burden

The interviews make it clear that the process of seeking an accommodation is a serious burden and incredibly invasive. It requires time, resources (at times costly), and persistence to complete these processes regardless of the outcomes of the accommodation-seeking process. Time and extensive paperwork were common themes throughout the interviews. The process often took from 6 to 12 months to initially resolve and complete. Extensive paperwork from supervisors, HR, and the institution—along with paperwork from physicians, hospitals, lawyers, and other offices, such as a campus civil rights office or ombuds—was necessary throughout

the process. The accommodation-seeking process was described as a series of hurdles that interviewees often had to navigate not only without institutional support but often with apparently intentional interference. For example, one participant said, "It's supposed to be a lot easier than HR makes it, and they just make it, in my opinion, so hard so that they don't have to do it for as many people." Another interviewee captured the stress of these processes quite well, saying, "So I began seeking an accommodation two or three months [after I started], and the whole process was very stressful and not at all helpful or empowering. And I was kind of forced into the process because of some tensions with my administration. So, it wasn't something that I felt super comfortable with or felt comfortable navigating at all." The process was repeatedly described as uncomfortable, invasive, opaque, taxing, and unsupportive.

The process taxed not only interviewees' work time but also their personal time and finances. The participants regularly mentioned paying for extra appointments to complete required paperwork, traveling to see specialists, having to hire lawyers and consultants, and the expenditure of an incredible amount of time on appointments and self-education to advocate for themselves. As an example of having to self-educate, one participant shared that, "It was through this whole process that I started doing research and then actually more stuff came up and I was like, 'Oh my gosh, I could request accommodations for longer breaks if I needed it because I'm having an anxiety attack. That's news to me.' So it was only through self-education that I figured all of that out." The self-education process was coupled with participants contending that they were consistently coaching and educating HR at their institutions along the way. One interviewee said of HR, "I can tell you straight out though, that I taught them stuff." This article returns to this dynamic and to HR's role at more length in the relational section of the discussion.

Such process burden is often ongoing, even if an accommodation is granted, as continuing evaluation is required for participants and updated verification from medical professionals. In addition, changing any part of their request could force them to start the entire process over again. For example, one participant shared, "I had another phone call with the Office of Human Resources because, well, surgeries sometimes they go as planned and sometimes they don't, and there was a little complication. So, then I had to have another little procedure, which meant whole new forms and so a whole new conversation." The interviewees frequently emphasized that getting an accommodation is a major hurdle and further described it as dehumanizing and invasive. One participant said, "I felt just really demoralized and dehumanized by the whole experience. … My boss still insists that we meet with HR once a year to relook at it as if something's going to radically change. … This makes no sense. It's just been very uncomfortable and invasive." For some, these invasive processes happened when they were in a stable condition and well established at work; however, for others, the accommodation-seeking process added a grave burden to an already difficult moment in their lives, forcing them to request things like a pause on their tenure clock, or access to FMLA and long-term, unpaid leave.

The overwhelming theme emerging from the interviews was that the process of seeking an accommodation was a huge stumbling blocks for participants and that it created significant stress in their lives. The impact on the individuals seeking accommodations cannot be overly emphasized; one participant summed up the daily toll well when they said, "Yeah, and it was embarrassing. It's embarrassing to ask for. You don't want to have to have everybody in your business. And even if I am pretty open about my mental health struggles, it feels very awkward

to try to explain to someone why you need a [particular accommodation]." Every interview was filled with similar stories of exerting time and energy, both professionally and personally, to complete these processes and feelings of dehumanization, anger, and embarrassment. Seeking an accommodation was universally described as burdensome and disempowering at best; furthermore, it prompted several interviewees to look for other employment opportunities or to consider leaving the profession altogether.

Second Theme: Relational Aspects of Accommodation Seeking

The accommodation-seeking process was relational for all the participants involved, meaning that the people involved were as important as policies and procedures. Seeking accommodations required conversations with managers and supervisors, with human resource professionals, with peers and colleagues, and with many others. All the participants distinctly remembered people they perceived to be supportive, unsupportive, and/or indifferent. Many expressed strong reactions when asked about particular people or positions, such as a manager or accommodation coordinator, within their institutions. Seeking an accommodation was described as a vulnerable, monumentally dehumanizing, and burdensome process that was deeply (and painfully) personal. These experiences translated into crystal-clear memories for participants of who did what, where, why, and when. In addition, interviewees frequently commented on increased criticism, gossip, claims of favoritism, retaliation, collegial isolation, and general exclusion from HR, managers, as well as peers and colleagues.

