

# **The Big Shift: Student Experiences with Virtual Transition and Disability Services Offices during the COVID-19 Pandemic**

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# Sarah Young, Ed.D. About Me

Doctorate in Higher Education Administration from GWU

Experience working in student/academic affairs (disability services, career services, dean of students, provost); experience lecturing English composition and literature in traditional, online, and hybrid modalities.

Research interests include disability studies; experiences of students with disabilities and DS providers in higher ed. Also, pedagogical practices/approaches to english learning; faculty experiences; women in academia.

Personal: engaged to be married this December (COVID bride from last year!); two dogs (Ziggy the Frenchton and Yoshi the Shiba Inu); loves brunch and wine; hobbies include reading and avoiding cicadas!



# Presentation Objectives

- To learn about barriers faced by students with disabilities during the spring 2020 semester and their interaction with disability service offices (DSOs)
- To engage in collaborative discussion to determine any universality among barriers students faced and experiences of DSOs
- To consider recommendations for future research, practice, and/or policy

# Introduction & Background

- COVID- 19 Pandemic in Spring 2020
- Online Learning and Students with Disabilities
- Barriers to Success

# Purpose of the Study

- To investigate student experiences
- To investigate the role of disability services
- To reflect on disability services involvement
- To provide recommendations for future

# Methods & Framework

- General Qualitative Approach
  - Interviews
  - Coding
  - Data analysis
- Tinto's student departure theory

# Participants

- 4- year private postsecondary institution in Mid- Atlantic region
- 10 student participants registered with disability service office during Spring 2020 semester

# Findings

- Barriers
- Positive Experiences
- Long-term or future virtual outlook



# Think/Pair/Share

- Did students with disabilities at your institution experience these same barriers?
- Were there others for students with different disabilities (not represented in this study)?
- What were some of the same and/or different issues faced?

# Engagement with Disability Services Office

- Positive Experiences
- Negative Experiences
- Communication
- Support and Outlook

## Think/Pair/Share

- Did students engage with your DSO during spring 2020?
- What changed in your service, if anything?
- How was communication impacted?

# Significance and Moving Forward

- Institutional Preparedness and Communication
- Formatting and Faculty
- DSO Advocacy
- Kindness and Empathy

**Questions or  
Comments?**

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**References  
Available Upon  
Request**

