

Boston College Disability Services Office 2021 Assessment

About the Disability Services Office:

The Disability Services Office (DSO) empowers students with medical, physical, psychological, and temporary disabilities to achieve their educational, career, and personal goals. We provide accommodations to undergraduate and graduate BC students in the following areas:

- Academic
- Housing
- Dining
- Transportation/Parking

To date in 2020-2021, our office has provided accommodations for more than 800 Boston College students.

Assessment Method:

The DSO created a survey in Qualtrics and employed quantitative and qualitative methods to obtain student feedback on services provided by the office and campus accessibility. An invitation email was sent to students with an anonymous link to the survey, which took 5-10 minutes to complete. The survey consisted of multiple-choice, check all that apply, matrix, and open-ended questions.

Survey sent to: 1,146 students (all of the students who had received accommodations through DSO from Fall 2019 through October 2020).

242 students completed the survey
21% response rate

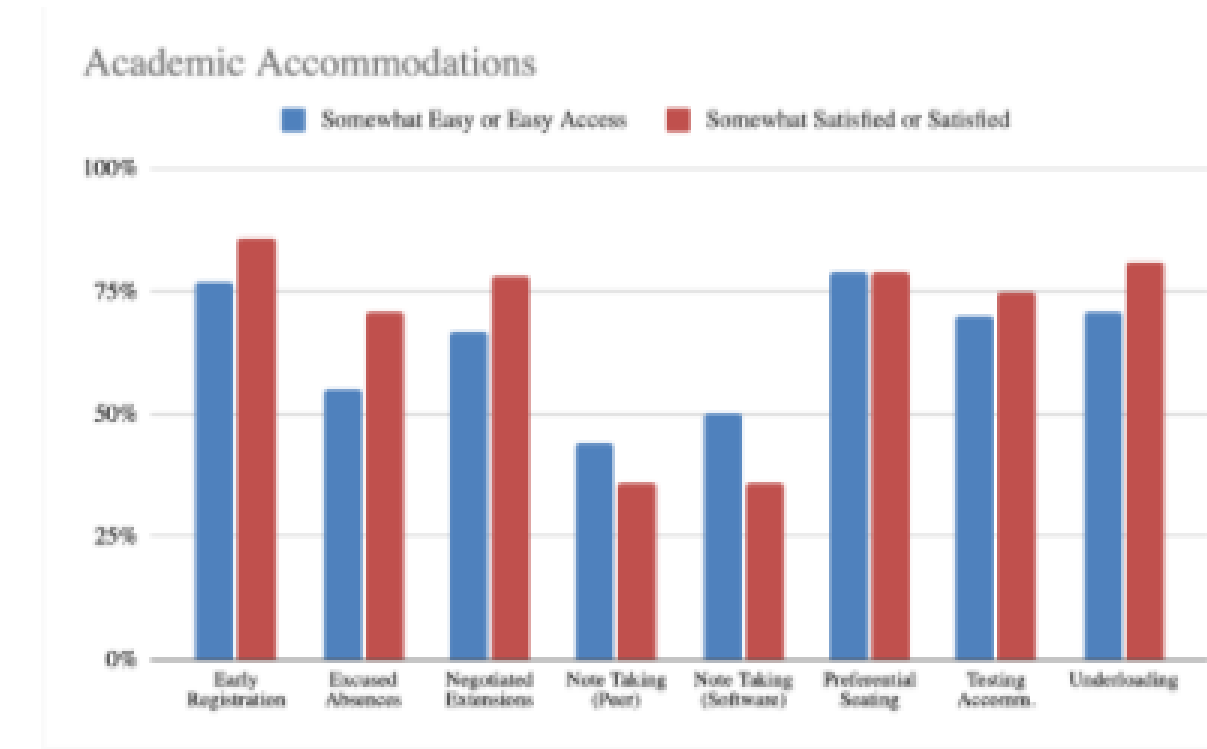
Recommendations:

Specific Accommodations with Campus Partners

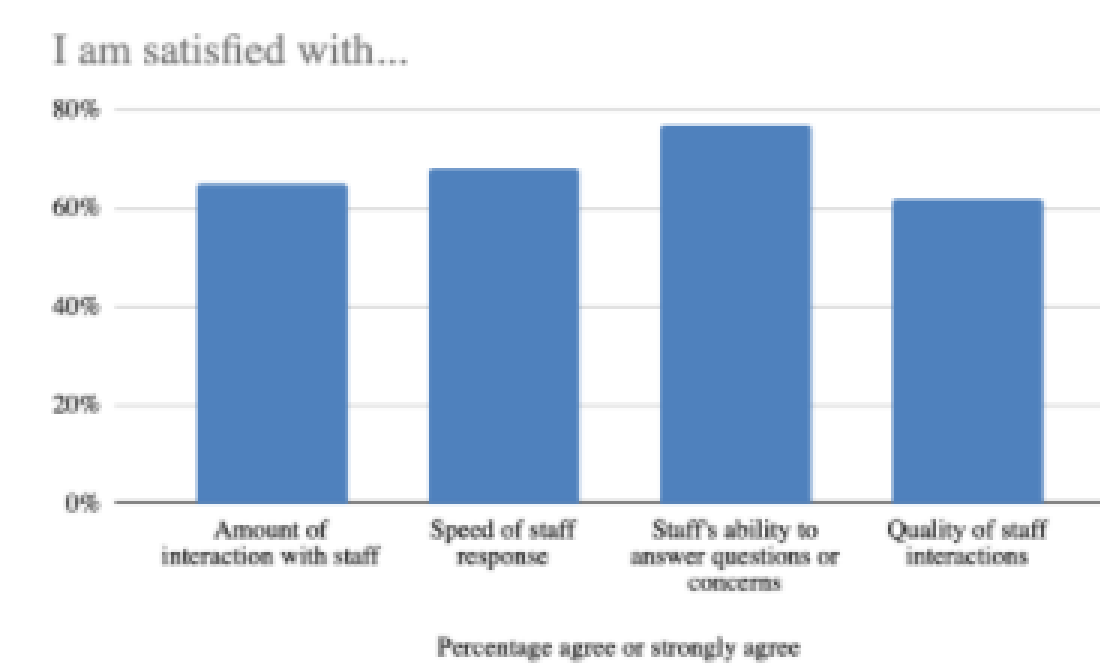
- Continue to work with the CFLC to ensure sufficient testing space for all BC students with disabilities.
- Work with Eagle Escort to improve student experience and add an additional van/driver to enable timely pick-up

Survey Results: Ease of Access to Academic Accommodations

Across all accommodations, students were "somewhat satisfied" or "satisfied" with received accommodations 72% of the time. For most accommodations, satisfaction with the received accommodations was higher than the reported ease of access



Survey Results: Feedback about the DSO



- "The Disability Services Office is easy to access and contact. They answer my questions within the same day and always clear up any concerns I have."
- "Clear conditions to apply for accommodation and very structured way of getting it."
- "Very approachable, understanding, supportive and helpful. Always listen to concerns from students and try to help in the best way they can."

Survey Results: Areas for Growth

- "An additional full time staff member... The turnover in grad student assistants makes it difficult to provide a seamless transition from one year to the next. I have found myself educating them about what I need and how to procure it."
- "Improving schedule for accommodations and responses and doing a better job at communicating with professors to prevent confusion and prying questions."
- "My approval process took so long that I barely needed the parking by the time I was able to get it."
- "I think continued contact through the semester is important and would be helpful. Just to like check in every so often."

Students requested increased **communication** between the DSO and registered students as well as with the campus community. Students described a desire for a smoother, faster registration and approval **process**. Navigating the temporary accommodations process while in the immediate stages of concussion recovery in particular emerged as a consistent challenge. Students highlighted the difficulty **understaffing** poses to building relationships and the seamless provision of accommodations.

Recommendations:

Improved Communication

Increase outreach to and communication with students.

Created and began sending a monthly newsletter highlighting DSO happenings, disability history and issues, entertainment recommendations, resources and more.