Managers and supervisors were a common topic in the interviews, and the researchers asked targeted questions about the roles that those in these positions played throughout these processes. Interviewees described supervisors as one of the main stumbling blocks to the process. They often felt they had to work *around* their supervisors in these processes or to succeed *despite* their managers. For example, one participant shared that they had to "[learn] more because of the need to self-advocate because of my bosses and work." Interviewees clearly remembered the people who were least supportive. One participant stated, "I will say that the dean, who was my direct supervisor, and that I was seeking the accommodation from, made it very clear that seeking an accommodation meant that she couldn't trust my work ethic." However, when interpersonal success was noted, it was often because managers went out of their way to support participants through informal accommodations. As discussed, many of these processes take a monumental amount of labor and a long period of time. In some cases, managers were regarded positively because they worked with colleagues on informal accommodations while these processes were ongoing or even after accommodations were denied. Informal accommodations were the outcome for several of our participants; however, those led to concerns about what would happen if the accommodation-granting supervisor were to leave. Managers and supervisors were often key to the accommodation approval process with HR. Unfortunately, interviewees often described them as indifferent. One participant noted, "Yeah, I mean, she didn't actively hinder,"—a remark that captured the sentiment of several interviewees. Others described managers as antagonistic and retaliatory, and several were accused of being overly officious to interfere. Interviewees remembered acts of supervisors in detail and often described them as being able to *choose* to make the process work and/or as providing essential support, even if it was just encouragement. One participant shared, "My supervisor, once I knew that she supported my potential request, that I thought she had full faith that I could do this job remotely, that I would be able to do just as high quality of work,

that I would continue to connect with colleagues and be a strong collaborator, et cetera, then I felt like, okay, that is the impetus. I need to go to my doctor."

HR professionals were also heavily present in the narratives; interviewees described them as everything from "dangerously incompetent" to "fantastic" (once you found the right one). Interviewees ascribed much of the process burden they experienced to HR professionals. A repeated theme throughout the interviews was that HR existed not to support the individual claims but to protect the institution. Participants strongly remembered their interactions with HR. "Not hindering" was often the most positive feedback of HR and other campus offices that interviewees gave. One stated, "I don't think anybody on campus was particularly helpful. I mean, I guess my supervisor didn't really seem to fight it when the official paperwork came through, but that's as helpful as anybody got...not actively opposing it." At the same time, interviewees often portrayed the individuals working in HR sympathetically and several interviewees shared that HR at their institutions were chronically underfunded and understaffed. In short, HR was experienced as a systematic obstacle in these processes by the participants: "HR wasn't helpful to me in that I didn't have a successful interaction with them, but I also don't think it's really designed to be helpful. I wouldn't put blame on them."

Interviewees described colleagues and peers in a wider variety of ways. Some participants described colleagues and peers as indifferent or "not hindering," while others described them as a source of support and encouragement. However, there were also discussions of retaliation and exclusion; several participants had to cope with accusations of favoritism. One interviewee said, "I'd say the only people who were helpful were my direct colleagues and peers in the library. They were really supportive of my seeking an accommodation...they were really the only people, and they didn't have direct experience with going through the process, but they were like, 'You really should do this.'" Other participants described an exponential increase in criticism and accusations of favoritism when they were given accommodations to work from home or to have a private office. Still other interviewees felt the need to explain and justify their absences and accommodations to their colleagues, which was an invasive experience. One participant shared: "I put together a little video, and I sent it to everyone in my department... it was like, here's what's going on. I don't know when I'm coming back to work. … And I feel like no one knows how to respond to that because it's like everyone wants to know, but I feel like everyone kind of wants to hear it secondhand, so they don't have to do whatever."

Even long after their requests were granted or denied, the process of seeking an accommodation continued to tax participants in their professional relationships. Several participants expressed regret over choosing to unmask a somewhat invisible disability. Some interviewees pinpointed library culture and vocational awe as possible reasons for the backlash they experienced. One participant responded to a follow-up comment about vocational awe by saying, "That's sort of normalizing overwork by being a wonderful, amazing colleague and librarian and all of that, but you're normalizing this. I can't put my needs first...I'd say, and even before that, no one would have ever discouraged me from seeking accommodations. It was totally internal to me, how I internalized work culture." Two other points regarding colleagues and peers arose. First, interviewees described affinity groups for people with disabilities, as well as contact with other colleagues at the institution who had been through the accommodation-seeking process, as sources of great support (if they were visible and accessible). Second, individuals seeking accommodations significantly benefited their peers and colleagues, as their requests at times led to libraries rethinking long-standing ways of doing

things, also known as the curb-cut effect. For example, one participant shared: "I officially had that as an accommodation that I could not teach more than two classes in a row, and I could not teach more than three classes in a day. … And then what's interesting is after that, my department was like, well, should anyone be teaching four classes in a row? We used to do it, but in this post pandemic life this doesn't seem like a great idea. And so we decided that we would try to do everything we can to not have people teach four classes in a row."

