



AMERICAN
PSYCHOLOGICAL
ASSOCIATION

750 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002-4242

Barriers to Students with Disabilities in Psychology Training

Disability Issues in Psychology Office
Public Interest Directorate
American Psychological Association

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Growing legal protections afforded by the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), changing norms, and a rising cohort of individuals, who have been able to demonstrate their competence as a result of reasonable accommodations, have resulted in an increasing number of persons with disabilities applying to psychology programs. The American Psychological Association's (APA) Center for Workforce Studies reports that the number of full-time students with disabilities enrolled in graduate schools of psychology increased from 347 in 2003 to 536 in 2008 (APA, 2009a, 2000b). The National Science Foundation (NSF) reports that psychology graduated 23.1% doctoral recipients with disabilities, the highest percentage of doctoral disability graduates in all science and engineering fields for which NSF collects data (National Science Foundation, 2007). Further, social and behavioral sciences are a major field of study indicated by 9.3% of students with disabilities, the largest percentage among all the science and engineering fields (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2004).

It is clear that the number of students with disabilities seeking admission and admitted to psychology programs has increased dramatically over the past decade and will continue to do so in the future. Despite these gains, however, anecdotal evidence from students with disabilities reveals continuing academic and institutional barriers. Applicants with disabilities routinely encounter inappropriate interview questions and comments, challenges to their skills and competencies based upon negative perceptions of people with disabilities, concerns surrounding the provision and costs of accommodations, and information in inaccessible formats. Empirically-based studies examining the nature of these barriers are sparse.

To gain a better more systematic understanding of the nature of barriers faced by students with disabilities in psychology programs, the APA Office on Disability Issues conducted the *Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey*. Information was solicited regarding major obstacles to training, disclosure issues, perceived knowledge of disability issues and legislation

among faculty, challenges to obtaining educational materials and information in alternative formats, and internship issues.

METHOD

Participants

Ninety-two current or recent psychology students with disabilities completed the survey. Notifications of the study were directly distributed by email to 53 mentees enrolled in the Office on Disability Issues' Mentor Program for Students with Disabilities. The survey was also posted to the APAGSABILITIES listserv, promoted in the January 2008 issue of gradPSYCH, and made accessible via links on the Office on Disability Issues and APAGS web sites. This general announcement approach was necessary to maximize the audience of potential respondents as direct solicitations were not feasible – no organization or group maintains a comprehensive contact list (mail or email) of psychology students with disabilities. Respondents were informed that the results of the study would “be used to create products and resources for psychology departments that will help improve the teaching and learning experience of psychology students with disabilities.”

Materials

The 35-item survey instrument was constructed using SurveyGizmo, an Internet-based software package used to design, test, and deploy online surveys. The survey was organized into five sections: *demographics and general questions*, *obtaining alternate format materials*, *teaching technique difficulties*, *internship difficulties*, and *additional comments*. Skip-patterns were employed to minimize the total number of items presented to any one respondent. That is, if a respondent indicated they had no internship difficulties, they would not be presented with the additional four items for that section. Instead, they would be immediately routed to the first item of the following section.

All survey questions were developed by the APA Disability Issues Office with feedback from the APA Committee on Disabilities in Psychology (CDIP), and the APA Center for Workforce Studies (CWS) with the goal of addressing the purpose of the survey while minimizing the length of the instrument. Given the exploratory nature of the study, many items were open-ended, requiring substantial manual recoding of responses.

Design and Procedure

Potential participants were notified in solicitations and at the beginning of the survey that submitted information would be kept confidential (as opposed to anonymous). A confidential design provided a means of eliminating duplicate submissions according to Internet Protocol (IP) address of respondents so that only one set of responses came from any one computer. Although not completely fool-proof, this method reduced the probability of multiple submissions by intent or accident when participants were not recruited by unique invitations.

The online survey was launched in October 2007 and closed at the end of January 2008. Data were captured in an SPSS database by SurveyGizmo and retrieved by staff in the CWS. Analyses of quantitative data and recoding of qualitative responses into descriptive statistics were conducted by APA's Disability Issues Office with technical assistance from the CWS. These findings are presented below.

