The University of Oklahoma
Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education
Department of Educational Psychology
Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment
Annual Report
2015

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Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment

Annual Report for 2015

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The Mission of the University of Oklahoma

The mission of the University of Oklahoma is to provide the best possible educational experience for students through excellence in teaching, research, creative activity, and through service to the state and society. The University of Oklahoma recognizes, appreciates, and actively pursues its responsibility to help make Oklahoma a good place in which to live and work.

The university is part of a world community of scholars whose activities impact local, national and international levels. Graduates of the university hold important leadership positions in the state, the nation, and around the world. To encourage excellence, the university recruits, develops, and retains outstanding faculty and staff; attracts capable students who will provide future leadership for the state, region, and nation; provides superior library, laboratory, classroom, performance and computer facilities; and engages in ongoing planning, analysis, and management for the effective use of its resources.

The Goal of the Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education

To promote inquiry and practices that foster democratic life and that are fundamental to the interrelated activities of teaching, research, and practice in the multidisciplinary field of education.

Purpose of the Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment

The Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment’s unique purpose and vision aligns with that of the University of Oklahoma and the Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education. Developed in collaboration with faculty and stakeholders, this vision guides all Zarrow Center activities.

The Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment promotes successful secondary and postsecondary educational, vocational, and personal outcomes for students and adults with disabilities through evaluation, research, development, instruction, and dissemination of best educational and support practices. The Zarrow Center also prepares undergraduate and graduate students to assume leadership roles in schools, universities, and support organizations.
Vision of the Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment

The Zarrow Center creates and facilitates student-directed educational, employment, and adult living outcomes; fosters innovative educational practices; and prepares educational leaders. The figure below shows how research, instruction, and outreach combine to facilitate dissemination of Zarrow Center information and products.

Zarrow Center’s Research Questions

The Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment — through its faculty, staff and students — develops, implements, evaluates, and disseminates strategies and procedures to facilitate youth and adults with disabilities; those at risk of school failure; and those who learn differently to attain their desired secondary education, postsecondary education, and employment goals. To that end, Zarrow Center activities will answer these questions:

1. What practices and supports achieve increased middle and high school student engagement, completion, and transition into postsecondary education and employment?

2. What practices and supports achieve increased student engagement and completion of postsecondary educational programs, and transition into desired employment or additional educational opportunities?

3. What secondary and postsecondary educational factors impede or facilitate students’ attainment of educational and vocational goals?
Objectives and Action Steps for the Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment

To answer the research questions, Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment faculty, staff and students will:

1. Evaluate current transition practices and their effect on postsecondary outcomes for students with disabilities.

   **Action Steps**
   - Promote familial, cultural and self-determination processes for all students, with particular focus on individuals with disabilities.
   - Promote student-directed educational practices in collaboration with families and educators.
   - Improve families’ knowledge about and participation in transition planning to advocate for their children’s postsecondary transition outcomes.
   - Collaborate with educators, community service providers, and policy makers to implement and evaluate transition practices and postsecondary outcomes for students with disabilities.

2. Conduct research activities that influence instruction practices.

   **Action Steps**
   - Develop, implement and evaluate culturally and disability-sensitive secondary, postsecondary, and employment assessments and instructional materials.
   - Involve undergraduate and graduate students in the development, field-testing, and dissemination of new assessments and materials.

3. Collaborate with families, educators, support service providers, and policymakers to develop and implement transition education assessments, instructional materials, and practices.

   **Action Steps**
   - Demonstrate awareness of needed supports to help secondary youth with disabilities achieve annual and postschool goals.
   - Break down barriers that undermine student-family-determined transition efforts and successes across cultures and disability categories.
   - Develop, implement, and evaluate culturally and disability-sensitive secondary, postsecondary, and employment assessments and instructional materials.

4. Assist school and agency staff to identify and implement strategies that support the successful integration of students with disabilities in postsecondary education, employment and adult living.
Action Steps
• Participate and take a leadership role in the Oklahoma Transition Council.
• Support, track, and provide technical assistance to secondary transition teams across the state, region, and nation.
• Support postsecondary disability support offices at OU and across the state and nation.

