

**Bowling Green State University  
Division of Student Affairs  
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Report Template**

This template\* is designed to assist you as you prepare your assessment report. When preparing this report, please be sure to focus on student learning outcomes. We understand that departments and units assess various aspects of the student experience. This report should focus only on the student learning outcomes' piece of the larger assessment puzzle. Please complete requested information in the space below each box; tailor the length of the report to your needs. For assistance in preparing an assessment plan or help in better understanding the assessment process please see Appendix 1.

**Student Affairs Department or Unit** (*i.e. Career Center, Athletics, CMAI*)

*Disability Services*

**Academic Year in Which Assessment Was Completed**

2007-2008

**Director/Report Author(s)**

Rob Cunningham

**Description of Event(s)/Program(s)/Project(s) Being Assessed:**

*This report should include student learning outcome assessment projects for your department/unit. While we understand that student satisfaction, facility usage, customer satisfaction, staff development, and other specific issues are important to measure for various units, please do not include those evaluations in the descriptive area of your report. This section should provide a summary of the event(s)/program(s)/project(s) on which you are focusing in this report. It should also give the Assessment Committee an overview of the focus and participants. If you are including multiple programs, clearly indicate this by using a consistent numbering or lettering system throughout the report.*

Similar to last year, we've chosen to focus on not one specific activity or event to measure the impact of, but rather, the entire scope of our interactions with our students. Thus, we will be assessing the impact of the numerous accommodations/services provided relative to students meeting our stated learning outcomes. The following list, while not exhaustive, is illustrative of the services students with disabilities routinely make use of: modified exam administration, transportation services, adaptive technology, referral to academic support units, orientation to campus facilities, reader services and alternative formatted materials, sign language/real time captioning services, note-taking assistance, and self-advocacy skills coaching.

**Student Learning Outcomes of Event(s)/Program(s)/Project(s):**

*Student learning outcomes are what we strive for students to learn by attendance/participation in the event(s)/program(s)/project(s) you are assessing. Outcomes should be established prior to the event/program/project taking place.*

*\*For more information on writing student learning outcomes, please see Guide for Writing Student Learning Outcomes.*

The learning outcomes assessed this year, again align with the goal of empowering students to persist at BGSU and beyond. Specifically, these goals are:

- Students will learn to set goals, and develop plans to achieve these goals.
- Students will learn to effectively communicate their need for appropriate accommodations in the academic and social settings (i.e. self-advocate).

**Assessments Administered:**

*This section should describe the assessment methods used to measure the student learning outcomes. You should also include when the assessment took place, how the assessment was conducted, and philosophical descriptions of instruments used (please attach the instrument as an appendix). Methods can be both quantitative and qualitative and should be directly aligned with the stated student learning outcomes. Examples of assessment tools include, but are not limited to, the following: surveys, feedback/focus groups, interviews, observation, and evaluation.*

SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENT

**Analysis and Interpretation of Data Collected:**

*This section should contain an analysis of the data collected and how the data relates to the stated student learning outcomes. Questions to think about include, but are not limited to, the following: How many students participated? What details need to be included so the committee fully understands the population and the setting? Did the students learn what you stated they would learn? Be sure to explain.*

SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENT

**Action Plan Based on Assessment Results:**

*Now that you have assessed the student learning outcomes, and collected, compiled, analyzed, and interpreted the data, what will you do with the results? This section is where all your hard work takes shape into an action plan.*

SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENT

**Additional Assessment Project(s):**

*Please list additional assessment initiatives/projects completed by your department/unit not related to student learning outcomes. Briefly highlight the participants and the outcomes.*

\*Template Adapted from James Madison University Template, which can be found on the web at:  
[http://www.jmu.edu/judicial/wm\\_library/templateforassessment.htm](http://www.jmu.edu/judicial/wm_library/templateforassessment.htm).

## References and Resources

AAHE: *9 principles of good practice for assessing student learning*.  
<http://www.higher-ed.org/resources/assessment-AAHE.htm>

ACPA: Guidelines for Successful Assessment  
<http://www.myacpa.org/comm/assessment/Research/BestPractices/GuidelinesforSuccessfulAssessment.doc>

American Public University System, Glossary of Assessment Terms  
<http://www.apus.edu/Learning-Outcomes-Assessment/Resources/Glossary/Assessment-Glossary.htm>

Bresciani, M. J., Zelna, C. L. & Anderson, J. A. (2004). *Assessing student learning and development*. Washington, D.C.: NASPA.

