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ATTITUDES TOWARDS ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS  
WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES: A STUDY OF  
ROWAN UNIVERSITY FACULTY

by  
Sean Smith

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Arts in  
Higher Education Administration  
of  
The Graduate School  
at  
Rowan University  
5/08/2007

Approved by

Professor

Date Approved

May 08, 2007

## ABSTRACT

Sean C. Smith

### ATTITUDES TOWARDS ACOMMODATIONS FOR LEARNING DISABLED STUDENTS: A STUDY OF ROWAN UNIVERSITY FACULTY

2006/2007

Dr. Burton R. Sisco

Master of Arts in Higher Education Administration

The purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes of Rowan University faculty regarding accommodations for students with learning disabilities. A survey was sent to 350 full-time assistant, associate, and full professors from Rowan University's six colleges. The study aimed to discover what instructional, exam, policy, as well as university accommodations faculty members were willing to make for students with learning disabilities. The demographic data of age, gender, college, years teaching experience were correlated with the attitudinal statements included in the survey. The study revealed that, overall, faculty were willing to make accommodations for students with learning disabilities.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This space is dedicated to those who helped me during the course of my graduate study at Rowan University.

I'd like to start by thanking Dr. Sisco, who serves as the department chair of the M.A. Higher Education program. Dr. Sisco has displayed a great deal of patience in working with me through the thesis, as well as the program. He has helped me to realize the value of actual learning, which is rare in a professor.

Dr. Melissa Cox, of the Academic Success Center, was also very important influence during my time at Rowan University. Dr. Cox exemplifies what it means to be a professional in the field of higher education. While serving as a graduate assistant in the Center for Academic Success, Dr. Cox presented me with many opportunities to experience higher education in practice.

I'd like to thank Steve Bonora, fellow classmate for six years, fraternity brother, and great friend for his ability to see the positive in almost any situation. Also, congratulations to Steve on his recent engagement to Kim.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Students with disabilities share many of the same aspirations as non-disabled students. Many students with learning disabilities wish to pursue a college education. According to the American Council on Education, the proportion of full-time freshmen who reported having one or more learning disabilities increased from 2.6% in 1978 to a high of 8.2% in 1994, and most recently, 6.0% in 2000 (Henderson, 2001). With the percentage of college students with learning disabilities steadily climbing, colleges and universities are facing new challenges of how to meet the needs of these students

The challenge of serving students with learning disabilities is not limited to facilities or support programming. A significant challenge is to understand faculty attitudes towards accommodations for learning disabled students. To what extent are college and university faculty concerned with whether a student has a learning disability? What accommodations do professors make for students with disabilities? Do faculty voluntarily make additional accommodations for students with learning disabilities?

Faculty are obliged to make some accommodations for learning disabled students under the requirements of the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA) of 1975 and other laws such as the Section 504 of the *Vocational Rehabilitation Act* in 1973 and the *Americans with Disabilities Act* (ADA) in 1990,



which ensure equal access to education for individuals with disabilities. However, faculty do not have to make any accommodation for students with learning disabilities, only ones that are reasonable. Reasonableness varies from individual to individual.

#### Statement of the Problem

Much research has been done regarding the attitudes of faculty members towards students with learning disabilities at the K-12 level. In contrast, relatively little research has been done in higher education and no study has been conducted at Rowan University, which prompted this study.

#### Significance of the Problem

The study is significant in that there are no data at Rowan University that suggest how faculty feels about accommodations for learning disabled students. Hopefully, the study will prompt faculty training regarding accommodations for students with learning disabilities. Furthermore, the study may help broaden the knowledge base for faculty and administrators regarding accommodations for students with learning disabilities.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to discover the attitudes of faculty towards providing accommodations for students with learning disabilities at Rowan University. Many steps have been taken by universities to ensure that students with disabilities can receive the best education possible; however, if the faculty have negative opinions about providing accommodations for students with learning disabilities, this may undermine the positive efforts that a university, as a whole, is

making. Furthermore, if faculty members have positive attitudes about providing accommodations for students with learning disabilities, this may have a positive affect on the students. Overall, this study may help equip higher education institutions with the knowledge that is necessary to negotiate the often difficult question: what is a fair accommodation?

#### Assumptions and Limitations

It is assumed that faculty honestly completed the survey to the best of their ability. It is also assumed that faculty did have some opinion regarding accommodations for students with learning disabilities. It is also assumed that faculty have been exposed to the vocabulary used in the survey.

It is also assumed that the researcher acted without bias in creating the survey. The researcher served as a graduate assistant in the Center for Academic Success at Rowan University, which serves students with learning disabilities.

The comprehensiveness of faculty examined is a limitation of the study. All full, associate, and assistant professors received surveys; however, the study did not examine the attitudes of adjunct professors, who teach 27% of Rowan University's classes (Rowan, 2006).

The response rate of 50% is another limitation in the study. Because the survey was distributed to all 350 full, associate, assistant faculty members on campus, the researcher was unable to obtain a desired response rate of 70%.

#### Operational Definitions

**Academic Success Center:** Administrative office at Rowan University that handles matters pertaining to students with learning disabilities.

Accommodation: It is a modification or adjustment to an academic program providing an otherwise qualified student with a disability full access to university-sponsored programs. They are determined on an individual basis and will reflect the functional impairment so that accommodation(s) may vary from class-to-class depending upon course content and format. Accommodations are individualized and flexible and intended to be effective and reasonable and do not change or fundamentally alter the purpose of a program.

Attitude: Attitude is defined by professors' responses to the items on the survey employed in the study.

Full-time Faculty Member: Persons whose specific assignments customarily are made for the purpose of conducting instruction, research, or public service as a principal activity (or activities), and who hold the academic rank of professor, associate professor, assistant professor and held a tenure line at Rowan University in the 2005/2006 academic year.

Learning Disabled: According to U.S. Federal Code (Section 300.7(c)(10) of 34 CFR Parts 300 and 303): The term means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia (U.S. Department of Education, 2006).

#### Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the attitudes of participating faculty members towards policy, instructional, examination, and institutional accommodations of students with learning disabilities?
2. Is there a significant relationship between the demographic variables of age, gender, academic rank, college, teaching experience, and experience with learning disabled students and the faculty attitude statements?
3. What impacts do participating faculty members report from the use of accommodations for students with learning disabilities?
4. What recommendations do participating faculty members make in serving students with learning disabilities?

#### Organization of the Study

Chapter two summarizes studies dealing with attitudes of faculty towards providing accommodations for students with disabilities. Chapter two also contains summaries of attitude research as well as information regarding the law with respect to accommodation for students with learning disabilities. The methodology of the study is presented in chapter three. It discusses how, where, and with whom the study was conducted. The chapter also discusses how the data were collected and analyzed. The results of the study can be found in chapter four. Chapter five presents a summary of the study, discusses the findings in relation to relevant literature, and offers conclusions and recommendations for further research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Educators' attitudes towards accommodations for students with disabilities are well researched in the area of public school education. For example, Ballone and Czerniak (2001) found that attitudes towards learning disabled students was one the most important aspects in determining intent to establish and implement accommodations in the classroom. There is also a considerable amount of research that considers the attitudes of faculty, particularly at the community college level. There is far less research pertaining to the attitudes of faculty in 4-year colleges and universities. This chapter begins with the nature of attitudes, explores the law and what it means to be learning disabled, and then reviews relevant research regarding faculty attitudes towards students with learning disabilities.

#### Attitudes

What are attitudes? How are they defined? How are they measured? Where do they come from? What influences attitudes? The term attitude is recognizable to most people, but difficult to specifically define.

Allport (1954) defined attitude as a "mental or neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence on the individual's response to all objects and situations to which it is related" (p. 169). This definition contains four parts: "(1) it is a mental and neural state, (2) of readiness to respond, (3) organized, (4) through experience and exerting a directive and/or dynamic influence on behavior" (Allport, 1954, p.44).

Rosenberg and Hovland (1960) suggest that attitude has three components. The first component is the affective component, or the way that we feel about something. The next element of attitude is the cognitive component, or the way that we speak about something. The third component is the behavioral component, or our overt actions. Essentially, this refers to the way we behave.

Zimbardo and Leippe (1991) more recently defined attitude as an evaluative disposition toward some object based upon cognitions, affective reactions, behavioral intentions, and past behaviors. They argue “Attitude is an informed predisposition to respond and is comprised of three constructs: (1) cognitive - belief, (2) affective - feeling, and (3) behavioral – a readiness or intent for action” (Zimbardo & Leippe, 1991, p.57).

According to Azjen, (1988), *attitude* is a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manor with respect to a given object, person, institution, or event. Azjen argues that there are three basic features: “(1) the notion that attitude is learned,(2) that it predisposes action, (3) that such actions are consistently favorable or unfavorable toward the object, person, institution, or event” (Azjen, 1988, p.37).

Rensis Likert, (1932), creator of the Likert scale, provides the backbone for many attitudinal research studies. The Likert scale requires individuals to make a decision on their level of agreement, generally on a five-point scale (i.e., Strongly Agree, Agree, Uncertain, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) with a statement. Likert’s scale remains a widespread tool for attitudinal research today, and is an essential element in this study.