5. Disseminate educational practice and research findings via books, book chapters, journal articles, the World Wide Web, and professional conferences.

Action Steps
• Develop, implement, evaluate, and disseminate instructional materials that demonstrate cultural and disability-sensitivity in transition education practices in secondary and postsecondary education, adult living, and employment settings.
• Write and submit for publication in journal articles, books, and book chapters.
• Submit and deliver presentations at state, national, and international professional conferences.
• Structure the Zarrow Center Web page to serve as a resource for professionals, teachers, students and families, as well as transition education and self-determination researchers.

6. Provide classroom and experiential opportunities for graduate students to become educational leaders and to fully understand transition education, self-determination, and postsecondary student-directed issues, practices, and needed supports.

Action Steps
• Recruit and retain graduate students, including those from multicultural and disability areas, and prepare them to be knowledgeable and skilled leaders in special education.
• Provide opportunities for Zarrow Center graduate students to engage in state and national professional service, research, writing, and publication activities.
• Provide opportunities for Zarrow Center graduate students to gain experience in teaching and supporting undergraduate general and special education majors.
• Provide opportunities for Zarrow Center graduate students to meet and engage secondary transition and postsecondary transition and self-determination leaders from across the state, country, and world.
• Provide opportunities for Zarrow Center graduate students to become engaged in state and national professional activities.
2015 Zarrow Center Faculty

James E. Martin, Ph.D., holds the Zarrow Family Chair in Learning Enrichment and directs the Zarrow Center. He investigates transition education and self-determination practices to improve student retention in secondary school and successful transition to postsecondary employment and postsecondary education.

Maeghan Hennessey, Ph.D., associate professor in the Department of Educational Psychology, devotes a portion of her time to serve as the assessment expert and assessment statistician on a Zarrow Center project developing a new transition assessment funded by the National Center for Special Education Research.

Amber McConnell, Ph.D., research associate, serves as the project coordinator on a Zarrow Center project funded by the National Center for Special Education Research to develop a new transition education assessment.

Robert Terry, Ph.D., professor of psychology, devotes a portion of his time each week to serve as an assessment statistician and test construction expert on a Zarrow Center project developing a new transition assessment funded by the National Center for Special Education Research.

Kendra Williams-Diehm, Ph.D., associate professor of special education, has been working with the Zarrow Center to develop transition education master and doctoral training programs and leadership grant proposals.

2105 Zarrow Center Staff

Linda Gill, managerial associate at the Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment, has been an administrative support OU employee for 30 years. She graduated Phi Theta Kappa from Rose State College in 1996 with an associate degree in political science/pre-law. She has served on the OU Hourly Employee’s Council and the Executive Employee’s Council; tutors social sciences and academic writing; and is a certified literacy tutor for adult readers. In 2004, the OU Hourly Employees Council awarded her the Distinguished Performance Award.

Donna Willis is an administrative assistant at the Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment. She graduated in May 2011 with a bachelor’s degree in psychology and earned an AAS in Horticulture Technology-Horticulture Therapy option from Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City in May 2014.

Chad Bailey serves as the Webmaster for the online Transition Assessment and Goal Generator (TAGG), developed by the Zarrow Center with funding by the National Center for Special Education Research.
2015 Zarrow Center Graduate Research Assistants

The following graduate students contributed their unique experiences and talents to Zarrow Center research, development, and teaching activities.

Jennifer Burnes earned her doctorate in special education in August 2015. She graduated from the University of North Texas in 2005 with a master’s degree in special education and Oklahoma State University in 1998 with a master’s degree in statistics. Her experiences include teaching middle school students with moderate to severe disabilities in Plano, Texas, and Norman, Oklahoma, plus one year of teaching a preschool class for children with developmental disabilities in Norman. She also worked at the Oklahoma State Department of Education, Special Education Services, as an assessment coordinator for three and a half years. She has consulted with the Oklahoma Deaf-Blind Project regarding statewide assessment for students who are deaf-blind. She is president of the Oklahoma chapter of the Division on Career Development and Transition. Her expertise includes data management and analysis, special education compliance, methods of providing access to the general curriculum for students with significant disabilities, and alternate assessment. Her interests include expanding post-secondary education opportunities for students with intellectual and other developmental disabilities to improve employment and independent living outcomes, universal design, and to provide access to the general curriculum for students with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities.

