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A NEWSLETTER FROM
THE CONSORTIUM FOR
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION
FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

COMING EVENTS

The Division on Career Development and Transition Fifteenth International Conference: From Cobblestones Think College Capacity Building Institute
In association with the Annual Meeting of the Association of University Centers on Disabilities
Sunday, November 8, 2009
Renaissance Hotel, Washington, DC

TASH 2009 Tech Workshops
November 18, 2009
Pittsburgh, PA

<http://www.tash.org/2009tash/TASHTECHWorkshops.htm>

Think College is doing a TASH Tech Workshop that will feature a presentation of early results from the participatory action research being conducted at UMass-Boston with students that are attending college who have intellectual disabilities as well as another presentation by a college student with intellectual disabilities and her mother.

Twelfth International Conference on Autism, Intellectual Disabilities, & Other Developmental Disabilities

January 20-22, 2010

Sheraton Maui Resort & Spa, Maui, Hawaii

<http://www.dddcec.org/conferences.htm>

Consortium partner Robert A. Stodden, Director, Center on Disability Studies, University of Hawaii at Manoa will present on Preparing Youth with Significant Disabilities for Postsecondary Education and Adulthood: Policy to Practice.

The Pacific Rim International Conference on Disabilities

April 12-13, 2010

Honolulu, Hawaii

<http://www.pacrim.hawaii.edu/>

PAC RIM will be followed on April 14, 2010 with a Capacity Building Institute on Transition to Postsecondary Education for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities and Autism. This workshop is recommended for college and university faculty, disability support personnel, high-school personnel, vocational rehabilitation counselors, DOE administrators, and persons with disabilities and their advocates. Debra Hart and Cate Weir from ICI-Boston will lead the CBI.

Council for Exceptional Children 2010 Convention & Expo, DDD Showcase Session

Nashville, TN

April 21-24, 2010

<http://www.cec.sped.org/Content/NavigationMenu/ProfessionalDevelopment/ConventionExpo/>

Dr. Stodden will serve as the session leader for a panel discussion on intellectual disabilities and autism and postsecondary education. Panel Participants will include Paul Wehman, David Mank, and Debra Hart.

to Cornerstones, Revitalizing Transition Outcomes in 2009, October 29-31, 2009

Savannah, Georgia

<http://www.dcdt.org/dcdtsavannah.cfm>

College Faculty: Frequently Asked Questions about Working with College Students who have Intellectual or Developmental Disabilities

By Cate Weir

Below are some questions that college faculty often have when there is a student with an intellectual disability in their classes, along with answers to those questions.

Q: Will federal program funding also carry with it documentation standards such as schools have with IEP documentation, IEP audits, etc.?

A: There is no indication at this time that the availability of federal financial aid, as has been recently approved by the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, will bring with it the level of documentation standards required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). However, it is best practice for programs serving students with intellectual disabilities to track outcomes of their students to be able to address the effectiveness of the initiative.

Q: Am I required to modify my course for students with intellectual disabilities?

A: In college, course work is not modified for students with disabilities, as it might be in K-12 education. Students who take a college course for credit will complete all work, with appropriate accommodations for disability. Accommodations may be such things as use of assistive technology, extended time for tests, use of books on tape, and so on. For some students with intellectual disabilities, college courses may be audited rather than taken for credit, and in that case, modifications such as reduced assignment load and so on may be allowed.

Q: If the curriculum is not to be modified, which academic courses would be best suited to the students' ability?

A: Students with intellectual disabilities vary from each other in terms of their strengths, interests and abilities, so it is hard to say exactly what courses may be best suited to them as a group. However, courses with more hands-on learning, courses that are related to the career goals of the student, or those that tap into a particular strength or interest of the student may be recommended.

Q: Is job placement something Vocational Rehabilitation solely does, or do your participating colleges work to find these students employment after taking college classes?

A: Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is an important partner in job placement for students in postsecondary education initiatives. For students still in high school, the job placement activities are the responsibility of the school district. In the case of dual enrollment programs, when students are still in high school and participating in a college experience, the program staff work with students to obtain employment, and then once they graduate Vocational Rehabilitation takes over. We believe that it is best practice that all college initiatives for students with intellectual disabilities have a strong focus on employment outcomes for students, and therefore would recommend that for all programs, both staff of the college program and VR, when appropriate, support students to get and maintain competitive employment.

Q: Will instructors have the same rights/responsibilities for students with ID as with other students? (e.g. If a student is disruptive can they be dismissed from class?)

A: Students with intellectual disabilities who are attending classes at a college are first and foremost students of the college, and as such are responsible for abiding by the code of conduct of the college. Students with ID do not have a different set of expectations for behavior, and faculty should apply rules for student behavior in their classrooms equally to all the students. Put simply, a student who was disruptive in class could be dismissed if that is the procedure utilized by that professor for disruptive students.

Q: Please delineate between learning disability and an intellectual disability..

A: An intellectual disability (ID) is defined as characterized by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills. This disability originates before age 18. Individuals with intellectual disabilities can and do learn, but at a slower pace than others, and learning across all domains may be affected.

In contrast, a learning disability (LD) is a neurological disorder that affects the brain's ability to receive, process, store, and respond to information. The term learning disability is used to describe the difficulty a person of at least average intelligence has in acquiring academic skills.

