

Demonstration Projects to Ensure Students with Disabilities Receive a Quality Higher Education

PR Award Number: P333A080039
Grantee: San Diego State University Research Foundation
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U.S. colleges and universities are becoming increasingly diverse in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, and disability (National Center for Education Statistics, 2006). One of the challenges and opportunities confronting higher education institutions revolves around the design of programs and curricula that are accessible to all students. The needs of students with and without disabilities can converge around a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) model. The relevance and importance of UDL principles to college curricula and programs are gaining momentum as institutions: (a) work to meet the accessibility mandates of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act; (b) deliver more courses via distance and blended learning; and (c) conceptualize and address student learning outcomes. The overall *Project* goal is **to enhance the capacity of faculty and administrators to meet the needs of postsecondary students with disabilities through a universal model**. To ensure success in achieving the goal, dynamic objectives will drive the activities for implementation, evaluation, and outcomes.

Objective 1: To increase awareness and knowledge of a minimum 150 faculty and administrators (annually) on issues and strategies relevant to students with disabilities.

Objective 2: To decrease the gap in completion rate between students with and without disabilities by five percent in courses taught by *Project Scholars*.

Objective 3: To increase the number of faculty and administrators actively integrating the training concepts and strategies in their courses and programs by 95 percent.

Objective 4: To increase access to and dissemination of universal model resources and materials through a minimum of 10 venues (annually).

The main components of the *Project* Design include: *workshops*, which will target specific skill-building, competency-enhancing topics; the *Scholar Program*, supporting 15 faculty/administrators annually to modify and enhance their courses/programs through UDL and appropriate use of technologies; *Focused Technical Assistance (FTA)* to provide individualized support to *Scholar Mentors*, *Scholars* and participants applying training content; and an integrated and multi-faceted *Evaluation (internal, external)* which allows for continual refinement of services and activities based on outcomes, stakeholder feedback, and needs of faculty/administrators.

Project materials, innovations, and results will be disseminated extensively through *Scholar Spotlight Events*, *Project* Web site, presentations, and publications. The expected benefits and results are substantial in both immediate and long-term systemic impact including: a) minimum of 450 faculty and administrators with **knowledge and skills** specific to teaching and supporting students with disabilities; b) participants incorporating UDL in courses/programs demonstrating **varied approaches and** models; c) enhanced opportunities for **systemic change** through policies and practices that promote UDL and overall student success; d) **comprehensive training** focused on disability, curriculum design, program services, teaching strategies, assistive technology and accommodations, accessibility and administrative issues; e) **cross-fertilization** between participants enhancing the teaching and learning of others; f) modules available **online and accessible** to faculty and administrators 24/7; g) **Learning Community(ies)** that will continue to thrive on innovation and advance the applications of UDL beyond the *Project* period; g) **students** receiving information through contemporary strategies and technology that **enhance their learning and educational experience**; and h) a **comprehensive evaluation system** infused throughout the *Project's* implementation to ensure efficient delivery of training and FTA, and achievement of *Project's* goal and objectives.

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PR Award Number: P333A080060
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Problem: Statistics indicate postsecondary education retention and completion rates of students with disabilities (SWD) are significantly lower compared to their non-disabled peers. **Addressing the Problem:** This project is designed to build on three interrelated concepts, universal design for learning (UDL), multiculturalism, and mentoring, by validating and utilizing new and innovative applications of these concepts to support faculty to better meet the needs of SWD. The project has been developed with input from a diverse range of stakeholders including faculty, SWD, and disability support and faculty development staff within the University of Hawaii (UH) system. Members from each of these groups will serve in an advisory capacity (partnership demonstration team) to ensure broad representation and input.

Goals and Activities: The primary purpose of the proposed project is to bring about positive concrete changes for SWD in postsecondary educational environments through the planning, development, and delivery of an organized sequence of professional development (PD) activities aimed at minimizing gaps in faculty and staff members' knowledge, skills, and attitudes concerning SWD. This will be accomplished by focusing upon validated and practical strategies associated with UDL, multiculturalism, and mentoring. The innovative process of this project will extend previous work in these areas by focusing on the interrelated nature of the three concepts. Through their continued use, strategies derived from these concepts will increase faculty members' knowledge and understanding of the concepts, and become gradually integrated within their teaching approaches. This will in turn, facilitate sustained use of the strategies throughout the wider postsecondary education teaching and learning milieu.