## The Law and Accommodations

Faculty attitudes are directly influenced by the law, particularly federal legislation such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. In many instances, faculty members have no choice as to whether to accommodate a student with a learning disability. However, the law is very complicated in that there are many areas where it can be interpreted in different ways. Everyday, college service providers and professors face challenging issues as to whether to provide an accommodation for any particular student.

Many people are under the misconception that Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or IDEA is the law that governs decisions made regarding students with learning disabilities in higher education. IDEA mainly governs grades K-12. It is the law that allows students who have special needs to receive individualized instruction, and provides that no individual can be denied the opportunity to participate in free public schooling.

Essentially, IDEA provides K-12 students with everything needed to succeed in the classroom. For example, if a learning disabled student needs an individual tutor because of a disability, then one will be provided, free of charge.

Section 504 of the law differs for college students in that students with learning disabilities are only required to receive reasonable accommodation. For example, post secondary students are “entitled to academic adjustments or auxiliary aids and services such as readers, interpreters, note takers, alternate text, audio taping of lectures, etc.” (Berry College, 2006, ¶ 3).

Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act provides that:

No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States...shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. (U.S. Department of Education, 2001, ¶ 2)

In Section I, subpart A of Section 504, the law states that individuals with disabilities must be afforded “equal opportunity to gain the same result, to gain the same benefit, or to reach the same level of achievement, in the most integrated setting appropriate to the persons needs” (U.S. Department of Education, 2001 ¶ 5)

Title III of the *American With Disabilities Act* further prohibits entities that operate places of public accommodation from discriminating against persons with disabilities by:

denying them full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations they provide (42 U.S.C. § 12182(a)).

Discrimination, harassment, constructive dismissal (i.e., forcing a student to withdraw), and retaliation (i.e., adverse treatment directed toward a student for having filed a complaint with the OCR, Department of Justice [DOJ], or the courts) claims are feasible under the ADA, as well as Section 504. (U.S.

Department of Education, 2001 ¶ 16)

Because the federal law has been defined broadly, colleges and universities have encountered issues dealing with the law. Many of the administrators overseeing the accommodation of students with disabilities do not understand the law. However, over time many cases regarding proper accommodation have been decided in the courts.



These decisions are important to educators and service administrators as they may help with the decision making processes.

#### Case Law

The *Dinsmore v. Pugh and the Regents of the University of California at Berkeley* case of 1989 is a decision that demonstrates how faculty attitudes towards students with disabilities can be important. In the case, a faculty member refused to provide a student with a learning disability extra time on a test. The university supported the faculty member by arguing the right to refuse a student extra time on a test because of academic freedom. The district court, however, ruled against the faculty member and University of California, and ordered the university to set clear policies regarding accommodations for students with disabilities. The professor was also held personally liable and was required to pay monetary damages (Scott, 1994).

*Southeastern Community College v. Davis* was also an important case involving students with learning disabilities in higher education. In this case, Frances Davis was denied admission because of a hearing impairment that would have required a great deal of individualized attention from faculty and exemption from a clinical component of the program. Ultimately, the case reached the U.S. Supreme Court and the decision was as follows:

- 1) postsecondary institutions have the right to establish and maintain academic and technical (nonacademic) standards that are essential to a course or program;
- 2) the student's physical and mental abilities must be considered on an individualized basis as they relate to the specific program (stereotypes about disabilities are not permissible); and
- 3) a wide range of accommodations that

might permit the individual to participate in the program must be considered.

Patient safety and undue administrative hardship were areas the Court examined in weighing the accommodation requests. (Scott, 1994, p. 407)

In another landmark case, *Doe v. New York University*, a student was dismissed from a medical college because of her pathological behavior. The student was initially admitted into NYU medical school. The university soon discovered that the student had a history of pathological behavior. They advised her that she would be asked to take a leave of absence if any incidents of the behavior occurred while she was enrolled. The student was then asked to take a leave of absence upon the university discovering that Doe bled herself with the aid of a catheter as a means of dealing with stress. Upon reapplying, the student was rejected, and she filed suit claiming that the university had discriminated against her because of her disability. The Supreme Courts decision was as follows:

Ms. Doe would] ... more than likely than not be able to complete her course of medical studies and serve creditably as a physician...[and] NYU had failed to sustain its burden of going forward and proving Doe was not an otherwise qualified handicapped person or that her application for readmission was rejected for reasons other than her handicap. (*Doe v. New York University*, 1981, p. 772-773)

#### Academic Studies

The initial interaction with a faculty member may have profound consequences on the student. For example, Nutter and Ringgenberg (1993), found that a prejudicial climate may prevent students with learning disabilities from enacting self-advocacy skills

(such as expressing academic strengths and weaknesses to faculty), understanding their academic needs, and asking for accommodations.

Belilke and Yssel (1998) studied an exemplary relationship between faculty and students with disabilities. The researchers found that the interaction between faculty and students can impact a student's self confidence and the ability to establish personal identity. If faculty members have negative attitudes towards students with disabilities, it may be difficult to foster positive relationships with those students.

Numerous studies have been done concerning attitudes of faculty towards students with disabilities at various colleges and universities. The colleges vary by size, variables, measurement scales, and outcomes naturally vary as well. The following section examines some of the studies that have been performed over the years.

In 1996, Stage and Milne conducted a study of college students with learning disabilities and personal college experiences. Part of the study focused on student interaction with faculty regarding a learning disability. The study found that many students had positive interactions with faculty. In one such instance, a student recounts his positive interaction with a faculty member:

Last year I had a class with 350 plus students....Well I had to constantly keep up with him (the professor)...That was a nice bonus, to be able to communicate with the professor and have him know who you are. Now I see him all over campus and he talks to me. With most professors, it's been that way. (Stage & Milne, 1996, p.434)

While some professors in the study were very positive, some faculty had negative reactions to students with disabilities. This student explains her difficulty with a particular professor:

I told the professor that I was dyslexic and she said, 'well, we can't really do anything about that. You're going to have to take the test just like everybody else.' I explained that I was asking for more time and she said, 'Well, I don't know if I can give you more time.' (Stage & Milne, 1996, p.434)

A study conducted by Scott and Gregg (2000) suggests similar attitudes of faculty regarding students with disabilities. For example, in one faculty survey, a respondent commented, "Why dilute a college education any more than it already has been by accepting less than capable students?" In another survey, a faculty member responded, "Making special arrangements for students is a frustrating waste of time" (Scott & Gregg, 2000, p.191).

Sowers and Smith (2004) examined nursing faculty's attitudes and beliefs about their students with disabilities. In the study, the researchers focused on several different factors, such as whether academic standards suffer because the students are disabled. Sowers and Smith also focused on patient care, and sought to determine how successful the students with disabilities were as nurses. The study is useful because it provides concrete statistical evidence that shows how the nurses felt about the students. The program produced positive results, as the majority of faculty's perceptions and beliefs about students with disabilities grew to be more positive after the in-service program.

Zirkel (2001) examined the need for accommodation and the current state of affairs in higher education concerning students with learning disabilities. Zirkel, a

college professor, described his experiences with learning disabled students while serving as a professor at Lehigh University. He essentially advocates the use of accommodation for students with disabilities, but believes that some students are taking advantage of the system. He believes that the 6% increase from 1978 to 1998 of students with learning disabilities can be partially attributed to “false positive” evaluations of students.

Zirkel (2001) also argues that many students with learning disabilities come from upper income families, which generally have an advantage when it comes to education. He is quick to point out that “risk factors for disabilities usually are connected with poverty” which leads him to question why the percentages of high income students with learning disabilities is so high (p.2). He comments, “the recent findings have led many observers to question whether a significant number of those students are truly learning disabled or, rather, in the words of one college official, ‘upper-income game players’” (p.2).

Bourke, Strehorn, and Silver (2000) conducted a study at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst regarding students with learning disabilities. Surveys were mailed to 485 faculty members at the university who received an instructional accommodation form from the Office of Learning Disabilities Support Services in the fall of 1995. The survey focused on faculty members' reported degree of ease or difficulty in implementing instructional accommodations, their perceptions regarding adequacy of support, and their own beliefs and understandings concerning the need for and benefit of providing instructional accommodations. The results indicate that beliefs about the helpfulness of and need for instructional accommodations were associated with the provision of the accommodations. Also, a perception of support from the university

influenced the ease of providing instructional accommodations (Bourke, Strehorn, & Silver, 2000).

Hartman and Haaga (2002) conducted a study entitled *College Students' Willingness to Seek Help for Their Learning Disabilities*. The study focused on a variety of issues concerning students with disabilities. In the study, 86 university students were given vignettes to read about a student requesting help from a professor and receiving a positive or negative reaction. The results of the study showed that students were more inclined to request help from a professor after reading a positive vignette as opposed to reading a negative one.

The study is well documented, and includes data for a variety of variables measured. While it does not measure faculty attitudes, it does assume that some faculty had negative reactions to students requesting accommodation for a disability. The findings are useful because they illustrate that students can be affected greatly by faculty attitudes concerning disabilities.

