

# Understandings & Perceptions of Disability: Influence on Tutor Training

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# Research Questions

- \* How do writing center administrators and consultants in university and college writing centers currently perceive, understand, and accommodate writers with disabilities?
- \* What factors, including contextual, institutional, or theoretical factors, shape the development and implementation of writing center accommodations?
- \* What, if any, developmental trajectories have these accommodation strategies followed?

# Perceptions & Understandings of Disability

## Medical Model(s)

- Disability is an illness
- Disability needs a cure
- Disability is a personal tragedy
- Accommodation is a personal responsibility

## Rehabilitation Model(s)

- Disability can and should be cured
- Disability can be overcome
- Disability is a tragedy
- Accommodation is a personal responsibility

## Social Model(s)

- Disability is socially, culturally, biologically, and materially constructed
- Contexts, not impairments, are disabling
- Accommodation is a community responsibility

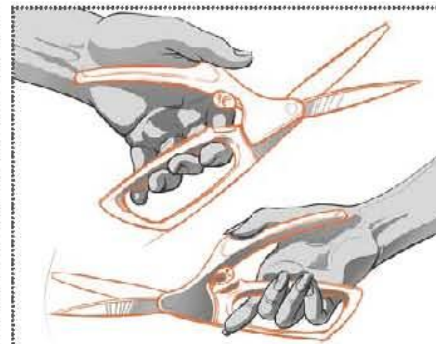
# The Principles of Universal Design



## Equitable Use

The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

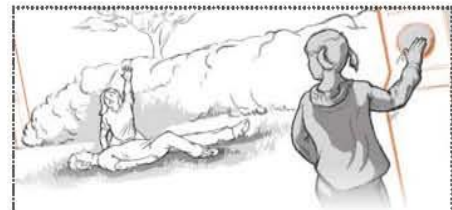
- 1a. Provide the same means of use for all users: identical whenever possible; equivalent when not.
- 1b. Avoid segregating or stigmatizing any users.
- 1c. Provisions for privacy, security, and safety should be equally available to all users.
- 1d. Make the design appealing to all users.



## Flexibility in Use

The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

- 2a. Provide choice in methods of use.
- 2b. Accommodate right- or left-handed access and use.
- 2c. Facilitate the user's accuracy and precision.
- 2d. Provide adaptability to the user's pace.



## Simple and Intuitive Use

Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or education level.

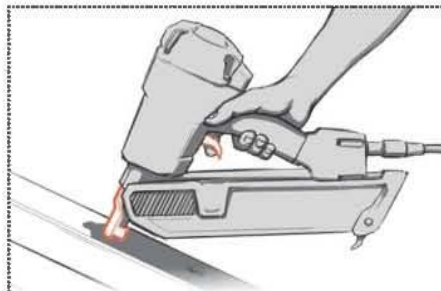
- 3a. Eliminate unnecessary complexity.
- 3b. Be consistent with user expectations and intuition.
- 3c. Accommodate a wide range of literacy and language skills.
- 3d. Arrange information consistent with its importance.
- 3e. Provide effective prompting and feedback during and after task completion.



## Perceptible Information

The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

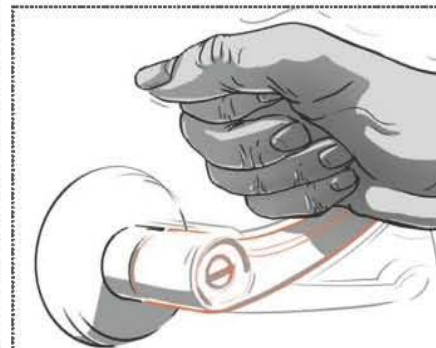
- 4a. Use different modes (pictorial, verbal, tactile) for redundant presentation of essential information.
- 4b. Provide adequate contrast between essential information and its surroundings.
- 4c. Maximize "legibility" of essential information.
- 4d. Differentiate elements in ways that can be described (i.e., make it easy to give instructions or directions).
- 4e. Provide compatibility with a variety of techniques or devices used by people with sensory limitations.



## Tolerance for Error

The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

- 5a. Arrange elements to minimize hazards and errors: most used elements, most accessible; hazardous elements eliminated, isolated, or shielded.
- 5b. Provide warnings of hazards and errors.
- 5c. Provide fail safe features.
- 5d. Discourage unconscious action in tasks that require vigilance.



