# Meeting the Standards:
# Connections Between the Individual Accommodations Model (IAM) and the AHEAD Program Standards

# Technical Report

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In 2001, the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) developed and published program standards for disability services in higher education (Dukes 2001; Shaw & Dukes, 2001). The standards were developed by asking disability services professionals to identify the support services they felt were "essential for assurance of equal educational access for students with disabilities" (Dukes, 2001, p. 62). During this same time period, research staff at the University of Kansas in conjunction with their partners at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee and the University of Kansas Medical Center developed the Individual Accommodations Model (IAM) (Lancaster, Mellard & Hoffman, 2001; Berry & Mellard, 2002). These activities were supported through funding of a model demonstration project from the USDE's Office of Special Education Programs.

The IAM was developed in response to the question of how to increase the enrollment, retention and completion rates for students with disabilities in community and technical colleges. To meet this goal project staff and staff from 15 participating colleges in California, Minnesota and Kansas, developed and field-tested materials for students with disabilities, their parents, college faculty, Disability Support Services personnel and college administrators. The nineteen materials developed compose the Individual Accommodations Model. [For more information regarding the methods and findings of the IAM, see Lancaster, Mellard & Hoffman (2001) and Berry & Mellard (2002)].

The AHEAD Program Standards consist of 27 individual standards in the following 9 categories (Shaw & Dukes 2001):

1. Consultation/Collaboration/Awareness (2 standards)
2. Information Dissemination (3 standards)
3. Faculty/Staff Awareness (4 standards)
4. Academic Adjustments (3 standards)

5. Instructional Interventions (1 standard)
6. Counseling and Advocacy (1 standard)
7. Policies and Procedures (5 standards)
8. Program Development and Evaluation (5 standards)
9. Training and Professional Development (3 standards)

The IAM materials meet, to varying degrees, standards found in 7 out of these 9 categories (see Findings section below, Table 1).

In 2003, IAM project staff examined the conceptual similarities between the AHEAD Program Standards and the components of the IAM. Individual components of the IAM were seen by Project staff identified that many of the IAM component materials met many of the AHEAD Program Standards.

## Methods

, Individuals from the various colleges using the IAM were asked to rate the degree to which particular IAM components were relevant in meeting AHEAD Program Standards. The relevancy questions were asked using a Likert-type scale. It is worth noting that the IAM did not satisfy all of the AHEAD Program Standards and only those standards that applied to each material were rated using this scale. Table 1 below provides a list of the materials and relevant standards that were rated by participants. The survey instrument used is available on-line at: http://das.kucrl.org/iam/instruments.html.

*Participants*

Eight individuals from separate colleges participated in this rating activity. All eight (100%) individuals were employed in full-time positions at their respective institutions, 25% (n=2) were from 4-year universities and 75% (n=6) were from community and technical colleges. Twenty-five percent (n=2) were faculty members, 50% (n=4) were administrators overseeing Disability Support Services programs and 25% (n=2) were Disability Support Services staff members. The educational backgrounds of participants were varied and included 25% (n=2) with Doctoral degrees, 75% (n=6) with master's degrees. Areas of study included special education

(37.5%, n=3), higher education administration (12.5%, n-=1), counseling psychology (25%, n=2), rehabilitation counseling (12.5%, n=1) and learning disabilities (12.5%, n=1).

The participants were recruited through a phone call to them. The survey instrument was mailed to them. A follow-up contact was made to those individuals who had not responded within three weeks. The completion rate was 100%.

Findings

The IAM materials were rated by participants on the level to which each is relevant to meeting particular AHEAD Program Standards. Of the 27 AHEAD Program Standards, sixteen (59.3%) were seen as being at least partially met by one or more of the 18 IAM materials. Using Likert-type scales ranging from 1=not relevant to 5=very relevant, none of the IAM materials were rated as not relevant to meeting the chosen standards. Forty-one total cases (see Table 1) were rated by the eight participants. A majority (n=227, 75.9%) of the 299 total valid responses were 4's (relevant) or 5's (highly relevant). Figure 1 below illustrates the distribution of Likert-type rating scores by participants.