Malakpa's (1997) *Problems in Admission and Retention of Students with Disabilities in Higher Education* also discusses how professors' attitudes can affect students. Malakpa argues, "in many instances, faculty members are either indifferent to, or reluctant to consider, issues such as accommodation and modification" (Malakpa, 1997, p.5). She points out that "some professors do not allow tape recordings in their classes and many will not share their lecture notes with students with disabilities" (Malakpa, 1997, p.5). Finally, she states that, "within the university community, generally people do not understand, let alone insist upon, important issues such as accommodation and modification" (Malakpa, 1997, p.5).

Possibly, the most well documented study on faculty attitudes concerning students with disabilities can be found in Sweener, Kundert, May, and Quinn's (2002) *Comfort with Accommodation at the Community College Level*. The study surveyed 255 full-time and 247 part-time faculty at a two-year, public, open admissions college. Forty-five percent of faculty surveyed responded. The study aimed to establish how faculty felt about very specific accommodations in the classroom. Among the variables studied were allowing students to tape record lectures, using a note taker to take notes, additional time to complete assignments, and videotaping lectures. There were a total of 23 variables studied, and data were organized into the percentage of faculty who would allow a particular accommodation. The study provides an in-depth comprehensive view of faculty attitudes towards students with learning disabilities. The study aimed to discover what instructional, as well as exam accommodations faculty felt comfortable making. Overall, the research indicated that faculty was willing to make some accommodations for students with learning disabilities. Of the 23 variables studied, 10 of the variables yielded a positive response from the faculty. Faculty was less comfortable with making instructional, as well as exam accommodations for students.

#### Summary of the Literature Review

Section 504 of the *Americans with Disabilities Act* governs the majority of decisions at universities with regard to students with disabilities. Administrators and faculty must be careful in making decisions about accommodations because the law is loosely defined.

Research has shown mixed reaction of faculty attitudes concerning college students with disabilities. Some research illustrates that faculty are genuinely concerned

with the academic success of students with learning disabilities. Other research suggests that faculty may have a more negative outlook. Malapka (1997) suggests that faculty are indifferent and negative towards students with learning disabilities. The research that views faculty's attitudes in a negative light may be over-represented in the literature. A research study that examines the attitudes of faculty at a four year, regional state university has not been completed. Thus, a study of Rowan University faculty could contribute to the knowledge base concerning faculty attitudes towards accommodations for students with learning disabilities.



## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### Context of the Study

The purpose of the study was to examine the attitudes of selected faculty towards students with learning disabilities at Rowan University. Rowan University (formerly Glassboro State College) is a selective public university in southern New Jersey with the funds and public support to transform itself into a top regional university ([www.rowan.edu](http://www.rowan.edu)).

Rowan University is divided into six academic colleges: Business, Communication, Education, Engineering, Fine & Performing Arts, and Liberal Arts & Sciences. Students can select from among 31 undergraduate majors, seven teacher certification programs, 25 master's degree programs and a doctoral program in educational leadership. The 200-acre campus contains 31 buildings, including eight residence halls and three apartment complexes.

The university enrolls more than 9,500 students who represent the Mid-Atlantic States and 30 foreign countries. Approximately one-third live on campus, another third live in private homes and apartments in the area, and a third commute from home. Because so many students live on or near campus, they are very involved in campus life. More than 150 clubs and organizations offer students professional, cultural, and service activities.

Rowan University will also be expanding the campus in the next 10 years with the Rowan West project. Rowan West will add new academic building, sports complexes, academic programs, and seats to the institution. In addition to physical expansion, Rowan will also undertake a faculty, as well as enrollment expansion, as administrators plan to significantly increase student enrollment by 2020.

Students with learning disabilities at Rowan University are required to register with the Academic Success Center if they need accommodations. In order for students to receive an accommodation, a letter from a physician must be provided. Students' learning disabilities range from ADD (attention deficit disorder) to dyslexia, to auditory processing disorder.

The Academic Success Center at Rowan University is the resource office for students with learning disabilities. The Academic Success center is directed by Dr. Melissa Cox, whom has recently completed her doctoral studies in psychology. The Academic Success Center provides tutoring, programming, and guidance to all students, and particularly serves students with learning disabilities. The center also serves as an alternate test site for students with learning disabilities.

#### Population and Sample Selection

The researcher surveyed faculty from Rowan University. The survey was distributed to faculty members from a variety of disciplines including faculty from the College of Engineering, College of Education, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, College of Communication, College of Business, and the College of Fine and Performing Arts. The survey was distributed to all full, associate, and assistant professor tenure line faculty members. The total number of faculty surveyed was 350.

Rowan University faculty members were chosen because they represented the most convenient option to the researcher. The survey was distributed to the entire population faculty members so that the most comprehensive results could be obtained.

Adjunct faculties were not included in the survey because responses to the items on the survey could be skewed because they may also be employed at another institution, which may handle accommodations issues differently.

#### Instrumentation

The survey (Appendix C) was a self designed instrument based on the items included in Sweeney, Kundert, May, and Quinn's (2002) *Comfort with Accommodation at the Community College Level*. Faculty members were given a survey on March 21, 2006. The survey asked a range of questions including faculty member's attitudes towards instructional, policy, exam, and insitutional accommodations for students with learning disabilities. The survey also included demographic information questions such as age, gender, experience working with learning disabled students, number of years teaching, college, and academic rank.

The first four questions on the survey were demographic in nature, asking for the respondents' age, sex, rank, and college. The next 20 items on the survey were formatted on a Likert scale with items arranged according to: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree.

The survey was then piloted with Dr. Burton Sisco, professor of higher education administration as well as Dr. Melissa Cox, Director of the Academic Success Center. Dr. Cox suggested adding three questions regarding the university's role in supporting faculty in dealing with accommodating students with learning disabilities. Dr. Sisco

assisted in creating the open-ended questions as well as in the wording of some of the items included in the final survey. Dr. Sisco also suggested adding demographic questions regarding faculty teaching experience and experience working with learning disabled students. The piloted survey included 22 items and the final survey consisted of 31 items as well as two open-ended questions.

#### Procedure of Data Gathering

The names of the various faculty members in the study were acquired from the Office of Institutional Research at Rowan University. An Institutional Review Board (IRB) application was submitted on February 17, 2006 (Appendix A). The application included a survey (Appendix C) and a copy of the informed consent (Appendix B). The application was approved on March 8, 2006. Subjects were asked to read and sign the consent form before completing the survey. All full, associate, and assistant professor faculty members were sent a copy of the survey, via mail, with an explanatory cover letter, on March 21, 2006. In addition to assuring confidentiality, the cover letter explained the rationale of the study and provided information to make the study relevant to the respondent. Although the letter indicated that participation was voluntary, the importance of each individual's responses was emphasized by explaining that results would be used to complete the researcher's thesis and help to contribute to the knowledge base. Each survey was personally addressed to the individual faculty member in order to raise the response rate. The surveys and consent forms were mailed to the Center for Academic Success at Rowan University.

## Data Analysis

The researcher inputted the survey data collected into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software program. Following data entry, the researcher analyzed the responses to Likert scale items using the descriptive statistics of frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviation. A Pearson product moment correlation was calculated to see if there were any statistically significant relationships between the attitude items and selected demographics.

Faculty responses to the open-ended questions were analyzed a content analysis procedures looking for common and divergent themes. The themes were then grouped by frequency and rank.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS

#### Profile of the Sample

The faculty examined in this study consisted of all assistant, associate, and full professor tenure line faculty members at Rowan University during the spring semester, 2006. The respondents were both male and female, ages ranging from 26 to 78. Out of the 350 faculty members surveyed, 175 surveys were obtained for an initial response rate of 50%. Out of the 175 surveys collected, 171 were usable. Four of the surveys were not usable because the respondents did not answer four or more survey items. The majority of items were answered by the majority of faculty members, allowing the researcher to produce reliable results.

Table 4.1 represents the ages of the respondents. Ninety-six faculty members were between the ages of 40-59. Forty-one faculty members were 60 years of age or older, and 29 faculty members were between the ages of 20-39.

Table 4.1

*Age of Respondents*

Age	n= 171 Frequency	%
20-39	29	17.0
40-59	96	56.0
60+	41	24.0
<u>Missing</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3.0</u>
Total	171	100

Table 4.2 illustrates the gender of the respondents in the survey. The majority of faculty members in the study were men, who represented 56.7% of the respondents.

Female faculty members represented 42.7% of the respondents.

Table 4.2

*Gender of Respondents*

Gender	n= 171 Frequency	%
Male	97	56.7
Female	73	42.7
<u>Missing</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>.6</u>
Total	171	100

Table 4.3 illustrates the academic rank of faculty members responding to the survey. Associate professors represented the 63 of the 171 (37%) respondents. Assistant professors represented 54 of 171 (31.5%) respondents and full professors represented 52 of 171(30.4%) respondents.

Table 4.3

*Academic Rank of Respondents*

Academic Rank	n= 171 Frequency	%
Full Professor	52	30.4
Associate Professor	63	36.8
Assistant Professor	54	31.5
<u>Missing</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1.3</u>
Total	171	100

Table 4.4 illustrates the respondents college. The majority of respondents were faculty in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences with 61 respondents. Education faculty represented the second largest group of respondents with 39 individuals. Twenty-five College of Communication faculty members responded. Sixteen College of Business

and Engineering faculty responded. Finally, the College of Fine and Performing Arts/Other had 14 respondents.

