

ACCESSIBILITY INDICATOR SURVEY REPORT

2013-2014

A snapshot of the thoughts, opinions and perceptions on accessibility at Grand Rapids Community College and the initiatives designed to address gaps and change campus culture.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents

The Accessibility Indicators	1
Introduction	1
The Participants	2
The Survey Tool	3
Survey Data by Population	5
Emerging Themes	29
GRCC Students	29
GRCC Employees	30
Results Summary	32
Accessibility Initiatives	33
Instruction/Faculty Empowerment	33
Technology	33
Physical Spaces	33
Campus Inclusion	34
Other Accessibility Related Initiatives	34
Recommendations	36
Service and Technology	36
Funding	36
Policy	37
Conclusion	38
Contact Information	39

THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

The Accessibility Indicators

INTRODUCTION

In the Office of Accessibility's ongoing effort to address issues of compliance and accessibility at Grand Rapids Community College it has become apparent that the largest issue to address lies beyond those governed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (1992) as Amended (2008) or Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Issues of transparency and lack of knowledge seemed to overshadow the efforts to bring change, create policy and offer resources simply due to preconceived notions, misconceptions and opinions about the college and the approach towards accommodation and accessibility for persons with disabilities.

In an effort to promote "systemic change for inclusion of people with disabilities on campus to ensure that all people experience the campus fully and equally through the same venues"; the Accessibility Indicators were created. Crafted and amended from questions created by the *AccessCollege* team at University of Washington directed by DO-IT international (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology), the GRCC Accessibility Indicators were designed to address similar concerns but in an expanded fashion. Instead of the University of Washington set of three categories, the Office of Accessibility has identified six key categories to use as perceptual and measurable concepts to review annually. They include College Conversations, Administrative Empowerment, Student Services, Physical Spaces, Instruction, and Campus Inclusion.

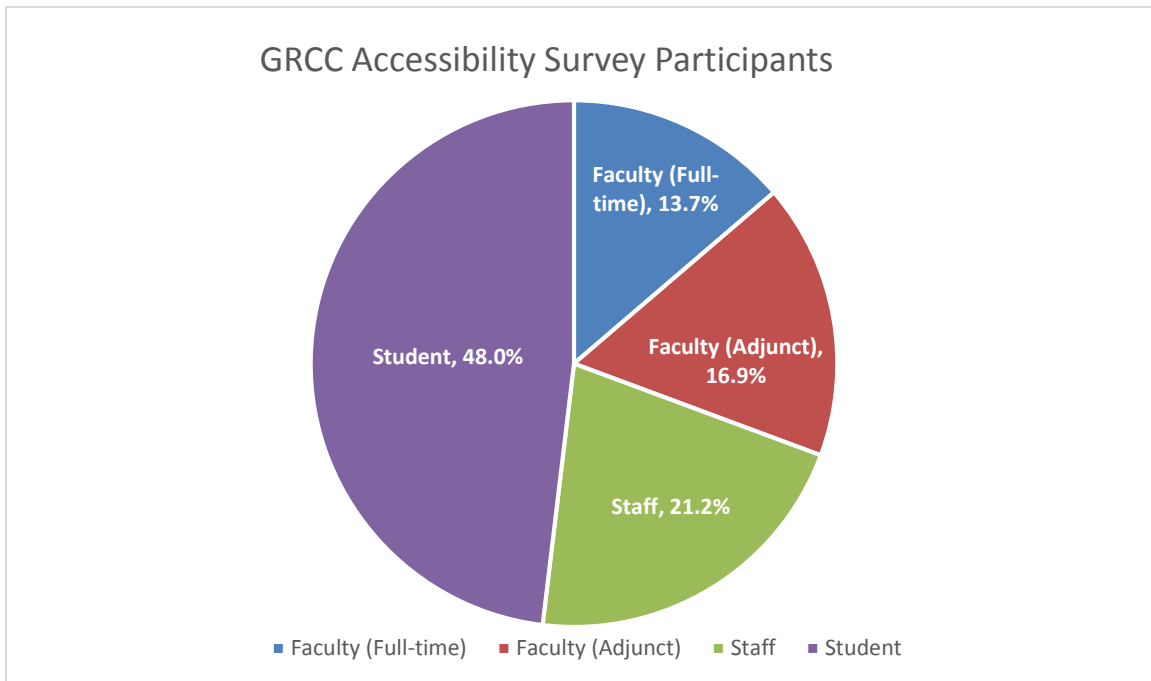
These Accessibility Indicators are designed to transparently display campus wide observation on our commitment to the development of an accessible campus for individuals of all abilities. The goal is to develop a scale to be used to determine our present status reflecting each indicator predicated on baseline data gathered from the 2013-2014 survey results.

THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

THE PARTICIPANTS

The survey was constructed and disseminated to all members of the GRCC campus community including Faculty (Full Time and Adjunct), Staff (ESP, Meet and Confer, College Employee Benefits Association (CEBA), and Campus Police) and Students. Each participant in the aforementioned groups received the survey via e-mail on September 19th, 2013. Campus student workers received the survey with one notification on September 23rd, 2013 with the rest of the student population receiving a general notice to their home or GRCC email on September 30th, 2013. On September 30th, 2013 a reminder email was also sent to the other faculty and staff groups.

In total, 88 full time faculty (13.8%), 108 adjunct faculty (16.9%), 136 Staff (21.3%), 307 students (48%) and 9 unidentified parties took the survey.



1569 emails went out to the GRCC employee groups with 14,729 emails sent to student home e-mails and 16,154 sent to student GRCC emails. Of those emails sent 850 were opened on September 19th, 2013 and 783 were opened on September 30th, 2013. Of the student respondents, 3,348 home emails were opened (22.73%) with 171 visits to the Accessibility Survey website and 1,148 GRCC emails were opened (7.11%) with 251 visits to the Accessibility Survey website.

THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

THE SURVEY TOOL

The survey tool included a list of two or more questions corresponding to the category they were featured in. The survey tool itself did not parse out each question in sections but asked them in the same hierarchical order. The survey questions are as follows:

College Conversations: (80.1% Agreed Avg.)

1. The GRCC mission, vision, and value statements are inclusive of all people, including those with disabilities. **(80.1% Agreed)**
2. Disability is included in campus discussions of and training on diversity and special populations. **(72.7% Agreed)**

Administrative Empowerment: (51.2% Agreed Avg.)

1. Policies, procedures, and practices are regularly reviewed for barrier removal and inclusivity of people with a diverse range of characteristics, including disability. **(54.9% Agreed)**
2. Administrators, staff, faculty, and student leaders are trained and empowered to take action around disability and universal design issues. **(54.1% Agreed)**
3. People with disabilities are visible (even if their disabilities are not) on campus including positions of power or authority (administrators, faculty, student leaders, etc.) **(44.5% Agreed)**

Student Services: (53.5% Agreed Avg.)

1. There is a campus web accessibility policy that ensures consistent, well-organized and universally accessible electronic resources. **(56.2% Agreed)**
2. The availability of accommodations in campus events or programs is advertised on brochures and websites. **(47.4% Agreed)**
3. Disability Support Services provides accommodations in a timely and reasonable fashion to students requesting assistance. **(56.9% Agreed)**
4. Are there specific concerns about student services: (comment)

Physical Spaces: (52.1% Agreed Avg.)

1. Campus building and landscape architecture show clear consideration to access. **(66.1% Agreed)**
2. Doors which do not contain automatic buttons are easily opened **(32.1% Agreed)**
3. Bathroom entrances are wide enough to be accessible **(51.3% Agreed)**
4. Wheelchair accessible ramps are provided in multiple locations to provide ease of access **(63.4% Agreed)**
5. All campus facilities are physically accessible **(47.2% Agreed)**
6. Are there specific concerns about physical accessibility: (comment)

THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

Instruction: (50.9% Agreed Avg.)

1. Principles of universal design are used to create course content in a way that minimizes the need for additional accommodation. **(50.5% Agreed)**
2. Instructors use a variety of methods for teaching content and offer alternative ways to participate in class activities. **(52.5% Agreed)**
3. The course syllabus statement encourages students to meet with the instructor to discuss accommodations and creates a supportive atmosphere. **(74.4% Agreed)**
4. Disability issues are regularly included as a component of the curriculum **(36.3% Agreed)**
5. Are there specific concerns about instruction: (comment)

Inclusion in all aspects of campus: (39.5% Agreed Avg.)

1. Budgeting reflects the reality of the cost of accommodating current and prospective employees, students and visitors with disabilities. **(29.5% Agreed)**
2. Measures of student success (i.e. retention, course completion, graduation, etc.) are the same for all student populations, including students with disabilities, and instructional research includes this data. **(44.8% Agreed)**
3. Campus marketing, publications, and public relations include images and content related to disabilities. **(43% Agreed)**
4. Campus publications and websites, including web-based courses, meet established accessibility standards. **(42.2% Agreed)**
5. Hilly terrain or other natural campus elements cause barriers to mobility **(11.6% Disagreed)***
6. Individuals are not denied access to services on the basis of ability or because services are not physically accessible. **(61.4% Agreed)**
7. If services are not physically accessible, alternative methods are provided that are equivalent to the basic source. **(44% Agreed)**

Any additional questions, comments or concerns: (comment)

**Question # 5 under Indicator 6 (Inclusion) was written in a negative context, therefore the measurement is not in affirming the statement, but disagreement. This is the only question measured differently into the scale than others surveyed.*

Baseline data is gathered by averaging the combined agreement statements (agree and strongly agree) for each question beneath each category and averaging the agreed score for each indicator to make a final measurement.

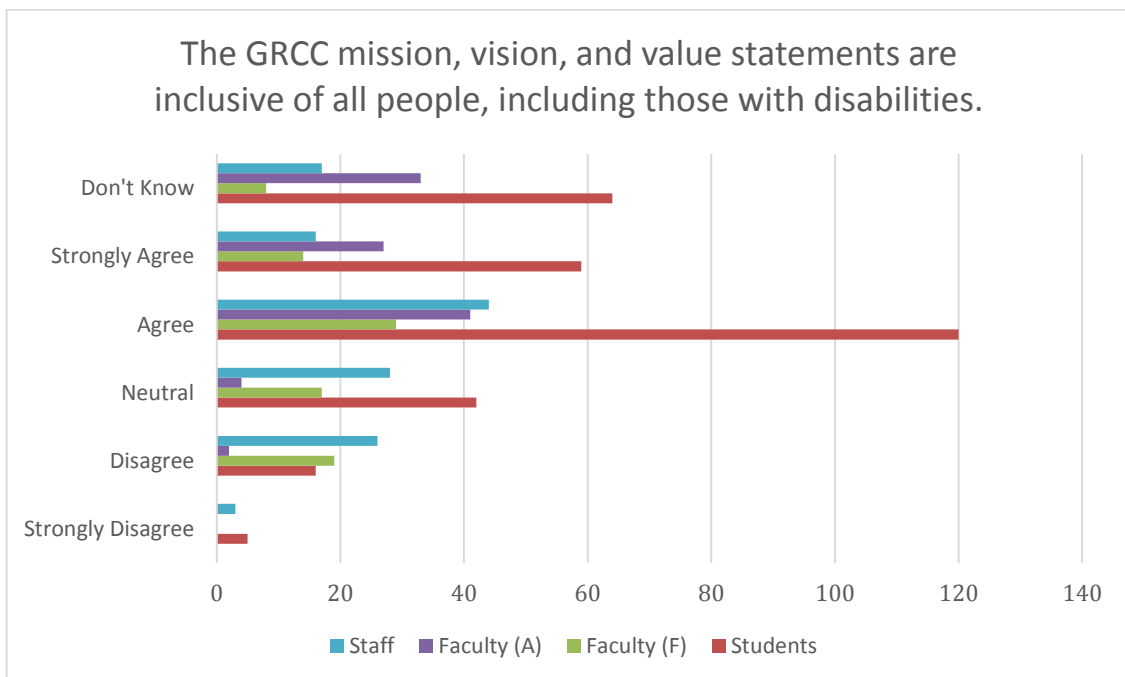
THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

SURVEY DATA BY POPULATION

The following data represents the numerical responses to each question asked in the survey. For each question you will find a numerical matrix as well as a graphical representation for comparison.

