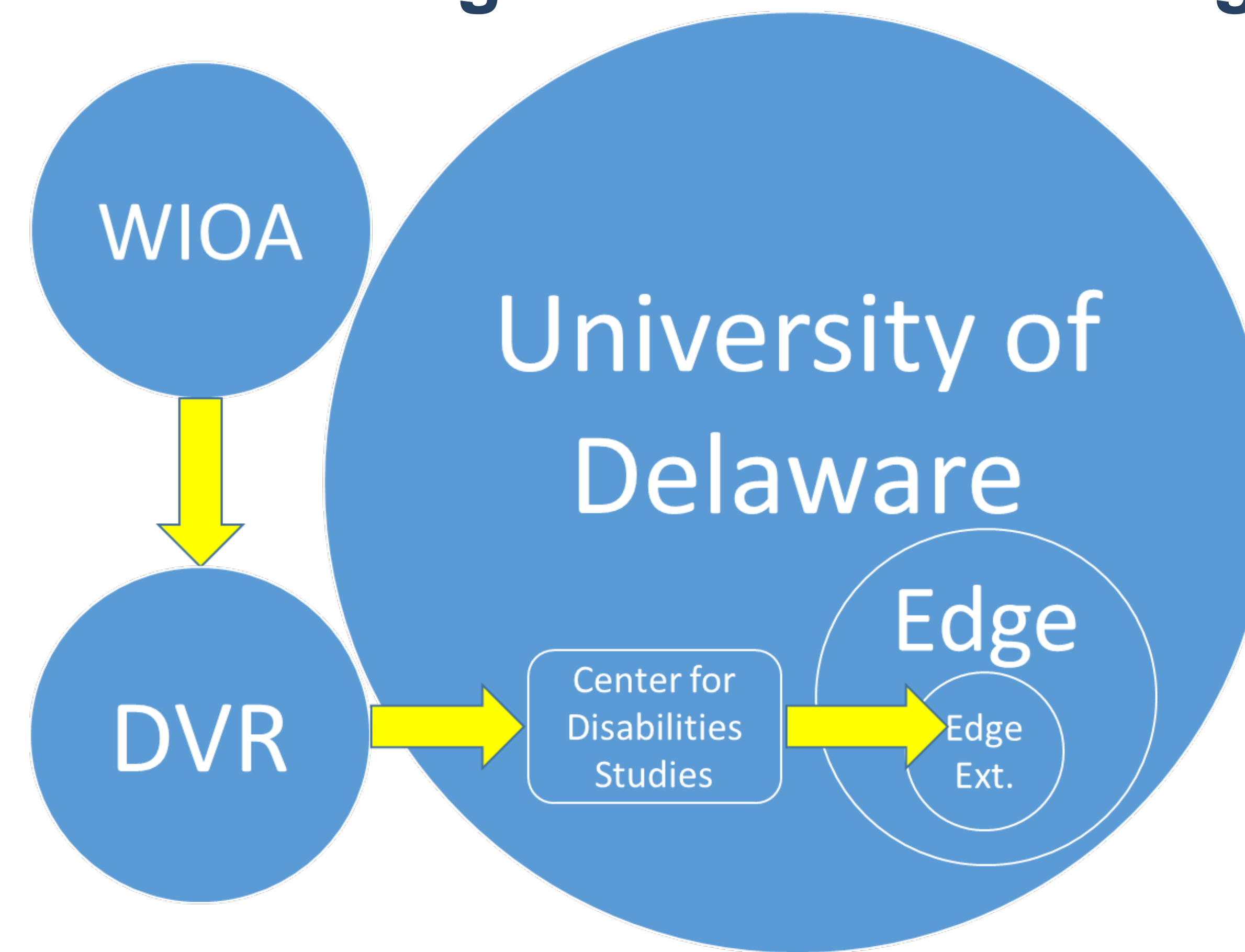


CENTER FOR DISABILITIES STUDIES

The Cutting Edge: Implementing a College Prep Program for High School Students with Disabilities at the University of Delaware

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Partners in Higher Ed: DVR and Edge



Student Profiles

Scott

Scott participated in Edge twice, once in the general program, and a second time with support from Edge Ext. In the first year Scott had tremendous difficulty and received failing grades. During his junior year, Scott was diagnosed with a hearing impairment and ADHD. He returned to Edge, now receiving accommodations and Edge Ext services. Scott's performance improved dramatically and he passed both 3-credit courses. With support from Edge Ext staff, he also advocated for a 504 plan when he returned to high school. Scott is now enrolled at the University of Delaware's Associate of Arts program.