Table 4.4

*Faculty Member College*

College	n= 171 Frequency	%
Liberal Arts and Sciences	61	35.6
Business	16	9.3
Education	39	22.8
Communications	25	14.6
Engineering	16	9.3
Other/Fine Performing Arts	14	8.1
<u>Missing</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Total	171	100

Table 4.5 illustrates number of years teaching experience. Sixty-one faculty members had 1-15 years of teaching experience. Fifty-eight faculty members had between 16-30 years teaching experience. Finally, 51 faculty members had 30+ years teaching experience.

Table 4.5

*Number of Years Teaching Experience*

Years	n= 171 Frequency	%
1-15	61	35.2
16-30	58	33.7
31+	51	29.6
<u>Missing</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>.6</u>
Total	171	100

Table 4.6 illustrates respondents experience working with learning disabled students. One hundred and thirty faculty members had some experience working with



learning disabled students. Thirty-two faculty members had substantial experience working with learning disabled students.

Table 4.6

*Experience Working with Learning Disabled Students*

Experience	n= 171 Frequency	%
No Experience	9	5.2
Some Experience	130	76.0
Substantial Experience	32	18.8
<u>Missing</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Total	171	100

Analysis of the Data

Research Question 1: What are the attitudes of participating faculty members towards policy, instructional, examination, and institutional accommodations of students with learning disabilities?

For the purposes of clarity, data are grouped and reported by the categories present within the survey instrument: policy accommodations, instructional accommodations, exam accommodations, and institutional accommodations.

Table 4.7 describes faculty willingness to allow policy accommodations for students with learning disabilities. More than half of faculty members surveyed strongly agreed that students with learning disabilities provide documentation for their disability if they are requesting an accommodation. More than 95% of faculty members surveyed would make adjustments in their schedule to meet with learning disabled students. Only 13.1% of faculty agreed that it is okay for a student with a learning disability to substitute a course for a required course in their program. Faculty had mixed responses regarding whether or not students with learning disabilities should be allowed to register before

other students with 35.8% agreeing or strongly agreeing to priority registration and 37.1% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. Ninety-five percent of faculty strongly agreed or agreed that they understood why accommodations for students with learning disabilities are necessary. Over 80% of faculty strongly agreed or agreed that accommodations were fair to other students in the class. Finally, 29.5% faculty members felt that some students with learning disabilities took advantage of professor's accommodations for them.

Table 4.7

*Policy Accommodations*

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Students who request accommodations provide documentation for their learning disability. n= 169, SD= .780, M= 1.61	90	53.3	62	36.7	10	5.9	7	4.1	0	0
I make the necessary adjustments in my schedule to meet with learning disabled students who are unable to meet during regular office hours. n= 169, SD= .613, M= 1.42	106	62.7	58	34.3	2	1.2	3	1.8	0	0
I feel that it is okay for a student with a learning disability to substitute a course for a required course. n= 169, SD= .981, M= 3.63	5	3.0	17	10.1	43	25.4	75	44.4	29	17.2
I believe that it is fair to allow students with learning disabilities the opportunity to register before other students. n= 170, SD= 1.279, M= 2.95	31	18.2	30	17.6	46	27.1	43	25.3	20	11.8
I have a good understanding of why accommodations for students with learning disabilities are necessary. n= 171, SD= .669, M= 1.44	109	64	53	31	5	2.9	4	2.3	0	0

I feel that special course accommodations for students with learning disabilities is fair to other students in the class. n= 170, SD= .786, M=1.94	51	30	86	51	26	15.9	7	4.1	0	0
I feel that some students with a learning disability take advantage of a professor's accommodations for them. n= 168, SD= .986, M= 3.05	9	5.4	41	24	59	35.6	50	29.8	9	5.4

Table 4.8 illustrates faculty willingness to provide instructional accommodations for students. The majority, 79.7%, of faculty members would share their lecture notes with learning-disabled students if they were asked. Eighty point seven percent of faculty strongly agreed or agreed that they would use varied instructional strategies to help students with learning disabilities. Over 98% of faculty members strongly agreed or agreed that they would allow the use of a tape recorder in class to help students with learning disabilities. Almost 80% of faculty members strongly agreed, agreed or were neutral concerning providing students with learning disabilities study guides before tests. Ninety three point six percent of faculty felt comfortable allowing a note taker to take notes for students with learning disabilities. Additionally, 65.5% of faculty members were comfortable allowing a proctor to rephrase questions that a learning disabled student may not understand. Over 80% of faculty members felt that accommodations helped learning disabled students succeed in their class. Finally, 73.7% of faculty strongly agreed or agreed that students with disabilities were as capable as other students.

Table 4.8

*Instructional Accommodations*

Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%

If asked, I share lecture notes with learning disabled students. n= 168, SD= 1.046, M= 1.89	74	44.0	60	35.7	20	11.9	7	4.2	7	4.2
I use varied instructional strategies to help students with learning disabilities. n= 171, SD= .913, M= 1.96	55	32.2	83	48.5	20	11.7	10	5.8	3	1.8
If asked, I allow students with learning disabilities to tape record my lectures. n= 170, SD= .501, M= 1.31	120	70.6	47	27.6	3	1.8	0	0	0	0
I consider providing students with learning disabilities study guides before tests. n= 164, SD= 1.142, M= 2.55	37	22.6	42	25.6	50	30.5	28	17.1	7	4.3
I feel comfortable allowing a note taker to take notes for a student with a learning disability. n= 171, SD=.766, M= 1.58	91	53.2	69	40.4	5	2.9	4	2.3	2	1.2
I feel comfortable allowing a proctor to rephrase questions that a student with a learning disability may not clearly understand. n= 168, SD= 1.145, M= 2.24	52	31.0	58	34.5	30	17.9	21	12.5	7	4.2
I believe that the accommodations provided for students with learning disabilities helps them to succeed in my course. n= 168, SD=.743, M=1.89	53	31.5	83	49.4	29	17.3	3	1.8	0	0
I feel that students with learning disabilities are as capable as other students. n= 171, SD=.955, M=2.02	58	33.9	68	39.8	31	18.1	12	7	2	1.2

Table 4.9 represents exam accommodations for students with learning disabilities. The majority of faculty members, 73.3%, disagreed or strongly disagreed with granting partial credit on exams to students with learning disabilities for final answers even if they are wrong. Faculty are divided regarding increasing the frequency of exams of learning disabled students with 42.3 % strongly agreeing or agreeing and 37% strongly

disagreeing or disagreeing. Over two-thirds of faculty members strongly agreed or agreed with letting learning-disabled students dictate answers for assignments or exams to a proctor. Thirty-seven percent of faculty members disagreed with offering different types of exams to students with learning disabilities. In total, 164 out of 171 faculty members agreed or strongly agreed to giving extra time on exams for students with learning disabilities.

Table 4.9

*Examination Accommodations*

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
I grant partial credit on exams to students with learning disabilities for final answers even if they are wrong. n= 165, SD= 1.091, M= 3.87	10	6.1	8	4.8	26	15.8	71	43.0	50	30.3
I am willing to increase the frequency of exams for students with learning disabilities. n= 170, SD= 1.202, M= 2.89	23	13.5	49	28.8	35	20.6	49	28.8	14	8.2
I feel comfortable letting learning-disabled students to dictate answers for assignments or exams to a proctor. n= 167, SD= 1.051, M= 2.19	49	29.3	64	38.3	32	19.2	18	10.8	4	2.4
If asked, I consider offering different types of exams to learning disabled students. n= 169, SD= 1.286, M= 2.88	30	17.8	42	24.9	33	19.5	46	27.2	18	10.7
I feel that giving extra time on exams is reasonable for LD students. n= 170, SD= .601, M= 1.14	109	64.1	55	32.4	4	2.4	2	1.2	0	0
I consider offering extra credit for completing extra assignments to students with learning disabilities. n= 169, SD= 1.249, M=3.34	16	9.5	27	16	46	27.1	43	25.4	37	22

Table 4.10 illustrates the role of Rowan University in accommodating students with learning disabilities. Over 45% of faculty were neutral concerning whether they received adequate support from the Academic Success Center, as well as whether they felt that university resources were insufficient to implement requests concerning students with learning disabilities. Over 50% of faculty felt that Rowan University does not provide training regarding accommodations for students with learning disabilities. Fifty-nine point six percent of faculty members felt that many students with learning disabilities were not over-accommodated. Only 8 faculty members out of 171 surveyed believed that many students with learning disabilities are over accommodated

Table 4.10

*Role of Rowan University*

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Undecided		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
I receive adequate support from the Academic Success Center in working with students who have learning disabilities. n= 166, SD= .939, M= 2.51	33	19.9	32	19.3	86	51.8	13	7.8	2	1.2
I believe that university resources are insufficient to implement requested accommodations for students with learning disabilities. n= 169, SD= .944, M= 3.05	13	7.7	24	14.2	82	48.5	42	24.9	8	4.7
My institution provides faculty training regarding accommodations for students with learning disabilities. n= 169, SD= .875, M= 3.60	2	1.2	15	8.9	55	32.5	74	43.8	23	13.6
I believe that many students with learning disabilities are over-accommodated. n= 171, SD= .792, M= 3.69	1	.6	7	4.1	61	35.7	77	45.0	25	14.6

Research Question 2: Is there a significant relationship between the demographic variables of age, gender, academic rank, college, teaching experience, and experience with learning disabled students and the faculty attitude statements?

