FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN PUBLIC POST SECONDARY EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

FACULTY PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN PUBLIC POST SECONDARY EDUCATION

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Persons with intellectual disabilities have been integrated into post secondary education at increasing rates since the 1990s. Some colleges and universities have responded to the influx of this population by implementing specific programs designed to meet the needs of students who have intellectual disabilities. As many as 138 college campuses now have such programs. Because of the links between faculty perceptions and student success, discovering faculty perceptions and providing a context for those perceptions marked the purpose of this study.

Qualitative and quantitative methods were employed to investigate faculty perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities when public post secondary campuses had programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities were compared to those institutions that did not have such programs. Findings were reported as an extension of data collected through an online survey research instrument completed by 246 faculty members from public post secondary campuses in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools geographical area of accreditation. Data was analyzed using an ex post facto research design formulated from both quantitative answers subjected to nonparametric statistical

analysis and qualitative responses analyzed through a constant comparative method.

Faculty perceptions about the integration of students with intellectual disabilities into public post secondary campuses were favorable as indicated by a 71.2% acceptance rate. Results from this study showed no significant evidence of difference among faculty perceptions when compared between institutions that had and those that did not have programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities. Further, there was no difference in the type or amount of contact faculty members had with students who have intellectual disabilities when compared among institutions that did and those that did not have programs for students with intellectual disabilities. Neither did faculty members participate in more faculty development when such programs existed on their campuses. Hence, the presence of programs alone did not affect faculty perceptions of students who have intellectual disabilities.

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INTRODUCTION

Students with intellectual disabilities are increasingly found on postsecondary campuses. Twenty years ago, 37.5% of community colleges served at least one student with an intellectual disability (McAffee & Sheeler, 1987). Now, it is estimated that there are more than 10,000 students with intellectual disabilities enrolled in postsecondary institutions across the nation (Hart, Grigal, Sax, Martinez, & Will, 2006: Hart, Zimbrich, & Parker, 2005).

A student with an intellectual disability is "characterized by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior" (American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, 2007, ¶ 1). A student with an intellectual disability often "requires ongoing support in one or more major life activities in order to participate in an integrated community," and to be able to "enjoy a quality of life similar to that available to all citizens" (The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 2000, ¶ 1). A student with an intellectual disability is usually classified as a person who has Down syndrome, a Traumatic Brain Injury, someone who is on the Autistic Spectrum, or some other disorder that may affect mental functions. This is different from a student who has a learning disability, which may include dyslexia, or someone who has a psychological disorder, or a physical disability. A clear distinction between an intellectual disability and other disability categories is an important aspect of this study.

All students with disabilities were granted rights under both Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. These rights include equal access to facilities, resources, and services. While these two acts were not the only pieces of legislation that had an effect on students with intellectual disabilities, they popularized the concept of mainstreaming students into public school classrooms. Mainstreaming is the process of taking students with a disabilities and educating them alongside their non-disabled peers. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2000), 42.2% of students with intellectual disabilities spent more than 60% of their time mainstreamed in general education classrooms in U.S. public schools.

Now working from a life of inclusion, many secondary students are seeking postsecondary education that is inclusive as well (Katsiyannis, Zhang, Woodruff, & Dixon, 2005). Recent reports state that while 78% of all secondary students attend postsecondary education, 14.2% of students with intellectual disabilities pursue the same goal (Hart et al., 2005; President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities, 2004; Zaft, Hart, & Zimbrich, 2004). That represents approximately 6,000 new freshmen with intellectual disabilities each year (Office of Special Education Programs, 2007).

In the last 20 years a new development has emerged to help serve students with intellectual disabilities on postsecondary campuses in a more systematic way. Before this development, few students with intellectual disabilities were able to attend postsecondary institutions because there was little institutional support. For those who did attend, family members provided much of the support

needed by the student. Now institutions are increasingly establishing postsecondary programs designed specifically for students with intellectual disabilities. These programs are models for social and academic inclusion for such students.

Twenty years ago there were only a handful of these programs in the world. Six years ago such programs were only seen on 15 campuses in the United States. At least 138 postsecondary campuses across the nation now claim one of these specialized programs designed for students who have intellectual disabilities. These programs can be found in private, public, religious, secular, two-year, and four-year institutions. While these programs have been supported by positive attitudes, research also shows that there were some concerns about the establishment of these programs at the institutional level (McDonald, MacPherson-Court, Uditsky, & Symons; 1997).

Although there are some students with intellectual disabilities who attend postsecondary institutions without the support of one of these programs, almost all students with intellectual disabilities require at least some extra level of support in order to be successful in college. Historically, supports for students with intellectual disabilities have come from natural supports (McDonnell, Hardman, and McDonnell, 2003). McDonnell et al. (2003) defined “natural supports” as family members, friends, acquaintances, as well as social resources that are readily available outside of education and are designed with the student’s success and well being in mind. An example of a natural support might include a brother helping his sister with her homework. The brother is outside of the

boundaries of support provided by an institution, but has a vested interest in the success of the student. Whether natural or constructed, supports and resources exist at many different levels in postsecondary education and can be used to help students with intellectual disabilities to succeed.

As an example of using natural supports in a positive way, studies indicated that co-student involvement in providing support for students with intellectual disabilities yielded enhanced learning for both the disabled and the non-disabled student (Burns, Storey, & Certo, 2004; Fenrick & Peterson, 2004; Lobban, 2002a; McDaniel, 2004). Research has been used to measure and discuss the effects of student involvement as supporting peers for students with intellectual disabilities (McDonald et al., 1997). This research indicated that supporting peers increased positive perceptions of the disabled student, increased understanding of day-to-day concerns, and increased self-awareness about perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities. Data from this same report also suggested that non-disabled students were increasingly aware and interested in the success of their disabled student-peers as a result of their supportive roles.

While research has been completed on student involvement in natural supports, there is little research on the role of an institution as a natural support. A postsecondary campus has many resources available to all students. Utilizing these resources that an institution already has, many natural supports are then available for students who have intellectual disabilities. Examples include tutoring labs, computer access, office hours where students can meet with faculty members, as well as others. These natural resources can support a student with an

intellectual disability in a similar way as a brother does his sister while tutoring her. While institutions have natural supports, research indicated when faculty members have made themselves available as natural supports they have been able to increase success and retention (Hamill, 2003; Lobban, 2002b).

Faculty members are increasingly aware of social disability issues (Benham, 1997). In various studies knowledge about disabilities has been directly linked to faculty attitudes toward students with disabilities (Aksamit, Morris, & Luenberger, 1987; Leyser, Vogel, Wyland, & Brulle, 1998). While such studies showed favorable consideration for students with disabilities in general, follow up studies have shown that perceptions were sometimes linked to individual disability categories (Becker, Martin, Wajeeh, Ward, & Shern, 2002). While a faculty member may feel one way about "disabilities," they may feel another way about "psychiatric disabilities" or "intellectual disabilities" as an example. The link between disability, knowledge, and perception is direct.

Faculty members are often called upon to shape the climate of the institution in which they work (Rummrill, 2001). Additionally, the attitudes of faculty members may affect the climate and tone of an institution and course (Lundquist, Spalding, & Landrum, 2003; Rao, 2004). Because climate and tone contribute to the success or failure of a student, faculty members may be an important piece to the holistic picture of students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education, and their perceptions must be considered.

To date, little formative information has been gleaned from studies designed to ascertain faculty perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities.

This lack of information leaves many questions unanswered. Since not all campuses have programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities, it seems worthwhile to find out if exposure to this population through such programs changes the perceptions of faculty members.

Statement of the Problem

Few faculty perceptions have been gathered regarding students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education. Further, little is known of faculty perceptions concerning the specific presence of this population on postsecondary campuses. Historically, faculty members have demonstrated qualitatively different levels of responses to the presence of persons with various disabilities in their institutions. Depending on the type and severity of the disability, faculty perceptions range from supportive to discriminatory (Aksamit et al., 1987; Becker et al., 2002). Further, faculty perceptions have been shown to either aid in the success of, or lead to the demise of individual students with disabilities (de A Moreira, San Juan, Perieira, & de Souza, 2000). Because of these links, and because there is little information on how faculty members perceive students with intellectual disabilities, systematic research stands to add to the understanding of students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education.

Purposes of the Study

The overarching purpose of this study was to ascertain faculty perceptions about the presence of persons with intellectual disabilities in public postsecondary education. Specifically, this research was designed to:

1. Determine if significant differences existed among faculty perceptions as delineated through institutional presence or absence of designated programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities in public postsecondary institutions.
2. Determine if qualitative responses supported and added contextual depth to faculty perceptions of the presence of students with intellectual disabilities in public postsecondary education.

Research Questions

1. Are there significant differences among responses of faculty members in their perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities when the responding faculty members' public postsecondary campuses have a program designed for students with intellectual disabilities as compared to those that do not?
2. Do statistics indicate that the presence of programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities alter the amount and type of contact faculty members have with both intellectually disabled persons and intellectually disabled students?
3. Do statistics indicate that faculty members are receiving more frequent training from their institution on campuses where programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities are found?

4. For those who reply to the question, "*Please tell me why you think, or do not think that persons with intellectual disabilities should be given opportunities to learn in your institution,*" do their responses add any significant information to the contextual picture of faculty perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities in public postsecondary environments?

5. For those who reply to the question, "*Have you had any experiences that you feel may contribute to your feelings about persons with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education? Can you tell me about them?*" do responses add any significant information to the contextual picture of faculty perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities in public postsecondary environments?

Research Hypothesis

The research hypothesis states that there are no significant differences among faculty perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities based on the presence or absence of public postsecondary educational programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities at their institutions.

Significance of the Study

Persons with intellectual disabilities have seen significant increases in the realization of inclusion since the 1970s. As research showed that persons with intellectual disabilities (formerly referred to as persons with mental retardation) were capable of learning, it became prudent to remove this population from

institutional care and integrate them into the non-disabled community (McDonnell et al., 2003). Through passage of The Developmental Disabilities Services and Facilities Construction Act, Title XIX of the Social Security Act, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1978, The Americans with Disabilities Act, The Bill of Rights Act of 2000, and initial and subsequent reauthorizations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), community inclusion through education became the norm.

In 2001, there were over 66,000 students with intellectual disabilities who exited the public school setting; of these, 27% graduated with full diploma honors (Office of Special Education Programs, 2005). For students with intellectual disabilities, the 2003 high school graduating class showed a four percent increase in these total exit numbers with less than a one percent increase in the number of students graduating with a diploma. While this indicated that a growing number of students with intellectual disabilities were exiting secondary educational environments with a diploma, proportionally more students with intellectual disabilities were leaving secondary education with something less than a diploma. Excluding those that drop out, almost 70% of students with intellectual disabilities left high school with only a certificate of attendance (Office of Special Education Programs, 2005).

After secondary education, most of these former students worked in sheltered atmospheres. Some entered competitive employment, some attended Day Habilitation groups, while still others demonstrated no consistent substantive peer interaction beyond their high school years (Parmenter & Knox, 1991). For

the 27% of students with intellectual disabilities who did receive diplomas, their postsecondary outcomes were comparable to those students who had not obtained a diploma (Blackorby & Wagner, 1996; Mank, Buckley, Cioffi, & Dean, 1996; Wagner, Blackorby, Cameto, & Newman, 1993). This indicated that, generally speaking, a diploma did not have a significant impact on the future of a person who has an intellectual disability.

Specific legal parameters were established through IDEA to support student transition from secondary schools into the community, education, or workforce (Individual with Disabilities Education Act, 1992). Through IDEA public schools were charged to provide substantive annual transition planning for students with disabilities beginning at age 16 through Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) meetings.

Despite the presence of transition plans, disproportionately fewer students with intellectual disabilities pursued postsecondary education when compared to other disability groups. A national study indicated 32% of public school respondents with an intellectual disability were looking forward to a college or vocational postsecondary experience (Katsiyannis et al., 2005). However, data showed that only 8-14.2% of youth with intellectual disabilities actually participated in postsecondary education (Hart, et al., 2005; President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities, 2004). Recent data showed that of the 37% of the population of students who have disabilities in general, 78% of these students attended postsecondary education (Forster, 2006; Hart, Zaft, & Zimbrich, 2001). These data revealed that while more students are exiting public school

education, and while many desire a postsecondary education, their percentages of attendance did not reflect such trends.

Berkner, Wei, He, Lew, Cominole, Siegel, & Griffin (2004) reported that 11.3% of undergraduate students in the 2003-2004 school year self-reported a disability. Yet, faculty members have demonstrated in previous research that they had only limited experience and contact with individuals who have disabilities (Leyser et al., 1998). While students do not have to report their disabilities to their professors of postsecondary institutions, students requesting accommodations must help mediate any need with professors and postsecondary institutions. A student may have a disability that requires no specific accommodation, in which case a professor may never know about the existence of the disability. In general, faculty members indicated that they were supportive of making accommodations (Norton, 1997). Research findings also indicated that faculty members who had contact with students who have disabilities showed attitudes that were more favorable toward their presence in the classroom. Further, faculty members who have increased contact proved themselves more knowledgeable about relevant disability considerations (Aksamit et al., 1987; Norton, 1997).

Faculty perceptions provide the foundation for the academic tone of a course. Faculty may indirectly determine the outcome of student success in their course based on their perceptions (Dowrick, Anderson, Heyer, & Acosta, 2005). Research has shown that faculty perceptions of students can be directly correlated to student success (Davis, 1964; Davis, 1966). Younger faculty members have

been shown to be more supportive of students with disabilities in postsecondary education (Benham, 1997; Leyser et al., 1998). Because of this, faculty members have been incorporated in increasing numbers into postsecondary student success models designed to help students with disabilities succeed (Kinzie, 2005). Despite success models and specialized programs, only 16% of students with disabilities who attended four-year institutions graduated, only 6% received associate degrees from community colleges, and 19% received vocational certificates (Horn & Bobitt, 1999).

Faculty members indicated that they had concerns about students with disabilities in their classrooms and on their campuses. Although wide reaching, research indicated that faculty members were:

1. concerned about the absorption of time and resources students with disabilities demand (Kaufman, 2006; Tyre, 2006),
2. concerned about classroom modifications (Waterfield, West, & Parker, 2006),
3. concerned about whether or not students with disabilities can be successful in postsecondary education (Becker et al., 2002),
4. feelings about perceived risks to others in the classroom (Becker),
5. consideration for personal levels of comfort in dealing with students who have disabilities (Brockleman, Chadsey, & Loeb, 2006), and

6. feelings of confidence in working with students who have disabilities (Brockleman).

As faculty perceptions in the literature specifically concerned students with intellectual disabilities, examples provided by Frank and Uditsky (1988), Gibson (1997), Hamill (2003), and Lobban (2002b) offered little more than anecdotal citations. However, these anecdotal citations contained many of the aforementioned faculty concerns.

The potential significance of this study may lay in the practical application of the findings. To expand the application, the results of this data may be used to fill in some of the literature gaps that concern faculty perceptions as well as gaps in the literature concerning postsecondary integration. Results may also be used to address the needs of policy makers for purposes of faculty development, for existential comparison to faculty perceptions of students in other disability categories, and for baseline trend analysis.

Faculty Development

If current trends continue for the next five years, by 2012 some 750 institutions will have programs for students with intellectual disabilities to support well over 37,000 students with intellectual disabilities. Due to necessary classroom modifications, this kind of growth may necessitate institutional support for instructors. For the most part, the training that faculty members get with regards to the inclusion of students with disabilities was placed into four main categories. The first category was personal study, which was outside the control of an employing institution. The second category was voluntary participation in

development offered through the postsecondary institution in the form of self-paced manuals (Debrand & Salzberg, 2005; Hurst, 2006). The third category came from mandatory training provided by the employing postsecondary institution. The fourth category came from graduate and undergraduate training in the form of classroom content (Bowen, 2000; Feyerer, Hayward, Hedge, & Ness, 2005). Classroom content included either learning about or teaching students about persons with intellectual disabilities.

Despite the availability of some resources to aid in faculty development, only about 39% of directors of disability service offices noted that they were satisfied with institutional efforts to teach faculty how to accommodate students with disabilities (Salzberg, Peterson, Cebrand, Blaire, Carsey, & Johnson, 2002). Such results indicated a need for increased quality in faculty development. Findings from this research may be used for such development.

Existential Comparison

Persons with disabilities are not new to postsecondary education. Their presence in various capacities and in varying degrees has been seen for decades. Through an ad hoc meta-analysis of faculty perception studies that concerned students with various disabilities, it was seen that the type of student disability and the range of the associated disability affected faculty perceptions of the student (Aksamit et al., 1987; Becker et al., 2002). While this variability was demonstrated across most disability categories, little systematic and controlled research was found that concerned faculty perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities. Information from this research may help to flesh out the

continuum of disability and faculty perceptions in such a way that a more holistic view of faculty perceptions and student disability categorizations may be realized.

Baseline Trend Analysis

Programs for students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary environments grew nationally from 15 programs in 2001 to 138 some five years later. Despite this growth, there existed few baselines from which to track trends and advances. Only 2% of postsecondary institutions maintained a program for persons with intellectual disabilities. As the first concise movements toward funding and subsidizations of these programs were only recently made, the number of programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities will increase as will accountability within existing programs. This research may be reapplied periodically to track changes in faculty perceptions over time. Longitudinal studies have already proven very effective in improving transition practices for students with intellectual disabilities (Katsiyannis et al., 2005).

Definition of Terms

Accommodations: The means whereby a person with a disadvantage comes to have access to an equitable end. This means that the person with a disability has reasonable access to services and goods as they are made available to the non-disabled public. Where an accommodation is offered, the requesting person must demonstrate that there is impairment and that the impairment substantially limits one or more major life activities (Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990a).

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): P.L. 101-336, passed in 1990 and implemented in 1992, is broken into five titles. ADA covers equal access for persons with disabilities and protections against discrimination in terms of the civil rights act as opposed to terms of an entitlement act.

1. Title I – Employment
2. Title II – Public Services and Transportation
3. Title III – Accommodations of Public Spaces
4. Title IV – Telecommunications
5. Title V – Miscellaneous

Developmental Disability: Any group of physical or intellectual disabilities that restricts or slows down the perceived normal developmental process on a permanent basis, to include a combination of at least three of the following;

1. Self-care,
2. Receptive and expressive language,
3. Learning,
4. Mobility,
5. Self-direction,
6. Capacity for independent living, and
7. Decreased economic self-sufficiency (McDonnell et al., 2003).

Disability: Any restriction or lack, resulting from impairment, of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being. (United Nations, 1983).

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA): PL 101-476, passed in 1975 and modified in 2004, is an entitlement act which cites that children with disabilities are guaranteed a free and appropriate education in a least restrictive environment, that the same students should be given an Individualized Education Plan from age 3 through age 21, and that all services should be provided by the students' state educational institution and associated local school district (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 1997).

Intellectual Disability: Specifically inhibits perceived normal intellectual functioning and impairs one or more of life's major activities, to include those ranges of disabilities that fall under Mental Retardation, Down syndrome, Traumatic Brain Injury, Autism spectrum, etc. The term Intellectual Disability serves as an acceptable pseudonym for the phrase Mental Retardation (TASH, 2000).

Learning Disability: A "disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using spoken or written language, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations" (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 1992b).

Mental Retardation: Based on a measure of general intelligence through standardized ascription, in cases where IQ test results are significantly below

average (usually <70) and where major life activities are hampered as a result of the disability. The term mental retardation can only be ascribed early on in life; it does not include late onset processes (Alzheimer's disease, etc.). More appropriately, mental retardation is now referred to as an intellectual disability (The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 2000).

Modifications: "adjustments that enable a covered entity's employee with a disability to enjoy equal benefits and privileges …as are enjoyed by its other similarly situated employees without disabilities" (Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990b, p. 357).

Natural Support: Natural supports are based on a familial network of relatives and friends as well as the services available to all community members (McDonnell et al., 2003).

Physical Disability: "Any physiological disorder or condition, cosmetic disfigurement, or anatomical loss affecting one or more of the following body systems: neurological, musculoskeletal, special sense organs, respiratory (including speech organs), cardiovascular, reproductive, digestive, genitourinary, hemic and lymphatic, skin, and endocrine" (Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990c, 11-24:1-2).

Postsecondary Institution: Educational setting beyond grades K-12, where terminal degrees are offered, to include technical schools, community colleges, universities, etc.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (504): 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq, PL 93-112, of 1973 is similar to ADA, where equal access is guaranteed, where the

ADA does not apply to religiously controlled institutions, 504 specifically applies to institutions that accept federal funding.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The issue of students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education has been increasingly reported in the literature. Neubert, Moon, Grigal, & Redd (2001) queried journal databases to include ERIC, Exceptional Children Educational Resources, Education Abstracts, and Dissertation Abstracts from 1969 to 1999 to identify research that dealt with students who have intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education.

In the 1970s there was little research concerning students with intellectual disabilities in higher education. Described by Neubert et al. as "informative and probing," these publications were focused on introducing the concept of students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education. Cited as being in the "infancy stage," data included little information about the development of postsecondary programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities.

Neubert et al. classified literature in the 1980s as "transitional." This transitional period noted a shift in focus from simply informative to a more analytical analysis. Within these publications research revealed five main themes:

1. transition planning for postsecondary attendance,
2. self-esteem,
3. employment,
4. implications of Section 504, and
5. the integration of students with intellectual disabilities into mainstream college classes.

Formalized research yielded outcomes that could be compared in ways that literature in the 1970s could not. For example, transition planning received increased attention because of the variable outcomes for students with intellectual disabilities. Because funding was made available to assess self-esteem and self-determination, the majority of research in this decade was focused on these two areas as they affected postsecondary education. Within this research, Neubert et al. found that increasing the number of activities that elicit self-determinism and self-esteem increased the ability of a student with an intellectual disability to become productive in society.

