University of Oklahoma
Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education
Department of Educational Psychology

Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment
Annual Report

For the Year Ending December 2011

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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 together to facilitate dissemination of ZC 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 policymakers 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.
2011 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., assistant 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, M.A., 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.

Tammy Pannells, Ph.D., post-doctoral research associate, works on a Zarrow Center project to develop a new transition education assessment funded by the National Center for Special Education Research.

Robert Terry, Ph.D., associate 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., assistant professor of special education, has been working with the Zarrow Center to develop transition education master and doctoral training programs and leadership grant proposals.

2011 Zarrow Center Staff

Linda Gill, administrative assistant at the Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment, has been an administrative support OU employee for 26 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 a staff assistant at the Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment. She graduated in May 2011 with a bachelor’s degree in psychology. She is a member of the Golden Key International Honor Society and the American Psychological Association.
During 2011, seven graduate students contributed their unique experiences and talents to Zarrow Center research, development, and teaching activities.

**Penny Cantley** earned her doctorate in May 2011. She graduated from the University of Oklahoma in 2002 with a bachelor’s degree in special education. Her experiences include two years teaching special education at the elementary level in Okinawa, Japan, and three years teaching secondary special education in Oklahoma, where she focused on improving reading proficiency for students considered at high risk for school failure. Penny has served as president for the Oklahoma Council for Exceptional Children, and as a committee member on the CEC-TED membership committee and professional development committee. She has presented locally, nationally, and internationally on topics related to reading instruction in the resource classroom, student perceptions of transition practices, self-awareness, and transition assessment. In collaboration with Zarrow Center associates, she developed *ME!*, a curriculum for teaching students with disabilities critical transition skills. Funded by the Oklahoma Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities, teachers use *ME!* to help students with disabilities become aware of the disability’s impact in their lives. Her research interests include secondary and postsecondary transition participation and outcomes for students with disabilities, specifically for issues related to disability awareness among Native American students in Oklahoma.

**Nidal El-Kazimi**, a final year doctoral student from Jordan, is working as a graduate research assistant with the Zarrow Center on the TAGG Project. Nidal’s research interests include self-determination and secondary transition education within different educational and cultural settings. A second research interest is meta-analysis techniques for single-subject designs. A third interest is early identification and prevention for at-risk students with mathematics difficulties. Part of Nidal’s work involves English-Arabic translations of selected publications in special education. Nidal co-taught Advanced Behavior Analysis and Research Design classes at OU and provided technical support on research design and statistical techniques for multiple projects. Prior to joining the Zarrow Center, he taught physics for 10 years with the United Nations’ educational agencies and provided private educational consultation and professional development services in Jordan. He earned his master’s degree in Gifted and Talented education and has been certified as a green belt Lean/Six Sigma from OU. Nidal has been awarded the Balqaa’ University Graduate College Award, the Arab Council for Gifted and Talented Award, and the Sandra L. O’Brien Endowed Scholarship for his excellent achievement. Also, he has been awarded the Meritorious Increment Award from UN-UNRWA as an outstanding teacher. He is a member of the Council for Exceptional Children and serves as a member on the Board of Directors to the Division of International Special Education and Services and English/Arabic Translation Team. He has presented his scholarly work in multiple regional, national, and international conferences and facilitated multiple strategic planning transition teams.
Marsha Dempsey Herron is a post-doctoral research fellow at the Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment. She earned a bachelor of science degree in public administration from Shaw University in Raleigh, N.C., and a master of science degree in special education from City University of New York - College of Staten Island. Marsha’s experiences include working as a special education teacher in under-served communities in Brooklyn, N.Y., where she filmed a documentary and implemented the first portfolio evaluation process for students with disabilities in her school. Her research interests focus on working with all students and teachers of students with behavioral and emotional disorders to produce better life outcomes. Additional areas of interest include social justice, school climate, dropout prevention, and universal design for learning. Marsha currently is serving as the student member of the Council for Exceptional Children Board of Directors. She also belongs to the American Psychological Association and is an active member of the North Dakota Study Group, an educational advocacy organization.

Brad Mays, a second-year doctoral student in adult and higher education, is from Bartlesville, Okla. He joined the Zarrow Center as a graduate research assistant in June 2007 and worked at the Zarrow Center while earning his master’s degree in adult and higher education, which he obtained in May 2009. Brad assisted the Oklahoma Transition Council, provided technical assistance to the Oklahoma Transition Institute local teams, tracked the ongoing progress of the OTI state transition teams, and shared his own experiences surrounding his transition from high school to college. He is pursuing his doctoral degree at OU in adult and higher education with emphasis in student affairs.

