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Faculty Attitudes Toward Students With Intellectual Disabilities In Postsecondary Educational Settings

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FACULTY ATTITUDES TOWARD STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family, whose continued support and counsel has made this ambition a reality.

In memory of my parents, Thomas and Kathleen Callan, who instilled in me a love and respect for learning and the tenacity to persevere when the task became daunting. I hope I have made you proud.

To my amazing husband, Tim, whose support and love has surrounded me for 50 years. Without his inspiration I would have stumbled and lost sight of my dream when life got in the way. It proves that you can accomplish anything with the right person at your side.

To my three wonderful children Matthew, Devon and Erin; who never cease to amaze, inspire, and delight me. I am so proud of you for you are truly my greatest accomplishment.

And last, but not least, to my five beautiful grandchildren, Jacob, Jackson, Sofia, Brendan and Luke, I dedicate this achievement as a legacy to endurance. Life has a way of putting obstacles in our path and it is at these times we must reach for that inner strength to steady the course. I was faced with such a dilemma when the project on which I was basing my work was discontinued after four years of dissertation research. I was ready to abandon my quest and assume it just was not meant to be. I realized, however, I would be sending a message to my grandchildren that it was acceptable to give up when faced with challenges and adversity. If one of my grandchildren, even once in their life say, “if Nana can do it so can I”, all the effort will have been worth it. To you, the most cherished of children, I wish a lifetime full of hopes and dreams and remember you are never too old, too tired, or too busy to follow your heart and above all, promise me that you will always, always reach for the stars.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

To matriculate to college or become involved in some productive postsecondary endeavor is the dream of most high school students and their families. Students are often overwhelmed by the myriad of choices and opportunities available to them, ranging from four-year college degree programs, vocational training for specific job related skills or the military to mention just a few. Completion of some type of postsecondary education, including different forms of vocational or technical training and other life-long learning, significantly improve one's chances of participating in gainful and satisfying employment (Executive Summary of New Freedom Initiative: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2001).

The picture, however, looks quite different for students with disabilities, especially students with intellectual disabilities. A student with an intellectual disability is "characterized by significant limitations, both in intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior" (American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, 2007). The transition from high school to postsecondary education and/or employment often presents unique challenges for these students. Students with disabilities face many obstacles in postsecondary institutions, including negative attitudes by others, including fellow students and faculty, lack of knowledge about effective accommodations, and little experience with self-advocacy skills (Izzo, Hertzfeld, Simmons-Reed, & Aaron, 2001). Although there has been an increase in postsecondary attendance (especially at community colleges) by students with disabilities, their enrollment rate is still well below that of their peers in the general population. The employment rate of students with disabilities soon after leaving high school also remains well below that of their same age peers without disabilities (Wagner, Newman, Cameto, Levine, & Garza, 2006). Moreover, students with disabilities are faced with fragmented services, limited program accessibility, and

training that too often focuses on low-paying jobs (National Council on Disabilities, 2007). Adults with disabilities are more than twice as likely as people without disabilities to live below the poverty line and be financially dependent on government programs or family members (Stodden & Whelley, 2004). Other disturbing statistics relating to students with disabilities are:

- Youth with disabilities drop out of high school at twice the rate of their peers without disabilities (National Longitudinal Transition Study – 2 [NLTS 2], 2005).
- In 2003, 85% of all high school dropouts had some kind of disability (Stodden & Whelley, 2004).
- The unemployment rate for people with any type of disability is 70%. There is a 90% unemployment rate for persons with an intellectual or cognitive disability (President's Committee for People with Intellectual Disabilities 2004).
- Students with disabilities are less likely than their peers without disabilities to complete a full secondary school academic curriculum, especially in the areas of math and science. (Friedman, 2003).
- Youth with disabilities seldom attend or have any but the most perfunctory involvement in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting and consequently are poorly prepared for effective postsecondary transition planning. (Aberty & Stancliffe, 1996).

Poor post-school outcomes for students with disabilities and the need for major improvement in this area are not new issues. In submitting its recommendations for the reauthorization of IDEA 1997, the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education (2002) reported:

> The Commission finds students with disabilities are unemployed and under-employed upon leaving school compared to their peers who do not have disabilities. Too many students with disabilities leave school without successfully earning any type of diploma, and they attend post-secondary programs at rates far

> lower than their nondisabled peers. Adults with disabilities are much less likely to be employed than adults without disabilities. Unemployment rates for working-age adults with disabilities have hovered at the 70 percent level for at least the past 12 years, which the Commission finds to be wholly unacceptable. Even when employed, too many adults with disabilities earn markedly less income than their nondisabled peers for the same work. These statistics reflect failures in the present systems' structures. (p. 43)

The Commission's findings indicated that transition services were not being implemented to the fullest extent possible, and meaningful results were lacking. The report also stated the IDEA's federal requirements are too complex for educators, students, parents and others to understand what precisely the law requires and in what logical timeframe. The Commission's findings on competitive employment and post secondary education found that students with disabilities who choose non-academic alternatives after completing high school were not provided adequate preparation and support to reach their goals successfully. Approximately 30% of adults with disabilities, ages 21 through 64 reported being employed with the majority of these individuals being employed part time and for minimum wage, (Harris, 2000). The most recent Harris poll indicates little change over the past 10 years. The 2010 Survey of Employment of Americans with Disabilities was conducted by phone and online within the United States by Harris Interactive on behalf of the Kessler Foundation and the National Organization on Disability between March 29 and April 23, 2010. The results indicated that although corporations recognized that hiring employees with disabilities is important, most are hiring very few of these job seekers and few are proactively making efforts to improve the employment environment. Data released in July 2010 found little progress had been made in closing the employment gap between people with and without disabilities since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990. Statistics show that only 21% of students with disabilities, ages 18 to 64, reported they are working either full or part time, compared to 59% of people without a disability. This latest survey points out that although 70% of corporations

polled have diversity policies or programs in place, only two thirds of those with programs include disability as a component. Only 18% of companies offer an education program aimed at integrating people with disabilities into the workplace. Cost of supporting a person with disabilities does not seem to be a factor given that the majority of employers (62%) perceive that costs of hiring a person with a disability to be the same as hiring a person without a disability.

Students with disabilities, who elect to continue their education at the postsecondary level rather than immediately enter the work place, also face significant barriers to achieving their goals. The Office of Special Education Program's (OSEP) and the National Longitudinal Transition Study reported that students with moderate disabilities who remained in high school for four grades accumulated an average of 10 to 12 credits in academic subjects compared with 15 to 16 academic credits earned by students without disabilities and students with substantial disabilities may not have been enrolled in a course of study leading to a diploma, but rather working only on functional skills (NLTS, 1993: accountability section of report).

According to Gilson and Gilson, (1998), students with disabilities, like all other students, benefit considerably by continuing their education after high school. In addition to making the psychological adjustment associated with learning to live away from home, establishing new friendships, and experiencing the transition into adulthood, students with disabilities who participate in postsecondary education are more likely to engage in competitive employment than students with disabilities who do not participate in postsecondary endeavors (Benz, Doren, & Yovanoff, 1998; Blackorby & Wagner, 1996; Getzel, Stodden, & Briel, 1999; Gilmore, Schuster, Zafft, & Hart, 2001; Gilson, 1996). Research has shown that participation in any type of postsecondary education, whether vocational classes, a college certificate program, or even one college course, for credit or audit, significantly enhances the ability of individuals with disabilities to secure meaningful employment (Gilson, 1996).

The focus of this study is the student with moderate low incidence disabilities, specifically intellectual disabilities (previously referred to as mental retarded, cognitively impaired or developmentally delayed) as it pertains to meaningful access to postsecondary education. Individuals with intellectual disabilities are not the typical students entering college to participate in college activities. Intellectual disabilities is defined by the IDEA legislation "as a significantly sub-average general intellectual function, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and is manifested during the developmental period, and adversely affects a child's educational performance. The I.Q. range for students with intellectual disabilities can vary from 25 to 35 for students with severe impairments to 70 to 75 for students with mild intellectual impairments. Students that were the focus of this study were moderately intellectually disabled, with an approximate I.Q. of 55 to 70, who would be able to navigate independently around campus, have beginning computer skills and would be at least emergent readers. Much research has been conducted concerning students with learning disabilities and other high incidence disabilities attending postsecondary institutions. Mull, Sitlington and Alper (2001) in a synthesis of literature about postsecondary education for students with learning disabilities indicated that postsecondary options for students with learning disabilities appear in the literature as early as the late 1980s (Lazarus, 1989) through the decade of the 1990s. Researchers (e.g., Houck, Asselin, Troutman & Arrington, 1992; Mangrum & Strichart, 1992; McDonald, 1998; McGuire, Hall & Litt, 1991) delved into the issues of postsecondary education for students with learning disabilities. The plethora of research studies and journal articles that appeared in the late 1980s and 1990s, focused on students with mild disabilities, specifically learning disabilities (LD), was related to legislative changes that occurred at that time. The reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1990 (IDEA), and the IDEA amendments of 1997 included postsecondary education as a major post school outcome. Section

504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) mandated accessibility to postsecondary education for students with disabilities. The ADA reinforced the mandates of Section 504 and expanded the coverage to all programs and services regardless of whether or not they receive federal funding assistance (Linthicum, Cole & D'Alonzo, 1991), and all anti-discrimination statutes were extended to all colleges and universities, regardless of federal funding.

Between 1976 and 1990, the number of college freshmen with learning disabilities increased tenfold, resulting in this group becoming the fastest growing group of college students with disabilities receiving services (Norlander, Shaw & McGuire, 1990). Over the last four decades, junior colleges and universities have created programs to begin to meet the needs of this ever-increasing population. A survey in 2008 by the federal government showed that more than 200,000 college students nationwide have been diagnosed with a learning disability. According to Debra Hart, Director of Education and Transition for the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts-Boston, the number of programs for this population has increased from 22 to more than 250 nationwide since 2001.

Whereas, the opportunities for postsecondary involvement for students with learning disabilities have increased dramatically, this has not been the case for students with intellectual disabilities. The term intellectual disability was introduced by the President Kennedy's Committee for People with Intellectual disabilities in the report, titled *"*A Charge We Have to Keep: A Road Map to Personal and Economic Freedom for People with Intellectual Disabilities in the 21st Century" (2004). It was felt by the Committee that a new term was needed to dispel the negative connotation implied by the term mental retardation, which tended to dwell on disabilities rather than abilities of people within this population. Of all students with disabilities, those with intellectual disabilities have the poorest post-school outcomes. Until recently, the

option of attending college, especially the opportunity to participate in typical coursework, has not been available to students with intellectual disabilities. Typical opportunities for these students, especially those past the age of 18, have been limited to segregated life skills or community-based transition programs, often housed in high school environments (Hart, Grigal, Sax, Martinez, & Will, 2006).

Inclusion has played a positive role in the advancement of students with disabilities on the college campus. The U. S. Department of Education recommended for the K -12 general education population that 80% of students with disabilities should spend 80% of their school day in the general education classroom. This percentage included students with moderate to mild intellectual disability, who have become accustomed to attending classes with their non-disabled peers and likely assumed that this type of placement would continue at the postsecondary level. Also, improved transition services for all students with disabilities, may be responsible for increased interest in postsecondary education for students with more substantial disabilities between the ages of 18 and 21 (Falvey, Gage & Eshilian, 1995; Fisher & Sax, 1999; Moon & Inge, 2000; Smith & Puccini, 1995), by service agencies and public school systems (Grigal, Neubert, & Moon, 2001, 2002; Hall, Kleinert, & Kearns, 2000).

From the very earliest research on postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities; attitudes toward these students by faculty, their willingness to provide accommodations, and their ability to adapt curriculum content have emerged as the most prominent obstacles to the achievement of students with disabilities in a postsecondary educational environment (Bagget, 1994; Fonosch & Schwas, 1981; Moore, Newlon & Nye, 1996).

Public attitudes toward persons with disabilities in general began to change after World War II due to the prevalence of physical disabilities among returning soldiers and the need for

prosthetic devices. The first college program for individuals with disabilities in the United States was opened at the University of Illinois in 1948 to accommodate returning veterans. This university offered comprehensive medical services, sports activities, and physical plant accommodations (ramps, bus services) for students with physical disabilities (Monaghan, 1998).

To better understand the importance of attitude on student success a review of the three-part definition of attitude proposed by Triandes, Adamopoulos and Brinberg (1984) is helpful and puts the elusive complexity of attitude into perspective. "An attitude is an idea (cognitive component) charged with emotion (affective component) which predisposes a class of actions (behavioral component) to a particular class of social situations" (p. 127). Researchers also found that demographics played a large part in faculty attitudes and their willingness to accommodate students with special needs. Surveys of college and university staffs found attitudinal variances were related to several demographic indicators, including (a) gender, (b) knowledge of different impairment categories and laws pertaining to students with impairments, (c) academic field of expertise, and (d) years of teaching experience (Kraska, 2003). According to Hart et al., 2006, the majority of postsecondary programs for students with intellectual disabilities identify "attitude" and "low expectations" as the most important barriers to overcome. Greenbaum, Graham, and Scales (1995) found that many faculty members seem uninformed about the nature of disability, were often unaware of the needs of students with disabilities and their legal responsibilities to these students, and generally lacked understanding of what it means to have a disability. Other additional barriers included funding, transportation, and entrance requirements. Furthermore, faculty often lacked skills needed to provide adequate support to students with substantial intellectual disabilities in their classes. Research has shown that postsecondary staff was opposed to having students with intellectual challenges in their classes for the following reasons:

- Faculty were not adequately trained to work with these students,
- There was excessive paperwork connected to having them in their classes,
- Faculty were concerned about the possible negative effect that the presence of students with intellectual disabilities might have on other students, and
- Faculty lacked sufficient institutional support to work properly with students with intellectual disabilities into their classes.

In previous studies, knowledge about certain disability categories had been linked to faculty attitudes toward students with disabilities (Aksamit, Morris, & Luenberger, 1987; Vogel, Wyland, & Brulle, 1998). The studies indicated that faculty may feel one way about a student with a physical impairment and another way about a student with psychiatric disabilities or intellectual disabilities. Faculty often noted that they would be comfortable with students with a physical impairment or mild learning disability in their classroom, but may feel very differently about the ability of a student with substantial intellectual or developmental disabilities to engage in the course content.

Statement of the Problem

Research has shown that participation in any type of postsecondary education, including being involved in even one college course for audit or credit, can substantially improve an individual's chance of success in adulthood. Exposing the population that has had the least chance of success in creating meaningful life outcomes to such experiences could greatly improve their opportunities for being productive later life. Faculty attitudes and perceptions have been shown to play a prominent role in student success (de A Moreira, San Juan, Periera, & de Souza, 2000). Hart et al. (2006) stated that faculty attitudes and low expectations are the most difficult barriers for students with intellectual disabilities to overcome. More information is

needed to understand faculty members' perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities and what role institutions of higher learning should play to support success for all students.

Purpose of the Study

The overarching purpose of this study was to examine faculty attitudes regarding the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in their classes and their willingness to accommodate the curricular content to meet the individual needs of the students. This study provided data concerning other important aspects of postsecondary transition that can be beneficial for future educational planning for this population.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this research:

1. To what extent are faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities, influenced by their knowledge and understanding of the laws and legal mandates pertaining to students with disabilities in a postsecondary educational setting?
2. To what extent do faculty self-perceptions of their skill levels and training needs to work with students with intellectual disabilities influence their willingness to include and accommodate these students in their courses?
3. To what extent does faculty feel that students with intellectual disabilities belong in college classes?
4. To what extent is there a difference in faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities among the faculty in the three colleges (College of Education, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts)?

Significance of the Study

This study contributed to the small, but important body of existing research on faculty attitudes toward students with disabilities in the postsecondary environment. By studying faculty attitudes, postsecondary institutions can determine what attitudinal traits appear to foster success for students and develop ways of changing negative attitude that are detrimental to positive school outcomes for all students, including those with disabilities. It can also be used to identify barriers faced by students with disabilities as they enter college life; and to determine possible training opportunities for faculty to assist them in working with students with disabilities.

Limitations of the Study

The following limitations were acknowledged for this study:

- The study was conducted at a single urban university. Results of the study may not be relevant to other colleges and universities in suburban or rural settings.
- The sample was drawn from three colleges within the university. The findings may not be relevant to faculty in other colleges and schools within the university.

Definition of Terms

Accommodations: The means whereby a person with a disadvantage comes to have access to an equitable end. This means that the person with a disability has reasonable access to services and goods as they are made available to the non-disabled public. Where an accommodation is offered, the requesting person must demonstrate that there is impairment and that the impairment substantially limits one or more major life activity (Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990a)

Adaptations: Any procedure intended to accommodate an educational situation with respect to individual differences in ability or purpose (Carpenter, 2001).

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) PL – 336*:* An act passed in 1990 and implemented in 1992, is broken into five titles. ADA covers equal access for persons with disabilities and

contains protections against discrimination in terms of the civil rights act as opposed to terms of an entitlement act

1. Title I Employment
2. Title II Public Services and Transportation
3. Title III Accommodations of Public Spaces
4. Title IV Telecommunications
5. Title V Miscellaneous

Developmental Disability: Any group of physical or intellectual disabilities that restricts or slows down the perceived normal development process on a permanent basis, including a combination of at least three of the following:

1. Self care
2. Receptive and expressive language
3. Learning
4. Mobility
5. Self direction
6. Capacity for independent living
7. Decreased economic self-sufficiency (McDonnell, Hardman, & McDonnell 2003).

Disability: Any restriction or lack resulting from impairment of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being (United Nations, 1983).

FAPE: A free, appropriate, public education is the right of every child as stipulated in the Education for All Handicapped Children of 1975, later reauthorized as IDEA

Inclusion: Integrating students with disabilities into the same classrooms, community activities, resources, and home settings as those of students without disabilities (Doyle, 2002).

High Incidence Disability*:* A high incidence disability is a physical or mental impairment that includes the category of specific learning disabilities, mild cognitive impairment, and mild to moderate emotional or behavioral disabilities. These students in grades Kindergarten through grade twelve are , by law, to be educated in the least restricted environment with non-disabled peers for a substantial portion of their school day (IDEIA 2004, Section 662(c)).

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) PL 101-476*:* Act passed in 1975 and modified in 1997 and 2004 is an entitlement act which cites that children with disabilities are guaranteed a free and appropriate public education in a least restrictive environment. These students should have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) from age 3 through 21 (age 26 in Michigan) and that all services should be provided by the students' state educational institution and associated local school district.

Intellectual Disability*:* A significantly sub-average general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and is manifested during the developmental period, and adversely affects a child's educational performance. I.Q. can range from 25 for severe intellectual disabilities to 70 for mild intellectual disabilities. The term intellectual disabilities has replaced other terms such as mental retardation and cognitive impairment and is considered appropriate people-first language.

Learning Disability*:* A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using spoken or written language that may be manifested in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations (IDEA Act, 1992b).