RESULTS

Demographic Information

Demographic characteristics of respondents are presented in tables 1 – 7. As can be seen, approximately 84% of respondents were female, and the same percentage reported their ethnicity to be White. Most respondents (55%) were full-time students, and 39% of those responding attended a public university/college followed by *private university/college* (26%). Almost 44% indicated a master's degree as their highest attained degree and 39.1% indicated they were seeking a PhD at the time of the survey.

Most, but not all, respondents (92%) provided at least one response when asked to indicate which of six disability categories described themselves. Although seven individuals did not provide a response to this item, later responses (to include *additional comments*) clarified matters to warrant their inclusion in the final dataset. For example, an individual may meet objective criteria for a disability, but not self-identify as disabled for this item. The majority of responses to this item were almost evenly distributed among four options: *psychological/emotional* (28%), *systemic* (27%), *physical/orthopedic* (26%), and *learning/cognitive* (26%). Lower numbers indicated *deaf/hard of hearing* (9%) or *blind/visually impaired* (7%).

Impact of one's disability

Table 13 summarizes the impact of one's disability upon his/her psychology training program. Most respondents (96%) provided at least one answer. Excluding *unclear* (N=7) and *no issues, minimal* (N=6) response categories, 103 responses were recoded into 12 categories. The most common issues (24% of responses) related to time – *more time needed to complete program, needed time off to attend to disability-related issues, and more time to complete dissertation*. The next most common set of issues were attitudinal (13%). For example, *stigma and discrimination, lack of sensitivity, or lack of understanding*. This was followed by medication issues and effects of disability (9%) such as *fatigue, pain management, and symptoms of disability*. Less common responses (3% or less per grouping) concerned financial issues, internship, positive experiences, and accommodations.

When asked whether they felt that their training options were limited compared to their non-disabled counterparts, 53% indicated yes, particularly with regards to the practicum (table 19) for which barriers cited include stigma and discrimination, limited choices, accessibility/lack of accommodation, and travel issues. Seventeen percent mentioned the effects of medication

as limiting their training options. Financial issues presented barriers for 9% of respondents, and limited social support/mentoring/opportunities were factors for just under 9%.

Disclosure Issues

Table 14 presents responses to whether respondents disclosed their disability when applying to their respective university. Almost 61% had not, while 39% did. A follow-up question asked why respondents chose not to disclose. The largest single group, a little more than one fifth, said it did not seem relevant to the application process. This was followed by a fifth who did not disclose for fear of not being accepted and 14% who were afraid of discrimination or being stigmatized if people knew. Sixteen percent were not disabled at time of application, and another seven percent disclosed in person or on a need to know basis.

Surprisingly, 80% of respondents indicated that, since applying, they disclosed their disability even though it was not visible or obvious to staff; 11% did not disclose (table 15). For those who disclosed, when asked what the impact of disclosure was, almost 42% said that it was positive (people were supportive, accommodating and communication improved), just under 22% said that the response was negative (not accommodating, discriminated against, disbelief on part of staff, discouraging). A mixed response was noted by almost 15%. Ten respondents did not disclose for a variety of reasons, including fear of consequences, no diagnosis at the time, it was obvious, nobody needed to know, might affect career prospects, previously disclosed, and recovered.

Access to Written Materials

A majority of respondents (77%) agreed when asked “were university application materials accessible to you?” Similarly, 76% of respondents indicated no difficulty in obtaining course materials in alternate formats. This could be due to the proliferation of university application materials made available on the internet.

Difficulties with Teaching Techniques

Tables 25 - 29 addressed difficulties students with disabilities experienced with teaching techniques. Responses were divided with 49% stating they did experience difficulties, and 49% stating they did not (table 26). Forty percent faced disability related challenges, while 36% had problems with course structural issues or teaching style. When asked about how these difficulties were overcome, 29% used peer support, mentor support, or tutors; one-fifth sought help from a professor; and 8% obtained or made an accommodation. Twenty-seven percent indicated that these difficulties were not overcome. When asked how these difficulties could have better been addressed, 30% mentioned changing the way material was offered, and another 30% talked about removing attitudinal barriers and educating students and faculty about ADA and disability. Providing note takers and tutors (9%) and listening to students (5%) were other suggestions.