## Low Physical Effort

The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

- 6a. Allow user to maintain a neutral body position.
- 6b. Use reasonable operating forces.
- 6c. Minimize repetitive actions.
- 6d. Minimize sustained physical effort.



## Size and Space for Approach and Use

Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

- 7a. Provide a clear line of sight to important elements for any seated or standing user.
- 7b. Make reach to all components comfortable for any seated or standing user.
- 7c. Accommodate variations in hand and grip size.
- 7d. Provide adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistance.

# Perceptions & Understandings of Disability: Writing Center Studies

## Medical Model(s)

- Huot (1988)
- Neff (1994)
- Pemberton (1998)

## Rehabilitation Model(s)

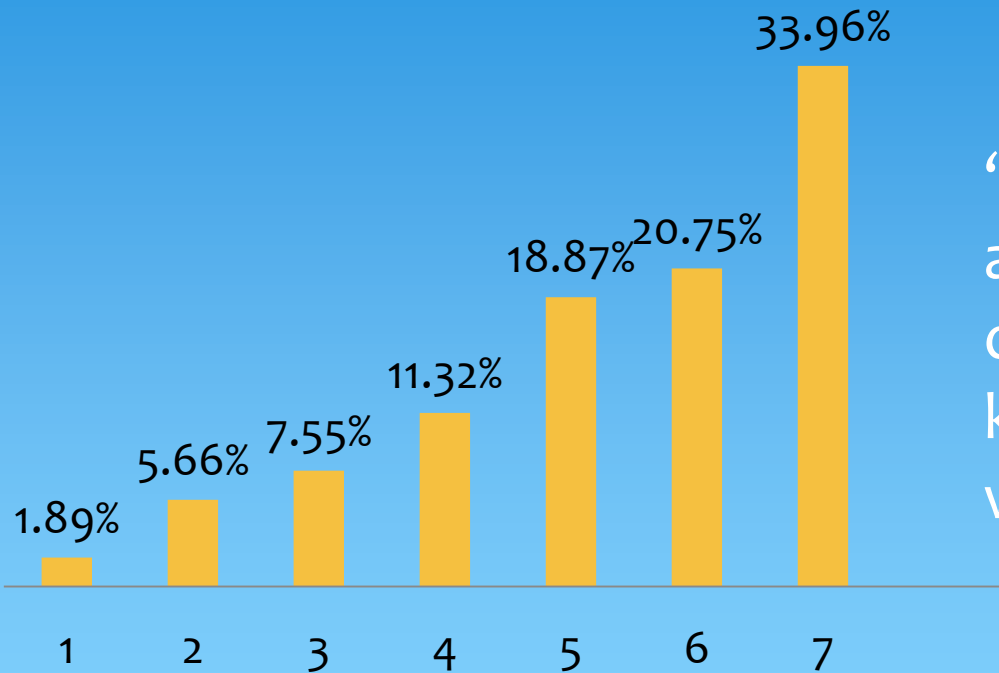
- Corrigan (1997)