Least Restrictive Environment: The educational philosophy, which states that children with disabilities are educated with children who are not disabled where to the maximum extent appropriate and do not attend special classes or separate schools. Removal of children with disabilities from the general education setting should occur only when the nature or severity of

the disability is such that education in general education classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily (IDEA Act, 1997).

Low Incidence Disability*:* A severe disabling condition with an expected incidence rate less than one percent of the total special education enrollment in Kindergarten through grade 12. Included in this population are those severe disabling conditions involving cognitive impairments, hearing impairments, vision impairments (excluding visual impairments resulting in visual perceptual or visual motor dysfunction), and severe orthopedic impairments or any combination of disabilities (IDEIA 2004, Section 662(c).

Mental Retardation: Based on a measure of general intelligence through standardized ascription in cases where IQ test results are significantly below average (usually below 70 IQ) and where major life activities are hampered as a result of the disability. The term mental retardation does not include late onset processes (Alzheimer's disease etc.) Mental retardation is now referred to as intellectual disability (The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 2000).

Modifications: Adjustments that enable an individual with a disability to enjoy equal benefits and privileges as are enjoyed by other individuals without disabilities (ADA, 1990b).

Postsecondary Institution: Education settings beyond kindergarten through twelve grade where terminal degrees are offered. These institutions include technical schools, community colleges, and universities (Hart, Grigal, Sax, Martinez, & Will, 2006).

Section 504: Protects qualified individuals from discrimination based on their disability. Section 504 forbids organizations and employers from excluding or denying individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to receive program benefits and services. It defines the rights of individuals with disabilities to participate in, and have access to, program benefits and services. A part of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 section 504 specifically applies to institutions that accept federal funding (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, section 504).

Transition Services: Transition services means a coordinated set of activities, designed within an outcomes-oriented process that promotes movement from school to post school activities (Wells, Sandefur, & Hogan, 2003).

Chapter II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Historical Overview of Special Education:

In the early years of formal education the looming question for students with disabilities was not "how" but "if" they would be educated. According to Lipsky and Gardner, (1997) in 1852 Massachusetts established a compulsory education law that allowed for the expulsion of children with disabilities from public schools. The only opportunity for students with disabilities to get an education was at state or private schools where marginal services, at best, were available. The picture was more dismal for students with intellectual disabilities, who were either kept at home or institutionalized.

The creation of a dual education system began as social pressures forced educators to grapple with the education of students with disabilities. The question gradually shifted from "if" children with disabilities should be educated to "where" education should take place. In 1958, Norris Haring worked tirelessly for, what later became special education, and advocated for inclusion of children with special needs into general education classrooms. Haring was ahead of his time in identifying crucial elements that must be present if special needs children were to receive an education. Haring believed that teachers had to be properly trained to work with children with disabilities, and they must have the appropriate resources to do their job. Teacher attitude toward the acceptance of students with disabilities in inclusionary situations has often been noted in research, as being a contributing factor to the success or failure of students with disabilities when integrated into the general education systems with non-disabled peers (Everington, Hamill, & Lubic, 1996).

Fisher, in his 2008 doctoral dissertation at Texas A & M University noted that as late as the 1970s "there was little research concerning students with intellectual disabilities in higher

education." Early research focused on the conceptual idea of students with intellectual disabilities becoming involved in postsecondary education, however, in the decade of the seventies there were no documented programs for students with intellectual disabilities at the postsecondary level. The major concern at that time was placement for students in the general education public school system, with little regard for school involvement in the postsecondary environment. Neubert, Moon, Grigal and Redd (2001) conducted a meta-analysis of existing databases including ERIC, Council of Exceptional Children Resources, educational abstracts and dissertations abstracts from 1969 to 1999 to determine the amount of research that was conducted concerning students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary settings during that thirty year period. The research during the 1970s dealing with students with intellectual disabilities involved in postsecondary endeavors was in the "infancy" stage. The literature in the 1980s was referred to as "transitional" which connoted a focus on these students as they begin to enter adulthood. The meta-analysis reported that the literature during the 1990s indicated an increase in the number of research studies, which resulted in a small number of trial programs which included students with intellectual disabilities on college campuses.

To understand the current state of transition options for students with intellectual disabilities it is necessary to look at the historical progression of special education legislation over the last six decades.

> In these days, it is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to exceed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity, where the state has undertaken to provide it is a right that must be made available to all on equal terms. *Chief Justice Earl Warren, Brown v. Board of Education (1954). P.493*

The tenth amendment to the U. S. Constitution implies that education is the responsibility of state government. That education is a state, not federal, matter was seen as essential by the founders of this country. This was because state governments were seen as being closer and more

connected to the needs of the people they serve (Yell, Rogers & Rogers, 1998). The history of special education was shaped by the efforts of parents and advocacy groups that have had the determination to pursue their concerns through the courts and subsequent legislation. Special education, as we know it today, evolved due to the exclusion of children with disabilities, and the initiation of the compulsory attendance laws for all students. The Civil Rights movement and the Equal Opportunity movement led to landmark court cases that molded the special education system of present day.

Rhode Island was the first state to pass a compulsory education law in 1840, with Massachusetts following suit in 1852. By 1918, compulsory education was adopted by all states (Yseldyke & Algozzine, 1984). Regardless of the fact that every state had passed compulsory attendance legislation, the exclusion of students with disabilities continued. In 1893, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled that a child who was "weak in mind and could not benefit from instruction, was troublesome to other children and was unable to take ordinary, decent, physical care of himself could be expelled from public school". (Watson *v.* City of Cambridge, 1893). Thirty years later the Wisconsin Supreme Court in Bealtie v. Board of Education ruled that school officials could exclude a student who had been attending public school until the fifth grade if the student had a physical condition that others found offensive and required excessive attention from the teacher. In 1934, the ruling was upheld by the Cuyahoga County Court of Appeals in Ohio, stating that the state statutes mandating compulsory attendance for children ages six through eighteen gave the state department of education authority to exclude certain children. This practice continued as recently as 1969 where courts upheld exclusions because the court felt the students would not, or could not, benefit from a public school experience or might be disruptive or harmful to others. In 1958, the Illinois Supreme Court, in the case of the Department of Public Welfare v. Haas, ruled that the state did

not have to provide a free, public education for the “feeble-minded” or “mentally deficient”, or because of limited intelligence, or were unable to benefit from a good education. In 1969, North Carolina went so far as to make it a crime for parents to insist that states enforce compulsory attendance legislation after a child with disabilities had been excluded from public education (Weber, 1992). Due mainly to social pressure from parents and community agencies, by the late 1960s and early 1970s most states had passed legislation that required schools to educate students with disabilities. The enforcement of these laws, however, was sporadic with some states simply providing access to public schools with little regard to the quality of the education received (Ysseldyke & Algazzine, 1984).

A societal shift in the educational placement of students with disabilities and their need for specialized instruction was a long time in coming. It began as early as 1910 at a White House conference on education. The focus of this conference was to establish remedial programs for children with special needs. This perspective was broaden to include quality of life issues for these students. It was recognized by participants of the conference that the education of these children should take place in schools not institutions. An outcome of this landmark conference was the concept that students with special needs should definitely be educated, probably in separate classes and more likely in segregated buildings, with smaller class sizes, using individualized instruction and by teachers specifically trained to work with this unique population. It was felt that this approach would afford these students a better education while boosting their self-esteem because they would not be experiencing the constant failure that was often their lot in the general education classroom. The number of special segregated classrooms/buildings grew substantially from 1910 to 1930 (Winzer, 1993).

The civil rights movement also greatly influenced the path that special education legislation followed. The 1950s and 1960s led to societal changes in general that would allow

equal opportunities for African Americans in this country. The resulting legislation led to constitutional protections for minorities and persons with disabilities. The highly publicized court case of Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, 347 U.S. 483 (1954) was a pivotal victory for the civil rights movement that effected aspects of educational law and procedure (Turnbull, 1993). In 1951, a class action suit was filed against the Board of Education of the City of Topeka, Kansas in the United States District Court for the District of Kansas. The plaintiffs were thirteen Topeka parents on behalf of their 20 children (Anderson, 2004). The suit called for the school district to reverse its policy of racial segregation. Separate elementary schools were operated by the Topeka Board of Education under an 1879 Kansas law, which permitted (but did not require) districts to maintain separate elementary school facilities for black and white students in twelve communities with populations over 15,000 (Sarat, 1997). The outcome of Brown v. Board of Education greatly affected educational approaches and programming for students with disabilities. The effect of the Brown case served as the beginning of the inclusion movement for special education. The Brown case was founded on the constitutional guarantee of equal protection under law within the Fourteenth amendment, which stipulates that the states may not deny any person within its jurisdiction equal protection under the law. If states have undertaken to provide an education to its citizenry, then they must do so for all its citizens regardless of race or disability. The lawsuit stated that to deny an individual an equal education solely based on a person's unalterable characteristics (e.g., race or disability) was unconstitutional. In the Brown v. Board of Education case, the Supreme Court decision allowed for the re-evaluation of educational issues for students with disabilities. Based on the Brown case, advocates pointed out that students with disabilities had the same rights as students without disabilities and were entitled to the same type and quality of education (Yell, Rogers & Rogers, 1998). These findings gave way to a powerful advocacy movement for students with

disabilities. One of the first documented advocacy groups to form for this population was the Cuyahoga County Ohio Council for the Retarded Child, which consisted of five mothers whose children had been excluded from school (Levine & Wexler, 1981; Turnbull & Turnbull, 1990; Winzer, 1993). This group organized a protest that resulted in the formation of a special class for these students, monitored by the parents themselves. Out of these grassroots advocacy efforts many influential organizations for the protection of individuals with disabilities were created. By 1950, a total of 88 such groups with a membership of over 19,000 persons had been established in 19 states. The following influential national organizations resulted from parental efforts due to concern and determination to better their children's educational opportunities (Yell, Rogers & Rogers, 1998).

The National Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC)

This organization was later renamed the Association for Retarded Citizens, also known as ARC and its mission has always been to provide information, monitor the quality of services given individuals with mental retardation and to act as an advocate for the rights and interest of individuals with mental retardation.

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)

CEC is a professional organization concerned with the education of children with special needs. The organization is a major force in the development of innovative programming, teacher preparation and policy making for individuals with disabilities. CEC publishes white papers and journals, addressing current issues of interest.

The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps (TASH)

TASH was created in 1974 and was composed of teachers, parents, administrators and service providers. TASH disseminates information on best practice, inclusion and case law.

Due in part to the Brown case, the Civil Rights Act emerged in 1964 as one of the most pivotal contemporary civil rights statutes enacted by Congress. The act's impact on colleges and universities has been immense, in that, it prohibits discrimination against students and employees on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion and sex. The Civil Rights Act consists of eleven extensive titles, four of which have special relevance for colleges and universities (Russo, 2008). Title II addresses injunctive relief against discrimination in places of public accommodation, such as university cafeterias and dining areas that had to be made open to all students. Title III addresses desegregation of public facilities that resulted in minority students no longer being denied opportunities to live in on-campus or off-campus housing and facilities. Title VI covers the prohibition against discrimination in programs receiving federal financial assistance. Title VII refers to employment opportunities, and forbids employers of more than 15 employees from discriminating against employees or prospective employees or applicants on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, and sex. If a particular skill is required for the job that would limit a person's ability to qualify for the job it must be taken into account during the hiring process. Titles VI and VII are the two most litigated titles of the Civil Rights Act and have produced many changes in the operation of colleges, and universities and private sector workplaces. In the 2008 reauthorization of the Civil Rights Act, language concerning protection from harassment for students in schools and college/universities that receive federal funds was added for the protection of students with disabilities.

According to the Office for Civil Rights, this legislation has had a profound impact on the educational opportunities for students with disabilities. From 1990 to 2000, more than 800,000 students with disabilities, including part-time students with disabilities are enrolled in all levels of higher education. This number represents approximately 6% of undergraduate enrollment and

4% of graduate and professional enrollment (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 2000).

The Equal Opportunity movement also played an important role in shaping special education legislation. Long after the Brown decision was rendered its influence was still strongly felt. Two landmark decisions in which action was against state statutes and policies that excluded students with disabilities were Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Citizen (PARC) v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (1972) and Mills v. Board of Education of the District of Columbia (1972). Both suits were brought because students with intellectual disabilities were not receiving a free appropriate public education (FAPE) as stipulated in the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, later reauthorized as IDEA. In the Pennsylvania case, the plaintiff argued that students with mental retardation were not receiving public education because the state was delaying, or ignoring its constitutional responsibilities to provide publically supported education for these students. In so doing, the state was in violation of its own state statutes and the students' rights under the Equal Protection of the Law clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. The PARC case was resolved by consent agreement stating that all children with mental retardation between the ages of 6 and 21 years must be provided a free public education and that it is most desirable to educate children with mental retardation in a program similar as possible to programs provided for non-disabled peers. This finding became the foundation for statutes found in the No Child Left Behind legislation of 2001 (Levine & Wexler, 1981; Zettel & Ballard, 1982).

The Mills v. Board of Education (1972) was filed in Federal District Court for the District of Columbia on behalf of all out-of-school students with disabilities. This class action suit was made up of individuals with several different disabilities that formed a class representing over 18,000 students who were denied or excluded from public education in the Washington D. C.

area. The suit stated that under the Fourteenth Amendment students were denied access to school without due process of law. The Mills case resulted in a judgment against the School Board of Washington D. C. that mandated that the board provide all children with disabilities a publicly supported education. Also, the Court mandated that the board provide due process and procedural safeguards and guidelines to parents and guardians, a procedure still in effect today. The PARC and Mills decisions set precedents for similar cases. In the two years following the PARC and Mills decisions 46 right to education cases were filed on behalf of children with disabilities in 28 states (Zettel & Ballard, 1982).

The first documented federal legislation that directly affected students with significant intellectual disabilities was Public Law 85-926 on September 06, 1958 and known as the Education of the Mentally Retarded Children Act in which Congress appropriated one million dollars for the training of teachers working with children with mental retardation.

Public Law 85-926

> To encourage expansion of teaching in the education of mentally retarded children through Grants to institutions of higher learning and to State educational agencies.
>
> *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled.* That the Commissioner of Education is authorized to make grants to public or other nonprofit institutions of higher learning to assist them in providing training of professional personnel to conduct training of teachers in fields related to education of mentally retarded children. Such grants may be used by such institutions to assist in covering the cost of courses of training or study for such personnel and for establishing and maintaining fellowships, with such stipends as may be determined by the Commissioner of Education.

PL 85-926 was the first federal law that addressed the issue of special education. It was not until the passing of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act in 1975 that individuals with disabilities were ensured a free, appropriate public education and acknowledged that all

children should have access to school. The law was reauthorized in 1997 and 2004 and is currently known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA).

In 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was enacted under President Lyndon B. Johnson's "War on Poverty" and provided additional federal funds to improve the education of certain categories of students including students with disabilities. Under Title V of this legislation grant funding was set aside for programming for students with disabilities and teacher training for these programs. The grant funding in this legislation was very likely the pre-cursor to special education funding (Murdick, Gartin, & Crabtree, 2002).

The Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act (PL 94-103) and the Education for All Handicapped Children Act were combined to create increased funding opportunities and to place additional responsibilities on states to educate students with disabilities fully and appropriately. This act relies heavily on procedural protections embedded in this legislation to reach the goals set forth in its amendments. According to Tucker, Goldstein, and Sorenson (1993), six basic principles form the basis of this Act (IDEA), which remains in effect in P.L. 101-476 as of 2013. According to Murdick et al. (2002), the strong language of IDEA clearly identified concepts that had only been alluded to in previous legislation:

- **Zero Reject**: focuses on the concept that all children with disabilities regardless of type or severity of their disability are entitled to FAPE;
- **Nondiscriminatory Assessment**: Schools are responsible to provide appropriate diagnosis, program planning and placement;
- **Procedural Due Process**: Procedural due process was created to safeguard the first two principles of zero reject and nondiscriminatory assessment;
- **Parental Participation**: The participation of parents and guardians is considered pivotal in the provision of FAPE and IDEA requires that parents are part of the

child's multidisciplinary education team (MET) that develops the Individual Education Program (IEP);

- **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):** states that the preferred placement for students with disabilities is the regular classroom to the greatest extent possible;
- **Individualized Education Program (IEP):** The IEP is a written statement for a student with a documented disability that is developed in accordance with Federal regulations.

In 1973, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act was created to protect persons with disabilities against discrimination based on their disability. When first written, Section 504 created confusion as to what protections it afforded to people with disabilities. Some believed its purpose was to correct problems in the current approach to rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, while others understood it to be an extension of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. There was no means to correct the discrimination of the disabled, either through civil or criminal measures, built into the law and it appeared that Section 504 originally offered very little protection for the disabled (Yell et al, 1998). The Education Amendments of 1974 revised Section 504, by stating, in clearer language, what protections should be afforded the disabled and the confusion created by Section 504 was clarified under the Rehabilitation, Comprehensive Services, and Developmental Disabilities Act of 1978. This Act clearly extended all civil rights protections that were included in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to persons with disabilities.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibits discrimination based on disabilities in all institutions that receive federal funding, including most colleges and universities. Section 504 mandated the following requirements regarding postsecondary education institutions and students with disabilities (a) access to facilities and activities; (b) admission policies and practices that do not discriminate on basis of disability; (c) testing procedures with appropriate

accommodations; and (d) provision of auxiliary aids and services (Rehabilitation Act, 1973, 29 USC.794).

Excerpt from the Rehabilitation Act of 1973:

> A recipient (postsecondary institution) to which this subpart applies shall make such modifications to its academic requirements as are necessary to ensure that such requirements do not discriminate or have the effect of discriminating, on the basis of handicap, against a qualified handicapped applicant or student. Academic requirements that the recipient can demonstrate are essential to the instruction being pursued by such student or to any directly related licensing requirement will not be regarded as discriminatory within the meaning of this section. Modifications may include changes in length of time permitted for completion of degree requirements, substitution of specific courses required for completion of degree requirements, and adaption of the manner in which specific courses are conducted. (Subpart E).

As stated in the Act, postsecondary institutions are required to adjust programs to ensure that they do not discriminate against students with disabilities, but they are not required to make adjustments that compromise the integrity of programs. Section 504 spells out the responsibilities of educational institutions to provide equal educational opportunities for students with disabilities. As well as, length of time permitted for degree completion or adaptations in the way certain courses are implemented as stated in Section 84.44 [a], other accommodations such as typed texts, interpreters, or readers as indicated in Section 84.44 [d], and conducting course examinations, or other means for evaluating student achievement in a fashion that highlights student performance rather than focus on the area of disability, unless such skills are factors that the test is intended to measure as reflected in Section 84.44 [c].