BGSU, Student Achievement Assessment Committee  
<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/assessment/index.htm>

BGSU, Student Affairs Assessment Committee,  
<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/vp/page17114.html>

California State University—Fresno, Guide to Outcomes Assessment

[http://www.csufresno.edu/ir/assessment/assessment\\_guide/programmatic\\_purposes.shtml](http://www.csufresno.edu/ir/assessment/assessment_guide/programmatic_purposes.shtml)

James Madison University, [http://www.jmu.edu/judicial/wm\\_library/templateforassessment.htm](http://www.jmu.edu/judicial/wm_library/templateforassessment.htm).

North Carolina State University (offers an extensive list of online resources)

<http://www2.acs.ncsu.edu/UPA/assmt/resource.htm#toc>

Palomba, C. A. & Banta, T. W. (1999). *Assessment essentials: planning, implementing, and improving assessment in higher education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Schuh, J. H., Upcraft, M. L., and Associates (2001). *Assessment practice in student affairs: An application manual*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Upcraft, L. M. & Schuh, J. H. (1996). *Assessment in student affairs: A guide for practitioners*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

*Previous Assessment Efforts.* As a program within the Division of Student Affairs, the Disability Services unit has been required to conduct ongoing assessment activities, and to submit an annual report. The office has also undergone a periodic Program Review in accordance with departmental rotation across the division (typically every seven years). Increasingly, departments have been asked to assess student learning outcomes rather than simply evaluating student satisfaction or performance.

In preliminary conversation with Dr. Rob Cunningham, Director of Disability Services, he indicated that staffing limitations had prevented him from doing everything he might have liked to do in terms of previous assessment efforts. Under his direction, the office secured a graduate-level practicum student last year to help with their assessment effort. Focus groups were conducted involving eleven students, representing a varied sample in terms of types of disability/services used. When we met to discuss his assessment needs in greater depth, Dr. Cunningham initially suggested that this format be replicated again this year, since he was generally pleased with the suggestions that came out of these focus groups. However, he acknowledged that only a small number of students participated, and many did so out of loyalty to the positive relationships that had been established with Dr. Cunningham and his staff members. He then shared that a survey had been used in previous years, and we discussed the appeal this quantitative approach might have with external reviewers who might appreciate a wider sample. We also discussed the possibility of surveying faculty, in order to assess their familiarity with services and their role in assisting students with accommodation. (This was later identified as a possible focus for a current practicum student).

*Research Questions.* Dr. Cunningham addressed the transition issues delineated earlier, confirming that students coming to college experience a gap between the level of service that BGSU

is able to provide, compared to what they may have received in high school or community colleges. This makes it even more important for students to develop the strategies and skills necessary to accomplish their academic and personal goals. Dr. Cunningham identified two primary learning outcomes that have influenced departmental goals and practice, and have been the focus of previous assessment activities: 1) students will learn to set goals, and develop plans to achieve these goals; and 2) students will learn to effectively communicate their need for appropriate accommodations in the academic and social settings, i.e., self-advocate. (Assessment Report Template, 2007).

Additional learning outcomes for the department are provided in Appendix A. While he was interested in whether students are satisfied with the level of service his office provides, he was much more concerned with whether his program has helped students develop self-efficacy skills. A critical component to developing self-efficacy lies in the students' ability to effectively communicate their need for appropriate accommodation, whether in working with faculty in the classroom, or staff members in the residence halls or other campus areas. When asked whether these desired outcomes were communicated to students, Dr. Cunningham shared that they typically are not. This may indicate a need to solicit feedback about whether this would help students adjust expectations in transitioning to college.

The purpose of this study was to examine to what degree do students feel the Office of Disabilities has helped them develop self-efficacy in communicating their need for accommodation in academic and social settings, and can they identify factors which would contribute to improvement. In addition, this study addressed the following research questions: are students satisfied with the programs and services that are provided by the Office of Disability Services? Are faculty and administrative staff sufficiently familiar with the process for securing accommodation that they are able to make appropriate referrals? Do students feel supported when the need arises for

them to secure accommodation? Do students feel that BGSU has done enough to make the campus accessible to disabled students? And are there improvements that the campus can make in order to better meet the needs of our disabled students? This study was designed to address these questions.

### Research Design and Methods

This researcher designed an electronic web survey (modeled after an existing instrument) in order to assess the degree to which the identified learning outcomes and research questions identified above were (or were not) achieved. Demographic data was collected to ensure a variable sample, and to compare responses from users of different types of services, in order to measure satisfaction with services and efficiencies. Several short-answer, qualitative questions were included that were designed to invite students to identify factors that would improve their ability to reach these outcomes. In compliance with HSRB stipulations, staff from the Office of Disability Services distributed the survey on my behalf, to preserve the anonymity of the respondents. I had access only to non-identifying information after data collection. The Office of Disability Services assumed responsibility for distributing the survey to all users (a census sample) via email, with a cover letter from Dr. Cunningham outlining the purpose of the survey. This cover email also invited students to contact me, the Survey Coordinator, for assistance if they needed special

accommodation in completing the survey. (This was intended to ensure student anonymity by providing this support outside of calling upon staff from the Office of Disability Services).

