

Disability Resources Student Survey Spring 2020

Purpose of Assessment

Disability Resources wanted to assess the overall satisfaction of the students registered with the department to understand their experience working with the department staff, as well as specific changes based on the university moving to a remote environment due to COVID-19. This is the sixth time Disability Resources worked with Student Life Studies to assess the students registered with their office.

Method and Sample

The 16-question survey was developed using Qualtrics®, a survey design software that creates web-based forms and databases. The survey consisted of 11 quantitative questions and five qualitative questions. Due to branching technology, not all students saw all the questions. The electronic survey link was sent to 2,474 registered students on April 23, 2020, using students' university email addresses. Non-respondents received up to three reminders before the survey closed on May 4, 2020. Three email addresses were returned and those students did not receive the survey invitation. Of the 2,471 students who successfully received the email, 691 students took some part of the survey, yielding a response rate of 28%.

Key Findings with Recommendations

Student Life Studies identified a few key findings and actionable recommendations for Disability Resources based on the results of the survey. However, department staff may identify other findings using their knowledge and understanding of the population. Staff members are strongly encouraged to read all the results and qualitative comments to gain a fuller understanding of students' experiences. Additionally, Student Life Studies recommends sharing the results with various stakeholders. Any changes made based on the feedback from the survey could be highlighted that those changes were based on student feedback.

- The students responding to this survey appeared to be in agreement that the Disability Resources staff treats them with respect, equity, and fairness. Additionally, students were satisfied with department services and interactions with Disability Resources staff. One note to consider is that the only opportunity to provide qualitative feedback was for those who indicated low satisfaction with specific areas and comments should be used only to provide context for negative experiences.
- Disability Resources staff might consider how expectations are set with students. Some of the qualitative comments involved students expecting or wanting something different than is provided. Looking at how expectations are set might provide students with a better understanding of what they can and cannot receive and/or what staff members will or will not do.

Results

Results are 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%. Tables are in descending mean or frequency percentage order for Spring 2020 unless otherwise stated. Summary themes for the qualitative questions are included in this report; the entire list can be found in a separate document. Comparisons to previous surveys will be made where appropriate; however, the scale for some response options changed for some questions, and comparisons cannot be made.

Students were initially asked to respond to questions based on their overall experience with Disability Resources, and not specifically about moving to online services. Students were given the opportunity to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with several aspects of working with the staff. Table 1 shows students were generally in agreement with all the statements. Students reported the most agreement with being treated equitably and fairly by the Disability Resources staff.

	Strongly Agree (6)	Agree (5)	Somewhat Agree (4)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Agree (1)	Spring 2020 Mean (sd) [n]
I am treated equitably and fairly by the Disability Resources staff.	75%	22%	2%	1%	--	<1%	5.71 (.56) [647]
I feel respected by Disability Resources staff.	74%	22%	3%	1%	<1%	<1%	5.67 (.65) [648]
I feel welcomed in the Disability Resources office.	71%	24%	4%	1%	<1%	<1%	5.64 (.66) [645]
Disability Resources collaborated with me to meet my disability-related needs.	67%	28%	5%	1%	1%	<1%	5.59 (.68) [648]
Disability Resources staff provided prompt and useful feedback regarding my accommodation requests, questions, and concerns.	66%	28%	4%	1%	<1%	<1%	5.58 (.70) [646]

Table 1 – Experience with Staff

If a student indicated they somewhat disagreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with any of the statements in Table 1, a follow-up question was provided for them to expand why they disagreed with the statement. Of the eight students who disagreed that Disability Resources collaborated with them to meet their disability-related needs, six students wrote a wide-range of comments. Some talked about wanting the Disability Resources staff to do more for them and be more active in the process. One indicated only being contacted once during the semester. Comments from two students were about experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic; one reported not receiving a response and the other experienced some challenges with the remote testing environment through Zoom.

Ten students reported being dissatisfied with Disability Resources staff providing prompt and useful feedback regarding their accommodation requests, questions, and concerns. Eight students wrote a comment with many of them expressing that Disability Resources took a long time to reply or that the staff did not resolve the issue. One student's comment was related to the experience since moving remotely.

Of the eight students disagreeing that they felt respected by Disability Resources staff, four responded to the follow-up question. Students shared that Disability Resources staff were short, did not show empathy, and could be rude.

Five of the nine students who reported not feeling welcomed in the Disability Resources office shared that staff can be rude, did not show warmth, made it seem like a chore to meet with them, and were sassy due to a scheduling mistake.

Of the five students who responded that they disagreed with being treated equitably and fairly by the Disability Resources staff, three shared a comment. One student talked about not receiving any aid during the process of a medical withdrawal. Another student shared that it seems like the department provided only what is required by law and described the responses from the department as a “cookie-cutter solution or we’re sorry, we can’t help you.”

Registered students were asked to rate their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with services provided by the department. Table 2 illustrates that students were generally satisfied with all areas; however, students reported being less satisfied compared to fall 2018 for all three statements.