Internship Difficulties

Tables 30-34 examine internship issues. Twenty-three percent of respondents indicated difficulties with internships, mostly attributed to disability related issues. Issues related to access, accommodation, assessment, attitudinal barriers, and difficulty with interviews were cited as additional barriers. To address these barriers, one-fifth of respondents stated that they were provided assistance or accommodations and 16% cited a change in their activities. When asked if these difficulties were overcome, 47% said no. Twenty three percent stated that efforts at improving communication would help overcome these difficulties as well as reorganize the work environment and work structure, educate faculty on ADA issues, add slots and part-time options.

Faculty ability to relate to PWDs, understand Federal Law, disability training

Table 16 provides responses to whether respondents felt that faculty or staff was able to relate to students with disabilities. Just over 51% agreed that faculty and staff could do so, 39% disagreed that faculty and staff could relate to students with disabilities, and almost 10% had no opinion. In table 17 students were asked if they felt that the training program understood the major federal disability laws. Forty-eight percent agreed that it did, 18% had no opinion, and fully one third disagreed.

Students were asked about their perception of disability awareness training among faculty and staff (table 18). The largest single proportion or almost one fourth of respondents stated that they perceived only a low level of training or disability awareness. Sixteen percent said that training was poor to nonexistent while another 16% stated they perceived training as average to good. Less than 9% reported a high level of training. Overall, 42% had negative perceptions, 25% reported positive perceptions, 12% were unsure, 6% felt that faculty were willing to learn, and 14% gave unclear responses or did not respond.

Major Barriers Encountered

Respondents were asked to indicate “the biggest barriers facing people with disabilities in studying psychology” in an open-item format (Table 8). Nearly all respondents (N=87; 95%) provided at least one response to this question, giving a total of 100 distinct answers that could be meaningfully categorized (seven were *unclear*). The largest single category of responses (37%) concerned *stigma and discrimination, negative attitudes by faculty and staff*. This was followed by *lack of appropriate education and faculty training about disability issues and inexperience working with persons with disabilities; overall lack of awareness (21%)*. *Lack of access and lack of accommodations* were reported by 12% and 10% of respondents, respectively. Most of the remaining responses were recoded into six additional barrier categories with the exception of 5% which indicated *have not faced barriers*. A follow-up

question (Table 35) asked for any additional comments regarding barriers to successful training for students with disabilities. The most frequently mentioned issue was lack of knowledge or understanding about disability issues.

DISCUSSION

Our study explored the experiences and barriers encountered by students with disabilities in psychology training programs. Though additional analytical research is needed, the insights shared by students provided us with an opportunity to glean some of the major challenges facing today's disabled students in psychology programs.

Attitudinal Barriers

Not surprisingly, our survey results showed negative attitudes, including stigma, discrimination, and negative assumptions held by faculty and staff to be among the biggest barriers encountered by the respondents. As one respondent aptly stated "depends on the disability, but one I think we all share is the stigma attached to being disabled and the fear of other's finding out (psychological disabilities) and how it affects our future careers. Many times the pressures can exacerbate symptoms and we have no one we feel comfortable enough with within our institution to turn to for support."

Outside of such anecdotal evidence, there is relatively little research on attitudes of faculty towards students with disabilities. What little research exists suggests that professors have moderately favorable attitudes towards students with disabilities on campus, but their attitudes are somewhat less positive when such students are in their classes or departments. While negative attitudes towards disability exist, many investigations, including ours, found that faculty are willing to provide various teaching and examination accommodations in their classrooms (Baggett 1994; Houck et al. 1992; Leyser et al. 2003; Thompson, Berteau and Turner 1997; Vogel et al. 1999).

Findings from several of these investigations also showed that faculty were generally less willing to make some accommodations, such as to allow exclusive extra credit, overlook spelling, incorrect punctuation and poor grammar, permit substitutions for required courses, provide copies of lecture notes and give extra credit assignments (Leyser et al. 1998; Sweeney et al. 2002). These studies suggest that faculty are less comfortable in providing accommodations they perceive will lower course standards or give unfair advantage to some students, yet are willing to implement accommodations that are easy to provide and which require little extra time and facilitate the integration of students into the planned course activities (Burgsthaler 2003).

Students with disabilities also reported a seemingly 'hierarchy' of accommodations based on faculty acceptance of certain disabilities, with requests to accommodate physical disabilities as the most well received, and skepticism regarding the validity of accommodation needs of students with invisible disabilities, especially psychiatric illnesses. This is important because up to 28% of students with disabilities self-identified as having a psychological/emotional illness.