The project goals will be accomplished through the development and provision of a series of PD training sessions for faculty, administrators, and staff as a means to improve/increase their knowledge, skills, and attitudes for instructing and interacting with SWD. A rigorous evaluation design will test the effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of these trainings. **Outcomes:** Include a tested and validated set of PD modules and technical assistance materials formatted for replication and dissemination to a wide range of postsecondary institutions. Government Performance and Results Act indicators of (1) difference between the rate at which students with documented disabilities complete courses taught by faculty trained in project activities, and the rate at which other students complete those courses; (2) percentage of faculty trained in project activities who incorporate elements of training into their classroom teaching in years one, two, and three; and, (3) quantified impact of project activities on faculty knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Project implementation will reach over 1,390 faculty, administrators, and staff within the UH system. Approximately 600 more will be trained through face-to-face and Web-focused dissemination of the PD materials and technical assistance. The project will be implemented by the Center on Disability Studies (CDS), Centers on Teaching Excellence and Disability Support Offices within the UH system.

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PR Award Number: P333A080022
Grantee: Georgia Tech Research Corporation
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The Center for Assistive Technology and Environmental Access (CATEA) and the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (CETL) at Georgia Tech and the University of Georgia's (UGA's) Disability Resource Center (DRC) propose SciTrain University (STU), a multi-faceted project to enhance the capacities of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) faculty and staff in postsecondary education to educate students with disabilities. Building upon successful research and programs conducted by project partners, STU will engage stakeholders in the development and evaluation of online training modules and resources. STU goal is to create a more effective learning environment by improving the knowledge of postsecondary teachers, student services staff, IT personnel and administrators – stakeholders who can work together to create lasting improvements in curricula.

STU will use a combination of in-person workshops and web-based training modules for postsecondary faculty and staff to instruct them in the creation of effective STEM coursework for students with disabilities. These resources will demonstrate methods for approaching access problems and will train teachers to generate their own ideas and solutions for accommodations. The training materials will provide instruction on the creation of adapted curricula and labs, online courses and hybrid courses. Teachers will be able to study individual modules or complete entire sets for continuing education units (CEUs). The result will be improved STEM education for students.

STU will also develop technical assistance materials for educators who are looking for answers to immediate access problems. These resources will include fact sheets, an online discussion forum and an open Wiki to promote the sharing of accommodations and best practices.

STU will enlist faculty champions in the partner universities to achieve initial buy-in from stakeholders. The project will then expand to include departmental and institute changes. Since all project materials will be published online, STU will then reach out to a national audience with training processes and materials that can be copied and easily replicated.

STU will work closely with instructors, student services offices, and administrators at Georgia Tech and UGA to ensure focused research and evaluation of its project results. Courses and online resources will be tested with these teachers and faculty prior to release to a national audience. These instructors will also participate in ongoing evaluation of project results, serving as a test-bed for the STU model in action, as well as models for replication. The project will monitor the percentage of faculty trained who incorporate elements of the training in their teaching, as well as the changes in student success in courses by faculty trained through the project.

The proposed program is vital in providing education for teachers in an area often neglected in their educations. Through improved educational practices, it will enhance accessibility of STEM education for students with disabilities, as well as improving participation in STEM education and careers for these students. Improved STEM education will broaden the participation of students with disabilities – currently an underrepresented group in STEM education. SciTrain U. will also enhance the infrastructure for research and education by providing extensive online resources that can be used by anyone, anywhere to address accessible STEM education.

Demonstration Projects to Ensure Students with Disabilities Receive a Quality Higher Education

PR Award Number: P333A080032
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The number of students with disabilities enrolled in postsecondary education has been increasing steadily since the early 1980s (National Center for Education Statistics, 2006). Similarly, the number of students with disabilities enrolled in the 11 institutions in the Texas A&M University System has reached approximately 2,000, an increase of 70 percent from 1997. However, many students with disabilities fail to successfully complete academically or simply leave campus prior to completing their planned programs of study (Quick, Lehman, & Deniston, 2003). In searching for solutions to this problem, an important area that has yet to be fully addressed is the faculty's and administrator's lack of understanding of disability issues and lack of knowledge of instructional strategies pertaining to students with disabilities.