The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992 (PL 102-569) stated that “disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the civil rights of individuals.” Section 504 was the primary access law protecting individuals with disabilities in postsecondary educational institutions and employment before the American with Disabilities Act of 1990. The responsibility of meeting the mandates of Section 504 is on the programs under its jurisdiction,

including institutions of higher learning. Programs not meeting the specified requirements are held accountable by litigation. Section 504 covers elementary, secondary and postsecondary school, and employment situations, as long as the programs in question are recipients of federal funding. According to Stodden, Jones, and Chang (2002), the key points of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as it applies to students with disabilities are:

- Individuals with disabilities are responsible for identifying themselves, seek assessment and evaluation to verify the disability and seek out needed assistance and accommodations;
- Public institutions bear the cost of assistance provision;
- There is a focus on services and supports;
- There is a focus on nondiscrimination;
- The receipt of federal funds by public institutions is linked to compliance with the law;
- The law applies across all environments, but is applied most often in postsecondary and employment environments.

In 1975 with the passage of the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (PL 94-142, a free appropriate education (FAPE) became the standard for all children in public education including students with disabilities. The Act laid out specific parameters for delivery of special education services. On October 30, 1990 the Education of All Handicapped Children Act was reauthorized, revised and renamed, reflecting changes in people-first language as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). In 1997, IDEA was again reauthorized to strongly affirm that an alternate education would be available to students with special learning challenges. Prior to the passage of these laws, there was no guarantee that special education services would

be provided in public school programs (Lipsky & Gartner, 1989; Rothstein, 1990; Ysseldyke, Algozzine, & Thurlow, 1992).

IDEA is more prescriptive than Section 504 or the Americans with Disabilities Act and deals in great depth with issues such as funding, responsibility for, and scope of programming and revolves entirely around the concept of "a free appropriate public education" or FAPE for students with disabilities. The local educational agency (LEA) is responsible for all aspects of assessment, involving parents in all decision making and the creation of a service plan known as the Individual Education Program (IEP). Federal funding is provided, along with state funding to provide services for students with disabilities and supports to their families. While many services can be considered, the specific combination of services to be provided to the student is decided by the IEP team and each service plan is unique to the individual student. IDEA is a federal mandate, the responsibility for its implementation, however, lies with the state using public taxpayer monies. The responsibilities inherent within IDEA are in effect from ages 3 to 21 nationally and to age 26 in Michigan, and conclude with the completion of secondary school signified by a high school diploma or certificate of completion, the student reaches age 21, or voluntarily chooses to leave the educational system. The services and supports contained with IDEA do not extend to postsecondary education or employment unless it is sponsored as a transition program through the student's local high school or vocational training opportunity (Hart et al, 2006).

A major difference between the Rehabilitation Act and IDEA is that in IDEA the responsibility for identification and provision of supports to students lays with the school district not the individual. According to Stodden, Jones & Chang, 2002 the key features of IDEA as it pertains to students with intellectual disabilities are:

- Schools are responsible for the identification, assessment, development of the IEP, delivery of direct and related services and the educational outcomes of children and youth with disabilities.
- There is a focus on services rather than on accommodations.
- There is a focus on quality of programming, least restrictive environment and the provision of FAPE.
- Federal funds and state funds are co-mingled for the provision of assistance.
- The law only applies until a child graduates from secondary school, takes a certificate of completion, drops out or ages out.

IDEA is the primary federal law that addresses the educational needs of children with disabilities including children with severe intellectual disabilities. The law requires an IEP for each student, and mandates the inclusion of students with disabilities in state and district assessments, and requires states to provide appropriate accommodations for students who can take the regular general education assessment and to develop alternate assessments for students who cannot participate meaningfully in the regular state assessment, due to degree and severity of their disability, as determined by the IEP team. Reflecting the legislative direction in education toward accountability and student achievement, IDEA was reauthorized in 2004 as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA).

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was signed into law in 1990 and extended the mandate for non-discrimination on the basis of disability to the private sector and non-federal public sector. ADA was created to address the concerns by the disabled and their families, because present laws for the population were too fragmented and too limited to provide adequate protection. ADA is viewed as one of the most comprehensive pieces of legislation since the passage of the Education of All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) in 1975 (Murdick et al.

(2002). According to First and Curcio (1993), providing a specific and inclusive national directive to eliminate discrimination of individuals with disabilities was the purpose of ADA. In 1990, the school reform aspects of ADA were carried through Section 504 of the Rehabilitation ACT. ADA is more overarching than Section 504 since it prohibits discrimination of those with disabilities by private entities and by state and local governments. This allowed state and local governments to be subject to litigation, thus challenging sovereign immunity inherent in the Eleventh Amendment of the United States Constitution and enjoyed by government agencies. ADA introduced the enforcement powers to the process of discrimination. Those discriminated against could now sue for monetary damages, injunction relief, attorney fees and all legal cost through complicated and often very time consuming procedures. Section 504 and ADA cover most American college and universities; private schools, from nursery to postgraduate schools are covered under Title III of ADA. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act relates to the operation of elementary and secondary public schools and institutions of postsecondary training and mandates reasonable accommodations. Specifically, colleges and universities are required to make reasonable modification in their practices, policies and procedures, and to provide auxiliary aids and services for people with disabilities, unless to do so would "fundamentally alter" the nature of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages and accommodations they offer, or unless to do so would result in an "undue burden." The phrases "fundamentally alter" and "undue burden" have proven to be ambiguous and open to interpretation, creating complex litigation around these points. To further define these terms the following explanations have been found in the *Department of Justice (DOJ) Title III Technical Assistance Manual*, (1993) [Subpart] p. 111.

- "fundamental alteration" is a modification that is so significant that it alters the essential nature of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or

accommodation offered. For example, in college and universities if such substantial changes to the content curriculum were needed to accommodate students with disabilities, that it would fundamentally alter the course syllabus, it would be beyond the mandate of this law.

- "undue burden" means to make such changes could cause significant financial burden or expense.

According to the California Protection and Advocacy System, the major impact of the changes for colleges and universities lie in the primary focus on whether or not they can provide a reasonable accommodation that does not pose an undue hardship on the institution or fundamentally alter the nature of a program (course content). The Americans with Disabilities Act was amended in 2008 and became effective on January 1, 2009, and is known as the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA). The amended law clarified and reiterated who is covered by the law's civil rights protection. It revised the definition of disability to more broadly include impairments that substantially limit a major life activity (United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission). The process of determining a reasonable accommodation remains unchanged and requires an interview with the individual to assess what accommodations are needed and to determine if they are reasonable.

The 1997 reauthorization of IDEA focused strong emphasis on least restrictive environment (LRE), which guarantees students with disabilities the right to be educated with their peers to the maximum extent appropriate as determined by the IEP team. Michigan presents a unique perspective as it pertains to LRE in that it is the only state that provides special education services under IDEA to age 26. Hypothetically, a student with disabilities could be involved in postsecondary education under the protection of IDEA in a university setting that typically is under legislative oversight by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 under Section 504. For

most disability categories, this would not pose a major problem because most students with mild disability would receive a diploma at or near the same age as their non-disabled peers. Only students with severe disabilities, including students with intellectual disabilities, tend to stay in the general education secondary public school system well passed the typical age for participation in high school. This creates confusion as to what laws apply when students still operating under an IEP are included in the university environment. Another difference between IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is a strong focus in IDEA on student performance rather than process and procedural compliance. Historically the driving force of early special education legislation was protection for students with severe impairments, and the right to be schooled, not on student academic performance. The special education population grew over the years to include many more categories of disabilities. Students with mild disabilities were capable of achieving higher academic outcomes, but the laws at this time were only focused on access to education, and not on student performance. During the next quarter of a century, the legislative focus began to shift from compliance to student performance. As stated in the 1997 reauthorization of IDEA, special education should become a service rather than a place where students are sent (Gloeckler, 2004).

From the beginning of special education legislation, it was apparent that educational legislation was on two separate, but parallel, tracks, IDEA referred to the special education population and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act dealt with general education students. In 1966 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act was amended to include two parts aimed specifically for students with disabilities by creating the Bureau of Education of the Handicapped and the National Advisory Council for the benefit of students with disabilities.

The “separate but equal” approach to education began to blur with the introduction of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) which emerged as the reauthorization of ESEA in 2001 under the

Bush administration. NCLB took a much broader stance and included special education in it student performance, and adequate yearly progress mandates. All children, regardless of disability, were to be considered general education students with special needs. Special Education students were being included in the accountability standards for a curriculum they were often never taught. NCLB includes special education in all aspects of its accountability system in order to make all schools accountable to the needs of struggling, low performing students and students with disabilities (Yell, Katsiyannas, & Shiner, 2006). A major focus of NCLB was to mandate greater participation by students with disabilities in the general education curricula and hold students and teachers to higher educational expectations (Nagle & Yunker, 2006). NCLB is the first federal law to clearly state that schools should be held accountable for the progress of students with disabilities (Allbritten, Nainzer, & Ziegler, 2004). The responsibility of fulfilling the accountability and assessment mandates of NCLB fall to the IEP team. The responsibilities of IEP teams were expanded under NCLB to include the selection of the state assessment that the special education student would take. Previously, special education students were exempted from state assessments and progress on goals and objectives as stated in their IEP was used to measure student progress.

Statewide assessments are the primary way that NCLB holds schools and teachers accountable for student performance. NCLB allows students with significant cognitive disabilities to take alternate achievement assessments and to be held accountable to alternate standards. NCLB does not define what constitutes a significant cognitive disability, but puts a cap on the number of students who can take an alternate assessment and still be counted in AYP calculations (Yell, et al., 2006).

Another significant piece of legislation that has had important impact on postsecondary education is the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965. HEA was signed into law as part of

Lyndon Johnson's Great Society domestic agenda and ensured access and inclusion in postsecondary education. Title I of this legislation encouraged partnerships between institutions of higher learning and secondary schools serving the disadvantaged and students with disabilities. The HEA legislation has undergone several reauthorizations and was renamed The Higher Education Opportunity Act in 2008 (PL 110-315) and mandated major changes in student loan discharges for disabled people. Previously, to qualify for a discharge, a disabled individual could have no income, which has been changed to parallel eligibility for social security disability insurance, which requires no substantial gainful activity. These changes in the law took effect on July 1, 2010. This legislation permits higher education institutions to admit people who will be dually or concurrently enrolled in the college or university as regular students while still attending their local high school. This amendment allowed for a smoother transition from the high school setting to the college/university environment. Inherent in this act, flexibility is granted to waive Title IV eligibility criteria related to grant ceiling, need analysis, and satisfactory progress in order to make students with intellectual disabilities eligible for Pell grants, federal work study programs and supplemental educational opportunity grant funds. This addressed, in some capacity, the funding issue that posed a major barrier to college attendance by students with intellectual disabilities (Hart, Zafft, & Zimbrich, 2001).

In 1994 the School to Work Opportunities Act was passed that required the inclusion of all students in opportunities to participate in a performance-based education and training program that would increase their opportunities for further education, including education in a 4 year college or university. The purpose of the School to Work Opportunities Act was to motivate all youths, including low-achieving youths, potential student dropouts and students with disabilities to stay in or return to school by providing enriched learning experiences and assistance in obtaining good jobs or continuing their education in a postsecondary setting. The most

significant aspect of this act for students with disabilities is the clear, transparent definition of "all students". The act defines all students to mean both male and female students, disadvantaged student, those with diverse racial and ethnic or cultural backgrounds, and students with disabilities, as well as academically talented students (Paris, 1994). President Clinton signed the School to Work Opportunities Act on May 4, 1994. The act authorized 300 million dollars for fiscal year 1995 and such sums as may be necessary for each of the fiscal years 1996 through 1999. Section 2 of the act pointed out that three fourths of high schools students in the United States enter the workforce without a college degree; and many lack the academic and entry-level occupational skills necessary to succeed in the changing United States workplace.

The Work Investment Act (WIA PL 105-220), passed on August 7, 1998, replaced the Job Training Partnership Act that failed to interest business partners in creating work opportunities for high school age youth. WIA was enacted during the second term of the Clinton administration, and was amended by the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Amendment of 1998 and the Higher Education Amendments of 1998. The Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act was first enacted in 1985 and amended in 1990 and 1998 for the purpose of making the United States more competitive in the world economy. The law is closely aligned with the Education of the Handicapped Act (PL 94-142) in guaranteeing full vocational and educational opportunity for youths with disabilities (Ysseldyke, Algozzine, & Thurlow, 2000). The 1990 and 1998 amendments to the Carl D. Perkins Law required states to ensure equal access to vocational education for youth with disabilities and they dedicated approximately half the available funds for the purpose of serving special populations of individuals, including those with disabilities, educationally and economically disadvantaged, including foster children, those with limited English proficiency, students that participate in programs designed to eliminate gender bias, and individuals in

correctional institutions. The 1990 Act mandated that students with disabilities would have equal access to recruitment, enrollment, and placement activities in the full range of vocational offerings. The term *inclusion* is not used, but the term *full participation* is defined to mean that programs must provide the supplementary and other services necessary for students to succeed in vocational education. The 1998 amendment clearly pointed out that states receiving federal funds under the Act are required to provide assurances of equal access. (Kochhar, West, & Taymans, 2000). On August 12, 2006, President George W. Bush signed into law the reauthorization under the name of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006. The new law included three major areas of revision

- Using the term "career and technical education" instead of "vocational education"
- Maintaining the Tech Prep program as a separate federal funding stream within the legislation
- Maintaining state administrative funding at 5 % of a state's allocation

The new law also included new requirements for "program of study" that linked academic and technical content across secondary and postsecondary education, and strengthened local accountability provisions that ensured continuous program improvement. The current Perkins Act was extended through 2012 (Kochhar et al., 2000).

Another influential piece of legislation for students with disabilities was the Olmstead Decision. On June 22, 1999, the Supreme Court upheld the ADA integration mandate by rejecting the State of Georgia's appeal to enforce institutionalization of individuals with disabilities. The Court affirmed the right of individuals with disabilities to live in their community in a 6 to 3 ruling against the State of Georgia in the case of the State of Georgia v. Olmstead Act under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg delivered the opinion of the court, as "states are required to place persons with mental disabilities

in community settings rather than in institutions when treatment professionals determined that community placement is appropriate and less restrictive." Title II of ADA requires public entities, including public institutions of higher learning, to administer their services, programs and activities in the integrated setting appropriate to the needs of qualified individuals with disabilities. In the decision, the Supreme Court stated that "recognition and unjustified institutional isolation of persons with disabilities is a form of discrimination" reflected in two judgments:

- Institutional placement of people with disabilities who can live in, and benefit from, community settings perpetuates the unwarranted assumptions that persons so isolated are incapable or unworthy of participating in community life.
- Confinement in an institution severely diminishes everyday life activities of individuals, including family relations, social contact, work options, economic independence, educational advancement, and cultural enrichment.

The Olmstead Decision was a major step forward in mandating that the disabled had the right to access all aspects of community life, including the pursuit of postsecondary education, that were available to non-disabled peers. The Court asserted that states must meet their obligations under Title II of ADA and the Olmstead Decision by developing a comprehensive, effective working plan for placing qualified people with disabilities in the less restrictive setting. To support the states in this effort, President George Bush unveiled the New Freedom Initiative to assist states in removing barriers that restricted over 54 million Americans with disabilities from enjoying community freedoms open to all. As part of this Initiative, President Bush enacted *Executive Order 13217 Community-Based Alternatives for Individuals with Disabilities:* which directed six federal agencies, including the Departments of Justice, Health and Human Services, Education, Labor and Housing and Urban Development and the Social Security Administration

to evaluate the programs, statutes and regulations of their respective agencies to determine whether any should be revised or modified to improve the availability of community-based services for qualified individuals and to report their findings to the President, the Departments of Transportation, Veterans Affairs, the Small Business Administration and the Office of Personnel Management. These agencies formed the Interagency Council on Community Living under the leadership of the Health and Human Services Agency (Getzel & Wehman, 2005).

On July 27, 2007, the White House released the 2007 Progress Report on the New Freedom Initiative. Chapter 2 of the report discussed educational advancements for students with disabilities which have been incorporated into the No Child Left Behind legislation and the reauthorization of IDEA of 2004 (PL 108-446). The improvements focused on the inclusion of youth with disabilities in accountability systems under NCLB that ensured that these students would receive more attention and targeted instruction by highly qualified teachers.

The 2007 report drew heavily from the research presented in the July 2002 publication, *A New Era: Revitalizing Special Education for Children and Their Families,* which included input from the U. S. Department of Education, the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education, and the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. The commission stated that if existing federal policies and laws were more effectively implemented, the low rates of individuals with disabilities currently obtaining competitive employment or accessing higher education would dramatically improve. An example of inadequate federal agency coordination that adversely affects improved outcomes for students with disabilities is the ongoing lack of coordination between the U. S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) that is responsible for administration of the adult education sections of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. For example, students with disabilities who drop out of the secondary system, often due to lack of meaningful options available to these students, between

the ages of 16 and 21 years of age are prevented from receiving both adult education services funded under WIA and simultaneous special education support under IDEA (A New Era: Revitalizing Special Education, p. 44). The Commission for the New Era report indicated that students with disabilities were grossly unprepared for adult life upon leaving school as compared to their peers who did not have disabilities (Trupin, Sebesta, Yelin, & LaPlante, 1997). Too many students leave school without any kind of diploma (Office of Special Education Programs, U. S. Department of Education, 1996), and attend postsecondary programs at rates far lower than their nondisabled peers (Getzel, Stodden, & Briel, 2001). Unemployment rates for working age adults with disabilities have hovered at 70% level for the past several decades. When employed, the disabled earn markedly less income than their nondisabled peers (U. S. Census Bureau, 1997). According to the Commission, these statistics, though not new, were unacceptable and reflected a continued failure of the special education system. On July 1, 2002, the report submitted the following recommendations:

- Support Higher Education Faculty, Administration and Auxiliary Service Providers to more effectively provide and help students with disabilities to complete a high quality postsecondary education;
- Support and hold accountable all postsecondary institutions receiving federal funding for using evidence-based programs and practices;
- Fund programs to educate postsecondary education personnel about modification and accommodations for students with disabilities that have proven to increase graduation rates and entry into the work force.

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation of 2001 brought sweeping changes to all aspects of education including special education. NCLB is the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The focus of the new law was to extend the

role of the federal government in education especially in the areas of student achievement and school accountability. The law requires all students to reach proficiency in reading and math by 2014. Mandatory testing to measure proficiency must be performed until 100% proficiency in those subjects is reached (Yell, Katsuyannas, & Shiner, 2006). NCLB insisted upon a complex data collection procedures that measured "response to intervention" (RTI) intervention effectiveness with students qualifying for special education services and put pressure on schools to concentrate curricula heavily on areas dealing with literacy and math (Kozol, 2005). NCLB included special education in all aspects of its accountability system to force schools to address the needs of struggling students and students with IEPs, (Yell, Drasgow, & Lowery, 2005). According to Turnbull (2005), NCLB attempted to align its aim with other civil rights laws affecting education, school reform, and welfare reform. The special education aspects of NCLB aligned with most state and local special education goals since they required greater participation by students with disabilities in the general education curricula and held students and teachers to higher expectations (Nagle & Yunker, 2006). These goals aligned well with the mandates incorporated in the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA. Both laws addressed student progress and proficiency, state assessment and teacher qualification. NCLB marked the first time federal law clearly mandated that schools should be held accountable for the progress of all students, including students with IEPs. Until this time, the education of students with disabilities was addressed specifically in the special education legislation IDEA (Allbutton, Mainzer, & Ziegler, 2004).

