Think College: A Nexus of Learning, Working, & Life

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Our Conversation

• Share a short film
• The formula for success
• Identify Myths
• Provide some strategies
• Share some standards
• If there is time left, we’ll just talk
  (this happens to be my favorite thing to do!!)
Interviewer: Can I ask you a question?
What are key components to success?

• Expectations
• Resources
• Opportunity
Expectations

• Set the tone for what is possible
• Create parameters of opportunity
• Impact students’ expectations of themselves
Resources

• Demonstrate priorities
• Expand options
• Allow for choice
Opportunity

Expectations + Resources = opportunities presented to students
Students with Intellectual Disability

- Low Expectations
- Finite/Existing Resources
- Limited Opportunities
Students with Intellectual Disabilities

• Expect them to get a job and earn $$
• Expect them to continue learning after high school and throughout adulthood
• Expect them to be dissatisfied when they have a crummy job
• Expect them to grow and change in their desires and skills
Resources

• Provide access to local college and community education options
• Provide access to highly trained staff
• Use/prioritize funding to train staff
• Hold staff accountable for poor outcomes
• Partner with families
• Engage IHE partnerships
Opportunities

• Explore possibilities on and off campus
• Remember employment is an iterative process, it is an iterative one.
• Do not be stymied by excessive hope
• Whenever possible connect employment interests to course options
Myth

People with intellectual disabilities CANNOT go to college!
Reality

- People with ID are not expected to go to college
- Therefore we don’t prepare them for college
- And few options exist
- This limitations do not stem from the students but from those of us who create their futures.
Myth

People with intellectual disabilities can’t benefit from college
What did you get out of college?

• Explore interests/expand skills
• Create and expand social network
• Discover/recreate who you are
• Gain independence-pay bills, laundry
• Manage your own time/responsibilities
Strategies for Success

• Get and share information about college options with all professionals
• Build college related goals into the IEP
• Talk with families in elementary, middle and high school about college options
• Encourage students to explore learning options
Myth

Unpaid job experiences result in employment
Reality

- If unpaid job experiences led to paid employment ALL of our students with ID would have paid jobs after high school!!
The only thing that truly prepares students for paid employment is…
Paid Employment
Do you BELIEVE your students can work?

Your beliefs, goals, and staffing will have a *greater* impact on a student becoming employed than will a student’s skills.
The Importance of Employment

- For youth with disabilities, one of the most important research findings shows that work experience during high school helps them get jobs at higher wages after they graduate. *NCWD/Youth, Hot topic: Work-Based Learning, 2003 Volume 2*

- Secondary school students with disabilities who worked for pay outside the home in the preceding year before exit and/or have participated in a work-study program at school, have an increased chance for employment in their post school years. *Changes over time in the Early Postschool Outcomes of Youth with Disabilities: A Report of Findings from the National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS) and the NLTS2.*
Does your institution or program address employment job training or career preparation specifically for students with ID

- 81% said yes (105)
- 18% no (23)
- 1% didn’t know
Most Likely to provide job develop services

- Job developer 20%
- School system SPED teacher 18%
- Adult services provide 13%
- VR 13%
- Family member

- LEA job coach / transition specialist 12%
- Program coordinator 12%
- Job coach 4%
- Career center staff 1%
Our DEFAULT settings

• Employment is not a goal

• Staff receive little to no training

• Use of antiquated practices

• Pervasive myths of reduction to benefits
Keys to success

• Try to secure paid employment as soon as possible
• Anticipate that students will have more than one job
• Support students to review their satisfaction with their job
• Help families to see that employment shifts are normal and a negative.
Myth

Students with ID will change the rigor of courses, and have a negative influence on classes, their peers, and the college.
Reality

• Professors indicate that the presence of students with ID
  – Has a positive impact on their instruction
  – Makes some peers work harder
  – Changed their perceptions of what is important in their class
Keys to Success

• Course Options
• Structured supports
• Motivation for learning
  – We learn what we like then we like what we learn.
• Connecting learning to desired outcomes
Things to consider

• What are the student’s learning goals and how to they relate to supporting the student’s outcome?
• How will you measure learning and progress?
• How will you help the student connect this learning to their life?

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Bella

• 20 year old student in a dual enrollment program
• Wants to go to a community college
• Can’t pass the placement tests
• Audits the introductory math course
• Twice....then
• Takes it for credit
• Takes and passes the placement test
Kinds of Learning in College

• Process-how to you access learning as an adult

• Experience-what does it feel like to learn with other adults outside of high school

• Content-I am interested in art history, computers, theater and want to know more
Taking a class is not enough

- Student must know the process
- Identify options (college class, adult education, park and recreation)
- Registration process and available supports
- Payment Process and funding supports
- Transportation
- Identify future needs/interests
Access to courses and adult learning opportunities

• Course access is a goal
• Navigate barriers (prereqs, funding)
• Don’t limit to college courses
Standards Based Conceptual Framework

Reflects a higher education perspective

Authentic, inclusive college education

Planning, implementation, and evaluation

Evidence base
Goal of the TC Standards

• To identify and validate practices that could be used by institutes of higher education (IHEs) to create, expand, or enhance high-quality, inclusive postsecondary education to support positive outcomes for individuals with ID.
An organizing structure must:

- Reflect input from key stakeholders
- Reflect frameworks recognized by higher education
- Provide common language to practitioners and researcher
- Allow for growth and expansion
Delphi Process

