

Approaches to Support and Professionalization in Inclusive Higher Education

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Chapter 6

University Inclusion in Quebec: Between Targeted Measures and Universal Practices

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ABSTRACT

This article compares and contrasts two approaches to university inclusion in Quebec: individual accommodations and inclusive pedagogy. The former is reactive and aims to compensate for disadvantages, while the latter is proactive and aims to eliminate barriers. The universal approach transforms learning environments to anticipate the diversity of needs. It relies on flexible practices, a diversification of support materials and assessments, and is situated within a systemic perspective. The article describes the challenges of implementing inclusive pedagogy: varying levels of understanding, dependence on individual will, organizational constraints, and tensions between flexibility and academic standards. It concludes that universities must strengthen their governance, offer continuing professional development, and integrate both approaches to ensure sustainable inclusion, a social imperative and a strategic lever for their democratic mission.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context

Since the second half of the 20th century, access to higher education has gradually become more democratized in Québec, contributing to an increasing diversification of the student population. In the 21st century, accessibility and success policies — including the maintenance of low tuition fees and the implementation of support measures — have reinforced this trend (Tardif et al., 2025). Thus, alongside the increased presence of women, people from recent immigration, and first-generation university students, the marked increase in the number of students in situations of disability (PÉSH) particularly illustrates this phenomenon, with an increase of more than 400% between 2005 and 2015 (Pautel, 2017).

In order to properly understand the issues associated with this reality, the term PÉSH deserves clarification. The Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur du Québec (2023, p. 3) designates as such “a person enrolled in higher education who presents a disability or a condition recognized by a health professional (physical, sensory, neurological, organic, psychological, or neurodevelopmental), and who requires accommodation measures to reduce obstacles to their academic success.”

This democratization is embedded in a legal framework that prohibits discrimination based on disability and obliges institutions to promote educational integration, notably through charters of rights and freedoms, the Act to secure the handicapped persons in the exercise of their rights, and more recently, through Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) policies imposed on post-secondary institutions (Gouvernement du Québec, 2004; Magnan et al., 2024).

Concretely, EDIA policies — equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility — support the implementation of organizational and pedagogical changes within higher education institutions. They are reflected notably in the establishment of dedicated governance structures and mandatory training, as well as strategies aimed at increasing the access and recruitment of historically underrepresented groups (Tamtik and Guenter, 2019). From a pedagogical standpoint, the gradual adoption of inclusive practices, such as diversifying assessment methods and developing distance or hybrid teaching, aims to reduce certain barriers to learning (Université du Québec, 2024). These orientations are also accompanied by support and accommodation measures, for example during evaluations, in the accessibility of educational materials, or in the adaptation of learning environments (Ducharme and Montminy, 2012).

1.2 Problem statement, chapter objectives, and epistemological stance

The rapid growth of diversity within the university student population, particularly the marked increase in the number of students in situations of disability, places Québec higher education institutions before a structural tension. On one hand, they are required to implement individualized accommodation measures in order to respond to specific needs, in compliance with legal obligations. On the other hand, they are invited to transform learning environments in a more global and proactive manner through the use of universally oriented approaches, such as inclusive pedagogy or Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Although both logics pursue common goals of accessibility, equity, and success, they rest on distinct paradigms — one individualized and compensatory, the other universal and preventive — and pose significant challenges of coherence, feasibility, and governance. The central problem can thus be formulated as follows: how can we reconcile a reactive logic of individualized adaptation with a proactive logic of systemic transformation of learning environments, in a context of increasing student diversity and multiple institutional constraints?

From this perspective, the present chapter analyzes the tensions and complementarities between individualized accommodation measures and universal approaches to university inclusion in Québec, by examining how these two logics are articulated in institutional and pedagogical practices. It is organized in three parts: a presentation of the conceptual and theoretical framework, a comparative analysis supported by a fictitious case, and then a discussion of points of convergence and tension leading to recommendations for a more balanced implementation.

This contribution is part of a reflective and analytical approach, based on the mobilization of scientific literature as well as an interpretive analysis of observed practices and contemporary institutional issues. It aims to propose a critical and situated reading of the dynamics at work, by crossing theoretical contributions and professional experience, without claiming to provide an empirical generalization of the results.