Faculty knowledge of Disability

Our survey asked students about their perceptions of disability awareness training among faculty and staff. Though many of the respondents believed that faculty were able to relate well to them as students with disabilities and had a good understanding of major federal disability laws, most, 54%, reported faculty and staff as having insufficient training when it comes to disability awareness. As one student stated "disability is never really mentioned at all, especially as it relates to diversity, social inequality, discrimination, life outcomes, or social identities. I feel that most faculty have never really had to engage with this area, and so they don't expect students to either."

Research supports our finding that faculty members often have limited knowledge of disabilities, especially for those students with “hidden” disabilities (Leyser et al, 1998). Many faculty members in the Leyser, *et al.* study reported having only limited knowledge about the rights and needs of students with non-visible disabilities, including those with psychiatric disabilities (Burgstahler, 2003; Cafferalla and Zinn, 1999). The combination of misinformation and societal stigma regarding symptoms and behaviors in students with psychiatric disabilities can contribute to fear and misunderstanding, and may result in a student's being labeled as lazy or uncooperative (Dona & Edmister, 2001; Leyser, et al, 1998).

Research indicates that attitudinal barriers can be overcome through raising staff awareness and increasing knowledge about disability issues. Faculty members with more knowledge about and experience with students who have disabilities have more positive attitudes about them than those with less experience and knowledge (Yuker, 1994).

Many respondents in our survey offered suggestions on ways to increase awareness of disability. These included expanding existing awareness about diversity to disability; promoting the concept that disability shapes a student's experience of learning just like race, gender, national origin, and culture; distribute information on disability culture; providing examples of successful people with disabilities; and establishing and promoting mentoring relationships.

Disclosure Issues

We also gained insight into disclosure issues, and the point at which students disclosed information about their disability and the level of response they received. In our study, most students reported not disclosing when applying to their university program. They shared similar reasons for initially not disclosing their disability: they feared that by disclosing, they would not be accepted into the program; they feared stigma and discrimination; they did not believe it was relevant to the process.

However, a surprisingly high percentage (80.4%) disclosed once in the program, even when the disability was not obvious or visible. Although further investigation is warranted, it is surmised that during some point of training, needed accommodations precipitated students disclosing their disability. Under U.S. laws, students are not required to report a disability, but they must disclose and document their disabilities in order to receive disability-related accommodations. Many people make strategic choices not to discuss their disabilities or the accommodations that they will need until after they have been accepted to the program. In some situations, it may be relatively simple to make disability-related arrangements while the student is already on the program. On the other hand, if a student waits until a disability-related need arises during the program, it may be difficult to arrange the necessary accommodations or support services in time to be effective.

Another unexpected finding was that close to 42% of respondents reported a positive response once their disability was made known. For example, one student reported that disclosing “has allowed people to work better with me and to give others an opportunity to ask what they can do for me.” Another stated that “I’ve spoken with the graduate director of my program, my primary advisor, and some of the faculty I’ve taken courses with – all of whom I’ve felt I could trust and be honest about my disability with.”

Olney and Brockelman (2003) conducted a study inquiring into how, why, and when students with invisible disabilities disclose information related to their disability. They gathered narratives from university students with psychiatric and cognitive disabilities and categorized them into themes. Students reported viewing themselves as simultaneously competent and in need of support, but reported observing that others had difficulty with this dichotomy. The authors discovered that students perceived that both staff and their peers could be skeptical about their disability status as their impairments were not necessarily apparent or visible in the way physical or sensory impairments can be. Disclosure often led to students being treated differently, either through disbelief or sympathy. Subsequently, students tended to operate on

disclosing their impairment(s) on a need to know basis. Their study provides support for the theory that the decision to disclose includes a complicated process of students working to manage external factors such as negative evaluations by others (Olney & Brockelman, 2003).

Limitations

Several limitations of this survey need to be noted. First, the responses were only from students with disabilities. Another survey targeting faculty perceptions would serve to verify major conclusions arrived at by this study based on student self reports. Second, the sample size was small due to the convenience sampling method that was utilized for this study. Possible methods of reaching a larger number of students with disabilities include using paper forms of the survey instrument which typically garner a higher response rate, as well as posting flyers in disability student services offices and psychology departments with follow-up reminders. Because the sample size was small, we were precluded from conducting correlative analyses, the goal of further research studies from this office.

