The Investigation of Strategies for Beginning College Students with Disabilities for the Successful College Experience

Kate Jones

Indiana University - Purdue University Fort Wayne
The Investigation of Strategies for Beginning College Students with Disabilities for the Successful College Experience

Kate Jones
Special Education

College students with disabilities need strategies to help them be successful. Studies show that college students with disabilities struggle academically. Starting college can be frustrating for anyone regardless of whether or not they have a disability but for students with disabilities they have an even harder journey. This special project is a handbook with strategies for beginning college students with disabilities for the successful college experience. In order to create this handbook, an extensive literature review was conducted and research was done through a qualitative and quantitative survey. The purpose of this survey was to determine what college students with disabilities know about strategies and information that will assist them as they strive to have a successful college experience.

Abstract

College students with disabilities need strategies to help them be successful. Studies show that college students with disabilities struggle academically. Starting college can be frustrating for anyone regardless of whether or not they have a disability but for students with disabilities they have an even harder journey. This special project is a handbook with strategies for beginning college students with disabilities for the successful college experience. In order to create this handbook, an extensive literature review was conducted and research was done through a qualitative and quantitative survey. The purpose of this survey was to determine what college students with disabilities know about strategies and information that will assist them as they strive to have a successful college experience.

Methods

Previous studies: indicate that college students with disabilities lack knowledge and understanding on the following:
1. Self-advocacy
2. Self-determination
3. Laws related to college students with disabilities
4. Campus and Community Resources

Research Approach:
• Survey sent out by the Director of Services for Students with Disabilities
• Survey completed through surveymonkey.com
• 31 students participated in the survey
• There was 23 questions, in which 12 were likert scale and 11 were open-ended questions

Results

56.7% have weak understanding
38% don’t speak out about legal rights
60% understand their disability
47% have good self-esteem
33% understand academic strategies
27% understand self-advocacy
32% are comfortable talking to professors
76% do not know about community resources
36% seek out resources when they struggle

Self-advocacy
1. being able to be an activist for oneself in order to be successful in different aspects of life
2. Facts about Self-advocacy
3. Misconceptions about Self-advocacy
4. Types of Self-advocacy
5. Self-advocacy assessment

Self-determination
1. knowing how to get accommodations and use them, managing one’s own life, and basically being determined to succeed
2. Facts about Self-determination
3. Self-determination chart

Laws
1. High School vs. College Chart
2. ADA
3. Section 504
4. IDEA
5. College students with disabilities rights

Campus and Community Resources
1. List and description of resources

Importance of this research

Unfortunately, 25% of college students with disabilities won’t make it past freshman year and 51% won’t make it past their junior year (Mamiseishvili and Koch, 2012). Research shows that transitioning from high school to college can be difficult and my research proved that a majority of students do not know how to self-advocate before beginning college. There is a limited amount of research on this issue and so research such as mine is very important, especially so that more students with disabilities are not just enrolling in college but graduating too.

References And Acknowledgements

1. I would first like to thank God. I would also like to thank my family for their support and encouragement.
2. I would like to thank Dr. Cho for her assistance throughout this special project.