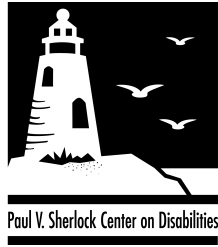


UCEDD Trainees Develop Interdisciplinary Practices through the Creation of a Self-determination Survey for College



Students with Disabilities: A Process Evaluation RI - The Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities, UCEDD Meada Daly-Cano, MS, Alyssa Francis, BA, Kayla Nastari, MA, Tabitha Newman, MA, & Brandis Ruise, MA



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Study 1: Creating a Self-determination Survey

Identifying Need

- More Students with Disabilities (SWD's) are pursuing education after high school but experience challenges in completing their programs (Garrison-Wade, 2012)
- Graduation rates from 4 year colleges examined after 6 years:
33% of College students with disabilities
66% of General student population
(Berke, He & Cataldi, 2002)

Justification

- Why Self-Determination?**
- Self-determined individuals exhibit behaviors/skills that are correlated with positive outcomes in:
 - School engagement (Shogren, Wehmeyer, Palmer, & Paek, 2013)
 - Transition Planning (Berry, Ward & Caplan, 2012)
 - Post School outcomes (Shogren, Wehmeyer, Palmer, Rifenshark, & Little 2013; Wehmeyer & Palmer, 2003)
 - Activities to address need:
 - Survey level of self-determination of SWD's
 - Create/deliver workshops to further develop self-determination skills of SWD's

Defining Self Determination

- Self-Awareness:** Understanding oneself and needs
- Self-Advocacy:** Asking for what you need
- Decision-Making:** Choosing between options
- Internal Locus of Control/Self-Efficacy:** Believing you control events that affect you
- Self-Regulation:** Monitoring progress towards goals

Participant Pool

- College students with disabilities at a 4-year college in the North East
- 775 students registered with Disability Service office

Intermediate Steps

- Administer Survey
- Identify Self-determination needs
- Develop workshops that address aspects of self-determination
- Recruit SWD's to participate in workshops



Figure 1. Aspects of Self-Determination

Long-term Outcomes

- Higher levels of self-determination in college SWD's
- Improvements in graduation rates for SWD's

Self-Determination Survey

Self-Determination Survey

5-point Likert Scale
0=None 1=Often 2=Almost Never 3=Sometimes 4=Almost Always 5=Always

Self-Awareness

- I understand my disability.
- I know the academic accommodations that I need to be successful.
- I know my academic interests (major choice, choice of major, etc.)
- I know what I am good at.
- I know what is hard for me.
- I know what learning accommodations I need to be successful.
- I know what learning styles and strategies help me be successful.

Self-Advocacy

- I can independently request the help I need from friends and families.
- I can independently request the help I need from professionals.
- I identify myself as a person with a disability to get the support services I deserve.
- I am able to talk about the challenges I experience so others understand me better.
- I am able to tell others what I want.

Decision-Making (Goal Setting) (Goal attainment)

- I set goals to get what I want to accomplish.
- I can prioritize my goals.
- I take the proper steps to achieve my goals.
- I check on how well I'm doing in meeting my goals.
- If my plan does not work, I'm either able to meet my goals.
- I can weigh pros and cons of my potential choices.
- I can identify barriers to my success.

Internal Locus of Control/Self-Efficacy

- I believe that my disability will not impede my academic success.
- Only with the help of others will I be able to be academically successful.
- The same opportunities are available to me as in comparison to those without disabilities.
- I have the right to decide what I want to do.
- I can get what I want by working hard.
- When I set a goal, I am confident that I will be able to reach it.

Self-Regulation (Time Management) (Task Completion) (Performance)

- I make a list of all the tasks I need to complete.
- I make schedules to help myself finish tasks on time.
- I have strategies to better manage my time.
- I celebrate when I reach my goal.
- I think about how I could have done something better.