Literature in the 1980s also incorporated issues of employment. Employment practices and the need for that employment comprised central themes for the justification of postsecondary education. Further, multiple studies showed that persons with intellectual disabilities were more likely to be productive working members of society if they were allowed to determine their own paths. In this, research demonstrated that postsecondary education and employment were related.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitative Act was passed in 1973 as a civil rights act. It was designed to increase services and opportunities for people with disabilities. Much of the literature in the 1980s that concerned students with intellectual disabilities focused on the effects of Section 504.

Literature in the 1980s marked an increase in anecdotal stories, reports, and studies that concerned students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education. In the 1970s, only a handful of stories of students with intellectual

disabilities in postsecondary education were published. In the 1980s these types of articles became more common.

During the 1990s an increase in the number of research reports and research studies provided depth to the collection of research about students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education. Neubert et al. determined that the literature of the 1990s had 5 prevailing themes,

1. transition planning,
2. multiple outcomes,
3. 18-21 year-olds in postsecondary education,
4. college courses, and
5. student outcomes.

While the first aspect of both literature from the 1980s and 1990s was centered on transition, Neubert et al. indicated that there was a definitive shift in the purposes of the studies respective to each decade. The research of the 1980s was based on conceptual aspects of transition planning and the literature of the 1990s was based on transition practices.

The second aspect, that of multiple outcomes, indicated that there were multiple outcomes that may be considered while planning and implementing transition plans. An extension of this concept was incorporated in the concept of multiple possible outcomes for education.

A new concept emerged during this time period that concerned students who were 18-21 years-old and still in the educational custody of public schools. Some postsecondary institutions began incorporating this population to ensure

that students were surrounded by age peers while still supported academically though public school educators. Much literature of this time period covered this concept and applications of this concept. Literature that was published in the 1990s also included articles about college course experiences. These exploratory articles considered what experiences were like for students who have intellectual disabilities in postsecondary classrooms. Also, these articles considered legal aspects and practical reports concerning the integration of students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education.

While the research of Neubert et al. (2001) represented the only discovered meta-analysis of students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education, a further review of literature has much to add to this analysis. Grouping literature by publication date, as Neubert et al. did may be relevant; however, grouping by themes, as was done in this study, demonstrated consideration of a topic through time in cohesive and directional application. The first topic of review is that of legal precedence or legal justification for the presence of this population in postsecondary education. Understanding the scope and application of the law leads naturally to a consideration of postsecondary attainment for students with intellectual disabilities. While building on the backbone of legal precedence and an understanding of postsecondary attainment, the third topic of review discusses types of programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities. Seeing the attainment and type of program available, the last topic of review will be faculty perceptions of students with disabilities, moving from the generic to the specific. In this, a compilation of research studies

show how perceptions can affect student outcomes. This progression through the literature sets the stage for research findings gained through the implementation of this study.

Legal Precedence

Understanding the scope of this study would be limited without a legal context. Persons with disabilities now live with more opportunities and rights as compared to the same population 20 years ago. Legal and local policies have been working towards equity in human rights for the last 60 years in all under-represented categories, which includes disability status.

Legislative Mandates

There are many laws that protect the rights of students with intellectual disabilities in education. The first was the 1963 Vocational Education Act (PL 88-210). This act provided for workforce education to include basic grants to states for vocational education. The Higher Education Act (PL 89-329) included provisions for community service in continuing education for all students. In 1975, the Education for all Handicapped Children's Act (PL 94-142) was put into place. The provisions of this act included basic state grants for the education of students with disabilities and the establishment of regional resource centers to assist. The Vocational Education Amendments of 1976 increased funding for disabled students in vocational education. They also provided grants to improve secondary programs, grants for community and independent living programs, and included funding for assistive technology. The Carl Perkins Vocational Act of 1984 expanded the provisions of workforce education to include all disabled and

disadvantaged individuals. Individuals with Disabilities Act (PL 101-476) dealt primarily with students in public K-12 education, but had some effect on postsecondary education as a civil rights law. There were also various reauthorizations and scattered minor acts that support students who have intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education in tangent ways; however, those contributing factors will not be thoroughly discussed.

Persons with intellectual disabilities gradually became more protected and more empowered in their educational pursuits. With all the good these legislative acts have done, two acts-the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act-frame a more comprehensive understanding of student and consumer rights with regard to disabilities.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (P.L. 101-336) was passed in 1990 and implemented in 1992. The ADA is broken down into five titles. Titles two and three have specific application to students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education. Title I prohibits discrimination in employment. Title II prohibits discrimination in connection with state and local governments.

> Subject to the provisions of this title, no qualified individuals with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any such entity (28 C.F.R. § 35.130(a)).

Title III prohibits discrimination by businesses that serve the public and are privately owned.

> No individual shall be discriminated against on the basis of disability in the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations of any place of public accommodation by any person who owns, leases, or operates a place of public accommodation (28 C.F.R. § 42.12182(a)).

Title IV prohibits discrimination in telecommunications, and Title V covers miscellaneous aspects not directly covered in the four previous titles.

Title II and Title III have specific application to postsecondary institutions. Title II states that a person cannot be excluded from the educational process because they have a disability. Title III establishes that goods or services provided by a postsecondary institution cannot be withheld from the "full and equal enjoyment" of a student who has a disability.

Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act (PL 93-112) is very similar to ADA but was passed many years before ADA. While the ADA does not apply to religiously-controlled institutions, Section 504 specifically applies to institutions that accept federal funding. Hence, private, public, non-profit, and for-profit institutions of postsecondary education were and are held to similar standards regarding discrimination. While Section 504 came first, the two now work hand in hand, both legally and pragmatically and rarely will legal cases be attributed to only one legal statute.

ADA and Section 504 protect individuals in three qualifying ways. First, the individual must have a life impairment that substantially limits one or more

life activities. Those activities include but are not limited to concentration, ability to care for oneself, ability to interact with others, ability to work, and reading (Latham & Latham, 1999). Second, an individual cannot be discriminated against for having a record of being diagnosed as disabled. Hence, a student who was hearing impaired but who received a cochlear implant would be regarded as having a record of being diagnosed with a disability. Lastly, a person cannot be discriminated against if the person is regarded as having a disability. A person cannot be discriminated against simply because someone thinks that the person has a disability. The last two of these protect the individual from direct or indirect discrimination; independent of any provisions for accommodations for accommodations (Reilly & Davis, 2005).

Further, to be protected under the ADA and Section 504, the individual must be disabled relative to the general population. In K-12 public schools, IDEA provides that the student can have discrepancies in modal competency in which case the students would qualify for special services. In other words, if a student had an average IQ score, but who read extremely poorly relative to others with the same IQ score, that individual might qualify for special services. The difference for that student is in a comparison of an aptitude and achievement. To qualify for ADA and Section 504 protection from discrimination, this same criterion of discipline does not apply.

Section 504 and ADA in some cases does not apply to students in higher education because of the essential functions of their educational program. Postsecondary institutions do not have to alter their standards if those standards

are a part of the central focus of the program or institution (Gordon & Keiser, 2000: Latham & Latham, 1999). There is no known case of students with intellectual disabilities and postsecondary access that has been tested in this provision, however. In summary, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and ADA apply to all postsecondary institutions. Where Section 504 does not apply to institutions that receive federal funding ADA does, and where ADA does not apply to religiously-controlled institutions, Section 504 does. They complement each other. A consideration of civil reform and legal cases better spells out the extent and scope of Section 504 and ADA in relation to postsecondary education.

Civil Reform

Both ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act are considered civil rights acts. They afford an individual protection against discrimination. While both of these laws are civil rights acts, they cannot be considered entitlement acts (Gordon & Keiser, 2000). This means that while actions of discrimination are prohibited, persons with disabilities are not entitled to anything extra because they have a disability. While not every institution is fully ADA compliant, despite legislative mandate, toleration for accommodation at the institutional level has become the norm.

An example of civil reform can also be seen in the formation of legislative councils designed to promote reform that supports students with intellectual disabilities. An example of this is the President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities. Established under President Nixon in 1974, this council advises the President concerning the expansion of educational opportunities,

promotion of home ownership, assurance of workplace integration, improvement of transportation options, and expansion of full access to community living. This committee is made up of the following members, The Attorney General, The Secretary of the Interior, The Secretary of Commerce, The Secretary of Labor, The Secretary of Health and Human Services, The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, The Secretary of Transportation, The Secretary of Education, The Secretary of Homeland Security, The Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service, The Commissioner of Social Security, The Chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, The Chairperson of the National Council on Disability and 21 others directly appointed by the President. The weight of the titles involved indicates a cabinet-level dedication to civil reform on behalf of this population.

They are not the only group endorsing civil reform. National interests in the form of advocacy groups became popular during the post-Section 504 time period. Such groups include the National Down Syndrome Society, The Association for the Severely Handicapped, Arc, and many others. All of these organizations and groups work to support and encourage agencies and individuals in areas of civil rights for persons with intellectual disabilities. They are watchdogs for ADA and Section 504 compliance. The normalization of these advocacy groups and civil activists indicate the breadth of civil reform and its influence.

Legal Findings

A study of legal cases helps one to understand the justification and scope of legal support for students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education. Understanding what it is that the courts have to say about the integration of students with disabilities in general lends itself to the legal justification for the placement of students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education. In an evaluation of legal cases, three sub-categories emerged to provide perspective. These categories included,

1. what is a disability,
2. admission and testing,
3. and accommodation.

What is a disability?

Morisky v. Broward County (1996)

A potential employee requested a test reader to help in the completion of a preliminary employment assessment. The employer balked at this request. The courts said that it did not matter if the applicant's inability to read came from the disability or not. Rather, because that applicant did not self-identify a disability and her associated needs in the application process, that individual was not to be afforded any legal protection from discrimination under ADA or 504. In other words, disabilities and accommodations need to be specified up front if accommodations are required.

Doane v. City of Omaha (1998)

An employee brought suit because of perceived discrimination based on her vision. Because Doane's vision was corrected to overall 20/20, the courts found that the disability was judged without consideration of mitigating measures taken to compensate for the disability. Even though the finding showed that the disability was mitigated, she was still afforded protection from discrimination.

Sutton v. United Air Lines, Inc. (1999)

This case was similar to Doane v. City of Omaha, but with a different ending. The 10th circuit court held that corrective measures should be considered in determining whether or not an individual's disability significantly limits a major life activity. This meant that if a disability was mitigated by correction lenses, medicine, or the like, the person should no longer be afforded protection from discrimination under ADA or 504. This finding was in direct conflict with Doane v. City of Omaha. Eventually, one of these two cases will make it to the Supreme Court, and legal precedent will be uniform for all regional court systems.

Summary

What it means to have a disability is based both on ADA and Section 504 guidance, but also on court findings. ADA and 504 provided that a person must be disabled relative to the general population and be significantly hampered in at least one major life event. Further, the person must not have any mitigating implements or intervention such as medication, surgery, or glasses (depending on the place of residence) if they are seeking protection under ADA or Section 504. So, a student claiming ADHD, whose disability was mitigated by medication,

would be eligible for protection not because of the disability but because of a history of disability, but would probably not be eligible for accommodations. Also, in postsecondary education, the student is responsible to self-report the disability up front. If the student does not self-report, the institution is not responsible for accommodation, and it is as if the disability did not exist.

Admission and Testing

Bartlett v. New York State Board of Law (2001)

A student who had a cognitive disorder that impaired her ability to read brought suit against the state board of law claiming that while given reasonable accommodations at her previous institution she was able to complete a JD and a PhD. So, the institution had no justifiable cause to deny her petition to tape record essays and to circle answers in a test booklet. The courts upheld her claim, citing that the state board was in violation of Section 504.

Ohio Civil Rights Commission v. Case Western Reserve University (1996)

A visually-impaired student brought suit against the school of medicine for denying his request for accommodations needed for admission to the psychiatry program. The courts determined that the student was not otherwise qualified for admission; rather, the student was using his disability to receive preferential treatment. A student who is seeking protection from discrimination must have a disability as determined by trained personnel, but must be otherwise qualified with the disability removed.

Summary

A review of these rulings indicated that a person with a disability cannot be denied admission if the student is otherwise qualified. To be otherwise qualified meant that taking out the disability; the student was on par with peers. Additionally, students may not get preferential treatment because of a disability status. As well, students who did not provide sufficient evidence for their disability and associated reasonable accommodations were not protected under Section 504 or ADA.

Accommodations

Guckenberger et al. v. Boston University et al. (1998)

A student group brought suit against Boston University because the university had not allowed for reasonable course substitutions for students with learning disabilities. The courts found in favor of the university, saying that a general policy allowing for course substitutions for all disabled students was unconstitutional; however, individual students could petition for personalized allowances based on that particular student's disability needs.

Beck v. University of Wisconsin (1996)

A secretary with osteoarthritis and depression sought a leave of absence. Upon her return, she expressed her desire to be appointed to a different position. However, when she was offered her old position with appropriate modifications she refused the offer insisting that she should be reassigned. The courts found in favor of the University of Wisconsin and ruled that once an employee knows of

the disability, ADA requires the two parties to work out the issue of accommodations.

Bultemeyer v. Fort Wayne Community Schools (1996)

A custodian with mental illness and other severe limitations requested accommodations in the workplace. The employing agency did not completely understand the request, so they didn't comply. Finding in favor of the plaintiff, the courts decided that the employer was responsible for seeking clarification concerning needed accommodations.

Dubois v. Alderson-Broaddus College, Inc. (1997)

Alderson-Broaddus had a policy for advance notice on associated accommodations. A student breached this policy and was subsequently denied accommodation. The student brought suit, and the court held that the student had no disability because the only documentation of disability status was a psychologist's report that vaguely indicated that the student might suffer from a learning disability. Further, the student refused to take an outcome-based assessment to establish a learning disability in connection with the report, so the student was judged not to have protection under ADA or 504. This finding indicated that even if a student might be "regarded" as having a disability, without documentation, extreme limitations are placed on the application of ADA and Section 504.

Kaltenberger v. OH College of Podiatric Medicine (1998)

A student who was making poor grades in her classes self-determined that she had ADHD. She was eventually dismissed from the medical program because

of poor grades. The student produced a handwritten note saying that she was being treated for ADHD. However, the court held that the college had no obligation to provide accommodations for an inadequately substantiated disability.

United States v. Becker (2007)

Becker CPA Preview adopted a policy of only allowing for certain types of modifications to be used for their tests. No deviations were considered beyond previously established types of modifications. The courts decided that regardless of the accommodation, an accommodation must be effective in achieving a parallel educational experience among all participants even if that accomplishment is not traditional.

Ellis v. Morehouse School of Medicine (1996)

A student with dyslexia received extended time on examinations for the first two years of study. The last two years of the program were clinical and the institution determined that the student should not get extended time on examinations during the last two years. The courts agreed, saying that since the student was not otherwise qualified and since the student was receiving extended time on previous tests the institution had no obligation to provide classroom accommodations in clinical settings.

Halasz v. University of New England (1993)

The University of New England had a history of charging extra fees to offer classes that were designed for students with disabilities, so students brought suit, saying this practice was discriminatory. The courts affirmed that since the

program afforded generally unqualified students an opportunity to gain skills they lacked and offered courses outside of their established academic tracks, the university had no real obligation to offer the programs and so they could add fees to the program if they wished.

Summary

Accommodations are an important part of legal findings. Their findings represented a large number of cases. From those rulings it can be seen that if the student has a disability, has demonstrated a need for accommodation, and is otherwise qualified, accommodations should be made. Providing they do not alter the scope of the program or integrity of the educational goals through degradation, those accommodations cannot be discriminatory in nature. In some cases, to be otherwise qualified means not to have received any accommodations previously. Findings also noted that educational goals need not be solely academic. If the accommodations are made outside the traditional scope of a course of study, the institution is allowed to adjust financial responsibility.

Conclusion

Legal precedence showed that a student with an intellectual disability must first have to qualify as having a disability. Secondly, getting into college was not granted just because a disability exists. The student must be otherwise qualified to attend postsecondary institutions in order to get legal protection. Thirdly, a student with an intellectual disability who is in postsecondary education may gain accommodations by thoroughly demonstrating the disability and associated needs; however, there are limits to the accommodations that must be made.

Accommodations may not be onerous to the institution. They must be well documented and must not compromise the primary purpose or central scope of the program of study. Hence, protection, assessment, and accommodation are demonstrated to have limits to correct application and understanding. Legal cases provide the framework to help understand the limits of protection under ADA and Section 504.

Postsecondary Attainment

Students with disabilities are becoming more prevalent on postsecondary campuses. How it is that students gained entrance into postsecondary programs, navigated postsecondary courses, completed postsecondary degrees, and attained a postsecondary education represent core areas of concern reflected in the literature.

While some students can be placed into a disability category based on physical appearance or behavioral manifestations, most students who have intellectual disabilities are not readily discerned. In postsecondary environments, students are not required to self-disclose their disability to faculty members. A student may continue throughout college without being identified as having a disability. While exact numbers indicating instances of disability consideration at the postsecondary level are hard to find, independent researchers routinely compile data that provide a glimpse into the population of students with disabilities on postsecondary campuses. Berkner et al. (2004) reported that 11.3% of undergraduate students in the 2003-2004 academic year self-reported a disability. Table 1 shows a break down of those disabilities by percentage.

Table 1

Students Self-Reporting Disabilities in Postsecondary Education 03-04

Disability	Percentage
Orthopedic	25.4%
Mental Illness or Depression	21.9
Health Impairment	17.3
ADHD	11.0
Other	7.8
Specific Learning Disability	7.5
Hearing	5.0
Visual	3.8
Speech	0.4
Total	100%

Katsiyannis, Zhang, Woodruff, and Dixon (2005) considered findings from the second round of assessments from the National Longitudinal Transition Study, which was designed to consider transition practices for students with disabilities. Of the respondents, 519 with intellectual disabilities indicated that transition planning was in place. Of those with transition plans, 32% of students with intellectual disabilities indicated that they were looking forward to postsecondary education (See Table 2).

Table 2

Transition Goals for Students with Intellectual Disabilities – NLTS-2

	ID	LD	ED
Attend a 2 or 4 year college	9.8%	54.3%	44.2%
Attend postsecondary vo-ed	22.5%	45.3%	44.2%
Made contact with college	10.9%	26.4%	17.7%
Made contact with postsec. vo-ed	16.5%	26.2%	23.4%
Made contact with other vo-ed	55.7%	33.6%	21.5%

As demonstrated by this study, transition goals are different for postsecondary attainment among the three of the predominant disability categories,
Intellectual Disabilities (ID), Learning Disabilities (LD), and Emotional Disabilities (ED). In a comparison between those who indicated interest in postsecondary education and those who actually contacted postsecondary institutions, there are significant differences. Data showed that a higher number of students with intellectual disabilities contacted colleges as compared to those who just had plans to do the same. When compared to the other two dominant disability categories, both students with Learning Disabilities and Emotional Disabilities indicated that they were much more interested, but made fewer efforts to contact a college. A similar trend can be seen in vocational education. Students with intellectual disabilities contacted institutions that offered vocational

education at a much higher rate as compared to those who had vocational education in their transition plans.

While looking at transition plans provides insights into the postsecondary desires of students who have intellectual disabilities, it is not representative of what students with intellectual disabilities actually end up doing as demonstrated by the lack of presence in Berkner et al. (2004). However, it does show where their preferences lay.

Program Types

Not all programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities are the same. The development of programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities was reflexive in nature. As institutions identified needs, they developed programs to address those needs. Because of this, what appears as a progression of identifying needs and aligning efforts to meet those needs naturally led to the development of specifically structured programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities. There are four types of programs that have emerged over the years:

1. fully inclusive,
2. mixed inclusion,
3. substantially separate, and
4. programs for students aged 18-21.

Hart, Zimbrich, and Parker (2005) indicated that 8% of students with intellectual disabilities attend postsecondary education. The President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities (2004) put this percentage

higher, at 14.2%. The discrepancy between these two indicators appeared to be related to regional queries. This disconnect may also be attributed to the time difference between the two reports. Yet the implications were the similar.

Zaft, Hart, and Zimbrich (2004) completed a study of 40 students enrolled in a college career connection program. This program was designed for students with intellectual disabilities. Building on previous research that indicated that postsecondary education was an accurate predictor of successful employment for persons without disabilities, the group matched 40 students to determine the effect of postsecondary education on successful employment in the population of students who have intellectual disabilities. Findings demonstrated that in the intellectually disabled population, postsecondary education was positively correlated with two employment variables, competitiveness and independence. Results indicated that a student with postsecondary experiences needed less support in employment. Additionally, the same students were more often employed in competitive wage positions demonstrating independence.

This study also indicated that students who participated in postsecondary education used more types of accommodations in larger amounts in college when compared to those used in public schools. When surveyed about supports used in the work place, the opposite was true. The researchers indicated that while 71% of students who did not receive postsecondary training required employment supports, only 33% of students with postsecondary experience required employment supports. While more supports may be needed in postsecondary education, the data show that same trend reversed in competitive employment.

Hamill (2003) completed an ethnographic biography of a student with Down syndrome who attended postsecondary education. In his research, he used interviews and observation to study the experiences that this student (Megan) had while navigating a postsecondary institution. The researcher indicated that four main themes emerged from his collected data.

1. The first was realizing the dream of going to college,
2. the second was concerned with friendships,
3. the third was focused on negotiating the academic program, and
4. the last included information about mutual collegiate benefits for all parties that supported the student with an intellectual disability.

The first theme demonstrated that Megan's desire to attend college was both because of her sisters and her friends. After realizing that college was an option, she encountered obstacles but she was able to navigate them with the support of her friends and family.

The second major theme that emerged was that of having friends. Megan wanted to have friendships with other students just like everyone else. However, negotiating the social world was often difficult. She was able to make friendships with numbers of students. Others who follow postsecondary students who have intellectual disabilities in have noted that while friendships can be and often are established, the sincerity of the friendships was an object of question (Kaufman, 2006).