Ana Melendez Guevara earned a master’s degree in social work in August 2015. She is from Bogota, Colombia, and graduated with a bachelor’s degree in psychology from the University of Los Andes-Colombia in 2012. She is a member of the Colombian Student Association at OU and the National Association of Social Workers. She is interested in exploring how adverse events at home affect students’ academic achievement, especially how domestic violence becomes a risk factor for students in the development of emotional and learning disabilities.

Jason Herron earned his doctoral degree in instructional psychology and technology in 2015. He earned a bachelor of arts degree in psychology from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois, and a master’s degree in education in instructional psychology and technology from the University of Oklahoma. He is a graduate teaching assistant for a graduate statistical methods course, and an undergraduate educational psychology course. His programmatic research agenda focuses on learning cognition, complex problem solving, and decision justification. He currently serves as the communications officer for the Graduate Student Council of Division C (Educational Psychology) American Educational Research Association, is a member of the National Council for Measurement in Education Graduate Student Issues Committee, and is a member of the Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education Graduate Student Committee. He also belongs to the American Psychological Association and the Association for Psychological Science.
Kristen Perez completed the special education Transition Education Scholars program, earning her master’s degree in August 2015. She worked part time as a graduate assistant at the Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment and part time as a resource teacher for Norman Public Schools. She serves on the ABLE Board of Directors in Norman and is a member of the OU Student Council for Exceptional Children.

Stephan Stefanoff is a first-year special education doctoral student from Bulgaria. He has a medical degree from Trakia University and an education degree from Sofia University, Bulgaria, EU. He also has completed course work in the master’s program in adult and higher education at OU. He has worked in recovery and rehabilitation with individuals with traumatic brain injury and severe trauma. In Europe, he worked as a consultant for a nonprofit advocacy organization for the rights of people with disabilities. He also has worked with adults with physical and mental disabilities. His research focus is on post-hospitalization transition for people with traumatic brain injuries.

**Employment of Zarrow Center Alumni During 2015**

Since opening its doors in the fall of 2000, several OU doctoral students studied and worked at the Zarrow Center while receiving support for their education from Zarrow Center funds. The partial list below names the alumni and their current positions as of December 2015.

- Jennifer Burnes, program evaluator at Oklahoma City Public Schools
- Jason Herron, assistant professor at Wichita State University, Kansas
- Jodie Martin, assessment researcher at Pro-Ed International Publisher, Texas
- Marsha Dempsey Herron, assistant professor at Langston University, Oklahoma
- Nidal El-Kazimi, department director, Shafallah Center for Children with Special Needs, Doha, Qatar
- Tammy Pannells, researcher at the Arkansas Department of Health, Health Statistics
- Penny Cantley, assistant professor at Oklahoma State University
- Lorrie Sylvester, research clinical professor at the OU Health Sciences Center
- Karen Little, monitoring consultant, North Central Region, North Carolina
- Vincent Harper, private educational consultant, Evansville, Indiana
- Chauncey Goff, adjunct professor, University of Wisconsin, Wisconsin
- Juan Portley, secondary transition consultant based out of Santa Fe, New Mexico
- Chen-Ya Juan, assistant professor at Hsin Sheng College, Taiwan
- Jamie Van Dycke, assistant professor at Fontbonne University in St. Louis, Missouri
- Lori Peterson, assistant professor at the University of Northern Colorado, Colorado
- Lee Woods, assistant professor at Northeastern State University, Oklahoma
- Sandra Ludwig, retired, Moore, Oklahoma
Several students studied at the Zarrow Center while working on their master’s degrees and also received support for their education from Zarrow Center funds. The partial list below names the alumni and their current positions as of December 2015.

