**INTRODUCTION**

**Purpose:** Understand the lived experience of students on campus as it relates to perceptions of inclusivity and accessibility

**Research Question:** What are the differences in the lived experiences of campus accessibility and inclusivity among students with disabilities and without?

**Research Aims:** Empower and educate students & highlight need for intentional inclusivity of students with disabilities on campus

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**METHODS**

**Qualitative Survey**
- Online qualitative survey
- 10 question online survey with multiple choice responses (Likert scale) & open-ended questions
- Anonymous survey using google forms
- Open-ended questions thematically coded
- Multiple choice survey questions generated frequency statistics via excel

**Participants**
- 110 graduate & undergraduate students at Western New England University
- 44 students identified with a disability

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**FINDINGS**

**THE PROCESS OF GETTING ACCOMMODATIONS**

- Lack of knowledge and understanding of campus accessibility
- Inconsistent implementation of both learning and physical accommodations across campus and classrooms
- Situations that require self-advocacy cause students with disabilities stress, fear, & anxiety

**SELF ADVOCATING FOR MY RIGHTS AS A STUDENT**

- Getting accommodations since coming to WNE for graduate school has been extremely stressful. I think that this should be a uniform process...and it is not
- I am unsure of how physically accessible campus is, because I do not have a disability. It's not something I'm consistently noticing

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**DISCUSSION**

- On average, students with disabilities rated campus inclusivity & accessibility lower than students without disabilities
- One contributing factor noted includes the lack of knowledge and understanding of campus accessibility
- Inconsistent implementation of both learning and physical accommodations across campus and classrooms contribute to stress
- 75% of students with disabilities rated the process of obtaining accommodations mildly to extremely stressful
- Situations that require students to self-advocate on campus can cause stress
  - 82% of students with disabilities rated self-advocating for their rights as a student mildly to extremely stressful
  - 84% of students with disabilities rated talking to classroom faculty about their accommodation needs as mildly to extremely stressful
- Limitations:
  - Small sample size
  - Self-reported data may have bias such as telescoping, selective memory, attribution, & exaggeration

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**IMPLICATIONS**

- Utilize data to identify gaps in accessibility for students
- Assess campus wide implementation of both learning and physical accommodations
- Compare the experiences of acquiring accommodations for students with visible vs invisible disabilities
- Evaluate possible differences in accommodations for graduate vs undergraduate students
- Deeper investigation into stressors for students with disabilities
- Further inquiry into factors families and students perceive as needing clarity on the process & qualification requirements for accommodations
- Assessment of universal design and ADA compliance

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**REFERENCES**

- Please scan the QR Code to view our references