

Student Employment Exit Survey

Disability Services

Spring 2015

Background

According to its website (<http://disability.tamu.edu/>), Disability Services “offers accommodations coordination, evaluation referral, disability-related information, adaptive technology services, sign language interpreting and transcription services for academically related purposes.” Furthermore, Disability Services staff members “interact and collaborate with students, faculty and staff to promote an inclusive environment at Texas A&M University by educating the campus community and facilitating appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities.”

Disability Services has student employees to assist in accomplishing its mission and provide services to students. The staff wanted to conduct an exit survey to understand the employment experiences for their students who were leaving their position. While Disability Services has worked with Student Life Studies in the past, this is the first time to assess this project.

Method and Sample

The 14-question survey was developed using Qualtrics®, survey design software that creates web-based forms and databases. The survey consisted of eight quantitative questions, five qualitative questions, and one demographic question. Due to branching technology, not all students saw all the questions. The data was analyzed using SPSS®, a statistical software package, and Microsoft Excel®.

The electronic survey was created as an open survey for Disability Services to send the general link to the students who were close to leaving their position during the spring semester. There were nine completed surveys, but it unknown how many students were provided the opportunity to respond to the survey to determine a response rate.

Results

Results will be reported as means, standard deviations (sd), and frequency percentages for the number of people (n) who responded to the question. For ease of reading, frequency percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percent, so totals may not add up to exactly 100%. Qualitative themes are contained in this report; the entire list can be found in a separate document.

Student employees were asked what they learned in their job with Disability Services that would benefit them in their career, and all nine responded. Students commented on learning communication skills, time management skills, interpersonal skills or working with different people, and professionalism.

When asked to describe the impact their role had with Disability Services beyond their job description, eight students wrote in a comment. Students talked about the staff being a community, working together, contributing to a positive team morale, and feeling valued.

All respondents provided a comment when asked about the benefits of working on campus. The students appreciated the convenience of working on campus and being close to their classes, the flexibility of scheduling hours, especially around classes, the understanding staff, and being able to discuss classes at work.

All students were asked about their primary reason for leaving their position. Over three-fourths (78%) were graduating and 11% reported taking an internship related to their major. Additionally, 11% selected the “other” option and wrote in that they were getting married. Nobody selected the options to have more time for academics, to have more personal time, or to take another job either on-campus or off-campus. Due to the small number of students completing the survey, one response represented 11%.

Students who were graduating (n=7) were asked a couple follow-up questions. First, they were asked if they had a job or had been accepted to graduate school. Just over half (57%) said yes and 43% said no. Students were then asked to expand on what their plans were for after graduation and all seven wrote in a response. Those with employment or graduate school lined up indicated the company or program they were going to. One discussed having interviews, but would be going to San Antonio, and one expressed securing a full-time job.

Student employees were asked to rate their supervisor in several areas and were provided definitions for the scale: exemplary, exceeds expectations, achieves, improvement needed, and unsatisfactory. Table 1, in descending mean order, shows that student employees were extremely positive about their supervisor, especially that they are supportive. One respondent represented 11%.

Please rate your supervisor on these areas:	Exemplary (5)	Exceeds Expectations (4)	Achieves (3)	Improvement Needed (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)	Mean (sd) [n=9]
Supportive	56%	44%	--	--	--	4.56 (.53)
Accountability	44%	44%	11%	--	--	4.33 (.71)
Organization	44%	44%	11%	--	--	4.33 (.71)
Approachability	44%	33%	22%	--	--	4.22 (.83)
Professional Development	44%	33%	22%	--	--	4.22 (.83)
Communication	33%	56%	11%	--	--	4.22 (.67)

Table 1—Supervisors

Additionally, students were provided the opportunity to write in any comment regarding their supervisor, and five shared feedback. All the comments were positive and students expressed that their supervisor was supportive, flexible, awesome, understanding, caring, and knowledgeable.

The final question asked students how many semesters they worked for Disability Services. Almost half (44%) of the students had worked for Disability Services for six or more semesters, 22% had been with the Department for two semesters, and 11% each reported one semester, three semesters, and five semesters.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the results from this assessment, students working in Disability Services seem to have a positive learning experience. Students could articulate what they learned from their position and how they could apply that to a future career. Additionally, students seemed to be very satisfied with their positions and especially their supervisors in the Department. This is evident by the number of students that continue their employment with Disability Services for multiple semesters and leave the position most often when they graduate.

The Department may want to use these results as they recruit new student employees and share what the experiences of former student workers. Disability Services is encouraged to read all qualitative responses to gain a fuller understanding of student employees' experiences. It is also encouraged that this report be shared with all Departmental staff.

Report prepared for: Lenny Lee Sanders, Disability Services
 Report prepared by: Kelly Cox, Student Life Studies
 Survey designed by: Barb Schumacher, Student Life Studies
 Analysis prepared by: Timothy Salazar, Student Life Studies
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