Results of quantitative questions will primarily be presented in descriptive terms, in summarizing frequencies of responses and conducting cross-tab comparisons of specific variables. (For example, does a students' major or year in school seem to influence his or her satisfaction?) Since the web survey was my own design (albeit, drawing from previous versions) its internal

validity cannot be ascertained in the manner of proven instruments, and generalizability will be severely limited. I conducted statistical tests (chi squares) of my descriptive statistics in order to measure statistical significance, a form of internal reliability. Resources that supported my efforts included past survey results and assessment instruments used by Disability Services, including previous survey and focus-group questions. These existing resources utilized the American College Personnel Association (ACPA) Guidelines for Successful Assessment, Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS), as well as the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) in their design. This ensures alignment with professional standards and practice, despite lack of statistical validity.

I made a number of modifications to the existing web survey format, in order to address newly identified research questions outside of the original focus of previous surveys (particularly in regards to faculty interactions and involvement with administrative office staff). I met with my client to review the instrument and make additional changes, as needed. Dr. Cunningham made a few minor corrections to several items, and shared that staff in his unit were especially concerned about several questions that asked respondents to evaluate the office staff. They were particularly concerned about a “leading question” from the original survey that asked respondents to explain any negative ratings. Out of sensitivity to their concerns, I modified this question and those like it to avoid leading, by inviting respondents to comment on any of the ratings in the previous section, without characterizing their answers as either positive or negative.

I developed the web survey using Snap software in order to be able to convert responses to SPSS data format. The current survey was modeled after the previous format (2005-2006 Office of Disability Services Survey), but in addition to the new questions discussed earlier, this survey also included more demographic inquiries as well as more qualitative questions than the previous

instrument.

## Results

The survey was emailed to the entire population of “users”: those students that have registered with the Office of Disability Services and/or have used various programs or services. The Office of Disability Services provided the following descriptive information about the overall population: The survey was sent to 450 students, including 210 men (47%) and 240 women (53%). The total sample included individuals with the following known types of disability: 211 students with a learning disability or ADHD; 13 with visual impairments; 16 who were deaf or hard of hearing; and 145 with physical disabilities, chronic health concerns, or psychiatric disabilities. Of these, 20 students reported having two or more disabilities; 2 reported 3 or more disabilities. Of this group, 34 had initiated housing appeals.

A total of 53 surveys were returned (11.7 %). Respondents included 15 men (28.3%) and 36 women (67.9%). The respondents varied greatly in terms of time spent at BGSU, ranging from one semester to doctoral level (20 semesters). Those completing their first year comprised the largest group (39.6%), followed by seniors (28.3%), Juniors (13.2%) and Sophomores (7.5%). A single Transfer, Master’s and Doctoral student each responded to the survey (1.9% of the overall group). Actual respondents included individuals who reported having the following disabilities: 5 deaf/hard of hearing; 3 blind or visually impaired; 25 learning disabilities; 22 ADD/ADHD; 3 chronic health conditions; 6 mobility impaired; 4 psychiatric disabilities; and 7 specified Other (with additional descriptions including motor skills, Asperger’s, clinical depression, surgery, communication impairment, memory loss, post-concussive syndrome, seizure disorder, and sleeping disorder).

Individuals were asked to estimate the number of visits they had made to the Office of Disability Services over the course of the year. Responses ranged from 1 visit (n=9, or 17%) through

45 visits (n=1, or 1.9%). Those estimating 1-3 visits represented 37.7 % of the respondents; 4-5 visits represented 20.7%; 6-10 visits represented 17%. Those visiting the office more than 10 times represented 18.8% of the respondents.

Responses to questions in Section One of the survey indicated that many of the learning outcomes identified by the Office of Disability Services were being achieved, though there is room for improvement. Questions in this section asked respondents to rate a series of statements on the basis of their own ability to complete certain tasks, using the following scale: *Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, or Does Not Apply*. These items reflected the degree to which students had been successful at serving as their own self-advocate. The majority of responses were positive; with the exception of two items, responses of Agree or Strongly Agree averaged **well over 55% overall**. Items with particularly favorable responses included “I can set reasonable goals for myself” (97.2% Agree or Strongly Agree) and “I have personally communicated my need for accommodation with faculty” (98.2% Agree or Strongly Agree). Areas where respondents did indicate some disagreement included “I have reviewed my academic goals with my DS Counselor” (26.4% Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed) and “I have reviewed my plan to achieve my academic goals with my DS Counselor (35.9% Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed). However, while most indicated that they had discussed their academic goals with a DS Counselor (64.1%), almost 36% had not actually reviewed their plan with their Counselor. More than 35% of respondents indicated that they had not participated in any campus workshops or academic support services. While most indicated that they felt their ability to be an advocate for him/herself had improved since working with the Office of Disability Services, 14.1% Disagreed or Strongly Disagreed. Refer to Table 1 for a summary of response frequencies.