Kelsey

Kelsey came to Edge Ext as a hopeful first-generation college student who had a learning disability and social challenges. In addition to participating in the academic coursework and coaching, Kelsey and her family used Edge Ext to learn about the college application/preparation process. Kelsey became a strong self-advocate and student, passing a 3-credit Biology course. Kelsey utilized her follow-up support to better understand her college options and the financial aid system, and had a significantly increased role in her IEP meeting. Happily, Kelsey's dream of attending college came true as she is now enrolled at University of Delaware's main campus in Newark with a minor in Disability Studies.

Sally

Sally entered Edge Extension as a rising junior, a year earlier than many of her peers. Sally's physical disability required Edge Extension staff to think strategically with Edge staff regarding housing accommodations, the use of an aide and availability of accessible course materials in Metacognitive Strategies. During the program, Sally came to realize that her academic modifications in high school were not available as accommodations in college. She also learned how to rely less on her aide. Upon returning to HS, she advocated with the support of her family and Edge Extension support staff, for changes to her modifications and accommodations in high school.

Background

- Students with disabilities struggle to succeed in college settings, particularly during their first years.
- Recent increase in resources from WIOA via Pre-ETS supports transition-age students
- Existing pre-college programs for students with disabilities are largely self-contained.
- Traditional pre-college programs include rigorous coursework and residential. Why wouldn't students with disabilities benefit from these programs too?

Program Description

Edge and Edge Extension

- *Edge Extension* provides support services for students with learning and other disabilities enrolled in a general UD pre-college program called *Edge*.
- Of the approximately 60 enrolled Edge students in 2016, 8 received *Extension* services.
- All *Edge Extension* students enrolled in two 3-credit courses over five weeks.
- **Metacognitive Strategies** is a course designed for *Edge Extension* participants and supports students to develop the skills they will need to be successful in college, including organization, assistive technology, time management, goal setting and self-advocacy. Students also learn how to access accommodations and utilize other available resources in higher ed.
- **Individualized Academic Coaching** was provided once per week to support the incorporation of strategies from Metacog. Strategies into the student's other course and consider resources for challenges outside of class (e.g., getting along with peers).
- **Post-summer support** provided in form of newsletters, individualized meetings (e.g., 504 and IEP mtgs), and group video chats.

Student Evaluation

Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI)

- Assessment of students' awareness of study and learning strategies related to skill, will, and self-regulation
- Focus on covert and overt thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors that relate to successful learning and can be altered through interventions

Pre/Post Sample Scores

	Time Management			Self Testing Scale			Motivation		
	Pre	Post	Change	Pre	Post	Change	Pre	Post	Change
Kelsey	60	85	25	85	90	5	50	65	15
Scott	35	90	55	15	90	75	30	85	55
Sally	10	40	30	5	70	65	1	10	9

Conclusions & Next Steps

- Students with disabilities can benefit from pre-college support.
- Existing pre-college programs offer significant opportunities for students with disabilities to prepare for college in an inclusive environment.
- WIOA/Pre-ETS promotion of self-advocacy and college and career preparation offers an innovative opportunity to build supports onto existing pre-college programs.
- Follow-up support has been invaluable for ensuring that further change can happen upon completion of the traditional pre-college program.
- More seamless integration with Edge (e.g., staffing) would further promote an inclusive atmosphere.
- Career preparation could be bolstered through job shadowing and internship experiences
- Analysis of most impactful change agents in the program (e.g., coursework, residential, post-summer follow-up)
- Replication to other higher ed institutions would help further reinforce how Pre-ETS funding can support college success.

Contact Information

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