The third major concern was that of negotiation within the academic program. While trying to participate fully, Megan made contributions in the classroom setting but found keeping up with homework difficult. She spent time with faculty when help was needed and with friends when she needed less structured assistance. There were apparent concerns when it came to dealing with the course content. While Megan did not receive accommodations, she received substantial support from faculty and friends.

The last topic of consideration that emerged was that of benefit. While Megan received educational and social benefits from her experiences in college, others also benefited from Megan's participation. One faculty member noted an increase in understanding and sensitivity toward students with disabilities because of her experiences with Megan. Some of Megan's classmates noted positive benefits from social contact with her.

Other considerations that were discussed in the research, but not formally categorized, dealt with the academic versus non-academic nature of the courses in which she was enrolled. Megan was enrolled as a non-credit student and did the same work as students who were taking the class for credit. Students expressed their disappointment that she spent so much time and effort on a class for which she received no credit. Another topic that was discussed, but likewise was not categorized, was that of collegiate assimilation. Megan was seen conforming to unwritten standards of dress and behavior while engaging students in public forums. The author noted the importance of this when Megan was seeking social acceptance.

Another story of a postsecondary student with Down syndrome came to light with Leslie Kaufman's (2006) report in the *New York Times*. Kaufman followed Katie Apostolides while she was enrolled at Becker College in Massachusetts. Katie was observed fitting in both in dress and classroom demeanor, much like Megan. Although she did not live on campus, Kaufman reported that without significant accommodations Katie was able to make two "B"s and one "A" in her last semester at Becker. While she admitted to spending hours outside of class with a paid tutor, the results were not without remark.

Hamill's (2003) account of Megan reported friendships between Megan and her classmates. Kaufman noted a similar trend; however, he quoted a counselor close to Katie who had a different perspective. "Katie thinks she has a million friends, but she is going to leave here and not one student is going to stay in touch…I can't help thinking that if she was with other Down syndrome children, it would be better" (Kaufman, ¶ 46).

As students with intellectual disabilities became more prevalent on postsecondary campuses, institutions asked how they might better serve this population. Following what Latham and Latham (1999) call the spirit of disability civil rights legislation, institutions began developing programs specifically designed for students with intellectual disabilities. Madeline Will pointed out that much of the development of this work was factionary, noting little conversation and cohesion in program development among institutions (Kaufman, 2006). While not planned for, these programs can now be divided into four main models. The first model is considered a fully inclusive model (n=30), the second

is mixed inclusion model (n=67), and the third is substantially separate model (n=39). The last model includes 18-21 year-old offerings (n=96). While some programs can have aspects of one or more of these designs, programs can be classified along these four lines. Figure 1 represents these four areas. Because some programs cross lines, institutions are cross-listed for a better breakdown.

A full inclusion model is just what the name implies; students were given a full offering of courses with accommodations provided at the professorial level as well as through the ADA/504 institutional office. In this, the student received supports that were available to all postsecondary students at their respective institution. Those supports included writing labs, reading labs, office hours for one-on-one tutoring with professors, tutoring labs staffed by professionals as well as students, access to computer labs and supplemental electronic instruction to include web-casts, pod-casts, and posted notes. All of these offerings were available to any academic student at virtually any postsecondary academic institution regardless of disability status. Any associated costs were imbedded in tuition and fees.

Full inclusion models required very little institutional support in the form of funds and time. If a student needed more help, that student was able to spend time with the disability service office using specially trained tutors and support systems. While this special service was not available to all students, it was available to the portion of students registered in the disability office. In this way students with intellectual disabilities did not receive preferential treatment. While some do not see this method as a program per se, others have coupled this natural

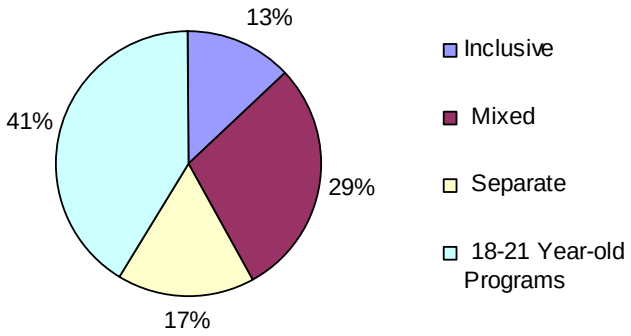

Figure 1. Types of Programs Designed for Students with Intellectual Disabilities.

approach with other efforts to increase student success in a planned way, which makes it a program.

Full Inclusion

Research done by McAfee and Sheeler (1987) indicated that of 136 reviewed institutions, 37.5% declared that they had a student who had an intellectual disability. Of those 51 institutions, 35 indicated that their enrollment was less than one percent. It is these institutions with low enrollment that most often serve students who have intellectual disabilities under the full inclusion model. Of the 136 respondents, 50% said that they have no plans to expand or develop programs for students with intellectual disabilities. This indicated that most colleges that exhibit full inclusion were probably not full inclusion by design, but rather by default.

Mixed Inclusion

The mixed inclusion model may be considered inclusive by design with consideration given for necessary student supports. Of the 138 institutions registered with www.thinkcollege.net, an online registry for institutions with programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities, 67 fit within this mixed design category. In a mixed model, institutions often had offices and staff who supported students with intellectual disabilities solely and directly. This differed from a regular disability student services office because students with intellectual disabilities are often assigned to specific tutors or assistants. Also, very often these programs maintained separate meeting spaces and have proprietary funding. They often had access to resources not available to all students with disabilities.

In a mixed inclusion model, students with intellectual disabilities are able to use the campus supports just like any other student, are also able to use the special services for students with disabilities just like any other student with a disability, and they are also able to take advantage of personnel with specialized training pertaining to students with intellectual disabilities. While a student with an intellectual disability will still have opportunities to attend postsecondary courses in a mixed design, they may only be auditing those classes. The student may be taking a decreased work load or might even receive instruction through group classes. Group classes designed for students with intellectual disabilities are usually taught in-house with student peers that also have intellectual disabilities.

Grantley (2000) reported on a program called “Up the Hill,” which qualified as a mixed inclusion model. In this program students audited courses and were given “buddies” to help them navigate their postsecondary experiences. The buddy system is one that has been in place in secondary institutions and has been shown to elicit responses from both the disabled student as well as their buddy. Hughes, Copeland, Guth, Rug, Hwang, Kleb, and Strong (2004) conducted extensive research on the results of a buddy system, as did Fenrick and Peterson (2004). Such research indicated increased success for students with intellectual disabilities and increased awareness of disability issues on the part of the buddies.

Grantley discovered that upon completion of the first semester, students with intellectual disabilities were doing many of the same things other freshmen were doing. Further, they attended class at a higher rate than the non-disabled students, and formed social relationships with other students in their classes. The buddies were observed socializing spontaneously with students outside of shared courses. They were also seen assisting in transcription, modifying language for comprehension, and showing auditing students the same respect as other students. In addition, buddies were observed helping to create working environments in group projects. Faculty were observed directing questions to the auditing students, clarifying instructions, and allocating extra time to complete in-class short assignments. Additionally, the research noted faculty members exercising patience with the auditing student.

A subsequent study on this same program was completed by Lobban (2002b). Findings echoed many of the results found in the original program research. Lobban discovered students in this program developing friendships that persisted beyond course exposure. Further, Lobban emphasized benefits for both the non-disabled peer buddies as well as for students with intellectual disabilities within a buddy system. Through interviews with family, friends, and educators he also discovered that students with intellectual disabilities increased in maturity, self-confidence, and self-esteem because of the involvement established by the program.

Frank and Uditsky (1988) provided data from one of the first substantive programs developed for students with intellectual disabilities. Subsequent studies were completed on this same program by McDonald, MacPherson, Court, Frank, Uditsky, & Symons (1997). Research completed by Frank and Uditsky was split into three distinct groups. The first was a chronicling of the events surrounding five students in the first year of their program. The second group was composed of six students completing their fifth and final year. The last group consisted of five recent graduates who spent at least four years in the “On-Campus” program. Family members were also included in each of the three groups. Through semi-structured interviews and brief questionnaires, the research group was able to discern key aspects of the program that relate to student experiences. The results indicated that students with intellectual disabilities shared social experiences similar to those reported by Hamill (2003). The students were seen fitting in and making friends in social places beyond the classroom.

While the research indicated many positive interactions, not everyone at the institution was accepting of this program. As an example of this, one faculty member indicated that he felt as if co-faculty only seemed to be interested in the students as research subjects and were not interested in the social well being nor education of students with intellectual disabilities (Frank & Uditsky, 1988).

Substantially Separate

Thirty-nine of the 138 programs registered with www.thinkcollege.net classified themselves as substantially separate programs. To be substantially separate, a program must serve students with intellectual disabilities outside of the regular classrooms normally associated with those who attend college. Substantially separate programs only have students with disabilities in them and typically use a curriculum designed primarily for students with intellectual disabilities. Goldstein (1988) reported on a program at William Patterson College where resources at a postsecondary institution were used to support students and to assist in adult transition in a manner similar to what has been defined as "substantially separate." LINK is a college-based program that allowed non-college going students with mild disabilities to develop and practice skills and behaviors that would support them throughout their lives. This program was also designed as a link between local educational agencies and postsecondary institutions in approach and policy. While integrating college-based components into transition models, the underlying component included an underlying ideal that college is an institution of the community and should reflect values and attitudes of the community. Unfortunately this study did not provide research

about the student or faculty population, but rather focused only on the structure of the reported program.

There was very little research and documentation related to these substantially separate programs. While there were substantially separate programs that incorporate students with intellectual disabilities of virtually all ages, most research on substantially separate programs has been completed on the 18-21 year-old population.

18-21 Year-old Programs

The last program type designed for 18 to 21 year-old students was a unique blend of multiple legal, educational, and social maxims. According to IDEA laws, students with disabilities can continue receiving education through public school resources until they are 21 years old. Historically, this education has taken place on public school campuses within a high school setting. Students who continue in public education until this age usually do not receive standard diplomas, rather, they receive certificates of completion. One of the major provisions of IDEA legislation is that each individual with a disability is allowed to receive a free and appropriate education. While finances were a different matter altogether, progressive educators and advocates indicated that appropriateness is more linked to age than to any other variable. Because of this, programs have been developed that link age appropriateness with content appropriateness (Goldstein, 1988).

Hall, Kleinert, and Kerns (2000) reported on a program designed for 18-21 year-old students at Asbury College in Kentucky. This program took the needs of

18-21 year-old students and serviced them in individualized ways through postsecondary resources. Because the program served students with moderate to severe disabilities, the educational repertoire included aspects of life planning, financial training, cultural understanding, and postsecondary integration.

Through interviews and observations, Hall et al. determined that there were benefits for this type of program not only for the students involved, but also for other college students, special education teachers, parents of students, as well as the institution. They found that the students in this program were given more academic learning activities than students who were not in such programs. These students were also provided increased opportunities for participation in age-appropriate recreation and leisure activities as well as pertinent vocational training. For college students at Asbury, the program provided unique opportunities to develop friendships, more hands-on learning experiences in natural settings for those in human service professions, and increased knowledge of student diversity campus wide. Special education teachers in the program were provided opportunities to increase community awareness, increased understanding of age-appropriate behavior, and increased knowledge of learning strategies and accommodations for those strategies. For parents of students enrolled in the program, the program provided a better understanding of their child's young-adult needs, and also provided a network of support from other parents, professionals, and community partners. For Asbury College, the program increased the breadth of learning opportunities for both students and faculty members, provided opportunities to prepare future educators to include all students, and provided

opportunities for collaboration with the public school system, the community, and other professional institutions.

Another way to refer to this 18-21 year-old student population is to speak of them as dually enrolled. These types of programs are called this because the students are covered under public education auspices while receiving the education at postsecondary institutions. Hart, Mele-McCarthy, Pasternack, Simbrich, & Parker (2004) surveyed 25 postsecondary education options for students with intellectual disabilities. Gathered from an administrative perspective, this study demonstrated that in programs with dual enrollment, postsecondary institutions and public schools had to share many things in order to be successful. Besides sharing faculty and material resources, they also shared a great deal of the financial burden of such programs. Because students and faculty were not included in this study valuable information was limited to a few key administrative points.

Dolyniuk, Kamens, Corman, DiNardo, Totaro, and Rockoff (2002) considered the design and implementation of a New Jersey school that had formed a partnership between a public school and a postsecondary institution for this same 18-21 year-old population. Using a similar research approach as Hall et al. (2000), Dolyniuk et al. (2002) were able to discern three major themes within the data, positive changes in feelings and perspectives of students with intellectual disabilities, greater awareness of how individuals with intellectual disabilities are treated, and the persistence of academic and emotional growth during the postsecondary experience.

Heart, Zaft, and Zimbrich (2001) detailed a model approach for the integration of the 18-21 year-old population in postsecondary education. Noting that educational attainment was a strong predictor of life-earnings and self-sufficiency, they considered a program in Massachusetts that incorporated individual student self-determinism, inclusive options, and individualized supports with collaboration. They found that some barriers to the success of students within this program included attitudinal resistance, student preparation, difficulty bridging differences between secondary and postsecondary educational structures, maintaining communication, and getting students prepared for college-level reading. They also found that if students were going to be able to overcome these barriers, traditional roles and responsibilities of faculty, staff, peers, and the individual would need improvement. Heart et al. indicated that updating these roles and responsibilities served as a new kind of safety net designed to support students and their families, not unlike the concept of natural supports for student learning.

Moon, Grigal, and Neubert (2001) evaluated a system of education for students aged 18-21 in Maryland. They found that parents and advocates were most often the impetus for the creation of programs within the state. Through interviews, observation, and evaluation, this team identified six benefits of an educational system. First, they found that students had increased opportunities for socialization with other young adults. This included unstructured social times like lunch and breaks, as well as time spent walking to and from class. They identified academic opportunities that were more age-appropriate and covered a

wider range of topics that any given student might be interested in. Because academic schedules were not rigid, greater tailoring and individualization was available for the benefit of the student. Students were seen learning to adjust to a less structured schedule and environment which the researchers believed led to increased independence and transition to real life applications.

From these several accounts general characteristics were identified. Programs designed for 18-21 year-old students were generally designed to deal with complicated disabilities; those that might be more severe or require more adaptation. These programs were designed less around the academic rigors of postsecondary education, and more around the social support system for education. Many of the students in these programs had student identification, and used campus facilities for recreation, consumption, and socialization, which were seen as educational benefits.

Despite legal and pragmatic challenges that affected the application of a dual enrollment program, 41% of the programs for students with intellectual disabilities were designed for this 18-21 age group. In fact, most of the program analysis and research that has been conducted within this population was done in relation to these dual enrollment programs.

Each one of these four programs served a specific niche. In this vein, because variable outcomes and goals persisted, functional comparisons between programs could not be made. While it would be beneficial to ascertain which of all these four types of programs was the most successful in helping students with intellectual disabilities, no such research exists.

Faculty Perceptions

Faculty members are often called upon to help establish institutional climate (Rummrill, 2001). How they feel about certain issues can shape the postsecondary campus. Faculty members often serve on postsecondary committees and boards that guide institutional policies that surround various issues. Also, how a professor feels about a certain student or student population can affect the academic outcome of the student or student population within his or her classroom.

de A. Moreira, San Juan, Pereira, and de Souza (2000) completed a short biography on a Brazilian student who was perceived to have had an intellectual disability by de A. Moreira, San Juan, Pereira, and de Souza (2000). This particular student had a mosaic form of Down syndrome and was treated as if he had an intellectual disability. Mosaicism is a relatively rare type of Down syndrome (also known as trisomy-21). In mosaic trisomy-21 a person may have three copies of the 21st chromosome only in certain systems or organs of the body as opposed to all systems of the body. In mosaic forms of Down syndrome, a person may only have trisomy-21 in their liver cells or skin cells. Hence, if a person had trisomy-21 of the skin cells, that person would have the physical appearance typically associated with a person with Down syndrome, but may not have any manifestations of trisomy-21 anywhere else, including mental abilities. Such was the case with this student. Cases of mosaic trisomy-21 occur in about 2-4% of cases of persons who have Down syndrome.

The student in this research graduated from high school, tested into a private postsecondary school, and enrolled in classes. He placed 47th out of 100 students, but eventually left the program without completing it. The student sought psychological help for new onset of mental instability. Through therapy it was discovered that the student underwent an unusually large amount of discrimination in postsecondary education. In Brazil, they do not have the ADA or Section 504; however, discrimination is still against social and legal norms. It was determined that the student was treated poorly by fellow students and faculty because of his perceived condition. They assumed that he would have all of the mental faculties typically associated with persons with Down syndrome because of his appearance. This led to a decrease in his self-esteem and the eventual demise of his postsecondary education. This clinical report did much to show potential outcomes based on ascribed perceptions and stands as evidence of the link between perception and outcomes.

Leyser, Vogel, Wyland, and Brulle (1998) surveyed 420 faculty members to ascertain faculty perceptions 20 years after the passage of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. They sent out a 35-question survey and found out that faculty members had only "limited contact" and "limited experience" with individuals with disabilities in education settings. Faculty members reported that they were willing to make accommodations, but most indicated that they had little experience in making accommodations. They also found that academic rank was positively correlated to faculty perceptions. Higher ranking faculty members indicated that they had more experience making accommodations and were more

knowledgeable about resources and services for students with disabilities. However, the same higher ranking faculty members indicated less familiarity with disability legislation and the resulting implications. This correlative finding between rank and disability consideration was also discovered in research completed by Benham (1997). Younger faculty members indicated that they spent more time per week with students who had disabilities. Data showed that younger faculty members were more interested than higher ranking faculty members in receiving institutional development to better understand and implement accommodations for students with disabilities.

It is understandable that faculty members trained after the passage of Section 504 and ADA have a different perspective on the impact of these laws when compared to those who were trained to be educators before these mandates were in force. Passage and enforcement of these legal mandates led to increased knowledge of disabilities and disability issues. This knowledge has been linked to faculty perceptions, which perceptions are linked to teaching pedagogy (Rummrill, 2001). In this way, legal mandates and social understanding frame perceptions and application of pedagogy in the classroom of younger instructors in significant ways.

Leyser, Vogel, Wyland, and Brulle's (1998) research was not concerned with any specific disability category, but was concerned with disabilities in general. While this information was instructive, research indicated that faculty members expressed different perceptions of students depending on the type of

disability being discussed. As an example, the following studies did not consider disabilities in general; rather they focused on specific disability categories.

Aksamit, Morris, and Leunberger (1987) surveyed 717 faculty members and student service professionals regarding students with learning disabilities. Their findings were similar to those of Leyser et al., younger faculty members were more knowledgeable about disability issues. Likewise, Akasmit et al. indicated that younger faculty members exhibited a more favorable attitude towards students with learning disabilities. The authors of this study also indicated that those faculty members with previous contact with students who had learning disabilities exhibited more favorable attitudes toward these students.

Becker, Martin, Wajeeh, Ward, and Shern (2002) contacted all faculty members and a 15% sample of students at a large Division I college. The survey considered faculty and student perceptions of students with psychological impairments. Working from previous research and empirical results that indicated that "consumer survivors" who have a mental illness and enter postsecondary education were more likely to be unsuccessful, this research team surveyed faculty and students to see if stigmatization was a contributing factor to a lack of success. Faculty members generally held positive expectations for students with mental illnesses; however, 19.1% of faculty and 14.4% of students did not feel that students with mental illnesses should be allowed on their campus. In an extension of this, 5.4% of faculty members did not want students with mental illnesses in their classroom, and 13.6% of faculty did not feel safe with a student in their class who had a mental illness.

While these numbers were not particularly high, it is telling that no other published research study indicated that faculty members felt unsafe with students in any particular disability category. Because this study also took place at one institution, results were assumed to be skewed. As an example, if this study were completed at Virginia Tech, the results would be different from results completed at an institution where student murders involving a student who had a psychological disability had not taken place.

Brockelman, Chadesy, and Loeb (2006) assessed the relationship between information and faculty perceptions of students with psychological disabilities. A single questionnaire was sent to one Midwestern research university for faculty responses. Results indicated that faculty perceptions of students with psychological disabilities were generally positive. While the methodology was weak, the results reinforced the idea that different disabilities elicit different faculty perceptions, indicating that while responses might be positive, they were conditionally so.

Social Psychology of Perceptions

Perceptions are not independent of social contexts; rather, they are based on experiences derived from imposed social circumstances. The idea of perception has historically been influenced by developments in social psychology. Social psychology is the study of how social conditions affect the individual beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions that support human interaction (Allport, 1985). Within this discipline, it is acknowledged that the formation of attitudes results from historical memories and experiences are placed into the brain as a “memory

set" of sorts (Bargh & Pietromonaco, 1982). Because the past experiences that faculty members have had with students who have intellectual disabilities are linked with either positive or negative connotations, the perceptions of faculty members are either positive or negative. The formation of faculty perceptions is affected by the type, amount, and social context of interactions with students who have intellectual disabilities. The amount and type of experiences or interaction that a faculty member might have is difficult to account for; however, a consideration of these contexts helps to form a basis for perception.

According to work by Snyder, Tanke, and Berscheid (1977), perceptions are reinforced through social interaction in such a way that behaviors often confirm, or appear to confirm, the original perceptions when the same stimuli are present for both presentations, whether or not the actual outcome is congruent with what was expected. Often perceptions are reinforced simply because they exist. The factors that contribute to perceptions can be overt or subtle, yet the effects are the same. Psychologists have struggled to identify which stimuli affect perceptions more heavily than others. A definitive common bond has been difficult to identify. To further complicate things, attitude and mood have significant impacts on the formation of social perceptions (Keltner, Ellsworth, & Edwards, 1993). Depending on what someone's mood was, what time of day it was, how comfortable the person was, and a host of other stimuli at the time of memory encryption, a perception, or "memory set" might be completely different from present perception.

