

Physical/Architectural Barriers at the University of Iowa

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Objective:

This research project was developed to examine disability and higher education – specifically, evaluating architectural/physical barriers that may impede inclusivity at the University of Iowa.

Method:

- Project was deemed not human subjects research (IRB)
- Setting: Iowa City, Iowa – University of Iowa campus
- Population: Graduate students enrolled at the University of Iowa in a master's program.
- Design: survey research measuring quantitative and qualitative data points from a pool of respondents by asking multiple survey questions. This research included the recruitment of individuals, collection, and analysis of data
- Procedure: recruited participants via departmental Graduate Program Coordinators to distribute survey within UI graduate programs
 - Distributed an anonymous survey with five questions, inviting open-ended responses to be completed virtually via Qualtrics
 - Participants were allotted approximately one month from initial invitation to participate to submit responses
 - Results were analyzed and coded using UI-given acronyms, unifying responses that were given in free-form text

Results/Conclusion:

The survey received 170 responses. Master's students (110), Doctoral students (48), staff (7), undergraduate students (4), and faculty (1). Individuals who began the survey but did not identify as graduate students were routed to conclude the survey as an excluded participant.

40 named responses were given in response to the question asking: "Which building(s) or their surrounding entrances (including, but not limited to, vehicle parking, sidewalks, signage, doorway limitations, etc.) have you experienced architectural or physical barriers at the University of Iowa?":

The following buildings, spaces, places, or facilities were named: Art Building West(2), Bowen Science Building (4), Chemistry Building (2), College of Public Health (7), Campus Recreation and Wellness Center (2), Eckstein Medical Research Building (2), General Exterior (4), General Interior (3), Halsey Hall (1), Hardin Library for Health Sciences (1), Laboratory Spaces (2), Main Library (1), Medical Education Research Facility (1), North Hall (1), Seamans Center (1), Wendell

Johnson Speech and Hearing Center (2), Trowbridge Hall (1), UIHC (1), Visual Arts Building(2), and Westlawn (1).

Future directions of this research include: focus groups for each building's users, and/or expanding research to additional University of Iowa constituencies.

References:

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