1. The GRCC mission, vision, and value statements are inclusive of all people, including those with disabilities.

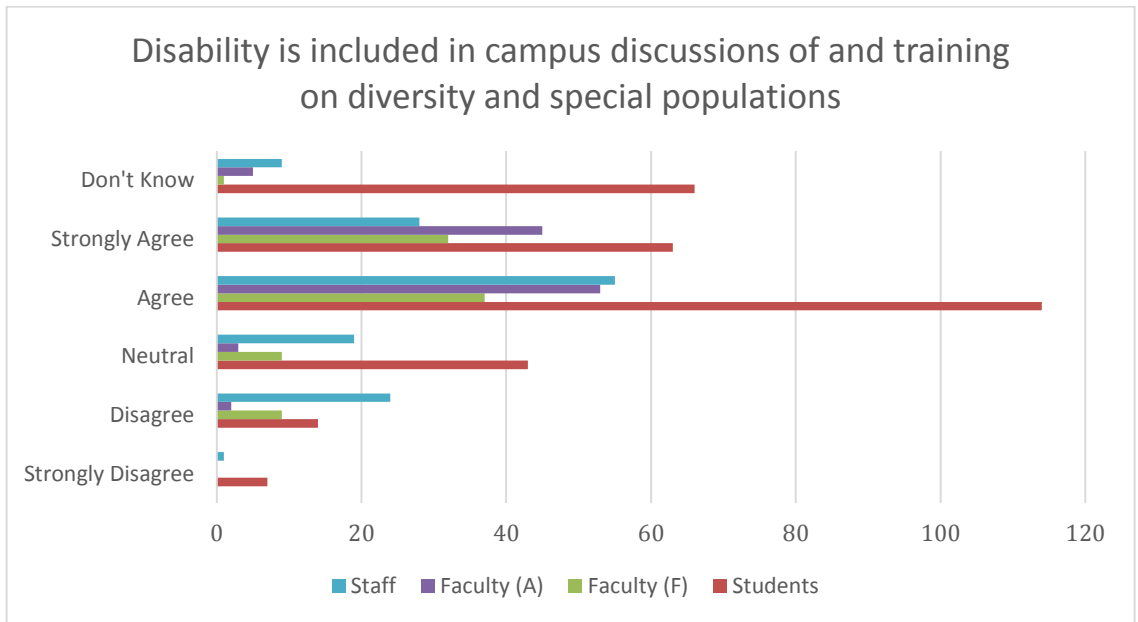
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	4	8	21	131	100	41	4.19	305
Faculty (F)	1	2	12	35	37	2	4.32	88
Faculty (A)	1	2	0	49	51	5	4.33	108
Staff	0	5	17	65	47	2	4.15	136
Total %	1.1% (7)	2.8% (18)	8.0% (52)	43.3% (280)	36.8% (238)	7.9% (51)		
							answered question	646
							skipped question	2



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

2. Disability is included in campus discussions of and training on diversity and special populations

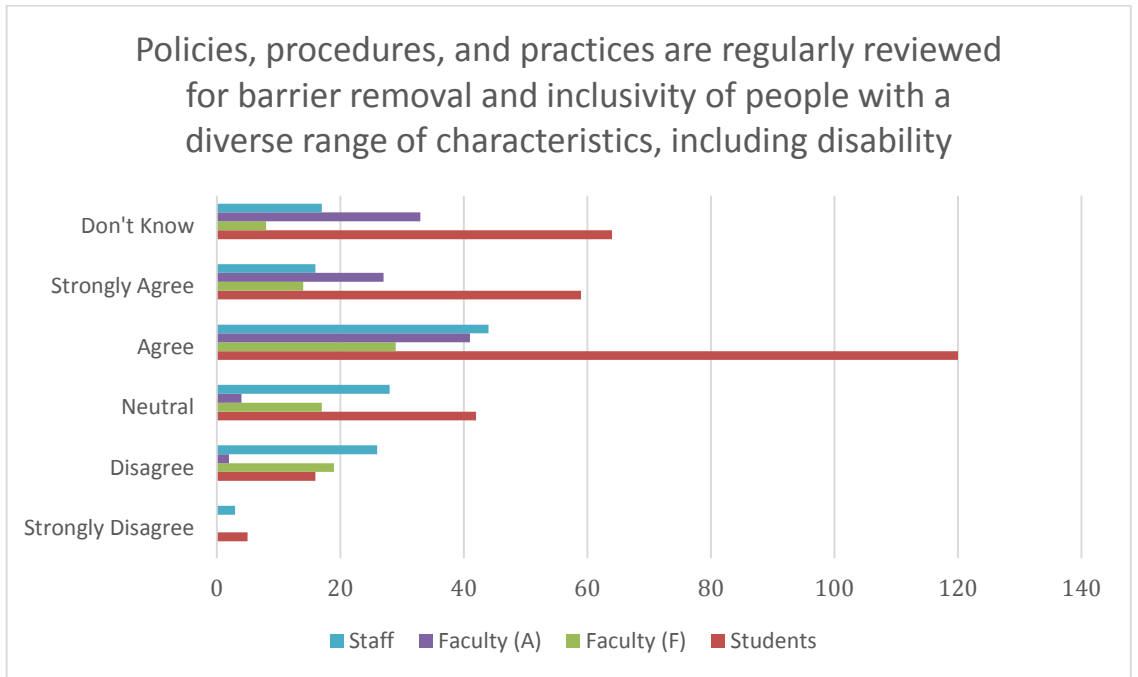
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	7	14	43	114	63	66	3.88	307
Faculty (F)	0	9	9	37	32	1	4.06	88
Faculty (A)	0	2	3	53	45	5	4.37	108
Staff	1	24	19	55	28	9	3.67	136
Total %	1.2% (8)	7.6% (49)	11.7% (76)	40.3% (261)	26.4% (171)	12.8% (83)	3.95	648
							answered question	648
							skipped question	0



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

3. Policies, procedures, and practices are regularly reviewed for barrier removal and inclusivity of people with a diverse range of characteristics, including disability

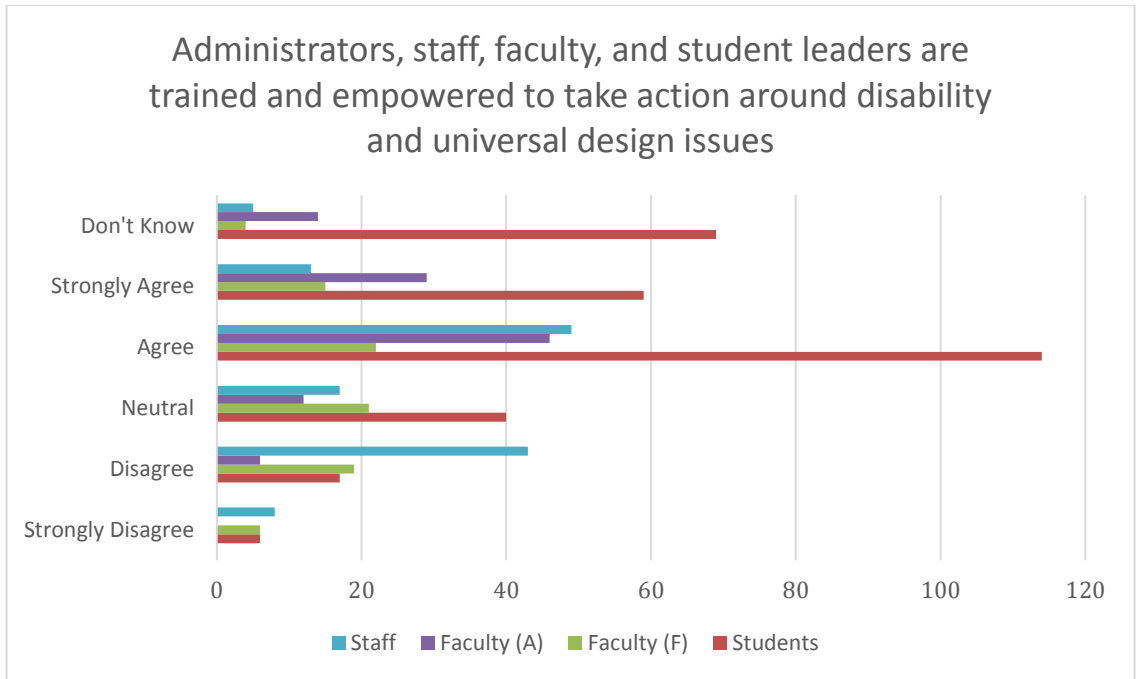
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	5	16	42	120	59	64	3.88	306
Faculty (F)	0	19	17	29	14	8	3.48	87
Faculty (A)	0	2	4	41	27	33	4.26	107
Staff	3	26	28	44	16	17	3.38	134
Total %	1.2% (8)	10.4% (67)	14.2% (91)	36.7% (236)	18.2% (117)	19.3% (124)	3.75	643
							answered question	643
							skipped question	5



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

4. Administrators, staff, faculty, and student leaders are trained and empowered to take action around disability and universal design issues

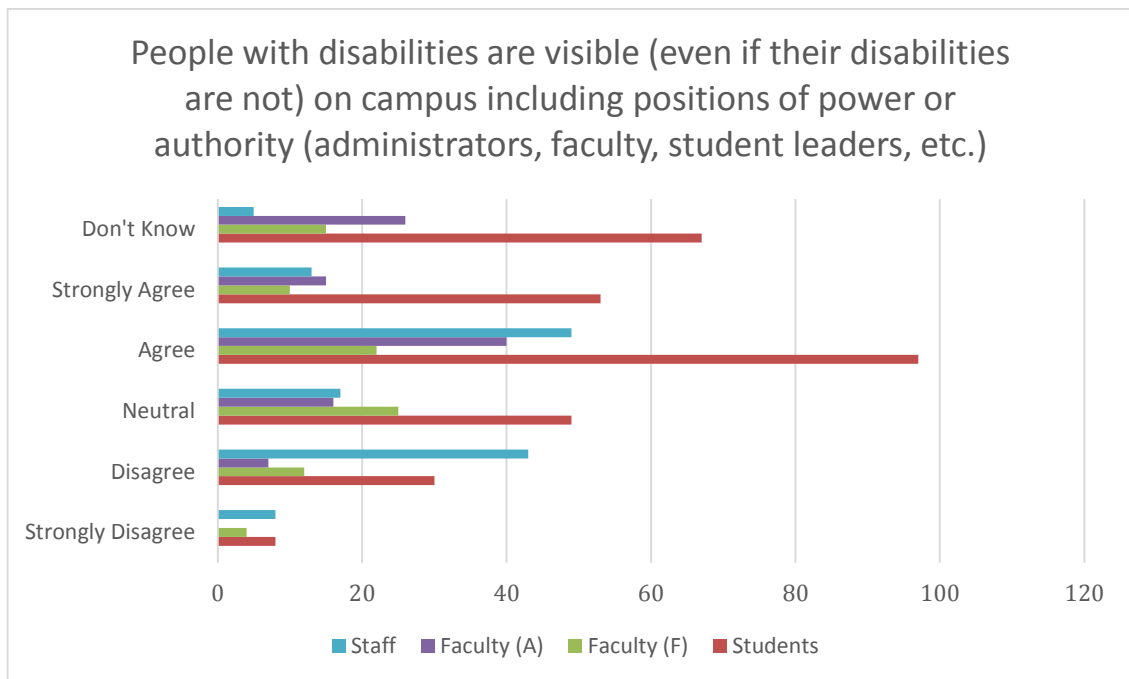
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	6	17	40	114	59	69	3.86	305
Faculty (F)	6	19	21	22	15	4	3.25	87
Faculty (A)	0	6	12	46	29	14	4.05	107
Staff	8	43	17	49	13	5	3.12	135
Total %	3.3% (21)	13.7% (88)	14.3% (92)	36.1% (232)	18.0% (116)	14.6% (94)	3.61	643
							answered question	643
							skipped question	5



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

5. People with disabilities are visible (even if their disabilities are not) on campus including positions of power or authority (administrators, faculty, student leaders, etc.)