To add to complex matters, when the perception is paired with a stimulus which is present at the time of encryption, the perception can be reinforced when the subsequent stimulus is presented in a different context. Parallel stimuli will always be in the perception field both at the time of encryption and also at each reauthorization. According to social psychology, faculty perceptions will often be reinforced through the environment before and outside of any actual social interaction. Perceptions, whether socially accurate or not, can be defined by relationships that have similar or parallel stimuli for both professors and students.

According to Wyer (2008) social exclusion can influence the perception of interpersonal closeness. With this in mind, when faculty members perceive social exclusion, the effect of their closeness to the individual is compromised. Because of this reinforcing behavior social exclusion is a predicating contingency that forms a social perception before a faculty member ever has contact with students who have intellectual disabilities. Considering these perceptions in terms of the experiences that faculty members have after initial contact, often the original perception persists outside of opposing contextual meaning. Following this, Poscente (2008) demonstrated that with perceptions in mind, a person begins to expect perceptions to feed our next experiences and in so doing reinforce those perceptions.

Each faculty member was influenced by their environment when perceptions were built. So, even though the environment has an effect on a faculty member's perception, by simply anticipating that the perception is true a faculty member may find the perception reinforced, even when the subsequent

context indicates otherwise. Understanding the social basis for predispositions helps contextualize faculty perceptions and the changes that happen. Research does show that exposure to certain populations can increase faculty knowledge and positive perceptions often result (Leyser et al., 1998).

Summary

Reviewing the literature provided depth, meaning, and a clear context for the establishment of this study. Through the review of literature it can be seen that students with intellectual disabilities gained legal protection from discrimination which led to the opening of postsecondary campuses. Further, court cases provided applications, limitations, and contextual meaning to legislative directions for postsecondary institutions and students with intellectual disabilities. The growth of postsecondary integration was documented in the literature as well in the court system. The literature moved from anecdotal stories to the discovery of research questions with quantifiable results. The growing body of literature documented postsecondary attainment in four different types of programs. These programs grew out of individualized needs and have distinct components, characteristics, and challenges. The literature also indicated that the perceptions of faculty members played an important role in the integration of students with disabilities. Further, research indicated that depending on the type of disability, faculty support and perceptions changed. While not a sole basis for change, the literature indicated that faculty perceptions of students with disabilities were positively linked to the amount and type of exposure the faculty member had with those students.

Perceptions that faculty members held were important considerations for faculty development, institutional support, and student integration. With that in mind, the purpose of this research was to ascertain faculty perceptions about the presence of persons with intellectual disabilities in public postsecondary education. Additionally, this research was designed to determine if significant differences existed among faculty perceptions as delineated through institutional presence or absence of designated programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities in public postsecondary institutions. As well, this study was designed to determine if qualitative responses added contextual depth to faculty perceptions of the presence of students with intellectual disabilities in public postsecondary education.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Methodology of Research

The purpose of this study was to investigate faculty perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities in public postsecondary environments. This entailed determining faculty perceptions through questionnaires in relation to the presence or absence of specific programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities in publicly accessible postsecondary institutions. Based on the research hypothesis and through the research questions, an ex post facto, causal-comparative design was employed to ascertain relationships among naturally occurring variables. Gall, Gall, & Borg (2003) suggested a causal comparative design when natural categories have been influenced by existing variables. Groups were designated based on independent variables, and then evaluated in terms of the dependent variable influence away from the norm through the use of non-parametric statistical techniques. Independent variables included the presence or absence of a program designed for students with intellectual disabilities. Dependent variables existed as measurements of faculty perception of students with intellectual disabilities in public postsecondary education. Methodology of procedure entailed securing permission from the institutional research review board (IRB), the development of a research instrument, sample selection, data gathering, and treatment of the data.

Human Subjects Committee Approval

Approval to complete this research was gained through appropriate channels within the Texas A & M University-Commerce system. The IRB considered the methodology of the study to ensure adequate and appropriate participant protection for research participants and determined that the research would have no inappropriate affects on the participants.

Instrumentation

The instrument was developed and was based on work done by other researchers in the area of faculty perception studies that concern persons with disabilities (Aksamit et al., 1987; Backels & Wheeler, 2001; Becker et al., 2002; Benham, 1997; Brockelman et al., 2006; Leyser et al., 1998; Norton, 1997; Rao, 2004). Portions of the research questions were then used as models for instrumentation. The completed instrument contained 26 questions that related to faculty perceptions concerning postsecondary students with intellectual disabilities. As a means of organization, the instrument focused on three aspects,

1. a demographic section,
2. a means of assessing the perceptions and attitudes of faculty members concerning the presence of persons with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary settings, and
3. a basis and option for voluntary participant involvement in a qualitative review of this topic.

The instrument was sent and reviewed by seven professionals in various fields. They included an Assistant Dean in the College of Education and Human

Services at Texas A & M University-Commerce, an Assistant Professor of Education at Texas A & M University-Commerce and Director of the Center for Career & Technology Education, a Professor at Texas A & M University-Commerce and departmental institutional research board liaison, a faculty member of the Business Office Systems and Support at Richland College who is an educator of students with intellectual disabilities and a former user of SurveyMonkey, a Research Associate at Virginia Commonwealth University's Rehabilitation Research and Training Center on Workplace Supports and Job Retention. Two others who advise students who have intellectual disabilities formally contributed to the review. Many others, which include two professionals in the field contributed to the review of this instrument on an informal basis. The instrument was revised based on suggestions from pilot participants and professional comments.

The instrument was designed primarily for online implementation and was developed so that it could only be completed once. The instrument included 24 quantitative questions and two qualitative questions. To help provide a common ground from which to answer questions, common definitions were provided to the participants. Redundancy was accomplished by asking some of the same questions differently. These two safeguards increased the quality of the instrument and helped to guard against potential data contaminants.

The instrument was administered online to provide accurate and timely responses. However, before implementation, three main obstacles were considered:

1. response errors,
2. low response rates, and
3. equal representation.

The first issue concerning response errors was addressed when the questionnaire was reviewed. The second issue, that of low response rates, stemmed from a preconception that online implementation of surveys result in a low response rate (Van Selm & Jankowski, 2006). This was addressed through various online survey techniques based on the research of Van Selm and Janowski (2006). Those techniques included introductory emails coupled with consistent and announced follow-up emails. The final issue grew out of consideration for equal representation in faculty responses (Granello & Wheaton, 2004). This aspect was addressed through the collection of a more representative sample by offering as true as possible randomness in sampling (Bluman, 2004). However, it was recognized that no amount of modifications could ensure complete representation in sampling (Glass & Hopkins, 1996).

Pilot Results

After the instrument was reviewed, it was piloted to establish question validity. The pilot sample was taken from two postsecondary colleges in Louisiana. Faculty members were chosen randomly from two postsecondary institutions, where one institution had a program for students with intellectual disabilities and the other did not. Those faculty members associated with the pilot sample were not included in the general survey as their responses were intended for pilot purposes only. Likewise, pilot responses were not used in the final

analysis. A sampling of 15 faculty members was solicited through random emails to 25 faculty members.

Pilot results showed consistency across responses. Follow up emails with select individuals who participated in the survey resulted in only minor changes to the existing instrument, but did eventually lead to the addition of two qualitative questions in an attempt to add depth to the study. Through the results of the pilot, it was also determined that the length of the survey was acceptable. Upon review, it was determined that the survey instrument adequately provided requisite data for evaluation.

Sample Selection

Most studies that addressed faculty perceptions of students with disabilities encompassed research at only one institution (Becker et al., 2002; Vaseck, 2005). However, this study was designed to produce a more representative sample over a defined geographical region. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) is the regional accrediting body for colleges and universities in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Virginia. SACS currently accredits 958 postsecondary institutions (Commission on Colleges: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, 2007). It was from within this SACS geographical boundary that the sample was selected.

This study was concerned with faculty perceptions as they exist at public postsecondary institutions; the 958 institutions within SACS boundaries were first screened for non-public institutions. The resulting list of 542 public

postsecondary institutions was then divided into two categories as determined by the presence or absence of established programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities. There were 11 institutions on this list that had programs for students with intellectual disabilities. Those were identified and the remaining list of 531 was subjected to a selection process that resulted in an equal number of groups that did not have a program. An equal number of institutions from each state were represented in the two categories. A random number generator (www.random.org) was used to identify 11 numbers that corresponded with the list of public postsecondary public institutions that did not have programs for students who have intellectual disabilities. The results of this process provided a total of 22 public postsecondary institutions from which to draw faculty perceptions (See Table 3).

A list of faculty members was generated from these 22 institutions based on publicly accessible, internet-based faculty rosters. From an initial pool of 6,899 available faculty members 2,800 faculty members were chosen again through the use of a random number generator (www.random.org).

Data Gathering

Based on the suggestions of Van Selm and Janowski (2006), an email correspondence (Appendix A) was circulated to faculty approximately four days before the survey was released. This email introduced the topic, the intent of the research, and indicated the extent of the time required for participation (Schaefer & Dillman, 1998). It also provided instructions in case a potential research

Table 3

Public Postsecondary Institutions Sampled

State	Programs Offered	No Programs Offered
TX	Austin Community College	Grayson
	West Texas A&M University	Laredo College
	Collin County Community College at Spring Creek	University of Houston
FL	University of Central Florida at Sarasota	University of South Florida
LA	Louisiana Tech	McNeese State
	River Parishes Community College	Nicholls State
KY	University of Louisville	Northern Kentucky University
VA	George Mason	Germanna Community College
	Radford University	Norfolk State
	Virginia Tech	Longwood University
	J. Sergeant Reynolds Community College	Central Virginia Community College

participant decided not to participate. Requests for removal were honored and taken into consideration with full respect for the research participants' desires.

Four days after the introductory email was sent, another email was circulated (Appendix B). This email provided a formal invitation to visit a posted survey at http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=147063203400 (Appendix C). The participants then had access to a letter of consent as well as the survey itself. A week after the formal invitation was sent out another email was sent thanking those who had participated, while inviting those who had not yet participated to do so (Appendix D). A week beyond this, a final email was sent formally thanking participants for their time and efforts (Appendix E). The survey was then taken off-line.

Follow-up contacts and thank you emails were previously coded to be released at predetermined times to predetermined addresses based on a recorded response matrix, so the researcher did not have a direct knowledge of who participated and who did not participate in the study. Neither were participants bothered with excessive or needless emails. The survey was online for two and one-half weeks. Two months later, the same process was repeated with faculty who had not responded in the first round. In total, faculty responses were collected over five weeks.

Imbedded within this system were two levels of safeguards to ensure participant consent. The first safeguard was established when faculty participants clicked through the provided link to access the survey. The second level of consent, and the most valid, was provided on the second slide of the survey. The first slide served as an introduction to the survey. The second slide provided for participant consent. In order to advance, participants were required to click to

accept or click to reject the terms of the consent for this research. If they accepted the terms of consent, they were taken to the first set of questions. If they rejected the terms of consent, they were thanked for their time but were not allowed to access the survey.

Data was then gathered from on-line responses to the questionnaire through SurveyMonkey, an online survey company, and was evaluated through statistical software called Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). SurveyMonkey offered access to data in a formatted matrix, which included raw data. This raw data set was updated each time a participant logged on to complete the survey. It is from this base that data was gathered and entered into SPSS. Statistical analyses included descriptive and non-parametric statistics. Upon completion of the study, instrument data was stored in a firebox in a secure location and will be maintained for ten years, after which all raw data will be destroyed.

Treatment of Data

Quantitative analysis techniques were used to test the research hypothesis and contributing descriptive statistics, while constant comparative methods were used to evaluate the two voluntary open-ended questions. Data was reported in narrative and table form based on applicable research questions supported by descriptive statistics as determined by responses to the instrument.

Research question one was concerned with differences among responses of faculty members in their perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities based on the presence or absence of programs designed specifically for students

with intellectual disabilities. Tested at a .05 alpha level, data were subjected to a non-parametric test of significance. A Kruskal-Wallis statistical test was used to determine differences in medians among groups. Assuming a continuous distribution over categories, these responses were determined through nominal answers to question number 10 of the supplied survey (How do you feel about the following statement; “Persons with intellectual disabilities should be allowed to pursue a postsecondary education?”). Responses were evaluated by the presence or absence of programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities on the responding faculty members’ campuses.

According to Green and Salkind (2005), there are three assumptions that must be considered when using a Kruskal-Wallis test.

1. The continuous distributions for the test variable are exactly the same for the different populations.

In instrumental distribution, the test variable is equal to and independent of any other factor. Hence, continuous distribution for the test variable is equated.

2. The cases represent random samples from the populations and the scores on the test variable are independent of each other.

Based on sampling practices, samples from each of the populations are considered random. Responses were independent based on the categorization of responses.

3. The chi-square statistic for this test is only approximate and becomes more accurate with larger sample sizes.

It was estimated that a sample size of at least 200 would provide statistical viability for the Kruskal-Wallis, and approximation towards practicality increased if significance was found in descriptive statistics. Other studies of faculty perceptions of students with disabilities held n= 420 (Leyser et al., 1998), n=717 (Aksamit et al., 1987), n=46 (Norton, 1997), n=200 (Benham, 1997), and n=561 (Brockelman et al., 2006). An actual response rate of 246 was considered appropriate both statistically and comparatively.

Within the Kruskal-Wallis test, a chi-square was used to evaluate differences in mean ranks to assess the hypothesis that all groups are equally distributed across criteria. If significance was found, an eta-square computed from the chi statistic was designed to provide a measure of practical significance.

Research question two was concerned with descriptive statistics and whether or not there was any indication that the presence of programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities increased the amount and type of contact faculty members has with people who have intellectual disabilities. Research findings were discerned through a non-parametric analysis using a Mann-Whitney *U* at a .05 alpha level.

Research question three was a branch of research question two, where the second question was concerned with faculty contact with students who have intellectual disabilities. The same descriptively-driven statistics were used to indicate whether institutionally-based structures support faculty development concerning faculty interaction with students who have intellectual disabilities.

These statistics were supported by another Kruskall-Wallis tested at the alpha equal to .05.

Research questions four and five were open-ended questions designed to give faculty members an opportunity to describe their responses. Data for this section was collected from voluntary participants and was coded and evaluated using a constant comparative method, allowing categories to emerge in attempts to add depth to the findings from research questions one through three. Responses were open-coded based on type, category, and perception. Within these categories, attributes or properties led to the formation of subcategories. Extreme answers were placed on a theoretical continuum and evaluated for contributing information (Creswell, 1998). Responses were recoded multiple times, looking for new ways to put the data together within subcategories, seeking causal conditions, and framing contexts. The researcher then attempted to find common story lines in the responses with the effect of providing depth and richness to the research questions (Meloy, 2002). In qualitative research, subjectivity is recognized as essential to the correct understanding and application of research findings (Deyhle, Hess, & LeCompte, 1992; Gall, et al., 2003; Jansen & Peshkin, 1992). While a more thick evaluation of qualitative data could have been accomplished with multiple qualitative data gathering techniques, the depth of evaluation was considered both functional and directive. Using only one qualitative measure provided a limitation for a complete contextual analysis.

Limitations

This research was limited based on the response rates of participants and the interest of the participants as far as taking the time to participate fully and accurately. Other limitations outside the control of the primary researcher included a lack of participation by a certain number of faculty members. Also, accuracy of faculty responses was out of the control of the research plan. Likewise, exclusion based on time of survey implementation might have inadvertently excluded interested faculty members who were on sabbatical or otherwise not available during the two separate times of data gathering. While not exhaustive, these considerations of limitations demonstrate a conscious researcher-based consideration of limitations that could affect generalizability of the results.

Delimitations

Delimitations are researcher-based limitations that could affect generalizability. To minimize extraneous information and to make sure that all subjects in the sample were teaching faculty members, efforts were made to select only teaching faculty at the risk of possibly excluding some administrative officials who are also educators. Geographical boundaries as delineated by SACS limit the scope of this research. Because of the anonymous nature of the instrumentation, delimitations exist based on primary knowledge that the faculty member is in fact who he or she says that they are. As well, the qualitative data was delimited based on the incorporation of only one means of qualitative data

gathering. These delimits represent a conscious decision within the research plan that may have an impact on generalizability.

Basic Assumptions

It is assumed, for reasons of intelligibility, that respondents will understand the questions in the instrument and respond in ways that accurately reflect their honest perceptions. It is also assumed that the research instrument will elicit accurate responses as they pertain to directed questions. Additionally, it is assumed that individuals who respond to the online survey will in fact be those to whom the survey was sent. Another assumption includes a belief that participant responses will constitute a representative sample of the faculty community, which the SACS regional boundaries define.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

Introduction

Faculty responses were gathered to answer five research questions designed to ascertain faculty perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education. Research questions supported the research hypothesis, which stated that there are no significant differences among faculty perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities based on the presence or absence of public postsecondary educational programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities at their institutions.

Typical Respondent

Demographic data was compiled where most frequent and averaged data were aggregated into a most typical respondent. The typical respondent for this survey was a 41 to 50 year-old female associate professor neither tenured nor on a tenure track, teaching undergraduate students for the last 13-14 years at a public four-year institution (See Table 4).

Research Question One

Were there significant differences among responses of faculty members in their perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities when the responding faculty members' public postsecondary campuses had a program designed for students with intellectual disabilities as compared to those that did not? Research shows that there are no significant differences among responses of faculty

Table 4

Demographic Data for Faculty Members Responding to the Survey Instrument

Category	Number	Percent	Total
Gender			
Male	94	40%	
Female	141	60%*	100%
Age			
21 – 30	10	4.3%	
31 – 40	52	22.1%	
41 – 50	70	29.8%*	
51 – 60	61	26%	
61 – 70	30	12.8%	
71 – 80	7	3%	
> 80	5	2.1%	100%
Position			
Adjunct	25	11.3%	
Lecturer	30	13.5%	
Assistant Professor	52	23.4%	
Associate Professor	62	27.9%*	
Full Professor	53	23.8%	100%

Table 4 (continued)

Category	Number	Percent	Total
Tenure or Tenure Track			
Yes	59	25.1%	
No	176	74.9%*	100%
Institution Type			
2-year	60	25.5%	
4-year	175	74.5%*	100%

* denotes a significant finding

members in their perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities between institutions.

A Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to evaluate differences between two types of institutions (those with programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities and those without similar programs). This test assessed median changes in types of faculty responses as measured by a five-point Likert scale, indicating perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities (See Table 5). At alpha = .05 level, the test was not significant, $x^2(1, N = 228) = 3.146$, $p = .076$. The proportion of variability in the dependent variable accounted for by the presence or absence designation was .016, indicating an extremely weak relationship between the presence of a program and faculty perceptions of

Table 5

Faculty Member Responses Regarding Students with Intellectual Disabilities

"Persons with intellectual disabilities should be allowed to pursue a postsecondary education."

Responses	With Programs	Without Programs	Total
I totally disagree	9	14	23
I mostly disagree	22	24	46
I have no feelings	7	10	17
I mostly agree	48	33	81
I totally agree	35	26	61
Total	121	107	228

students with intellectual disabilities. Because a significant relationship was not discovered, follow up tests were not required.

Research Question Two

Do statistics indicate that the presence of programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities alter the amount and type of contact faculty members had with both non-students and students with intellectual disabilities? Statistics did not indicate that there were significant differences among the amount and type of contact faculty members have with persons who have intellectual disabilities. Frequency of contact could not be correlated to the presence or absence of programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities as reflected by a

Mann-Whitney *U*, $z = -0.26$, $p = .979$. Frequency of contact was measured by segregating faculty responses into 7 sections of time (See Table 6). When considered as frequent (daily, weekly, or monthly), moderate (four times a year or two times a year), and infrequently (once a year or less than once a year), results again show no significance. Additionally, "type of contact," defined as social contact, casual contact, exchanges of pleasantries, conversation, or relative status was correlated to presence or absence of programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities, $z = -1.246$, $p = .213$.

There were 47 faculty members who claimed familial relationships with students with intellectual disabilities (22.9%). It was considered that family relationships might affect faculty perceptions. While this was not foreseen before the data was collected, the response rate of faculty respondents who did have a family relationship indicated that these relationships might affect results. Because of this, those faculty respondents who indicated family relationships were controlled, by removing their responses, and the analysis was repeated. Even with the controlled family members, results for the second research question were not significant. The presence or absence of a program designed for students with intellectual disabilities did not affect the amount or type of contact faculty members had with the population of students with intellectual disabilities. Neither did amount or type of contact affect faculty respondent perceptions.

Table 6

Frequency of Contact

Contact	With Programs	Without Programs	Total
No Contact	13	4	17
Yes Contact	141	60	201
< 1 time a year	21	15	36
1 time a year	16	7	23
Twice a year	12	6	18
Four times a year	17	6	23
Monthly	29	10	39
Weekly	30	12	42
Daily	16	4	20
Total	154	64	218

Research Question Three

Do statistics indicate that faculty members were receiving more frequent training from their institution on campuses where programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities were found?

Descriptive statistics indicated that there was not a significant difference for incidents of training when considered by institutional presence or absence of programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities (See Table 7). While not significant, descriptive statistics also indicated that two primary means of

Table 7

Presence and Absence of Programs and Incidents of Training

Presence of Programs	Training Yes	Training No	Total
Programs Available	21	95	116
No Programs	20	83	103
Total	41	178	219

training were most prevalent (See Table 8). Those modalities of training were institutionally-supported training that was voluntary, and educational training that took place as the emerging professor took graduate classes in pursuit of a degree. A Kruskal-Wallis was completed to evaluate if faculty members at postsecondary institutions where programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities receive more training as compared to faculty members who teach at institutions where no such programs exist. The test was not significant $x^2(1, N=214)<.001$, p=995. Further, of the 41 (19.2%) respondents that indicated that they had received training, 20 (48.8%) belonged to institutions that had programs for students with intellectual disabilities, while 21 (51.2%) belonged to institutions that did not have programs for students with intellectual disabilities.

