

INTRODUCTION

- Students with disabilities are attending post-secondary institutions in growing numbers.^(1, 2)
- As such, disability service providers on campus are providing more accommodations, including assistive technology (AT).^(3, 4)
- AT can help students with a variety of learning needs, however, many students discontinue use of their AT despite the benefits that this technology can provide.
- Therefore, to examine discontinued use of AT, we examined the relationship between accessing training and discontinued use.

METHOD

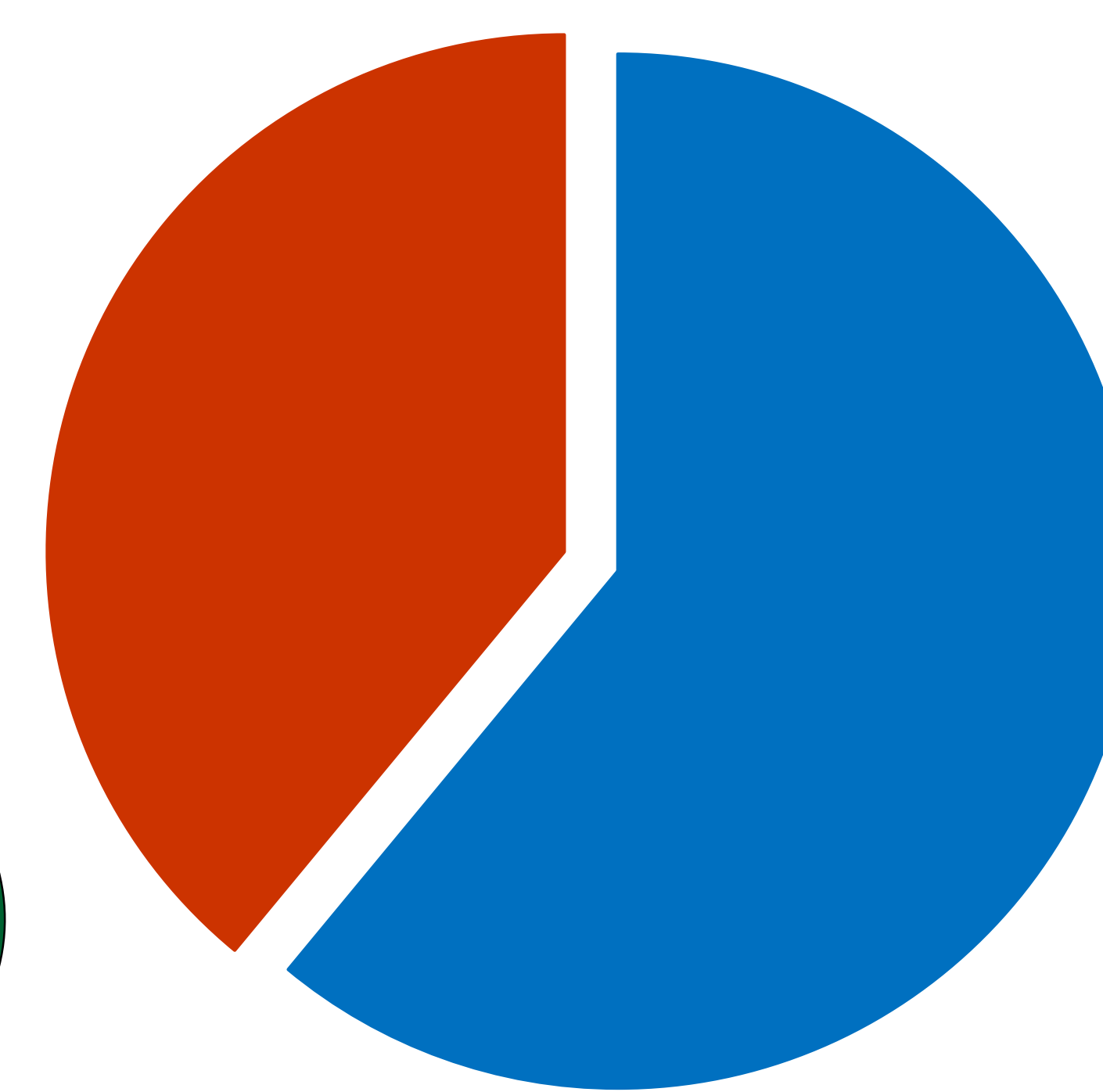
- We recruited students through three disability resource centres at post-secondary institutions in Western Canada.
- An email was sent with a link to the survey.
 - In total 103 students accessed the survey.
 - Students ranged in age from 17 to 53 ($M = 27.4$ years) and were mostly female (70%).
- We asked students questions related to:
 - Their experiences with AT and training.
 - Recommendations they would you make for future AT training.