Furthermore, when looking at the percentage of responses that were rated as greater than or equal to four for each case, 37 of the 41 cases (90.2%) had 50% or more responses of 4 or 5 (see Table 1). Table one also illustrates mean scores for these Likert-type scales ranging from 3.43 to 4.67 with median scores ranging from 3.00 to 5.00.

Overall, the IAM materials were rated as having a high level of relevance when considering whether or not they meet prescribed standards. The AHEAD Program Standards were developed to serve as a guide for colleges who wish to improve their services for students with disabilities. The IAM is only one model in the field of many strategies being used by colleges as they strive to meet the AHEAD Standards and increase the support and accessibility for the increasing numbers of students with disabilities in postsecondary educational settings.

Figure 1. Distribution of relevancy scores
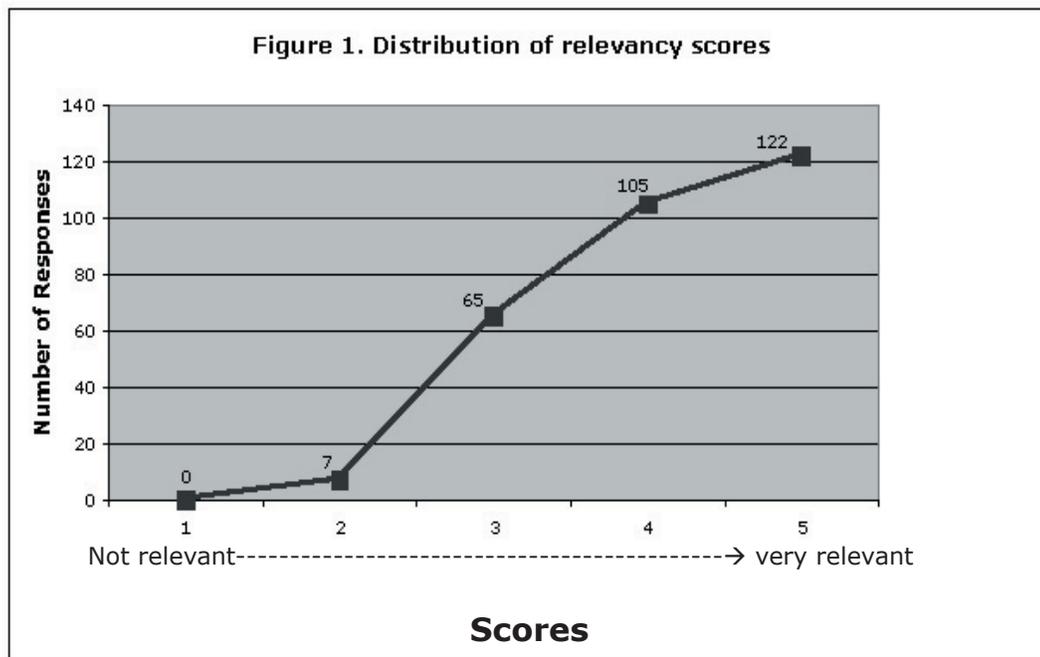
Further information regarding the research and development of the Individual Accommodations Model (IAM) can be found on-line at http://das.kucrl.org/iam.html or by contacting the University of Kansas Center for Research on Learning, Division of Adult Studies.