To not have the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement of NCLB reflect negatively on school districts, as it pertains to a particular subgroup, (e.g. special education that could not meet the AYP provisions), the Safe Harbor provision was enacted. The Safe Harbor provisions require:

- At least 95% of students enrolled participate in statewide testing including subgroups such as special education.
- All students and all subgroups score at least proficient at the state's AYP targets for that year and have the percentage of students in the subgroup(s) that did not score at least proficient decrease by at least 10% and have students in the subgroup(s) make progress in graduation rate or attendance.
- All students and other subgroups meet AYP targets for graduation and attendance (Yell et al., 2006).

The purpose of the Safe Harbor provision was to assure that districts and local education agencies (LEAs) addressed academically its lowest achieving students, many of whom are special education students. In many districts, the result has had an opposite effect, often causing higher drop-out rates due to pressure exerted by AYP requirements on faculty, curricula among low performing students and students with special needs, thus penalizing the schools from which they dropped out (Grangler, 2008).

Statewide assessments are the primary way that NCLB hold schools accountable for student progress. The law allows students with severe intellectual disabilities to take an alternate achievement assessment and to be held accountable to alternate standards. The law does not define what "severe intellectual disabilities" are, but puts a cap on the number of students who can take the alternate assessment and still be counted in AYP calculations. The number of students above the cap (presently 2% at each grade level) taking the alternate assessment are counted as not meeting minimum proficiency standards (Yell, et al., 2006). NCLB has clearly pointed out that it is the role of the IEP team, which is an IDEA requirement, to fulfill the accountability and assessment mandates of NCLB by deciding how the student will participate

not whether they will participate in state assessments. Before NCLB, an IEP team could use progress on stated goals and objectives as an assessment measurement of student achievement.

NCLB has brought about some very positive effects on special education, primarily by forcing school administrators and general education teachers to acknowledge ownership of the progress of all students, including students with disabilities. Research is divided as to whether the law increased segregation of all low performing students and increases the marginalization of special education students (Kozel, 2005).

The reauthorization of IDEA (2004) included several revisions to the requirements for transition planning designed to improve postsecondary results for students with disabilities. In the hopes of improving consistently poor post-school outcomes, Congress mandated several new requirements for transition planning. The term "transition services" was redefined to focus on activities that should and must lead to improved academic and functional achievement of the student to support movement from the secondary environment to postsecondary activities. The transition plans are based on the student's strengths and interests and involve plausible outcomes for the student and family. The focus of the process was changed to be "results-oriented" as opposed to the earlier requirement for an "outcome-oriented direction. IDEA 2004, established a clear starting point for transition planning. The IEP team must begin exploring transition options no later than the student's 16^{th} birthday and can begin earlier when appropriate. The development of appropriate, measurable postsecondary goals based upon age appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and independent living skills (Hagner, 2002). A statement of the transition services, including courses of study, need to assist the student in reaching these goals must become part of the IEP. A performance summary, indicating progress on postsecondary goals is to be prepared by the school as the student exits the special education system. The requirement assumes that the information in this summary is adequate to

satisfy the disability documentation required under other federal laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The purpose of these changes was to help increase collaboration of transition partners as the student moves from one federal system into another and improve post-school outcomes for all.

Another meaningful change embedded in IDEA 2004, was the mandated collection of post-school outcome data. Previously very little information, if any, was gathered on the status of students once they left the special education system. Thus, it was impossible to determine how well schools were preparing youth with disabilities for success after high school. As a requirement of IDEA 2004, the U. S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) now requires states to find out whether their former special education students have pursued further education or found competitive employment with one year of leaving high school. This information provides families, local school district, state departments of educations and policymakers with a clear indication of how well young people with disabilities are doing in adult life, and how effective the programs leading to graduation have been.

Each state was responsible for creating a State Performance Plan under Part B of IDEA that included 20 indicators, each dealing with a different aspect of the special education process, with the focus of consistent measurement of the effectiveness of that indicator. Indicator 14 dealt with postsecondary outcomes and data was collected on the percent of youth who are no longer in secondary school and had an IEP in effect at the time they left school and were:

- Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school
- Enrolled in higher education or competitively employed within one year of leaving high schools

- Enrolled in higher education or in some other postsecondary education or training program; or competitively employed within one year of leaving high school. (IDEA , 20 USC.1416 (a) (3) (B)

Michigan adopted the OSEP definition for enrollment in higher education, competitive employment, enrolled in other postsecondary education or training and some other employment. The adopted terms are:

Enrolled in higher education is defined as enrollment on a full or part-time basis in a community college (two-year program) or college/university (four or more year program) for at least one complete term at any time in the year since leaving high school.

Competitive employment is defined as work for pay at or above the minimum wage in a setting with others who are nondisabled for a period of 20 hours a week for at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes military employment.

Enrolled in other postsecondary education or training is defined as enrollment on a full or part-time basis for a least one complete term at any time in the year since leaving high school in an education or training program (e.g., Job Corps, adult education, workforce development program, vocational technical school which is less than a two-year program).

Some other employment is defined as work for pay or in a self-employment setting for a period of at least 90 days at any time in the year since leaving high school. This includes working in a family business (e. g., farm, store, fishing, ranching, catering services). IDEA Part B (OMB No: 1820-0624/Expiration Date 02/29/2012).

Michigan data for the State Performance Plan is collected by the Wayne State University Center for Urban Studies who maintains data portals for local and state views of both disproportional representation and parent involvement data. The WSU Center for Urban Studies was asked by the Michigan Department of Education of Special Education and early Intervention

Services to conduct a yearly survey of former Michigan students who received special education services. For the 2009 report, the Center surveyed students who exited schools, local education agencies (LEAs), and public school academies (PSAs) during the 2008 – 2009 school-year. The latest survey was administered during the spring and summer of 2010. The postsecondary outcome data was mandated by federal legislation to assist in determining the effectiveness of the educational system at the national, state and local levels. The overall response rate for Michigan was 31.2% of the 4,065 eligible students who left school during the 2008 – 2009 school year; the state is missing postsecondary outcome information on Indicator 14 of the State Performance Plan for 68.8% (n=2,797) of former Michigan special education students, leaving 1,268 students who responded to the survey, and of those 1,268 students 406 (32%) were not captured by the designated measurement categories. Table 1 presents the Michigan Annual Performance Report for FFY 2009.

Table 1

Michigan Annual Performance Report for FFY 2009

	Category	Number	Percentage
1	Enrolled in higher education within one year of leaving high school	414	32.6
2	Competitively employed within one year of leaving high school	290	22.9
3	Enrolled in some other postsecondary education or training program with one year of leaving high school	98	7.7
4	In some employment with one year of leaving high school	60	4.7
	Categories 1 through 4 - TOTAL	**862**	**68.0**
	Leavers not captured by categories 1 through 4	406	32.0
	TOTAL	1,268	100.0

Source: Modified National Post School Outcomes Center Survey: Part B State Annual Performance Report for FFY 2009, (2009-2010) p. 141.

MDE has projected a slight increase of 3% in each of the four categories for the 2010–2011 data. To support this projected data increase, MDE has suggested the use of following

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources Chart by local school districts, intermediate school districts, and public academies:

Table 2

Improvement Activities/Timelines/Resources Chart

Timelines	Activities	Resources
	Provide Technical Assistance	
2010-2011	1. Use graduation, dropout, secondary transition and postsecondary outcomes data to develop and implement technical assistance and personnel development for district staff to improve postsecondary outcomes	Michigan Transition outcomes Project (MI-TOP), OSE-EIS Program Accountability (PA) unit, Reaching and Teaching Struggling Learners (TTSL), National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (NSTTAC)
2010-2011	2. Provide sustained building- level personnel development using available district/building-level data to improve postsecondary outcomes	MI-TOP, OSE-EIS PA Unit, RTSL, NSTTAC
2010-2011	3. Provide policy and data guidance to support a long-term, outcomes-based approach to student-centered planning	MI-TOP, OSE-EIS PA Unit, RTSL, NSTTAC

Source: Excerpt from Part B State Annual Performance Report for FFY 2009 (2009-2010) OMB No. 1820-0624/ Expiration Date 2/29/2012. p. 143.

Little data has been collected on postsecondary outcomes for students with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities. The study, *Students with Disabilities at Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions-First Look* was published June 11, 2011, as a joint effort of the U. S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, and the Institute of Education Sciences. This purpose of this study, which was requested by the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) in the U.S. Department of Education, was to collect information from postsecondary institutions in the United States on the enrollment of students with disabilities, services and accommodations provided, documentation accepted as verification of a disability, educational and accessibility materials and activities provided and the use of Universal Design for all students. Universal Design is an approach to the design of all products and

environments to be usable by as many people as possible regardless of age, ability, or situation. The data was gathered by use of a survey during the 2009-2010 academic year using the Postsecondary Education Quick Information System (PEQIS). PEQIS is a survey system designed to collect small amounts of issue-oriented data from a nationally representative sample of institutions. The survey represented data from 4,200 2-year and 4-year Title IV eligible degree-granting postsecondary institutions in the United States. The overall response rate to the survey was high with an unweighted response rate from these institutions was 91% and the weighted response rate was 89%. For the purpose of the survey, a disability was defined as a physical or mental condition that causes functional limitations that substantially limit one or more major life activities including mobility, communication (seeing, hearing, speaking), traumatic brain injury, specific learning disabilities ADD or ADHD, autism spectrum disorders, cognitive difficulties or intellectual disability, health impairments and mental illness.

Data from this study indicated that only 41% of the reporting institutions indicated that they had students with cognitive/intellectual disabilities enrolled. This was the lowest percentage shown for any disability area. This is slightly higher than percentages reported in past surveys, but still remains far behind other disability categories for college enrollment.

Impact of Faculty Attitudes toward Students with Disabilities in the Postsecondary Setting

As more students with disabilities successfully complete their elementary and secondary education due to federal mandates such as the reauthorized IDEA amendments of 1997 (P.L. 105-17), the number transiting into higher education has increased steadily (Friedan, 2003). The Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) reported that the number of undergraduate students revealing that they had a disability has tripled over the last 20 years, from 3 to 10% (Wolanin & Steele, 2004). Higher attendance in postsecondary venues, however, does not relate to higher success rates for students with disabilities (Stodden & Conway, 2003). Reports from institutions

of higher learning indicate that of 73% of students with disabilities who enroll in college, only a meager 28% received their diplomas compared to 54% of non-disabled peers (Wolanin & Steele, 2004). To counteract this dismal statistic it would be helpful to determine the barriers that are faced by students with disabilities in the college/university environment.

A multitude of studies has identified faculty attitudes as the key contributor to the success of students with disabilities (Askamit, Morris & Leunberger, 1987; Baggett, 1994; Fichten, 1988; Ibrahim, & Herr, 1982; Katz, Hass, & Bailey, 1988; Matthews, Anderson, & Skolnick, 1987; Minner & Prater, 1984; Roa, 2004; Scott & Gregg, 2000; Vogel, Leyser, Wyland, & Brulle, 1999; Wolanin & Steele, 2004). Ibrahim and Herr (1982) found that as faculty became more familiar with information related to disabilities, their negative stereotyping attitudes began to decrease and their perceptions of people with disabilities started to be more positive. Research conducted by Hartman-Hall and Haaga in 2002 reported that students were more reluctant to seek help once they had a negative experience with the faculty. The inverse held true as well, students who have a positive reaction from faculty the first time they approached them they were more likely to ask for help again in the future. This study, and the work of Farone, Hall & Costello, 1998; Houck, Asselin, Troutman & Arrington, 1992, suggested that faculty attitudes towards students with disabilities played an important role in influencing students' willingness to obtain help early, and avoiding failure or high drop-out rates (Hong & Himmel, 2009).

Results of research conducted by Maria Kraska in 2003 utilizing a questionnaire entitled "*The Survey of Faculty Attitudes Relative to Serving Students with Disabilities,"* was used to collect data from a sample of 106 faculty members concerning their interactions with students with disabilities. Results indicated no statistically significant differences in perceptions existed based on gender, age, and years of teaching; but did find statistically significant differences in perceptions for academic rank and academic unit. Minner and Prater (1984) asked faculty to

respond to a questionnaire focusing on their academic expectations for a student vignette depicting a student with favorable academic and social attributes but who was identified as having a learning disability as compared to non-labeled students with mediocre grades and poor social characteristics. Results of that study indicated that faculty responded more favorably to the non-disabled students, even though they added very little to the over-all climate of the classroom. Minner concluded that university faculty may be susceptible to frequently held stereotypes, which may, in turn, be barriers to student success. These findings are in contrast to the predominantly positive attitudes expressed by student service professionals and faculty in a mail survey conducted by Aksamit et al. (1987). Respondents reported limited knowledge of the nature and needs of students with mild disabilities or of services available. Student service professionals expressed a more positive attitude than did faculty. Evidence of positive faculty responses regarding accommodations that may be needed by students with learning disabilities within the university environment was found in the report by Matthews et al. (1987). Faculty indicated a willingness to make accommodations, such as, extending deadlines for class projects, allowing students to respond orally to essay questions, allowing extra time on tests when needed. Respondents reported more reluctance to permit other accommodations, such as extra-credit assignments, allowing misspellings, grammar, and punctuation errors to go uncorrected, or permitting students to make a substitution for a required course. Similar results were obtained by Nelson, Dodd, & Smith (1990), using an adapted version of the survey employed by Matthews et al. (1987). Faculty acknowledged a willingness for accommodations such as tape-recorded lectures and extra time on test, faculty were less willing to allow alternate assignments that were unavailable to other students, misspelling, incorrect grammar, or tape-recorded assignments. Faculty in the College of Education seemed more willing to make accommodations that faculty from the Colleges of Business or Arts and Sciences.

The purpose of this study is to add information, gathered by use of a survey instrument, to the small, but useful body of data concerning faculty attitudes and perceptions toward students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary educational environments.

As a result of a combination of legislative, academic, political, and social changes, students with a wide array of disabilities, are entering postsecondary education to obtain academic certifications or age appropriate social skills or both (Gibson, 1996). Postsecondary programs are increasing for students with disabilities, and success depends on a multitude of factors (Brinckerhoff, Shaw, & McGuire, 2002; de Fur, Getzel & Trossi, 1996; Getzel, McManus & Briel, 2004.) Since postsecondary institutions of higher learning have no legal obligations under IDEA, students are now responsible for a number of activities that had been provided by secondary schools. In postsecondary settings, students with disabilities are responsible for documentation of their disability, assessment information, advocacy for appropriate programming decision making and transition planning (Brinckerhoff et al., 2002). Many students with disabilities are hesitant to identify themselves for fear of ridicule by fellow classmates (Getzel et al., 2004). Students, in a postsecondary environment, must identify themselves to gain needed services or accommodations. Once students with disabilities enter postsecondary environments they are no longer “entitled to disability-related services and supports, but must meet eligibility requirements through the documentation of a disability (Burgstahler, 2001). Students with disabilities and their family members need to understand the implications of moving from services and supports provided under IDEA to adult coverage under ADA and Section 504. This information dissemination process needs to begin in the secondary environment. Under IDEA, student services and supports are designed to meet specific educational goals created by the IEP team. The accommodations provided in a postsecondary

setting are designed to ensure access to programs and activities available on campus, rather than to ensure academic success (Wehman, 2006).

Most colleges and universities have a specific office to handle requests for accommodations or specialized supports for students with disabilities. On the Wayne State University Campus, the Office of Student Disabilities (SDS) provides these services for students with disabilities on campus, who identify themselves and provide documentation of the impairment. The mission statement of the Students Disability Services Office (SDS) at WSU is:

> Our mission is to ensure a university experience in which individuals with disabilities have equitable access to programs and to empower students to self-advocate in order fulfill their academic goals.

The SDS website contains information on the laws that apply to students enrolled in postsecondary environments, and defines disability classifications according to ADA, as well as a list of accommodations available to students upon request.

For students with mild disabilities (physical impairments or learning disabilities) the standard accommodations, such as longer time for assignments or preferential seating is often sufficient to mitigate the effect of the disability on learning, and assuring the possibility of success. For students with intellectual disabilities, necessary accommodations and services may look very different. Their growth and success is measured in a number of ways, such as increased self-esteem when they begin to see themselves as more similar to, rather than different from their peers without disabilities, or learning to navigate the campus independently, which cannot be accomplished through the introduction of standard accommodations. According to Getzel and Wehman (2005), being part of campus life for these students, by taking classes (whether auditing or for credit) helps students set high expectations for success in adult life. College, in any format, has not been a traditional option for students with intellectual disability.

Most students with intellectual disabilities may not be able to complete the rigor of course work for credit, but by being included they could certainly gain academic knowledge in the content area, and possibly more importantly, gain increased social skills and enhanced self-esteem for life. Of all students with disabilities, those with intellectual disabilities have the poorest post-school outcomes. Until recently the option to attend college, has not been available to post high school students with intellectual disabilities. The usual options for these students, have been limited to segregated life skills or community-based transition programs. Inclusive postsecondary education options are beginning to become a reality for some students and have great potential to improve student outcomes (Hart, Grigal, Sax, Martinez, & Will, 2008).

To ensure clarity for the reader the following definitions are put forward by Hart et al. (2008), as it pertains to postsecondary education:

Postsecondary Education (PSE): Refers to education after the high school level. Options for students with intellectual disabilities include community college, four-year colleges and institutions, vocational-technical colleges and other various forms of adult education.

Intellectual Disability: refers to students with significant learning, cognitive, and other conditions (e.g. mental retardation), whose disability impacts their ability to access course content without a strong system of educational supports and services. These are not students who would access the postsecondary education system in a typical manner: rather, they require significant planning and collaboration to provide them with access. This population typically (though not always) includes students who (a) take the alternative state assessment: (b) exit secondary education with an alternative diploma, or a certificate of attendance, instead of a typical high school diploma; and (c) qualify to receive services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) until age 21 (26 years of age in Michigan).

Funding has been an area of concern when considering postsecondary educational options for students with intellectual disabilities. Traditionally IDEA funds cover the student while enrolled in Kindergarten through grade twelve public school education. Once a student has exited, in whatever fashion, the general education system, typically IDEA funds cease and agency funding, from other legislative options, or family funding become the primary funding sources. Because of lack of published results and diminished federal funding streams federal and local agencies have been hesitant to fund educational programs that do not have clear and transparent exit criteria and proven outcomes. Dual enrollment options have been created to assist transition from high school to postsecondary activities and have had encouraging success. Dual refers to students who are enrolled in postsecondary education and secondary (high school) education simultaneously. Under this arrangement, secondary students use local educational funding to pay for postsecondary educational options (Getzel & Wehman, 2005). Some local school systems have partnered with two and four year public institutions and private colleges to offer dual enrollment options to students with intellectual disabilities age 18 and over, and who are still receiving services from their school system under IDEA. These programs are usually run by the local school agency LEA) personnel and could be typically thought of as a center-based program at an off-site location. Some programs are connected to education or rehabilitation programs at the host institution (college or university) with some supports being provided to students with disabilities by faculty or staff connected to these programs. Very few PSE options include dorm experiences. Often these programs end when the student ages out and is no longer covered by an IEP.