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Appendix A

Tables

Table 1
Gender

	N	%
Female	77	83.7
Male	15	16.3
Total	92	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 2
Disability Status

	N	%
Psychological/Emotional disability	24	28.2
Systemic	23	27.1
Physical/Orthopedic	22	25.9
Learning/Cognitive disability	22	25.9
Deaf/Hard of hearing	8	9.4
None indicated	7	8.2
Blind/Visually impaired	6	7.1
Total number of responses*	112	

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Note: percentages may exceed 100% due to multiple responses

*85 individuals provided at least one response for this item

Table 3
Race/Ethnicity

	N	%
White	77	83.7
Black/African American	7	7.6
Spanish/Hispanic/Latino(a)	5	5.4
Asian	3	3.3
American Indian/Alaskan Native	2	2.2
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0.0
Other	2	2.2
Total number of responses*	96	

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Note: percentages may exceed 100% due to multiple responses

*92 individuals provided at least one response for this item

Table 4
Student Status

	N	%
Current full-time student	51	55.4
Current part-time student	8	8.7
Former student, but did not complete program	4	4.3
Psychology intern	11	12.0
Graduate	8	8.7
Post-doctoral fellow	3	3.3
Post Doc	4	4.3
Unclear response	3	3.3
Total	92	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 5
Academic Institution

	N	%
Public University/College	35	38.0
Private University/College	24	26.1
Non-response	9	9.8
Professional School in a Traditional Academic Setting	9	9.8
Free-standing Professional School	6	6.5
N/A	5	5.4
On-line Program	4	4.3
Total	92	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 6
Degree type seeking

	N	%
PhD	36	39.1
PsyD	20	21.7
MA/MS	18	19.6
Non-response	7	7.6
BA/BS	6	6.5
N/A	5	5.4
Total	92	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 7
Highest Earned Degree

	N	%
MA/MS	40	43.5
BA/BS	36	39.1
PhD	6	6.5
PsyD	4	4.3
Highschool	3	3.3
M.Ed	2	2.2
AA	1	1.1
Total	92	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 8
Biggest Barriers for Students with Disabilities in Studying Psychology

	N	%
Stigma and discrimination, negative attitudes by faculty and students	32	36.8
Lack of appropriate education and faculty training about disability issues and inexperience working with persons with disabilities; overall lack of awareness	18	20.7
Overall lack of accessibility including but not limited to - physical/structural building accessibility/ accessible materials	10	11.5
Lack of accomodations	9	10.3
Lack of time and scheduling issues; inflexibility of programs	9	10.3
Unclear response	7	8.0
Financial issues and issues with funding	6	6.9
Have not faced barriers	4	4.6
Internship issues	4	4.6
Lack of resources and supports	4	4.6
Disclosure issues	2	2.3
Invisibility of disability	2	2.3
Non-response	5	5.7
Total responses*	112	

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Note: percentages may exceed 100% due to multiple responses

*87 individuals provided at least one response for this item

Table 9
Barriers during application, interview, and admissions

	N	%
Yes* (see below)	17	18.5
No	75	81.5
Total	92	100.0

Table 9a
Types of barriers during application, interview, and admissions

	N	%
No Issues/Not Applicable	6	37.5
Interview Issues:		
- Traveling concerns	5	31.3
- Attitudinal hurdles once disability became known or apparent		
Entrance exam Issue:		
- Lack of accommodations	2	12.5
Disclosure Issues:		
- Whether or not to disclose	2	12.5
- Fear of disclosing		
- Negative consequences as a result of disclosing		
Unclear response	1	6.3
Total number of responses*	16	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 10

Suggested improvements for disseminating information in an accessible manner

	N	%
Provide resources and information		
- mentoring; mentor/advisor; support groups		
- university resources		
- information for/about students with disabilities	17	20.2
Not an issue	13	15.5
Unclear response	13	15.5
Increase awareness of disability		
- study or talk about/ distribute information on disability culture		
- acknowledge variety of experience		
- solicit students with disabilities to increase diversity		
- recognize disability in terms of cognitive, LD, mental health		
- provide examples of successful PWD	12	14.3
Remove attitudinal barriers	10	11.9
Provide materials in an accessible format		
- closed captioning		
- electronically formatted materials		
- written instructions		
- e-mail	9	10.7
Faculty training		
- provide continuing education on disability sensitivity		
- provide resource information in the syllabus at the beginning of the year		
- increase communication among student/faculty/program regarding accommodation options and resources such as DSS	7	8.3
Increase accommodations		
- allow for extra time completing assignments	3	3.6
Total number of responses*	84	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.