Jodie D. Martin, a second-year doctoral student, graduated from the University of Maryland in 2005 with a master’s degree in special education. Her experiences include four years of teaching math and reading in full-secure juvenile corrections settings, one year of providing instructional support in a charter school in an urban setting, and one year of teaching seventh grade lab math and co-teaching an inclusive eighth-grade math class. In the past, Jodie served as a member of the Oklahoma City Public Schools Math Textbook Adoption Committee and the State of Oklahoma Curriculum Resource Guide Modified (CARG-M) Development Committee. Jodie’s university-level teaching experience includes three discussion sections of Understanding and Accommodating Students with Exceptionalities, and guest lecturing on topics including Specific Learning Disorders, Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, and Response to Intervention. Jodie currently is the project director of the Assistive Technology Self-Determination pilot study. Funded by the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, the study is looking at the Take Action curriculum and assistive technology to increase goal attainment among individuals with disabilities. Jodie also is a research assistant on a study examining the effects of special education infusion in general education university courses. As a part of this study, Jodie’s primary responsibilities include curriculum development, data collection, and qualitative and quantitative analysis. Jodie’s research interests include measurement and assessment of students with disabilities, instrument and curriculum development, and family planning rights for females with intellectual disabilities. Jodie will complete her doctoral work in 2013.
Amber McConnell joined the Zarrow Center as a Sooner Scholar in the fall of 2008 and will graduate with a doctorate in special education in spring 2012. She has attended several Oklahoma universities, including Oklahoma State University, the University of Tulsa and Northeastern State University, where she earned a bachelor’s degree in mild-to-moderate special education and a master of science degree in collegiate scholarship and services with an emphasis in student personnel services. Amber graduated with honors and was awarded the 2007 Academic Achievement Award by Collegiate Scholarship and Services during her master’s studies, concentrating on transfer of rights for students with disabilities from the secondary to postsecondary setting. She is a member of the Kappa Delta Pi, Gamma Beta Phi, Phi Kappa Phi, and Golden Key honor societies. Her experiences include teaching special education at the secondary level for six years in northeastern Oklahoma, where she focused on improving transition from the secondary to postsecondary settings and informing parents and students of the change in rights and services during this transition. She has served as a secondary special education team leader, a member of the professional development team, and a member of the Northeastern Pryor Transition Team. Amber’s research interests include improving transition education and strategies to teach self-determination to students with disabilities to enhance transition outcomes. She currently is the project coordinator for the Transition Assessment and Goal Generator (TAGG) development study funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Special Education Research. The TAGG development study is a multi-state study that aims to develop a transition assessment that identifies behaviors and skills known to indicate postschool success in students with disabilities that educators can use to develop annual transition goals.

Lorrie Sylvest completed her doctoral dissertation in the spring of 2011 and graduated. She is a licensed physical therapist and earned her doctorate in special education from the University of Oklahoma. She earned a bachelor’s degree in physical education from the University of Delaware in 1977. Besides working as a graduate research assistant at the Zarrow Center, Lorrie also teaches in the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences at the OU Health Sciences Center. Her dissertation research investigates self-determined physical therapy interventions for youth with developmental disabilities and their families as they pursue postsecondary goals. She is comparing the impact of clinician-directed versus student-self-directed physical therapy approaches on motor skill acquisition for young adults with severe and multiple disabilities. Other research endeavors include vocational choice making, student-directed transition planning, self-determination in related services settings, and physical therapy’s impact on transition outcomes for youth with disabilities. She co-authored the Student-Directed Transition Planning lessons and coordinated the final year of this federally funded research project, investigating gains in transition knowledge, self-determination, self-efficacy, and IEP meeting activity as a result of students’ participation in transition education programs incorporating two distinct lesson packages. She serves on the editorial board for Physical and Occupational Therapy in Pediatrics. Lorrie is a 26-year member of the American Physical Therapy Association, and serves as the APTA’s pediatric section liaison to the National Joint Committee on Communication Issues for People with Severe Disabilities. Lorrie is chair of the Adolescents and Adults with Developmental Disabilities special interest group of
APTA’s Section on Pediatrics, and serves on a related task force, Continuum of Care for People with Lifelong Disabilities. Lorrie also belongs to the Council for Exceptional Children (DCDT and DDD divisions), the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, and the American Association for Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Lorrie presented locally, nationally, and internationally on topics related to vocational choice making, student-directed transition planning, and self-determination in related services settings, and has co-authored three articles, one book chapter and a Web-based lesson package.