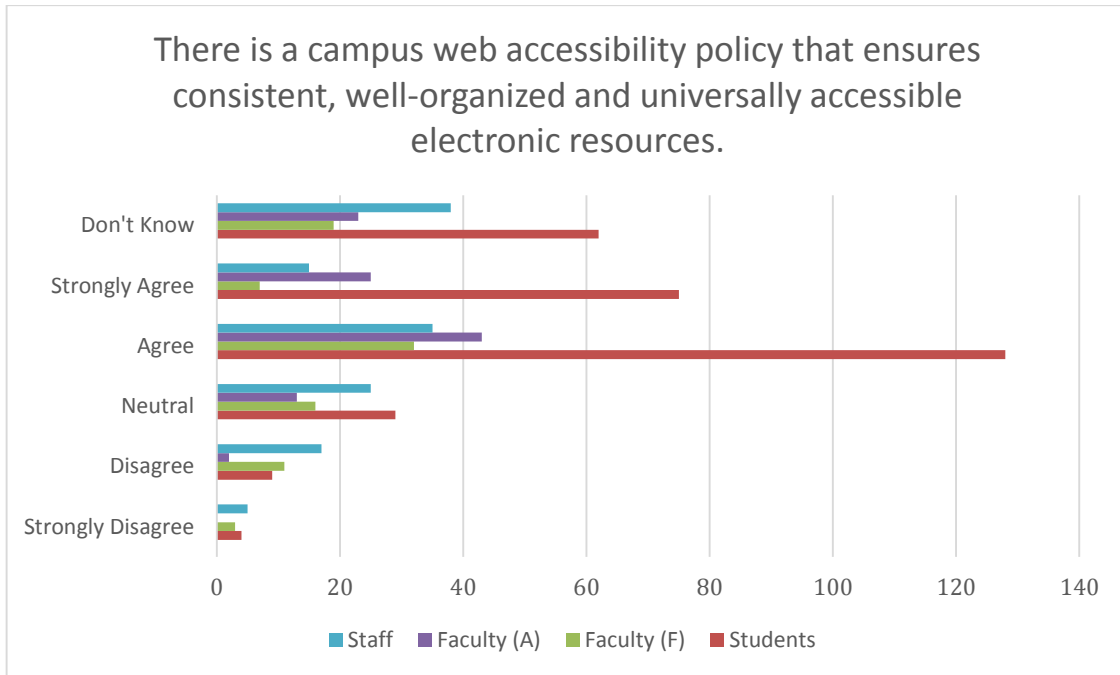
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	8	30	49	97	53	67	3.66	304
Faculty (F)	4	12	25	22	10	15	3.30	88
Faculty (A)	0	7	16	40	15	26	3.81	104
Staff	8	43	17	49	13	5	3.12	135
Total %	3.4% (22)	13.6% (87)	18.3% (117)	29.6% (189)	14.9% (95)	20.2% (129)	3.49	639
							answered question	639
							skipped question	9



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

6. There is a campus web accessibility policy that ensures consistent, well-organized and universally accessible electronic resources.

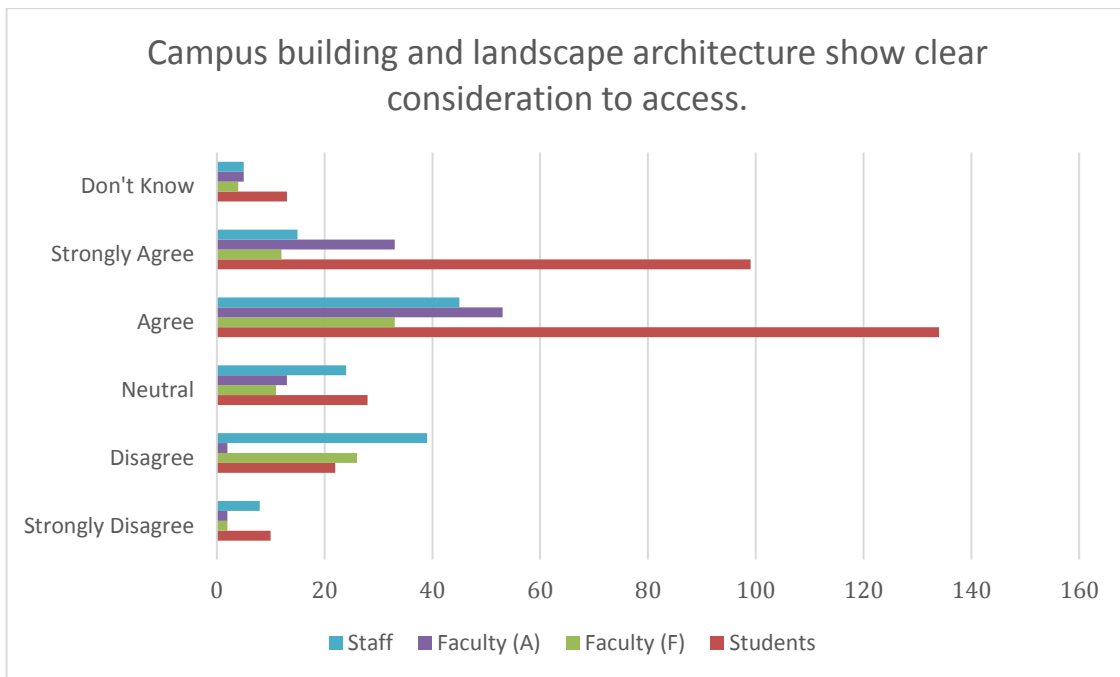
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	4	9	29	128	75	62	4.07	307
Faculty (F)	3	11	16	32	7	19	3.42	88
Faculty (A)	0	2	13	43	25	23	4.10	106
Staff	5	17	25	35	15	38	3.39	135
Total %	1.9% (12)	6.1% (39)	13.2% (85)	37.3% (240)	18.9% (122)	22.7% (146)	3.85	644
							answered question	644
							skipped question	4



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

7. Campus building and landscape architecture show clear consideration to access.

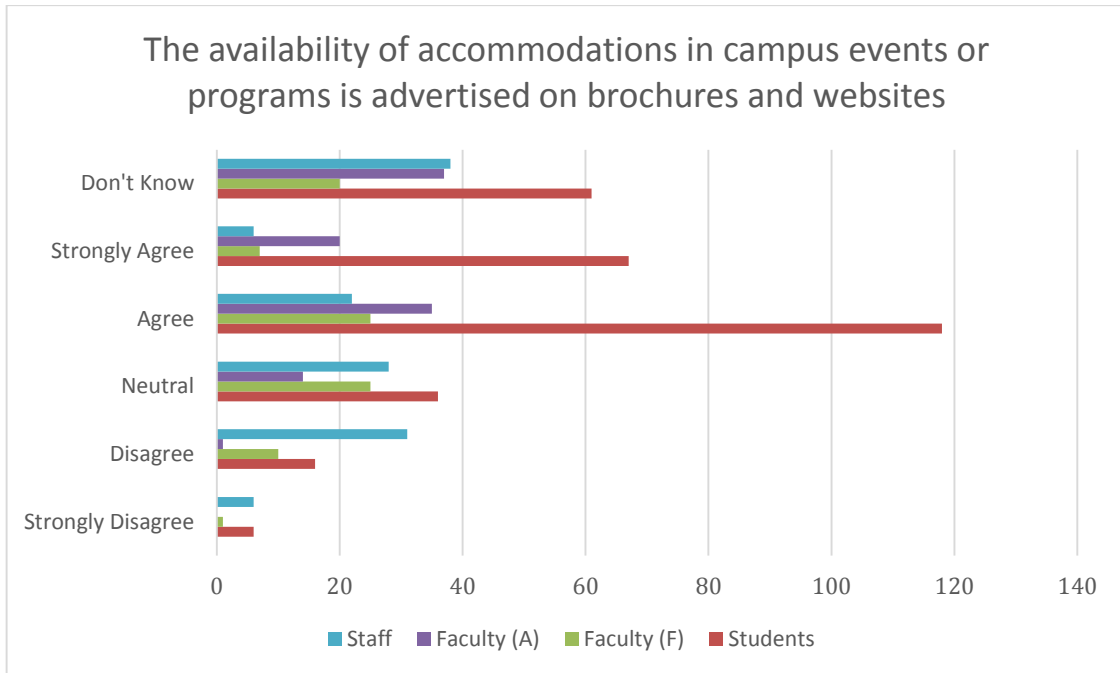
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	10	22	28	134	99	13	3.99	306
Faculty (F)	2	26	11	33	12	4	3.32	88
Faculty (A)	2	2	13	53	33	5	4.10	108
Staff	8	39	24	45	15	5	3.15	136
Total %	3.6% (23)	13.9% (90)	11.9% (77)	41.5% (268)	24.6% (159)	4.5% (29)	3.73	646
							answered question	646
							skipped question	2



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

8. The availability of accommodations in campus events or programs is advertised on brochures and websites

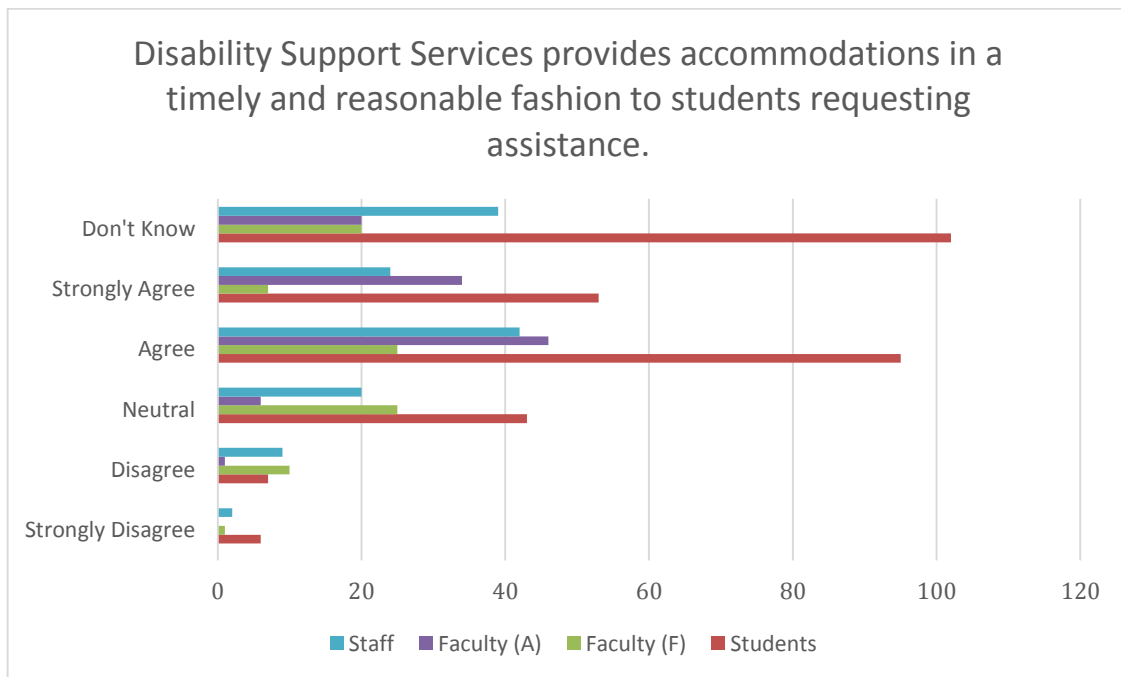
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	6	16	36	118	67	61	3.92	304
Faculty (F)	1	10	25	25	7	20	3.40	88
Faculty (A)	0	1	14	35	20	37	4.06	107
Staff	6	31	28	22	6	38	2.15	136
Total %	2.0% (13)	9.4% (60)	16.3% (104)	31.7% (202)	15.7% (100)	24.9% (159)	3.66	638
							answered question	638
							skipped question	10