American Psychological Association, 2008.

*80 individuals provided at least one response to this item

Table 11

Method of distribution of University application materials

	N	%
Internet	66	72.5
Mailings	39	42.9
Teacher/Advisor	34	37.4
Other students	31	34.1
Email	27	29.7
Phone calls from college/university	21	23.1
Newspaper/Magazine	3	3.3
Total number of responses*	221	

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.

American Psychological Association, 2008.

*91 individuals provided at least one response to this item

Table 12

"Were University application materials accessible to you?"

	N	%
Strongly agree	51	55.4
Somewhat agree	20	21.7
Agree	12	13.0
No opinion	6	6.5
Disagree	2	2.2
Somewhat disagree	1	1.1
Strongly disagree	0	0.0
Total	92	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 13

Disability impact during training program

	N	%
TIME ISSUES		
- More time needed to complete program		
- Managing full course load/courses		
- Slowed/slower progress		
- Needed time off to attend to disability-related issues		
- More time needed to complete dissertation	28	24.1
ATTITUDINAL ISSUES		
- Stigma and discrimination		
- Lack of sensitivity		
- Lack of understanding		
- Negativity towards disability in general	15	12.9
MEDICATION ISSUES AND EFFECTS OF DISABILITY		
- Medication side effects, adjusting to meds		
- Fatigue		
- Pain management		
- Symptoms of disability		
- Impact of disability on writing assignments, course completion	11	9.5
ACADEMIC/TRAINING ISSUES		
- Missing out on training opportunities; social interactions		
- Difficulty in conducting or administering psychological tests		
- Difficulty with coursework and assignments		
- More effort was required		
- Grades suffered		
- Dropped out of program/dismissed from program	10	8.6
ACCESS ISSUES		
- Difficulty in securing accessible materials		
- Not able to access built environment (restrooms, stairs, blackboard, etc.)	7	6.0
UNCLEAR RESPONSE		
	7	6.0
DISCLOSURE ISSUES		
- Fear of disclosing		
- Feelings of shame regarding one's disability		
- Negative consequences as a result of disclosing	6	5.2
LACK OF KNOWLEDGE		
- Need to educate faculty on disability issues as there was lack of knowledge and awareness in this area	6	5.2
NO ISSUES, MINIMAL		
	6	5.2
SUPPORT ISSUES		
- Lack of social support		
- Lack of guidance and mentoring	5	4.3

(continued)

Table 13 (continued)
Disability impact during training program

	N	%
FINANCIAL ISSUES		
- Lack of insurance		
- Extra costs incurred as a result of disability	4	3.4
INTERNSHIP ISSUES	4	3.4
POSITIVE EXPERIENCES		
- Belief that their disability brought a unique perspective to the program		
- Unique experiences due to disability		
- Increased sensitivity to and understanding of client situations and experiences	4	3.4
ACCOMMODATION ISSUES		
- Difficulty obtaining accommodations	3	2.6
TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONSES*	116	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.

American Psychological Association, 2008.

*88 individuals provided at least one response to this item

Table 14
Disclose disability on application to University

	N	%
Yes	36	39.1
No* (responses below)	56	60.9
Total	92	100.0

Table 14a
Why not disclose disability on application to University

	N	%
Not relevant; did not seem relevant to the application process or did not affect me	12	21.8
Fear of not being accepted into program	11	20.0
Did not have the disability at the time of application	9	16.4
Fear of stigma, discrimination	8	14.5
Unclear response	8	14.5
Disclosed in person on need to know basis	4	7.3
Disability was apparent, obvious	2	3.6
Advised to not disclose	1	1.8
Total number of responses	55	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.