Zarrow Center Alumni

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 2011.

- Vincent Harper, assistant professor at University of Evansville, Ind.
- Chauncey Goff, assistant professor at West Virginia University
- Juan Portley, secondary transition consultant based out of Santa Fe, N.M.
- Chen-Ya Juan, assistant professor at Hsin Sheng College in Taiwan
- Jamie Van Dycke, assistant professor at Fontbonne University in St. Louis
- Lori Peterson, assistant professor at the University of Northern Colorado
- Lee Woods, assistant professor at Boise State University
- Sandra Ludwig, principal at Moore Public Schools in Moore, Okla.
- Lorraine Sylvester, research clinical professor at the OU Health Sciences Center

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 2011.

- Staci Vollmer, instructor at East Central University in Ada, OKLA.
- Rosemary Davani (Robertson), high school special ed. teacher in Mesa, Ariz.
- Bryan Duncan, Ph.D. staff psychologist at Texas Tech University

2011 Zarrow Center External Funding Accomplishments

Transition Success Assessment
Funding Source: National Center for Special Education Research (Institute of Education Sciences)
Director (PI): James Martin and Maeghan Hennessey (CO-PI)
Time: 7/01/10 – 6/30/14
Amount Funded: $2,018,249

Assistive Technology and Self-Determination Goal Attainment Project
Funding Source: Oklahoma Department of Vocational Rehabilitation
Director (PI): James Martin
Time: 10/1/10 – 9/30/11  
Amount Funded: $36,250

_Transition Technical Assistance and Evaluation_  
Funding Source: Oklahoma Department of Education, Special Education Program  
Director (PI): James Martin  
Time: 4/1/07 – 6/30/12  
Amount Funded: $400,000

_ME! Development of a Disability Awareness Curriculum_  
Founding Source: Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council  
Director (PI): James Martin  
Time: 9/1/08 – 4/30/11  
Amount Funded: $90,000

**2011 Zarrow Center Accomplishments**

**Teaching**
Zarrow Center faculty and doctoral scholars taught a variety of classes at the undergraduate and graduate levels in 2011 to help prepare future special-education teachers.

Herron, M. D., _Individual Behavioral Supports_  
Martin, J. E., _Transition and Self-Determination_  
Martin, J. E., & Herron, M. D., _Classroom Management in Special Education_  
McConnell, A. E., _Special Education Advanced Practicum_  
McConnell, A. E., _Special Education Introductory Practicum_

**Articles Submitted**
Dempsey, M., Moriasi, P., & Martin, J. E. (2011). _Using targeted classroom intervention to reduce disruptive behaviors for students with emotional and behavioral disorders._  
El-Kazimi, N., & Martin, J. E. (2011). _Using TouchMath to teach addition to second grade students at risk for academic failure._  
Herron, M. D., & Martin, J. E. (2011). _Using self-determination scores to predict school engagement of middle school students with behavioral disorders._  
Martin, J. E., Hennessey, M. N., Terry, R., McConnell, A., El-Kazimi, N., Willis, D., & Martin, J. D. (2011). _Developing the Transition Assessment and Goal Generator (TAGG): Results of a confirmatory factor analysis and basic psychometric properties._  


**Articles in Preparation**


Herron, M. D. (in preparation). *Changing minds: Using proactive identification methods to increase self-determination interventions for middle school students with E/BD.*


Martin, J. E., Kazimi, N., Walden, R., & Wu, P. (in preparation). *Teaching students with visual impairments to actively participate in their secondary IEP meetings.*


**Book Chapters in Press**


**Book Published**


**Presentations and Workshops**


El-Kazimi, N. A. *Effective communication strategies for English Language Learners (ELL).* Annual Conference of the Oklahoma Council for Exceptional Children, Oklahoma City, OK.


Herron, M. D. *Saving our students: Using a self-determination assessment to predict the performance of middle school students with emotional and behavioral disorders.*
Division on Career Development and Transition International Conference; October 2011; Kansas City, KS.