To answer research question 2, a Pearson product moment correlation was calculated to determine if there was a significant relationship ( $p < .05$ ) between the demographic variables of age, gender, academic rank, college, years of teaching experience, and experience with learning disabled and responses to attitude statements.

Table 4.11 depicts the relationship between age and various statements from the accommodations survey. The correlation is statistically significant between the following variables: age and the statement “I believe university resources are insufficient to implement requested accommodations for students with learning disabilities” ( $r(169) = -.164, p < .05$ ); age and the statement “I feel comfortable letting learning disabled students dictate answers for assignments and exams to a proctor” ( $r(167) = .213, p < .01$ ); age and the statement “I feel comfortable allowing a note taker to take notes for a student with a learning disability” ( $r(171) = .179, p < .05$ ); age and the statement “I believe that it is fair to allow learning disabled students priority registration” is ( $r(170) = -.211, p < .01$ ); age and the statement “I feel that giving students extra time on tests is reasonable if they have a documented learning disability” ( $r(170) = .195, p < .05$ ); age and the statement “I feel that students with learning disabilities are as capable as other students” ( $r(171) = .153, p < .05$ ); age and the statement “My institution provides faculty training regarding accommodations for students with learning disabilities” ( $r(169) = .236, p < .01$ ).

Table 4.11

*Relationship Between Age and Selected Faculty Attitude Statements*

Items	r coefficient	p-level
University resources insufficient	-.164	.036*
Comfort with dictation of answers to proctor	.213	.007**
Comfort with note taker	.179	.021*
Priority registration	-.211	.006**
Extra time on tests	.195	.012*
LD students as capable as other students	.153	.049*
Faculty training regarding LD accommodations	.236	.002**

\*Statistically Significant  $p < .05$

\*\*Statistically Significant  $p < .01$

Table 4.12 depicts the relationship between academic rank and various statements from the accommodations survey. The correlation is statistically significant between the following variables: academic rank and the statement “I feel comfortable allowing a note taker to take notes for a student with a learning disability” ( $r(171) = -.220, p < .01$ ); academic rank and the statement “My institution provides faculty training regarding accommodations for students with learning disabilities” ( $r(171) = -.176, p < .05$ ).

Table 4.12

*Relationship Between Academic Rank and Selected Faculty Attitude Statements*

Items	r coefficient	p-level
Comfort with note taker	-.220	.004**
Faculty training regarding LD accommodations	-.176	.022*

\*Statistically Significant  $p < .05$

\*\*Statistically Significant  $p < .01$



Table 4.13 depicts the relationship between college and various statements from the accommodations survey. The correlation is statistically significant between the following variables: college and the statement “I receive adequate support from the Center for Academic Success office in working with students who have learning disabilities” ( $r(166) = -.173, p < .05$ ); college and the statement “I feel that students with learning disabilities are as capable as other students” ( $r(171) = .211, p < .01$ ); college and the statement “I feel that some students with learning disabilities take advantage of professor’s accommodations for them” ( $r(168) = -.214, p < .01$ ).

Table 4.13

*Relationship Between College and Selected Faculty Attitude Statements*

Items	r coefficient	p-level
Support from Center for Academic Success	-.173	.026*
LD students as capable as other students	.211	.006**
LD students take advantage of accommodations	-.214	.005**

\*Statistically Significant  $p < .05$

\*\*Statistically Significant  $p < .01$

Table 4.14 depicts the relationship between years teaching experience and various statements from the accommodations survey. The correlation is statistically significant between the following variables: years teaching experience and the statement “I feel comfortable allowing a note taker to take notes for a student with a learning disability” ( $r(171) = .154, p < .05$ ); years teaching experience and the statement “I feel that giving students extra time on tests is reasonable if they have a documented learning disability” ( $r(170) = .182, p < .05$ ); years teaching experience and the statement “I believe that it is fair to allow learning disabled students priority registration” ( $r(170) = -.168, p < .05$ );

years teaching experience and the statement “I feel that students with learning disabilities are as capable as other students” ( $r(171) = .176, p < .05$ ); years teaching experience and the statement “My institution provides faculty training regarding accommodations for students with learning disabilities” ( $r(171) = .236, p < .01$ ).

Table 4.14

*Relationship Between Years Teaching Experience and Selected Faculty Attitude Statements*

Items	r coefficient	p-level
Comfort with note taker	.154	.045*
Extra Time on Tests	.182	.018*
Priority Registration	-.168	.029*
LD students as capable as other students	.176	.021*
Faculty training regarding LD accommodations	.236	.002**

\*Statistically Significant  $p < .05$

\*\*Statistically Significant  $p < .01$

Table 4.15 depicts the relationship between experience working with learning disabled students and various statements from the accommodations survey. The correlation is statistically significant between the following variables: experience working with learning disabled students and the statement “I use varied instructional strategies to help students with learning disabilities” ( $r(171) = -.153, p < .05$ ); experience working with learning disabled students and the statement “I allow students with learning disabilities to tape record lectures in class” ( $r(170) = -.154, p < .05$ ); experience working with learning disabled students and the statement “I feel that special course accommodations for students with learning disabilities is fair to other students” ( $r(170) = -.234, p < .01$ ).

Table 4.15

*Relationship Between Working with LD students and Selected Participant Attitude Statements*

Items	r coefficient	p-level
Varied Instructional Strategies	-.153	.046*
Tape record lectures	-.154	.045*
Accommodations fair to other students	-.234	.002**

\*Statistically Significant  $p < .05$

\*\*Statistically Significant  $p < .01$

Research Question 3: What impacts do participating faculty members report from the use of accommodations for students with learning disabilities?

Table 4.16 illustrates the responses given for the open-ended question number one included in the survey. The total number of faculty responses to the open-ended questions was 152. The data were organized into four main categories: success in the classroom, increased self-esteem/confidence, lower standards, and over-reliance on accommodations. The responses were examined and reported according to rank and percent of respondents listing the comment. Seventy-eight faculty members felt that students with learning disabilities achieved success in the classroom from the result of accommodations. Further, 54 faculty members felt that students with learning disabilities had increased self esteem or confidence from the use of accommodations. Eleven faculty members felt that accommodations led to lower academic standards, and nine faculty members felt that students were over-reliant on accommodation.

Table 4.16

*Impacts from the Use of Accommodations*

Item	Rank	Frequency n=152	%
Success in the classroom	1	78	51
Increased self confidence/esteem	2	54	35
Lower standards	3	11	7
Over-reliance on accommodation	4	<u>9</u>	6
Total		152	

Research Question 4: What recommendations do participating faculty members make in serving students with learning disabilities?

Table 4.17 illustrates the responses given for the open-ended question number two included in the survey. The total number of faculty members responding to open-ended question number two was 104. The data were organized into three main categories: more faculty training, increased resources, and less accommodation. Fifty-nine faculty members recommended more training regarding accommodations, while 32 faculty members recommended increased resources for serving students with learning disabilities. Thirteen faculty members recommended less accommodations.

Table 4.17

*Recommendations for Serving LD Students*

Item	Rank	Frequency n=104	%
More training	1	59	56
Increased resources	2	32	30
Less accommodations	3	<u>13</u>	12
Total		104	

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary of the Study

Many questions have been posed at college and university campuses throughout the United States regarding what constitutes fair accommodations for students with learning disabilities. Some institutions, particularly those at the community college level, have conducted research regarding how faculty feel about accommodating students. In this study, Rowan University faculty attitudes towards accommodations for learning disabled students were examined.

#### Purpose of the Study

To date, there has not been a systematic study conducted at Rowan University to discover the attitudes of faculty towards accommodations for students with learning disabilities. The information contained in this study is useful in that it provides Rowan University with a greater understanding of how faculty are responding to accommodation requests from students with learning disabilities, as well as what can be done to improve accommodation services for students with learning disabilities.

#### Methodology

The study surveyed the entire population of full, associate, and assistant professor tenure line faculty members at Rowan University in the spring 2006 semester. This particular group was chosen because they more accurately reflect the attitudes of the faculty at Rowan University, as they represent 74% of the course sections taught at

Rowan University. In order to ensure the consent and privacy rights of the faculty were maintained an Institutional Review Board (IRB) application was submitted on February 17, 2006 (Appendix A). The application included a survey (Appendix C) and a copy of the informed consent (Appendix B). The application was approved on March 8, 2006. Subjects were asked to read and sign the consent form before completing the survey.

Faculty members were mailed the survey on March 22, 2006. The survey posed a series of statements covering instructional, policy, examination, and institutional accommodations for students with learning disabilities, as well as demographic information such as age, gender, college, years teaching experience, experience with learning disabled students, and academic rank. The survey was modeled on the survey from Sweener, Kundert, May, and Quinn (2002) *Comfort with Accommodation at the Community College Level*.