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

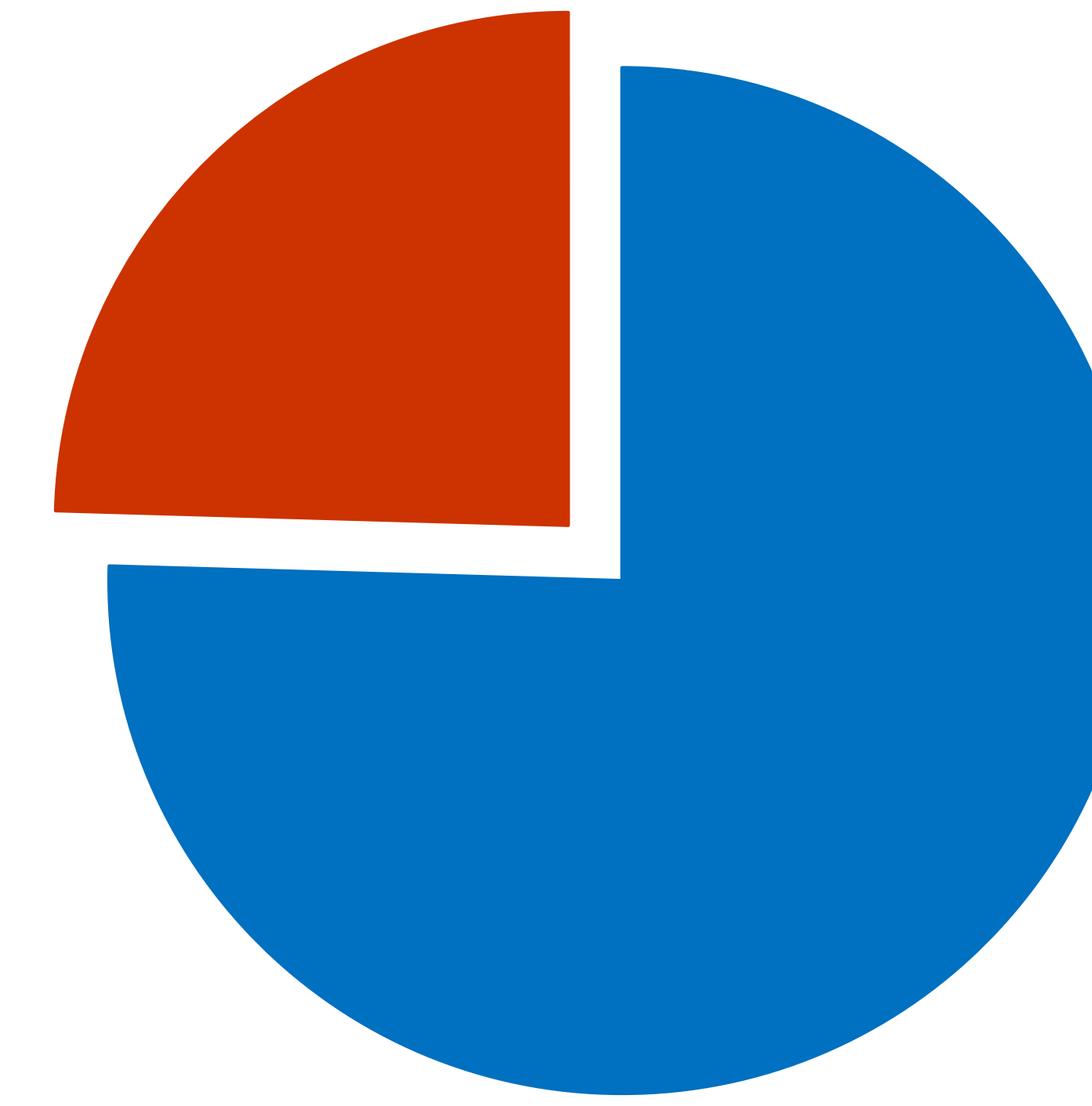
- 75% of students indicated accessing training,
- 61% of students continue to use their AT.
- Accessing training was not associated with continued use of AT ($r = .20, p > 0.05$).
- However, a more positive experience with training was associated with more continued use ($r = .35, p = .004$).
- Our logistic regression with accessing training and positive experience with training predicted 18.7% of the variance in continued use of AT.

Do you still use the AT?

Have you received any Assistive Technology Training?



61% of students continue to use their AT.



75% of students access AT training.

QUALITATIVE RESULTS

- We used a deductive analysis procedure whereby we explicitly looked for themes in students' recommendations for training that resource centres providers could implement.
- We found four general types of recommendations:
 - Options for appointments (e.g., online, drop-in, group sessions).
 - The format of training.
 - The individuals providing training (e.g. experience of instructors).
 - Additional resources after training.

“What recommendations would you make for future AT training?”

Do a set of 2 appointments with the software, in the first one show the basics then the student goes and practices. In the second they come back, review and show what they know, then go over the more complicated bits of the software.

Regular on-going training sessions as needed as technology advances.

I'd like for there to be more training available online so I don't have to make appointments.

...group sessions, drop-in. I like this idea of knowing when it is so I can come by, not have to make an appointment.

All the teaching was strictly oral. Printed notes or easy to access tutorials, for important things.

A brief, simple printed resource with explanations and instructions afterwards would be helpful for [the AT], especially as a refresher without needing to book another full training session.

Maybe it may be useful to prepare a small PDF as supplementary material to review after the training.

Make sure instructors know/have access to all key commands for Mac and PC.

More experienced staff, it seemed like they were learning the AT too, rather than able to teach it.

DISCUSSION

- Inadequate training can lead to abandonment of AT which can be detrimental to students who would otherwise benefit from the AT.^(5, 6)
- Students identified a number of recommendations for training which are consistent with previous research.^(5, 6, 7)
- While training is important, ongoing support was also associated with two of four themes.⁽¹⁾
- Universal design for learning (UDL) promotes the ideas of inclusion, ensuring all individuals have equal opportunities and future training should take a more UDL approach.⁽⁸⁾

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