Table 1. IAM Materials' Relevance to Meeting AHEAD Program Standards

| IAM Material STUDENT MATERIALS | AHEAD Program Standard* | Mean | Median | SD | % ≥ 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Self-Advocacy Brochure | 2.1 Disseminate information through institutional publications regarding disability services and how to access them (n=8) | 4.38 | 4.50 | .744 | 87.5% |
| | 6.1 Assist students with disabilities to assume the role of self-advocate (n=8) | 4.38 | 4.00 | .518 | 100% |
| Accommodations Brochure | 2.1 Disseminate information through institutional publications regarding disability services and how to access them (n=8) | 4.50 | 5.00 | .756 | 87.5% |
| Rights & Responsibilities Brochure | 2.1 Disseminate information through institutional publications regarding disability services and how to access them (n=8) | 4.25 | 4.50 | .886 | 75% |
| | 6.1 Assist students with disabilities to assume the role of self-advocate (n=8) | 4.00 | 4.00 | .756 | 75% |
| | 7.3 Establish guidelines for student rights and responsibilities with respect to service provision (n=8) | 4.38 | 4.50 | .744 | 87.5% |
| Grievance Brochure | 2.1 Disseminate information through institutional publications regarding disability services and how to access them (n=8) | 3.75 | 4.00 | 1.389 | 50% |
| | 2.3 Provide referral information to students with disabilities regarding available campus and community resources (n=7) | 3.43 | 3.00 | .976 | 42.9% |
| | 7.5 Encourage the development of policies and guidelines for settling a formal complaint regarding the determination of a "reasonable accommodation" (n=8) | 4.50 | 4.50 | .535 | 100% |

Table continues

| IAM Material | AHEAD Program Standard* | Mean | Median | SD | % ≥ 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **STUDENT MATERIALS** (cont.) | | | | | |
| *What is a Disability Brochure* (n=8) | 2.1 Disseminate information through institutional publications regarding disability services and how to access them (n=8) | 4.13 | 4.00 | .835 | 75% |
| *A Parent's Guide to College Brochure* (n=8) | 2.1 Disseminate information through institutional publications regarding disability services and how to access them (n=8) | 4.38 | 4.50 | .744 | 87.5% |
| | 2.3 Provide referral information to students with disabilities regarding available campus and community resources (n=8) | 3.63 | 3.5 | 1.061 | 50% |
| *Student Assessment of Instructional Preferences* | 6.1 Assist students with disabilities to assume the role of self-advocate (n=7) | 4.29 | 4.00 | .756 | 85.7% |
| *Student Activity Accessibility Checklist* | 2.2 Provide services that promote access to the campus community (n=8) | 4.00 | 4.00 | .756 | 75% |
| | 2.3 Provide referral information to students with disabilities regarding available campus and community resources (n=7) | 3.43 | 3.00 | .535 | 42.9% |
| | 6.1 Assist students with disabilities to assume the role of self-advocate (n=7) | 4.14 | 4.00 | .900 | 42.9% |
| **INSTRUCTOR/FACULTY MATERIALS** | | | | | |
| *Instructor Assessment of Instructional Preferences* | 3.1 Provide consultation with faculty regarding academic accommodations, compliance with legal responsibilities, as well as instructional, programmatic, physical and curriculum modifications (n=8) | 4.13 | 4.00 | .641 | 87.5% |

**Table continues**

| IAM Material<br>INSTRUCTOR/FACULTY MATERIALS (cont.) | AHEAD Program Standard* | Mean | Median | SD | % ≥ 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Three-Part Instructor Series | 3.1 Provide consultation with faculty regarding academic accommodations, compliance with legal responsibilities, as well as instructional, programmatic, physical and curriculum modifications (n=8) | 4.5 | 5.00 | .756 | 87.5% |
| | 3.4 Provide feedback to faculty regarding general assistance available through the office that provides services to students with disabilities (n=8) | 4.13 | 4.50 | .991 | 62.5% |
| ADMINISTRATION MATERIALS | | | | | |
| Assessment of Classroom Environment | 3.1 Provide consultation with faculty regarding academic accommodations, compliance with legal responsibilities, as well as instructional, programmatic, physical and curriculum modifications (n=8) | 4.00 | 4.00 | .535 | 87.5% |
| | 3.2 Provide consultation with administrators regarding academic accommodations, programmatic, physical and curriculum modifications (n=7) | 3.86 | 4.00 | .900 | 85.7% |
| Campus Access Report Card | 3.2 Provide consultation with administrators regarding academic accommodations, programmatic, physical and curriculum modifications (n=6) | 4.67 | 5.00 | .516 | 100% |
| DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES MATERIALS | | | | | |
| Ensuring Appropriate Accommodations for Students with Disabilities | 4.1 Maintain records that document the plan for the provision of selected accommodations (n=7) | 4.14 | 5.00 | 1.215 | 71.4% |
| | 4.2 Determine with students, appropriate academic adjustments consistent with the student's documentation (n=7) | 4.29 | 5.00 | .951 | 71.4% |