See (Luckner & Sebald, 2013) for full review of instruments

Study 2: Trainee Development

Identifying Need

- Shortage of personnel with interdisciplinary training, who provide services to people with developmental disabilities (Helm, Holt, Conklin, Pariseau & Pearson, 2010).
- Activities to address need:
- (1) Designing, conducting, evaluating and presenting an experiential learning project.
 - (2) Engaging with stakeholders/ community members to get feed back on survey
 - (3) Reflecting on process to identify lessons learned.

Justification

- How does participating in traineeship address the shortage of qualified personnel?
- (1) Development of leadership, knowledge, skills, advocacy, networking and engagement in activities similar to experiences in future practice
 - (2) Skills are refined by using experiential learning process, consisting of experiencing, reflecting, thinking and acting, to evaluate and make meaning of the process (Kolb & Kolb, 2005)

Participants

- 2 School Psychology Master's candidates (RIC)
- 1 Human Development and Family Studies Master's candidate (URI)
- 1 School Psychology Ph.D. candidate (URI)
- 1 Behavioral Science Ph.D. candidate (URI)

Stakeholders

- Trainees met with the following groups in the development of the survey:
- Sherlock Sentinels**- members of the community advisory committee who are adults with disabilities or family members of children with disabilities.
 - Self-Determination Action Team**- Professionals throughout the disability field who meet once a month to work jointly on projects related to self-determination
 - College Disability Service Director**- Contact person who will be recruiting students to participate in survey

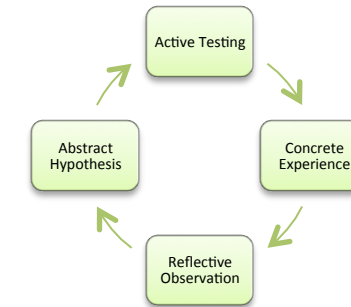


Figure 2. The Experiential Learning Cycle

Results: Themes of Lessons Learned

- (1) Engaging with stakeholders helped to ensure our research remained inclusive of our total population (Stakeholder perspectives)
- (2) Developed leadership skills through helping our university increase its capacity to meet the needs of students with disabilities and by consulting with stakeholders (Participant perspectives)
- (3) Increased knowledge by designing and implementing a research project (Participant perspectives)
- (4) Interdisciplinary teamwork collaboration with diverse team led to sharing our expertise (Participant perspectives)

Theme 1 - Engaging with Stakeholders

- "The language of the survey needs to be very simple so that people with all types of disabilities can understand what they are filling out."
- "The definition of "self-determination" should not exclude people who do not have the cognitive capacity to understand their own strengths and needs or to self-advocate, monitor progress."
- "We became aware that we overlooked important demographic data and that we need to be compliant with section 508 which says that survey should be accessible to students of all disabilities."

Theme 2 - Developing Leadership Skills

- "We are developing leadership by helping the university to increase its' capacity to serve students with disabilities."
- "This project helped us develop leadership skills. To be an effective leader, one must be aware of the diverse needs and abilities of every individual you are representing, in order to ensure every individual accessibility and equality."

Theme 3 - Increase Knowledge

- "This was helpful because I assumed that people who work with and have children with a disability would have more understanding of self-determination than they did."
- "I learned there are various perspectives to consider when creating a measurement tool for any population and eliciting feedback is an integral step of the development process"

Theme 4 - Interdisciplinary Teamwork

- "While it is sometimes difficult to have conflicting viewpoints, it was these viewpoints that caused us to discuss and evaluate the research and our protocol."
- "Team collaboration allowed each team member's diverse perspective and ideas on self-determination to be examined, tested and re-integrated to form one mutual perspective/goal."

Discussion

- Additionally, creating the survey as a team allowed each team member to thoroughly review one or two pre-existing self-determination surveys and dissect questions from each measure that best captures a component of self-determination.
- Compared to pre-existing scales used with the college population, our survey is shorter than other surveys. The length of the survey was addressed after soliciting feedback from the Sentinels meeting.
- Our survey is concise and direct, addressing one topic per question, unlike some of the others. For instance, other surveys ask, "I know what I need, what I like, and what I'm good at" while our survey asks "I know the living accommodations I need to be successful."