The author adopts a situated epistemological stance, which is important to make explicit. Both a teacher, an advisor in pedagogy and technopedagogy, a researcher in moral philosophy, and the mother of a young adult in a situation of disability, brings a plural perspective to the realities addressed. This position allows her to simultaneously apprehend the student experience, the constraints of teaching staff, and the organizational difficulties that structure institutional decisions. This perspective nourishes a critical analysis anchored in practices and their ethical foundations. It nonetheless constitutes both a strength and a limitation, as the proximity to the situations studied may introduce certain interpretive biases. A reflexive approach

was therefore prioritized in order to maintain a critical distance, notably through an anchoring in existing theoretical frameworks and scientific works, as well as through the explicit statement of the limitations inherent to this position.

2. CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Definition of key concepts and theoretical frameworks used

We have chosen two approaches representative of educational practices in Québec: on one hand, the individual approach, centered on the student, widely adopted over the past forty years and drawing in part on John Rawls's theory of justice as fairness (1971, 1993, 2001); on the other hand, an emerging approach since the turn of the 2000s, namely that of universally oriented practices, which encompasses inclusive pedagogy and Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

2.1.1 The individual or reactive approach

The Québec educational system, from kindergarten to university, currently favors an individual-centered approach. That is, a logic in which needs are addressed in an individualized manner, often based on a medical diagnosis. This approach rests on the obligation, for the student or their close circle, notably family, to demonstrate limitations in order to access accommodation measures aimed at compensating for disadvantages, without questioning pedagogical objectives. This philosophy is reflected in the financing, policies, and organization of services, for example through the creation of adapted services offices, the allocation of specific budgets for accommodation measures, and the implementation of standardized procedures. Concretely, this translates into individualized interventions such as the granting of extra time during exams, their completion in adapted rooms, access to assistive technologies, or sign language interpretation (Desmarais et al., 2023). The person in a situation of disability is thus responsible for seeking the necessary help and demonstrating its legitimacy, assuming most of this process, which limits institutional accountability.

As Lefebvre (2024) highlights in their thesis *La transition d'adultes autistes vers les études postsecondaires: ancrage dans leur vécu*:

“The role of autistic students is thus transformed: from service recipients, they must become advocates for their own rights and interests. The lack of awareness of this responsibility erects before these students a particularly problematic barrier, since it now falls to them to ensure their access to adapted services at their

post-secondary institution [...]. If they are not aware of the available support, they can neither request nor receive services from their institution” (p. 41).

This so-called individualized approach rests on the legal principle of reasonable accommodation, as enshrined in the Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, where the “reasonable” character does not refer to the everyday sense of the term, but designates an adaptation measure deemed acceptable insofar as it does not impose an undue constraint on the institution. This principle aims to correct a situation where a general rule creates an unjustified disadvantage for a person, for example due to a disability. Concretely, this means that certain practices are adapted or exemptions are granted to allow the student to succeed under equitable conditions (Commission des Droits de la Personne et des Droits de la Jeunesse, 2025). These measures must not modify the pedagogical objectives of the course and may be refused if they result in undue constraint, such as disproportionate costs for institutions or unreasonable infringements on the safety of other persons (Ducharme and Montminy, 2012). The central idea is therefore to allow the student in a situation of disability to demonstrate their competencies without being penalized by their functional impairment (Simard, 2020).

2.1.2 The conception of justice as fairness

Québec and Canadian policies on inclusion draw inspiration from liberal political philosophy, notably the works of John Rawls. In his major work *A Theory of Justice* (1971), Rawls proposes the conception of justice as fairness, which distinguishes equality in rights — the fact that everyone has the same fundamental rights — from real equity, which aims to correct disadvantages linked to starting conditions. In other words, it is not sufficient for the rules to be identical for everyone; the means must be adapted to take into account differences. This perspective is expressed through the principles of distributive justice, whose objective is to organize institutions to guarantee equality of opportunity. Inequalities are only acceptable if they are accompanied by equitable conditions of access. In practice, this implies compensating for initial disadvantages through concrete measures: accessible and universal school systems, support programs, grants for the less advantaged, family allowances, etc. These mechanisms aim to ensure that success is based on the real merit of the individual, and not on the chance of one's birth.

For pedagogical inclusion, this logic means that the objective is not only to offer the same courses to everyone, but to design environments and practices that allow each person to succeed. It is a matter of moving from formal equality to real equality, where equity becomes the main lever to guarantee social justice, particularly for persons in situations of disability or from disadvantaged backgrounds (Cayouette-Guilloteau, 2013).

