3.2. Successful vs. unsuccessful students

As in previous work on determinants of academic success (Parker et al., 2004), it is also of interest to examine the differences between the successful and unsuccessful groups in more detail. Table 3 shows the mean TAS-20 scores for the successful and unsuccessful groups for the combined sample and for males and females separately. A series of ANOVAs was performed with gender and success group as factors. A significant main effect of gender was found for difficulty describing feelings [$F(1, 199) = 4.07$, $p = 0.045$]. There were significant main effects of success group for total TAS score [$F(1, 199) = 14.05$, $p < 0.001$], difficulty describing feelings [$F(1, 199) = 4.31$, $p = 0.039$], difficulty identifying feelings [$F(1, 199) = 6.59$, $p = 0.011$] and externally oriented thinking

Table 3
Means and standard deviations of TAS-20 scores by success group

Group	N	Total mean (SD)	DIF mean (SD)	DDF mean (SD)	EOT mean (SD)
Total sample					
Unsuccessful	98	47.68 (12.98)	15.14 (6.81)	12.93 (4.91)	19.61 (5.13)
Successful	105	39.52 (11.41)	12.54 (4.76)	10.92 (4.88)	16.06 (4.76)
Men					
Unsuccessful	28	49.36 (11.52)	15.00 (6.30)	13.82 (4.62)	20.54 (4.50)
Successful	21	42.48 (12.72)	12.71 (4.99)	12.52 (5.70)	17.24 (4.81)
Female					
Unsuccessful	70	47.01 (13.54)	15.20 (7.05)	12.57 (5.00)	19.24 (5.34)
Successful	84	38.79 (11.01)	12.50 (4.73)	10.52 (4.61)	15.76 (4.73)

Note: TAS-20; Toronto alexithymia scale total; DIF, difficulty identifying feelings; DDF, difficulty describing feelings; EOT, externally oriented thinking.

$F_{(1, 199)} = 17.28$, $p < 0.001$); as can be seen from Table 3, these results correspond to the unsuccessful group having higher mean scores for total TAS-20 and for the TAS-20 sub-scales. There were no significant gender-success group interactions. For the sub-set of participants who completed the PANAS, the successful ($N = 37$) and unsuccessful ($N = 64$) groups were not significantly different on the positive or negative affect scales ($p > .05$).

3.3. Alexithymic vs. non-alexithymic students

A gender by alexithymia group (non-alexithymic vs. alexithymic) ANOVA with first-year GPA as the dependent variable found that the main effect for gender and the interaction were not significant. However, the non-alexithymic ($M = 70.61$, SD = 10.28) and alexithymic ($M = 66.23$,

SD = 15.06) groups differed significantly on GPA [$F(1,585) = 5.04$, $p = .02$]. Analyses also revealed that the proportion of alexithymic and non-alexithymic individuals falling into the three different academic success groups were significantly different [$\chi^2 = 6.50$, $df = 2$, $p = .04$]. For the non-alexithymic group, the proportions for unsuccessful, moderately successful, and successful were 12.3%, 71.1%, and 16.6% respectively; for the alexithymic group the proportions were 15.5%, 77.9%, and 6.5% respectively. For the sub-set of participants who completed the PANAS, the alexithymic ($N = 48$) and non-alexithymic ($N = 332$) groups were not significantly different on the positive or negative affect scales ($p > .05$).