Third Theme: The Academic Library as an Institution

Recognizing the academic library as an institution itself and as a part of the larger institution of a university or college was the third theme that emerged from the interviews. While academic libraries are frequently seen as innovative, responsive, and forward-thinking, many participants identified the bureaucratic nature and reluctance to change within their workplaces (O'Donnell & Anderson, 2021). Interviewees regularly mentioned the seemingly exclusive attention on clear accommodation seeking processes and additional support for disabled students in higher education (Mintz, 2021). The presence of a clear, highly structured accommodations process with a dedicated center/space on campus for students (e.g., Georgia Southern University's Student Accessibility Resource Center; University of Wisconsin-Madison's McBurney Disability Resource Center) contrasts starkly with the absence of administrative support, lack of helpful information, and dearth of expertise or training regarding accommodations that employees experience (Kwon, 2023).

Interviewees expressed feelings of frustration, exhaustion, and anger. As one interviewee stated:

> They were trying, I guess, but they were really overwhelmed with everything else too. So, I would say campus HR, fuck them. They just sucked. And it's not their fault. But my experience was still that they sucked. Yeah, the Title IX office, I didn't find really great at all. I found our conversations often, it felt combative.

The institution, the system, was ever-present in the experiences of the interviewees regardless of individual facilitators involved (e.g., managers or HR professionals) or the discrete part of the organization (i.e., the library) they worked in. The institution has a presence of its own throughout the stories that interviewees shared because these experiences never played out solely within the library or with just one manager or supervisor. The greater institution cannot be separated from the outcomes.

Guidance (and Warnings) for Accommodation Seekers

One of the final questions asked of participants was what advice they would give other folks seeking accommodations. The answers were incredibly similar across the interviews and deeply imbued with the experiences of the participants. Firstly, they advised future accommodation seekers to be prepared for a burdensome road: "Be prepared that you're going to have to go through all kinds of hoops." Secondly, they implored self-advocacy and education. For example, when asked what they would tell someone, a participant replied, "I mean, truthfully, I'd probably go into librarian mode and just want to find them as much information as possible." And another said, "Know your rights, the law, know your college's policies." Notably, interviewees consistently prefaced guidance and advice with blunt warnings and

honest considerations for potential seekers (Boren, 2022). As one librarian stated, "I would note that they need to think very carefully about whether or not they are safe enough to be out about their actual condition with their people. … It's going to impact you as a colleague." Interviewees knew, from their experiences, that others would likely experience repercussions (Timmons et al., 2024) while inquiring about accommodations and even once they obtained the accommodation(s) sought. They also warned that the accommodations given are not always those originally sought or those recommended by medical professionals (Wen et al., 2024). Finally, interviewees encouraged accommodation seekers to recognize that colleagues are "not necessarily your friends" and that HR is not there for you as an employee but for the institution.

Limitations

A key limitation of this study is the number of participants involved. As qualitative research, this was a strategic decision by the researchers. A smaller participant pool allowed for depth rather than breadth; furthermore, elevating the experiences of participants was paramount to the researchers throughout the study. The small sample size does limit generalizability of findings from this study across institutions; however, it does not discount the unique and impactful experiences shared or what may be learned from them. It is also important to emphasize that at no stage during the study did the researchers define, label, or explicitly categorize "disability" for participants. The original call for participants included a link to the online screening survey, which sought librarians and library workers who requested disability accommodations at academic libraries as part of publicly funded universities and colleges. As with the interviews, the researchers did not provide an explicit definition or apply direct meaning to terms including "disability," "librarian," or "library worker" at any time from recruitment of participants to data collection and analysis.