The proposed project, "***Disability Training Network: Training, Innovation, Research (DTNTR)***," will address this gap by implementing a project design that involves three dimensions of activities aiming to achieve the following goals:

Goal 1 is to provide four-levels of training and technical assistance to faculty and staff at 11 institutions within the TAMU System. **Goal 2** is to develop teaching innovations pertaining to students with disabilities through mini-grants and through Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs). **Goal 3** is to empirically examine the effectiveness of faculty training and the effectiveness of applying instructional strategies on student outcomes through quasi-experimental research.

Dimension 1 Activities: provide four levels of training and technical assistance. The four levels include: (a) providing a brief introductory training to new faculty at new faculty orientations; (b) disseminating quarterly updates on policies, practices, and issues; (c) providing instructor-led seminars and self-paced online seminars on topics of importance; and (d) offering train-the-trainer modules to faculty, staff, and administrators during Summer Institutes.

Dimension 2 Activities: develop teaching innovations through Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs) and mini-grant awards to faculty. The FLC is an effective mechanism for faculty to develop discipline-specific teaching innovations. Faculty in the FLCs will participate in professional development, work with each other and with students to identify innovative strategies, field-test these strategies, and assist the proposed project in disseminating their innovations. Another mechanism will be mini-grant awards to faculty from different disciplines for developing, testing, and disseminating new or applied instructional strategies.

Dimension 3 Activities: conduct quasi-experimental research to empirically examine the effectiveness of training on faculty competencies in teaching students with disabilities and to examine the effectiveness of implementing certain instructional strategies on student outcomes.

Each year, 30 faculty members will be selected from FLCs and from mini-grant recipients to serve as an experimental group. Thirty equivalent faculty members who are not involved in these activities will be selected to serve as a control group. To make these research activities realistic and manageable, only three campuses will be involved in each of the three years. Research findings and other project information and materials will be widely disseminated by multiple means, including traditional and online media. A strong evaluation component is built in the project, with evaluation activities to be conducted by an independent evaluator.

Demonstration Projects to Ensure Students with Disabilities Receive a Quality Higher Education

PR Award Number: P333A080071
Grantee: The Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System
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The use of technology in higher education is rapidly expanding parallel to society's adoptions of innovations in our daily lives. Unfortunately, while technology has improved, educational methods, materials, and technology pose new barriers for many students. It is also clear that our student populations with disabilities extend far beyond the 5-7 percent typically reported who declare their disabilities and seek services from disability student service offices. Our recent statistics reveal that nearly 12 percent of postsecondary students describe specific intrinsic impairments that stage educational risk and demand intervention. An additional eight percent of students are not native English speakers. Combined, this 20 percent, or one out of five students, have the potential to benefit from Universal Design (UD) approaches. Successful UD implementation, however, demands that faculty and staff throughout campuses "buy in" to the methodology. They require resources that they believe will benefit them and students without taxing their time. Campuses also need accessibility assessment tools. Few instruments are available to comprehensively identify access barriers and thus identify where interventions are needed. Likewise, campuses must vigilantly watch emerging instructional technologies (such as Second Life, Facebook, classroom response clickers, podcasting) to predict accessibility problems. Without this analysis, campuses will fail to assure equal educational access.

This project proposes to implement and measure Universal Design in Higher Education across a system of 26 campuses and develop UD resources to help administrators, faculty, staff, and students better incorporate technology into their day-to-day educational activities. Key approaches to maximize success include creating UD resources that are user-friendly and quick to implement, then disseminating training and materials on location through an infusion network, an annotated Web site and Webinars. Five key project objectives have been designed to enhance the recruitment, retention and success of students with disabilities in postsecondary education: (1) Create a comprehensive Web-based instrument that over 300 students will complete as a pilot study to document accessibility barriers and diagnose institutional needs; (2) Identify the accessibility and usability issues in existing and emerging educational technologies and develop technical reports; (3) Implement and institutionalize campus-wide UD interventions; (4) Disseminate project materials and training; and (5) Conduct monthly formative and annual summative evaluations, overseen by an independent evaluator with the assistance of an expert national advisory panel, to assess the impact of the project.