• 38 Expert Panelists
• 3 rounds of review
• Rated as essential
  – 8 standards
  – 18 quality indicators
  – 87 benchmarks
A STANDARDS BASED CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR INCLUSIVE HIGHER EDUCATION

Alignment with College Systems & Practices

Academic Access

Career Development

Ongoing Evaluation

Campus Membership

Coordination & Collaboration

Self-Determination

Sustainability

Inclusive Higher Education
The Cornerstones of Practice

- Academic Access
- Career Development
- Campus Membership
- Self-Determination

Boxes with "academic access", "career development", "campus membership", and "self-determination"
Academic Access

• Courses with peers without disabilities
• Access to existing courses
• Credit, non-credit, audit
• Waived entrance requirements
  – (i.e. prerequisites and placement tests)
• Student Services, Disability Services
• Alternate pathways for admission
Quality Indicator 1.1: Provide access to a wide array of college course types that are attended by students without disabilities, including:

1.1A: Enrollment in non-credit-bearing, non-degree courses (such as continuing education courses) attended by students without disabilities.
Career Development
Career Development

- Person Centered Planning
- Job carving
- Job coaching
- Time-limited paid internships
- Service learning
- Natural Supports & Universal Design
- Coordination with voc. rehab, etc.
Quality Indicator 2.1: Provide students with the supports and experiences necessary to seek and sustain competitive employment, including:

2.1B: Access to job coaches and developers who receive ongoing training and supervision.
Campus Membership

• Social networks
• Social organizations
• Technology Resources
• Natural Supports
• Universal Design

Photo of female working on computer
Quality Indicator 3.1: Provide access to and support for participation in existing social organizations, facilities, and technology, including:

3.1C: Technology for social communication, including email, texting, cell phone, Facebook, Twitter, Skype.
Self-Determination

Box with "self-determination"; photo of female at podium on stage
Self Determination

- Self-determination
- Personal Goals
- Family involvement
- Natural Supports
Quality Indicator 4.2: Ensure the development and promotion of the self-determination skills of students with intellectual disabilities as evidenced by students:

• 4.2A: Monitoring their own progress toward their personal goals.
Institutional Infrastructure

• Alignment with College Systems and Practices

• Coordination and Collaboration

• Sustainability

• Evaluation

Photo of two males and a female in class
Graphic saying “Alignment with college systems & practices; inclusive higher education; coordination & collaboration; sustainability; ongoing evaluation”
Alignment with College Systems and Practices

• Outcomes (degree, certificate)
• Academic Advising—Satisfactory Academic Progress
• Admissions, Registration, Orientation
• Health and Counseling
• Existing Professional Development (Universal Design)
• Schedules and policies
• Diversity
Graphic saying “alignment with college systems & practices; inclusive higher education; coordination & collaboration; sustainability; ongoing evaluation”
Coordination & Collaboration

• Key University departments
• Designated Coordinator
• Support and Training for Program Staff
• IHE governance
Graphic saying "Alignment with college systems & practices; inclusive higher education; coordination & collaboration; sustainability; ongoing evaluation"
Sustainability

• Financial Aid
• Funding Streams-blending and braiding
• State Wide Planning
• IHE planning or advisory team
• Communication
Graphic saying "Alignment with college systems & practices; inclusive higher education; coordination & collaboration; sustainability; ongoing evaluation"
Ongoing Evaluation

- Internal and External
- Student-centered
- Key Stakeholders
- Use Standards, Quality Indicators and Benchmarks tool as self-reflective tools
- Bottom Line: Helps with sustainability
Graphic saying “alignment with college systems & practices; inclusive higher education; coordination & collaboration; sustainability; ongoing evaluation”; “academic success”; “career development”; “self-determination”; “campus membership.”
How are TC Standards being used in the field?
Standards, Quality Indicators, & Benchmarks Tool

**STANDARD 8: EVALUATION:** To facilitate quality postsecondary education services for students with intellectual disabilities, the comprehensive postsecondary program should:

Quality Indicator 8.1: Conduct evaluation on services and outcomes on a regular basis, including:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benchmarks</th>
<th>Implementation Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.1A: Collection of data from key stakeholders, such as students with and without disabilities, parents, faculty, disability services and other college staff.</td>
<td>3 2 1 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.1B: Collection of student satisfaction data.</td>
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<td>8.1C: Collection of student exit data.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.1D: Collection of student follow-up data.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8.1E: Review of all data compiled by the advisory team and other stakeholders.</td>
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<td>8.1F: Implementation of program changes as a result of data review.</td>
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Current uses of TC standards

• Planning
• Creating action plans
• Setting goals
• Communication
• Evaluation
Translating Standards into Practice

– Be honest
– Establish clear, manageable goals
– Commit to a consistent review process
– Engage people who understand your vision
– Continuous improvement means never being done
What is the upside for me?

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Positive outcomes for students

• Ability to access adult learning opportunities
• Expanded social networks
• Opportunity to connect learning to personal desired outcome
• Enhanced Employment outcomes
• Socially valued roles and experience

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Positive Outcomes for LSS

- Enriches transition experiences and outcomes
- Builds collaboration
- Better employment outcomes
- Greater access to PSE
- Builds higher expectations

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Positive outcomes for IHE’s

• Mission of Diversity
• Enhanced collaborations
• Increased revenue
• Student Opportunities
• Opportunities for faculty and staff
• Funding opportunities
Inform, Connect, Contribute

• Sharing information through training, events like today’s conference, PR
• Connecting new initiatives with existing initiatives – not everything has to be about disability
• Contribute your knowledge and experience to others and build the network.
Thank you!!

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