The surveys were distributed via campus mail by the researcher. The faculty members were asked to return the survey and the consent form to the Center for Academic Success at Rowan University by April 30, 2006. All initial 155 surveys were collected by this date. Twenty additional surveys were secured by May 8, 2006. Of the total 175 surveys collected, 171 were deemed usable for data analysis.

#### Data Analysis

The survey data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software program. Descriptive statistics were calculated including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations (SD) to analyze the demographic and attitudes scale items of the survey.

Next, a Pearson product moment correlation was calculated to determine if there were any statistically significant relationships between the demographic variables of age, gender, academic rank, college, years of teaching experience, and experience with learning disabled students and the various attitudinal statements contained in the survey.

Finally, the researcher analyzed the open-ended question responses using a content analysis procedure and calculated percentages, frequencies, and rankings for the top response themes.

### Discussion of the Findings

Research Question 1: What are the attitudes of participating faculty members towards policy, instructional, examination, and institutional accommodations of students with learning disabilities?

Overall, faculty attitudes towards policy accommodations were positive. For example, more than half of faculty members surveyed strongly agreed that students with learning disabilities provide documentation for their disability if they are requesting an accommodation. Also, over 95% of faculty members surveyed would make adjustments in their schedule to meet with learning disabled students.

An overwhelming majority (95%) of faculty strongly agreed or agreed that they understood why accommodations for students with learning disabilities are necessary. Also, over 80% of faculty believed that accommodations were fair to other students enrolled in the class.

Faculty had mixed responses regarding whether students with learning disabilities should be allowed to register before other students with 35.8% agreeing or strongly agreeing to priority registration and a slight majority of 37.1 % disagreeing or

strongly disagreeing. Sweener et al. (2002), reported a greater number of faculty members being comfortable with allowing priority registration with almost 65% agreeing it was fair.

Concerning negative faculty attitudes, 47% of faculty members surveyed said that they either disagreed or strongly disagreed with providing extra credit points for extra credit assignments completed by students with learning disabilities. Also, 13.1% of faculty agreed that it is okay for a student with a learning disability to substitute a course for a required course in their program. Finally, almost one-third, 29.5% of faculty members, felt that some students with learning disabilities had taken advantage of professors accommodations for them. The majority of faculty members, 85%, in the Sweener et al. study also felt uncomfortable with allowing learning disabled students to substitute a course for a required course.

With regard to instructional accommodations, faculty also reported positive attitudes. For example, 87 % of faculty members strongly agreed or agreed that they would use varied instructional strategies to help students with learning disabilities. Also, the vast majority, 98% of faculty members strongly agreed or agreed that they would allow the use of a tape recorder in class to help students with learning disabilities. Similarly, faculty in the Sweener et al. study also felt comfortable with allowing tape recorders in class as only 12% objected to their use.

Moreover, 93.6 % of faculty felt comfortable allowing a note taker to take notes for students with learning disabilities. Furthermore, 65.5% of faculty members were comfortable allowing a proctor to rephrase questions that a learning disabled student may not understand. This faculty trend differs from the Sweener et al. study in that the



majority of faculty members did not feel comfortable with a proctor rephrasing questions for students with learning disabilities.

Most importantly, over 80%, or four-fifths of faculty members believed that accommodations helped learning disabled students succeed in the class. Additionally, 73.7% of faculty strongly agreed or agreed that students with disabilities were as capable as other students.

The only statement in which faculty reported less than positive attitudes was in their willingness to provide study guides to learning disabled students before tests with 21% of faculty disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this statement. However, 30% of faculty members remained neutral, while 48% agreed with the statement. Almost 60% of faculty in the Sweener et al. study felt uncomfortable or somewhat uncomfortable with providing learning disabled students with study guides.

Faculty attitudes were somewhat negative concerning providing exam accommodations for students with learning disabilities. For example, the majority of faculty members, (73.3%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with granting partial credit on exams to students with learning disabilities for final answers even if they are wrong. Faculty in the Sweener et al. study had similar responses as 88% of faculty felt uncomfortable with providing partial credit. Faculty were divided regarding increasing the frequency of exams of learning disabled students with 42.3% strongly agreeing or agreeing and 37% strongly disagreeing or disagreeing.

Moreover, over two-thirds of faculty members strongly agreed or agreed with letting learning-disabled students dictate answers for assignments or exams to a proctor. Additionally, 37% of faculty members disagreed with offering different types of exams to

students with learning disabilities. Nearly 60% of faculty in Sweeney et al. disagreed with offering different types of exams to learning disabled students. Finally, 47% of faculty members disagreed with giving extra credit for completing extra assignments for students with learning disabilities

However, 164 out of 170 faculty members agreed or strongly agreed to giving extra time on exams for students with learning disabilities. This figure differs greatly from faculty in the Sweeney et al. study as only 38% of faculty felt comfortable with providing extra time on tests for students with learning disabilities.

With regard to institutional accommodations, faculty attitudes were fairly neutral. Over 45% of faculty were neutral regarding receiving adequate support from the Academic Success Center, as well as regarding university resources being sufficient to implement requests concerning students with learning disabilities.

However, over 50% of faculty felt that Rowan University does not provide training regarding accommodations for students with learning disabilities. Finally, 59.6% of faculty members felt that many students with learning disabilities were not over-accommodated.

Research Question 2: Is there a significant relationship between the demographic variables of age, gender, academic rank, college, teaching experience, and experience with learning disabled students and the faculty attitude statements?

With regard to age, several significant relationships were found. For example, a weak inverse relationship was found between age and the statement “I believe university resources are insufficient to implement requested accommodations for students with learning disabilities” ( $r(169) = -.164, p < .05$ ). Essentially, the older faculty members

tended to agree with this statement. There was also a weak inverse relationship between age and the statement “I believe that it is fair to allow learning disabled students priority registration” ( $r(170) = -.211$  and  $p < .01$ ). This mildly suggests that older faculty members tended to agree with the statement.

The relationship between age and the statement “I feel comfortable allowing a note taker to take notes for a student with a learning disability” is direct and weak ( $r(170) = .179$ ,  $p < .05$ ) as well as age and the statement “I feel that giving students extra time on tests is reasonable if they have a documented learning disability” ( $r(170) = .195$ ,  $p < .05$ ) with younger respondents tending to strongly agree with the above statements more often.

A direct weak relationship was found between younger faculty strongly agreeing with the statement “I feel that students with learning disabilities are as capable as other students” ( $r(171) = .153$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and age and the statement “I feel comfortable letting learning disabled students dictate answers for assignments and exams to a proctor” ( $r(167) = .213$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

Finally, older faculty members were more likely to disagree or strongly disagree with the statement “My institution provides faculty training regarding accommodations for students with learning disabilities” as there was a direct weak relationship ( $r(169) = .236$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

No significant relationships were found between gender and the responses to the items on the survey.

The relationships between academic rank and statements from the accommodations survey were inverse and weak. Assistant professors strongly agreed

more often than associate or full professors with the statement “I feel comfortable allowing a note taker to take notes for a student with a learning disability” ( $r(171) = -.220, p < .01$ ). Also, full professors tended to disagree more often than assistant professors and associate professors with the statement “My institution provides faculty training regarding accommodations for students with learning disabilities” ( $r(169) = -.176, p < .05$ ).

Several weak relationships were found between academic college and the statements from the survey. An inverse weak relationship was found between college and the statement “I feel that some students with learning disabilities take advantage of professor’s accommodations for them” ( $r(168) = -.214, p < .01$ ). When examining the data further, the researcher discovered that Education, Communications, and Fine and Performing Arts faculty tended to have a stronger level of agreement with the statement than faculty in Liberal Arts and Sciences and Engineering. A direct weak relationship was found between college and the statement “I feel that students with learning disabilities are as capable as other students” ( $r(171) = .211, p < .01$ ) level. Faculty in the College of Communication had a stronger level of disagreement with the statement, while faculty in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences were most likely to agree. An indirect weak relationship was found between college and the statement “I receive adequate support from the Center for Academic Success office in working with students who have learning disabilities” ( $r(166) = -.173, p < .05$ ). The majority of faculty members in all colleges tended to be neutral regarding this survey item.

Several direct weak relationships were found between years of teaching experience and various items from the survey. As expected, some of the relationships

between age and years teaching experience were very similar. Direct weak relationships were found between years of teaching experience and the statements: “I feel comfortable allowing a note taker to take notes for a student with a learning disability” ( $r(171) = .154, p < .05$ ); “I feel that giving students extra time on tests is reasonable if they have a documented learning disability” ( $r(170) = .182, p < .05$ ); “I feel that students with learning disabilities are as capable as other students” ( $r(171) = .176, p < .05$ ) as the less experienced faculty showed a stronger level of agreement with the above statements.

A direct weak relationship was also found between years of teaching experience and the statement “My institution provides faculty training regarding accommodations for students with learning disabilities” ( $r(169) = .236, p < .01$ ) as many faculty with more experience tended to have a stronger level of disagreement with this statement.

Finally, years of teaching experience and the statement “I believe that it is fair to allow learning disabled students priority registration” showed an indirect weak relationship at ( $r(170) = -.168, p < .05$ ) as younger faculty tended to have a stronger level of disagreement with this statement.

