Implications Brief #6
(MS#021c(7)-H01)
National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Educational Supports (NCSPES)
University of Hawai‘i at Manoa

Issue Area: Assistive Technology Supports; Study 6

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Summary of the Issue:

There is very little known regarding current practice concerning the provision of educational supports to students with disabilities at the postsecondary level. A national survey was conducted which provides crucial information for researchers seeking to ascertain the current status of educational supports in postsecondary programs. The survey and the sub-analyses have provided a comprehensive baseline of data to address issues concerning educational support provision.

Study Questions/Method:

- What is the availability and use of technology for students with disabilities (SWDs) across the nation? Several questions were asked in order to gain a baseline for Assistive Technology (AT) supports availability.

A national survey instrument was developed and distributed to a national sample more than 1500 disability support coordinators (DSC). More than 650 respondents completed the survey providing a profile of characteristics. The
respondents within the sample were profiled as follows: 422 were from public schools vs. 193 from private schools; 246 were from two-year or less than two-year schools vs. 369 from four-year schools. Respondents were asked:

“What is the capacity of your institution to offer the following supports or accommodations as needed by students with disabilities?”

Types of Supports Frequency Count (Question #1):

0 = not offered
1 = offered less than 25% of time
2 = offered 25-50% of time
3 = offered 51-75% of time
4 = offered more than 75% of time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question #1</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-q) real-time captioning</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-r-1) AT evaluations for students</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r-2) skills training on equipment/software</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r-3) Equipment or software provision</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r-4) AT supports across campus</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7- Does your institution offer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance learning for students who are deaf or blind-</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>YES</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Accessible library services?</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Accessible on-line student services (e.g. registration)</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Accessible TV courses (e.g. captioning, descriptive narration)</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Accessible Web-based courseware?</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Findings:

Overall, Assistive technology (AT) offerings for students with disabilities are not readily available. Public schools offer AT supports across campus (e.g. library, computer lab), more readily than the private schools.

When comparing supports offered at 2-year and 4-year schools, 2-year schools offer far more support for students with disabilities. Educational supports such as
learning centers laboratory, equipment or software provision, skills training on equipment/software, are more readily available at 2-year schools.

For the majority of students who are deaf and blind, on-line services such as registration, TV courses, web-based courseware, and library services are not offered.

Recommendations:

- Secondary Education students, their parents, and school personnel need to gain information and understanding about the Assistive technology supports available by college upon application.

- The needs of persons with deafness and blindness to access on-line services should be further studied.

- Private schools should be made aware of the major deficits in their programs regarding access to technology for SWDs.

- The provision of AT within 2-year schools could be demonstrated as a model for all postsecondary institutions to follow.

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