Descriptive statistics also indicated that faculty involvement in training occurred most often more than three years ago, 38.1% (n=16). While 21.4% (n=9) received training within the last semester, 19% (n=8) two years ago, 16.7%

Table 8

Incidents of Training for Faculty Members

Type of Training	# of Responses	% of Responses
Institutional Development-Voluntary	20	23.5%
Topic was Covered as a Student	20	23.5%
Independent Development-Personal Study	14	16.5%
Teach This Topic in Courses I Teach	13	15.3%
Institutional Development-Required	7	8.2%
Independent Development-Institutionally Provided	6	7.1%
Independent Development-Through outside Agency	5	5.9%
Total	85	100.0%

(n=7) in the last year, and 4.8% (n=2) three years ago. There was no relevant data in the literature that showed how often faculty should engage in professional development to learn how best to deal with students who have intellectual disabilities. While it cannot be said what amount of training is either appropriate or most successful, descriptive statistics indicated that there was no difference in the frequency of training within the presence or absence of programs for students with intellectual disabilities.

Research Question Four

For those who replied to the question, "*Please tell me why you think, or do not think that persons with intellectual disabilities should be given opportunities to learn in your institution,*" did their responses add any significant information to the contextual picture of faculty perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities in public postsecondary environments? In other words, did the responses add any significant information to describe faculty perceptions of students who have intellectual disabilities? Qualitative responses added depth and understanding to faculty perceptions of students who have intellectual disabilities.

Since faculty perceptions were independent of the presence or absence of programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities as demonstrated by research question one, qualitative data was evaluated independent of the presence or absence of programs. Qualitative responses were coded and evaluated using a constant comparative method, allowing categories to emerge in attempts to add depth to the findings from research questions one through three (Woods, 1992).

The researcher combined responses with similar attributes and properties, which led to the formation of subcategories. Establishment of these subcategories followed the literature (Backels & Wheeler, 2001; Becker, Martin, Wajeeh, Ward, & Shern, 2002; Brockelman, Chadsey, & Loeb, 2006) and was reinforced through findings of other researchers in the area of faculty perceptions and related student perceptions that affect students with disabilities. After much research and consideration, seven subcategories were established with minor cross listing of

responses that held meaning in multiple categories, resulting in 156 evaluation points (See Figure 2).

1. Adaptation of Material (n=39)
2. Perceptions about Students in the Classroom Environment (n=7)
3. Self-Confidence and Social Aspects (n=7)
4. Rights of the Individual (n=21)
5. Disability and Academic Ability (n=33)
6. Equality of Education (n=33)
7. Time and Resources (n=16)

Throughout the evaluation, data grew slowly into categories, subcategories, and were later recombined into cross-listed categories (Nias, 1991). Results discovered through qualitative questions were reported and grouped in this chapter and were more thoroughly considered in context of each other and proposed faculty responses in the final chapter.

Adaptation of Material

Responses that fit into the first category generally concerned postsecondary faculty perceptions about modifications and the adaptation of material for those students. When compared to other categories, responses that fit under “adaptation of material” comprised 26% (n=39) of responses. This is the highest grouping rate among the seven categories. Select qualitative quotes from faculty members were located in order of appearance in Appendix F of this research.

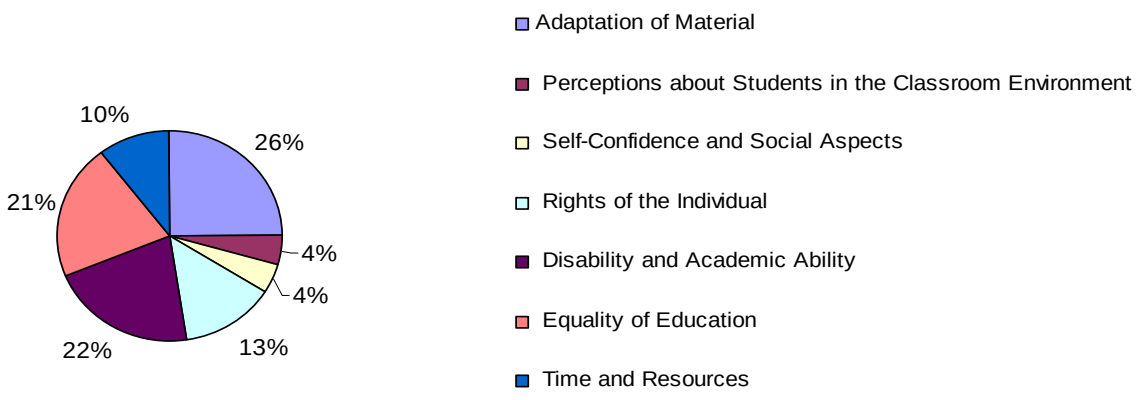

Figure 2. Categorization of Faculty Responses to the First Qualitative Question

While most faculty members supported the integration of students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education, some faculty members were "suspicious of how these opportunities might be established." For those that had significant concerns, one of those concerns was about the meaning of accommodations. If courses were to be modified, some faculty members felt that there was the "possibility that the content might be weakened." If integration was to become mandated, then the experiences within a course "may be lessened." Within faculty responses, issues of accommodations and academic rigor were often paired. While faculty members indicated that all students should have the opportunity to learn, those who, were "not able to do the work should not be there."

Faculty responses showed a collective concern for accommodations on two levels. The first level concerned the purpose of the accommodation. When self-reported, faculty members were generally willing to make accommodations if they were genuinely warranted. A caveat to this willingness resulted in the second

major level. Faculty members shared their concern about the relationship between accommodation and rigor. Some faculty members felt that postsecondary education "by its nature, is primarily for those who have adequate intelligence," and "modifying course content for the sake of an intellectually challenged person is lowering the standards." Even though most faculty members supported the integration of students with intellectual disabilities, because of the accommodation issue some faculty members felt that "there should be institutions for such people elsewhere."

There was a line that separated how comfortable faculty members were in making accommodations. "The difference lies in accommodation/equity versus outright capitulation of standards to cater to the unique needs of a person with intellectual disabilities." Some faculty members felt that when the accommodation compromised the standards of the professor or institution, then the accommodation caused a problem. When taken from a different perspective, survey results indicated that 50.9% (n=116) of faculty members were either "Comfortable" or "Somewhat Comfortable" making accommodations. When asked about modification of course content, results showed that 25% (n=57) of faculty members were either "Comfortable" or "Somewhat Comfortable" (See Table 9).

Qualitative survey findings mirrored the general tenor of qualitative responses. Making accommodations were generally fine; however, when they touch issues of course content and rigor a certain amount of discomfort became

Table 9

Faculty Comfort in Making Accommodation

Comfort Level	Teaching Style		Course Content	
	n	%	n	%
Uncomfortable	39	17.1%	102	44.7%
Somewhat Uncomfortable	47	20.6%	56	24.6%
No Feeling Either Way	26	11.4%	13	5.7%
Somewhat Comfortable	65	28.5%	28	12.3%
Comfortable	51	22.4%	29	12.7%
Total	228	100.0%	228	100.0%

apparent. To expand this, 82% (n=187) of respondents felt that modifications should be made to help students with intellectual disabilities have an equal chance at learning. Seventy-eight point nine percent (n=180) of faculty members indicated that these modifications did not give students with intellectual disabilities an unfair advantage over their non-disabled peers. While 71.1% (n=162) of faculty members felt that modifications affected other students in the class, only 30.3% (n=69) considered those effects helpful. Whereas 69.3% (n=158) faculty members saw the effects of modifications as detrimental to the success of other students in class.

Most faculty members indicated that they supported certain accommodations “such as note-takers and special testing environments;”

however, they were “not willing to extensively change or slow the content in order for the person to keep up with the class.” Comments indicated that while some accommodations were considered “dumbing down” material for those with intellectual disabilities, others were not. Some faculty members felt that above all, students with intellectual disabilities should “meet the same intellectual standards and qualifications demanded of other students.”

Perceptions about Students in the Classroom

Faculty members have dealt with students who have intellectual disabilities in various locations, including offices, and other social environments. However, most of the interaction and involvement came from classroom exchanges. Only 4.5% (n=7) of responses from faculty members demonstrated that they were generally concerned with the pragmatic implications of incorporating students with intellectual disabilities into their classes. However, those responses added much to the understanding of faculty perceptions.

Some faculty members think that students with intellectual disabilities should have “opportunities for secondary education,” but also think “we need to be realistic about their abilities.” Many faculty members suggested that each student be considered on a “case-by-case basis,” where the institution provides “as much help as they need without disrupting the standards of the typical classroom.” Part of educating students with intellectual disabilities was seen as preparing them for the real world. Some faculty members indicated that integration in the classroom was felt to be good preparation for the real world.

Faculty members generally felt that there were pronounced differences between “educational, financial, philosophical, ethical, moral, and even logical possibilities of having an individual with ID in a classroom and then having an individual with ID in MY classroom.” This dichotomy between idealism and pragmatic application was most pronounced in the category of students with intellectual disabilities in the classroom.

Self-Confidence and Social Aspects

About 20 years ago federal funding spurred research on self-confidence, self-determination, self-improvement, self-respect, and self-perception with respect to persons with intellectual disabilities. About ten years later, long term studies were conducted to consider the role of self-determination and self-improvement as they concerned students with intellectual disabilities (Bremer, Kachgal, & Schoeller, 2003; Thoma & Whemeyer, 2005; Wehmeyer, 2005). Similarly, a category emerged in this research that included both self-confidence and social aspects of classroom integration. This category was represented by 4.5% (n=7) of responses.

The faculty-driven qualitative data indicated that there was a general feeling towards support, growth, and independence for students with intellectual disabilities. While there was no correlation between recent literature and faculty responses on self-confidence and social aspects, faculty members did consider social issues an important aspect. “The experience of being on a college campus can help add to the feelings of acceptance and can provide the student with new experiences.” Faculty members felt that those experiences provided students with

intellectual disabilities many benefits. Literature on self-determination and self-improvement has been directly linked to the presence of choice and accountability (Whemeyer & Schwartz, 1997). Some faculty responses implied that postsecondary education might "boost their confidence and self-respect."

Rights of the Individual

Faculty members indicated in their responses to the first qualitative question that they saw the rights of individual as a key issue that influenced their perceptions, n=21 (13.5%). Rights, as they are referred to in these responses, have different meanings. While rights can be defined as civil rights where protection comes through legislative application, it may also refer to a constructed concept of rights based on wide cultural acceptance.

Faculty members stated that they felt that people with intellectual disabilities wanted to have postsecondary experiences similar to their peers without disabilities. They felt that postsecondary "experiences provide(d) opportunities for growth and friendships along with many levels of support." While all people have a right to attend postsecondary education, faculty members felt that this need not be limited to students without disabilities. Students with intellectual disabilities "are people too." "Just as the so called 'normal' student should have the opportunity to go as far as she/he can go, so too should the student seen as intellectually challenged." Some responses indicated that every student may have limits to what can be accomplished, but that every student should also "have the right to dispel (the limits)."

Still within believing in this right, some faculty members noted that "people with disabilities, by definition, have limits to their abilities." The juxtaposition between rights and limits often framed faculty responses that referred to rights belonging to students with intellectual disabilities.

Disability and Academic Ability

The naturally occurring category of disability and academic ability had faculty responses comprising 21.2% (n=33) of the corpus of qualitative responses. These responses pointed out the relative complexity of the issue of students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education. While most of the qualitative responses in this category supported the presence of students with intellectual disabilities, faculty members mentioned that there were differences in performance levels of students with intellectual disabilities. There were three subcategories that occurred within the broader concept of disability and academic ability. The first was the level of disability the student has or is perceived to have. The second was the type of program in relation to the level of disability, and the third was related to desire in comparison to the academic ability of the student.

Level of Disability

All people are different. Even if two people have the same IQ score, they may act with different levels of intelligence. The same is true for people with intellectual disabilities. Faculty members recognized that even within a disability categorization, some students may succeed in postsecondary education independent of their "intelligence score."

For some faculty members the most relevant issue was the level of

disability that a student was perceived to have. The level of disability had a "huge impact" on how faculty members responded to the issue of postsecondary students with intellectual disabilities. The degree of disability was measured by some faculty as their ability to complete appropriate coursework.

Types of Programs

Postsecondary education can be marked by its many courses of study. A freshman may take any number of classes that will eventually lead to a major and a minor. Faculty members recognized these many courses in light of dealing with students who have intellectual disabilities. Most of the faculty responses suggested "they should be given the opportunity to learn vocations that they can safely and adequately pursue to support themselves."

Other faculty members felt that because of the many different courses of study, there should be a separate space for students with intellectual disabilities. Faculty members felt that placing students in separate programs that were technical or workforce driven would "better serve" the student population. The issue of a separate place was one that came up many times in conjunction with a measure of student ability.

Desire versus Ability

The last subsection of disability and academic ability category was that of desire versus ability. While persons with intellectual disabilities may desire to attend postsecondary education, some faculty responses indicated that there should be a limit on the general acceptance of a student with an intellectual disability in postsecondary education.

One faculty member said, “I myself am athletically disabled compared to a professional athlete. No one expects the rules to be changed to allow me to compete.” This sentiment was a common thread throughout this category. “I cannot imagine that we should accommodate in our society a bus driver with no arms, a soldier with no feet, or a student with no intellectual abilities going to college.” For others “the goal of the learning is the deciding factor” in determining ability and disability. Still others believed that educating students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education was “a waste of time that could be spent training in a field where the student could be successful and fulfilled” which “is not beyond his/her intellectual disability.” In some fields the agreement between academic ability and the student’s disability may be different, which fact bridges level of disability, type of program, and desire versus ability.

Equality of Education

Another theme that emerged in the analysis of qualitative responses was that of equality of education. Twenty-one point two percent (n=33) of faculty responses posted that they were in favor of postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities when their perspectives were compiled with those responses that supported equality of education.

Faculty members indicated that “if a person has an intellectual disability, this should not exclude him/her from learning and thriving like any other person.” Some faculty members brought an interesting perspective to this issue. Reflecting the view that “in some ways, we all have learning ‘disabilities’. Some of us learn

faster; some slower; some need to rewrite it; some need to hear it again." This perspective indicated that "anyone who can learn should have the opportunity to do so" despite a need for accommodations. Noting for some that a "strong, personal belief overrides all misgivings" about a student's "ability to do college-level work."

Some faculty members indicated that upsetting the students' rights comprised a "violation of civil rights." Faculty noted that protecting civil rights for students with physical disabilities should not be any different than making accommodations for intellectual disabilities. "These individuals are citizens and the same human rights as those without disabilities."

Time and Resources

Faculty members recognized that the incorporation of students with intellectual disabilities affected them in different ways. Faculty members felt personal impact when it came to the onus of time constraints and the absorption of resources when dealing with students who have intellectual disabilities. Sixteen faculty responses (10.3%) were classified for evaluation in terms of time and resources and their responses all maintained a centralized position, working with students who have intellectual disabilities took time that was not readily available.

While most faculty members had opinions that supported students who have intellectual disabilities, in regards to time and resources some faculty members admitted "to ambivalence on this issue." However, "when space and faculty limitations create a shortage of available seats in classes that are required for progressing through an academic program, to have those limited seats taken

by individuals with little chance of progressing seems unfair to others and an 'inefficient' use of available resources."

Others indicated that in theory they "would love to fully support the goals and ambitions of those with intellectual disabilities. On a practical level, at public universities, our resources are stretched very thin as it is." Further, "accommodations take time and energy away from other students and other professional activities." One faculty member indicated that he or she was "saddened by my own answers here, as I really support inclusion. But I know that universities will not provide additional resources –it will just be one more thing that faculty members are expected to add to their already overwhelming list of tasks and responsibilities...Mainly, though, it's that spending time assisting students with disabilities is not considered important when I am going up for tenure, and I have only a limited number of hours in a day and am stressed to my limit already."

Ideally, the integration of students who have intellectual disabilities was seen as the right thing to do, where 71.2% (n=166) of respondents indicated that they believed that students with intellectual disabilities should be granted equal opportunity to learn at postsecondary institutions. However, responses indicated that the practical nature of facilitating this education was a difficult thing to realize because of constraints on time and resources.

Research Question Five

For those who replied to the question, "*Have you had any experiences that you feel may contribute to your feelings about persons with intellectual*

disabilities in postsecondary education? Can you tell me about them?" did responses add any significant information to the contextual picture of faculty perceptions of students who have intellectual disabilities in public postsecondary environments? In other words, did the experiences of faculty members add any information to an understanding of their perceptions? Qualitative data added a lot to the understanding of faculty perceptions when viewed within their experiences in very specific ways.

There were 94 responses to this second qualitative question in which the faculty indicated that they had experiences that contributed to their feelings about students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education. Responses were broken down into three types of experiences. The first type of experience was based on actual experiences teaching students with disabilities, n=63 (67.0%). The second type of experience was based on family relationships, n=17 (18.1%). The last type of experience was based on second hand knowledge, n=14 (14.9%). While responses in the last category were not necessarily personal experiences, they represented vicarious experiences, which for some faculty members characterized the only aspect on which to build context for understanding.

Teaching Experience

Responses from faculty with actual teaching experience were grouped to include the major themes of frustration, success, work, classroom participation, accommodation, and incidents of fakery or deceit. For this qualitative question, there were no real numerical differences between positive, neutral, and negative responses as they concerned perspectives of students with intellectual disabilities

in postsecondary education. But as may be seen, some differences became significant at the sub-grouping level.

Frustration

Faculty members often noted frustration either on behalf of the student who has an intellectual disability or frustration with the student who has an intellectual disability. Some faculty members indicated that a failing grade had a psychological effect on the individual that was "devastating." Further, one faculty member mentioned that in regard to seeing students with intellectual disabilities fail he or she "felt great sorrow for them because they could not reach their goal…Repeated failures can demoralize a student and I hate to see that happen." Faculty members also mentioned that one way that they felt that they could mitigate frustration was to advise students appropriately before they attended postsecondary institutions.

Success and Failure

A survey of responses produced data that easily fit into a category concerned with success and failure, n=19 (20.2%). Responses reflected a genuine concern about the outcome of postsecondary education, where 57.9% (n=11) of responses in this category held positive views of postsecondary integration. The end goal for most postsecondary students was a degree, and postsecondary success may be marked by a conferral of a degree. However, Zaft et al. (2004) pointed out that many of the benefits of postsecondary education may be garnered by students who do not earn a degree. While most faculty responses held success to the measure of degree conferral, some did not.

Faculty members who saw students that received accommodations sometimes classified them “as a failure.” One faculty member felt that an offer to go to Harvard for a student who had an intellectual disability was hard to consider because the faculty member felt that because she had received accommodations, “she was so undeserving.” The idea of diminished quality because of accommodation was not expressed by this faculty alone. It may be seen in multiple responses that faculty were concerned with the meaning of a degree once a person has obtained one. The level of “appropriate completion” for many faculty members was correlated to the power that a degree held. For example, the more appropriate the work, the more appropriate the degree. Some faculty members indicated that “should they actually complete all of the requirements to earn a degree, they should not be awarded the same degree as all of the students who completed a more rigorous level of work to receive the same degree.” Further, “a system which reduces the rigor for some students also devalues the degree and causes a misrepresentation to prospective employers.”

Faculty members indicated that “anyone with an intellectual disability should be held to the same standards as other students.” While accommodations may be made to support them, those accommodations should not be manifest as easier assignments. “That is, unless we'll award a different degree for people who didn't have to do the challenging assignments.”

Success and failure were key issues that played into faculty perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities. How each faculty member defined success or failure was a variable that could not be fully accounted. However, collectively

the definition seemed to center not just on the completion of a program of study, but a correct completion of a program of study with no significant accommodations.

Work

Faculty members indicated that teaching and supporting students who have intellectual disabilities took time, work, and was “more challenging” than working with other students. Some faculty members indicated if a student didn’t have an accommodation, not very much more time was required. However, in cases where accommodations were made, the need for more work on the part of the professor was evident.

Faculty members “often have to work with them outside class, remind them of things that are due, allow them to redo pieces, and accommodate testing.” These accommodations presented more work for faculty members. Even though some faculty members felt that working with students who have intellectual disabilities “monopolized my time,” most responses indicated that offering this time “isn’t a big deal.” One faculty member indicated that he or she knew of other faculty who "turned on the disabled student for (this) reason.”

Working with students who have intellectual disabilities has been described as “frequently exhausting.” One faculty member indicated that he or she had to “work very hard to make my classes work” with a student who had an intellectual disability. Faculty members also indicated that working with students who have physical disabilities often resulted in “very hard” work. In this way, the demands placed by students who have intellectual disabilities were not isolated.

Even though faculty members indicated that it took more time to work with students who have intellectual disabilities, there was not an unwillingness to do so.

Classroom Participation

Faculty members who have worked with students who have intellectual disabilities shared some of their classroom experiences. Faculty members interacted more with these students in the classroom than in other environments, therefore classroom experiences generally shaped the perceptions of faculty members in relation to students who have intellectual disabilities in meaningful ways. Faculty responses indicated that more positive perceptions were held by faculty members when discussing classroom participation, 85.7% (n=6).

Some faculty members indicated that students changed the tone of the course to the extent that there were "complaints" from other students about students with intellectual disabilities. One faculty member noted a "higher drop rate" in courses that had a student who had an intellectual disability. For this faculty member, synthesizing "how is it that this one student's 'right' out weighed those of other students" shaped his or her classroom perceptions.

Issues of concentration, repetition, and social appropriateness were key components of faculty responses that fit into the Classroom Participation category. Some faculty responses indicated the "transition" aspect of courses as they provided a bridge to independence for students with intellectual disabilities. However, in this category there was concern over the practical day-to-day aspects of having a student with an intellectual disability in the classroom.

One faculty member told a story of working with a person who had an intellectual disability outside of education. She routinely had to go back and fix what wasn't done correctly by the person with the disability. In this, she felt a one-sided relationship with the individual. Other faculty members indicated that they felt like collaboration in education meant more work for him/her with minimal output from the disabled partner. This concept of one-sidedness in dealing with students who have intellectual disabilities was reflected in the notion that, for some, the amount of time and resources applied to students who have intellectual disabilities did not offset perceived benefits for working with the same population.