Kohler, P., Martin, J. E., Osmani, K., & Coyle, J. (2011). Cross-organization collaboration: One state’s example of how it works. The 16th CEC’s Division on Career Development and Transition Conference, Kansas City, MO.

Martin, J. D., Promoting Goal Attainment among Students with Disabilities, University of Oklahoma Graduate Research Day, Norman, OK.

Martin, J. D., Teaching Students to Attain Their Goals, Oklahoma Transition Institute, October, 2011, Oklahoma City, OK.

Martin, J. D., Martin, J. E., Kifer, M., & Osmani, K. (2011). Teaching students to attain their transition goals. The 16th CEC’s Division on Career Development and Transition Conference, Kansas City, MO.

Martin, J. D., Martin, J. E., Kifer, M., & Osmani, K. (2011). Teaching students to attain their transition goals. The 6th Annual Oklahoma Transition Institute, Transition Conference, Oklahoma City, OK.


Martin, J. E. (2011). Webinar on transition assessment for students with severe and multiple disabilities. Workshop delivered via a webinar for the Indiana Transition Change Project, Bloomington, IN.

Martin, J. E. (2011). Student involvement in the IEP. Workshop delivered at an NSTTAC teacher training workshop, Grants, NM.


Martin, J. E. (2011). Student-directed planning. The 8th Wisconsin Transition Conference, Wisconsin Dells, WI.


Martin, J. E., & Sylvester, L. (2011). *Webinar on transition assessment for students with severe and multiple disabilities*. Workshop delivered via a webinar for the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center, Charlotte, NC.

Mays, B. *College Success and YOU*. Moore Transition Team Meeting. April, 2011. Moore, OK.


Osmani, K., & Martin, J. E. (2011). *Transition 101*. Workshop presentation at the 6th Annual Oklahoma Transition Institute, Transition Conference, Oklahoma City, OK.


**Professional Service**

**Transition Team Facilitator**

McConnell, A. E.

Reviewer
El-Kazimi, N. A.
• Proposal Reviewer of the Self-Determination strand for the DCDT 2011 Conference in Kansas City, June 2011
• Proposal Reviewer for the International Programs/Services topic area for the CEC 2011 Convention and Expo in Washington DC, July 2011

Martin, J. E.
• Grant review panel member for U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education and Institute of Education Sciences
• Panel member for the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Special Education Program (OSEP) 3 + 2 Review of the National Post-School Outcomes Center

CEC Division Service
El-Kazimi, N. A.
• Council for Exceptional Children/Division of International Special Education and Services (CEC/DISES) Board of Directors.
• Council for Exceptional Children/Division of Career Development and Transition (CEC/DCDT) Human Rights and Diversity Committee.

Herron, M. D.
• Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) National Board of Directors

Martin, J. E.
• Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Finance and Audit Committee
• CEC Division on Career Development and Transition, Publication Chair

OU College of Education Service
Herron, M. D., 2011 Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education Fall Convocation Speaker

Editorial Service
Herron, M. D.
• Guest Reviewer, Contemporary Educational Psychology

Martin, J. E. Editorial Board Member
• Career Development For Exceptional Individuals (1993-96, 2000 – to present)
• Exceptional Children (2009 - present)
• Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disabilities (2010 – to present)
• Journal of Special Education (guest reviewer)
• Research in Developmental Disabilities (1985 to 1996, 2002 - present)
• Research and Practice for Persons with Severe Disabilities (2008 – present)

Committees and Advisory Boards
McConnell, A. E.
• Dream Institute Scholar Selection Committee
• Oklahoma Transition Council
Martin, J. E.
• Dream Institute Board of Directors
• Dream Institute Scholar Selection Committee
• Oklahoma Transition Council
• Cleveland County United Way Seniors and Disability Council
• Oklahoma Autism Council
• Advisory Board Member for the OUHSC Tolbert Center in the College of Allied Health
• Search Committee for the College of Liberal Studies Assistant Dean

Awards and Honors
Herron, M. D., Sandra L. O’Brien Special Education Endowed Scholarship
Herron, M. D., R. Steven Hsu Special Education Endowed Scholarship
Herron, M. D., Sooner Heritage Scholarship
Herron, M. D., College Board/NCORE Student Scholar (National Conference on Race and Ethnicity)
McConnell, A. E., Will Rogers Scholarship Recipient

For more information, contact:
OU/Zarrow Center for Learning Enrichment
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