## Social Model(s)

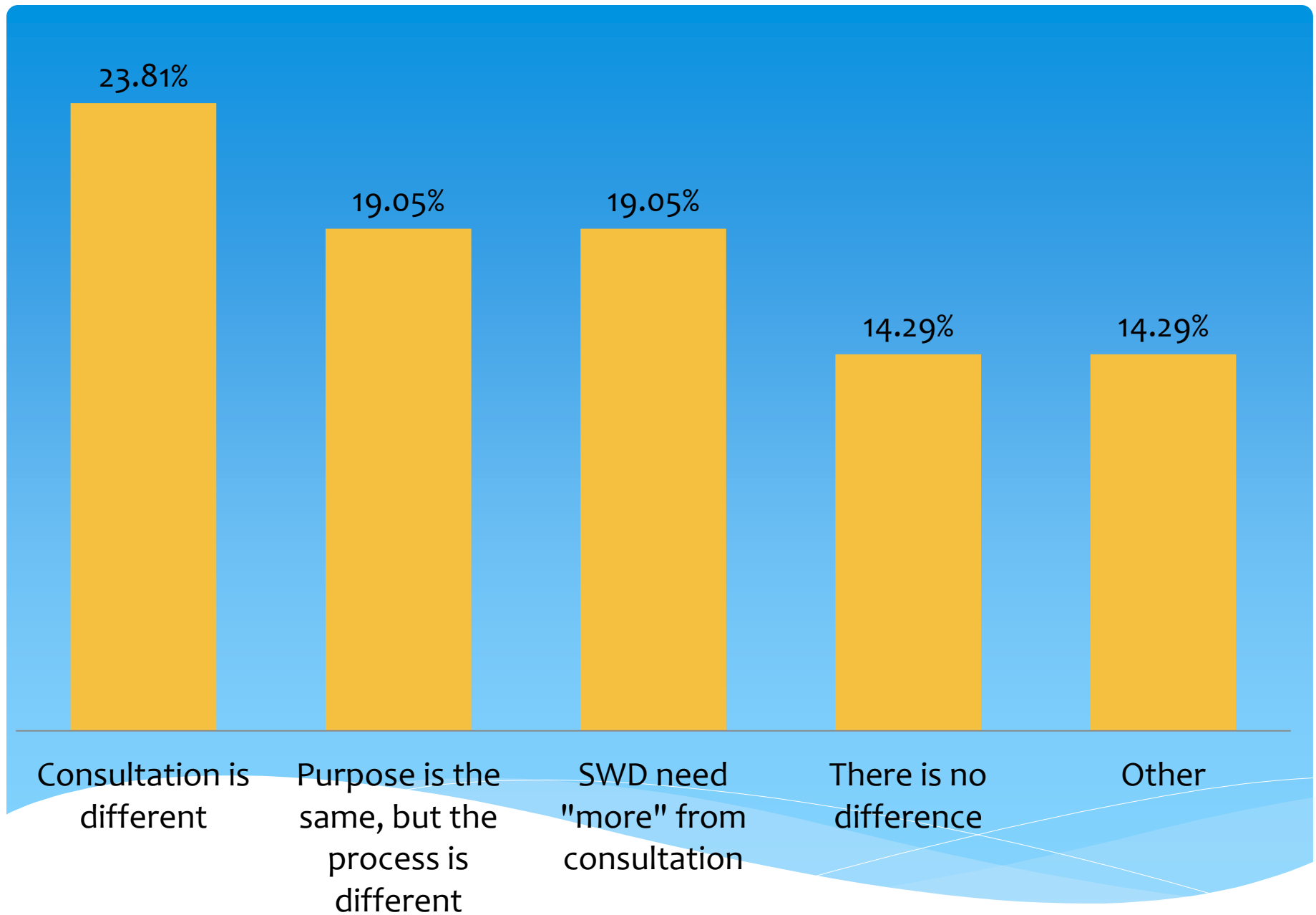
- Babcock (2008)
- Hitt (2012)
- Kiedaisch and Dinitz (2007)

# Survey Data

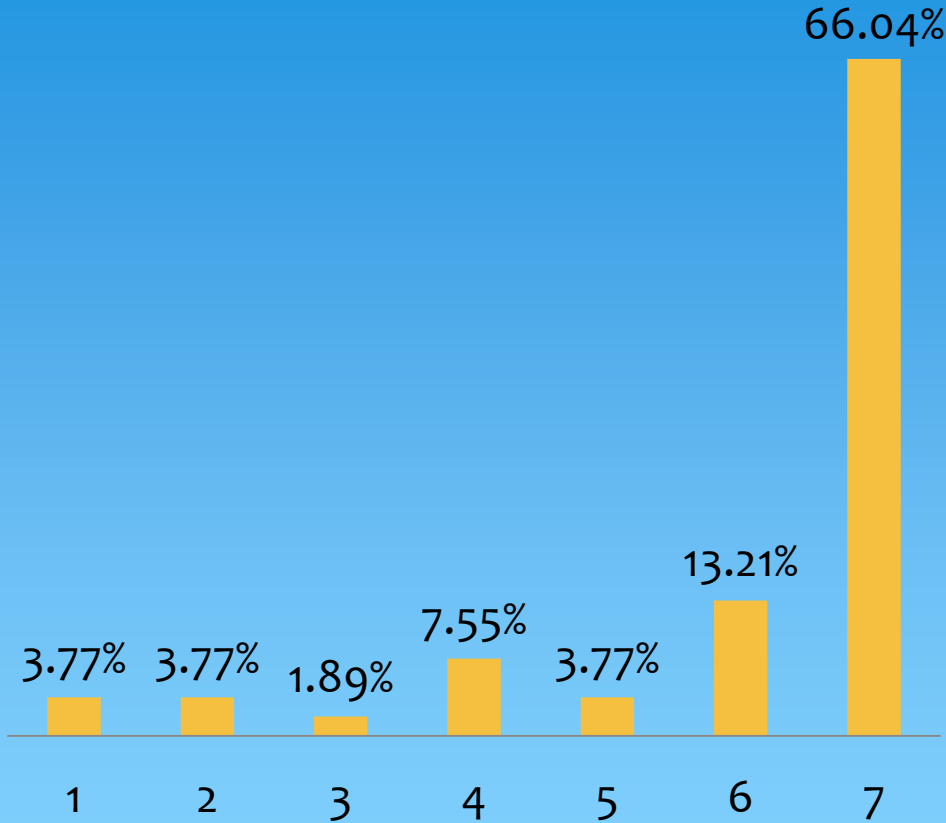
- \* “Students with disabilities and students without disabilities want the same kind of services from our writing center”
- \* “Writing center tutors should receive training specific to working with students with disabilities”
- \* “As a writing center administrator, I feel prepared to accommodate or meet the needs of students with disabilities.”
- \* “As a writing center administrator, I feel prepared to train my staff in tutoring students with disabilities.”