Some faculty members relayed experiences of inappropriate classroom behavior from students with intellectual disabilities. One faculty member said that a student with an intellectual disability was "unable to appropriately participate in class discussions, so this alienated other students, who were very patient, but eventually couldn't take it anymore." The students were rude to the student with the intellectual disability, but the respondent was quick to note that it happened "only once."

Students with intellectual disabilities sometimes exhibited inappropriate behavior to the extent that it made others uncomfortable. One faculty member indicated a colleague felt that a particular student with an intellectual disability "could have been one who was at risk of losing it and shooting up a classroom." While most faculty members do not feel that students with intellectual disabilities presented a threat in the classroom, some identified were concerned about how to

handle difficult situations. One faculty member indicated that the disability office was ineffective to the point that he or she believed that it only existed "to fulfill the federal requirements."

Sometimes faculty members who experienced those classroom interactions became concerned about the integration of this population. While faculty members indicated that they support students with intellectual disabilities, many have used classroom experience as primers that inform their perceptions.

Accommodation

The issue of accommodations in postsecondary education was an issue that has been previously considered by several sources (McAfee & Sheeler, 1987; Hurtubis & Shalen, 2006). Research indicated that faculty members were generally willing to make accommodations, but felt that students did not always do a good job articulating their needs (Norton, 1997). While accommodations were also discussed in results of the first qualitative research question, responses to the second qualitative research question may be seen through the lenses of personal experiences.

Some faculty members indicated that accommodations can be "taken to extremes." As an example one faculty member relayed a story of accepting a "blind student into a visual computer design Art program." While faculty members were agreeable to "reasonable accommodations," most felt that there should be limits to those accommodations.

Making accommodations and understanding the role of accommodations may not be "a normal skill the average prof has." Further, requiring specialized

knowledge may be just as useful as “requiring all college staff/professors to know CPR.” Although most have not used CPR in their classrooms, most faculty members indicated that they have made accommodations for students with disabilities at some point in time. One faculty member said, “While I can have friendship and empathy and sympathy, I have to say that I am hired to be a postsecondary teacher, to teach higher education for the primary purpose of receipt of a college degree.” He or she went on to say “We professors often ask ourselves: ‘In the real world, do I tell my mechanic, please take the extra time you need to fix my car, beyond the time the insurance says the labor should take? Do real people in the work force get the accommodations we allow our students in their special needs?’”

Some faculty members indicated that by making accommodations “we are doing our students an injustice and giving them unreal expectations about what life is like.” Accommodations were viewed by others besides faculty members. Faculty members indicated that students sometimes “resent peers getting what they see as preferential treatment and help to receive an 'A' while they themselves struggle with jobs, family and C's in the classroom.” In this way, accommodations proved visible to others besides faculty members.

The issue of accommodations in postsecondary education was perceived by faculty members to be an important issue. Accommodations were generally out of the hands of faculty members, meaning that they were not generally involved in deciding what types or amounts of accommodations would be best suited for a student in his or her classroom. While accommodations exist, some

faculty indicated that they felt that accommodations have not been completely effective in mitigating disability issues.

Fakery or Deceit

Not all students with intellectual disabilities are fakers or are deceitful; however, faculty members indicated that there were a few. The few that were fakers or were deceitful appeared to affect how faculty members felt about students with intellectual disabilities. Faculty members felt that such students gave a “bad name and undue suspicion to those who legitimately have” a disability.

Despite institutional safeguards, faculty members indicated that there were some students who “somehow fake(d) their way into being diagnosed with disabilities so they can try to get out of doing school work.” Postsecondary institutions required much more documentation for students with intellectual disabilities in order to gain accommodations as compared to public schools. The majority of faculty responses indicated that deceit was very prevalent. One faculty member indicated that sometimes students "work outside the required academic processes” and because of this ended up with a degree that was meaningless to employers. He or she felt that this deceit misrepresented an institutional degree.

Unlawfully trying to extend accommodations or misrepresentation of a disability in some form or fashion was mentioned by multiple faculty members. Most comments referred to a lack of “proper documentation.” Even though some students were perceived as taking advantage of faculty members through

accommodations, one faculty participant posted a response that stood in opposition to others. "I would also add that in my experience NONE of my students with ANY type of disability sought an unfair advantage. They all merely wanted to be on the same playing field."

Family Relationships

It was not demonstrated in this research study that family members had statistically different views about the integration of students with intellectual disabilities, nor was that a research question. According to the data conducted, 45 participants (19%) indicated a familial relationship to someone with an intellectual disability. It is not known what type of kinship this response indicated; however, qualitative answers to this question indicated that relationships were as close as immediate family and as distant as in-law cousins. A few of the responses indicated that the faculty member was a parent of a child with an intellectual disability who was of postsecondary age.

One faculty member responded to the difficult nature of finding a postsecondary institution for his or her child "that would assist to the degree she needed and she was comfortable with." Another parent looked forward to helping his or her son to have a postsecondary education, "or I will have failed him as a parent."

A few faculty members indicated that they, themselves had intellectual disabilities. For them "If not for individuals who assisted me and altered program requirements, policies, etc…I would not have succeeded at the level I am!" Further, "it is fear that we somehow diminish the quality of programs or our

perceived position is somehow tarnished by working with these individuals that complicates such programs…it's easy to say you accept…it is when you must, reality is apparent!"

Most of the responses that included self-reporting kinship with a person or student with intellectual disabilities claimed a special knowledge of the topic because of the familiarity with individuals. However, responses from family members were not different from responses that came from faculty members who did not have family members with intellectual disabilities. Respondents who had family members with intellectual disabilities tended to recognize the level of disability in relation to postsecondary education at higher levels. However, the special knowledge offered by kinship did not affect the positive nature of faculty perceptions.

Second Hand Knowledge

Some faculty responses included experiences that came from second hand knowledge. What is meant by this is that the individual filling out the questionnaire was not the one who was directly affected by a student or a given incident; rather the information came from "colleagues who work with students with varying disabilities." Faculty members came "to know more about this population through my colleagues" but never had exposure to students with intellectual disabilities.

Analysis revealed that these responses lacked depth when compared to other responses to the second qualitative question. As evidence of this, 42.9% (n=6) of faculty responses held neutral perceptions for students who have

intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education. This is the highest rate of neutrality among all the qualitative categorizations.

Summary

Faculty members did not hold differing perspectives concerning students with intellectual disabilities in pubic postsecondary education when those responses were compared among institutions that have and institutions that did not have programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities. Faculty members did not have increased incidents of contact, nor did they have a qualitatively different set of social contacts with persons who have intellectual disabilities if their public postsecondary institution had a program for students with intellectual disabilities. Faculty members who resided on campuses where there were programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities did not receive any specific type of training, nor did they receive more sessions for faculty development in the areas that concern students with intellectual disabilities.

Responses to the first qualitative question led to the establishment of seven major themes that influenced faculty perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities. Those themes included,

1. Adaptation of Material,
2. Perceptions about Students in the Classroom Environment,
3. Self-Confidence and Other Social Aspects,
4. Disability and Academic Ability,
5. Equality of Education,

6. Issues of Time, and

7. The Rights of the Individual.

Responses to the second qualitative question led to the formation of three categories of experiences,

1. Faculty Teaching Experiences, including
    a. Frustration,
    b. Success and Failure,
    c. Work,
    d. Classroom Participation,
    e. Accommodations,
    f. Fakery and Deceit,
2. Family Relationships, and
3. Second Hand Knowledge.

Themes from both of the qualitative questions revealed that experiences shaped faculty perceptions in distinctive ways. Faculty members supported students with intellectual disabilities; however, they were

1. concerned that accommodations compromised academic rigor,
2. concerned that the amount of time required for teaching this population was vast and sometimes not equal to expectations,
3. concerned that having students with intellectual disabilities in a class affected other students, and

4. they were concerned that some students may be faking or exaggerating the effects of their disabilities to gain accommodations.

Notwithstanding these concerns, faculty members support students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education. They were not without experience or knowledge when responding with their perceptions. Rather their perceptions were represented by thoughtful consideration of the topic and its effects.

Chapter 5

RESEARCH SUMMARY, FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATORS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Research Summary

Persons with intellectual disabilities have been integrated into postsecondary education at increasing rates over the last ten years. Some colleges and universities have responded to the demands of providing services for this population by forming programs of study specifically directed towards the needs of these students. As many as 138 college campuses now have such programs. While it is unclear how faculty members felt about this move as it grew, this research sheds light on faculty perceptions as they now stand. Additionally, this research provides a qualitative context to better understand these faculty perceptions.

This research demonstrated that 71.2% (n=166) of faculty members think that persons with intellectual disabilities should be granted equal opportunities to learn at public postsecondary institutions. There were no demonstrated statistical or practically significant differences among faculty perceptions from institutions that already had postsecondary programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities as compared to those institutions that did not. Analysis indicated that there were no differences in the amount or type of contact that faculty members had with students who have intellectual disabilities when compared between institutions that either had or did not have programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities. Neither did descriptive statistics indicate that there were

differences in the amount or type of institutional faculty development opportunities provided to faculty and staff for the express purpose of working with students who have intellectual disabilities based on the presence or absence of established programs.

Findings

Findings were reported as an extension of data collected through an online survey research instrument. Findings were provided by 246 faculty members from public postsecondary campuses in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) governance area, which includes 11 states in the southeastern United States. Two types of data were collected in this research. Quantitative data were analyzed using an ex post facto research design formulated from questionnaire answers and were subjected to nonparametric analysis to determine statistical significance. Qualitative responses were analyzed through a constant comparative method. From the qualitative data, categories emerged that added depth to the results of the research questions.

Research question one asked if there were significant differences among responses of faculty members in their perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities when the responding faculty members' public postsecondary campuses had a program designed for students with intellectual disabilities as compared to those that did not. Research data indicated that there were no significant differences in faculty perceptions between responses collected from institutions that had programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities as compared to responses from those institutions that did not.

Regardless of where a faculty member was employed, they indicated that they were generally accepting of students who have intellectual disabilities. Based on this information, regardless of where a student with an intellectual disability enrolls, it is likely that the majority of faculty members will be supportive of their integration.

Research question two asked if statistics indicated that the presence of programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities altered the amount and type of contact faculty members had with both intellectually disabled persons and intellectually disabled students. Analysis indicated that there were no significant differences in the amount or type of contact that faculty members had with persons or students who have intellectual disabilities. While the presence of a program leads to an increased number of students on a campus and an increased number of students lead to a greater potential for student and faculty contact, data showed that presence was not correlated to contact.

Based on this finding, it can be hypothesized that just because programs are found on a campus does not mean that there will be contact between faculty members and any given student. Further, of the four types of programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities, 69.6% (n=96) were established in environments with little faculty involvement. It may also be true that the majority of contact that a faculty member had with persons who have intellectual disabilities is represented by contact with non-students who lived in their communities.

Research question three asked, do statistics indicate that faculty members are receiving more frequent training from their institution on campuses where programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities are found. Data indicated that faculty members did not receive professional training in how to support students with intellectual disabilities at greater levels in institutions that had a program for students with intellectual disabilities.

While it may be suspected that at institutions where programs for students with intellectual disabilities are found incidents of faculty training would be increased, data showed that this is not the case. The majority of faculty members who received training indicated that they received their training more than three years ago. Faculty members felt that if they were going to be successful in teaching students with intellectual disabilities they needed more training. While the number of programs designed for students who have intellectual disabilities has doubled in the last three years, training appears as if it is not keeping pace.

Research question four asked if those who replied to the question, **"***Please tell me why you think, or do not think that persons with intellectual disabilities should be given opportunities to learn in your institution*," did their responses add any significant information to the contextual picture of faculty perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities in public postsecondary environments. Qualitative analysis supported the quantitative data, demonstrating that faculty members generally supported the integration of students with intellectual disabilities. While the data sets were similar, the depth of response in the qualitative analysis indicated that their support of this movement was not without

reservation. Six major themes emerged from the data that provided contextual complexity to this issue. Those included the Adaptation of Material, Perceptions of Students in the Classroom Environment, Self-Confidence and Social Aspects, Rights of the Individual, Disability and Academic Ability, Equality of Education, as well as Time and Resources (topics are reinforced with italics below for ease of narration).

The issue of *adaptation of material* was key throughout the qualitative analysis. Faculty members said that they were generally comfortable adapting their teaching style to accommodate student needs; however, they were uncomfortable changing the course content. Faculty members were concerned that accommodating the material diminished the educational outcome, whereas they felt accommodations made through instruction preserved the college-level content.

Faculty perceptions of students in the classroom were marked by responses that indicated that the while the presence of students with intellectual disabilities often changed the environment within a course, those changes were not necessarily negative. Often those classroom experiences provided *self-confidence as well as social integration* to the students. Those social aspects were supported by both legislative mandate, but also by a feeling of social obligation. Even though faculty members indicated that they were not entirely knowledgeable about ADA or Section 504, they felt as if they understood the intent of the legislation and the inherent *rights of the individual*. This general knowledge and a

willingness to support it provided an understanding of the social obligation that contributed to faculty perceptions.

Like all people, students who have intellectual disabilities come to postsecondary education with a range of abilities. The alignment of *disability and academic ability* was an issue that faculty members discussed. Two students who have a Traumatic Brain Injury may manifest this intellectual disability in completely different ways. According to faculty members matching the student's ability with the desired outcome is important to consider when looking at ability. Faculty responses showed that they think education came down to an issue of *equality of education* regardless of their disability. However, faculty members indicated that supporting students with intellectual disabilities moved beyond those feeling of equality. The qualitative responses showed that there was a difference between the rights of the individual, which are given legally and socially, when compared to the ideal of the equality of education.

Faculty members recognized that some students with intellectual disabilities required more *time and resources* from a professor than a non-disabled peer. Some faculty members felt that a postsecondary institution had only a limited number of resources, and that time spent with a student who has an intellectual disability may be time spent away from other duties. That giving one of the limited seats to a student "with little chance of progressing, seem(ed) unfair to others and an 'inefficient' use of available resources." They also indicated that when administrative resources were allocated for students who have intellectual disabilities those resources were then not available for others to use. However,

sentiments did not negate the positive support of students who have intellectual disabilities.

Responses to qualitative research question one demonstrated that there were complex issues that surrounded the integration of students who have intellectual disabilities. All of the issues expressed by faculty members indicated a basis for their perceptions. In the qualitative responses, faculty perceptions were both supportive and dismissive of students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education. Responses to research question one demonstrated that even though faculty may be on opposite sides of the issue, they shared many of the same concerns.

Research question five asked if responses from those who replied to the question, *"Have you had any experiences that you feel may contribute to your feelings about persons with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education? Can you tell me about them?"* did their responses add any significant information to the contextual picture of faculty perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities in public postsecondary environments. Faculty members have had experiences with persons who have intellectual disabilities in many locations. Most of the responses to the second qualitative question centered on experiences that faculty members had with students while in their classes. Within the experiences that affected faculty perceptions, Frustration, Success and Failure, Work, Classroom Participation, and Fakery or Deceit were among the most frequent (topics are reinforced with italics below for ease of narration).

Faculty members indicated that they sometimes became *frustrated* when working with students who have intellectual disabilities. They also noted that the students themselves often became frustrated with their experiences in postsecondary education. Frustration usually came when an idea of how things should be done was in conflict with how they were being done or when ideals did not meet performance. It was interesting that faculty members were frustrated with the students. It was also telling that the faculty members noticed that students were frustrated with their experiences. Those frustrations emerged through the responses given.

The responses indicated that frustration came from one of three entities, faculty, students, or administration with regard to one of four aspects. Those aspects included students' abilities, culpability, the role of accommodations, or the role of the institution. This disconnect may have come from a combination of any of the many different perspectives and aspects. This disconnection led to frustration felt by the faculty and seen in students. Frustration contributed to some perceptions expressed by faculty members.

Faculty members were concerned with the *success and failure* of students with intellectual disabilities. One aspect that emerged from faculty responses was the meaning of success and failure with regards to obtaining a degree. Success and failure are relative terms that do not seem to be clearly communicated concerning students with intellectual disabilities. For example, while an institution may measure success by completion of courses or completion of a

degree, research showed that success might be gained even with a failing grade in the course.

Many faculty members indicated that the quality of a degree or the meaning of a degree might be compromised if the student sees himself or herself as a success even if they do not make a passing grade. Furthermore, when compared against the institution's mission, the student is seen as a failure. Faculty members suggested that there were levels in a degree and the completion of the degree to a certain standard had more meaning than a completion of the degree to a different standard. This issue was not clearly illustrated by faculty responses to quantitative questions; however, it was clear that faculty members indicated that stratification was an issue based on their qualitative responses.

Teaching and supporting students who have intellectual disabilities is a lot of *work* for faculty members. Not all students who have intellectual disabilities take extra time from a professor, but some do. Some faculty members indicated that even though it took more work to support students who have intellectual disabilities, they were willing to do so.

Faculty members interacted more with students who have intellectual disabilities in the classroom, than elsewhere. Some faculty expressed concern about the behavior and interaction of students who have intellectual disabilities in terms of *classroom participation*. However, not all students with intellectual disabilities had behavior that was different from other students. For some faculty members, classroom exchanges were the only interaction that they had with students who have intellectual disabilities. It was also a place where they saw

students with intellectual disabilities interact with other students. Because these two primary aspects occurred in the classroom it was not surprising that faculty members often spoke of behavior, such as outbursts, that occurred within a classroom.

While discussed in the first qualitative question, the issue of accommodation came up again in the second qualitative question. Accommodations are generally outside of a faculty member's domain. The disability office makes recommendations for accommodations. From that point it is between the faculty members, students, and institution to determine what role accommodations should play. Therefore, faculty members have little to no control over accommodations. This lack of control over accommodations was reflected in some of the responses. There were three aspects of control that could be discerned from the responses, control over the classroom, control over the content expected for college-level learning, and control over the meaning of the course outcome for the student. The issue of control over content expected for college-level learning only came out in response to the second qualitative question, which was based on faculty experiences.

The lack of control may have come from a disconnection between the role and the function of accommodations. Perhaps this disconnect manifested itself because faculty members felt that they should have control of their classroom, and accommodations took that control away. This perspective appeared to be substantiated by responses to the question about modifying teaching style versus modifying course content. Faculty members were willing to modify their

teaching style but not their course content. By modifying their teaching style they still did not change the content quality or level of the expected content quality. However, when someone else required a content of accommodation, faculty indicated that their control was compromised.

Faculty members were concerned about *fakery and deceit* at many different levels. Some faculty members felt that a few students were outright deceitful in gaining accommodations. However, most of the responses that fell into this category indicated that faculty members felt like too many liberties were taken by the student in areas of accommodation. Accusing a person of fakery or deceit is a serious claim. The fact that some faculty members were willing to make that claim was considered important. While not all students with intellectual disabilities were faking disabilities or were deceitful in their claims, faculty members noticed that it did happen. Faculty members have limits to what they deem acceptable, and they were not very comfortable having those limits challenged.

Because intellectual disabilities are not always readily apparent, understanding accommodations can be difficult. For instance, if a student was paraplegic and used a wheelchair, it would be easy to see how an automatic door would help them. However, not seeing how the brain works, it would be more difficult to see how accommodations supported a student with an intellectual disability. This disconnect between what is apparent and what is not led to many concerns for faculty members. Because faculty members at times did not see the

connection between need and accommodation, some mentioned that they became suspicious of students.

Some faculty members mentioned that they were family members of persons who have intellectual disabilities. Besides this, some noted in the qualitative responses that maintaining a family relationship provided them special insight into the role of faculty perceptions that concerned students with intellectual disabilities. Responses demonstrated that faculty members were more acquainted with the issues that surround supporting a student with an intellectual disability. However, in some instances, being a parent also blinded him or her to certain issues. One important finding of this research was that faculty perceptions were independent of familial relationships. It was at least noteworthy that while depth of responses might change based on relationships, the responses themselves did not change if a faculty member was related to a person who has an intellectual disability. Family members generally included references to the level of disability in relation to the demands of postsecondary education more often than non-family members. This seemed to indicate that perceptions were not likely to change when amount and type of contact increased.

Some faculty members responded to the second qualitative question even when they didn't actually have experiences. Instead, these respondents quoted others who they knew. They also relayed second-hand stories that they were exposed to at some time in the past. Even though it was second hand, the perspective brought by these faculty members was important to consider. Perceptions are often based on second hand knowledge rather than their own

experiences. Although findings demonstrated that second hand knowledge affected faculty perceptions, it was difficult to discern to what extent.

Discussion

When considering the issue of faculty perceptions of students who have intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education, many interesting conversations came to the surface. The concept of students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education was a difficult concept for faculty members to respond to, and asking about one's perceptions seemed both to add and to complicate the understanding of their perceptions.

Students with intellectual disabilities cannot be discriminated against while in pursuit of a postsecondary education. However beyond rhetoric, facilitating access and mitigating discrimination has proven difficult. There is little in the form of a legal framework to support this integration, little support in the form of academic study to support this integration, and little support in the form of established programs that demonstrate success for the integration of this population. However, this research demonstrated that there is a lot of support from faculty members, institutions, and social systems. Research has shown that while receiving a diploma does not change the social outcomes for students with intellectual disabilities attendance at a postsecondary institution does (Blackorby & Wagner, 1996; Zaft, Hart, & Zimbrich, 2004).

The majority of faculty members supported this movement. They did not have a problem including students with intellectual disabilities in their classrooms. The majority of faculty members demonstrated that they saw benefits

to the integration of this population. It was evident that this support from faculty members was not without concern or reservation, however. Faculty members understood that when considering the integration of a student who was on the Autistic Spectrum there would be social awkwardness in the classroom. They understood that when considering the integration of a student who had a Traumatic Brain Injury there might be increased needs for repetition of material. Each student who has an intellectual disability may bring a special circumstance to the classroom for which faculty members might have to accommodate. However, the majority of faculty members indicated that they did not mind making accommodations for students with intellectual disabilities.