2.1.3 The approach of universally oriented practices or proactive approach

This conception of justice opens the way to a global educational approach, which aims not only to correct individual disadvantages, but also to transform the learning environment by anticipating the diversity of needs. Thus, the approach of universally oriented practices seeks to go beyond the simple integration of PÉSH to promote the success of all, by acting from the design of courses onward. Concretely, this involves anticipating the diversity of needs by offering content in multiple formats (texts, videos, diagrams), diversifying assessment methods, and providing options promoting engagement, such as thematic choices or flexible pacing. These practices aim to reduce obstacles before they arise, rather than intervening solely through individual measures (Tardif et al., 2025).

“Inclusion is thus conceived as a process that aims to take into account and satisfy the diversity of the needs of all — children, young people, and adults — through increased participation in learning, cultural life, and community life, and through a reduction in the number of those who are excluded from education or excluded within education itself. It presupposes changing and adapting contents, approaches, structures, and strategies, drawing on a shared vision that encompasses all children in the target age group and with the conviction that the ordinary educational system has the duty to educate all children” (Organisation des Nations unies pour l’éducation, la science et la culture, 2009, p. 3).

Universally oriented practices are anticipatory, collective, and oriented toward systemic change (Desmarais et al., 2023). They rest on the conviction that a class must welcome all learners by enabling their full and complete participation, that is, their active involvement in all dimensions of academic life: access to content, interaction in class, completion of evaluations, and engagement in pedagogical activities, without obstacles linked to their personal characteristics. The objective is to value diversity and remove barriers to learning, thus going beyond simple integration (Belleau, 2015). In addition to taking into account persons officially recognized as being in a situation of disability, the universally oriented practices approach also aims at the success of those who encounter obstacles linked to environmental factors in their personal lives, such as the responsibility of a dependent person, financial precariousness, recent immigration, first-generation status in higher education, or belonging to an Indigenous community or a historically discriminated minority. These conditions can, in themselves, also create disabling situations by limiting academic participation and success.

It is in this perspective that Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is situated, also called *Universal Design for Learning* in English. Appearing in the late 1990s, it was developed by the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) and draws

inspiration from universal design from architecture, which proposes accessible environments from the design stage onward. Applied to the field of education, UDL draws on contributions from the neurosciences in order to consider the variability of learning and to reduce obstacles through the implementation of flexible pedagogical practices. Concretely, it works on three axes: the “why,” which concerns motivation and engagement, for example by offering thematic choices or projects adapted to the interests of all; the “what,” linked to representation and the diversity of presentation modes, such as the use of texts, videos, diagrams, and interactive supports to explain a concept; and the “how,” which pertains to the means of action and expression of learning, for example by proposing several assessment modalities such as an oral presentation, a conceptual map, or a multimedia project. These three axes contribute to reducing barriers to learning by considering the variability of profiles, by promoting understanding through diversified supports, and by offering flexible means to demonstrate acquired knowledge (Odier-Guedj et al., 2023).

2.1.4 The Human Development Model and Disability Creation Process 2 (MDH-PPH 2)

In conclusion, we situate ourselves in continuity with the work of Lefebvre (2024) by broadening the reflection on universally oriented practices through their articulation with a more global theoretical framework: the Human Development Model and Disability Creation Process 2 (MDH-PPH 2). This model, of an interactionist and ecosystemic nature, constitutes a major contribution since it goes beyond an individual-centered conception to situate disability in a social and environmental perspective.

According to the MDH-PPH 2, the situation of disability is not an intrinsic characteristic of the person, but the result of a dynamic interaction among three dimensions: personal factors, environmental factors, and life habits. Personal factors encompass identity characteristics (age, gender, life history, values, aspirations), organic systems (integrity or impairment of vital functions), and aptitudes (innate or acquired capacities to accomplish an activity, evaluated independently of context and able to vary from optimal capacity to complete incapacity). Environmental factors encompass the physical and social dimensions that influence individuals' participation and can act as facilitators or obstacles. They are distributed across three levels: the micro-environment (family, home), the meso-environment (school, transportation), and the macro-environment (policies, societal norms), and include social components (rules, values, attitudes) and ecological components (climate, architecture, accommodations) (Fougeyrollas et al., 2023). Finally, life habits designate the daily activities and social roles valued by the person or their context, ensuring their survival and flourishing in society. Their quality is situated on a continuum

ranging from full social participation to the situation of disability, determined by the interaction between personal characteristics and environmental conditions (Fougeyrollas et al., 2023).