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

9. Disability Support Services provides accommodations in a timely and reasonable fashion to students requesting assistance.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	6	7	43	95	53	102	3.89	306
Faculty (F)	1	10	25	25	7	20	3.40	88
Faculty (A)	0	1	6	46	34	20	4.30	107
Staff	2	9	20	42	24	39	3.79	136
Total %	1.4% (9)	2.8% (18)	12.7% (82)	34.7% (224)	22.2% (143)	26.2% (169)	4.00	645
							answered question	645
							skipped question	3

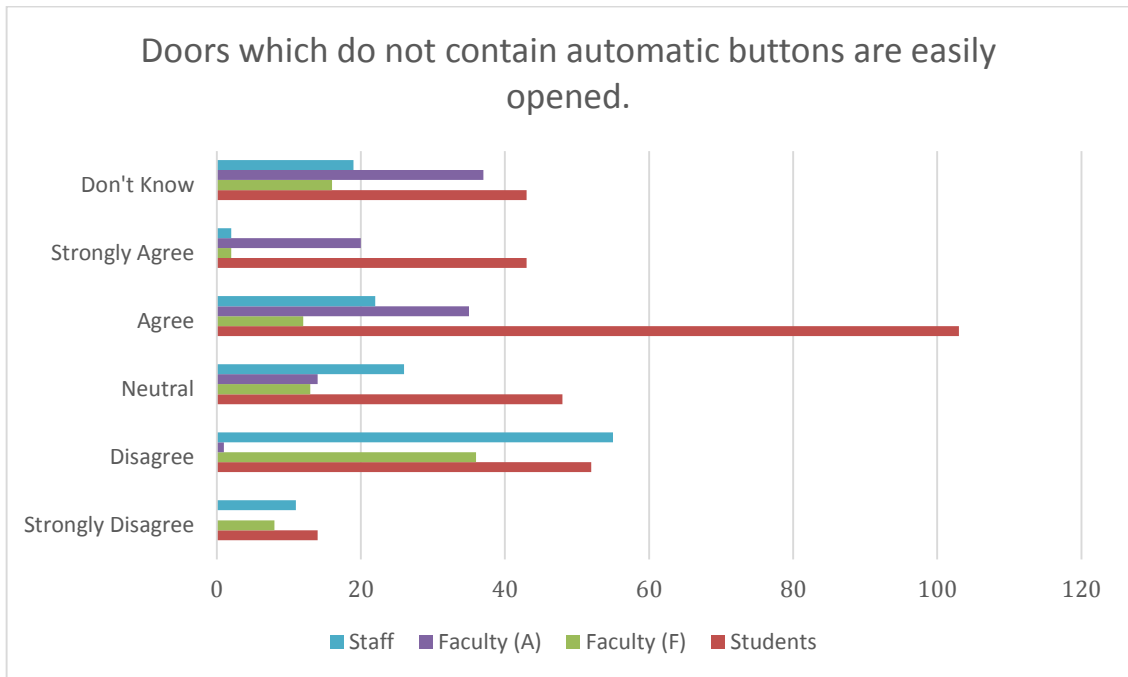


10. Are there specific concerns about student services? **(See Responses)**

THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

11. Doors which do not contain automatic buttons are easily opened.

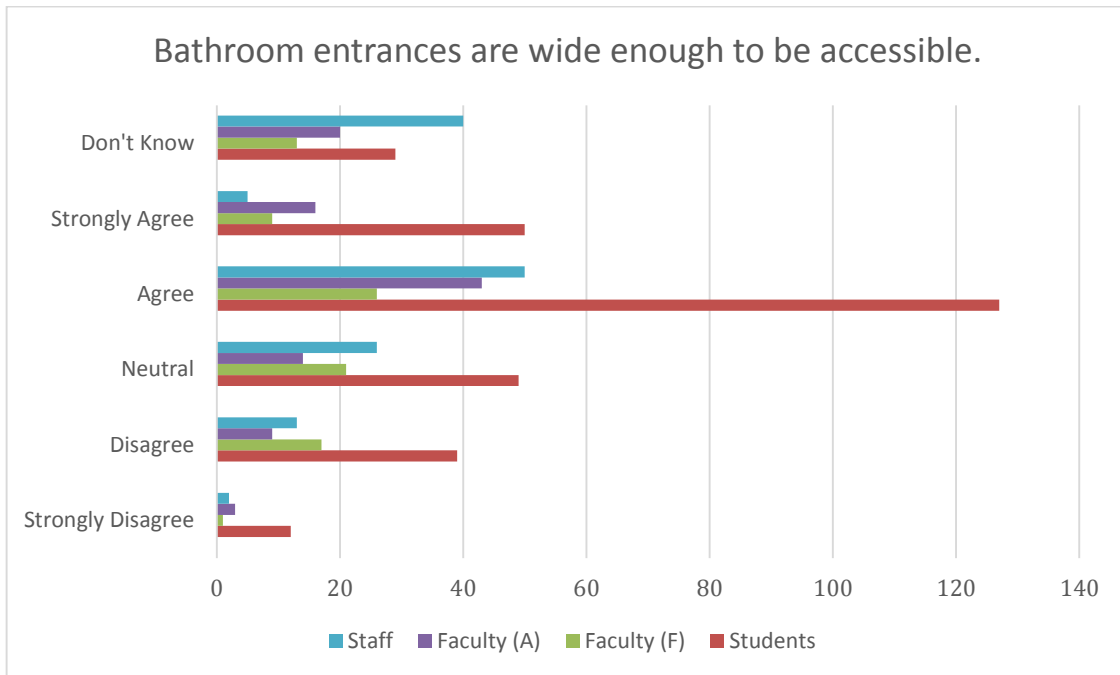
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	14	52	48	103	43	43	3.42	306
Faculty (F)	8	36	13	12	2	16	2.49	87
Faculty (A)	0	1	14	35	20	37	4.06	107
Staff	11	55	26	22	2	19	2.56	135
Total %	5.5% (35)	25.9% (166)	16.2% (104)	27.4% (176)	8.3% (53)	16.8% (108)	3.09	642
							answered question	642
							skipped question	6



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

12. Bathroom entrances are wide enough to be accessible.

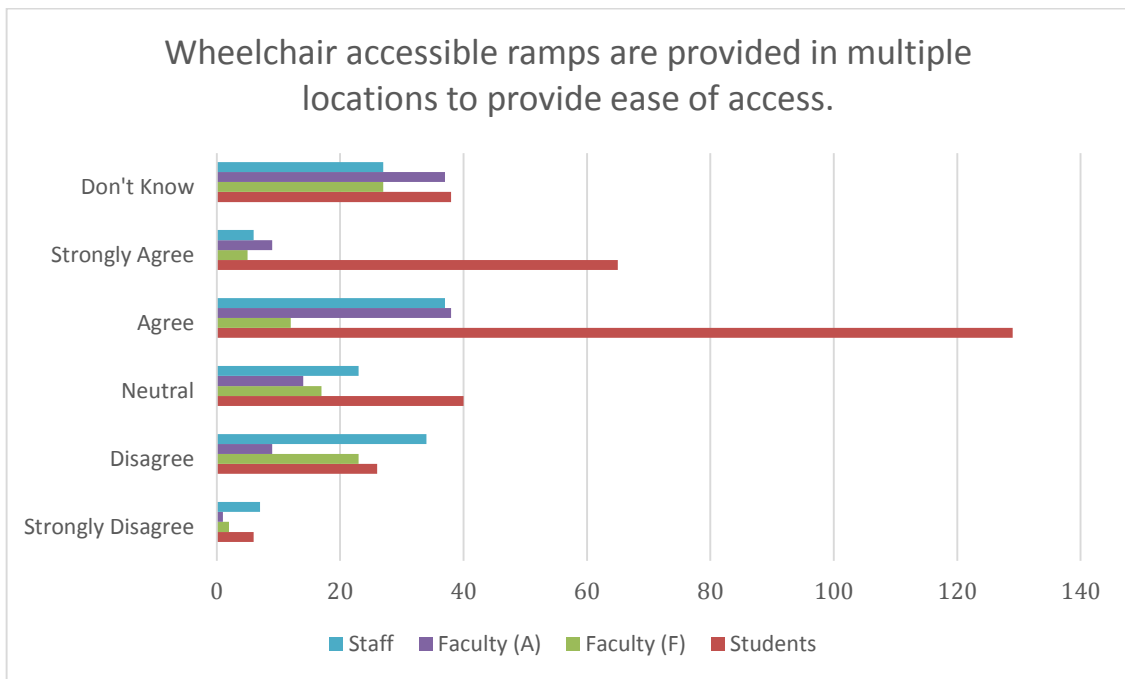
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	12	39	49	127	50	29	3.59	306
Faculty (F)	1	17	21	26	9	13	3.34	87
Faculty (A)	3	9	14	43	16	20	3.71	105
Staff	2	13	26	50	5	40	3.45	136
Total %	2.8% (18)	12.2% (78)	17.7% (113)	38.8% (248)	12.5% (80)	16.1% (103)	3.55	640
							answered question	640
							skipped question	8



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

13. Wheelchair accessible ramps are provided in multiple locations to provide ease of access.

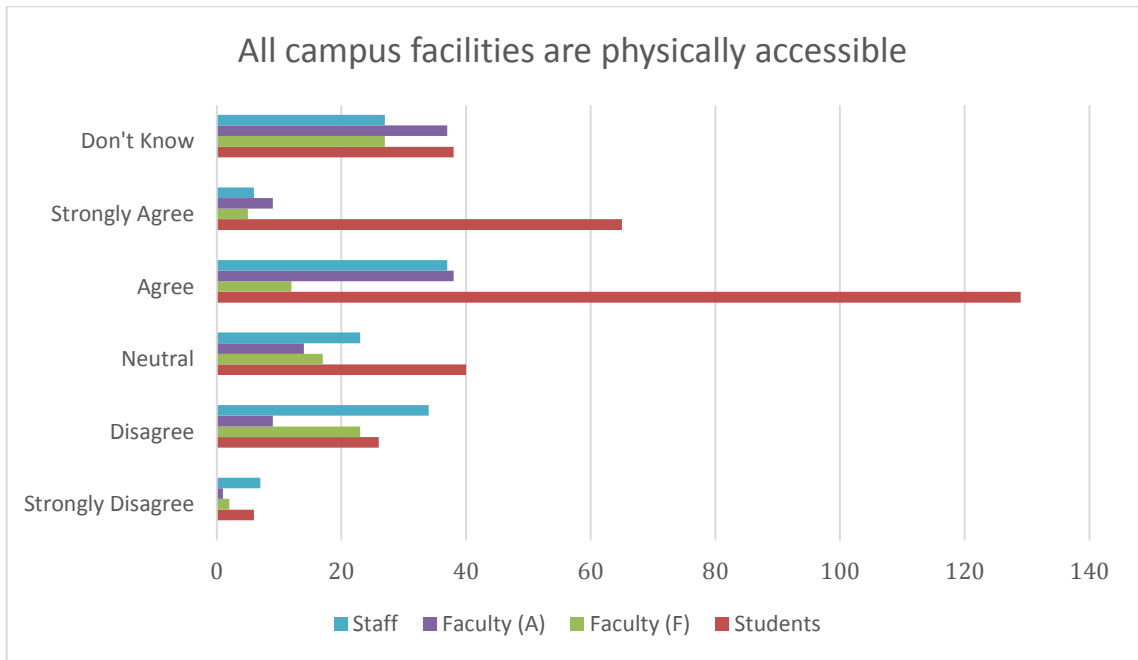
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	6	24	37	130	68	38	3.87	303
Faculty (F)	0	11	15	42	9	11	3.64	88
Faculty (A)	1	6	10	52	25	14	4.00	108
Staff	1	19	24	64	13	14	3.57	135
Total %	1.3% (8)	9.5% (61)	13.6% (87)	45.3% (290)	18.1% (116)	12.2% (78)	3.79	640
							answered question	640
							skipped question	8



