Foreword

Colleges and universities in the United States strive to educate their students to become responsible global citizens and future leaders within a challenging learning environment informed by cutting-edge scholarship. Everyone on our campuses should have an opportunity to participate in all that we offer, whether from the perspective of a learner, a teacher, a researcher, or a staff member, or from the perspective of our many visitors who take advantage of our on-site and online offerings. What we make available must be accessible to and usable by everyone, and our values—such as integrity, diversity, excellence, collaboration, and innovation—should reflect this view.

Over the years, the list of characteristics considered to represent "diversity" at our institutions has expanded significantly to include race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, socioeconomic status, and ability. Everyone benefits from what individuals from traditionally underrepresented groups bring to our learning communities; their participation increases our ability to address pressing societal issues and prepare our students for global citizenship and leadership. We simply cannot afford to waste the talents, creativity, or brilliance of anyone.

Sheryl Burgstahler, founder and director of the DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology) and Access Technology Centers at the University of Washington, has been tireless in finding allies in the United States and abroad to promote the adoption of inclusive practices that serve all students at all types of postsecondary institutions. In this book, some of these allies—students with disabilities, scholars, and practitioners—share examples of such practices and the principles of universal design that inform them. Instead of designing courses, technology, services, and resources for the "typical" person and then reactively making modifications for those who find those offerings unwelcoming, inaccessible, or unusable, universal design *proactively* addresses the needs and preferences of people with a broad range of abilities and other characteristics during the purchase, design, and deployment processes.

The authors of this book make a compelling case for adopting universal design in *all* postsecondary offerings in order to support a diverse educational community and an inclusive approach to academic excellence. There is something here for everyone.

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