This approach highlights that disability is above all situational, produced by the encounter between these dimensions and the contexts in which the person evolves (Lefebvre, 2024). We believe that this perspective is particularly relevant for thinking about educational inclusion. It reminds us that inclusion cannot be reduced to individual adjustments, but also depends on organizational choices and pedagogical practices, which can act as obstacles or facilitators. The adoption of universally oriented practices is part of this logic: creating learning environments that anticipate the diversity of needs rather than responding to them after the fact. To move toward a truly inclusive society, it is therefore necessary to act on environmental dimensions in order to reduce or eliminate systemic obstacles to the social participation of persons with disabilities (Réseau international sur le Processus de production du handicap, 2025).

2.2 Illustration through a fictitious case

To concretely illustrate these concepts, let us now examine a fictitious case, which will allow us to see how these principles apply in a real situation.

Gabrielle is a student at the Université du Québec à Rimouski (UQAR) and presents a significant and persistent disability linked to a learning disorder affecting her information processing speed and short-term memory. In one of her courses, the instructor uses the lecture method to convey complex information, requiring handwritten note-taking and evaluating the achievement of objectives exclusively through a final exam in the form of an argumentative essay, written by hand in class, under a strict time constraint (three hours). Gabrielle experiences great difficulties and is at risk of failure.

According to the individual approach, Gabrielle could benefit from the services of the *Aide aux besoins particuliers* (ABP) at UQAR on the condition of providing medical proof attesting to her learning disorder. Following the analysis of her situation, an individual intervention plan would be developed in order to specify the required accommodations, such as additional time during exams, access to technological tools, course notes in electronic format, or an adapted room for evaluations. The deployment of these measures rests on a collaboration between Gabrielle, the ABP staff, and the teaching faculty. In case of refusal or disagreement, discussion mechanisms and, if necessary, institutional or legal recourses may be mobilized, as these measures constitute a legal obligation for educational institutions. This retroactive approach nonetheless requires a significant investment on the part of the student, who must initiate the process, gather supporting documents, and have

their needs recognized, all while continuing their studies. This logic nevertheless aims to ensure a real equality of opportunities by compensating for encountered disadvantages, in accordance with the principles of equity and equality of opportunity formulated by John Rawls.

From a perspective grounded in universally oriented practices, the adoption of inclusive pedagogy or Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles by Gabrielle's instructor can be analyzed as a potential lever for reducing certain obstacles in the learning environment, with effects likely to go beyond her individual situation and benefit the entire class. This reading is situated within the framework of MDH-PPH 2 (Fougeyrollas et al., 2023), according to which the situation experienced by Gabrielle cannot be attributed exclusively to her personal characteristics, but results from a dynamic interaction between those characteristics and a partially inadequate academic environment. From this perspective, the restrictions observed in her capacity to assume her social role as a student and to carry out the everyday activities of learning and evaluation are explained by this interaction, rather than by an isolated individual deficit (Lefebvre, 2024).

Thus, the instructor could make the course outline and preparatory notes available before the session, while diversifying the modes of presentation of complex concepts (visual supports, diagrams, tables, in addition to oral delivery). They could also offer several assessment modalities, such as a demonstrative text, an oral presentation, or a concept map, and ease exam constraints by authorizing the use of digital tools (computer, correction software). Finally, they could propose thematic choices and format options in order to stimulate the motivation and interest of the class. These strategies would benefit Gabrielle, but also the entire class, since all persons may encounter difficulties influencing their learning at some point in their university path, whether or not they are considered to be in a situation of disability (Fortier & Bergeron, 2016).

It is important to note that all of this is done on a voluntary basis by Gabrielle's instructor and represents a considerable workload. This approach requires additional investment, both in training in inclusive pedagogy and in designing courses that integrate a diversity of supports (texts, visuals, multimedia content) and making documents accessible before each session. It also involves designing flexible evaluations offering several modalities, which requires in-depth reflection on the criteria of equity and the validity of learning. To this is added coordination with the department to validate adjustments, the management of digital tools, and increased availability to answer questions from those enrolled in the course. Although these efforts promote inclusion and the success of all, they require rigorous planning and a significant investment in time and resources.