American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 15

Disclose disability if Not Obvious/Not Visible to staff

	N	%
Yes* (see below 15a)	74	80.4
No* (see below 15b)	10	10.9
Non-response	8	8.7
Total	92	100.0

Table 15a

Impact of disclosing disability to staff

	N	%
Response was positive		
- Faculty were supportive		
- Accommodations were made		
- Improved communication with faculty	31	41.9
Response was negative		
- Disability was ignored or not believed		
- Faculty discouraging towards student with disability		
- Discriminated against		
- Lack of understanding, support		
- Accommodations were not provided		
- Faculty thought less of person with disability		
	16	21.6
Response was mixed		
- Some were positive		
- Some were negative	11	14.9
No impact or not sure	7	9.5
Not relevant as disability was visible	2	2.7
Unclear response	5	6.8
Non-response	2	2.7
Total	74	100.0

Table 15b

Why not disclose to staff

	N	%
Fear of other negative consequences	3	30.0
Had not been diagnosed at the time	2	20.0
Nobody needs to know	1	10.0
It might affect my career prospects	1	10.0
Previously disclosed	1	10.0
Disability is obvious	1	10.0
Recovered	1	10.0
Do not need an accommodation for my disability	0	0.0
Total	10	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
 American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 16

Faculty and staff ability to relate to students with disabilities

	N	%
Strongly agree	15	16.3
Somewhat agree	21	22.8
Agree	11	12.0
No opinion	9	9.8
Disagree	13	14.1
Somewhat disagree	6	6.5
Strongly disagree	17	18.5
Total	92	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 17

Training Program's understanding of major federal disability laws

	N	%
Strongly agree	15	16.3
Somewhat agree	17	18.5
Agree	12	13.0
No opinion	17	18.5
Disagree	12	13.0
Somewhat disagree	8	8.7
Strongly disagree	11	12.0
Total	92	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 18

Student perception of disability awareness training among faculty and staff

	N	%
Low level of training or disability awareness	22	23.9
Poor to non-existent	15	16.3
Average/good level of training or awareness	15	16.3
Unsure of any training	11	12.0
High-level of training and/or experience with disability	8	8.7
Faculty willing and open to learning about disability issues	6	6.5
Unclear response	6	6.5
More training is needed	2	2.2
Non-response	7	7.6
Total	92	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 19

Limited training options compared to non-disabled counterparts

	N	%
Yes* (see below 19a)	49	53.3
No	42	45.7
Non-response	1	1.1
Total	92	100.0

Table 19a

Describe limited training options compared to non-disabled counterparts

	N	%
ACCESSIBILITY ISSUES		
- Built environment not accessible	5	11.1
LACK OF ACCOMMODATIONS OR ASSISTANCE/SUPPORT		
	3	6.7
DISSUADED FROM CERTAIN TRAINING AREAS/LIMITED OPTIONS		
	2	4.4
PRACTICUM ISSUES		
- Stigma and discrimination		
- Limited in choices		
- Accessibility/lack of accommodations		
- Travel issues		
	10	22.2
EFFECTS OF DISABILITY		
LIMITING/MEDICATION ISSUES		
	8	17.8
FINANCIAL ISSUES		
	4	8.9
ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS		
	5	11.1
LIMITED OPPORTUNITIES FOR MENTORING/SOCIAL SUPPORT		
	2	4.4
UNCLEAR RESPONSE		
	6	13.3
Total number of responses*	45	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.

American Psychological Association, 2008.

*39 individuals provided at least one response to this item

Table 20

Difficulty obtaining materials in alternate format

	N	%
Yes* (see tables 21-24)	20	21.7
No	70	76.1
Non-response	2	2.2
Total	92	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.

American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 21
Types of difficulties with alternate format materials

	N	%
Physical/access barriers; accessibility issues	9	47.4
Unable to secure accommodation	5	26.3
Unclear response	3	15.8
Financial issues	2	10.5
Total	19	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 22
How were difficulties with alternate format materials overcome

	N	%
Sought resources to help (i.e. peers, mentors, tutors, vocational rehabilitation counselor)	7	36.8
Not overcome	5	26.3
Unclear response	5	26.3
Used disability office on campus	2	10.5
Total	19	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 23
Difficulties with alternate format materials were addressed well

	N	%
Strongly agree	1	5.0
Somewhat agree	0	0.0
Agree	2	10.0
No opinion	3	15.0
Disagree	5	25.0
Somewhat disagree	3	15.0
Strongly disagree	6	30.0
Total	20	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 24

How could difficulties with alternate format materials have been better addressed

	N	%
No response; don't know	6	37.5
Hold faculty/staff accountable	2	12.5
Education & training	3	18.8
Provide point of contact or someone to coordinate	2	12.5
Materials provided in a different way; change teaching methods	2	12.5
Unclear response	1	6.3
Total number of responses*	16	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 25