Table 1

*Frequencies of Responses to Self-Advocacy Questions (Section One)*

Question	SA		A		D		SD		N/A		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I can set reasonable goals for myself.	27	50.9	25	47.2	1	1.9					53	100
I have reviewed my academic goals with my DS Counselor.	13	24.5	21	39.6	13	24.5	1	1.9	5	9.4	53	100
I have developed a plan to achieve my academic goals	15	28.3	27	50.9	5	9.4	1	1.9	4	7.5	52	98.1
I have reviewed my plan to achieve my academic goals with my DS Counselor	12	22.6	13	24.5	17	32.1	2	3.8	9	17.0	53	100
I have personally communicated my need for accommodation with faculty,	34	64.2	18	34.0	1	1.9					53	100
I have shared my "Professor Letter" with instructors in discussing my need for accommodation.	35	66.0	14	26.4	1	1.9	1	1.9	1	1.9	52	98.1
I have personally communicated my need for accommodation to Residence Hall Staff.	7	13.2	11	20.8	6	11.3			29	54.7	53	100

I have evaluated how my disability may impact my future career.	19	35.8	30	56.6	1	1.9	3	5.7			53	100
I have visited or participated in campus workshops, conferences, and/or academic support services this semester.	14	26.4	12	22.6	11	20.8	8	15.1	8	15.1	53	100
Do you feel the DS Office has helped you to achieve the goals you have set for yourself?	20	37.7	23	43.4	6	11.3	2	3.8	2	3.8	53	100
Do you feel that your ability to be an advocate for yourself has improved since working with the DS Office?	16	30.2	29	54.7	5	9.4	3	5.7			53	100
I have found my instructors to be open and responsive regarding my need for accommodation	23	43.4	22	41.5	3	5.7	3	5.7	1	1.9	52	98.1
Can you identify ways in which the Office of Disability Services can help you improve your own ability to be a self-advocate?	17	32.1	16	30.2	13	24.5	2	3.8	4	7.5	52	98.1

Section Two of the survey included items that asked respondents to evaluate interactions with the staff of the Office of Disability Services, as well as interactions with faculty and campus administrators. Questions asked respondents to rate these interactions on a scale of Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, and Does Not Apply (N/A). Again, the results were generally positive, with well over 75% of responses in the Good and Excellent categories. Items rated as fair were generally in the 10-20% range. Ratings for Disability Services office included very few responses in the Poor range, while 5-10% of respondents did rate their interactions with faculty or administrators as Poor. The question “How do you rate the degree to which Residence Life staff have been open and responsive

regarding your need for accommodation” seemed to have the most even distribution of answers (16.9% Excellent, 15.1% Good, 17.0% Fair, 5.7% Poor; and 15.9% Did Not Apply). Refer to Table 2 for a summary of response frequencies from this section.

Table 2

*Frequencies of Responses to Service-Evaluation Questions (Section Two)*

Question 3	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		N/A		TOTAL	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
How effective are the general guidance and advisement services offered DS professional staff?	19	35.8	23	43.4	9	17.0	1	1.9	1	1.9	53	100
How do you rate the degree to which you find DS professional staff to be helpful, understanding and capable of providing services and assistance?	25	47.2	18	34.0	9	17.0	1	1.9			53	100
How do you rate the availability of DS professional staff to talk with you, to arrange for services, or to deal with a particular problem?	23	43.4	20	37.7	8	15.1			1	1.9	52	98.1
How would you rate the professionalism of DS support staff (secretaries, clerical assistants) when greeting you in the office or answering the phone?	35	66.0	16	30.2	2	3.8					53	100
How would you rate the helpfulness of DS staff when answering the phone?	29	54.7	16	30.2	4	7.5			4	7.5	53	100
How do you rate the degree to which your instructors have been well-informed about the accommodation process and role of	12	22.6	27	50.9	7	13.2	7	13.2			53	100

the DS office?												
How do you rate the degree to which your instructors have been open and responsive regarding your need for accommodation?	21	39.6	22	41.5	3	5.7	7	13.2			53	100
How do you rate the degree to which Residence Life staff have been well-informed about the accommodation process and role of the DS office?	9	17.0	8	15.1	7	13.2	5	9.4	24	45.3	53	100
How do you rate the degree to which Residence Life staff have been open and responsive regarding your need for accommodation?	10	16.9	8	15.1	9	17.0	3	5.7	23	43.4	53	100
Please rate the degree to which you have found campus offices to be well-informed about the accommodation process and role of the DS Office.	10	18.9	21	39.6	8	15.1	4	7.5	10	15.9	53	100
Please rate the degree to which you have found campus offices to be open and responsive regarding your need for accommodation.	11	20.8	20	37.7	8	15.1	4	7.5	10	18.9	53	100

