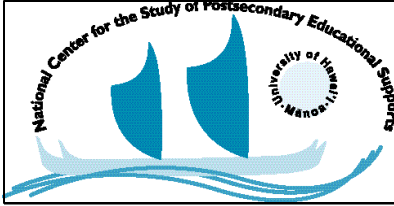


Implications Brief #4

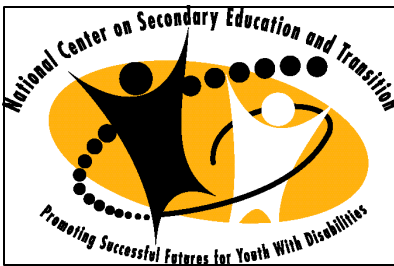
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National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Educational Supports (NCSPEs)

University of Hawai'i at Manoa



Issue Area: Workplace and Postsecondary Supports;
Study 4



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Summary of the Issue:

Despite an increase in the number of postsecondary students reporting a disability, the enrollment of people with disabilities is still 50% lower than the general population. This gap in educational attainment affects the long-term employment prospects of people with disabilities. The Rehabilitation Research Training Center (Virginia Commonwealth University) focused on the facilitation of four Participatory Action Teams (PAT) concentrating on documentation guidelines, cooperative agreements, data collection and evaluation, and information technology access.

Study Questions/Method:

- What are factors affecting the enrollment of people with disabilities in postsecondary institutions?
- What are identified barriers faced by students with disabilities within the postsecondary education setting?
- What are improvements that can be implemented within institutions regarding documentation guidelines, interagency agreements, data collection and evaluation, and the Information Technology Access Act?

Findings:

- The Virginia Commonwealth University Higher Education Workgroup (PAT) has 30 members and meets quarterly.

- The Documentation Guidelines PAT has completed a draft of guidelines for documentation of a disability that will incorporate best practices and provide clear standards for service providers.
- After determining financial costs for accommodations and reviewing inequities in distribution of funds, a draft agreement was developed by the Interagency Agreements PAT.
- The Data Collection PAT is working on disseminating a statewide satisfaction survey of students with disabilities in higher education to be compared to a similar survey conducted 10 years ago.
- The Information Technology Access Act PAT has focused on broadening the scope of the state law to include persons with all disabilities, clarifying how the law impacts higher education, identifying accountability procedures, and determining what information universities need to comply with this law.

Implications by Audience:

- Need to address issues of how students with disabilities will self-advocate for requests in postsecondary institutions.
- Need for students with disabilities to identify accommodations necessary for education in postsecondary institutions.
- Need to identify postsecondary institutions that have clear documentation guidelines of disabilities to ensure that students with disabilities will receive proper services and aid.
- Need to focus on postsecondary institutions with comprehensive career planning for students with disabilities.
- Need to coordinate services and supports in postsecondary institutions necessary for the success of students with disabilities.

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