- Ian Dewey, high school special education teacher, Noble, Oklahoma
- Qi Wang, certified Chinese teacher at Tulsa Public Schools, Oklahoma
- Pik Wah Lam, research assistant at Texas Tech University, Texas
- Staci Vollmer, instructor at the University of Oklahoma, Norman
- Rosemary Jakub, high school special education teacher in Mesa, Arizona
- Bryan Duncan, Ph.D., staff psychologist at Texas Tech University, Texas

**2015 Transition Education Scholars**

In 2012, professors Kendra Williams-Diehm and James Martin were awarded a professional leadership development grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs to prepare 40 master-level transition education scholars to enhance and improve transition programs and planning for their students with disabilities. As of December 2015, 17 of these transition professionals achieved their masters’ degrees in special education with emphasis in secondary transition education. The list below names the alumni and their current positions as of December 2015.

- Lori Chesnut, Choctaw-Nicoma Park Schools
- Ian Dewey, Noble Public Schools
- Katie Carter, Moore Public Schools
- Mindy Lingo, Moore Public Schools
- Kennda Miller, Oklahoma City Public Schools
- Marcie Stickney, Norman Public Schools
- Bruce Young, Francis Tuttle Technology Center
- Beverly Carter, Noble Public Schools
- Ty Beasley, Norman Public Schools
- Cynthia Carlton, Moore Public Schools
- Whitney Green, Moore Public Schools
- Contessa Hubbard-Bass, Oklahoma City Public Schools
- Rachael Laib, Moore Public Schools
- Lindsay Race, University of Florida
- Donna Lewis, Children’s Hospital Education Program
- Kristen Perez-Rickels, Norman Public Schools

**2015 Zarrow Center External Funding Accomplishments**

(Approximately $14,040,000 to date)

**2015 Funded**

*Transition Success Assessment*
Funding Source: National Center for Special Education Research (Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education)
Director (PI): James Martin and Maeghan Hennessey (CO-PI)
Time: 7/01/10 – 6/30/15
Amount Funded: $2,018,249

Secondary Transition Education Scholars – Master’s Degree Leadership Grant
Funding Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs
Directors (PI): Kendra Williams-Diehm, Co-PI Jim Martin
Time: 1/01/12 – 12/31/16
Amount Funded: $1,240,000

2015 Submitted
Sooner Scholars: Preparing Doctoral Students to Become Higher Education Professors with a Focus in Applied Behavior Analysis and Secondary Transition Education
Funding Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs
PI: James Martin
Co-PI: Kendra Williams-Diehm
Status: Awarded Grant# H325D150083
Time: 1/1/16 – 12/31/20
Total Award Request: $1,250,000

Secondary Transition ABA Scholars: Preparing Master Level Graduates to Serve Secondary Students with Low-Incidence Disabilities
Funding Source: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs
PI: Kendra Williams-Diehm
Co-PI: Jim Martin
Status: Awarded Grant# H325K150210
Time: 1/1/16 – 12/31/20
Total Award Request: $1,248,200

TAGG-A: Developing, Validating, and Disseminating a New Secondary Transition Assessment for Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities Taught to Alternative Achievement Standards
Submitted to: Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research
 PI: James Martin
Co-PI: Meaghan Hennessey
Status: Awarded Grant# R324A160160
Time: 7/1/16 – 6/30/20
Partner: SRI of Palo Alto, California. SRI is the largest not-for-profit research organization in the country.
Total Award Requested: $1,599,747
Zarrow Center Accomplishments

Transition Assessment and Goal Generator (TAGG)
The TAGG is an online transition assessment developed with funding from the U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences that measures student mastery of nonacademic behaviors research shows to be associated with postsecondary further education and employment. Over the five-year development process, the TAGG was normed on 1,537 students with disabilities along with input from their teachers and families. Multiple reliability and validity studies support use of the TAGG in transition planning.

The TAGG is designed for use with students with mild to moderate disabilities who plan to someday become competitively employed. The TAGG Professional, Student, and Family versions identify students’ strengths and needs in eight constructs and then produce a results profile with suggested annual transition goals IEP teams may use for transition planning. The TAGG was released for sale in October 2014 and is available for $3 per set, which includes the Professional, Student, and Family versions. Educators in all 50 states are using the TAGG to facilitate transition planning for high school students with disabilities.