Section Three of the survey asked for general feedback about the accessibility of the campus, and student satisfaction with specific services. Satisfaction with test/quiz administration, adaptive technology, and referrals to academic support services were generally positive. Areas receiving more negative responses (Fair and Poor) included Note-Taking Services (26.4%) and Orientation to Campus Facilities (28.3%) A complete summary of results from this section is provided in Table 3.

Table 3

*Frequency responses about campus services (Section Three)*

Question 1	Excellent		Good		Fair		Poor		N/A		TOTAL	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Information about campus accessibility	8	15.1	13	24.5	10	18.9	3	5.7	19	35.8	53	100
Parking for persons with disabilities.	6	11.3	10	18.9	7	13.2	3	5.7	27	50.9	53	100
Transportation services.	6	11.3	15	28.3	8	15.1	1	1.9	23	43.4	53	100
Test / quiz administration.	20	37.7	20	37.7	4	7.5	2	3.8	6	11.3	52	100
Adaptive technology in computer facilities.	9	17.0	14	26.4	8	15.1	2	3.8	20	37.7	53	100
Referrals to academic support services.	7	13.2	20	37.7	9	17.0	2	3.8	15	29.3	53	100
Orientation to campus facilities.	7	13.2	19	35.8	12	22.6	3	5.7	12	22.6	53	100
Reader services and / or alternative formats.	6	11.3	14	26.4	5	9.4	3	5.7	25	47.2	53	100
Sign language interpreting services.	4	7.5	3	5.7	5	9.4			41	77.4	53	100
Note-taking services.	6	11.3	11	20.8	7	13.2	7	13.2	22	41.5	53	100
Time-management or study skills coaching.	4	7.5	9	17.0	8	15.1	5	9.4	27	50.9	53	100
Loan amplification (FM) services.	2	3.8	7	13.2	4	7.5	1	1.9	39	73.6	53	100
Loan of other equipment. *	4	7.5	10	18.9	5	9.4			34	64.2	53	100
Accommodations in the Residence Halls. *	5	9.4	11	20.8	4	7.5	2	3.8	31	58.5	53	100
Other *	1	1.9	5	9.4	1	1.9			33	62.3	40	75.5

\* = asked to describe in follow-up question.

After running frequency reports, I selected specific items to compare using cross-tab analysis in SPSS. For example, I compared satisfaction with services to types of disability, and student majors. Unfortunately, because the sample size was very small, the accompanying chi-squares did not reflect statistical significance because many of the possible majors included very small numbers.

(For example, there might be only one person in a given major, or with a specific disability).

Nevertheless, the frequencies of responses did suggest some interesting possibilities, and will be examined in further study (with a larger sample). Tables 4 and 5 illustrate the potential of using cross-tabs by revealing how the results of these comparisons are distributed, but it would be inappropriate to make generalizations based on such a small sample.

Table 4

*Cross-Tab Comparison of Self-Advocacy and Type of Disability*

		Total	Deaf/ Hard of Hearing	Blind/ Visual imPAIR	Learning Dis	ADD/ ADHD	Chronic Health Issue	Psych Dis
How do you rate the degree to which you find DS professional staff to be helpful, understanding, and capable of providing services and assistance?	Excellent	25	1	1	13	10	1	2
	Good	17	1	2	7	8	2	1
	Fair	9	3	0	4	3	0	1
	Poor	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
	Total	52	5	3	25	22	3	4
How do you rate the degree to which your instructors have been well-informed about the accommodation process and role of the DS office.	Excellent	11	0	1	4	6	0	1
	Good	27	3	2	12	11	2	1
	Fair	7	1	0	4	2	1	1
	Poor	7	1	0	5	3	0	1
	Total	52	5	3	25	22	3	4
How do you rate the degree to which Residence Life staff have been well-informed about the accommodation process and role of the DS office?	Excellent	9	0	1	3	5	0	0
	Good	8	0	0	3	4	1	2
	Fair	6	2	1	3	0	0	0
	Poor	5	2	0	1	3	1	0
	Total	24	1	1	15	10	1	2
	Total	52	5	3	25	22	3	4

*In each of the cases above, chi square calculations revealed that 6-8 (60.0% to 80.0%) of the cells had expected counts less than 5. Minimum expected counts were between .29 and 2.40.*