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

14. All campus facilities are physically accessible.

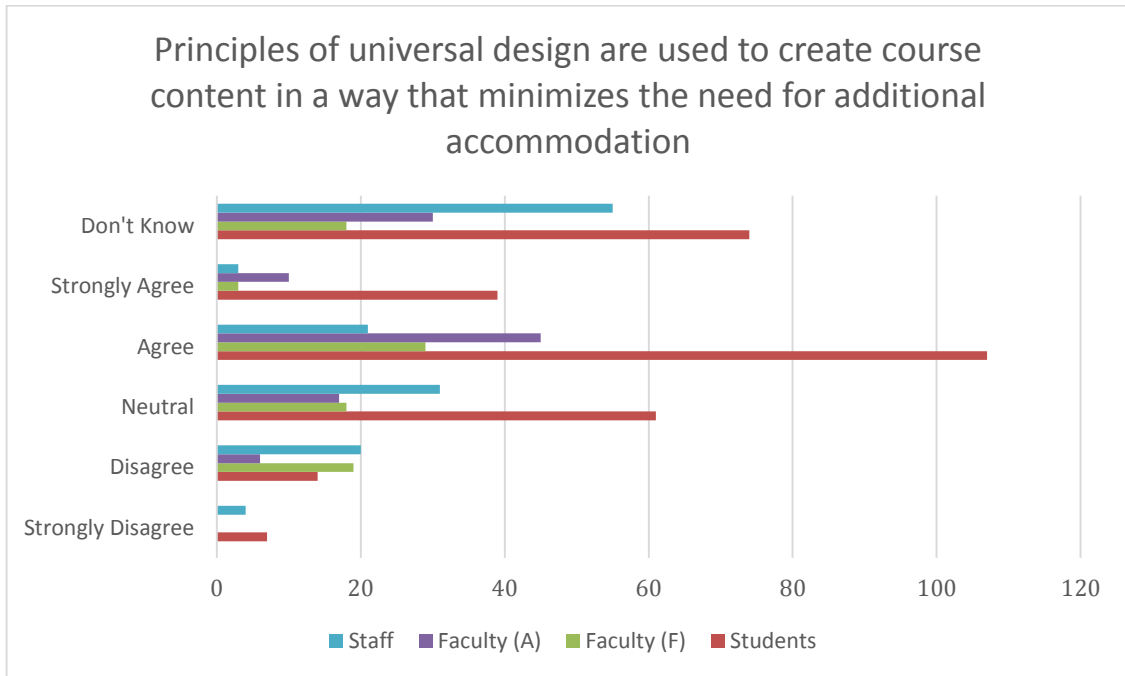
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	6	26	40	129	65	38	3.83	304
Faculty (F)	2	23	17	12	5	27	2.92	86
Faculty (A)	1	9	14	38	9	37	3.63	108
Staff	7	34	23	37	6	27	3.01	134
Total %	2.5% (16)	14.9% (95)	15.0% (96)	33.9% (216)	13.3% (85)	20.4% (130)	3.51	638
							answered question	638
							skipped question	10



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

- 15. Are there specific concerns about physical accessibility? **(See Responses)**
- 16. Principles of universal design are used to create course content in a way that minimizes the need for additional accommodation.

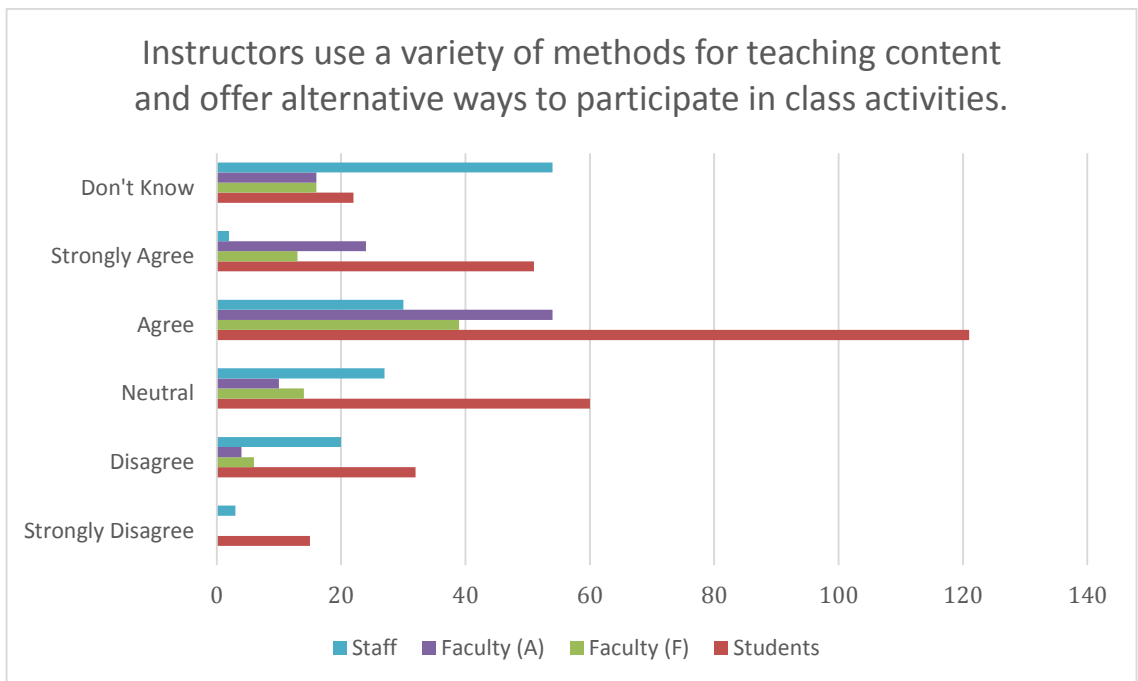
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	7	14	61	107	39	74	3.69	302
Faculty (F)	0	19	18	29	3	18	3.23	87
Faculty (A)	0	6	17	45	10	30	3.76	108
Staff	4	20	31	21	3	55	2.99	134
Total %	1.7% (11)	9.9% (63)	19.9% (127)	31.9% (203)	8.6% (55)	27.9% (178)	3.50	637
							answered question	637
							skipped question	11



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

17. Instructors use a variety of methods for teaching content and offer alternative ways to participate in class activities.

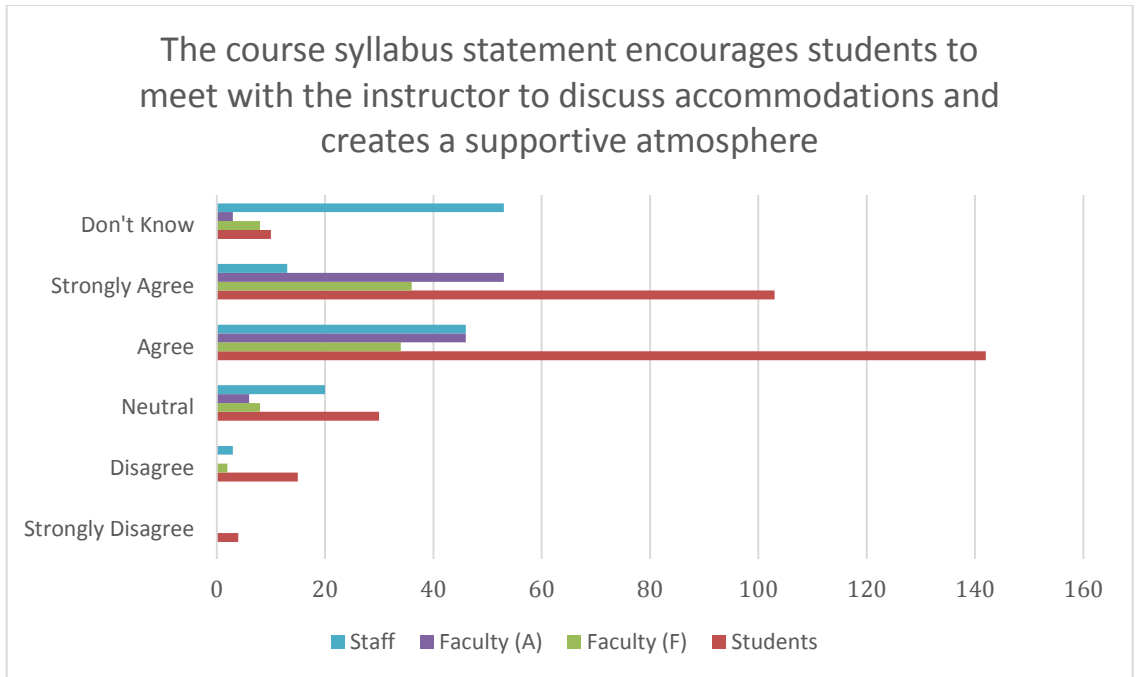
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	15	32	60	121	51	22	3.58	301
Faculty (F)	0	6	14	39	13	16	3.82	88
Faculty (A)	0	4	10	54	24	16	4.07	108
Staff	3	20	27	30	2	54	3.10	136
Total %	2.8% (18)	9.7% (62)	17.7% (113)	38.3% (245)	14.2% (91)	17.2% (110)	3.62	639
							answered question	639
							skipped question	9



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

18. The course syllabus statement encourages students to meet with the instructor to discuss accommodations and creates a supportive atmosphere

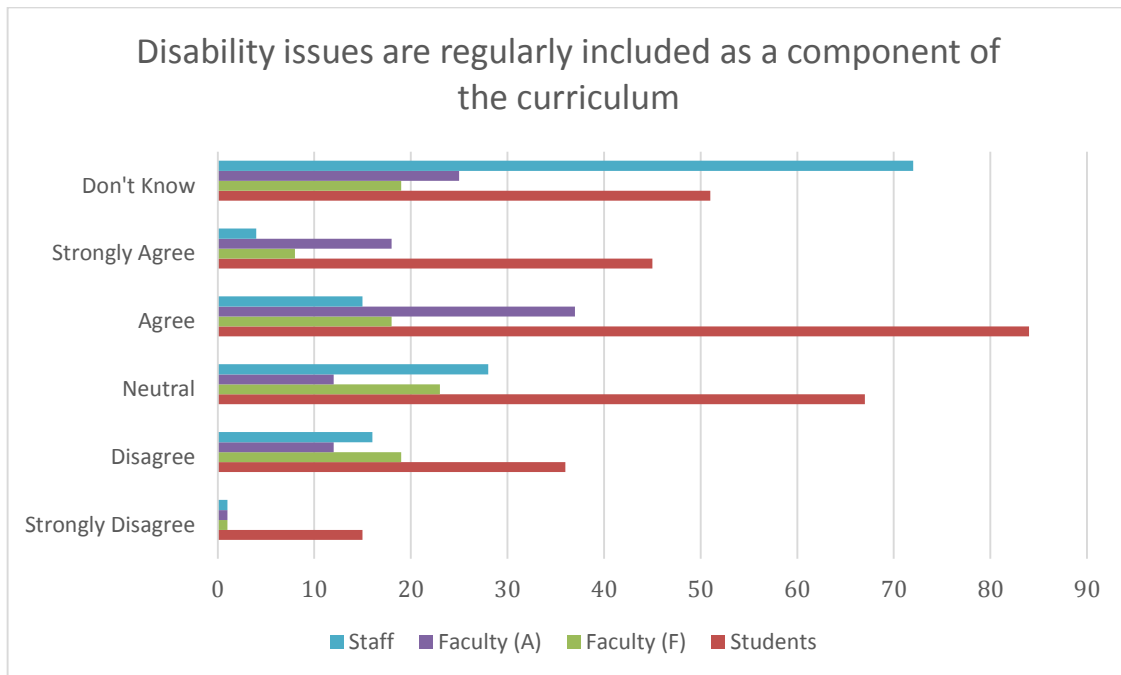
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	4	15	30	142	103	10	4.11	304
Faculty (F)	0	2	8	34	36	8	4.30	88
Faculty (A)	0	0	6	46	53	3	4.45	108
Staff	0	3	20	46	13	53	3.84	135
Total %	0.6% (4)	3.1% (20)	10.0% (64)	42.1% (270)	32.3% (207)	11.9% (76)	4.16	641
							answered question	641
							skipped question	7