This UD infusion project is based on a solid foundation of experience and an actively involved interdisciplinary team with technological, pedagogical, and disability expertise that represents consumer, academic, administrative and service perspectives. The project is based in the University of Wisconsin System, led by the urban-based Milwaukee campus, but with a minimum of four partnerships from suburban and rural campuses, and both two- and four-year institutions. Additional replication will be encouraged outside of Wisconsin with new support features on our ACCESS-ed website, and through national presentations. Additionally, the project will showcase its work and invite presentations from other UD innovators by hosting a UD in Higher Education Symposium in the second year.

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PR Award Number: P333A080018
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The Institute on Disabilities, Pennsylvania's University Center for Excellence at Temple University, is submitting this proposal in response to CFDA 84.333A: "Demonstration Projects to Ensure Students with Disabilities Receive a Quality Higher Education Program. The overall goal of *Enhancing Higher Educational Opportunities for All* is to improve the higher education outcomes for students with disabilities through the provision of effective training, professional development, and technical assistance to key faculty and relevant staff at Temple University with replication in other universities throughout the United States.

Specific goals include: 1) Human Resources at Temple University will present disability as part of diversity when orienting all new faculty and staff; 2) Faculty teaching the required two-semester course, Mosaic: The Humanities Seminar, will include disability as part of the larger framework of diversity; 3) Faculty and staff at Temple University will infuse information, including accessibility and Universal Design for Learning, in their teaching and student support, in order to facilitate learning opportunities of all students, including diverse learners with disabilities; 4) Other universities throughout the United States will replicate *Enhancing Higher Education Opportunities for All* for students with disabilities; 5) There will be increased national recognition of the ways in which accessibility and universal design for learning, including the provision of assistive technologies, coupled with the infusion of Disability Studies-based curriculum can reduce attrition among disabled students who often critique their education as being irrelevant to their experiences as a member of a devalued social constituency; and (6) evaluate the overall project outcomes using required performance measures as described in Section VI.4 of the grant announcement.

The Institute on Disabilities, in collaboration with Disability Resources and Services, Human Resources, and undergraduate faculty and staff at Temple University, are uniquely qualified to demonstrate what is needed to improve outcomes for students with disabilities at Temple University and at other universities throughout the United States.

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PR Award Number: P333A080016
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Universal Access: Creating Accessible Higher Education Opportunities is a new three-year initiative by the Iowa Center for Assistive Technology Education and Research (ICATER) at The University of Iowa that directly addresses the critical national need for students with disabilities attending postsecondary institutions to receive a quality education. The goal of the project is to improve postsecondary educational experiences and outcomes for students with disabilities. The project goal will be achieved through the development of comprehensive training materials and professional development opportunities designed specifically for postsecondary administrators and educators. All materials and training programs will be easily replicable, available free online, and disseminated nationally.

Universal Access has five objectives: **1)** create a resource bank of comprehensive material related to teaching and working with students with disabilities at the postsecondary level; **2)** develop and conduct a needs assessment of **a)** administrator, faculty, staff, and student attitudes toward, and practices of, providing accommodations to students, and **b)** perceptions of students with disabilities of accommodations made in the postsecondary classroom; **3)** develop and disseminate a campus-wide policy for achieving universal access in the postsecondary classroom; **4)** develop training and professional development materials to facilitate the implementation of universal access and policy in the classroom, and **5)** nationally disseminate information and training materials to faculty members, administrators, staff, and students who work with students with disabilities at postsecondary institutions. To attain the objectives, project staff will develop effective mechanisms and strategies to establish universal access in the classroom for students with disabilities; develop an online interactive comprehensive Web site; collaborate with administrators, faculty, students, and appropriate partners to create Web-based training resources for the ongoing administrator and faculty training; conduct summer workshops and hands-on training at national meetings; and develop print materials with information on universal access policies, barriers to students with disabilities, and strategies for providing accommodations.

Universal Access will begin with a comprehensive needs assessment to gather baseline information to develop appropriate training materials and workshops for postsecondary administrators and faculty who work with students with disabilities. This will lead to the development of high-quality and fully accessible instructional materials prepared in a variety of formats for diverse learners. Multiple approaches to distribution will ensure materials are offered equally or equivalently to all learners. *Universal Access* materials will be presented in a variety of audio and visual formats and allow access for different screen readers and other assistive technology.