Table 5

*Cross-Tab Comparison of Satisfaction and Type of Disability*

		Total	Deaf/ Hard of Hearing	Blind/ Visual imPAIR	Learning Dis	ADD/ ADHD	Chronic Health Issue	Psych Dis
Do you feel the DS Office has helped you to achieve the goals you have set for yourself?	SA	20	0	0	9	11	1	2
	A	22	3	2	11	8	1	1
	D	6	1	0	3	2	1	1
	SD	2	1	0	1	1	0	0
	N/A	2	0	1	1	0	0	0
	Total	52	5	3	25	22	3	4
Do you feel that your	SA	16	0	0	7	7	1	2

ability to be an advocate for yourself has improved since working with the DS Office?	A	28	2	2	15	12	2	0
	D	5	2	1	1	1	0	2
	SD	3	1	0	2	2	0	0
	N/A							
	Total	52	5	3	25	22	3	4
I have found my instructors to be open and responsive regarding my need for accommodation.	SA	23	1	2	13	9	1	2
	A	21	3	1	21	9	1	3
	D	3	0	0	3	2	1	1
	SD	3	0	0	3	1	0	0
	N/A	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
	Total	51	5	3	51	21	3	6

*In each of the cases above, chi square calculations revealed that 4-6 (50.0% to 60.0%) of the cells had expected counts less than 5. Minimum expected counts were between .48 and .29.*

I was particularly interested to know whether any conclusions could be made from comparing student satisfaction with whether they scheduled appointments in advance, or chose to “drop in” at the office. The results revealed little significant difference. Table 6 reveals that both those with appointments and those without tended to rate services highly.

Table 6

*Cross-Tab Comparison of Satisfaction and Appointment/Drop In*

		Call or email in advance	“Drop In”	Total
How do you rate the degree to which you find DS professional staff to be helpful understanding, and capable of providing services and assistance?	Excellent	18	3	21
	Good	13	4	17
	Fair	5	3	8
	Poor	1	0	1
	Total	37	10	47
How do you rate the availability of DS professional staff to talk with you, to arrange for services, or to deal with a particular problem?	Excellent	15	3	18
	Good	14	5	19
	Fair	6	2	8
	Poor	1	0	1
Total	36	10	46	
How would you rate the professionalism of DS support staff (secretaries, clerical assistants) when greeting you in the office or answering the phone?	Excellent	27	3	30
	Good	10	5	15
	Fair	0	2	2
	Poor			
Total	37	10	47	

*In each of the cases above, chi square calculations revealed that 3-5 (50% to 62.5%) of the cells had expected counts less than 5. Minimum expected counts were between .21 and .43.*

The qualitative responses were particularly powerful. The majority of responses were very positive, indicating a very favorable relationship with the ODS staff. For example,

*“I just love how available and willing my DS advisor was there to help me. She made the time and was always available even for a tiny little question!”*

*“Rob, Peggy and the secretary are the best, They have always helped me when a problem arose.”*

However, a few candid comments that discussed challenges faced by students were particularly poignant. One student named a specific professor, saying “*you may need someone to talk and explain it to Dr. -----.*” Other examples included the following:

*“Many professors have not taken my mental illness seriously, and living with this illness greatly impacts my achievement [sp] at school. I feel like they don't even consider mental illness a real disability, and I find myself very discouraged when they are not.”*

*“Professors should be made to respond appropriately and not basically disregard the students when they tell them they have a disability.”*

These comments also provided detailed information about areas of campus that were perceived to be inaccessible or in need of improvement. Suggestions from students ran the gamut (improving furnishings at ODS to adding elevators in Mosely). The range of critical versus constructive is represented by the following:

*“The physical access to the DS office is a negative experience. The office and testing rooms have the feeling of being old, used, dirty, and with poor lighting. How can other offices know*

*how to treat students when DS doesn't set a good example? BGSU should be setting an excellent example for accessibility, [sp] instead we are treated like second class citizens.”*

*“The 'Professor Letter" (accommodation Letter) needs to be written and look more professional. It could explain without telling the disability how the accommodations [sp] give the students fair access to higher education.”*

A complete summary of written responses is included in Appendix B.

### Implications and Recommendations

Based upon these findings, the Office of Disability Services can be assured that the majority of students appear to be achieving the desired learning outcomes, and report general satisfaction with programs and services. The results indicate a greater need to improve faculty and administrative staff sensitivity and responsiveness to students with disabilities. While many students reported satisfaction with the familiarity of faculty to the process, encounters with those who were less responsive were especially negative. Qualitative responses indicated that perceived insensitivity to learning disabilities or mental illness were especially significant challenges for students to bear. Recommendations for ODS staff include:

- Collaborate with orientation staff to increase support for disabled students in transitioning to campus, particularly in terms of campus facilities.
- Communicate department learning outcomes to students during initial contact with the office (via website, brochures, any written correspondence).
- Increase outreach to students who have not scheduled times with a counselor to review their academic goals.