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

19. Disability issues are regularly included as a component of the curriculum

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	15	36	67	84	45	51	3.44	298
Faculty (F)	1	19	23	18	8	19	3.19	88
Faculty (A)	1	12	12	37	18	25	3.74	105
Staff	1	16	28	15	4	72	3.08	136
Total %	2.8% (18)	13.6% (86)	20.5% (130)	24.3% (154)	12.0% (76)	26.7% (169)	3.40	633
							answered question	633
							skipped question	15

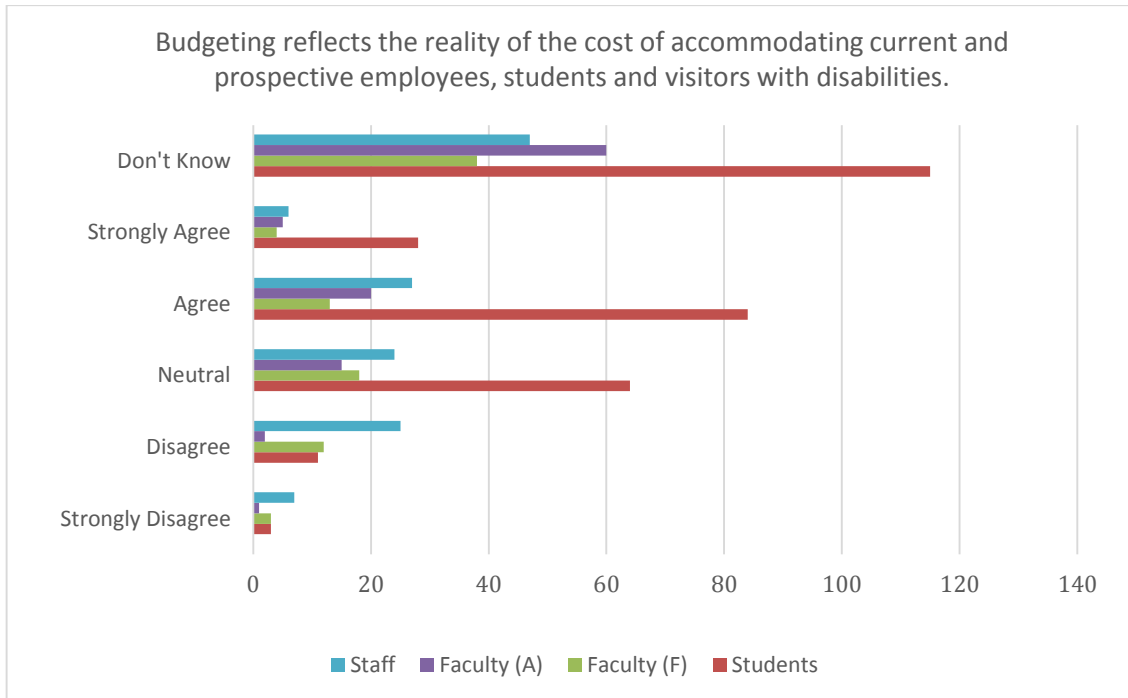


20. Are there specific concerns about instruction? (See Responses)

THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

21. Budgeting reflects the reality of the cost of accommodating current and prospective employees, students and visitors with disabilities.

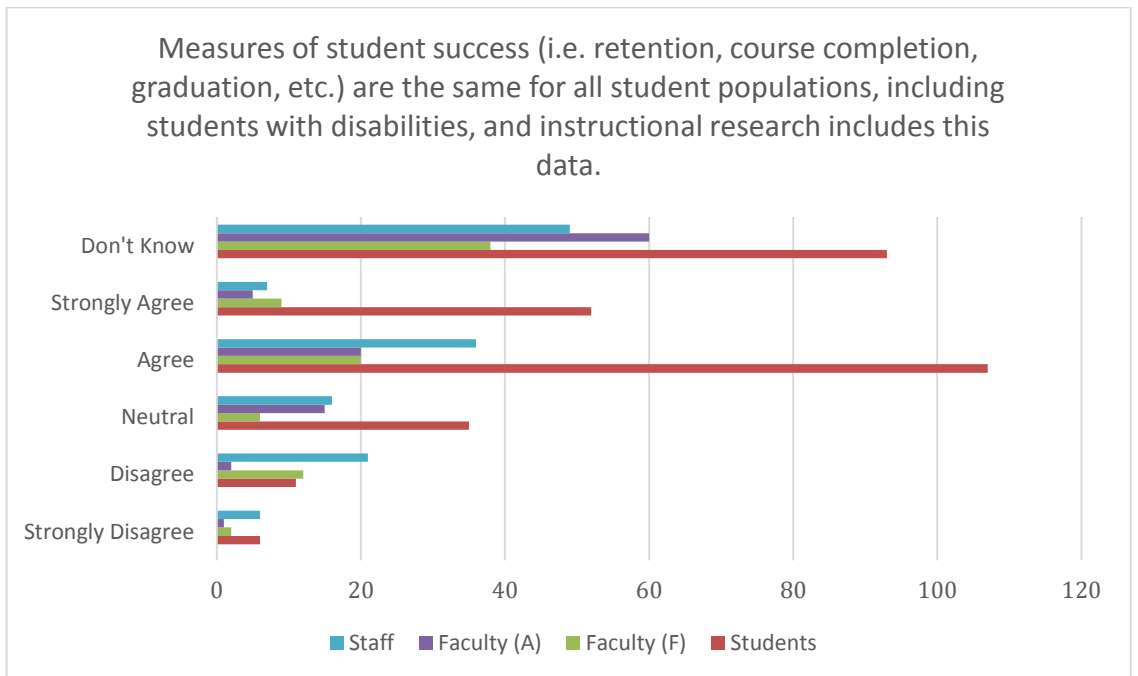
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	3	11	64	84	28	115	3.65	305
Faculty (F)	3	12	18	13	4	38	3.06	88
Faculty (A)	1	2	15	20	5	60	3.60	103
Staff	7	25	24	27	6	47	3.00	136
Total %	2.2% (14)	8.2% (52)	19.2% (122)	22.6% (144)	6.9% (44)	41.0% (261)	3.40	637
							answered question	637
							skipped question	11



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

22. Measures of student success (i.e. retention, course completion, graduation, etc.) are the same for all student populations, including students with disabilities, and instructional research includes this data.

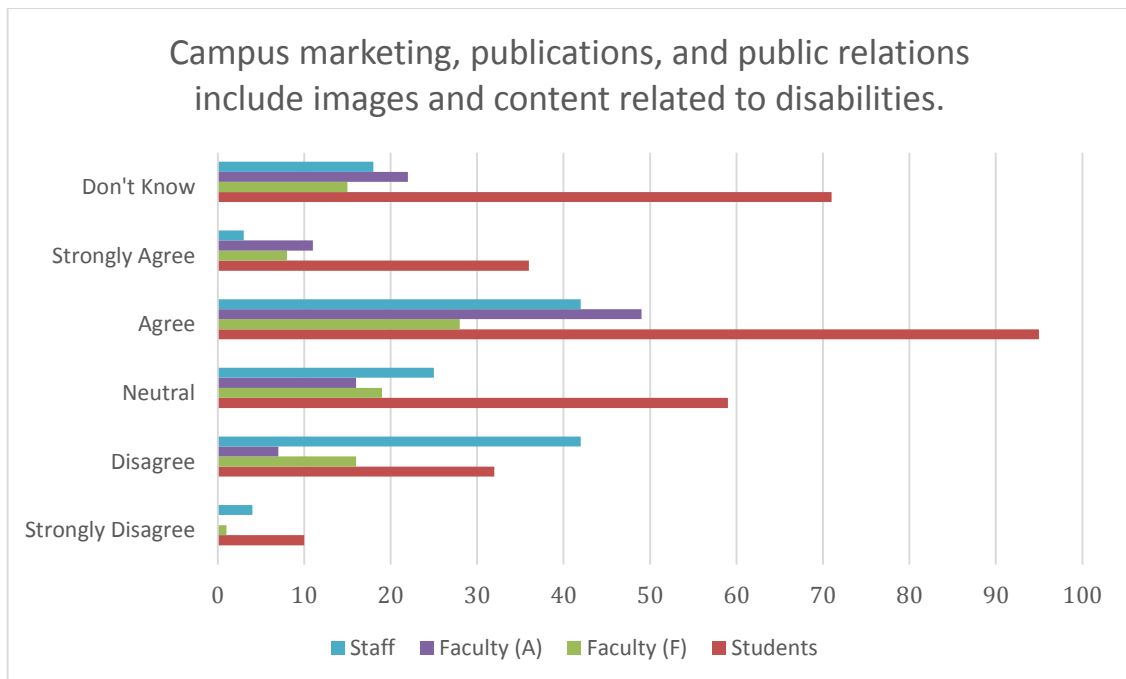
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	6	11	35	107	52	93	3.89	304
Faculty (F)	2	12	6	20	9	38	3.45	87
Faculty (A)	1	2	15	20	5	60	3.60	103
Staff	6	21	16	36	7	49	3.20	135
Total %	2.2% (14)	7.4% (47)	10.7% (68)	31.6% (201)	13.2% (84)	34.9% (222)	3.71	636
							answered question	636
							skipped question	14



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

23. Campus marketing, publications, and public relations include images and content related to disabilities.

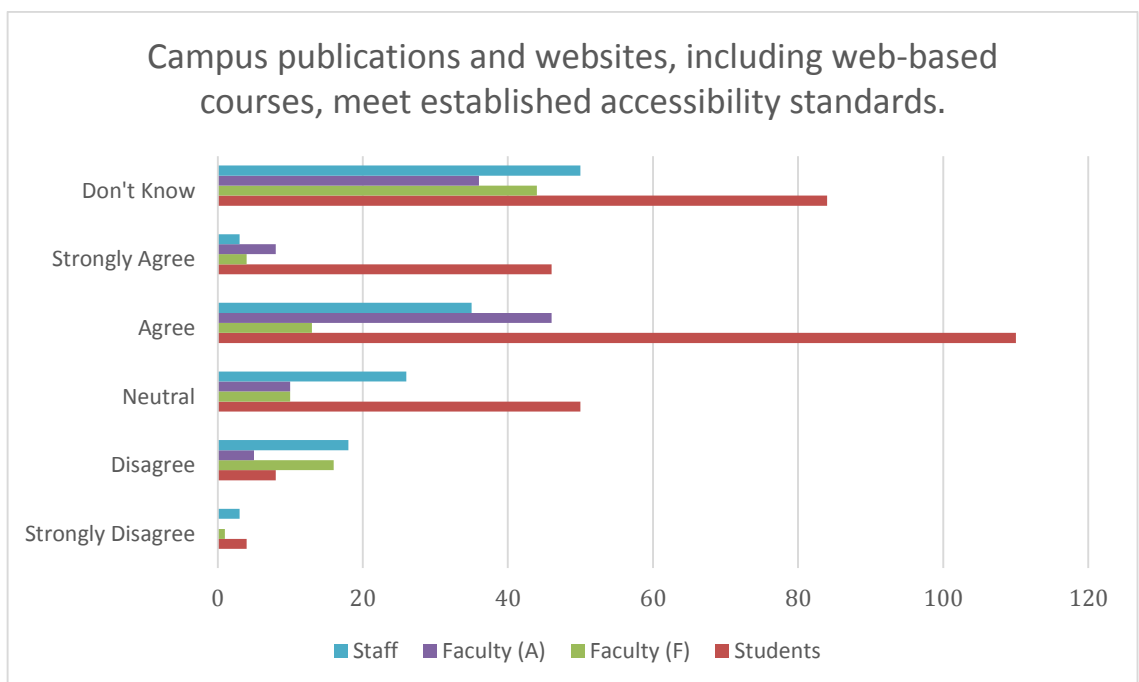
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	10	32	59	95	36	71	3.50	303
Faculty (F)	1	16	19	28	8	15	3.36	87
Faculty (A)	0	7	16	49	11	22	3.77	105
Staff	4	42	25	42	3	18	2.98	134
Total %	2.5% (16)	15.5% (98)	18.9% (120)	33.9% (215)	9.1% (58)	20.0% (127)	3.40	634
							answered question	634
							skipped question	14