	Very Satisfied (5)	Satisfied (4)	Unsure (3)	Dissatisfied (2)	Very Dissatisfied (1)	Spring 2020 Mean (sd) [n]	Fall 2018 Mean (sd) [n]
The facilitation of my accommodations by my Access Coordinator.	67%	29%	3%	1%	<1%	4.61 (.62) [643]	4.79 (.56) [611]
Availability of Disability Resources staff for questions and concerns.	60%	36%	4%	1%	<1%	4.53 (.64) [645]	4.70 (.61) [610]
Advice provided by Disability Resources staff on disability-related matters.	63%	30%	6%	2%	<1%	4.53 (.70) [644]	4.69 (.66) [609]

Table 2 – Experience with Accommodations

The last set of questions asked students to respond based on the transition of all classes moving to remote learning and Disability Resources also working remotely. Students were asked to rate their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the staff specifically during this time. As seen in Table 3, on the following page, the majority of the students rated being satisfied with the services from department staff during this transition to remote learning. However, overall students were slightly less positive in the statements specifically about remote learning than they were previously in rating the department services and interactions with staff.

	Very Satisfied (5)	Satisfied (4)	Unsure (3)	Dissatisfied (2)	Very Dissatisfied (1)	Spring 2020 Mean (sd) [n]
Timeliness of my Access Coordinator in responding to my questions.	64%	30%	4%	1%	1%	4.57 (.67) [593]
Ability of my Access Coordinator to help with any access issues that I had with my online classes.	63%	29%	7%	1%	<1%	4.53 (.70) [569]
Communication from the Disability Resources Office about the transition.	58%	33%	7%	2%	<1%	4.46 (.74) [627]

Table 3 – Experience with Staff Working Remotely

Demographics for the population of registered students for the spring 2020 semester and the survey respondents were gathered from the Texas A&M student database. Table 4, on the following page in descending order by the survey respondents for each category, displays the results for those with valid UIN. Most students registered with Disability Resources and responding to the survey were seniors, engineering major, White, females, and not first generation or Top 10%. The survey respondents were fairly similar when compared to the population except for a slight underrepresentation of seniors and male students.

	Spring 2020 Survey Population [N=2,474]	Spring 2020 Survey Respondents [n=691]
Classification		
Senior	37%	30%
Junior	23%	24%
Sophomore	21%	23%
Freshman	11%	13%
Masters	4%	5%
Doctorate	2%	3%
Nondegree/Postbac	1%	1%
Medical/Pharmacy (all years)	1%	1%
Veterinary (all years)	1%	1%
Sex		
Female	57%	64%
Male	43%	36%
First Generation Status		
Not First Generation	80%	80%
First Generation	15%	15%
Unknown	4%	5%
Race		
White	70%	70%
Hispanic or Latino	18%	18%
Asian	3%	4%
Multi-Racial excluding Black	3%	4%
Black or Multi-Racial with Black	4%	2%
International	1%	1%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	<1%	<1%
Unknown or Not Reported	<1%	<1%
American Indian	<1%	<1%
College		
Engineering	23%	22%
Agriculture and Life Sciences	14%	15%
Liberal Arts	16%	14%
Mays Business School	12%	12%
Education and Human Development	11%	11%
Veterinary Medicine	5%	6%
Science	4%	6%
General Studies	5%	5%
Architecture	5%	4%
Medicine/Nursing/Pharmacy	2%	2%
Public Health	2%	2%
Geosciences	2%	1%
Bush School of Government	<1%	<1%
Exchange	<1%	--
Top Ten Percent		
Not Top 10	70%	66%
Top 10	30%	34%

Table 4: Student Demographics

Department Background

According to its website (<http://disability.tamu.edu/>), Disability Resources “offers accommodations coordination, evaluation referral, disability-related information, assistive technology services, sign language interpreting and transcription services for academically related purposes.” Furthermore, the department has three guiding principles they use to promote disability to be seen as an aspect of diversity. These three principles include equity, collaboration, and excellence.

Project Details

The email distribution of this survey in April 2020 coincided with the move of all courses to online delivery, and shelter at home executive orders caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This change could have an effect on the survey response rate and the feedback provided by students.

The Department of Student Life Studies provides quality assessment services, resources, and assessment training for departments in the Texas A&M University Division of Student Affairs and student organizations. Services by Student Life Studies are funded, in part, by the Texas A&M University Advancement Fee. Results of this project and other assessment projects done through Student Life Studies can be found at <https://studentlifestudies.tamu.edu/results/>. Additionally, division staff and students can follow Student Life Studies on Facebook.

To work with Student Life Studies for future assessment projects, please fill out the Assessment Questionnaire at <https://slsform.dsaapps.tamu.edu/>.

Report Prepared for:	Whitney Ward, Disability Services
Report Prepared by:	Kelly Cox, Student Life Studies
Prepared on:	May 4, 2020
Survey Prepared by:	Kelly Cox, Student Life Studies
Analysis Prepared by:	Ligia Perez, Student Life Studies