**Table continues**

| IAM Material | AHEAD Program Standard* | Mean | Median | SD | % ≥ 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES MATERIALS (cont.)** | | | | | |
| *Ensuring Appropriate Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (cont)* | 4.3 Have final responsibility for determining effective academic accommodations which do not fundamentally alter the program of study (n=8) | 4.25 | 4.50 | .886 | 75% |
| | 5.1 Advocate for instruction in learning strategies (n=8) | 3.75 | 4.00 | .886 | 75% |
| | 7.1 Develop written policies and guidelines regarding procedures for determining and accessing "reasonable accommodations" (n=8) | 4.13 | 4.00 | .835 | 75% |
| *Web Resources for Students with Disabilities* | 2.3 Provide referral information to students with disabilities regarding available campus and community resources (n=8) | 4.13 | 4.00 | .835 | 75% |
| **STAFF DEVELOPMENT MODULES** | | | | | |
| *Helping Everyone Feel Included (Disability Awareness)* | 3.4: Provide feedback to faculty regarding general assistance available through the office that provides services to students with disabilities. (n=7) | 4.00 | 4.00 | 1.00 | 57.1% |
| | 9.1 Provide disability services staff with on-going opportunities for professional development (n=7) | 4.14 | 4.00 | .900 | 71.4% |
| | 9.2 Provide services by professional(s) with training and experiences working with college students/adults with disabilities (n=7) | 4.14 | 4.00 | .900 | 71.4% |
| *Self-Advocacy* | 6.1 Assist students with disabilities to assume the role of self-advocate (n=6) | 4.50 | 4.50 | .548 | 100% |
| | 9.1 Provide disability services staff with on-going opportunities for professional development (n=6) | 4.17 | 4.00 | .753 | 83.3% |
| | 9.2 Provide services by professional(s) with training and experiences working with college students/adults with disabilities (n=6) | 4.17 | 4.00 | .753 | 83.3% |

**Table continues**

| STAFF DEVELOPMENT MATERIALS (cont.) | AHEAD Program Standard* | Mean | Median | SD | % ≥ 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Disclosure and Confidentiality* | 7.4 Develop written policies and guidelines regarding confidentiality of disability information (n=7) | 4.14 | 5.00 | 1.069 | 57.1% |
|  | 9.1 Provide disability services staff with on-going opportunities for professional development (n=7) | 4.57 | 5.00 | .787 | 85.7% |
|  | 9.2 Provide services by professional(s) with training and experiences working with college students/adults with disabilities (n=7) | 4.29 | 4.00 | .756 | 85.7% |
| *Ensuring Appropriate Accommodations* | 4.1 Maintain records that document the plan for the provision of selected accommodations (n=6) | 4.17 | 4.50 | .983 | 66.7% |
|  | 4.3 Have final responsibility for determining effective academic accommodations which do not fundamentally alter the program of study (n=6) | 4.00 | 4.00 | 1.095 | 50% |
|  | 9.1 Provide disability services staff with on-going opportunities for professional development (n=6) | 4.00 | 4.00 | .894 | 66.7% |
|  | 9.2 Provide services by professional(s) with training and experiences working with college students/adults with disabilities (n=6) | 4.17 | 4.00 | .753 | 83.3% |

*Note. Taken from: Shaw, S.F. & Dukes, L.L. (2001). Program Standards for Disability Services in Higher Education. Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability, 14(2), 81-90.

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