For many faculty members, considering this issue became a delicate balance between living the ideals of education and ensuring that an education is appropriate. This was a dichotomy that educators struggled with in responding to the survey, and will probably continue to struggle with if the population of students with intellectual disabilities wanting to attend postsecondary institutions continues to increase. Faculty members indicated that they were supportive of students who have intellectual disabilities. However, they might not be comfortable accommodating those students in their classrooms.

Implications for Educators

Faculty members are responsible for instruction and the implementation of accommodations to support students with intellectual disabilities. Further, their perceptions affect students. Therefore, understanding how faculty members feel about students with intellectual disabilities is important. Educators may be

impacted in many ways by this study. One impact may come from the recognition of the effect of perceptions. Faculty members may also better understand the need for accommodations as a result of this study. Additionally, they may also find out how their perceptions align with other faculty members. By reading this study, educators may become more cognizant of the effects of their perceptions on students with intellectual disabilities in the classroom.

It is evident that for some faculty members there was a disconnection between accommodations and the role that they play. Educators may improve their educational practice for students with intellectual disabilities by becoming more informed about the role of accommodations and the frameworks that support those accommodations. By so doing, educators may then become more aware of the effects their perceptions have on students who have intellectual disabilities.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study was completed on a limited number of institutions defined by a prescribed geography. A related study may be conducted on a larger geographical representation using this as well as other instruments to ensure constancy of the results. Based on this, it is recommended that future research should be conducted on this student population and also on faculty perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities. Because research findings have application in faculty development, further research is suggested in the area that compares faculty development and faculty perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities. While this research showed that there was no correlation among

faculty training or development and the existence of programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities, it should not sway attempts to define the relationship between faculty development and faculty perceptions.

Future research may also be conducted in terms of comparisons of studies that involve faculty perceptions in various disability categories. Research showed, and this research supported, that faculty members have different perceptions of students in different disability categories. While 71.2% (n=166) of respondents supported the integration of students with intellectual disabilities, 96.6% (n=225) of the same population indicated that they supported the integration of students with physical disabilities. It would be beneficial to take the results of this research and pair them with faculty perception studies completed on other student populations that have disabilities to evaluate faculty perceptions across disability categories.

Future research may also be completed using the same instrument over time. It may be beneficial for faculty members and also for administrators to track faculty perceptions in a longitudinal study. Such research may measure the effect of exposure and policy changes if the research instrument is administered appropriately. It would also be beneficial to expand research beyond a region of the country.

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Appendix A

First Email Correspondence with Potential Faculty Participants

Esteemed Colleague,

This email comes as both an introduction and an invitation to participate in some research. A strong movement has been made lately to place persons with intellectual disabilities on postsecondary campuses for both academic and also for therapeutic reasons. In 2001 there were 15 programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities on postsecondary campuses, now there are over 115 of these programs across the nation, with more being added each semester. Yet there have been no research efforts made to discern how it is that faculty members feel about this move. Hence, I am researching how faculty members feel about the presence of persons with intellectual disabilities in their classrooms and on their campuses.

This study has been composed to assess faculty perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education, where the results of this data may be used by policy makers for purposes of faculty development, for existential comparison to faculty perceptions of students in other disability categories, and for baseline trend analysis. This research is important to advocates of the integration of students with intellectual disabilities, but is also extremely important to postsecondary policy makers who direct faculty development. Please consider taking an approximately ten-minute (24 question) survey to voice your opinion.

You have been chosen out of a potential pool of almost 6,900 faculty members, and have been sent this email as an introduction to this research. In four days, you will be sent another email that will contain a link to the online survey. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you should choose to participate, your personal information will not be made available to other parties. Should you choose not to participate in this study, please return a response to my email and I will take you off of my list. If you do not opt out, you will be provided the link to participate.

I am very excited to find the results of this study, and I really want your participation to make this research as meaningful as possible. Thank you for your consideration.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns about this research.

Thanks,

Andrew Fisher
Texas A&M University-Commerce
(903) 243-3545

Appendix B

Second Email Correspondence with Potential Faculty Participants

Esteemed Colleague,

Thank you very much for considering participation in this research. As I stated in my previous email, I am interested in faculty perceptions as they concern students with intellectual disabilities on campus. In 2001 there were 15 programs designed for students with intellectual disabilities on postsecondary campuses, now there are over 115 of these programs across the nation, with more being added each semester. Yet, research concerning faculty perceptions about this move is all but non-existent.

This email serves as a formal invitation to participate in this research. By clicking on the link below, you will be taken to a secure and independent survey site to participate in a short (approximately 10 minute) survey about your perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary environments. The results of this data may be used by policy makers for purposes of faculty development, for existential comparison to faculty perceptions of students in other disability categories, and for baseline trend analysis. Please take some time to participate, as your help will assist researchers and administrators as they consider the presence of these programs. There are no pop-ups, neither is this site monitored for advertising purposes. It is a privately funded site that is under contract for survey services only. I have added an encoded security matrix to further protect your identity.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=147063203400

Should you choose not to participate in this study, either return a response indicating so to my email, or click on the removal link below and I will be sure to take you off of my participant list.

I am very excited to find the results of this study, and I really want your participation to make this research as meaningful as possible. Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, feel free to call or email me, I will be around for your help.

Your Colleague,

Andrew Fisher
Texas A&M University-Commerce
(903) 243-3545

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=147063203400

Appendix C

Survey

Complete and formatted survey can be accessed by the following web address, http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=147063203400

Barring access, a paper copy is supplied below.

Faculty Perceptions of Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Postsecondary Education

Introduction

Thank you for considering participation in this survey concerning faculty perceptions of the presence of persons with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education. This survey will take approximately ten minutes to complete and has between 24 to 33 questions (depending on your answers). You will not be identified by name, institution, or otherwise. To help ensure consistency, I have provided a standard definition for you to consider as you complete this survey.

An **Intellectual Disability** conforms to The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps (TASH, 2000) definition of severe disability, as persons with intellectual disabilities require "ongoing support in one or more major life activities in order to participate in an integrated community and enjoy a quality of life similar to that available to all citizens. Support may be required for life activities such as mobility, communication, self-care, and learning as necessary for community living, employment, and self-sufficiency." Students who are diagnosed as having Down syndrome, some levels of Autism spectrum disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), or a variation of the like sometimes express intellectual disabilities. The term intellectual disability generally carries the same meaning as does the phrase, mental retardation.

Thanks again for your participation.
-Andrew Fisher

Participant Consent

The purpose of this study is to discover prevailing faculty attitudes towards the presence of students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary educational environments. Your participation in this research will illicit results that will be utilized to fill significant gaps in the literature. These results may also be used by policy makers for purposes of faculty development, for existential comparison to faculty perceptions of students in other disability categories, and for baseline trend analysis. You need not have experience with students with intellectual disabilities in order to participate in the study. The following survey is designed to take around ten minutes.

By noting below, you indicate that your participation in this survey is voluntary, and that you will receive no financial compensation for your time. You are free to withdraw from participation at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the survey before its completion, your responses will be eliminated from analysis.

This online survey is designed so that you can only complete it once. You will be asked a series of questions, between 24 and 33 total (depending on your answers). Your identity has been entered into a security matrix wherein no personal identifying information can be accessed again. However, I have set up a program from which you will receive a reminder email if you have not completed the survey, and an altogether separate email thanking you for your time and effort. These contacts have already been constructed and are encoded to be released at predetermined times. The survey will be online for three weeks, after which time participants will no longer have access to the questions. Upon the three week completion, data will be transferred and the online survey will be destroyed, as will all matrix information. Rest assured, identifying information will not be made accessible to other parties.

Participation includes risks such as answering questions designed to draw out personal feelings, which might bring discomfort to some.

This research conforms to all institutional research committee requirements as proposed by Texas A & M University-Commerce. Any questions or concerns can be directed to any of the following:

Andrew Fisher
Primary Researcher
(903)-243-3545
andrew.fisher@quinlanisd.net

Dr. Sharon Chambers
Doctoral Advisor
(903) 886-5124
sharon_chambers@tamu-commerce.edu

Additionally, should you have research related questions, questions about rights of research participants, or for research related injury, please contact the Texas A&M University-Commerce Institutional Review Board Chair:

Dr. Tracy Henley
IRB Chair
(903) 886-5594
thenley@tamu-commerce.edu.

By agreeing below, you indicate that you have read the risks and agree to the terms of participation. Please click a response (survey will not advance until a response is chosen).

Yes, I agree
No, I do not agree

Survey

1) How long have you been a postsecondary educator?

1) 1-5 years
2) 6-10 years
3) 11-15 years
4) 16-20 years
5) 21-25 years
6) 26-30 years
7) 31-35 years
8) more than 35 years

2) What is your academic rank and status? Choose all that apply.

1) Lecturer
2) Assistant Professor
3) Associate Professor
4) Professor
5) Tenured
6) Non-Tenure track
7) Tenure track
8) Adjunct
9) Administrative
10) Graduate Faculty
11) Undergraduate Faculty
12) Other (please specify)

3) How many classes do you teach each semester?

1) 0
2) 1
3) 2
4) 3
5) 4
6) 5
7) >5

4) What is your gender?

1) Male
2) Female

5) What is your age?

1) 21-30
2) 31-40
3) 41-50
4) 51-60
5) 61-70
6) 71-80
7) >80

6) At what postsecondary institution do you teach?

1) Austin Community College Southwest
2) Central Virginia Community College
3) Collin County Community College at Spring Creek
4) George Mason
5) Germanna Community College
6) Grayson County College
7) J. Sergeant Reynolds Community College
8) LA Tech
9) Laredo Community College
10) Longwood University
11) McNeese State
12) Norfolk State
13) Northern Kentucky University
14) Nicholls State
15) Radford
16) River Parishes Community College
17) University of Central Florida
18) University of Houston
19) University of Louisville
20) University of South Florida, Sarasota-Manatee Campus
21) Virginia Tech
22) West Texas A&M University
23) Other (please specify)

7) For these next questions, a series of definitions are included.

A **Postsecondary Institution** is defined as an educational institution, beyond secondary schools, that is designed to provide advanced educational and/or occupational training.

A Physical Disability is a disability that impedes motor functioning of movement, to include difficulty walking, amputation, decreased fine motor or gross motor skills, etc.

Based on these definitions, do you think that persons with **physical disabilities** should be granted equal opportunities to learn at a postsecondary institution?

1) Yes
2) No

8) An **Intellectual Disability** requires ongoing support in one or more major life activities such as mobility, communication, self-care, and learning as necessary for integrated community living. Students who are diagnosed as having Down syndrome, some levels of Autism spectrum disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, or variation of the like sometimes express intellectual disabilities. The term intellectual disability generally carries the same meaning as does the phrase "mental retardation."

Based on this definition, do you think that persons with **intellectual disabilities** should be granted equal opportunities to learn at postsecondary institutions?

1) Yes
2) No

9) Are you aware of the growing trend of students with intellectual disabilities accessing postsecondary programs?

1) Yes

How did you learn about this trend?

1) Faculty training
2) Professional Journal publications
3) Discussions with other professionals
4) Other publications (Newspapers, magazines, etc.)
5) Conferences
6) Other (please specify)

2) No

10) How do you feel about the following statement?

Persons with intellectual disabilities should be allowed to pursue a postsecondary education.

1) I totally disagree with this statement
2) I mostly disagree with this statement
3) I have no feelings about this statement
4) I mostly agree with this statement
5) I totally agree with this statement

11) Have you had at least one student with an intellectual disability enrolled in one of your classes?

1) Yes

On average, how many students have you had that have been diagnosed with an intellectual disability?

1) More than one student every semester
2) One student every semester
3) One student every year
4) One student every two years
5) One student every three years
6) Less than one student every three years

2) No

12) If you had a student with an intellectual disability in your class, how would you feel about modifying your **teaching style** to provide that student an equal opportunity for learning?

1) Uncomfortable
2) Somewhat uncomfortable
3) No feeling either way
4) Somewhat comfortable
5) Comfortable

13) If you had a student with an intellectual disability in your class, how would you feel about modifying your **course content** to provide an equal opportunity for learning?

1) Uncomfortable
2) Somewhat uncomfortable
3) No feeling either way
4) Somewhat comfortable
5) Comfortable

14) Do you feel that modifications (such as extended time on tests, note-takers, shortened assignments, etc.) should be made to help students with intellectual disabilities gain an equal opportunity for learning?

1) Yes
2) No

15) Do you believe that modifications designed to help students with intellectual disabilities will give them an unfair advantage over other non-disabled students?

1) Yes
2) No

16) Do you feel that classroom and curricular modifications made on behalf of students with intellectual disabilities affect other students in the classroom?

1) Yes

How would you rate those effects on the other students?

Largely, these modifications were…

1) very helpful to the success of other students
2) somewhat helpful to the success of other students
3) somewhat detrimental to the success of other students
4) very detrimental to the success of other students

2) No

17) Have you ever modified an assignment, assessment, or requirement for any person with a disability, whether that disability was physical, developmental, intellectual, psychiatric, or otherwise (examples include extended time for tests, modified assignments, note-takers, etc.)?

1) Yes

How often, on average, you have been involved in these modifications?

1) More than once every semester
2) Once every semester
3) Once every year
4) Once every two years
5) Once every three years
6) Less than once every three years

What disability categories have you modified for? Please choose all that apply.

1) Physical Disability
2) Psychiatric Disability
3) Intellectual Disability
4) Learning Disability
5) Other, please specify
6) I don't know

2) No

18) Have you ever received training, either while you were a student or while you were a faculty member, on how to teach or modify curriculum **specifically** as it relates to students with intellectual disabilities?

1) Yes

Where did you receive this training? (Please click all that apply)

1) Institutional Faculty Development (required attendance)
2) Institutional Faculty Development (voluntary attendance)
3) Independent Faculty Development through an agency
4) Independent Faculty Development through your institution
5) Independent Faculty Development through personal study
6) Experience teaching this topic in the class(es) you teach
7) Topic was covered when you were a student
8) Other (please specify)

How long has it been since the last training with which you have been involved?

1) More than once a semester
2) Once a semester
2) Once a year
3) Once every two years
4) Once every three years
5) Less frequently than once every three years

2) No

19) Do you know your institution's policies concerning students with intellectual disabilities?

1) Yes
2) No

20) As they relate to students with intellectual disabilities, would you say that you have enough previous knowledge to be able to talk to your students about any of the following acts?

(You may choose more than one response.)

1) Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
2) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504)
3) The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
4) Bill of Rights Act of 2000 (DD Act)
5) I do not consider myself able to teach my students about any of these.

21) There are three types of programs that have emerged to support persons with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education;

Significantly Separate-
where separate facilities and instructional classes support persons with intellectual disabilities who wish to pursue a postsecondary education.

Full Integration-
where students with intellectual disabilities participate in classes and sections that are designed for persons without an intellectual disability.

Mixed Model-
where a student with an intellectual disability is supported in programs that maintain both separate classes and joint classes.

Based on this information, which types of programs would you be most willing to support? (choose all that apply)

1) Significantly Separate Programs
2) Full Integration Programs
3) Mixed Model Programs
4) I would support any of these models
5) I would **not** support any of these models

22) Does your institution have a program designed for students with intellectual disabilities?

1) Yes
2) No
3) I don't know

23) Do you agree with this statement; students with intellectual disabilities can benefit from an educational experience on your campus?

1) Totally disagree
2) Mostly disagree
3) Somewhat disagree
4) I have no opinion
5) Somewhat agree
6) Mostly agree
7) Totally agree

24) Have you ever had personal contact with a person with an intellectual disability?

1) Yes

Since you indicated that you have had personal experience(s) with a person who has an intellectual disability, can you share with me the nature of your experience(s)?

On average, how often have you had personal contact with a person who has an intellectual disability?

1) Less than once every year
2) Once a year
3) Twice a year
4) Four times a year
5) Monthly
6) Weekly
7) Daily

During these encounters, what type of contact do you typically have? Choose all that apply.

1) Social contact
2) Casual contact
3) Exchanges of Pleasantries
4) Conversation
5) Person with whom I have contact is a relative
6) Other (please specify)

2) No

25) Would you be willing to participate in a second phase of this research? The second phase is comprised of two open-ended questions concerning the same topic. If you indicate that you choose to participate you will be taken to the questions. The second phase should only take a couple of minutes. If you choose not to participate, you will be taken to the end of the survey.

1) Yes, I would like to participate

1) Since you indicated that you would be willing to participate in a qualitative review of the topic, can you please tell me in your own words why you think, or do not think, that persons with intellectual disabilities should be given opportunities to learn in your institution.

2) Have you had any experiences that you feel like contribute to your feelings about persons with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education? Can you tell me about them?

2) No thanks, take me to the end

Conclusion

Thank you very much for your responses. I recognize the time and energy you have dedicated toward this study as it is concerned with students who have intellectual disabilities. I appreciate all that you have done.

If you should so choose to know the results of this study, please send me a personal email indicating the same and I will keep you updated.

Thanks again,

Andrew Fisher
andrew.fisher@quinlanisd.net

Appendix D

Third Email Correspondence with Potential Faculty Participants

Esteemed Colleague,

For those who participated in the survey, thank you very much! For those of you who have not had the opportunity, you can do so for one more week only. After (Date), I will be taking the survey off-line for analysis. So far, I have had an impressive response rate, but more data will only improve the quality of the research.

If you have not completed a survey, please visit the link below. This email serves as a formal invitation to participate in this research. By clicking on the link below, you will be taken to a secure and independent survey site to participate in a short (approximately 10 minute) survey about your perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary environments. The results of this data may be used by policy makers for purposes of faculty development, for existential comparison to faculty perceptions of students in other disability categories, and for baseline trend analysis. Please take some time to participate as your help will aid researchers and administrators as they consider the presence of these programs. There are no pop-ups, neither is this site monitored for advertising purposes. It is a privately funded site that is under contract for survey services only. I have added an encoded security matrix to further protect your identity.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=147063203400

Should you choose not to participate in this study, either return a response indicating so to my email, or click on the removal link below and I will be sure to take you off of my participant list.

I am very excited to find the results of this study, and I really want your participation to make this research as meaningful as possible. Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, feel free to call or email me, I will be around for your help.

Your Colleague,

Andrew Fisher
Texas A&M University-Commerce
(903) 243-3545

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=147063203400

Appendix E

Third Email Correspondence with Potential Faculty Participants who Participated in the Study But Who Did Not Get the First Emailed Thank You.

Esteemed Colleague,

Thank you to all who participated in the study! I was able to amass some valuable data that will do much to help us understand how faculty members feel about the presence of students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary environments.

As soon as all data are put through statistical analysis, I will write a short results section that can be emailed to you as an attachment. If you are interested in the results of this study, please feel free to email or call me and I will get you a copy along with appropriate citation information.

Thanks again!

Your Colleague,

Andrew Fisher
Texas A&M University-Commerce
(903) 243-3545

APPENDIX F

Selected Qualitative Responses from Research Question Four and Five

1. I believe that this population of folks needs to be educated outside of the mainstream of higher education for many reasons. One is that the time, money and needs of this population often negate time, money and needs of those students who are average or above. I also believe that it is unfair to faculty and other students in a class when a situation occurs, for example, in which a pop quiz is given and the challenged person must travel to another area on campus, get double time to take the test, arrangements must be made to get the pop quiz immediately to another area, and the class may not resume until the challenged student returns, which will not usually be until the class is over. This exception negates the option of pop quizzes, in class impromptu testing measures, etc, that must continue to be part of post-secondary education.

2. I believe that persons with intellectual disabilities should have the opportunity for advanced study, however I am suspicious of how those opportunities might be established. If courses are modified there is always the possibility that their content may be weakened. If integration with the mainstream classroom is mandated, there is always the possibility that the experience (of the course) may be lessened.

3. All persons who qualify should have the opportunity to learn at our institution. But those who are not able to do the work should not be there.

Therefore, I would approve of aids such as note-takers and special testing environments, but I would not shorten assignments or make tests easier.

4. I think it is important that they have the same workload and assignments as students without disability, but accommodation such as extra-time for exams, written assignments and personal meetings can be made for students with disabilities.

5. I am concerned that attempts to mainstream intellectually disabled persons could have detrimental effects on college level curriculum; in effect "dumbing down" material for those with intellectual disabilities.

6. The difference lies in accommodation/equity versus outright capitulation of standards to cater the unique needs of a person with intellectual disabilities…finding the balance is the most difficult part for any institution or instructor. While I support allowing students with intellectual abilities access to collegiate study, it should be with the understanding that they meet the same intellectual standards and qualifications demanded of other students.

7. Postsecondary education, by its nature, is primarily for those who have adequate intelligence, and I fear that a program to cater to the mentally

retarded would dilute the rigor of college and university courses in an adverse way.

8. I believe postsecondary (university) is an environment that provides a clear intellectual challenge. Further, modifying course content for the sake of an intellectually challenged person is lowering the standards. There should be institutions for such people elsewhere.

9. I do think that they should have opportunities for secondary education but I also think we need to be realistic about their abilities. Even students without specific disabilities do not have the ability to go to college and obtain a degree. We must evaluate each one on a case-by-case basis and give them as much help as they need without disrupting the standards of the typical classroom. More time on tests, note takers etc. are fine but to completely change a classroom to meet their needs is a little much. We must prepare them for the real world, there are certain areas where people with disabilities will not be able to succeed.

10. My background in Adult Education, experience working with the learning disabled (Adult Literacy), and experience working with a close friend with severe physical and intellectual disabilities puts me in a very unique position to consider the idea of ID in post-secondary education. For anyone that is closely aligned with both sides of the issue this was a very difficult survey to complete and a very difficult subject to even begin to

sort out. One needs to consider the educational, financial, philosophical, ethical, moral, and even logical possibilities of having an individual with ID in a classroom and then having an individual with ID in MY classroom.