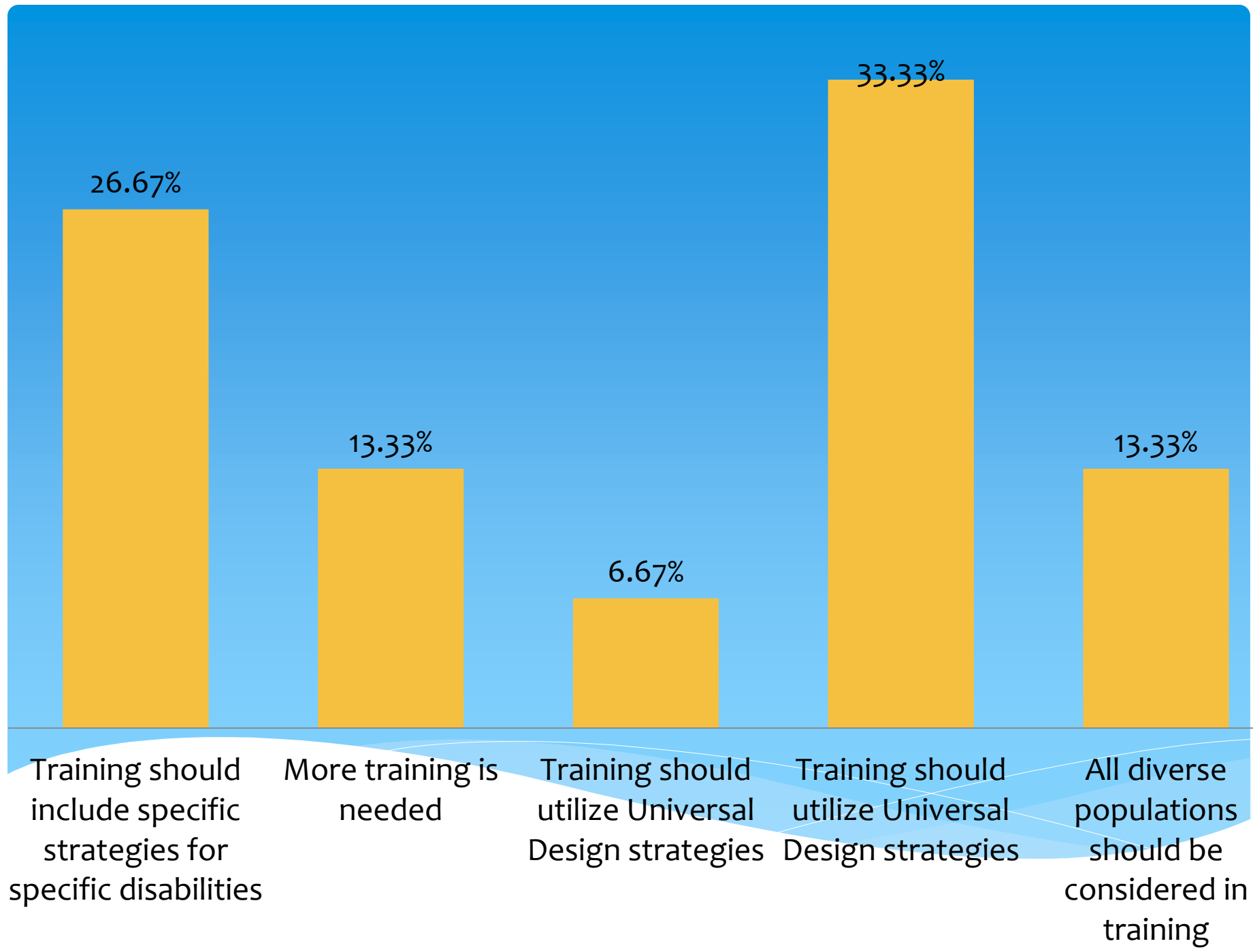
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