A learning disability is often characterized by test scores that indicate highs in one area, with lows in another. An intellectual disability will present as lower scores across all domains.

Continued on the next page.....

Q: How do you ensure being able to find jobs for students with intellectual disabilities when people nationwide are struggling to find jobs?

A: It is true that a recession and high unemployment affect all citizens, including those with intellectual disabilities. What is also true that even in good economic times, individuals with disabilities still experience higher than average unemployment rates. So in good times or bad, individuals with disabilities may need support to obtain employment, but often prove to be exemplary employees, with lower attrition and absenteeism. All citizens deserve a good job so that they can support themselves, and become a tax-paying citizen of their community, state and country.

Q: Instructors in developmental courses (as well as others) currently and in the past have had students with intellectual disabilities with no help/support and are often at a loss with what to do — can you give us a few first steps?

A: First, it is important to remember that students with intellectual disabilities can and do learn, although it may be at a different pace and with more outside of class support.

That being said, there are several things you can do as the professor in the class. First, it can be helpful to talk to the student about how they learn best. Ideally, the students have been learning ways to describe their learning style and needs.

Students may benefit from material being offered in various ways, for example with pictures and diagrams as well as words. Encouragement and support from faculty for students to use technology can be very helpful. Many students may prefer electronic text so that they can use technology such as read-aloud programs (Kurzweil, for example) to read text so that they can see and hear it at the same time. Repetition helps, so if you create podcasts of lectures that students can listen to again, or allow tape recorders in your classroom, that is very helpful. Structured handouts that help students take notes from a lecture can work well. These are just a few examples of how diversifying class content and material can help many of the learners in the classroom, including students with intellectual disabilities. Some professors have agreed to have a student audit their class, thereby opening the door for modifying some class assignments. This way, students can learn some of the material, and participate in a rich academic environment.

Faculty should also refer students to the supports that may be available outside of class. Colleges offer a rich array of support services for all college students, such as learning labs; disability services offices, and tutoring services. For students with intellectual disabilities, there may be additional supports such as educational coaches and other program staff that can assist with homework outside of class. Take advantage of these resources.

Please contact us for more information!

Think College Mini-Grant Competition 2009—Promoting Inclusive Postsecondary Education Options for People with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities

BACKGROUND

Think College, at the Institute for Community Inclusion (ICI) at the University of Massachusetts Boston, with funding from the Administration on Developmental Disabilities, conducts a comprehensive national training initiative designed to increase the participation of individuals with intellectual and other developmental disabilities in postsecondary education. Think College will be awarding up to FIVE (5) mini-grants to five different University Centers of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDDs) to develop a statewide team that conducts planning for inclusive postsecondary education for individuals with developmental disabilities.

The emphasis of this competition is to increase opportunities for postsecondary education for students with Intellectual / Developmental Disabilities within the University Centers of Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) network, in partnership with their respective Developmental Disabilities Councils and other key state partners, such as Board of Higher Education. The project priority area is state level collaborative planning resulting in an action plan to increase opportunities for inclusive postsecondary education for people with intellectual/developmental disabilities.

The overarching goal is a plan that will result in measurable increases in participation of students with intellectual/developmental disabilities in inclusive postsecondary education.

The lead applicant must be a University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD).

PURPOSE

Think College will award five mini-grants of \$15,000 each for a 9-month period for UCEDDs to support statewide strategic planning to implement an inclusive postsecondary initiative statewide. To be successful, applications must:

1. Identify key stakeholders in your state and describe plans for engaging in a collaborative strategic planning process with them to identify project goals, tasks to achieve goals, timelines, responsible entities, and milestones.
2. Describe plans to sustain and continue project activities after the funding period.

This competition will not support projects that propose to develop a separate or segregated postsecondary education program only for students with intellectual / developmental disabilities. For more information, visit http://www.aucd.org/template/news.cfm?news_id=4700&parent=16&parent_title=Home&url=/template/index.cfm

An Article Worth Revisiting

From the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition, December, 2006

Transition Services for Students Aged 18-21 with Intellectual Disabilities in College and Community Settings: Models and Implications of Success

By Meg Grigal, Amy Dwyre, and Helena Davis

Recently in the field of special education there has been a call for the development and expansion of services for older students with intellectual disabilities outside of the high school setting. In response, local school systems across the country have begun to provide transition services to students ages 18 and older with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary settings such as two- and four-year colleges or other community settings. This brief provides an overview of some successful models of transition services being implemented in postsecondary settings, describes one such model implemented by the Baltimore City Public School System in three local colleges, and presents some of the implications and strategies for success of this model.

To read the rest of the article, visit <http://ncset.org/publications/viewdesc.asp?id=3395>



CONSORTIUM PARTNERS—

THE UNIVERSITY CENTERS FOR EXCELLENCE IN DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AT:

**University of Massachusetts Boston (primary) University of Minnesota
University of Hawaii University of Delaware The Ohio State University
Vanderbilt University University of South Carolina
University of California Los Angeles**

In conjunction with the **Association for University Centers on Disabilities**

The Think College Newsletter is published monthly.

To subscribe electronically, please send your email address to Carrie Coslin at cosl0001@umn.edu.

Please distribute widely to interested parties.

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Administration for Children & Families

ADMINISTRATION ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (ADD)