Conclusion

The researchers suggest a few areas of interest and future consideration. First, discussions about the accommodation-seeking process constitute the bulk of this study's interviews. Therefore, the researchers suggest that those working in academic libraries and, by extension, colleges and universities systematically review what is asked of accommodation seekers by their institutions. Based on the experiences of this study's participants, there are likely few, or no, guardrails in place regarding how much time and energy seeking accommodations can take, yet the weight of the accommodation-seeking process on the individual was obvious to the researchers from each of the interviews. While most higher education processes can be improved, focusing on accommodation processes is essential to support hiring, accessibility, and equity at all institutions. Too often the participants described pyrrhic victories. They received accommodations but, for many, their relationships with supervisors, managers, and colleagues felt permanently damaged.

Secondly, the relational nature of the accommodation-seeking process necessitates that supervisors and managers lead with empathy, compassion, and accountability. Those seeking accommodations remember what managers did and did not do. This study highlights only one side of the story; however, supervisors play a vital role during accommodation processes. Those seeking accommodations need advocates, and managers need to proactively and intentionally fill this role. In addition, it behooves all library professionals to consider what type of

colleague they are going to be when someone in their workplace is seeking an accommodation. Finally, more stories from people seeking accommodations and working in libraries with disabilities (whether successful, unsuccessful, or somewhere in-between) must be surfaced and amplified. The entire library community can benefit from these important conversations.

Authors' Note

Abigail L. Phillips, co-author of this manuscript, acknowledges she is disabled (visible and "invisible"), chronically ill, and neurodivergent (including AuDHD, mental health conditions, sensory processing disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, C-PTSD). Her scholarship, writing, teaching, and self-advocacy work are reflective of and informed by an evolving understanding of herself and being a part of the disability community. Co-author Dustin Fife is neurodivergent and profoundly ADHD.

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The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Institutional Review Board has granted your protocol Exempt Status under Category 2 as governed by 45 CFR 46.104(d). This study received IRB approval from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

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Appendix A
Call for Participation Qualtrics Survey

Accommodations in Public Academic Libraries

This study seeks participants to explore the experiences of library workers living with disabilities at public colleges and universities that have sought accommodations since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Accommodations and accommodation requests vary from institution to institution. According to the Americans with Disabilities Act, "A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a job, the work environment, or the way things are usually done during the hiring process" (ADA, 2023). Yet, the need for accommodations can occur long after the hiring experience. In this study, the researchers are seeking participants (8-12) that have sought or received accommodations since 2020. This qualitative study will use structured, anonymized interviews to collect information.

The researchers are seeking some optional demographic information in order to support compositional diversity among the participants.

Researchers: Abigail L. Phillips, Assistant Professor, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (abileigh@uwm.edu) and Dustin Fife, College Librarian, Colorado College (dfife@colorado-college.edu).

IRB: 23.263: University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Appendix B
Call for Participation Information and Demographic Survey

Name:
[short answer text]
Contact Information (Email):
[short answer text]
Do you currently work at the institution from which you sought an accommodation?
- Yes
- No
- In Progress
- Other:_____

How do you personally identify your race? (Optional)
[short answer text]
How do you personally identify your gender? (Optional)
[short answer text]
What is your age range? (Optional)
- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60-69
- 70+

Briefly describe your experience seeking an accommodation. (300 words max)

Appendix C
CFP Follow-Up Email to Potential Participants

RE: Accommodation in Public Academic Libraries Study

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your willingness to be interviewed about accommodations and working in an academic library. We would love to interview you. We are hoping to conduct interviews between July 31st and September 1st. If you are still willing, please respond here and we will work with you to find a reasonable date and time.

Once again, thank you so much.

Best,
Dr. Abigail L. Phillips and Dustin Fife

IRB: 23.263: University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Appendix D
Semi-Structured Interview Questions:

1. Tell us about the types of libraries you have worked in.
2. Without having to reveal details, did you newly need an accommodation, or have you always been eligible and not sought it until recently?
3. When did you begin seeking an accommodation?
4. During the hiring/application process, were you able to discuss your need for an accommodation? Did you feel comfortable revealing that you needed an accommodation?
5. What offices or positions on your campus handle accommodations
6. What was your general experience when seeking an accommodation(s)?
7. Who was helpful on campus in your experience
8. Who was not helpful on campus in your experience
9. How did your supervisor(s) help or hinder you in your accommodation seeking process?
10. How did your colleagues help or hinder you in your accommodation seeking process?
11. What would you tell someone else seeking accommodations in a higher-education workplace?
12. Do you consider the process of seeking an accommodation to have been successful/unsuccessful? Why?
13. What is your rank/status/employee structure (faculty, staff, etc.) and how do you think that influenced your experience?
14. Was there anything specific about working in the library that shaped your experience?
15. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?