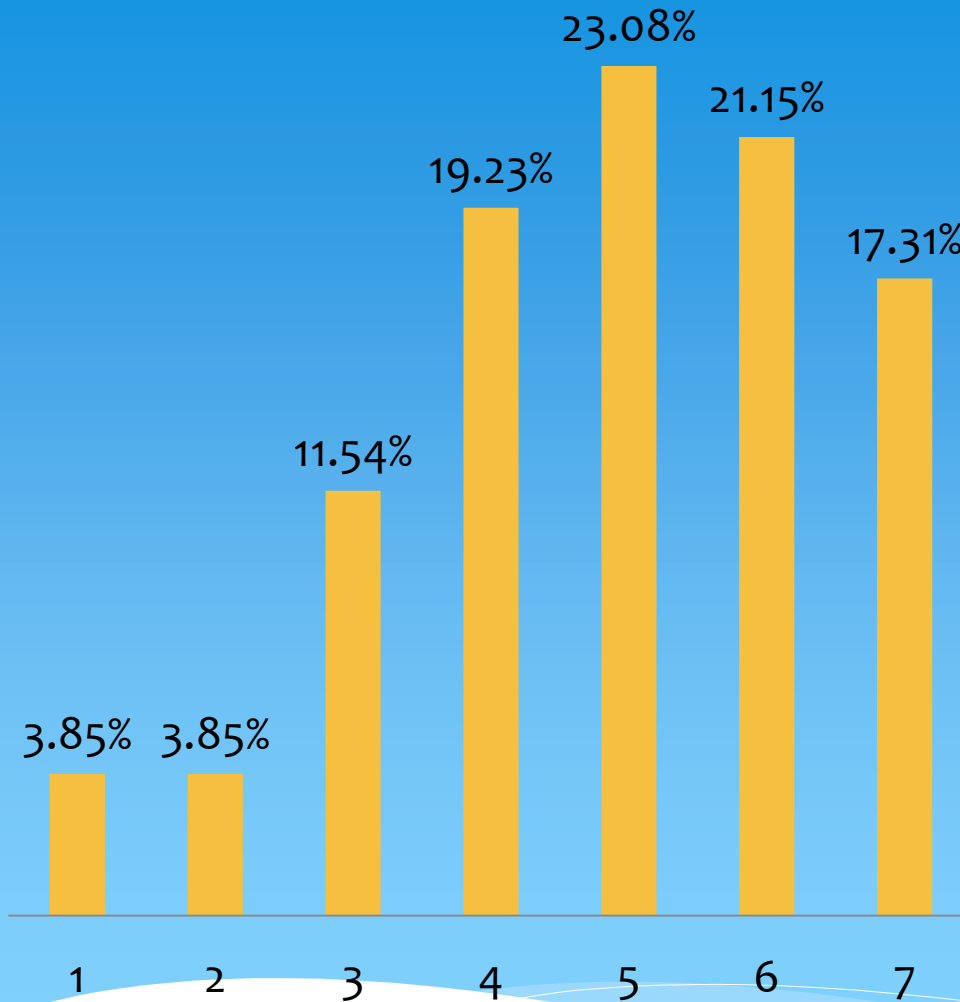