Postsecondary Program Models for Students with Intellectual Disabilities

There are three main types of PSE models; mixed or hybrid, substantially separate, and totally inclusive. Within each model a wide range of supports and services are provided in

flexible formats. Each model is described in the research by Hart, Grigal, Sax, Martinez and Will, 2005:

1. *Mixed/hybrid model***:** Students participate in social activities and/or academic classes with students without disabilities (for audit or credit) and also participate in classes with other students with disabilities (sometimes referred to as a "life Skills" or "transition" classes). This model typically provides students with employment experiences on-or off campus.

2. *Substantially separate model***:** Students participate only in classes with other students with disabilities (sometimes referred to as a "life skills" or "transition" program). Students may have the opportunity to participate in generic social activities on campus and may be offered employment experience, often through a rotation of pre-established employment slots on or off campus.

3. *Inclusive individual support model***:** Students receive individualized services (e.g., educational coaching, tutoring, technology, natural supports) in college courses, certificate programs, and /or degree programs, for audit or credit. The individual student's vision and career goals determine what services the student receives from the institution. There is no program base on campus. These students, like their non-disabled peers, come to campus when they need to or want to be there. The focus is on establishing a student-identified career goal that directs the course of study and employment experiences (e.g., internships, apprenticeships, work-based learning). Built on a collaborative approach via an interagency team (adult service agencies, generic community services, and the college's disability support office), agencies identify a flexible range of services and share costs.

Due to funding ambiguities, few programs exist to serve adults over the age of 21 nationally, and age 26 in Michigan. The major difference between dual enrollment and adult PSE options is that the local educational agency or school district no longer participates in providing student supports or funding. Primarily, the student and their families, with the help of some local and federal agencies have to shoulder the financial burden entirely.

A few research projects and pilot programs for postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities have sustained nationally over the last few decades. A brief summary of three successful programs operating in the United States and one from Canada follows:

LifeLink PSU: The origins of LifeLink lay in the efforts of "the Wild Dream Team," during the 1093-1994 academic school year, a group of mentally challenged special education students who had been exploring the boundaries of self-determination by reviewing the available choices in transition options to create a more independent adult life style were influential in creating this model. LifeLink PSU is an ongoing partnership between the State College Area School District's Department of Special education and the Pennsylvania State University, College of Education. The concept behind LifeLink is a dually funded apartment that functions much like a science or computer lab. Just as a science student would go to a science lab that has specialized equipment, a student needing to learn transition skills goes to LifeLink to learn in an atmosphere that is more realistic and effective for learning life skills. Groups of students requiring transition education identify the skills that they need to work on in a natural environment that is age appropriate for college-age students. Students determine the skills they need to develop set goals, and then schedule the LifeLink Lab, as a "living" classroom. The apartment is made available to students while they are still in high school. The students take turns living in the apartment with a transition coach who lives on site and oversees their stay and aids in the teaching of various life skills. Students begin by residing in the apartment for short periods and lengthening their stays as they adjust to independent living. In this way, they learn transition skills in an environment that is the real world, not a classroom simulation of it. The curriculum at school reflects the needs of the students as determined by their experiences and individual needs. College classroom space is located in the student union building of the university and acts as the hub of the students' activities. Each student's individually designed program is based on goals identified by the student and his IEP team. The college portion of the program supports social development and self-esteem, rather that exposure to rigorous academic curriculum. While students participate in the apartment

experience they also attend college activities that are of interest to them. LifeLink has been extremely successful for both parents and students. The program continues to expand and develop. The Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Bureau of Special Education has helped sponsor LifeLink-2. LifeLink 2.0, started in 1996, is a second apartment that is located a few blocks from the first apartment. The purpose of this apartment is for the students to experience a greater degree of independence. The transition coaches do not live with them but stay in an apartment nearby. This enables the students to make the last step in the transition process to independent living, by allowing them to life on their own with little or no obvious supervision.

Transition Training for Independence Program (TTI): The Transition to Independence or TTI is a Saint Paul Public School community-based transition program for special education students between the ages of 18 to 21 years old who are no longer involved in a traditional high school program and have not fully attained the transition goals in their IEP. During the fall of 1996, the TTI began on the campus of Montgomery College/Rockville as a collaborative effort with Montgomery County Public Schools. The program was designed to support students with developmental disabilities ages 19 to 21 years to successfully transition to adult living. The first class consisted of seven students, presently there is a class on each Montgomery College location. In the fall of 2002, Montgomery County Public Schools expanded its' off-school site programs to meet the needs of students ages 18 to 21 who require intensive community and work support. This program is called Community and Career Connection Program (CCC). The College and Career Connection was a model demonstration project funded from 1998 to 2001, by the department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, and developed by the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI). CCC was designed to assist students with severe intellectual disabilities (e.g., mental retardation and autism) to

choose, gain admission to, and successfully complete an inclusive postsecondary educational experience at their local community colleges. The targeted project population was Massachusetts high school students from 18 to 22 years of age. The CCC model was designed to take into account the unique characteristics of all participants, including their aspirations for the future, family relationships and cultural background. Outcomes identified for the project included having participants gain access to paid and unpaid employment, transportation, participating in community and/or continuing education/ adult education or college classes and being ability to link with outside agencies and providers. Evaluation of the program indicated statistical significance for the following relationships: (Stodden, & Zucker, 2004).

1. Participation in postsecondary education correlated positively with two employment variables, competitive and independent employment.
2. Students who participated in postsecondary education worked more total hours per week in paid employment than their peers without postsecondary education experience and participated in a "part-time school and part-time work" schedule.
3. Students who participated in postsecondary education used more accommodations and more types of accommodations in college than they did in high school.
4. Students who participated in postsecondary education were more likely to receive a high school diploma.
5. Sixteen of the 20 students who participated in postsecondary education chose to continue in college after completing their first class.

Postsecondary Education research Center Project (PERC): The PERC project was a five year (2005 – 2010) model demonstration project that established model demonstration sites in Maryland and Connecticut. The project was funded by the U. S. Department of Education, Office of special Education Programming and facilitated by TransCen, Inc. (a private social

agency). The purpose of the project was to evaluate the efficacy and outcomes of serving students ages 18 to 21 years with intellectual disabilities in two and four year colleges. Each PERC site served as a model replication hub for its state and provided the basis for intensive study of the effectiveness of serving students ages 18 to 21 years with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary institutions. Data was collected on major model components (college courses attendance, employment and self-determination to document student goal achievement and follow up data continued to be collected after the official closure of project, to gauge the impact on long-term student outcomes. The PERC model sites provided technical assistance and training to personnel within each state on the development of services updates for students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary environments.

The PERC project developed from research findings where teachers in 11 public schools systems serving students with significant disabilities ages 18 to 21 years in 13 postsecondary settings were surveyed to collect information on student's access to college courses, employment training, activities in the community and on college campuses, and interagency linkages with adult services. The study concluded, among other things, that access to college courses and extracurricular activities was limited (Neubert, Moon & Grigal, (2001). The program was expanded to 13 sites and ran through 2012.

STEPS Forward Inclusive Postsecondary Education: The STEPS Forward Society was incorporated in 2001 in British Columbia in response to the historical and systemic lack of opportunity for persons with intellectual disabilities to access inclusive postsecondary education, to access meaningful employment, or to participate as citizens in democratic society. The mandate of the STEPS Forward program is to promote inclusive postsecondary education for persons with intellectual disabilities to increase the willingness and capacity of postsecondary institutions to accommodate them by providing appropriate supports for students,

families, faculty, and teaching staff, and to support the establishment and growth of similar initiatives. STEPS Forward began supporting students in 2002, first at the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design and then at the University of British Columbia in September of 2003. Students were expected to spend approximately four to five years at college or university, the typical length of an undergraduate degree, with the support of STEPS. Students normally audit one to four courses per term and engage in extracurricular activities on campus. In January 2004, STEPS Forward created an employment component called Steps Co-op to complement STEPS Campus. Under STEPS Co-op students engage in meaningful paid (i.e., unsubsidized) employment over the summer, consistent with the experiences of their non-disabled peers. Students were able to find employment at the Law Foundation of British Columbia, the Public Trustee and Guardian (bank) and local businesses in the community such as the movie theatre, art gallery, and some local grocery chains. Project research indicated that the combination of inclusive postsecondary education and co-op work experience resulted in a post-graduation employment retention rate of over 70% (Uditsky, Frank, Hart, & Jeffery, (1988)

The evaluation of the effectiveness of the STEPS forward program is on-going. One tool used is the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) that was designed to obtain, on an annual basis, information from a large number of colleges and universities nationwide about student participation in programs and activities provided by institutions for students with a wide range of disabilities, including intellectual disabilities. The survey reflects the use of “good practice” techniques as it pertains to engagement of students with disabilities during their college experience.

Research has indicated that perceptions and attitudes held by faculty members toward students with intellectual disabilities in institutions of higher learning were strong factors in determining the success of postsecondary programs reviewed in this study. Attitudinal barriers

need to be addressed when striving to provide equal access for students with disabilities in higher education. The attitude of faculty may be a significant determinant in the successful completion of educational experiences for students with intellectual disabilities. With that in mind, the purpose of this research was to ascertain the effect of faculty attitudes toward the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in public postsecondary education and to help identify barriers encountered by both faculty and students.

Summary

Chapter II chronicled the creation and evolution of special education for students with disabilities. For students with more severe disabilities the struggle was much more intense. For most students with disabilities, the journey was about where the students would be educated, but for students with intellectual disabilities it was about whether they would be educated at all, or continue to be kept at home or institutionalized. The Massachusetts Supreme Court ruling in Watson v. City of Cambridge (1893) further strengthened the case against mandated education for students with intellectual disabilities by stating that a child "weak in mind, and who could not benefit from instruction, was troublesome to other children and unable to take ordinary, decent, physical care of himself could be expelled from public school." The civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s greatly influenced society's understanding and acceptance of special education for children with special needs. Organizations such as the Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC) and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) came into existence and advocated heavily for more explicit legislation for the disabled which influenced the adoption of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 which was later reauthorized as IDEA. The rehabilitation Act of 1973 (SUBPART B) dealt with the issue of transition to a postsecondary setting for students with disabilities by stating that postsecondary

institutions must make modifications to academic requirements to ensure that they (the institution) do not discriminate against a qualified handicapped student.

Due to the focus of current legislation, more students with disabilities are entering institutions of higher learning. Both two and four year colleges and universities have seen an increase in the enrollment of students with disabilities. However, students with intellectual disabilities are still the least enrolled category of special education on college campuses. Only 41% of colleges and universities indicated that they had students with cognitive/intellectual disabilities enrolled. According to Stodden and Conway (2003), higher enrollment rates do not correlate with success rates for students with disabilities. College records indicate that only approximately 28% of students with disabilities enrolled complete a program or receive a diploma compared to 58% of their non-disabled peers. Research studies have identified faculty attitude as a key factor in determining success of students with disabilities in a postsecondary setting. Ibrahim and Herr (1982) indicated that as faculty became more informed about students with disabilities their negative attitudes diminished and their impressions of students with disabilities improved.

As a result of legislative, social and political changes over the past decades several postsecondary transition models have been created. A growing number of colleges now offer opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities ranging from stand-alone (separate) to mixed or integrated models (Hart, Grigal, Sax, Martinez, & Will, 2006). A stand-alone model is a program located on or near a college campus, where students with disabilities can partake in some social aspects of campus life, but do not attend college classes. Their programming is functional in nature and completely separate from the college academic offerings. This type of program often has a residential component to it where students may stay, with supervision, to learn independent living skills. The integrated model includes some specific courses offered by

the college or university and allows students with intellectual disabilities to take classes with non-disabled peers. A mixed model combines aspects of both program types and usually incorporates some form certification that could lead to gainful employment.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to investigate faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities in public postsecondary educational environments. Faculty attitude was measured by the use of an online survey. Chapter III presents a discussion of the methods and procedures used in the development of the research instrument, sample selection, data gathering, and treatment of the data.

Research Design

A nonexperimental, causal-comparative, descriptive study was used as the framework for this study. Causal-comparative research designs are used to compare groups (cause) on the dependent variable (effect). However, the research lacked the control that is inherent in experimental research (Gay, Mills. & Airasian, 2008). This type of research design is appropriate when the independent variable is not manipulated and no treatment or intervention is provided for the participants. A researcher-developed survey that had both quantitative and qualitative sections was used as the primary data collection tool.

This type of research design is not subject to the same threats to internal and external validity as experimental research designs. However, the researcher must be aware of any uncontrolled extraneous variables that could affect the survey responses when drawing conclusions based on the findings.

Setting for the Study

The university selected for this study was Wayne State University (WSU). WSU is a large, urban, state funded university located in midtown Detroit, Michigan. Participants for this study were faculty members from three social science colleges within the university.

Participants

A total of 825 teaching faculty were selected from the faculty directory listed on the university's publicly available website to participate in an online attitudinal survey. The colleges and departments within these colleges that were selected for this study are listed in Table 3.

Table 3

Colleges and Departments Selected for the Study

College of Education	College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts
Art Education/Art Therapy	Criminal Justice	Art
Bilingual Education	Psychology	Communications
Computer Education	History	Dance
Counseling	English	Music
Curriculum and Instruction	Computer Science	Theatre
Early Children Education	Communication Science and Disorders	
Education Evaluation & Research	Africana and Anthropology	
Education Leadership	Biological Science	
Elementary Education	Classical and Modern Languages Arts	
Exercise and Sport Science Education		
Health Education		
Instructional Technology		
Kinesiology Education		
Mathematics Education		
Multicultural Education		
Reading, Language and Literature Education		
Rehabilitation and Counseling		
School and Community Psychology		
Science Education		
Special Education		
Sport Administration		

Sample Size

G*Power 3.1 (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009) was used to determine the appropriate sample size for the study. Using an effect size of .15, alpha level of .05, and power for .95 for a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with four groups and three independent variables, a sample of 56 participants was needed. A total of 107 responses were

recorded, which increased the power of the analysis to make appropriate decisions on the statistical analyses.

Development of the Research Instrument

An internet-based survey instrument was used as the data collection method for this study. The internet has served as a useful resource for conducting social science research through the distribution of surveys and questionnaires (Granello & Wheaton, 2004; Sax, Gilmartin, Bryant, 2003; Van Selm & Jankowski, 2006). Internet-based surveys are appealing to professionals, such as university faculty, and researchers, because they are experienced in using computers and have incorporated computer use into their professional and private lives. Other advantages of online survey research include convenience in use, low administration costs, flexibility in survey design, quick response rate and the ability to obtain large samples (Couper, Kapteyn, Schonlau, & Winter, 2007). Van Selm and Jankowski (2006) stated that online surveys offer anonymity through the availability of third-party online survey software (e.g., Survey Pro, SurveyMonkey, iResearch, and Zoomerang) and provide participants greater response control in completing the survey in the privacy of their home or office. The internet-based survey programs also simplify data collection for the researcher. Evans and Mathur (2005) reported that the cost of distributing online surveys may be lower than postal mail surveys and programming costs often are off-set by a larger respondent base.

After an intensive review of existing instruments, as noted in the review of literature, it was determined by the researcher that no previously created survey was appropriate for this population. Several surveys dealt with the inclusion of students with disabilities, but many of these surveys dealt with the K-12 population and general education teaching staff. The surveys that dealt with attitudes of university/college faculty toward the inclusion of students with disabilities in their classes, involved students with mild disabilities, usually students with

learning disabilities, where the willingness to accommodate was the main focus. Because so little has been written on the possibility of students with moderate to significant intellectual disabilities participating in the postsecondary educational arena no viable tool dealing with this population was found.

The survey instrument was developed to gather information concerning the specific population of students with intellectual disabilities and faculty attitude and perception. The instrument is titled *A Survey of Faculty Attitudes Pertaining to Inclusion of Students with Intellectual Disabilities in College Courses* and contains 22 questions that are answered using a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from (5) Strongly Agree; (4) Agree; (3) Undecided; (2) Disagree; (1) Strongly Disagree. The format and content of the survey has been influenced by the work of other researchers as previously stated. The completed instrument contained 33 questions that relate to faculty attitudes concerning students with intellectual disabilities and is organized in three sections:

Section one introduced the instrument and informed the survey respondent that the students discussed are not typically found in their classes due to the severity of the intellectual impairment and contained a description and definition of students with intellectual disabilities. Twenty-two items were presented as a means of assessing the attitudes of faculty concerning the presence of persons with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary educational settings. The 22 items were divided into five rationally-derived subscales. Table 4 presents the subscales and associated item numbers.

Table 4

Subscale Items

Subscale	Survey Items
Faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities	8, 17, 21,
Willingness to accommodate students with intellectual disabilities	1, 4, 5, 11, 15, 16, 18
Knowledge and understanding of laws and mandates for adults with disabilities	2, 10, 13, 19
Faculty skill levels and training needs	12, 14, 20, 22
Perceived educational needs of students	3, 6, 7, 9

Section two was a demographic section, which gathered information on faculty gender, age, college where they teach, years of teaching experience at the postsecondary level, teaching status, teaching rank, and education level of students taught. The items on this section of the instrument were answered using a combination of forced-choice or fill-in-the-blank responses.

Section three included four open-ended questions concerning their personal experiences with individuals (students, family, or acquaintances) with intellectual disability for voluntary responses from the participants which were reviewed qualitatively. In addition, an open-ended comment section was available if the participant chose to provide any information not previously addressed on the instrument.

Content Validity

The instrument was reviewed for item clarity and ease of use by seven educational professionals familiar with this population of students and three parents of students with intellectual disabilities who were in postsecondary settings. The instrument was reviewed based on comments and suggestions received from professionals and parents.

Reliability

Reliability is the extent to which the instrument has the ability to measure the constructs accurately. To test for reliability, Cronbach alpha coefficients were used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. The results of these analyses were included in the final dissertation.

Pilot Test

A pilot test was used to determine usability of the instrument in measuring post-secondary faculty perceptions of the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in their classrooms. Faculty from local community colleges was asked to complete the instrument and make comments regarding the comprehensiveness and clarity of the items. They also were asked to indicate the time in minutes required to complete the instrument. Results of the pilot test were used to refine the final version of the survey and adjust the suggested response time.