3. COMPARISON OF THE TWO APPROACHES

3.1 Common objectives

Although individualized support measures and inclusive pedagogy — notably UDL — rest on distinct paradigms, they converge on fundamental objectives: promoting success, inclusion, and equity. Both models aim to support students in their academic path by guaranteeing accessibility and the full and complete participation of all, without distinction based on disability (Fortier & Bergeron, 2016). They respond to a diversity of educational needs, whether it concerns situations of disability, second-language learning, or the challenges encountered by first-generation students (Consortium d'animation sur la persévérance et la réussite en enseignement supérieur, 2013). Thus, the objective is always to ensure real equality of opportunity, allowing each person to demonstrate their acquired knowledge under equitable conditions (Belleau, 2015).

In practice, these two approaches can function in a complementary manner. Inclusive pedagogy plays a first-line role: by integrating more flexibility from the planning of courses, it allows for preventive action and reduces the need for individual interventions (Robert & Ounsi, 2025). However, individual measures remain indispensable for responding to specific or complex needs that cannot always be anticipated (Pautel, 2017). Returning to the example presented above, if Gabrielle's learning environment had been designed according to the principles of inclusive pedagogy, it could have reduced upstream the difficulties encountered by the student and, consequently, limited her recourse to individualized measures. Giving the entire class 60 additional minutes to complete an evaluation and allowing the use of computers in a controlled environment could mean that Gabrielle does not feel the need to book an appointment to complete the evaluation in the ABP rooms. However, in the current legislative context, if Gabrielle's intervention plan provides for her adaptations, they could not be refused to her.

3.2 Identification of points of tension

Despite this complementarity, tensions persist, linked to a profound change in perspective on the nature of the problem and the solutions. Indeed, the individual approach emphasizes the individual and their disability (Pautel, 2017). In this paradigm, the difficulties experienced are caused by limitations of the person that must be compensated for or adapted, and the proposed solutions are consequently individualized and seen as exceptions to the norm. For its part, the universally oriented practices approach shifts the gaze toward the learning environment and the

obstacles it generates. It is not the person who is poorly adapted to their environment, but the environment that is poorly adapted to different people.

3.2.1 Implementation difficulties

The implementation of practices aimed at inclusion can come into conflict with organizational structures. Indeed, even if the management of individual measures is often perceived as time-consuming and complex, it is nonetheless known and predictable. Over the past thirty years, an entire sector dedicated to supporting students with particular needs has emerged and become structured in Québec higher education institutions, under the name of “adapted services.” Originally, these services were modest and focused on punctual interventions. In response to the increase in demand and the evolution of legal and regulatory frameworks, they have professionalized and become institutionalized. They now form a generally efficient system, with clear processes, specialized resources, and proven tools. Their functioning is well known in the field: it relies on standardized procedures for evaluation, adaptation, and follow-up, which guarantees a uniform and effective response to requirements (Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur, 2023).

By comparison, the adoption of universally oriented practices is uneven and fragmented in French-language higher education institutions. Research highlights that the understanding of UDL varies depending on contexts, sometimes departing from its original intentions, and that its application does not always rest on all of its principles or its values of social justice. This fragmentation complicates the appropriation of this model. The application of these practices depends on the willingness of teaching staff. They are free to adopt the practices that suit them, with UDL's guiding principles serving mainly as reference points (Odier-Guedj et al., 2023). Their deployment therefore rests on personal will and may occur in an intuitive and informal manner, rather than through a structured process.

A study focusing on the challenges experienced by PÉSH at university, centered notably on the implementation of individualized support measures, made it possible to collect testimonies on this subject. Regarding the attitudes and knowledge of teaching staff, more than 50% of PÉSH surveyed (58 persons) identified this aspect as a major challenge (Robert & Ounsi, 2025). While some testimonies report a positive attitude, the vast majority still express a negative attitude or a lack of willingness on the part of teaching staff toward their situation or their accommodation requests. One student specifically shared their experience regarding this reluctance of professors: “Several professors do not want to or simply cannot deal with students in situations of disability” (Robert and Ounsi, 2025, p. 14). This result attests, according to the respondents, to a certain lack of knowledge on the part of teaching staff. Moreover, another study indicates that between 23% and 53% of professors demonstrate re-

luctance to accommodate students in situations of disability (Philion et al., 2017), even though this is imposed by a strict normative framework. Among the concerns raised are the lack of alignment with professional reality, compliance with course requirements, student accountability, and equity toward other class members (Philion et al., 2017). These elements show that universal practices cannot be generalized without institutional policies and dedicated resources.