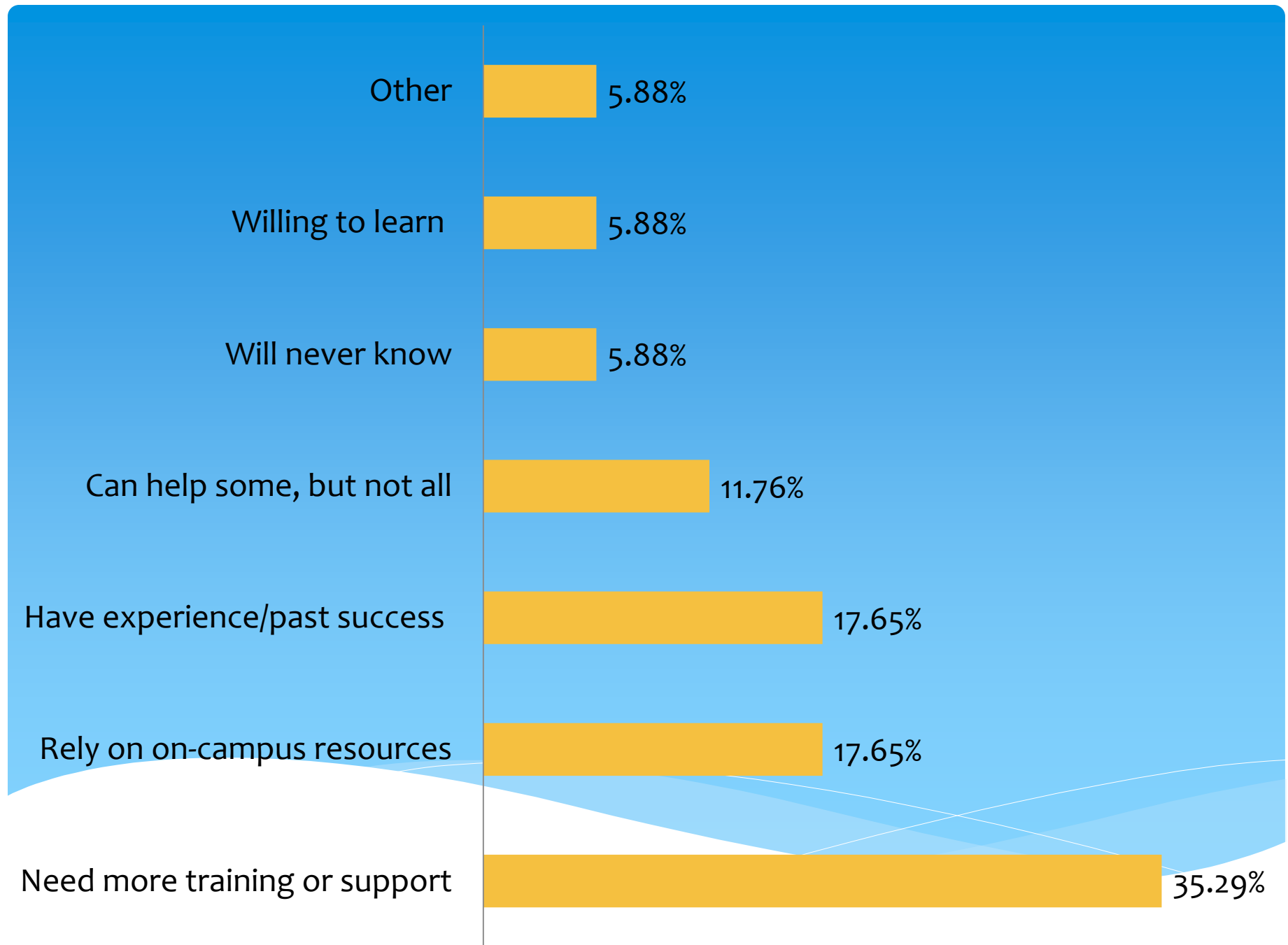


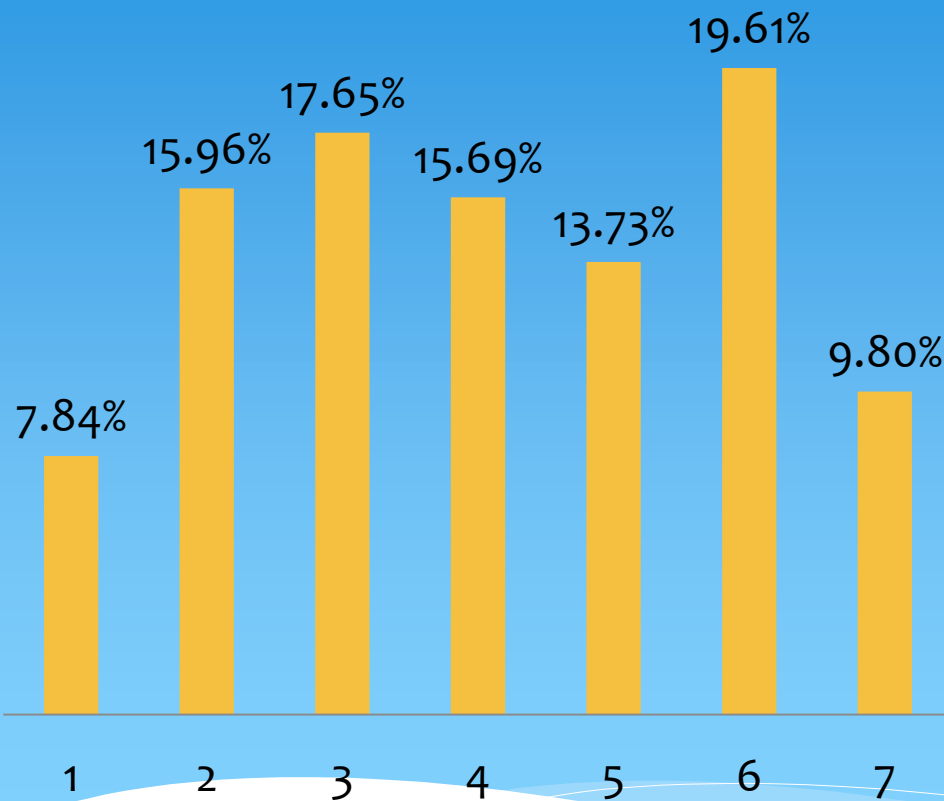
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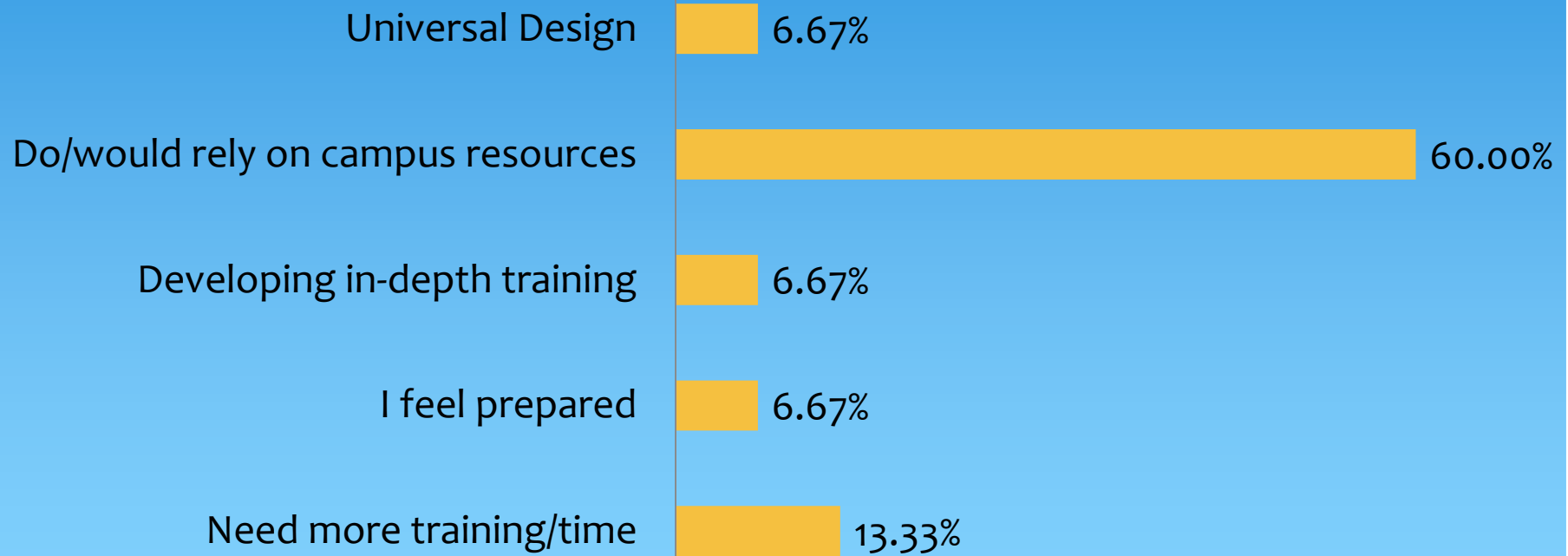


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“As a writing center administrator, I feel prepared to train my staff in tutoring students with disabilities.”



# Implications

For transcript, presentation, or  
Works Cited please visit:  
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