Data Collection Procedures

Upon approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Wayne State University, the instrument was administered on line to insure accurate and timely implementation. To combat the obstacle of low response rate as indicated in the research of Van Selm and Jankowski (2006) certain online survey techniques, such as, an introductory email explaining the importance of the study and how their participation was relevant to the outcome. Other emails would have been sent in a timely fashion, if response rate was low. Due to an above adequate response rate no reminder emails were necessary. The introductory email was circulated to faculty approximately two days before the survey was released. This email introduced the topic, the purpose of the research and indicated the extent of time required to complete the survey. It also provided instructions to allow the participant to decline participation in the survey. All requests to be removed from the active survey list were honored. Two days after the introductory email was

sent another email followed that provided a formal invitation to a live link to www.surveymonkey.com where the participants were presented with a letter of consent that had to be activated before they could enter the survey site. The survey response period was two weeks. A final email was sent informing all participants that the survey had been taken off-line and thanking those who participated.

Data was gathered from the participants' on-line responses to the survey questions presented through Survey Monkey, an online survey company, and was evaluated through statistical software called IBM-Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The data set was updated each time a participant completes the survey.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this research:

1. To what extent are faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities, influenced by their knowledge and understanding of the laws and legal mandates pertaining to students with disabilities in a postsecondary educational setting?
2. To what extent do faculty self-perceptions of their skill levels and training needs to work with students with intellectual disabilities influence their willingness to include and accommodate these students in their courses?
3. To what extent does faculty feel that students with intellectual disabilities belong in college classes?
4. To what extent is there a difference in faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities among the faculty in the three colleges (College of Education, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts)?

A number of studies over the past two decades have investigated the effects of different variables on faculty willingness to accommodate and include students with disabilities in their courses (Bourke, Strehorn & Silver, 2000; Dodd, Hermanson, Nelson & Fischer, 1990; King & Satcher, 2001). The variables in this study included gender, professional rank, departments where faculty work, years of teaching, age and education level of students taught. Descriptive analysis determined the effect of these independent variables as it pertained to attitude toward students with intellectual disabilities.

Data Analysis

The data from the surveys was analyzed using IBM-SPSS ver. 19.0. The analysis was divided into three sections. The first section used crosstabulations and measures of central tendency and dispersion that created a profile of the participants. The second section used descriptive statistics that provided baseline statistics on the scaled variables. Inferential statistical analyses, including Pearson product moment correlations and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) procedures were used to address the research questions. All decisions on the statistical significance of the findings were made using a criterion alpha level of .05. Table 5 presents the statistical analysis that was used to address each of the research questions.

Table 5

Statistical Analysis

Research Questions	Variables	Statistical Analysis
1. To what extent are faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities influenced by their knowledge and understanding of the laws and legal mandates pertaining to students with disabilities in a postsecondary educational setting?	• Faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities • Knowledge and understanding of laws and mandates for adults with disabilities	Pearson product moment correlations were used to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities and the knowledge and understanding of laws and mandates for adults with disabilities.
2. To what extent do faculty self-perceptions of their skill levels and training needs to work with students with intellectual disabilities influence their willingness to include and accommodate these students in their courses?	• Faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities • Willingness to accommodate students with intellectual disabilities • Faculty skill levels and training needs • Perceived educational needs of students	Pearson product moment correlations were used to determine the strength and direction of the relationships between faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities and the their willingness to accommodate students with intellectual disabilities, faculty skill levels and training needs, and the perceived educational needs of students.
3. To what extent does faculty feel that students with intellectual disabilities belong in college classes?	<u>Dependent Variable</u> • Faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities • Willingness to accommodate students with intellectual disabilities • Faculty skill levels and training needs • Perceived educational needs of students	t-Tests for one sample were used to determine the extent to which faculty attitudes toward the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities belong in college classes. Scores significantly above the mid-point of the scale were indicative of positive attitudes, while scores significantly below the mid-point were reflective of negative attitudes toward the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in their college classes.

Research Questions	Variables	Statistical Analysis
4. To what extent is there a difference in faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities among the faculty in the three colleges (College of Education, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts)?	<u>Dependent Variables</u> • Faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities • Willingness to accommodate students with intellectual disabilities • Knowledge and understanding of laws and mandates for adults with disabilities • Faculty skill levels and training needs • Perceived educational needs of students <u>Independent Variables</u> College • College of Education • College of Liberal Arts and Sciences • College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts	A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to determine if there are differences on the five subscales measuring faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities among faculty at the three colleges. If a statistically significant difference was found on the omnibus F test, the between-subjects effects were examined to determine which of the subscales are contributing to the statistically significant difference. All possible pairwise comparisons were made using Scheffé a posteriori tests to determine which of the colleges are contributing to the statistically significant differences on the individual subscales.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis that was used to provide a description of the sample and address the research questions posed for the study. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section uses descriptive statistics to develop a profile of the participants. The second section uses measures of central tendency and dispersion to provide a description of the scaled variables. Inferential statistical analyses were used in the third section to address the research questions.

The overarching purpose of this study is to examine faculty attitudes regarding the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in their classes and their willingness to accommodate the curricular content to meet the individual needs of the students. This study also will provide data concerning other important aspects of postsecondary transition that can be beneficial for future educational planning for this population.

The survey was conducted on the Internet using Survey Monkey as the data collection medium. Emails were sent to 825 professors with the link to the survey. Of this number, 60 emails were returned because of bad email addresses. A total of 107 professors completed and submitted surveys for a response rate of 14%.

Description of the Sample

The participants completed a short demographic section on the survey. The participants were asked to indicate their gender and age on the survey. Their responses were summarized using frequency distributions. Table 6 presents results of this analysis.

Table 6

Frequency Distributions: Age and Gender of Participants

Age and Gender	Number	Percent
Age		
25 to 35 years	18	17.5
36 to 45 years	18	17.5
46 to 55 years	25	24.2
Over 56 years	42	40.8
Total	103	100.0
Missing 4		
Gender		
Male	44	41.9
Female	61	58.1
Total	105	100.0
Missing 2		

The largest group of participants (n = 42, 40.8%) indicated their ages were over 56 years. Eighteen (17.5%) participants were between 25 and 35 years of age, with another 18 (17.5%) reporting their ages were between 36 and 45 years. Twenty-five (24.2%) participants were between 46 and 55 years. Four participants did not provide a response to this question.

The majority of the participants (n = 61, 58.1%) reported their gender as female, with 44 (41.9%) indicating male as their gender. Two participants did not provide a response to this question.

The participants were asked to indicate the college in which they taught. Their responses were summarized using frequency distributions for presentation in Table 7.

Table 7

Frequency Distributions: College of Participants

College of Participants	Number	Percent
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	56	54.4
College of Education	28	27.2
College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts	19	18.4
Total	103	100.0

Missing 4

The majority of participants (56, 54.4%) indicated they were teaching in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Twenty-eight (27.2%) participants were teaching in the College of Education, with 19 (18.4%) teaching in the College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts. Four participants did not provide a response to this question.

The participants were asked to indicate the number of years they had been teaching at the postsecondary level. Their responses were summarized using frequency distributions for presentation in Table 8.

Table 8

Frequency Distributions: Years of Teaching at the Postsecondary Level

Years of Teaching at the Postsecondary Level	Number	Percent
1 to 5 years	21	20.0
6 to 10 years	27	25.7
11 to 15 years	18	17.1
16 to 20 years	11	10.5
More than 20 years	28	26.7
Total	105	100.0

Missing 2

The largest group of participants (n = 28, 26.7%) reported they had been teaching at the postsecondary level for more than 20 years, with 27 (25.7%) indicating they had been teaching

for 6 to 10 years. Twenty-one (25.7%) participants had been teaching for 1 to 5 years and 18 (17.1%) had been teaching for 11 to 15 years. Eleven (10.5%) participants had been teaching at the postsecondary level for 16 to 20 years. Two participants did not provide a response to this question.

The participants provided their teaching rank on the survey. Their responses were summarized using frequency distributions for presentation in Table 9.

Table 9

Frequency Distributions: Teaching Rank

Teaching Rank	Number	Percent
Professor	9	8.8
Associate Professor	27	26.5
Assistant Professor	19	18.6
Lecturer	12	11.8
Instructor	6	5.9
Adjunct Staff	19	18.6
Graduate Assistant	10	9.8
Total	102	100.0

Missing 5

Nine (8.8%) reported their teaching rank as professor, with 27 (26.5%) indicating their rank as associate professor. Nineteen (18.6%) participants' teaching rank was assistant professor and 12 (11.8%) participants reported their teaching rank was lecturer. Six (5.9%) participants identified their teaching rank as instructor and 19 (18.6%) indicated their teaching rank was adjunct staff. Ten (9.8%) participants reported their teaching rank as graduate assistants. Five participants did not provide a response to this question.

The participants were asked to indicate the educational level of their students. Their responses were summarized using frequency distributions for presentation in Table 10.

Table 10

Frequency Distributions: Educational Level of Students Taught

Educational Level of Students Taught	Number	Percent
Undergraduate	66	63.5
Graduate	13	12.5
Both	25	24.0
Total	104	100.0

Missing 3

The majority of the participants (n = 66, 63.5%) reported they were teaching undergraduate students, with 13 (12.5%) indicating they were teaching graduate students. Twenty-five (24.0%) participants taught both graduate and undergraduate students. Three participants did not provide a response to this question.

The participants were asked to indicate their teaching status, full or part-time. The responses to this question were summarized using frequency distributions. Table 11 present results of this analysis.

Table 11

Frequency Distributions: Teaching Status

Teaching Status	Number	Percent
Full-time	68	64.2
Part-time	38	35.8
Total	106	100.0

Missing 1

The greatest number of participants (n = 68, 64.2%) were teaching full-time, with 38 (35.8%) participants indicating they were teaching part-time. One participant did not provide a response to this question.

Description of the Scaled Variables

The items on the survey were included in five subscales, faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities, willingness to accommodate students with intellectual disabilities, knowledge and understanding of laws and mandates for adults with disabilities, faculty skill levels and training needs, and perceived educational needs of students. The numeric responses to the items on each subscale were summed and divided by the number of items to obtain a mean score. Descriptive statistics, including measures of central tendency and dispersion, were used to summarize the scores on the subscales and provide baseline data on the participants' responses to the attitudinal survey items. Possible scores for the subscales could range from 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating greater agreement with the items on the subscale. Table 12 presents results of this analysis.

Table 12

Description of Scaled Variables

					Range	
Subscale	Number	Mean	SD	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities	107	2.83	.85	3.00	1.00	5.00
Willingness to accommodate students with intellectual disabilities	107	3.14	.68	3.14	1.43	4.57
Knowledge and understanding of laws and mandates for adults with disabilities	107	2.70	.78	2.50	1.00	4.75
Faculty skill levels and training needs	107	3.06	.60	3.00	1.00	4.75
Perceived educational needs of students	107	2.99	.91	3.00	1.00	5.00

The mean score for the subscale measuring faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities was 2.83 (sd = .85), with a median score of 3.00. The actual scores ranged from 1 to 5. Willingness to accommodate students with intellectual disabilities had a mean score

of 3.14 (sd = .68), with a median of 3.14. Actual scores on this subscale ranged from 1.43 to 4.57. The range of mean scores for the subscale measuring knowledge and understanding of laws and mandates for adults with intellectual disabilities was from 1.00 to 4.75, with a median score of 2.50. The mean score for this subscale was 2.70 (sd = .78). The mean score for the subscale measuring faculty skill levels and training needs was 3.06 (sd = .60), with a median score of 3.00. The actual scores on this subscale ranged from 1.00 to 4.75. The subscale, perceived educational needs of students, had a mean score of 2.92 (sd = .91), with a median score of 3.00. The range of actual scores was from 1.00 to 5.00.

Research Questions

Four research questions were developed for this study. Each of the questions was addressed using inferential statistical analyses. All decisions on the statistical significance were made using an alpha level of .05.

Research question 1. To what extent are faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities, influenced by their knowledge and understanding of the laws and legal mandates pertaining to students with disabilities in a postsecondary educational setting?

Pearson product moment correlations were used to determine the extent to which faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities was related to their knowledge and understanding of laws and legal mandates for adults with disabilities. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 13.

Table 13

Pearson Product Moment Correlations – Faculty Attitudes toward Students with Intellectual Disabilities and Knowledge and Understanding of Laws and Legal Mandates for Adults with Disabilities

	n	r	Sig
Faculty Attitudes toward Students with Intellectual Disabilities and Knowledge and Understanding of Laws and Legal Mandates for Adults with Disabilities	107	.49	<.001

The correlation between faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities and knowledge and understanding of laws and legal mandates for adults with disabilities was statistically significant ($r = .49$, $p < .001$). The positive direction of the relationship indicated that respondents with more positive attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities had higher levels of knowledge and understanding of laws and legal mandates for adults with disabilities.

Research question 2. To what extent do faculty self-perceptions of their skill levels and training needs to work with students with intellectual disabilities influence their willingness to include and accommodate these students in their courses?

The relationship between faculty self-perceptions of their skills levels and training needs to work with students with intellectual disabilities and their willingness to include and accommodate these students in their courses were tested using Pearson product moment correlations. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 14.

Table 14

Pearson Product Moment Correlations – Faculty Skill Levels and Training Needs and Willingness to Accommodate Students with Intellectual Disabilities

	n	r	Sig
Faculty Skill Levels and Training Needs and Willingness to Accommodate Students with Intellectual Disabilities	107	.67	<.001

The results of the Pearson product moment correlations test the relationship between faculty skill levels and training needs and willingness to accommodate students with intellectual disabilities was statistically significant ($r = .67$, $p < .001$). The positive relationship between the variables provided support that participants who had higher mean scores for faculty skill levels and training needs increased, tended to have higher scores for willingness to accommodate students with intellectual disabilities also increased.

Research question 3. To what extent does faculty feel that students with intellectual disabilities belong in college classes?

The mean scores for each of the five subscales measuring faculty attitudes pertaining to the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in college courses were compared to the midpoint of the scale using t-tests for one sample. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 15.

Table 15

t-Test for One Sample - Faculty Attitudes Pertaining to the Inclusion of Students with Intellectual Disabilities in College Courses

Subscale	N	M	SD	DF	t-Value	Sig
Faculty Attitudes toward Students with Intellectual Disabilities	107	2.83	.85	106	-2.07	.041
Willingness to Accommodate Students with Intellectual Disabilities	107	3.14	.68	106	2.18	.032
Knowledge and Understanding of Laws and Legal Mandates for Adults with Disabilities	107	2.70	.78	106	-4.04	<.001
Faculty Skill Levels and Training Needs	107	3.06	.60	106	1.01	.315
Perceived Educational Needs of Students with Intellectual Disabilities	107	2.99	.91	106	-.09	.930

When the mean score for faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities ($m = 2.83$, $sd = .85$) was compared to the midpoint of 3, using t-tests for one sample, the result was

statistically significant, t (106) = -2.07, p = .041. This finding indicated that faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities were significantly below the midpoint.

The comparison of the mean score for the subscale, willingness to accommodate students with intellectual disabilities (m = 3.14, sd = .68) with the midpoint of the scale was statistically significant, t (106) = 2.18, p = .032. This finding provided evidence that faculty responding to the scale was somewhat positive regarding their willingness to accommodate students with intellectual disabilities.

When the mean score for the subscale, knowledge and understanding of laws and mandates for adults with disabilities (m = 2.70, sd = .78), was compared with the midpoint of the scale, the result was statistically significant, t (106) = -4.04, p < .001. This result indicated that participants were more likely to have more negative perceptions of their knowledge and understanding of laws and mandates for adults with disabilities.

The mean scores for faculty skill levels and training needs (m = 3.06, sd = .60) were compared with the midpoint using t-tests for one sample. The results were not statistically significant, t (106) = 1.01, p = .315, indicating that the participants were neutral about this subscale.

When the mean score for perceived educational needs of students with intellectual disabilities (m = 2.99, sd = .91) were compared to the midpoint of the scale, the results were not statistically significant, t (106) = -.08, p = .930. This result indicated that faculty members' attitudes regarding educational needs of students with intellectual disabilities were at the neutral point.

The results of this research question provided evidence that the faculty who responded to the study had mixed attitudes pertaining to the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in college courses.

Research question 4. To what extent is there a difference in faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities among the faculty in the three colleges (College of Education, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts)?

The five subscales measuring faculty attitudes toward students with disabilities were used as the dependent variables in a one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). The colleges (College of Education, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts) were used as the independent variables. Table 16 presents results of this analysis.

Table 16

Multivariate Analysis of Variance – Faculty Attitudes Toward Students with Disabilities by College

Hotelling's Trace	F Ratio	DF	Sig	η^2
.48	4.51	10, 188	< .001	.19

The comparison of faculty attitudes toward students with disabilities among the faculty at the three colleges was statistically significant, $F (10, 188) = 4.51$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .19$. The medium effect size of .19 provided evidence that the result had some practical significance in addition to the statistical significance. To determine which of the five subscales measuring faculty attitudes toward students with disabilities was contributing to the statistically significant result, the between subjects effects were examined. Table 17 presents results of this analysis.

Table 17

Between Subjects Effects - Faculty Attitudes Toward Students with Disabilities by College

Variable	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Squares	F Ratio	Sig	η^2
Faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities	7.72	2, 99	3.86	5.83	.004	.11
Willingness to accommodate students with intellectual disabilities	6.23	2, 99	3.12	7.76	.001	.14
Knowledge and understanding of laws and mandates for adults with disabilities	18.98	2, 99	9.49	22.58	<.001	.31
Faculty skills levels and training needs	3.59	2, 99	1.80	5.38	.006	.10
Perceived educational needs of students	8.84	2, 99	4.42	5.86	.004	.11

The results of the between subjects effects comparing each of the five subscales by the college of the participant were statistically significant. The effect sizes for each of the subscales ranged from small for faculty skill levels and training needs (η^2 = .10) to large for knowledge and understanding of laws and mandates for adults with disabilities (η^2 = .31). To determine which of the colleges were contributing to the statistically significant results on the between subjects effects, descriptive statistics were obtained for each of the subscales. Scheffé a posteriori tests were used to compare the three colleges. Table 18 presents results of this analysis.

Table 18

Descriptive Statistics - Faculty Attitudes Toward Students with Disabilities by College

Subscale	Number	Mean	SD
Faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities			
College of Education	28	3.26a,b	.75
College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts	19	2.61a	1.09
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	55	2.66b	.73
Willingness to accommodate students with intellectual disabilities			
College of Education	28	3.52a,b	.57
College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts	19	2.96a	.91
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	55	2.97b	.54
Knowledge and understanding of laws and mandates for adults with disabilities			
College of Education	28	3.41a,b	.68
College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts	19	2.50a	.89
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	55	2.43b	.53
Faculty skills levels and training needs			
College of Education	28	3.35a	.55
College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts	19	3.03	.74
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	55	2.91a	.52
Perceived educational needs of students			
College of Education	28	3.44a,b	.76
College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts	19	2.78a	1.17
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences	55	2.79b	.80

Note: Means in a column sharing subscripts are significantly different from each other. For all measures, higher scores indicate greater agreement with the subscale.