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

24. Campus publications and websites, including web-based courses, meet established accessibility standards.

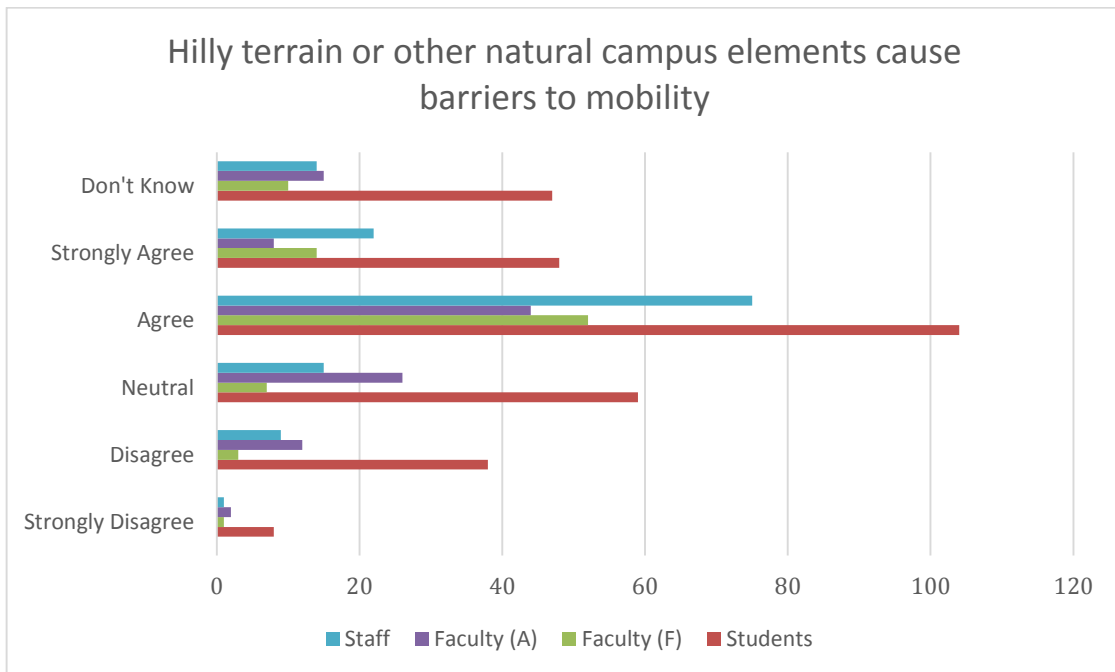
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	4	8	50	110	46	84	3.58	302
Faculty (F)	1	16	10	13	4	44	3.07	88
Faculty (A)	0	5	10	46	8	36	3.83	105
Staff	3	18	26	35	3	50	3.20	135
Total %	1.3% (8)	7.6% (48)	15.1% (96)	32.4% (206)	9.8% (62)	33.9% (215)	3.63	635
							answered question	635
							skipped question	13



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

25. Hilly terrain or other natural campus elements cause barriers to mobility

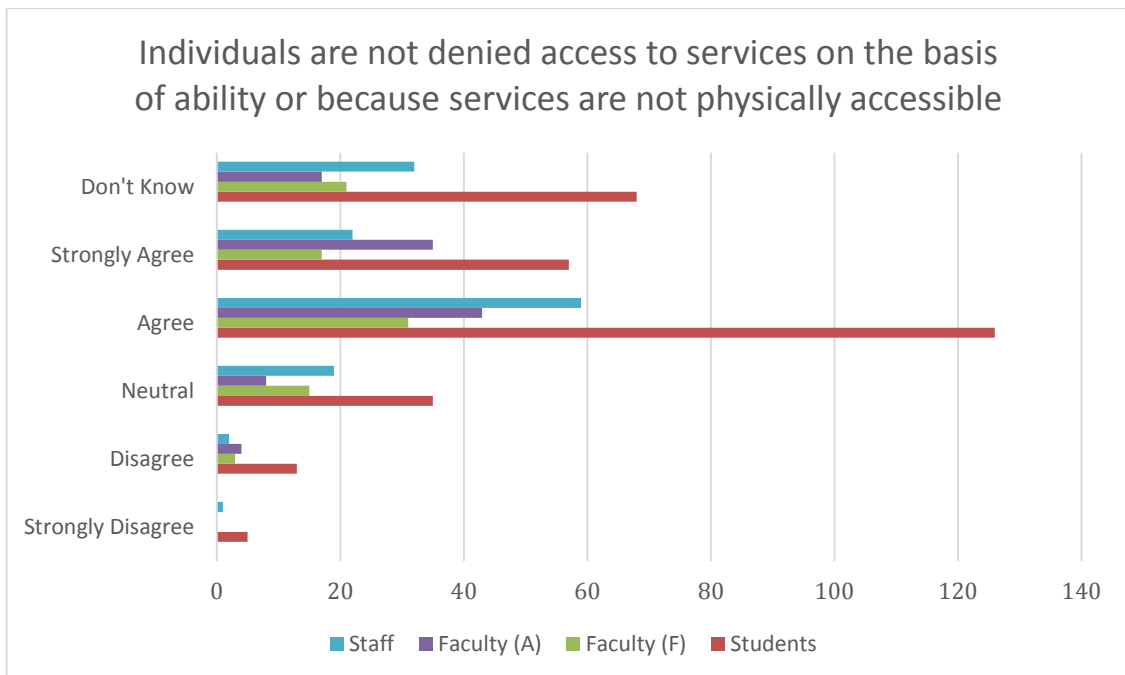
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	8	38	59	104	48	47	3.57	304
Faculty (F)	1	3	7	52	14	10	3.97	87
Faculty (A)	2	12	26	44	8	15	3.48	107
Staff	1	9	15	75	22	14	3.89	136
Total %	1.9% (12)	9.7% (62)	16.7% (107)	43.0% (275)	15.0% (96)	13.6% (87)	3.69	639
							answered question	639
							skipped question	9



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

26. Individuals are not denied access to services on the basis of ability or because services are not physically accessible.

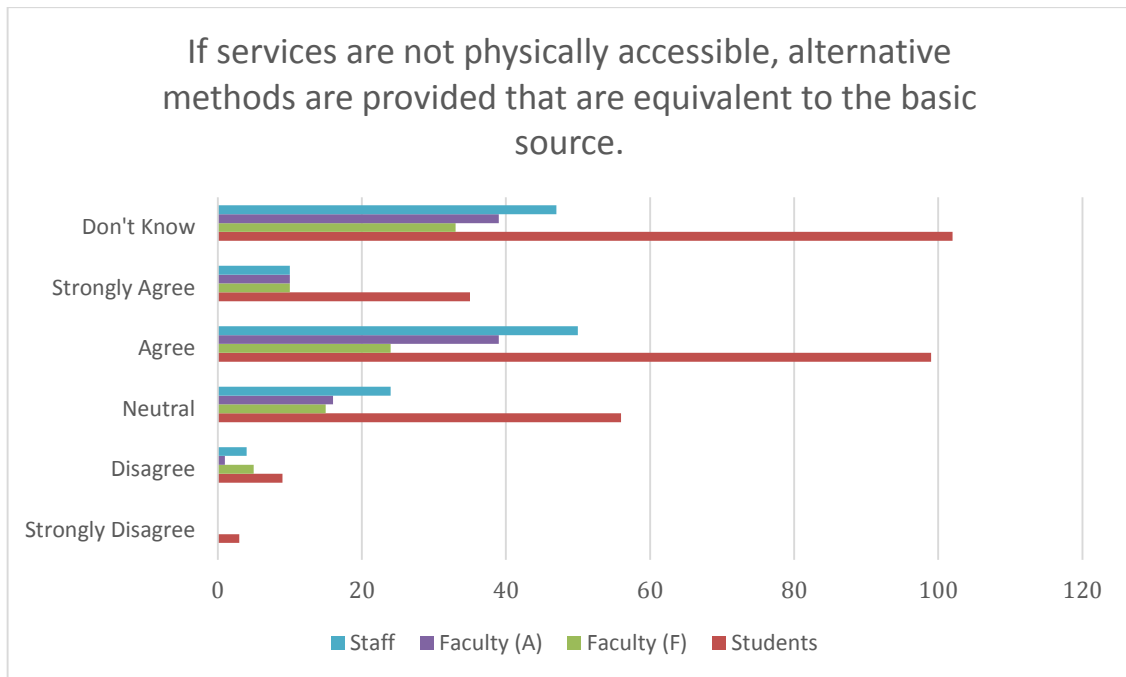
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	5	13	35	126	57	68	3.92	304
Faculty (F)	0	3	15	31	17	21	3.94	87
Faculty (A)	0	4	8	43	35	17	4.21	107
Staff	1	2	19	59	22	32	3.96	135
Total %	0.9% (6)	3.4% (22)	12.4% (79)	40.9% (261)	20.5% (131)	21.8% (139)	3.98	638
							answered question	638
							skipped question	10



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

27. If services are not physically accessible, alternative methods are provided that are equivalent to the basic source.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Rating Average	Response Count
Students	3	9	56	99	35	102	3.76	304
Faculty (F)	0	5	15	24	10	33	3.72	87
Faculty (A)	0	1	16	39	10	39	3.88	105
Staff	0	4	24	50	10	47	3.75	135
Total %	0.5% (3)	3.1% (20)	17.5% (111)	33.4% (212)	10.6% (67)	35.0% (222)	3.77	635
							answered question	635
							skipped question	13



THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

EMERGING THEMES

In analyzing the written responses to questions 10, 15, 20, and 28; various themes emerged relating to Student Support, Disability Support Services, Facilities and Campus Terrain, Instruction, Campus Issues, General Awareness, Technology, Training, the need for Policy and Funding.

GRCC Students

For students the major themes revolved around gaining access to services and lack of awareness as to what those services were. For example, October 1, 2013 at 12:05 AM a student wrote: **“The extent of information required to actually GET assistance is tough, it costs money to get paperwork filled out by doctors to “prove” disability. That should be taken into consideration...”** on the same date at 3:14 AM another student indicated that their student service concern involved: **“Affordable testing for dyslexia”**. In terms of awareness, one student wrote on September 30, 2013 at 6:14 PM **“I have witnessed a couple of students that clearly have a learning disability, but state that they do not. If these students come from a background where learning disabilities weren't discussed or education wasn't readily available, they may not know about such. Is there anything available for them?”**

On question 15, a question related to specific concerns about physical accessibility, students mainly indicated the difficulty the campus poses for individuals with mobility challenges. Aside from commentary about the number of stairs, there were specific buildings and physical spaces identified as problem areas. On October 3, 2013 at 9:55 PM a student wrote: **“Gaining entrance to the Ford Fieldhouse from Lyon can be a bit arduous for someone in a wheelchair. One would have to make it through the door, navigate the hallway, make another turn to the elevator just to get up to the main floor. The weight room on the lower floor doesn't appear to be very accessible for someone in a wheel chair looking to do an upper body workout, or even to get onto machines to work out.”**

Another student indicated that parking ramp accessibility was an issue. On October 2, 2013 at 11:47 PM a student wrote: **“Bostwick Parking Ramp Level 4 elevator doors have no automatic buttons and doors are HEAVY, not enough handicapped parking on Bostwick ramp (I've only ever seen 1 space open, and it was van accessible, so I don't qualify to use it), women's bathroom on 200 level of main building has nice auto door button...but handicapped stall is NOT accessible...stall door opens inward, and there is not enough space for a wheelchair.”**

Additionally, there were nine comments regarding door accessibility (accessible buttons, weight of doors, door width), seven comments regarding wheelchair accessibility and four comments regarding the accessibility of bathrooms in Sneden Hall. On September 30, 2013 at 11:37 PM one low vision student commented **“Accessible, yes, however there are concerns when using canes, especially guide**

THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

canes and we have to "fight" with our canes because they become "stuck" in various areas around campus."

Student concerns about instruction ran the gamut from lack of awareness and understanding about students with disabilities' needs in a classroom setting, professors singling out students with disabilities during class, and the lack of alternative assignments.