A TAGG demo site is also available for professors and graduate students to use the TAGG at no cost for classroom activities and research projects. School district administrators may also request TAGG demo access for professional development and training purposes. More details can be found at the TAGG website: https://tagg.ou.edu/tagg/

Annual Oklahoma Transition Institute
The Oklahoma Transition Council (OTC) consists of 30 members representing diverse interests and includes representatives from the Oklahoma State Department of Education, Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services, Oklahoma Family Network, Public School educators, Oklahoma Department of Human Services, the Parent Training and Information Center of Oklahoma, and university representatives, to name a few. The mission of the Oklahoma Transition Council is to improve transition education, planning, and services that lead to successful post-school outcomes for students with disabilities.

Based on the model used by New Mexico’s transition leaders, in 2004, the Oklahoma Transition Council formed to develop the Oklahoma Transition Institute and the local team concept. The Oklahoma Transition Council divided the state by Career Technology Center locations matched by available rehabilitation counselors to form regional teams. In 2006, the OTC held its first Oklahoma Transition Institute with follow-up regional team meetings. Since then, participation in OTI by secondary special educators, school counselors, transition specialists, and vocational rehabilitation counselors increased to over 500 participants.

The 10th OTI was held in October 2015 and was the largest group so far with 524 Oklahoma transition stakeholders in attendance. Evaluations and feedback from
participants suggests teachers feel they learn helpful strategies and get lots of fresh ideas for transition planning with their students. Valuable relationships and network connections are developed between agency representatives and educators in a relaxed and fun environment where the focus is on successfully transitioning students into adult life.

2015 Teaching
Martin, J. (2015). OU Special Education Program
  o Transition-Based Assessment (master students)
  o Transition Practicum (master students)
  o Dissertation Research (doctoral students)
  o Directed Project (master students)
Martin, J. (2015). OU College of Liberal Studies
  o Goal Setting and Attainment (undergraduate students)
  o Comprehensive Exam Committees (master students)
McConnell, A. (2015). OU Special Education Program
  o Theories of Exceptional Children (master students)
  o Transition and Self-Determination (undergraduate and master students)
  o Comprehensive Exam Committees (master students)

2015 Articles Published

2015 Articles Submitted


**2015 Articles Under Review**


**2015 Articles in Preparation**


**2015 Book Chapters In Press**


**2015 Assessments and Instructional Materials Published**


2015 Webinars, Presentations, and Workshops

Invited Webinars


National Conference Presentations


**State Presentations or Workshops**


**Professional Service**

**Facilitator**

Willis, D. (2015). Team Facilitator, 10th Oklahoma Transition Institute, Norman, Oklahoma
Reviewer
Martin, J. (2012-present). Field Reviewer, Exceptional Children
Martin, J. (2015). Guest Reviewer, Remedial and Special Education
Martin, J. (2015). Reviewer, Exceptionality
Martin, J. (2015). Reviewer, Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individuals
Martin, J. (2015). Reviewer, Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities

Editorial Board Member
Martin, J. (2000-present). Career Development and Transition For Exceptional Individuals
Martin, J. (2008-present). Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities

Organization Service
Martin, J. (2015). President, Council for Exceptional Children, Division of Career Education
Martin, J. (2015). Treasurer, Oklahoma Division on Career Development and Transition
Martin, J. (2015). Member of the OU College of Education Extended Administrative Council
Martin, J. (2015). Award Committee for the OU College of Education, Department of Educational Psychology (chair 2012 - 14)
Martin, J. (2015). Member of Oklahoma’s Transition Council
Martin, J. (2015). Strand Chair and Field reviewer for CEC’s Division on Career Development and Transition Conference
McConnell, A. (2015). Member, Oklahoma Deaf and Hard of Hearing Coalition
McConnell, A. (2015). Member, Oklahoma Transition Council
McConnell, A. (2014). President, Oklahoma Division on Career Development and Transition
McConnell, A. (2015). Member, Council for Exceptional Children, Publication Committee, Research Committee

Awards and Honors
Martin, J. (2015). Jon E. Pedersen Excellence in Graduate Mentoring Award, University of Oklahoma, Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education
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