On average, 67% of recipients have opened the newsletter in its first three months

Creating a Student Handbook so that students have a comprehensive resource for the DSO's accommodations, policies, and procedures

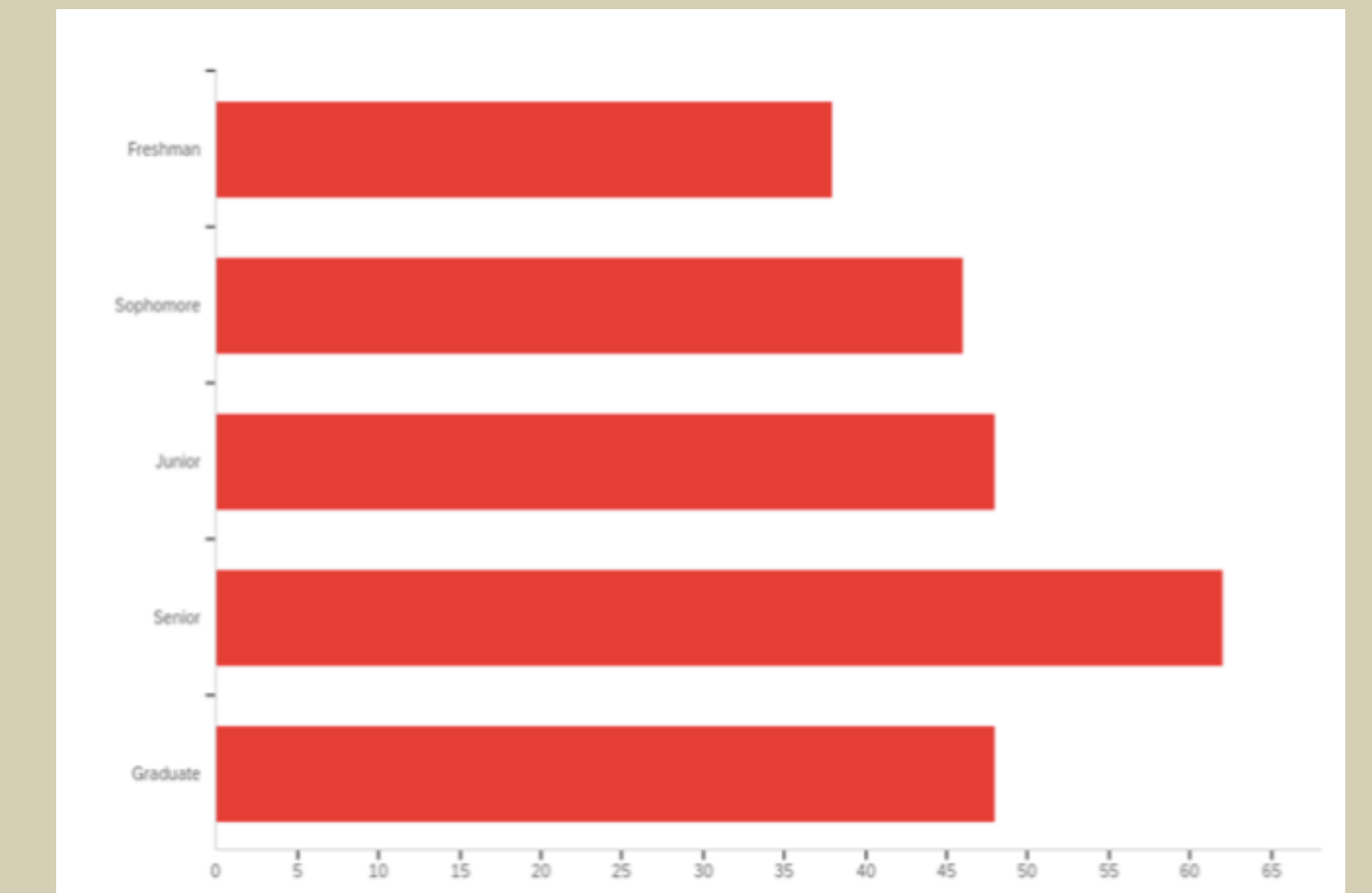
Try to more quickly review and approve accommodations requests.

Current action: This year, we have revised our housing accommodations process, so students are notified of an approval or denial much faster than in previous years. As the bulk of housing requests are received in January and February, the survey results may not reflect these changes.

Increase outreach to faculty to improve familiarity with accommodations and promote a welcoming culture for students with disabilities in the classroom.

