Triangulating disability staff, faculty and student perceptions of disability services

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Research Questions and Answers

- Q: What are different stakeholders' perceptions of DSC?
  - Q: How are perceptions triangulated to make DSC improvements?
  - A: Each group had unique perceptions, and subsets within each group had differing experiences.
  - A: Common recommendations: greater access, more and more effective communication, greater sense of caring, more specific directions and training, more support resources, and more wrap-around services.
  - Action: establishing a faculty-student-staff liaison committee and providing more training and resources for the community.

Background and Need

- California State University Long Beach
- Bob Murphy Access Center
- 700-2000 students with disabilities
- Manual record-keeping >> AIM/MyBMAC
- New BMAC director and associate director
- Data analytics partners

Goal: Improve BMAC Services
Research Questions

- What are the perceptions about BMAC by college students with disabilities who received disability services?
- What are the perceptions about BMAC by faculty who were asked by DSC to provide accommodations?
- What are the perceptions about BMAC by the disability services staff?
- How do those perceptions differ within and across groups?

Literature Review: Students’ perceptions

- lack of communication,
- faculty attitudes,
- advisor mismatch,
- college stress,
- support service quality,
- lack of access,
- social challenges

Literature Review: Faculty Perceptions

- uneven knowledge/attitudes/experience with support services and accommodations, especially for “invisible” disabilities
Literature Review: Staff Perceptions

- in-house differs from public view,
- interaction valued more than documentation,
- uneven reviews,
- changing environment valued more than changing staff,
- limited inclusive education

Literature Review: Common Needs

- training for knowledge and skills,
- more resources,
- more time to implement accommodations,
- social development,
- inclusive campus climate,
- effective communication and collaboration across stakeholders

Methodology

Develop and administer perception surveys via Qualtrics to

- 22 (20) BMAC staff
- 700 (140) students receiving BMAC services,
- 2200 (400) faculty receiving BMAC services

Apply statistical tests: descriptive statistics, cross-tabs, correlation analysis, content analysis, triangulation
Student Wants

- BMAC recommended mainly by one timers and regulars (regardless of year)
- Regulars more interested in guest speakers, faculty and industry mentors
- Dissatisfied students wanted peer mentoring more
- Want more personal connections, regular check-ins, and mental health advising
- Want more referrals and resources
- Want more guidance on talking with faculty about accommodations

Faculty Wants

- Uneven awareness and comfort about BMAC and accommodations (not by faculty status, but older are better)
- Rating of campus differed by age (younger rated lower), disability experience (lower) and by college (business higher)
- Lecturers learn about accommodations outside campus
- Main accommodations: testing, lecture recording, excused absences, note-taking
- Most challenge aspect: behavior, sensory modifications
- Want training most on tech use, dealing with behavior, UDL, policies/procedures
- Big wants: better/more communication and services

Staff Findings

- Main tasks: intake-related, accommodations, explaining
- Main skills used: communication, people skills
- Ways to increase job satisfaction: time allocation, campus relations, going F2F, faster tech response time
- Ways to lower job stress: more staff and support, clearer expectations for all, improve traffic flow and signs, provide more information to students/faculty
- Why job joy: helping, campus environment, staff peers, BMAC mission
- Why job non-joy: angry people, pandemic, clerical tasks, workplace politics, feel unsure
Staff Wants

- WANTS: Communication, outreach, student support, tech issues, more staff and money
- Wants of students: communicate, plan ahead, be patient
- Wants of faculty: communicate, relate to students, know laws, be timely and consistent

Mutual/Triangulated Recommendations

- Provide greater access (longer operating hours, continue online help)
- Provide more and more effective communication
- Demonstrate a greater sense of caring
- Give more specific directions and training
- Provide more support resources
- Provide more wrap-around services

Action Plans

- Establish a faculty-student-staff liaison committee
- Provide more training and resources for faculty, staff, students
- Retrain and monitor staff MyBNAC input and use
- Develop a peer mentoring program
- Strengthen ties with other on-campus student support offices
- Strengthen ties among CSU access centers
Lessons Learned

- Get leadership trust and support
- Get staff trust and ownership
- Make it easy for staff
- Communicate regularly
- Tech: the devil is in the details
- DATA OUTPUT IS ONLY AS GOOD AS DATA INPUT
- REALLY TRY TO GET HIGH RESPONSE RATES
- Prioritize strategically
- Support staff but don't push them
- EVERYTHING TAKES TIME

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