The comparison of faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities provided evidence that instructors in the College of Education (m = 3.26, sd = .75) had significantly higher scores than instructors in the College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts (m = 2.61, sd = 1.09) and instructors in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (m = 2.66, sd = .73). The difference between instructors in the College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts and instructors in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences were not statistically significant different.

The a posteriori tests used to compare mean scores for willingness to accommodate students with intellectual disabilities indicated statistically significant differences between instructors in the College of Education (m = 3.52, sd = .57) and instructors in the College of

Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts (m = 2.96, sd = .91) and instructors in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (m = 2.97, sd = .54). The differences between instructors in the College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences were not significantly different.

Statistically significant differences were found for knowledge and understanding of laws and mandates for adults with disabilities between instructors in the College of Education (m = 3.41, sd = .68) and instructors in the College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts (m = 2.50, sd = .89) and instructors in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (m = 2.43, sd = .53). The mean scores for instructors in the College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences were not significantly different.

When the mean scores for the subscale measuring faculty skill levels and training needs were compared among instructors in the three schools, a statistically significant difference was obtained between the College of Education (m = 3.35, sd = .55) and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (m = 2.91, sd = .52). No statistically significant differences were found between the College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts and either the College of Education or the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

The comparison of the mean scores for the subscale measuring perceived educational needs of students provided statistically significant results between the College of Education (m = 3.44, sd = .76) and the College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts (m = 2.78, sd = 1.17) and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (m = 2.79, sd = .80). The difference between the College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences was not statistically significant.

The findings on the a posteriori analyses provided support that the instructors in the College of Education had substantially higher scores on each of the subscales, with little

differences noted between instructors in the College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Review of Open Ended Questions

Questions 30 to 33 of the survey were open ended questions that allowed participants to express their opinions, in their own words, pertaining to relevant topics discussed in the survey. The response to the open-ended questions was robust indicating that the focus of this study was a topic of interest to many faculty members. Professors, through their candid and thoughtful answers, provided excellent insight into their attitudes and concerns about students with intellectual disabilities participating in college courses. Participant responses were reviewed to identify trends in faculty thinking on specific discussion points and to note any connection to the research questions stated in the study.

Question 30: In your opinion would exposure to a postsecondary educational experience be beneficial for students with disabilities?

In total, 93 out of 107 participants responded to this question, which resulted in an 87 % response rate to this question. This number included 49 from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, 23 from the College of Education, and 17 from Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts. Four participants did not provide their college on the demographic information.

Responses from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to Question 30:

The 49 responses to this question from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences represented 88% of the faculty who responded to the survey from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Thirty-three percent indicated that they felt there was a possible benefit for students with intellectual disabilities to attend classes, but many qualified their answers by stating that only certain introductory level classes would be acceptable. Some indicated concern that the student's possible lack of pre-requisite skills to handle college level material might put him/her

at risk for failure. Sixteen percent indicated they had no basis for response due to lack of exposure or understanding of this population. Twenty percent had very strong responses, indicating that there would be no benefit; citing concerns that students without disabilities were struggling with the content material. Also, some faculty perceived that inclusion of students with moderate intellectual disabilities could lower the standards of a research university and rejected the premise that college was right for everyone. Thirty-one percent wrote that the exposure to a college environment could be beneficial, especially for the development of appropriate social skills with students most likely auditing classes.

Responses from the College of Education to Question 30:

Of the 23 responses to this question represented 82% of survey participants from the College of Education. Twenty-one percent stated that they thought there might possibly be a benefit for students with intellectual disabilities to be included in classes appropriate for their skill level. Faculty indicated that this inclusion could work if the students were able to communicate their needs and concerns to the instructor. Thirteen percent of respondents indicated that a positive postsecondary experience might possibly create a viable career path, thus improving these students' quality of life. Four percent stated he/she had no information on which to formulate a response, with 8% responding that these students would not benefit from inclusion in college classes. Some faculty perceived that students with moderate intellectual disabilities would be at a complete loss in their classes; while others stated that these students "bothered" other students and demanded too much attention from the instructor. Sixty percent of the respondents wrote that they thought that students with intellectual disabilities could, and would, benefit from exposure to postsecondary education experience. Some comments indicated that this type of inclusion had been very successful in other states, but that it would be necessary to pick specific classes that could be adapted easily to the skill levels of these students. Multiple

faculty members pointed out that defined parameters would be needed for the program, with specific, attainable outcomes.

Responses from the College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts to Question 30:

The 17 responses to this open-ended question represented 89% of faculty from the College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts who participated in the survey. Thirty-five percent of the responding faculty thought there might be some possible benefit for students with intellectual disabilities to be included in college classes. Some faculty indicated that it may be necessary to have addition staff due to the hands on nature of many of these classes, and staff would need training in order to work with this population of students. Eighteen percent responded they had no way of determining if these students would be able to learn the skills necessary to perform in their classes (e.g., to learn to play an instrument). Twelve percent indicated they thought there would be no benefit and could lessen the rigor of the university. One individual stated that they doubted that Harvard or Yale would allow students with intellectual disabilities to attend so why should Wayne State University, which also is a research institution. Thirty-five percent perceived it would be beneficial, but most felt it needed to be a specifically designed curriculum geared to their skills and abilities that would support them in their adult life.

The analysis of open-ended question 30 aligned with the findings for Research Question 3 that asked if faculty thought students with intellectual disabilities belonged in college classes. The statistical data provided evidence that the faculty had mixed attitudes concerning the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in college classes. The same attitudinal variance was evident in the comments and concerns shared by staff in answering this question.

In addition, the statistical findings for Research Question 4 that stated that faculty from the College of Education had substantially higher scores on the subscales, indicating a willingness of faculty to accept and accommodate students with disabilities in their classes. This

finding was aligned with an emerging pattern from this open ended question showing a higher percentage of faculty from the College of Education were in agreement that it would be beneficial for students with intellectual disabilities to be exposed to postsecondary educational experiences.

Question 31: Do you feel you are adequately informed about federal legislation pertaining to students with disabilities in postsecondary settings?

This question received the most robust response rate of the open-ended questions and elicited the strongest pattern across all three colleges. Out of 107 total survey respondents, 95 (89%) participants responded to this question. Included in the 95 responses were 50 from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, 24 from the College of Education, and 17 from the College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts. Four participants did not identify their college on the demographic survey.

Responses form the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to Question 31:

The 50 responses to this question represented 89% of participants from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Six percent of the responses indicated they had some knowledge of legislation pertaining to college age students, but were not aware of specific legislation dealing with students with intellectual disabilities. One individual remarked that he/she used to work for a law firm and was aware of educational legislation through that connection, but had not had exposure to legislative issues since coming to Wayne State University. One respondent indicated that he/she had no opinion on the subject. Ten percent responded yes to the question and noted they were knowledgeable of the laws and regulations because they had family members with disabilities. Eighty-two percent stated they had little or no knowledge of legislation pertaining to students with disabilities in postsecondary settings. Some faculty referenced receiving assistance from the Student Disabilities Services office pertaining to testing accommodations for students

with learning disabilities. Several participants noted that they would attend trainings on this issue if the university would provide them.

Responses from the College of Education to Question 31:

The 24 responses from the College of Education represented 85% of all faculty members from the College of Education that responded to the survey. Two percent of respondents indicated that they had some knowledge of present educational legislation (e.g., NCLB and Section 504), but did not know how it applied to students with intellectual disabilities in a college environment. Forty-two percent perceived that they had a good grasp of the essence of the legislation, but stated that, in their opinion, many of their colleagues were not knowledgeable of rules and regulations in effect for students with disabilities. They also responded that no mechanism was in place to inform faculty when changes are made in the laws that could affect their teaching. The largest percentage of respondents (50%) indicated that they were not informed about important legislative issues pertaining to students with disabilities. Several participants indicated that they would welcome a venue, possibly a newsletter, informing faculty members of pertinent issues concerning their students, including legislative changes and updates. Several faculty members indicated that they were unaware of the SDS office on campus and would attend information sessions if provided.

Responses from the College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts to Question 31:

The 17 responses from the College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts represented 89% of participants who responded to this survey from this college. Six percent participant felt that as faculty members at a research institution, he/she should be knowledgeable regarding how this information could be obtained. He/she also indicated that, if needed, mandatory faculty training sessions should be implemented to instruct faculty about these issues.

Twelve percent of the respondents indicated that had a good working understanding of the legislation, however, 82% indicated their understanding of the legislative mandates pertaining to students with disabilities was shallow. Several faculty indicated they had never received any information and welcomed an opportunity to learn more on this topic.

Upon analysis of the comments elicited from this question, some patterns emerged. Eighty-nine percent of all survey respondents answered this question, showing a strong interest in this topic. A majority of participants indicated that they lacked knowledge and understanding of laws and mandates concerning students with disabilities in classes and their responsibilities, as instructors, concerning these students. A high percentage of respondents indicated that training on these issues was needed and they would be willing to attend these training sessions. Many of the comments to this question aligned with the findings for Research Question 3, which asked to what extent did faculty perceive that students with intellectual disabilities belonged in college. Faculty generally had negative perceptions of their exposure to this population and a lack of understanding and knowledge of the legislative issues surrounding students with disabilities. These outcomes supported findings that indicated that faculty from the three colleges had mixed attitudes toward the inclusion of, and accommodations for, students with disabilities.

Question 32: Please share your experiences with individuals with disabilities (mild, moderate or significant) in your personal or professional life.

Of the 107 survey participants, 77 faculty responded to this question, with 5 indicating they had no basis for response, which is a 71% overall response rate. Of the 77 responses to this question, 42 were from the College Liberal Arts and Sciences, 19 were from College of Education, and 13 from the College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts. Three of the respondents to this question did not provide their college on the demographic section of the survey.

Responses from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to Question 32:

The 42 responses to this question represented 78% of the participants from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. A summary of pertinent comments that appear frequently in the answers from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to question 32 follows:

- The SDS office has been a valuable resource in supporting students with disabilities in my classes.
- I have implemented minimal accommodations successful (quiet testing environment and longer time for tests) – mostly for students with learning disabilities
- Students with disabilities (probably cognitive in nature) appear to suffer frustration with the content of my classes
- I don't think we are prepared to meet the needs of these students in our classrooms
- Depends on the level of impairment
- I have worked with these students through the public school system – but not at the university level
- I received little assistance from the university and my other students suffered
- I have family members with disabilities and am familiar with this population. I would be willing to accommodate them in my classes.
- I have had experience with students who I suspected had cognitive issues but never declared it so they were ineligible for services

Responses from the College of Education to Question 32:

The 19 responses to this question represent 68% of participants from the College of Education. A summary of pertinent comments that appeared frequently in the answers from the College of education to question 32 follows:

- I have a family member with disabilities and am familiar with their struggle in school
- I have worked in the special education field for 20 years
- I have done volunteer work with individuals with disabilities – some quite severe
- It's too much if the accommodation causes us to lose the rigor of the content

- At the postsecondary level I have worked with students with other disabilities (ASD and physical disabilities) and have successfully accommodated them
- The students with cognitive disabilities that I have worked with would have great difficulty in classes unless major accommodations were available.
- If students with intellectual disabilities were allowed to audit they might get a lot of meaningful exposure from certain classes

Responses from the College of Fine, Performing and communication Arts to Question 32:

The 13 responses to this question represent 68% of the respondents to the survey from the College of Fine, Performing and Communicating Arts. A summary of pertinent comments that appeared frequently in the answers to question 32 follows:

- I have experience with individuals with disabilities from the fifth grade to postsecondary level
- I have worked with individuals with disabilities in the areas of social, physical, mental and learning disabilities
- I am seeing more and more students with what appears to be autism – that appear to be drawn to theatre
- These students appear to be easily frustrated which diminishes their self-confidence
- I have a disabled son and grandson and have taught students with disabilities
- I have had to slow down the learning process to a slow crawl in order to teach music on the elementary level, due to long and short term memory deficits
- I have a nephew who has Down syndrome and has completed classes at a community college. This boosted his self-esteem greatly
- I have had students with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), attention deficit disorder (ADD), turrets and hearing loss in my classes. Results were mixed and took time away from other students
- I have volunteered for sports programs for the disabled
- I have much family involvement with individuals with disabilities. I don't know if I have enough time to write fully in response to this question

In analyzing this open-ended question, it appeared that faculty who had personal experiences with individuals with disabilities in their lives appeared to be more willing to include and accommodate these students with disabilities in their classrooms. This information aligned with the statistical findings for Research Question 1 that examined the relationship between faculty attitudes toward students with disabilities and their knowledge and understanding of laws and legal mandates pertaining to this population. The statistical data indicated a positive relationship, providing support that when faculty were more knowledgeable about students with disabilities, they were more willing to include them in their classes and make necessary accommodations for these students.

Question 33: Other comments.

The purpose of question 33 was to allow participants to share any comments and/or concerns about their attitudes toward students with disabilities in postsecondary settings not discussed directly in the survey. Thirty seven (34 %) out of 107 participants or responded with comments. Similar comments were generated from participants from all three colleges and resulted in four patterns:

Faculty training needs:

- Many faculty indicated they had never heard of the legislation referenced in the survey
- Faculty felt already overburdened but several indicated a willingness to take university sponsored training to learn about legislation pertaining to students with disabilities in postsecondary settings
- Faculty indicated they would need training to and possibly additional staff to work effectively with students with disabilities
- Overall, faculty seemed willing to attend information sessions concerning students with disabilities if the university provided them

College is not a right:

- Some faculty indicated that they strongly disagree with the premise that all students should go to college.
- Many individuals, with and without disabilities, possess strengths and attributes that may not be developed or enhanced by a college degree
- To accept students with intellectual, emotional, or maturity disabilities is a dishonest way of taking their money
- Are we using funds that could support another student who might contribute greatly to society
- We would be lowering the standards of a research institution
- Other students might resent the time and attention these students require

Certain classes could be appropriate for inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities:

- There needs to be certain prescribed outcome clearly defined for faculty and students in inclusionary situations
- An assessment system would be needed to insure student achievement
- What is required in the way of participation by students auditing classes
- Consider the creation of a modified program that allowed students with intellectual disabilities to participate in college activities in an age appropriate setting, ensuring social growth for the individual, while not lowering the academic standards of the university

Reaction to Survey:

- Two faculty indicated they needed more background information to appropriately respond to survey
- Twelve participants expressed gratitude that this research was done and indicated a need for some type of programming for this student population at the college level.

Summary

The results of the statistical analyses used to describe the sample and address each of the research questions has been presented in this chapter. Conclusions and recommendations based on these findings are included in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

According to prior research, involvement in at least one college course either by audit or for credit can result in improved opportunities for success in adulthood. Without exposure to a college experience that could help them become productive, working adults, individuals with intellectual disabilities have a reduced chance of achieving success in adulthood. Research by de A Moreira, San Juan, Periera, and de Souza (2000) found that the attitudes and perceptions of university faculty are important predictors of student success. Hart, Grigal, Sax, Martinez, and Will (2006) argued that faculty attitudes and low expectations could result in barriers for students with intellectual disabilities. Additional research is needed to understand faculty members' perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities and determine what role institutions of higher learning should play in supporting success for all students.

Chapter II presented a historical overview of special education, from its inception to its current state, from the unique perspective of students with intellectual disabilities. The focus of this study is the effect of faculty attitudes toward students with disabilities and their success in a postsecondary setting and the review of literature delved into the research on this topic to gain information for this study. The chapter concluded with a summary of current models of postsecondary transition programs in two- and four-year colleges and universities.

In Chapter III, the methods that were used to collect and analyze the data for this study were presented. A nonexperimental, causal-comparative, descriptive research design was used as the framework for a researcher developed survey instrument that gathered data that was analyzed through quantitative and qualitative methodology. This chapter included information on the setting for the survey and denoted the requirements necessary to be considered as a survey

participant, and introduced the measurement tools used to collect the data. Data collection methods and analyses were also included. Data were provided by 107 faculty members from the Colleges of Education, Liberal Arts and Sciences, and Fine, Performing and Communication Arts at Wayne State University.

Chapter IV presented the results of the data analysis that provided a description of the sample and addressed the research questions stated in Chapter I of this study. Descriptive statistics were used to develop a profile of the participants. Measures of central tendency and dispersion were used to provide a description of the scaled variables and inferential statistical analyses were used to validate the research questions posed for this study. Statistically significant correlations between faculty attitudes and the premises posed in the research questions were noted and discussed in detail in the conclusions section of Chapter V.

Discussion

Findings from the demographic section of the survey indicated that the largest group of participants was over 56 years old with the second largest group of respondents were between 46 to 55 years of age. The majority of participants reported their gender as female. Twenty-eight faculty members reported that they had been teaching at the postsecondary level for more than 20 years, with the second highest-ranking group having taught at the postsecondary level for 6 to 10 years. Pertaining to teaching rank, associate professor was the largest responding group with the rank of instructor the smallest group.

The first research question examined to what extent faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities are influenced by their knowledge and understanding of laws and legal mandates pertaining to students with disabilities in postsecondary educational settings? Pearson product moment correlations were used to determine a statistically significant correlation in a positive direction between faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities and

knowledge and understanding of laws and legal mandates for adults with disabilities. The positive direction of the relationship indicated that participants of the survey with lower scores for attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities tended to have less understanding of legal issues pertaining to persons with disabilities in postsecondary settings. Further evidence of this positive relationship was shown by participant responses to an open-ended question on the survey where participants were asked to discuss in their own words if they felt they were adequately informed about federal legislation pertaining to students with disabilities. The response to this question indicated that the majority of participants felt they were not adequately informed about federal legislation and were willing to attend information sessions if the university provided them. This pattern was consistent with the research of Greenbaum, Graham, and Scales (1995). Their study noted that many faculty members seemed uninformed about the nature of disability and of their legal responsibilities to their students. Although information concerning students with disabilities and the laws that govern these students is posted on the Wayne State University Student Disability Services Office website, the majority of survey participants were unaware that this information was available to them.

Research question 2 asked to what extent do faculty self-perceptions of their skill levels and training needs to work with students with intellectual disabilities influence their willingness to include and accommodate these students in their courses. The Pearson product moment correlation analysis indicated a statistically significant relationship between faculty's perception of their skills and training and their willingness to accommodate students with intellectual disabilities. Faculty who had been trained to work with students with special needs indicated a greater willingness to accommodate students with disabilities in their courses. One respondent commented that he/she thought that training for faculty to work with students with disabilities would be a wonderful idea. Another respondent wrote that if training was available, it would

have to be mandated for faculty to attend. According to Izzo, Hertzfeld, Simmons-Reed, and Aaron (2001), students with disabilities may face obstacles in postsecondary education including lack of knowledge about effective accommodations. Early research (Bagget, 1994; Fonosch & Schwas, 1981; Moore, Newlon & Nye, 1996) on students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary settings found that attitudes toward these students by faculty, their willingness to provide accommodations, and their ability to adapt curriculum content were barriers that affected student achievement.