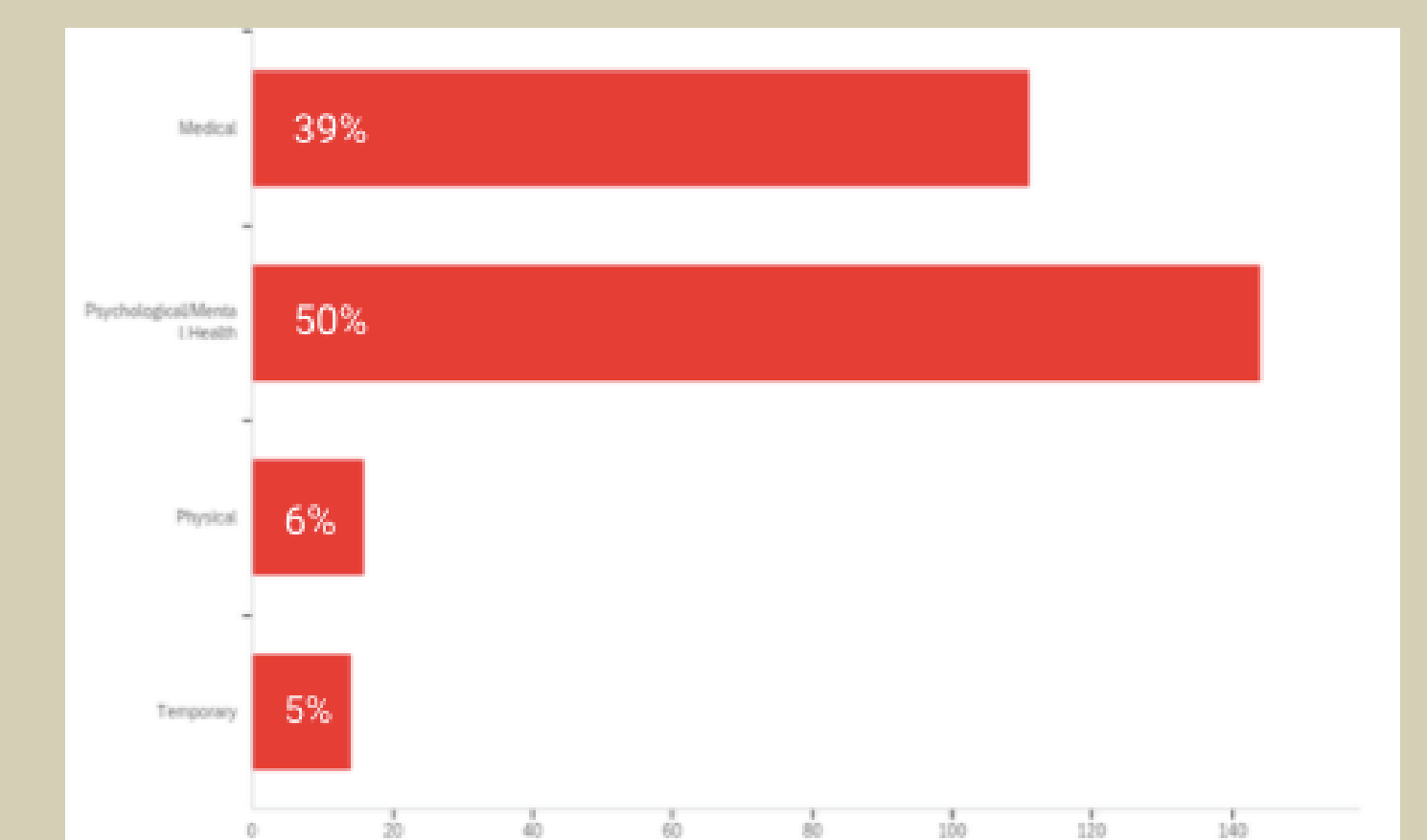
Current action: We are updating our website and faculty accommodation letters to provide more specific guidance.

Survey Results: Respondents by Year



#	Answer	%	Count
1	Freshman	15.70%	38
2	Sophomore	19.01%	46
3	Junior	19.83%	48
4	Senior	25.62%	62
5	Graduate	19.83%	48
	Total	100%	242

Survey Results: Respondents by Disability Type



#	Answer	%	Count
1	Medical	38.95%	111
2	Psychological/Mental Health	50.53%	144
3	Physical	5.61%	16
4	Temporary	4.91%	14
	Total	100%	285

Total number is higher than the class year data because many students identify as having more than one disability type.