

College Faculty Perceptions of Instructional Strategies That Are Effective for Students with Dyslexia

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Abstract : There are many issues that students face in college, such as academic-based struggles, financial issues, family responsibilities, and vocational problems. Students with dyslexia struggle even more with these problems compared to other students. This qualitative study examines faculty perceptions of instructing students with dyslexia. This study is important to the human services and post-secondary educational fields due to the increase in disabled students enrolled in college. This study is also substantial because of the reported bias faced by students with dyslexia and their academic failure. When students with LDs such as dyslexia experience bias, discrimination, and isolation, they are more apt to not seek accommodations, lack communication with faculty, and are more likely to drop out or fail. College students with dyslexia often take longer to complete their post-secondary education and are more likely to withdraw or drop out without earning a degree. Faculty attitudes and academic cultures are major barriers to the success and use of accommodations as well as modified instruction for students with disabilities, which leads to student success. Faculty members are often uneducated or misinformed regarding students with dyslexia. More importantly, many faculty members are unaware of the many ethical and legal implications that they face regarding accommodating students with dyslexia. Instructor expectations can generally be defined as the understanding and perceptions of students regarding their academic success. Skewed instructor expectations can affect how instructors interact with their students and can also affect student success. This is true for students with dyslexia in that instructors may have lower and biased expectations of these students and, therefore, directly impact students' academic successes and failures. It is vital to understand how instructor attitudes affect the academic achievement of dyslexic students. This study will examine faculty perceptions of instructing students with dyslexia and faculty attitudes towards accommodations and institutional support. The literature concludes that students with dyslexia have many deficits and several learning needs. Furthermore, these are the students with the highest dropout and failure rates, as well as the lowest retention rates. Disabled students generally have many reasons why accommodations and supports just do not help. Some research suggests that accommodations do help students and show positive outcomes. Many improvements need to be made between student support service personnel, faculty, and administrators regarding providing access and adequate supports for students with dyslexia. As the research also suggests, providing more efficient and effective accommodations may increase positive student as well as faculty attitudes in college, and may improve student outcomes overall.

Keywords : dyslexia, faculty perception, higher education, learning disability

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