Research question 3 asked to what extent faculty felt that students with intellectual belonged in college courses. To analyze this question it was necessary to use t-tests for one sample to compare the mean and standard deviation to the mid-point of 3, (m=2.83, sd= .85). The results indicated that on faculty attitudes toward students with intellectual disabilities was statistically significant, indicating faculty attitudes toward students with disabilities were significantly below the midpoint. Willingness to accommodate students with intellectual disabilities also was significant higher than the midpoint. The results provided evidence that faculty were somewhat positive regarding their willingness to accommodate students with intellectual disabilities. Knowledge and understanding of the laws and legal mandates for adults with disabilities was statistically significant in a negative direction. The results indicated that participants were more likely to have negative perceptions of their knowledge of laws and mandates for adults with disabilities. The results of the t-test for one sample for faculty skill levels and training needs were not statistically significant, indicating participants were neutral about their skill levels and training needs. When the mean score for perceived educational needs of students with intellectual disabilities was compared to the midpoint of the scale, the results were not statistically significant. These findings indicated that faculty attitudes toward the educational needs of students with intellectual disabilities were at the neutral point. The faculty

members' comments on the open-ended questions provided support of their negative attitudes about students with intellectual disabilities. Their comments included that most students lacked the prerequisite skills needed to succeed at the college level, their inclusion might work in introductory classes only, might have difficulty in communicating with the instructor and classmates, significantly impaired students were at a complete loss in class, and significantly impaired students bothered other students and demanded too much attention. Some participants indicated students with intellectual disabilities may benefit from participating in college classes. One participant indicated that inclusion of students with disabilities should be considered on a case-to-case basis.

Several studies have identified faculty attitudes as a major contributor to the success of students with disabilities (Askamit, Morris & Leunberger, 1987; Baggett, 1994; Fichten, 1988; Ibrahim, & Herr, 1982; Katz, Hass, & Bailey, 1988; Matthews, Anderson, & Skolnick, 1987; Minner & Prater, 1984; Roa, 2004; Scott & Gregg, 2000; Vogel, Leyser, Wyland, & Brulle, 1999; Wolanin & Steele, 2004). As faculty became more familiar with information related to students with disabilities, their negative attitudes began to decline and their perceptions of people with disabilities became more positive (Ibrahim & Herr, 1982). Hartman-Hall and Haaga in 2002 reported that students who had negative experiences with faculty were less likely to seek help. However, the inverse was true, with students who had positive interactions with faculty were more likely to seek help in the future. This study, and research by Farone, Hall & Costello, 1998; Houck, Asselin, Troutman & Arrington, 1992, suggested that faculty attitudes regarding students with disabilities had an important role in influencing student willingness to obtain help early, and avoid failure or high drop-out rates (Hong & Himmel, 2009).

Research question 4 addressed if attitudinal differences existed among faculty at the three colleges selected for this study (College of Education, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and

the College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts) toward students with intellectual disabilities. Frequency distributions indicated that the majority of participants were from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, with participants from the College of Education the next largest group. Respondents from the College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts formed the smallest group.

Multivariate analysis of variance was used to compare the mean responses among faculty in the three colleges. A statistically significant difference was obtained on the omnibus F test. Statistically significant differences were found for each of the five subscales on the between subjects effects. Scheffé a posteriori tests were used to determine which of the groups were contributing to the statistically significant results. The College of Education had significantly higher scores than the College of Liberal Arts and Science for all five subscales. Statistically significant differences were found for four of the five subscales between the College of Education and The College of Fine, Performing, and Communication Arts. In each case, the College of Education had the highest scores, indicating faculty in this college had more positive attitudes toward students with disabilities than the other two colleges.

Wayne State University faculty who responded to the open-ended questions section of the survey indicated that they had mixed feelings concerning the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in college course, whether for credit or audit. Faculty who had family members or friends with intellectual disabilities appeared to be strongly in favor of inclusion, while a smaller percentage of respondents felt inclusion could be problematic. In analyzing the responses to the question where faculty were asked if they thought that exposure to a postsecondary educational experience would be beneficial for students with intellectual disabilities the following themes emerged:

- College is not a right: (not all individuals need to attend college to achieve success)

- Reduction of academic standards: (students with lower intellects will negatively affect academic rigor).
- May negatively impact other students in the class: (too much time and attention may be required by faculty to accommodate these students).
- Certain classes may be appropriate for these students: (some curriculum will be too complex for these students).
- Faculty training needs; (some faculty indicated they would need additional staffing and training to meet the educational needs of students with intellectual disabilities participating in their classes).

In comparing attitudes of participants from the three colleges, the significant differences among the respondents were consistent with the results of other attitudinal studies (Bourke, Strehorm, & Silver, 2000; King & Satcher, 2001; Nelson & Fischer, 1990) that compared faculty attitudes across different colleges. The faculty from the College of Education had significantly higher scores on the subscales contained in this research question because much of the core content taught at the College of Education focuses on providing preservice teachers with skills to accommodate learning styles of all students. Special education faculty, who were knowledgeable of the educational needs of students with significant disabilities, as well as participants from the teacher education program from the College of Education were included in the sample. These findings were consistent with research conducted by Nelson, Dodd, & Smith in 1990 that indicated that faculty from colleges of education were more likely to include students with disabilities in their classes and were more willing to accommodate these students in their classes than faculty from other colleges. This finding would appear to be logical as accommodating individual student needs is considered best practice for pre-service teachers during their professional teacher training.

Conclusions

The focus of this study was to examine faculty attitudes toward the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in their courses. The premise of this study is hypothetical since this

is a student population who typically would not be attending college courses at a research-intensive university. Some faculty members who participated in this study had little or no prior exposure to this population on which to base their responses. One implication of this study might be to expand faculty thinking concerning a more diverse student body and to understand how influential they could be in shaping student outcomes. Many participants mentioned in the comment section of the survey that this concept was new thinking for them. Some were completely opposed to the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities and felt it would be a disservice to both the student and the university, others were ambivalent, but open to further exploration, and others were in favor of such an option being offered on campus. Some faculty members mentioned that they were unaware that their attitudes and perceptions were so pivotal to student success.

The study findings indicated that the majority of participants perceived that some type of meaningful planning was needed for this population and should include postsecondary educational options. Not all respondents thought that college course work for credit was appropriate, but a majority of the participants agreed that the college campus was an age appropriate environment for this student population.

Certain implications of this study could be useful to colleges and universities that have students with special needs in attendance. Any postsecondary institution, including Wayne State University, that might be considering creating special programming for students with disabilities, needs to be aware of the important role that faculty attitudes and perceptions regarding these students play in overall student success. A majority of faculty that participated in the study indicated an interest in furthering their knowledge and understanding of the laws and legal mandates concerning this population. Postsecondary institutions need to assume responsibility to

be sure that faculty know how to access this type of information, either through online training or by attending professional development programs

A repetitive pattern that emerged often in this study, both in the review of literature and in the survey findings, was that attitude was greatly influenced by exposure. For example, Wayne State University faculty with experience and exposure to students with disabilities were more willing to include these students in their classes and to make the necessary accommodations and modifications to make the class a meaningful experience for all. Research has shown that as faculty become knowledgeable about students with disabilities, negative attitudes and bias begin to diminish and their perceptions of this population become more accepting, thus allowing them to focus on the student's strengths rather than their weaknesses.

With a greater number of students with disabilities entering the college environment, faculty at the postsecondary institutions need to broaden their knowledge and understanding of students with disabilities. They should begin to contend with the daunting challenge of providing a meaningful college experience for all students.

Limitations of the Study

This study was conducted at a single, urban university and the results may not be relevant to other colleges and universities in similar or differing settings. Faculty from 3 of the 13 colleges were surveyed, and such a small sampling may not be consistent with the attitudinal beliefs and perceptions of faculty from different colleges within the same university.

An Internet survey instrument was used a data collection tool for this study. Surveys have inherent limitations when used as research tools, such as low response rate, privacy issues, and invalid responses due to possible misunderstanding of what is being asked of participants. The validity of responses may also be skewed if participants answer questions in a manner that is

perceived as “politically or socially correct” rather than how they actually feel due to fear of reprisal from the institution, which might adversely affect their employment.

The timing of the survey distribution may have been a limitation. Email links to the survey were sent to the faculty of the three colleges during the spring/summer semester. Many full-time faculty are not available during this semester, limiting the number of potential respondents.

Recommendations for Future Research

The results of this study indicated a need to establish a connection between the K-12 educational system and the postsecondary system to develop a seamless transition process for students with disabilities. Recommendations for future research could include:

- Examine perceptions of local school districts and universities to develop programs for students with special needs who want to continue education beyond high school.
- Replicate this study in a variety of postsecondary educational institutions (e.g., community colleges, private liberal arts, etc.) to determine if the attitudes and perceptions of faculty are consistent with the findings of the present study.
- Creation of a longitudinal research study using the same survey instrument used in this study, to capture to changes in attitudes and perceptions of faculty over time concerning the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in college-level courses.
- Conduct a comparison study to determine if participation in professional development programs pertaining to accommodating students with disabilities by college faculty result in improved attitudes and perceptions regarding the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities.

The higher than expected survey response rate and the robust and thoughtful participation by faculty in the open-ended question section suggested that this topic is of interest to the faculty of Wayne

State University and indicates the need of more research on the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in their classes.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY

Faculty Survey

Exit this survey

Section 1

Answer the following questions by clicking the number that best describes your agreement with the statements. There are no correct answers. The best responses are those that reflect your honest, candid opinions. Your responses are confidential and will be used for doctoral dissertation data collection only. Thank you for your participation.

1. My course content would not be appropriate for students with intellectual disabilities.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

2. According to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation I must accommodate all learning styles of my adult students in their college courses.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

3. It could be a beneficial experience for a student with intellectual disabilities to attend my course.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

4. It is unfair to expect students without disabilities to complete the rigor of the course while students with intellectual disabilities are not held to the same academic standards.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

5. Inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities will create a positive learning environment for all students.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

6. There are many venues where participation by students with intellectual disabilities is appropriate however; the college classroom is not one of them.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

7. By supporting students with intellectual disabilities in class, the other students learning will be enhanced.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

8. Students with intellectual disabilities have not been exposed to adequate background knowledge to be successful in my course.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

9. Non-disabled students will resent the time spent by faculty to assist students with disabilities who may be just auditing the class.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

10. According to the law students with intellectual disabilities are better served in special classrooms.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

11. I am willing to make reasonable accommodations for all students.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

12. I would need additional staff to accommodate for a student with intellectual disabilities in my course.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

13. I am familiar with Section 504 and ADA as it pertains to students with disabilities in post-secondary education settings.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

14. I feel I have the expertise to work with students with intellectual disabilities in my course.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

15. I am aware of the services and resources offered by the Student Disability Services (SDS) office.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

16. It is too difficult to adjust my course syllabus for a student with intellectual disabilities.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

17. A student with intellectual disability would contribute very little to my course.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

18. Accommodating students with intellectual disabilities goes beyond "making reasonable accommodations," which is what I'm required by law to do.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

19. I have not been trained to work with students with intellectual disabilities.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

20. I work with students with learning disabilities (LD) but feel students with intellectual disabilities would pose too great a challenge.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

21. I am able to obtain needed resources from WSU to support students with any disability.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

22. I would attend professional development for faculty that would assist us in working with students with disabilities.

Strongly agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly disagree

Next

Faculty Survey

Exit this survey

Demographic Information

23. Gender

male

female

24. Age

25-35 years old

36-45 years old

46-55 years old

56+ years old

25. I teach at:

College of Education

College of Fine, Performing and Communication Arts

College of Library and Information Science

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Department

26. Years of teaching at the postsecondary level:

1-5 years

6-10 years

11-15 years

16-20 years

20+

27. Teaching Status:

Full time

Part time

Tenure

Tenure track

Non-tenure

28. Teaching Rank:

Adjunct staff

Lecturer

Instructor

Graduate Assistant

Professor

Assistant Professor

Associate Professor

Other (please specify)

29. Education Level of Student Taught:

Undergraduate

Graduate

Both

30. In your opinion, would exposure to a postsecondary educational experience be beneficial for students with intellectual disabilities?

31. Do you feel you are adequately informed about federal legislation pertaining to students with disabilities in post-secondary settings?

32. Please share your experiences with individuals with disabilities, (mild, moderate or significant) in your personal or professional life.

33. Other comments:

Prev Done

APPENDIX B

INTRODUCTORY EMAIL TO FACULTY

DATE: June 11, 2012
TO: WSU Faculty Colleagues
RE: Faculty Survey
FROM: Diane Fekete
Doctoral student,
College of Education
WSU

My name is Diane Fekete, I am a doctoral student and adjunct staff in the College of Education and **I need your help**. To gain data for my dissertation, selected WSU faculty are being asked to participate in a short online survey to gain insight into faculty attitudes and perceptions concerning the inclusion of students with intellectual disability in college courses. Individuals with intellectual disabilities are not the typical students entering college and would require additional supports from the institution of higher learning and faculty to function in a meaningful way in a classroom setting. The focus of this study are students with moderate intellectual disabilities with an approximate I.Q. range of 55 to 70 who can independently travel around campus, have some computer skills and are emergent readers. Typically these students audit, rather than, enroll in classes.

If you take part in the study, you will be asked to take a one-time, anonymous survey that should take no longer than 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Your responses will be used only for my doctoral research and will be completely confidential. This is a hypothetical situation and my purpose is to see if responses from WSU faculty correlate with other attitudinal survey information collected from other institutions of higher learning nationally.
As a participant in this study there are no direct benefits for you, including any form of compensation, also there are no known risks or cost associated with your participation. All information collected in this study will be kept without identifiers, thus ensuring confidentiality of participants.
You will be receiving an email in two days from me with FACULTY SURVEY in the subject line. This is the invitation to participate in the survey. By clicking on the link to the survey you will agree to be a participant and you will be directed to the survey instrument.
I know how easy it is to ignore a survey invitation but many of you have been in my position, so **please** take a few minutes out of your very busy day to help me complete this work. I want to thank you in advance for your participation and I look forward to the survey results. If you have any questions please email me at an8259@wayne.edu.

Thanks, Diane

APPENDIX C

FOLLOW-UP EMAIL

A Survey of Faculty Attitudes Pertaining to the Inclusion of Students with Intellectual Disabilities in College Courses:

INTRODUCTION:

As Wayne State University teaching facility you have been selected as a survey participant to gather research for a doctoral dissertation study. My name is Diane Fekete and I am completing my work for a Ph.D. in special education. The following survey was created to gather information on faculty attitudes and perceptions on having students with intellectual disabilities in their courses.

Individuals with intellectual disabilities are not the typical students entering college to participate in a meaningful postsecondary experience. However research has indicated that individuals with disabilities who are exposed to age appropriate activities with non-disabled peers experience positive post school outcomes in adult life. By definition the term intellectual disabilities has replaced terms such as mental retardation, and cognitive impairment and is defined by the IDEA Act "as a significantly sub-average general intellectual functioning, existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and is manifested during the developmental period, and adversely affects a child's educational performance". The I.Q. range can vary from 25 for severely intellectually impaired to 75 for mild intellectual impairment. The focus of this study are students with moderate intellectual impairment with an approximate I.Q. range of 55 to 70, who can independently travel around campus, have beginning computer skills and are emergent readers. These students typically audit classes, rather than enroll as a student and may require additional support by instructor and classmates.

The survey should take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete and no further involvement is required. As a participant there may be no direct benefit for you, however, information gained from this study may benefit others now or in the future. There are no known risks, costs, or financial gain for you as a participant. The survey results will be confidential and are to be used for dissertation research only. Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw from the survey at any time. By clicking the link below you are agreeing to participate in the survey. Thank you for your assistance

Insert survey link.

APPENDIX D

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

IRB Administration Office
87 East Canfield, Second Floor
Detroit, Michigan 48201
Phone: (313) 577-1628
FAX: (313) 993-7122
http://irb.wayne.edu

CONCURRENCE OF EXEMPTION

To: Diane Fekete
Deans Office CLL Ext & Summer Sess

From: Dr. Scott Mills
Chairperson, Behavioral Institutional Review Board (IB)

Date: February 28, 2012

RE: IRB #: 017912233X

Protocol Title: Faculty Attitudes Toward Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Postsecondary Educational Settings

Sponsor:

Protocol #: 1202010561

The above-referenced protocol has been reviewed and found to qualify for **Exemption** according to paragraph #2 of the Department of Health and Human Services Code of Federal Regulations [45 CFR 46.101(b)].

- Revised Protocol Summary Form (received in the IRB Office 02/21/2012)
- Protocol (received in the IRB Office 01/25/2012)
- The request for a waiver of the requirement for written documentation of informed consent has been granted according to 45 CFR 46.117(1)(2). Justification for this request has been provided by the PI in the Protocol Summary Form. The waiver satisfies the following criteria: (i) The only record linking the participant and the research would be the consent document, (ii) the principal risk would be potential harm resulting from a breach of confidentiality, (iii) each participant will be asked whether he or she wants documentation linking the participant with the research, and the participant's wishes will govern, (iv) the consent process is appropriate, (v) when used requested by the participants consent documentation will be appropriate. (vi) the research is not subject to FDA regulations, and (vii) an information sheet disclosing the required and appropriate additional elements of consent disclosure will be provided to participants not requesting documentation of consent
- Research Information Sheet (dated 01/24/2012)
- Data collection tools: Survey

This proposal has not been evaluated for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human subjects in relation to the potential benefits.

- Exempt protocols do not require annual review by the IRB.
- All changes or amendments to the above-referenced protocol require review and approval by the IRB **BEFORE** implementation.
- Adverse Reactions/Unexpected Events (AR/UE) must be submitted on the appropriate form within the timeframe specified in the IRB Administration Office Policy (http://irb.wayne.edu/policies-human-research.php).

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ABSTRACT

FACULTY ATTITUDES TOWARD STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

by

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August 2013

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Research has indicated that participation in some aspect of postsecondary education, for either credit or audit, could improve a disabled individual's changes for success in adult life. Research also has shown that faculty attitudes toward, and perceptions of students with disabilities play an important role in student success. The purpose of this study was to examine faculty attitudes toward the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in college classes and willingness by faculty to accommodate the course content to meet individual student needs.

An internet survey instrument was developed to gather information concerning students with intellectual disabilities and faculty attitude and perception toward these students in the college environment. The survey was also designed by the researcher to determine if attitudinal differences or trends existed among faculty from three different colleges within the university. The survey was completed by 107 faculty. Overall, statistical significance was observed when analyzing the research questions as they pertained to faculty attitude and perception concerning this unique population. The findings indicated that faculty generally were open to consider the possibility of having students with intellectual disabilities included in their classes. The significance of the study was that it contributed information to a small, but growing, body of

research pertaining to the importance of faculty attitudes as a predictor of student success. Future research is needed to expand the study to other post-secondary institutions.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

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Education:

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