Difficulty with teaching techniques

	N	%
Yes* (see tables 26-29)	45	48.9
No	45	48.9
Non-response	2	2.2
Total	92	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 26

Types of difficulties with teaching techniques

	N	%
Disability related challenges	19	40.4
Course structural issues; teaching style	17	36.2
No access	3	6.4
Unclear response	8	17.0
Total number of responses*	47	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

*44 individuals provided at least one response to this item

Table 27

How were difficulties with teaching techniques overcome

	N	%
Not overcome; unresolved	14	26.9
Peer support; mentor support; tutors	15	28.8
DSS assistance	3	5.8
Sought help from a professor	11	21.2
Obtained/made an accommodation	4	7.7
Increased efforts	1	1.9
Unclear response	4	7.7
Total number of responses*	52	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.

American Psychological Association, 2008.

*44 individuals provided at least one response to this item

Table 28

Difficulties with teaching techniques were addressed well

	N	%
Strongly agree	4	8.7
Somewhat agree	4	8.7
Agree	10	21.7
No opinion	7	15.2
Disagree	6	13.0
Somewhat disagree	4	8.7
Strongly disagree	11	23.9
Total number of responses*	46	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.

American Psychological Association, 2008.

*Note: one respondent provided an answer for this item despite answering 'no' to Q25 (table 25)

Table 29

How could difficulties with teaching techniques have been better addressed

	N	%
Offer lectures/instruction in multi-format; increase use of universal design; structure course content differently; change format of class to incorporate different learning styles	13	30.2
Remove attitudinal barriers	8	18.6
Unclear Response	7	16.3
Educate students & faculty on ADA/ disability	5	11.6
Make note takers and tutors available	4	9.3
Not sure	4	9.3
Listen to students' recommendations	2	4.7
Total number of responses*	43	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.

American Psychological Association, 2008.

*41 individuals provided at least one response to this item

Table 30

Difficulty with any aspect of the internship because of disability

	N	%
Yes* (see tables 31-34)	21	22.8
No	27	29.3
Not applicable	43	46.7
Non-response	1	1.1
Total	92	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 31

Types of difficulties with internship

	N	%
Not experiencing difficulties	2	10.0
Access issues	2	10.0
Disability related issues	8	40.0
Accommodation issues	1	5.0
Assessment issues	2	10.0
Attitudinal barriers	1	5.0
Interview issues	1	5.0
Unclear response	3	15.0
Total responses	20	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 32

Overcome difficulties with internship

	N	%
Were not; in process	9	47.4
Changed internship activities	3	15.8
None reported	1	5.3
Assistance/accommodations were secured or provided	5	26.3
Unclear response	1	5.3
Total	19	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 33

Difficulties with internship were addressed well

	N	%
Strongly agree	3	15.8
Somewhat agree	2	10.5
Agree	4	21.1
No opinion	1	5.3
Disagree	3	15.8
Somewhat disagree	2	10.5
Strongly disagree	4	21.1
Total	19	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 34

How could difficulties with internship have been better addressed

	N	%
Could reorganize work [built] environment/ better structure	3	17.6
No issues	3	17.6
Better educate faculty on ADA issues	2	11.8
Increase/improve communication efforts; clarify student needs	4	23.5
Restructure internship process with added slots, and part time positions	2	11.8
Unclear response	3	17.6
Total responses*	17	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

Table 35

Additional comments regarding barriers preventing success in psychology training program

	N	%
Lack of education, knowledge, understanding about disability issues:		
- Stereotyping disability or treating swd like they do not know their own disability-related strengths/weaknesses		
- Diversity often does not include disability		
- Lack of awareness of chronic pain, mental illness, invisible disabilities	15	23.1
None noted or no additional ones	15	23.1
Unclear response	11	16.9
Lack of resources, access within program or internship site	6	9.2
Attitudinal barriers	6	9.2
Need for individualized approach	4	6.2
Did not feel comfortable disclosing to faculty, peers	3	4.6
Effects of disability	3	4.6
Lack of networking, mentoring, role models	2	3.1
Total responses*	65	100.0

Source: Students with Disabilities Barriers Survey.
American Psychological Association, 2008.

*59 individuals provided at least one response to this item