Similar to other variables, several weak direct and indirect relationships were found between faculty’s experience working with learning disabled students and various statements from the accommodations survey. Indirect weak significant relationships were found between experience working with learning disabled students and the statements: “I use varied instructional strategies to help students with learning disabilities” ( $r(170) = -.153, p < .05$ ); “I allow students with learning disabilities to tape record lectures in class” ( $r(170) = -.154, p < .05$ ); and “I feel that special course accommodations for students with learning disabilities is fair to other students” ( $r(170) = -.234, p < .01$ ). This

suggests with more experience working with learning disabled students tended to have a stronger level of agreement with the above statements.

Research Question 3: What impacts do participating faculty members report from the use of accommodations for students with learning disabilities?

The majority of faculty responses to RQ3 were positive. Of the 152 faculty members responding to the first open-ended question, 51% felt that accommodations for students with learning disabilities have helped them to succeed in the classroom. Also, 35% of faculty members felt that students self esteem and self confidence improved from the use of accommodations in class.

Only 7% of faculty members reported a decrease in standards from the use of accommodations, while 6% felt that students were over-reliant on their accommodations.

Research Question 4: What recommendations do participating faculty members make in serving students with learning disabilities?

The total number of faculty members responding to open-ended question number two was 104. The data were organized into three main categories: more faculty training, increased resources, and less accommodation. Fifty-six percent of faculty members recommended more training regarding accommodations, while 31% of faculty members recommended increased resources for serving students with learning disabilities. Only 11% of faculty members recommended fewer accommodations.

### Conclusions

Overall, faculty had positive attitudes towards accommodations for students with learning disabilities. The vast majority of faculty seemed willing to make policy and instructional accommodations. Faculty did not seem as willing to make exam

accommodations; however, the data suggest that they were willing to make specific exam accommodations. Faculty attitudes regarding institutional accommodations were mixed. In summation, the positive attitudes indicate that faculty are willing to work with students with learning disabilities, which is important for building positive relationships between faculty and students.

Some weak correlations were found between the various demographic variables and faculty attitudes. Overall, younger faculty members, as well as those with fewer years teaching experience tended to have more positive attitudes regarding accommodations for students with learning disabilities.

Moreover, those faculty members with substantial experience with learning disabled students tended to have the most positive attitudes towards providing accommodations.

Overall, faculty in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences felt that students with learning disabilities were as capable as other students, while the College of Communication faculty members remained less positive about learning disabled students' abilities.

Faculty saw mostly positive outcomes from the use of accommodations for students with learning disabilities, with many citing success in the classroom and increased self esteem/confidence as a result of accommodations.

Finally, faculty felt that there is need for more training, as well as increased resources with regard to serving the accommodation needs of learning disabled students.

Positive attitudes towards accommodation are important as illustrated in Hartman and Haaga (2002), Nutter and Ringgenberg (1993), and Beilke and Yssel (1998) studies

which illustrated that students are more likely to ask for help if the faculty member is approachable.

Most of the findings of the study are consistent with Sweener, Kundert, May and Quinn's *Comfort with Accommodation at the Community College Level*. Nineteen out of 25 variables yielded a positive response from faculty members, compared with 10 of 23 variables in the Sweener et al. study. Overall, faculty in the Sweener et al. study were less comfortable providing instructional, as well as examination accommodations for students with learning disabilities.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

The following recommendations are made for further research:

1. A study regarding Rowan University faculty attitudes towards accommodations following university training designed to improve faculty awareness concerning accommodations for students with learning disabilities.
2. A statewide study of New Jersey state colleges designed to discover the differences or similarities in attitudes towards students with learning disabilities at various institutions.
3. A study regarding student's perceptions of faculty attitudes towards accommodations for students with learning disabilities at Rowan University.



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APPENDIX A

Institutional Review Board Application  
Rowan University Approval

Rowan University  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD  
HUMAN RESEARCH REVIEW APPLICATION

INSTRUCTIONS: Check all appropriate boxes, answer all questions completely, include attachments, and obtain appropriate signatures. Submit an original and two copies of the completed application to the Office of the Associate Provost.

NOTE: Applications must be typed.  
Be sure to make a copy for your files.

FOR IRB USE ONLY:

Protocol Number: IRB-\_\_\_\_\_

Received: \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewed: \_\_\_\_\_

Exemption: \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Category(ies): \_\_\_\_\_

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

**Step 1: Is the proposed research subject to IRB review?**

All research involving human participants conducted by Rowan University faculty and staff is subject to IRB review. Some, but not all, student-conducted studies that involve human participants are considered research and are subject to IRB review. Check the accompanying instructions for more information. Then check with your class instructor for guidance as to whether you must submit your research protocol for IRB review. If you determine that your research meets the above criteria and is not subject to IRB review, **STOP**. You do not need to apply. If you or your instructor have any doubts, apply for an IRB review.

**Step 2: If you have determined that the proposed research is subject to IRB review, complete the identifying information below.**

Project Title: Attitudes Towards Accommodations for Students with Learning Disabilities: A Study of Rowan University Faculty.

Researcher: Sean Smith	
Department: Higher Education Administration	Location: Education Hall
Mailing Address: Rowan University-Center For Academic Success 201 Mullica Hill Rd. Glassboro, NJ, 081028	
E-Mail: smith0706@gmail.com	Telephone: 609-405-1960
Faculty Sponsor (if student): Dr. Burton Sisco	
Department: Higher Education Administration	Location: Education Hall
E-Mail: sisco@rowan.edu	Telephone: x3717

Approved For Use by Rowan IRB: 7/04

**Step 3: Determine whether the proposed research eligible for an *exemption* from a full IRB review.**

Federal regulations (45 CFR 46) permit the exemption of some types of research from a full IRB review. If your research can be described by one or more of the categories listed below, check the appropriate category(ies), complete questions 1-5, and complete the Assurances on the last page of the application.

If your research cannot be described by any of these categories, your research is not exempt, and you must complete the entire "Human Research Review Application."

\_\_\_\_\_ **Category 1** - Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as: (a) research on regular and special education instructional strategies; or (b) research on the effectiveness of, or the comparison among, instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods.

**Category 2** - Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior, unless: (a) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that the human participants can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the participants; and (b) any disclosure of the human participants' responses outside the research could reasonably place the participants at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the participants' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

*(Note: Exemption for survey and interview procedures does not apply to research involving children. Exemption for observation of public behavior does not apply to research involving children except when the investigator does not participate in the activities being observed.)*

\_\_\_\_\_ **Category 3** - Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under Category 2 above if: (a) the human participants are elected or appointed public officials or candidates for public office; or (b) federal statute requires without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Category 4** - Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that participants cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the participants.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Category 5** - Research and demonstration projects which are conducted by or subject to the approval of department or agency heads, and which are designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine: (a) public benefit or service programs; (b) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs; (c) possible changes in or alternatives to these programs or procedures; or (d) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Category 6** - Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies: (a) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed; or (b) if a food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below the level found to be safe by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

*(Note: Exemption categories cannot be applied to research involving fetuses, pregnant women, human in vitro fertilization, or prisoners.)*

Please answer Questions 1-5 below

1. WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH?

To gain an understanding of Rowan University faculty attitudes at towards accommodations for students with learning disabilities. To discover what accommodations faculty will make for students with a documented learning disability.

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2. DESCRIBE THE DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH INCLUDING WHAT WILL BE REQUIRED OF SUBJECTS (ATTACH ADDITIONAL SHEET IF NECESSARY):

A stratified sample of faculty will be asked to complete a survey which consists of twenty-five survey questions as well as two open ended questions.

3. DESCRIBE THE SUBJECTS WHO WILL BE PARTICIPATING (NUMBER, AGE, GENDER, ETC):

Survey will be distributed to 300 full-time faculty at Rowan University. There will be an equal number of full, associate, and assistant professors that will be given surveys. The survey will also be distributed to members of every college within the university.

4. DESCRIBE HOW SUBJECTS WILL BE RECRUITED (e.g. ADVERTISEMENTS, ANNOUNCEMENTS IN CLASS, E-MAIL, INTERNET)

Faculty will be recruited by mail, and email reminders will be given as well.

5. WHERE WILL THE RESEARCH BE CONDUCTED:

Rowan University.

NOTE: IF THE RESEARCH IS TO BE CONDUCTED IN ANOTHER INSTITUTION (e.g. A SCHOOL, HOSPITAL, AGENCY, etc.) A PERMISSION LETTER FROM AN ADMINISTRATOR ON THE LETTERHEAD OF THAT INSTITUTION MUST BE ATTACHED.

IF THE RESEARCH IS TO BE CONDUCTED AT ANOTHER UNIVERSITY, A SIGNED COPY OF THE IRB APPROVAL FORM FROM THAT UNIVERSITY MUST BE ATTACHED.

ATTACH THE CONSENT FORM TO THIS APPLICATION. The Consent Form must address all of the elements required for informed consent (SEE INSTRUCTIONS).

NOTE: IF THE ONLY RECORD LINKING THE SUBJECT AND THE RESEARCH WOULD BE THE CONSENT DOCUMENT, AND THE RESEARCH PRESENTS NO MORE THAN MINIMAL RISK OF HARM TO SUBJECTS, YOU MAY USE AN ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURE FOR CONSENT. IF YOU WISH TO REQUEST PERMISSION FROM THE IRB TO USE AN ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURE, ATTACH A COPY OF THE FIRST PAGE OF YOUR RESEARCH INSTRUMENT OR A LETTER WITH THE REQUIRED INFORMATION (see Instructions).