The implementation difficulties highlighted in this analysis are not specific to the fictitious case presented, but broadly echo the findings from the scientific literature on inclusion in higher education. Several works show that, when universally oriented practices are not supported by clear institutional policies, dedicated funding, and mechanisms for recognizing pedagogical work, their implementation remains fragmented and uneven (Desmarais & Flanagan, 2023; Odier-Guedj et al., 2023; Tardif et al., 2025).

Institutions then tend to rely on existing and institutionalized structures — notably adapted services — to respond to legal obligations, while the proactive transformation of learning environments remains marginal and largely dependent on the individual engagement of teaching staff (Pautel, 2017; Robert and Ounsi, 2025). This configuration maintains a reactive logic of compensation, despite an increasingly favorable institutional discourse on universal inclusion.

3.2.2 Pedagogical concerns

Based on our professional experience and an interpretive analysis of university practices — not founded on systematic empirical data — certain members of the teaching staff manifest reluctance in the face of inclusive measures. These resistances are explained by organizational constraints, demands related to the teaching task, the complexity of certain adaptations, and pedagogical considerations. They appear particularly salient in the context of universally oriented practices, where we observe the emergence of a possible conflict between the necessity of flexibility and the maintenance of academic standards perceived as essential.

From our point of view, the teaching body then finds itself caught in a tension between two imperatives. On one hand, that of offering a plurality of resources, pedagogical strategies, and assessment modalities, in accordance with the principles of universal pedagogy. On the other hand, that of guaranteeing a rigorous evaluation allowing for the certification of acquired competencies. This tension seems to us to be accentuated by a logic of competition that runs through higher education, whether it manifests itself among students, within the teaching body, or between institutions themselves. The objectives pursued, whether it concerns access to limited-enrollment programs, grants, employment, or positioning in institutional rankings, influence the way in which evaluation is conceived and practiced.

Finally, certain fears expressed — as we have noted in our practice and in our professional exchanges — concern the possible effects of these measures over the longer term. For example, the granting of extra time to all persons enrolled in a course, including those who do not need it, is sometimes perceived as potentially hindering the development of competencies deemed central, such as time management, planning, and work efficiency, which are highly valued in university and professional contexts. It should be noted that these elements arise from an interpretive analysis drawn from the professional experience of the author and from the critical examination of discourses observed in the university environment, rather than from systematically established empirical results. They aim to shed light on plausible dynamics discussed in the literature, without claiming to offer an exhaustive empirical validation.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 Synthesis of the contributions of the analysis

This contribution, of a reflective and analytical nature, highlights the necessary, yet sometimes conflictual, coexistence of two models aimed at university inclusion: individualized support measures and universally oriented practices. Although both approaches pursue common objectives — accessibility, equity, and success — they are situated within distinct paradigms. The individual approach, inherited from the medical and legal model, remains indispensable for responding to specific unanticipated needs. Conversely, inclusive pedagogy proposes a proactive and systemic logic aimed at reducing obstacles from the design of courses onward. This analysis confirms that, even in a context of universalization of practices, individualized measures will persist in order to guarantee real equality of opportunity.

However, the adoption of universal practices faces major challenges: heterogeneous understanding of UDL, fragmented implementation, dependence on individual initiative, and persistent reluctance of teaching staff. These obstacles reveal that inclusion cannot rest solely on the goodwill of the actors involved, but requires structural changes and strong educational governance. Finally, the tension between pedagogical flexibility and the maintenance of academic standards calls for concrete choices to reconcile innovation and rigor, notably in assessment modalities and the certification of competencies. The goal is to guarantee the flexibility necessary for inclusion without compromising the validity of learning and the credibility of degrees.

4.2 Recommendations for a balanced implementation

To promote lasting university inclusion, it is essential to clearly distinguish the consolidated institutional achievements from the dimensions that remain insufficiently structured. In this regard, the individualized support of students in situations of disability now benefits from a solid institutional anchoring, both in terms of structures, processes, and specialized resources. This is not, however, the case for universal approaches, whose implementation remains largely fragmented and strongly dependent on the individual initiative of those who teach.