- Continue to support students in developing their self-advocacy skills in working with faculty and administrators.
- Develop support groups for students experiencing challenges around specific issues with faculty (perceptions of learning disabilities, etc.)
- Develop marketing/awareness materials for faculty and staff, especially around learning disabilities and mental illness, in addition to existing newsletters, etc.
- Increase role/participation in New Faculty Orientation.
- Offer awareness workshops for faculty by special invitation for those that have disabled students registered in their classes. These could be offered in conjunction with the Center for Teaching, Learning and Technology (CTLT), with an emphasis on teaching and learning strategies for those with specific types of disabilities.
- Collaborate with Residential Life Staff to develop in-services about the referral process for students seeking accommodation, if this is not already happening.
- Even though accommodation requests are often handled by administrative staff prior to a student checking into the halls, this is particularly important for Resident Advisors as well, who may be called upon to advise students who did not register with the ODS before arriving at BGSU, or who were not diagnosed until after their arrival. ODS already provides support for RAs with residents who have disabilities, such as Asperger's, but in light of feedback, might be an area worth reviewing/expanding.
- Expand programming efforts by including information about area resources.
- Continue to work with university facilities personnel to address issues of accessibility and improvement to current facilities.

- Develop a student advocate group to help promote sensitivity to disabled student issues on campus and provide ongoing feedback about programs and activities for disabled students.
- Expand upon liaison-relationships with the Student Affairs Diversity Committee, Career Services, Student Employment, Residence Life, and other offices. Involve liaisons in ODS-sponsored events or initiatives.

### Conclusion

This survey generated several important findings. While students are generally satisfied with programs and services provided by the Office of Disability Services, there are areas of improvement, particularly in terms of improving faculty and staff sensitivity to students with learning disabilities and mental health issues. Based on the results obtained so far, there are implications for further research. This survey was limited by its small sample size, which prevented the researcher from being able to run comparisons with assurance of statistical significance. Consequently, the researcher and the Director for the Office of Disability Services have agreed to extend the deadline in order to collect additional data. It is hoped that the inferences made from these initial findings will be supported, though additional cross-tab comparisons may bring new information to light.

## Appendix A

### Office of Disability Services Learning Outcomes

The Office of Disability Services will empower students with disabilities to persist at BGSU and beyond by...

- Teaching students to set goals and develop a plan to achieve these goals;
- Assisting students to effectively communicate their need for appropriate accommodations in academic and social settings (i.e., self advocate);
- Giving students opportunities to critically analyze their strengths v. the impacts of their disability in relation to personal and career choices;
- Providing access to staff that are qualified and capable of providing appropriate advising, accommodations, understanding, and general guidance to students;
- Offering personal and professional development opportunities appropriate to students' goals and interests.

## Appendix B

### Summary of Written Responses

Question 2: We invite you to expand upon any of your previous responses in the space below.

- The org was helpful when avoiding the problems associated with class reg. The extra time and special consideration has made my completion possible. Continue to develop [sp] further students. People can control most aspects in life help them understand proactive behavior. (included name and phone number).
- I just love how available and willing my DS advisor was there to help me. She made the time and was always available even for a tiny little question!
- You guys have been great. Thank you with all the help you have given me. You all have been very supportive and very helpful during my four years here. I hope you will still keep the sidewalks clear, the door buttons working, and the accomedation [sp] letters coming! See you next year.
- Many professors have not taken my mental illness seriously, and living with this illness greatly impacts my acheivement [sp] at school. I feel like they don't even consider mental illness a real disability, and I find myself very discouraged when they are not willing to work with me. I feel like sometimes the DS office doesn't recognize that this is going on, even though I have brought it to their attention. Last semester I didn't even pick up my letters because I figured, what's the point?
- Thank you very much. The services and faculty/staff in your office has been very helpful.
- I have only ever seen my disability services advisor once. It would be better if we could meet with the advisor every semester just to talk about our academic goals and how we are doing.
- I have had to be my own self-advocate just to recieve [sp] accommodations.
- The DS staff has help me schedual [sp] test in the most proffessional [sp] and freindliest [sp] way. I have recieved [sp] help from my counsellor [sp] in being able to read better.
- Professors should be made to respond appropriately and not basically disregard the students when they tell them they have a disability.
- Disability Services has tremendously helped me complete my first year as a college student. The associates that worked at the Disability Service Center were very friendly and always pleasant to be around!
- I think they should let students know what kind of service is provide [sp] throughout the year for helpful tips, studying skills, etc. I am still not sure what kind of events are out there in Bowling Green State University that will help me continue my develop e more..while [sp] showing improvement from my learning disability.
- No one really wants to listen to any kind of advocate. I only put efforts towards struggling with my courses.