**If you are requesting an exemption from a full IRB review, STOP. Complete the last page of this application (“Certifications”), and forward the completed (typed) application to the Office of the Associate Provost for Research, The**

Graduate School, Memorial Hall.

IF YOU CANNOT CLAIM ONE OF THE EXEMPTIONS LISTED ABOVE, COMPLETE ALL OF THE ABOVE AS WELL AS THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR A FULL IRB REVIEW.

Does your research involve a special population?

- Socioeconomically, educationally, or linguistically disadvantaged racial/ethnic group
- Pregnancy/fetus
- Cognitively impaired
- Elderly
- Terminally ill
- Incarcerated
- No special population

At what level of risk will the participants in the proposed research be placed?

*(Note: "Minimal risk" means that the risks of harm anticipated in the proposed research are not greater, considering probability and magnitude, than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests. The concept of risk goes beyond physical risk and includes risks to the participant's dignity and self-respect as well as psychological, emotional, or behavioral risk.)*

Minimal Risk     More than Minimal Risk     Uncertain

1. HOW WILL SUBJECTS BE RECRUITED? IF STUDENTS, WILL THEY BE SOLICITED FROM CLASS?

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2. WHAT RISKS TO SUBJECTS (PHYSIOLOGICAL AND/OR PSYCHOLOGICAL) ARE INVOLVED IN THE RESEARCH?

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3. IS DECEPTION INVOLVED IN THE RESEARCH? IF SO, WHAT IS IT AND WHY WILL IT BE USED?

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4. WHAT INFORMATION WILL BE GIVEN TO THE SUBJECTS AFTER THEIR PARTICIPATION? IF DECEPTION IS USED, IT MUST BE DISCLOSED AFTER PARTICIPATION.

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5. HOW WILL CONFIDENTIALITY BE MAINTAINED? WHO WILL KNOW THE IDENTITY OF THE SUBJECTS? IF A PRE-AND POSTTEST DESIGN IS USED, HOW WILL THE SUBJECTS BE IDENTIFIED?

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6. HOW WILL THE DATA BE RECORDED AND STORED? WHO WILL HAVE ACCESS TO THE DATA? ALL DATA MUST BE KEPT BY THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR FOR A MINIMUM OF THREE YEARS.

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**CERTIFICATIONS:**

Rowan University maintains a Federalwide Assurance (FWA) with the Office of Human Research Protection (OHRP), U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. This Assurance includes a requirement for all research staff working with human participants to receive training in ethical guidelines and regulations. "Research staff" is defined as persons who have direct and substantive involvement in proposing, performing, reviewing, or reporting research and includes students fulfilling these roles as well as their faculty advisors.

Please attach a copy of your "Completion Certificate for Human Participant Protections Education for Research Teams" from the National Institutes of Health.

If you need to complete that training, go to the Web Tutorial at <http://cme.nci.nih.gov/>

**Responsible Researcher:** I certify that I am familiar with the ethical guidelines and regulations regarding the protection of human participants from research risks and will adhere to the policies and procedures of the Rowan University Institutional Review Board. I will ensure that all research staff working on the proposed project who will have direct and substantive involvement in proposing, performing, reviewing, or reporting this research (including students fulfilling these roles) will complete IRB approved training. I will not initiate this research project until I receive written approval from the IRB. I agree to obtain informed consent of participants in this project if required by the IRB; to report to the IRB any unanticipated effects on participants which become apparent during the course or as a result of experimentation and the actions taken as a result; to cooperate with the IRB in the continuing review of this project; to obtain prior approval from the IRB before amending or altering the scope of the project or implementing changes in the approved consent form; and to maintain documentation of consent forms and progress reports for a minimum of three years after completion of the final report or longer if required by the sponsor or the institution. I further certify that I have completed training regarding human participant research ethics within the last three years as indicated below my signature.

Signature of Responsible Researcher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Faculty Advisor (if Responsible Researcher is a student):** I certify that I am familiar with the ethical guidelines and regulations regarding the protection of human participants from research risks. I further certify that I have completed training regarding human participant research ethics within the last three years as indicated below my signature (attach copy of your "Completion Certificate for Human Participant Protections Education for Research Teams" from the National Institutes of Health).

Signature of Faculty Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX B

Cover Letter to Participants

March 23, 2006

Dr. Lorin Basden Arnold  
Associate Professor-Communication Studies  
Rowan University  
201 Mullica Hill Rd.  
Glassboro, NJ, 08028

Dear Dr. Arnold:

I am a graduate student enrolled in the Educational Leadership Department at Rowan University. I am conducting a research project under the direction of Dr. Burton Sisco as part of my master's thesis project regarding faculty attitudes towards accommodations for students with learning disabilities at Rowan University.

I am requesting your assistance in acquiring data for my thesis. I would like to gain an understanding of what accommodations faculty members feel are appropriate for students with learning disabilities. I have enclosed a survey for you to complete and return to me by Friday, March 31<sup>st</sup>. Please understand that all information that you provide is completely confidential and it will only be used as part of the research project.

For purposes of the study, learning disabled can be defined as neurologically based disorders that affect the manner in which information is acquired, organized, stored, and then retrieved or expressed. In addition, at the college-level, the learning disability must be documented and clinically diagnosed by a professional.

If you have any questions regarding the survey please feel free to contact Dr. Burton Sisco, my thesis advisor at (856) 256-4500 ex.3717. You may also contact me at (609) 405-1960 or via email at [smith0706@gmail.com](mailto:smith0706@gmail.com). I have a self-addressed stamp envelope for you to return the survey. Please have the survey back by Friday, March 31<sup>st</sup>. I thank you again for your anticipated participation in this study.

Sincerely,

Sean Smith

## APPENDIX C

### Survey

## Learning Disabilities Survey

This survey is being administered as part of a master's degree research thesis at Rowan University. The survey aims to discover the attitudes of faculty towards accommodations for students with learning disabilities. It will take approximately 10 minutes for you to complete. While your participation is voluntary and you are not required to answer any of the questions herein, your cooperation and participation are important to the success of the project and are greatly appreciated. If you choose to participate, please understand that all responses are strictly confidential and no personally identifiable information is being requested. If you would like, the results of the survey can be sent to you via email. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Male: \_\_\_\_\_ Female: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Rank: \_\_\_\_\_ Full Professor \_\_\_\_\_ Associate Professor \_\_\_\_\_ Assistant Professor

Academic Division/Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Years Teaching experience: \_\_\_\_\_ 0-5 \_\_\_\_\_ 5-10 \_\_\_\_\_ 10-15 \_\_\_\_\_ 15+

Experience working with students with learning disabilities:

\_\_\_\_\_ None \_\_\_\_\_ Some experience \_\_\_\_\_ Substantial Experience

Directions: *Circle the response that best characterizes your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements.*

1. Students who request accommodations provide documentation for their learning disability.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      Agree      strongly agree

2. I would make the necessary adjustments in my schedule to meet with students with disabilities who could not meet during regular office hours.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

3. If asked, I would share lecture notes with a student with a documented learning disability.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

4. I would grant partial credit to students with learning disabilities for final answers even if they are wrong.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

5. I use varied instructional strategies to help students with learning disabilities.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

6. If asked, I would allow students with learning disabilities to tape record lectures in my classes.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

7. I have a good understanding of why accommodations for students with learning disabilities are necessary.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

8. I receive adequate support from the Office of Learning Disabilities Support Services in working with students who have learning disabilities.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

9. I believe that my resources are insufficient to implement requested accommodations for students with learning disabilities.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

10. I feel that special course accommodations for students with learning disabilities are fair to other students in the class.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

11. I would be willing to increase the frequency of exams for students with learning disabilities.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

12. I would feel comfortable letting a learning disabled student to dictate answers for assignments or exams to a proctor.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

13. If asked, I would consider offering different types of exams to learning disabled students (e.g.-such as oral exams instead of written exams).

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

14. I would consider offering extra credit for completing extra assignments to students with learning disabilities.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

15. If asked, I would consider providing students with learning disabilities study guides before tests.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

16. I would allow a student with a learning disability to substitute a course for a required course.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

17. I would feel comfortable allowing a note taker to take notes for a student with a learning disability.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

18. I would feel comfortable allowing a proctor to rephrase questions that a student does not clearly understand.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

19. I believe that it is fair to allow students with learning disabilities the opportunity to register before other students

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree



20. I believe that the accommodations provided for students with learning disabilities helps them to succeed better in my course.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

21. I feel that giving students extra time on tests is fair if they have a documented learning disability.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

22. I feel that students with learning disabilities are as capable as other students.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

23. I feel that some students with learning disabilities take advantage of professor's accommodations for them.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

24. I believe that many students with learning disabilities are over-accommodated.

strongly disagree      disagree      neutral      agree      strongly agree

Open Ended

1. What impacts have you seen from the use of accommodations for learning disabled students?
2. Do you have any recommendations for serving learning disabled students?

**Thank you for your participation in this study, it is greatly appreciated.**