12. The experience of being on a college campus can help add to the feelings of acceptance and can provide the student with new experiences, which, I think helps the student live up their fullest potential.

13. No one should be barred from access to self-improvement, the issue is how to best achieve it. I have no personal expertise or knowledge of the particulars of this issue so I cannot comment on the hows and whys of reaching out to the needs of the intellectually disabled, however, I support effective efforts on their behalf, including “inclusion” at the post-secondary level in some form. I do believe that whatever methods are attempted they should be evaluated and continued only in conjunction with some scientific proof of their efficacy.

14. They have the equal right to pursue education in the field they choose and community colleges might be a good option financially and academically. In addition extra help might definitely help boost their confidence and self-respect.

15. People with intellectual disabilities want to learn and to have a college experience similar to their peer and siblings with out disabilities. These experiences provide opportunities for growth and friendships along with many levels of support. “They are people too.”

16. One can always learn from another. Students, who are intellectually challenged are not necessarily so in all areas. Just as the so called “normal” student should have the opportunity to go as far as she/he can go, so too should the student seen as intellectually challenged. We all have limits and we all should have the rights to dispel them.

17. Everyone should have the opportunity to grow and learn to the limits of their ability. That said, people with disabilities, by definition, have “limits to their abilities.” Institutional rules and expectations must confront that unhappy fact.

18. Intellectual disabilities vary, and my experience has been that most persons with such disabilities can learn material that may be of benefit to them.

19. I want to qualify that I believe “level of disability” is relevant here. Most people with intellectual disabilities are only mildly impaired and can learn in traditional classroom settings with minor adjustments/allowances. If a

student is capable of learning with such adjustments and WANTS to achieve higher education, I strongly support their right to do so. Most of my experience has been with “learning disabilities” and we have an office on campus that works with these students to ensure their academic success. They are given separate testing environments with extended time, note-takers, etc. as needed and we as faculty are strongly encouraged to be supportive of their academic endeavors. I have seen NO problems with this system and have never met a faculty member who was unwilling to help these students succeed.

20. I think that it depends on the degree of disability. A great deal of resources go into assisting students with these types of disabilities are reasonable. I have had one student with a severe disability. I think we have to judge the costs and benefits associated with assisting students whose disabilities extend beyond the type we get here at (name of school removed). The costs have to be justified.

21. I think the level of disability would have a huge impact in the classroom. I would be happy to have a person with intellectual disabilities in the classroom, but I’m not willing to extensively change or slow the content in order for the person to keep up with the class. I would be willing to make modification such as note takers, extended test time, etc, but I’m hesitant to modify course content for one or two students.

22. I think that they should be given the opportunity to learn vocations that they can safely and adequately pursue to support themselves. There are some vocations, those requiring higher level intellectual functioning, may not be appropriate. But there are many vocations, such as IT, culinary arts, etc. that might be appropriate. Nursing and nursing related vocations would not be appropriate for those with moderate to severe intellectual disability.

23. In some cases I believe that we are providing our students with a disservice by letting them continue trying to pursue a college degree. Many of the students that I have encountered who are pursuing an Associates Degree with plans to continue on to the Baccalaureate Degree level do not have the mental capabilities to finish that degree. I do believe that some of these students would be better served in a technical or workforce type of degree plan.

24. I myself am athletically disabled compared to a professional athlete. No one expects the rules to be changed to allow me to compete. There are other things I can do that are within my abilities, so I got a PhD in physics. The professional athlete might run a summer camp for kids but they're not going to take the kids to training camp. I might do a program at a school for the special needs students but I don't think they belong in my classes.

25. I cannot imagine that we should accommodate in our society a bus driver with no arms, a soldier with no feet, or a student with no intellectual abilities going to college. And I am a liberal Democrat. We can help disadvantaged people, but sending people who cannot learn to college is like sending someone who cannot hold a gun to war.

26. The goal of the learning is the deciding factor. For instance – health care requires assessment, judgment, decision making – all with regard to diagnosis and treatment of a patient. For patient safety – a student with intellectual limitations that DO NOT support these activities should not be pursuing this type of education. On the other hand, if their disabilities do not interfere with the end goal, then they should have open access to courses.

27. I teach at a community college, and I believe the mission of community colleges is to provide opportunity for personal growth for people of all backgrounds. If a person has an intellectual disability, this should not exclude him/her from learning and thriving like any other person. His/her learning style and instructional needs may be different from that of most "mainstream" students, but anyone who can learn should have the opportunity to do so at a community college.

28. I think that persons with intellectual disabilities should be given opportunities to learn in ALL institutions. In some ways, we all have learning “disabilities”. Some of us learn faster; some slower; some need to rewrite it; some need to hear it again. I think the goal should be to approach the area where they are strongest; for example, I am a very visual learner. I learn best when I rewrite things, and I can picture it in my head.

29. I think that all students should be given the opportunity to learn. That strong, personal belief overrides all misgivings I may have about individuals with intellectual disabilities concerning their ability to do college-level work.

30. Intellectual disabilities should be treated as physical disabilities are.

31. These individuals are citizens and the same human rights as those without disabilities—if they can meet the requirements to pursue a goal/dream for themselves, then it is a violation of their civil rights to be denied. They are people too.

32. I admit to ambivalence on this issue. Even a person with intellectual disabilities has a fundamental ability to learn “something”, and should be given opportunities to learn what they can. I do, however, have concerns

when space and faculty limitations create a shortage of available seats in classes that are required for progressing through an academic program. To have those limited seats taken by individuals with little chance of progressing, seems unfair to others and an “inefficient” use of available resources.

33. Theoretically, I would love to fully support the goals and ambitions of those with intellectual disabilities. On a practical level, at public universities, our resources are stretched very thin as it is, and, although I gladly do it, accommodations take time and energy away from other students and other professional activities for me. I am saddened by my own answers here, as I really support inclusion. But I know that universities will not provide additional resources –it will just be one more thing that faculty members are expected to add to their already overwhelming list of tasks and responsibilities. My classes already have too many students in them; I also worry that for me to add students that may struggle to keep up with the concepts of the course and whose questions may interrupt the already necessarily crammed pace of a course would simply take away from what other students could accomplish. Mainly, though, it’s that spending time assisting students with disabilities is not considered important when I am going up for tenure, and I have only a limited number of hours in a day and am stressed to my limit already.

34. I've watched these students take the same class repeatedly –though not always with the same instructor—always failing. Psychologically, this must be devastating to the individual. It's a waste of time that could be spent training in a field where the student could be successful and fulfilled and is not beyond his/her intellectual disability.

35. I have had students in the RN program who had limited intellectual abilities for whatever reason and they could not given the two chances given every student grasp the material. I felt great sorrow for them because they could not reach their goal and had been lead to believe they could by someone earlier in their schooling. Repeated failures can demoralize a student and I hate to see that happen. Some have left the RN program and made wonderful LPN where level of responsibility is not as great.

36. I had one student that I would classify as a Failure who received substantial "help" to graduate She could not do it on her own. Upon graduation, she was offered a free ride at Harvard. She asked me to write a required 5 page essay for her (as part of her official application process). I refused. All I think of is the thousands of deserving and capable students that would kill to have that opportunity and how she was so undeserving.

37. While I do feel compassion for students with intellectual disabilities, and I understand the benefits to the individual, I don't agree that students with intellectual disabilities should be in the same classroom with regular students, which divides the instructor's time and distracts from primary duties. I also don't believe that the coursework and assignments should be made easier or shortened for persons with intellectual disabilities, when they are receiving a grade and credit hours. Neither do I believe that, should they actually complete all of the requirements to earn a degree, they should be awarded the same degree as all of the students who completed a more rigorous level of work to receive the same degree. To prospective employers, the degree represents an ability to perform at a high level of intellectual capacity, and I believe that a system which reduces the rigor for some students also devalues the degree and causes a misrepresentation to prospective employers.

38. My feeling is that anyone with an intellectual disability should be held to the same standards as other students. Their disabilities should entitle them to various support services and extra time on exams, but not easier assignments. That is, unless we'll award a different degree for people who didn't have to do the challenging assignments.

39. For several years (more than long enough for the student to have graduated), I worked with a young woman that was so withdrawn that it

took two hours to get her to select courses. Last year or so, she expressed the desire to be a secondary level English teacher. Her grades were sufficiently high, and her ACT score was barely high enough so she was accepted to the Education program. She was capable of reading the material, but the minute she was asked a question she refused to speak. She refused to work with her classmates, or her cooperating teacher. When a cooperating teacher gave her an opportunity to work in a public school classroom (required of all students) the young woman refused to talk to, work with, or even look at the high school students. She reported to us that she had been highly involved with the students because she collected some homework assignments for the teacher. This young woman's autism would never allow her to work with other people comfortably. She could have finished her degree as an English major, (and potentially succeeded as a library researcher) but the experience of trying to be a high school teacher so traumatized her that she had to drop out of school. Another unhappy person with a financial burden to bear. Granted good counseling would have kept her out of Education or any other job where high interpersonal contact is required. However, she has the freedom to make her own choices, and her disability makes it almost impossible for her to accept that people might have her best interests in mind.

40. I have had students in the classroom and find that working with them is more challenging. However, they are willing to learn. I often have to

work with them outside class, remind them of things that are due, allow them to redo pieces, and accommodate testing. However this isn't a big deal to me. Many students have issues with them in the classroom and I know of other faculty who have turned on the disabled student for that reason. However, I ignore the comments or simply explain other have different learning styles. I think this protects the student in question and helps create a perception of learning camaraderie to occur.

41. Occasionally, I have also had student with below-average intelligence or behavioral conditions (e.g. Tourette's syndrome). While I have welcomed and included thoroughly all of these students (and have numerous thank-you letters from them), I have found them frequently exhausting. I have to work very had to make my classes work under these circumstances, and there is often a disruptive quality that can unbalance the "chemistry" of a group or class trying to work together. Generally, even with students with physical disabilities (deafness, blindness, e.g.), I end up working very hard to accommodate some (though not all) students.

42. I have had several students with brain injuries due to accidents that left them with an intellectual disability. I have also worked with individuals with mild and severe downs syndrome. In the case of the individuals with accident caused brain injury I new a graduate student in physics who became injured. He was unable to continue most of his work but he did

attend classes for a while. He eventually decided to get training in something that he was actually able to do. The classes helped in the transition from graduate school to a job but when it was all over he felt that continuing classes had been non productive. The second individual had recurring severe pain resulting from an accident that made it impossible to work for more than a couple of months before they would be gone for a couple of weeks. At the end of that time they could not retain information from the previous period. Basically he felt that he should be able to repeat the same course for five years for one semester's worth of tuition. He monopolized my time in lab. He would ask for help, get help and then do something completely different. Then complain that I gave him the wrong help. If I was with another student he would do the same to the students around him. After three semesters of this the administration gave him credit for my course and his other courses so that he would get his degree. Unfortunately he remembered nothing related to his degree. In this sections with this student I had many complaints about not being able to answer everyone’s questions and I had a higher drop rate than my other sections of the same course over those three semesters. How is it that this one student's "right" out weighed those of other students I have worked at jobs outside the university with intellectually disabled people and for the people working side by side with them are forced to do extra work. For example when I worked in food service going to college, I worked with a downs syndrome person. To put it plainly, not only did I have to keep

them on track, I also had to redo things that weren't up to code when they weren't around. On nights where they helped me I did twice the work on nights when I was by myself. It's not that they couldn't do the tasks which they could. They couldn't keep up with the pace required when dealing with customers.

43. My student was unable to appropriately participate in class discussions, so this alienated other students, who were very patient, but eventually couldn't take it anymore and were rude-but only once. This student went on to apply for a law enforcement job, and when I was called as his reference I had to say that he could not control himself or sense human interactions accurately enough to do this type of job. It would have benefited him greatly to have had some assessment that gave him a more realistic view of job possibilities. A colleague feels this person could have been one who was at risk of losing it and shooting up a classroom. I didn't feel he was that great a threat, but we have no resources if we feel there might be this kind of problem or others. Our disability resources office is very underfunded, and has no political power on campus. I believe that it only exists to fulfill the federal requirements. The director does a great job with the limited resources she has. With the influx of students with severe problems she does not have the resources or university backing to do accurate assessments for academic success, or to assess the threat level of these students. Another colleague of mine was verbally abused by a

disabled student in front of her other students at the end of class. Since then she has been very fearful of this student, and feels she has been less highly regarded by other students who witnessed this.

44. Oh yes. First, let me say that things can be taken to extremes. This is a little off topic, but let me say that in a prior school, the ADA said we had to actually accept a blind student into a visual computer design Art program. The student literally had a visual person trying to describe the computer web pages the blind student was developing, and techniques such as "Rainbow blur" or other Photoshop editing. We didn't feel the student was creating art--it was the "assistant". We had no choice but to show "reasonable accommodations" to an unreasonable and ultimately illogical career goal. In my current classroom, I have had many Asperger's diagnosed students who caused social disruptions due to behavior. I've had bi-polar folks "go off" in class. I've personally had training in dealing with such folks, but it's hardly a normal skill the average prof has, any more than requiring all college staff/professors to know CPR. I've had to deal with giving separate daily quizzes in a testing center, extra time on tests, oral readers. I worked with handicapped adults as a Program Coordinator, overseeing a residential home, and writing teaching programs. My individuals ranged from non-speaking, minimal life skills, to quadriplegics, seizure disorder, bi-polar, schizophrenics and ages 18-72. Some did go to jobs, and attend adult classes at a local college. I can say

many are my friends. But while I can have friendship and empathy and sympathy, I have to say that I am hired to be a Postsecondary teacher, to teach higher education for the primary purpose of receipt of a college degree. We professors often ask ourselves: "In the real world, do I tell my mechanic, please take the extra time you need to fix my car, beyond the time the insurance says the labor should take? Do real people in the work force get the accommodations we allow our students in their special needs?" I think that we are doing our students an injustice and giving them unreal expectations about what life is like with extra time, readers, special professorial notes. And don't think the "normal" folks are oblivious--they resent peers getting what they see as preferential treatment and help to receive an 'A' while they themselves struggle with jobs, family and C's in the classroom. Lastly, my own son (now 18) went from a regular grade school classroom to the disabled classroom in Junior High, and his diagnosis went from ADHD to Oppositional Defiance, to Bi-Polar and has been treated in institutions for his sometimes violent behavior. I'm not totally convinced that he is an innocent victim--I see plenty of evidence that he manipulated the school system out of ability, laziness, fear, etc to get easier tests, opt out of classes and other accommodations. He is not the productive adult he should be or could be. I would love to see him finish school, he lacks even his high school diploma. But I dread the student he could be in college, were he in my classes. He is not college material, and

I think I have to say that there are different levels of postsecondary education and the "college material" who should attend them.

45. I have had several students over the last few years with a variety of disabilities including dyslexia, ADHD, severe depression, physical ailments including terminal diseases, physical trauma, sexual assault and malformation of bodily systems, schizophrenia, and autism in various forms. I have no concern with these students other than they complete the work as needed to pass the class--in terms of personal judgment, I do not perceive them as more or less a student than others without said issues. Perhaps this viewpoint derives from a long term (30 years plus) understanding of the limitations yet unique abilities persons with disabilities possess. My childhood friend of 32 years is a severe quadriplegic with MS and speech privation but has been attending college in pursuit of her degree for 14 years. She graduates in December from the University of Illinois in Springfield. Yahoo! Another perspective I might offer you is this--I am a solely online instructor. Some of the students mentioned above were in traditional face-to-face classrooms (including one with Asperger's) but I have found that the internet is a great equalizer. The nature of my online courses (I teach American History I and II) allow for greater flexibility for students struggling to overcome or work through their disabilities--as such, a student who has a speech/mental clarity issues can shine in an environment where their written/non-verbal skills are their

best means to learn and communicate. Most of my experience with successful student training for those with intellectual disabilities has occurred in the web courses; partly due, I think, to greater access and convenience for them at their own pace - my modules are usually over a full 7 days rather than crammed into a brief in-class meeting- but also to the lack of stigma in an asynchronous forum.

46. The problems I have had come from students who somehow fake their way into being diagnosed with disabilities so they can try to get out of doing school work. They give a bad name and undue suspicion to those students who legitimately have learning disabilities but refuse to use them as an excuse and get the work done despite their disabilities.

47. One student is challenged with an inability to write or spell in any way coherently. She also has difficulty reading. She is permitted to use software for her disability that interprets her writing, grammar and spelling so that her answers are re-constructed for her before being returned to her professor. She is also allowed a scribe in each class to take notes or write pop quizzes for her if she chooses. She has by-passed the time-frame allotted for remediation of English and Math courses, and has managed with the assistance of advocates in Special Services to "work outside the required academic processes" even allotted to her. She is very manipulative and aggressive and determined to find any and all

individuals who will sympathize with her and give her all kinds of waivers, exceptions etc. This is a non-trad student who will be graduating soon with a degree with our emblem on it. She cannot write a coherent sentence or spell simple words. Employer beware! This, I believe, misrepresents our degree and is fraudulent to prospective employers. I have never been a person who will not assist an individual with challenges and problems. That is my job and my belief system. But I first and foremost am a realist who believes in honesty, integrity and fairness. Our college diploma should represent competence in all areas specified by our requirements. This just isn't so any more, due to situations like these.

48. The biggest issue I've run into is with students who state that they have learning disabilities but don't provide proper documentation from the disability services office, or else they provide documentation that is unrelated to the accommodations that they want. I had one particularly unpleasant experience with a student who continually interrupted class with irrelevant questions, and was personally rude to me. I know this made the experience worse for me and for other students in the class. Not being a professional, I don't know how much of his behavior was related to his documented disability and how much was related to his personality. I have had similar issues with students who do not suffer from any apparent or documented disability so I'm hesitant to generalize from one case. Having

better support and communication from the school and the disabilities office on this issue, however, would have helped.

49. In addition to my tutoring, I have had friends with a variety of disabilities. I also have conducted research among individuals with disabilities. I would also add that in my experience NONE of my students with ANY type of disability sought an unfair advantage. They all merely wanted to be on the same playing field.

50. Yes, my daughter when she graduated wanted to go to college like her friends. However, it was difficult to find a place that would assist to the degree she needed and she was comfortable with. Therefore, instead of her being able to get a degree she has had to settle for a school that will offer her a certificate and a vocation.

51. I parent a college-age person with an intellectual disability who is attending a program based on a community college campus though not on my campus.

52. I've only had students who need extra test-taking time due to test anxiety or learning disabilities. However, my son (with his intellectual disability) will have an opportunity to attend a postsecondary school or I will have failed him as a parent.

53. As I said I fit under both categories (Physical [physical handicapped] and Intellectual [extreme Adult ADHD) if not for individuals who assisted me and altered program requirements, policies, etc…I would not have succeeded at the level I am! EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES can and ARE REWARDING! It is fear that we somehow diminish the quality of programs or our perceived position is somehow tarnished by working with these individuals that complicates such programs from growing…it's easy to say you accept…it is when you must reality is apparent! I hate that some individuals especially those in higher ed hold them self in such high esteem and forget all those who sacrificed for them!

54. Yes. I have a brain tumor and seizures, so you might call me intellectually challenged. But, I also have a degree in psychology, and have worked with acute care psyc patients as well as adolescent patients who have learning disabilities. Although I'm no longer in that field, I now use that knowledge to tailor my teaching in different ways. Example: I had a student in two classes last semester who had a speech and hearing impairment. I got to know her. I earned her trust. Found out the best way to teach her was by being patient with her, it just took her a while to learn it, etc. We are now good friends. We actually have a lot in common; when I have seizures, I have a problem speaking. So, we bonded over that. I like using humor in the classroom. I would be lost without humor!!

55. Having worked with autistic children (my brother, of whom I essentially was primary caretaker--in my household--while growing up was originally diagnosed as autistic) for several summers, I feel I am at least aware of the varying degrees of understanding that an 'intellectually disabled' can grasp dependent on the subject. Because the interrelationship between fields of knowledge becomes more complex as grade level increases, I find it difficult to imagine what purpose advanced education would have for the 'intellectually disabled'. If the value is found in self-fulfillment, then these programs should be relegated to something along the lines of adult education through community colleges. If it is for career advancement, then I can not imagine what would be studied that could not be covered through either on-the-job training or through vocational education. Higher Education is already being SEVERLY weakened by the hordes of under-educated high school graduates who are being thrown into the system each year, all with the expectation that it is their birthrite to be presented with a degree in 4 years.

56. My sister (deceased) had an intellectual disability. She attained her high school diploma and would have been successful in some college courses. Others, however, she would not have passed. My own courses (particularly research methods) would not have been appropriate for her.

57. I have a nephew who is autistic and a fairly severe case. It would be totally inappropriate for persons like him to be in a university environment. On the other hand, I had a student who showed some characteristics of autism. Accommodations were made for him and he successfully completed the program.

58. I have had the opportunity to work with colleagues who work with students with varying disabilities. While I have always felt that all students should have the opportunity to learn, I've come to know more about this population through my colleagues that have contributed to my knowledge of individuals with disabilities.

VITA

Andrew Fisher was born in Hays, Kansas on September 21, 1977 to Dennis Fisher and Janet Hutchinson. He attended the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas where he completed a degree in Anthropology. While in Denton, Andrew met his wife Shauna Williamson. They now have four children, Robert Andrew, Molly Kate, Claire Olea, and Calvin Ammon.

Andrew and his family are active in their church and community, taking part in church service and instruction while maintaining a connection to education. Andrew currently serves as a volunteer clergy member for his local congregation supporting the youth, facilities, and Sunday school courses.

Andrew completed a Master's Degree in College Teaching at Texas A&M University-Commerce before moving to Henderson and taking a position at Panola College. Andrew currently serves as Chair of the Developmental Studies Department at Panola.

Andrew earned a Doctor of Education degree with a major in Supervision, Curriculum, and Instruction-Higher Education in December 2008 from Texas A&M University-Commerce.

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