General concerns expressed in the last question related to larger spaces for the parking ramps which adequately accommodate larger vans or trucks that transport students who use a wheelchair. Other concerns relayed dealt with notification and not being made aware of campus construction or events that may impede access. On September 30, 2013 at 11:37 PM one low vision student responded: **"No one advises me that an area may have a barrier for construction. I find out the window cleaners are on campus by running into their equipment. No one informs me that mazes are placed around campus, ie..activities, counseling areas, first floor student building. And NO ONE INDIVIDUAL the whole time I have been going to CC has informed me or invited me to campus activities. It is as if the disabled are not included. We would not want to participate, or enjoy when they are having "fun" days."**

GRCC Employees

For faculty and staff at GRCC, the concerns are slightly different, but not considerably so. Instructors primarily asked questions about their role in the accommodation process. For example, one faculty member commented: **"Is it possible to automatically get a copy of the Disability Support Services individual agreement, instead of relying on the disabled students to arrange that? Often we don't know of the disability, certainly early on, and don't give accommodations that would help as a result. (SIC)"**

Faculty also requested additional training: **"Yes...I think that faculty need more training on the latest accommodations, especially if in areas of our own particular courses, course packets, AV usage in the classroom."** Faculty also questioned the process of establishing or recommending accommodations by Disability Support Services, indicating: **"I think that they over compensate for the student...expecting what sometimes are unreasonable accommodations."** There was also concern over the testing process and procedure conducted within DSS by faculty.

Faculty spoke frequently about the lack of training or their lack of empowerment around issues of accessibility or how to make course content compliant and accessible. One faculty member commented: **"No guidance/training provided with regards to software to be used for math accessibility. I cannot, therefore, say we have been "trained and empowered." I think it is just the opposite. Due to lack of knowledge, I now feel I am at a standstill. Also, I have been at presentations lately where administrators used power points that were not compliant due to coloring, style of font, etc."**

THE ACCESSIBILITY INDICATORS

Staff members commented on issues and barriers that make campus life particularly difficult for students. One ESP commented: **“Yes, tables in halls of first floor of Cook building are way too high so people in wheel chairs have to look up to someone sitting on a 'high chair". Also, wheel chair people do not have access to the tables themselves.”** Staff members also expressed concern about access to buildings. As one ESP pointed out, the accessible entrances aren't always the most convenient or easy to access: **“All campus facilities are accessible but by going out of the way to find a ramp or elevator. For example, there is are two ways to enter the main building that are accessible for wheelchairs. But there are more than 2 entrances to the building. can you imagine how frustrating it would be to have to find "the" entrance you can use? (SIC)”**

RESULTS SUMMARY

Results Summary

In analyzing the results and emerging themes there are clear concerns in a multitude of areas but little difference between the individual populations in regards to which values or views an issue as higher than the others.

The most strikingly apparent information gleaned from the Indicator Survey was the lack of awareness on campus as to the current resources available or afforded in efforts to make GRCC an accessible campus for all. From there, the theme carried as faculty commented on not having enough training or opportunities to learn about how to create accessible course content or feeling empowered to do so independently. There were questions as to the process and procedure for student services such as academic testing facilities for students receiving accommodations and how faculty receive notification of an accommodation. There were questions as to compliance and accessibility in campus facility locations showing a disparity in the understanding of the difference between compliance and accessibility as concepts for evaluation. There was an outpour of concern for those with physical disabilities but very little mention of those with invisible disabilities with the exception of questioning how those with cognitive or emotional diagnosis can receiving diagnostic testing to receive services.

The ADA College Action Project has done a considerable amount of work to address these and many other concerns raised in the comment section of the survey as well as the numbered items for each indicator where a great deal of responses recorded were either “neutral” or “I don’t know”.

Accessibility Initiatives

INSTRUCTION/FACULTY EMPOWERMENT

- **[Faculty Resource Guide/Accessibility Subject Guide](#) (from the Library and Learning Commons):** created and continues to be a dynamic resource for faculty and staff on campus.
www.subjectguides.grcc.edu/access
- **Accessibility and Universal Design Trainings:** The Center for Teaching and Learning has administered and hosted twenty-three professional development events since January 2013 providing information about and skill development in universal design.
- **Research:** The work of the ADA CAP Capacity Sub-Team drove efforts to research and continue to provide. Other current processes are under continued review for accessibility to revise if necessary:
 - New Faculty Orientation
 - Distance Learning and Instructional Technologies professional development
 - Best practices for creating accessible learning environments

TECHNOLOGY

- **Audit of all of GRCC's Web-based Software/Systems:** The Information and Technology department has purchased a program to assist with the review of all web based software
- **Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT):** As a common practice and embedded within the purchasing procedure, potential vendors are asked to complete a VPAT to ensure compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) and has overall accessibility such as screen reader capability, keyboard functionality, alternative text for images, tags for audio, etc.

PHYSICAL SPACES

- **Physical Environment Goals for 2014-2016**
 - Continue with upgrade of elevator controls (Due Date: January 2016)
 - Continue with upgrade of door levers (Due Date: January 2016)
 - Facility evaluation of accessibility campus wide (Due Date: September 2015)
- **Facilities Procedure for Accessibility or Compliance Related Requests:** All doorways, entry ways, equipment height, etc. will be checked to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 as amended. If there is a question about whether or not a space or entry way is

ACCESSIBILITY INITIATIVES

in fact ADA compliant, the space will be assessed according to the Checklist for Physical Accessibility to Offices based on the Americans with Disabilities Act: Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities (ADAAG) (i.e. 5lbf. maximum force to open a door).

- Facility evaluation of accessibility campus wide

CAMPUS INCLUSION

- **Disability Awareness Poster Campaign:** A combined effort of the Office of Accessibility and Staff Development to help change campus culture through addressing issues and attitudes towards the topic of ability.
- **Accessibility Statement:** the Office of Accessibility has provided statements to the Communications department about standard statements to be included in all outgoing publications. These statements are to be included on all notifications of events and activities indicating that accommodations are available through the Disability Support Services office and can be found on the Office of Accessibility website.
<http://www.grcc.edu/officeofaccessibility/resources>
- **Disability Awareness Month:** For the first time in a very visible way, GRCC under the direction of Disability Support Services offered a Disability Awareness Fair, Mental Health Awareness Fair and a Town Hall Forum on Disability and Accessibility at GRCC all during the month of October 2013.
- **Accessibility Advocates:** Through a series of trainings offered by the Office of Accessibility, staff are educated on the “why” as opposed to the “how” of accessibility by learning the social justice aspects of disability by developing collective responsibility, individual autonomy, scientific evidence as well as personal judgment skills necessary to be an advocate and ally.
- **Accessibility Task Force:** an online committee which meets electronically via Blackboard and periodically in person to address issues and concerns raised on campus about compliance and accessibility while driving initiatives to also make GRCC an accessible campus for

OTHER ACCESSIBILITY RELATED INITIATIVES

- **Essential Abilities and Technical Standards:** the Essential Abilities and Technical Standards (EATS) documents provide a set of physical, mental, emotional, cognitive and judgment based criteria and abilities necessary to be successful in a given class for a particular program or department at GRCC. The goal of this initiative is to allow faculty to have a better seat at the table in establishing accommodations and give greater forethought to alternative assignments and essential components in course objectives; allow Disability Student Support to have a better foundation to

ACCESSIBILITY INITIATIVES

determine appropriate and adequate accommodations by being able to reference a programs standards and allow students to make better informed decisions about their ability to be successful in a program having more information about its contents; enabling them the opportunity to intelligently determine if they are otherwise qualified.

- **Disability Access Response Tool (DART):** the Office of Accessibility has provided an online form to fill out which will allow members of the GRCC community to report campus wide issues of compliance or accessibility in physical or virtual spaces for data collection and immediate attention in impacted areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations

Going forward, the Office of Accessibility will be pursuing other measures to ensure greater accountability, pro-active responsibility and create a greater sense of cultural competence when it comes to the topics of compliance, accessibility and barrier removal in academic, environmental and social scenarios for individuals of all ability levels.

SERVICE AND TECHNOLOGY

The gap between student and employee accommodation services and the need for technology has been apparent for quite some time. With the number of students needing accommodations growing and the awareness of accommodations being available for faculty and staff increasing, the ever changing world of technology is rapidly advancing as well. In order to ensure access to the resources best suited for these individuals and to do so in a timely manner, the Office of Accessibility is actively pursuing the creation of a dedicated position to serve as liaison between Disability Support Services and Information Technology. This person would not only oversee the delivery and maintenance of instruments like laptops with accessible software and other auxiliary aids and peripheral requests, but also help us to continually move with the changing wave of technology. By pro-actively staying ahead of new challenges and being innovative in how we serve the community this position would help guide our efforts as a college to become a truly accessible campus for all.

FUNDING

Presently, there is no direct funding model to address accessibility related concerns, physical space renovations or requests. The allocation of funds for these types of requests whether they are related to an accommodation or an effort to create a space with ease of access beyond basic compliance for all campus community members comes from a collective of offices each with their own budgets and projects to fund or support. The simple task of accommodating a heavy door while compliant by ADA standards which still poses a significant challenge for an individual with limited mobility or physical strength by putting in an accessible door button can cost in excess of \$3000. The need for bariatric furniture and adjustable height tables in each building is increasing, but currently there is no direct funding source to immediately address the concerns raised. This causes individuals affected to have to wait for services equal to that of their peers and this flies in the face of the spirit of the ADA. The Office of Accessibility is actively seeking the creation of an Accessibility specific budget which can not only address internally raised concerns about the aforementioned issues, but can also respond to requests

RECOMMENDATIONS

for funds from departments or programs which have an accommodation need or accessibility related issue that affects individuals with disabilities.

POLICY

In the wake of several colleges coming under fire for the lack of accessibility in videos shown in classroom, extra-curricular and sporting events, it is imperative that Grand Rapids Community College pass a campus wide Audiovisual Captioning Policy. Captioning is not an option. It is a must for accessibility. The benefits reach far beyond those who are hard of hearing or deaf. Captioning has proven benefits for those who use English as a second language, it helps retention and comprehension for individuals of all abilities, but is especially beneficial for those students with learning disabilities, ADD/ADHD or other cognitive impairments. There currently is an Audiovisual Captioning Policy proposed being reviewed by the Academic Governing Council. It is the goal of this office to get the policy passed through AGC and make it a campus-wide policy for all audiovisual media including but not limited to videos, movie clips, DVDs and films to be produced or purchased with open/closed-captioning or subtitles.

There is also a great need for greater accessibility in the selection of textbooks for students. The need for screen reader capability is not only a concern for software but in textbooks as well. When publishers offer textbooks the question must be asked if the text is offered in an accessible electronic format. The effort, time and expense related to the conversion of a textbook into an accessible alternative format is extensive compared to the front end screening process required to ensure that students with accommodation needs can receive their materials at the same time and in the same fashion as their peers. Without creating this step or intervening in a more pro-active way during this process we are accommodating the concern but the barrier still exists forcing many students to wait well into the semester to receive books and course materials long after class work has been assigned. As a result, the Office of Accessibility is currently drafting and will pursue an E-Text Policy which will operate independently or in conjunction with the Instructional Materials Policy.

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

In just a few short months since the formation of the Department of Accessibility, many strides have been made in academics and student services here at Grand Rapids Community College. However, in looking at the results and perceptions held by members of the campus community; it is apparent that in the process of creating resources, the same effort must be expelled in educating the campus about the availability of these resources.

With the assistance of offices like Center for Teaching Excellence, Communications, Disability Student Support, Facilities Office, General Council, Human Resources, Instructional Research and Staff Development much work has been accomplished, but it will take the combined effort of all of these offices and the greater campus community to bring awareness to issues of accessibility and the opportunities for training, education and enrichment.

GRCC should be proud of the accomplishments made to date in efforts to remove barriers at all levels for campus community members of all ability levels, it is the hope of this office that the work will continue and the energy will be sustained so this college will one day become an example for others to follow. Now that we are monitoring the perceptions and opinions of our efforts have a transparent way to continue the conversation.

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