- The 'Professor Letter' (accommodation Letter) needs to be written and look more professional. It could explain without telling the disability how the accommodations [sp] give the students fair access to higher education.
- Nothing

**Question 4: Please describe nature of any accommodation requested from other campus offices:**

- Residence life has been very help in terms of accomodations [sp] such as de-lofting my bed so I don't have to climb up the side of it and also giving me a desk chair that doesn't rock.
- Help with handwritten tests, quizzes [sp], and other graded things. I now have altrenitives [sp] to take the test so that the instructor can read it.
- extend time, and uses of a spell check
- N/A
- N/A
- I had used the recorderable [sp] tape player for me to take for my long lectures such as sociology. Otherwise I had used the services to take my test in the office/small rooms to have no distractions.
- None
- Extra test time

**Question 5: Please use the space below to expand upon any of your answers in the preceding section, and provide feedback (whether positive or needing improvement).**

- Rob, Peggy and the secretary are the best. They have always helped me when a problem arose.
- its has been good.
- Question 6: You may need someone to talk and explain it to Dr. (professor name).
- Incredible staff at the DS Office, they have always been very friendly and helpful!
- I believe having the support of the disability has helped me a bunch this semester. However, I think if there were emails with events and helpful tutoring on certain subjects I think I would be helped and go to those to help my studies.
- The physical access to the DS office is a negative experience. The office and testing rooms have the feeling of being old, used, dirty, and with poor lighting. How can other offices know how to treat students when DS doesn't set a good example? BGSU should be setting an excellent example for accessibility [sp], instead we are treated like second class citizens.
- Nothing

- no problems. parking a bit

Question 6: When seeking help, do you usually call or email to schedule an appointment?

Question 8: Please provide suggestions for improving the physical accessibility of the campus. Are there specific locations where you have encountered difficulty?

- placement of the buttons must be opposite [sp] of how the door opens
- I cant walk long distances so I drive around campus and sometimes there is a need for more handicapped parking in certain areas on campus.
- Olscamp. the rooms mess with my hearing aids and causes major feedback.
- Saint Eva Marie Theatre ramp is too steep for a power wheelchair
- University Hall and Mosely hall are toughest because U-Hall has an unreliable elevator and Mosely doesn't have an elevator. However, all other campus and dining facilities are accessible. My residence hall is also accessible. I also like the policy that you have that allows for a classroom to be changed if its original location is delofting of bed and desk chair that does not rock.
- Does not apply.
- The steps in Moosley [sp] Hall.
- Overman Hall has a ramp but no handicap button to open the door and those doors are heavy! It was a bare for me to get them open without any assistance [sp]. Could you maybe fix that? Moseley Hall doesn't have an elevator and what if I have classes that are on like the 3rd or 4th floor?
- the side walks and roads need to all be redone to make it smoother.
- The buildings look a lot alike, and a person struggling with a vision disability takes a lot more time to get places because of it.
- Where is the elevator for Moseley Hall? How do people get up on the third floor if they are in the wheelchair?
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- PARKING
- Elevator takes too long. I know that it's more of the Dean's fault, but still someone should do something about that. It's either that or those treacherous [sp] stairs. We are disabled and we need reasonable accommodation and the stairs and the long lasting elevator is not efficient enough. If we can't get to the Disability Center in enough

- The elevator is some times hard to find. But is always a slow smelly ride.
- When I just "Drop In" there is never a staff willing(able) to talk to me. There is not a feeling of being welcome. Again the physical enviroment [sp] doesn't help ie colors, location, lights, smell, carpet, and office set up.
- Nope
- #parking spots, older rr's

If checked, please describe "other equipment" or type of accommodation.

- A suite, accessible mailbox

Please provide additional comments or explanation about any of the responses above... (part 1)

- None
- While I was able to take the math exams in the DS office, I chose to take it in the math lab in case if I should have a question, and there were a lot of distractions and problems including the staff.
- The computers in computer labs are extremely difficult to read due to the size of the font. The monitors cannot be pulled closer either, so when I absolutely need to use a computer, I have to either stand up close to it or sit on my legs on my chair to get a bit closer.
- I found out about my ADD this year and did not really understand what the possible accommodations were and I know of many more people who have disabilities that were surprised when i told them there are accommodations. I was on crutches for four and a half months and often times there was not enough handicap parking spots for the num
- n/a

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