The recommendations formulated below rest on a dual anchoring: on one hand, the conceptual and normative analysis of individualized and universal approaches to inclusion; on the other hand, the converging results of the scientific literature on systemic obstacles to the implementation of inclusive practices in higher education. They aim to translate these findings into institutional levers of action likely to support a lasting transformation of practices, beyond punctual or voluntarist initiatives.

4.2.1 Strengthening the institutional anchoring of universally oriented practices

To operationalize this objective, institutions could:

- explicitly integrate universally oriented practices into institutional pedagogical policies
- define measurable objectives in terms of inclusion and accessibility
- establish monitoring indicators to evaluate the implementation of practices
- put in place periodic evaluation mechanisms
- ensure coherence among academic units, programs, and departments

4.2.2 Investing in the training and support of teaching staff

To support the development of pedagogical competencies, institutions could:

- offer structured continuing training on inclusive pedagogy and UDL
- align these trainings with specific disciplinary realities
- propose individualized or collective pedagogical support mechanisms
- explicitly recognize the workload associated with the transformation of practices
- value inclusive pedagogical initiatives in evaluation and recognition mechanisms

4.2.3 Favoring a gradual and complementary approach

In order to ensure an effective articulation, it would be relevant to:

- maintain individualized measures to respond to specific unanticipated needs
- progressively deploy universally oriented practices at the program level
- avoid a logic of substitution between the two approaches
- conceive of inclusion as a continuum integrating adaptation and transformation
- support progressive and realistic institutional planning

4.2.4 Supporting co-construction and dialogue among those involved

To reinforce coherence and adherence to inclusive practices, institutions could:

- put in place formal dialogue spaces among those involved
- foster collaboration between teaching staff, adapted services, and pedagogical services
- integrate the student community into processes of reflection and improvement
- document and share exemplary practices
- encourage participatory approaches to the co-construction of solutions

4.2.5 Strengthening technopedagogical resources and clarifying academic benchmarks

To concretely support inclusive practices:

- invest in accessible and flexible digital tools
- develop diversified and inclusive learning environments
- support the teaching body in the integration of educational technologies
- establish clear institutional benchmarks regarding the evaluation of learning

By way of indication, these benchmarks could specify that: (1) evaluation bears on the targeted competencies rather than on modalities; (2) diversification rests on equivalent criteria ensuring the comparability of requirements; (3) adjustments modify the means, without altering learning objectives; and (4) inclusive evaluative practices are grounded in collective reflection and pedagogical support. These benchmarks would contribute to ensuring institutional coherence, while preserving academic rigor and the autonomy of teaching staff.

4.2.6 Ensuring adequate and sustainable funding for inclusive practices

To support these transformations, institutions should:

- provide dedicated funding for the development of inclusive pedagogical practices
- recognize the workload associated with the design of accessible courses
- support technopedagogical services and adapted services in a concerted manner
- integrate inclusion issues into internal and ministerial funding models
- favor long-term investments rather than punctual initiatives

In the absence of sufficient resources, inclusive practices risk remaining dependent on the individual engagement of those who teach, limiting their deployment at the institutional level.

In closing, university inclusion must be conceived as an ethical and social imperative that goes beyond mere compliance with legal obligations. It is part of a broader conception of educational justice and collective responsibility, where universities are called upon to play an active role in the reduction of structural inequalities. Such a transformation cannot be limited to punctual adjustments: it requires a systemic approach grounded in equity, pedagogical innovation, and academic rigor. This transformation nonetheless rests on essential material and organizational conditions, notably in terms of funding, without which the objectives of inclusion risk remaining difficult to achieve on a large scale.

In this regard, the orientations carried by international organizations such as UNESCO (Organisation des Nations unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture, 1994) remind us that inclusion constitutes a fundamental lever of the right to education, of full and complete participation in social life, and of the sustainable development of societies. Situating university inclusion within this global perspective thus allows for a reaffirmation of the democratic and social role of universities in the face of the growing diversity of student populations.

DECLARATION OF THE USE OF AI TOOLS

The author declares having used artificial intelligence tools for writing support. She specifies, however, that the ideas, analysis, and content are her own, that she has carried out a complete review of the text, translations, and that she assumes full responsibility for it.

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