The essential elements for the *Universal Access* project are already in place. ICATER will develop, design and produce training materials and professional development opportunities. The College of Education will provide technological support to the project. ICATER staff will conduct the seminars. A rigorous evaluation design is an integral component of this project. It will provide information about the project's efficacy and contribute to our understanding of how to deepen students' with disabilities educational experience in postsecondary institutions. The combination of expertise, commitment and resources of the *Universal Access* project will have a significant impact on educational opportunities for students with disabilities.

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PR Award Number: P333A080027
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EnACT:PTD (Ensuring Access Through Collaboration & Technology: Partnerships, Technology and Dissemination) will offer students with disabilities within the California State University (CSU) support toward attaining their postsecondary educational goals. Specifically, EnACT:PTD will provide faculty within the CSU system the support and training necessary to ensure that students with disabilities are provided a high quality education. To this end, EnACT:PTD will achieve three distinct yet interconnected goals.

Goal 1: *Partnerships to Ensure Access to a Quality Postsecondary Education*

EnACT:PTD will formally establish Research Partnerships (Tier 1) and Implementation Partnerships (Tier 2) across multiple California State University campuses to ensure a high quality education for students with disabilities. Research Partners will have the support of their respective faculty, students with disabilities, student support services, assistive technology services and faculty development programs in implementing all research and faculty development efforts. Implementation Partners will also have campus-wide collaborative endorsements and focus primarily on implementing faculty development activities in support of postsecondary students with disabilities. Toward this end, the two central components of the EnACT:PTD faculty development model include the implementation of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) in Higher Education workshops and the establishment of Faculty Learning Communities (FLC) on each Research and Implementation campus. This innovative model of faculty development will address key areas such as effective instruction in higher education and development of accessible instructional materials to support students with disabilities.

Goal 2: *Technology to Ensure Access to a Quality Postsecondary Education*

Since 2000, over 5,000 new tenure-track faculty have been hired at the 23 campuses that comprise the CSU system. Given this growth, EnACT:PTD seeks to strengthen faculty development programs in support of CSU students with disabilities. To this end, EnACT:PTD will develop Accessible Instructional Media (AIM) resources to address specific instructional issues through the use of current and emerging technologies. In addition, faculty will learn about emerging technology-based teaching and assessment approaches to support all students including students with disabilities. Finally, EnACT:PTD will develop Coll@borATe, an online assistive technology forum. Thus, EnACT:PTD will examine the connection between technology and accessibility-related instructional design across all participating campuses.

Goal 3: *Dissemination of EnACT:PTD Content and Processes*

EnACT:PTD will partner with the CSU Center for Distributed Learning and the CSU Accessible Technology Initiative to disseminate online professional development resources to numerous Dissemination Partners (Tier 3) across the CSU system. In addition, EnACT:PTD will disseminate resources to other institutions of higher education (IHEs) nationally via existing academic databases such as MERLOT, an international online community of over 60,000 members. EnACT:PTD will also capitalize on regional meetings in conjunction with selected CSU Centers for Faculty Development to disseminate AIM resources developed in Goal 2 to other IHEs at the state and national levels. Finally, dissemination of the research and implementation activities will be achieved through professional presentations at prominent state and national conferences.

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PR Award Number: P333A080023
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The 2007 release of a report by the Modern Language Association, "Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World," has focused renewed attention on foreign language instruction at the introductory level. Frequently, the report finds, these beginning courses are taught by part-time and untenured instructors, many of whom remain on the fringes of the department, with little access to ongoing support, pedagogical training, or faculty development. When students with sensory, cognitive or physical disabilities are introduced to this environment, the results can be frustrating for both the student (who may benefit from specific instructional strategies or accommodations) and the instructor (who may be ill-equipped to provide inclusive instruction).

To address this problem, Project LINC will develop a portable and sustainable training curriculum to support new, part-time, and temporary foreign language instructors in inclusive classroom techniques. A Leadership and Development Team (LDT) of experienced foreign language faculty will identify, develop, and evaluate instructional strategies that reflect effective application of Communicative Foreign Language Learning (CFLL) and Universal Design for Instruction (UDI). Faculty training based on CFLL, UDI, and data-based instruction will be developed, piloted, revised, and packaged for broad dissemination. The resulting curriculum, consisting of: (1) a Foundation Workshop, (2) six Topical Training sessions, (3) Support Materials, and (4) Evaluation and Feedback Tools will be produced in hard copy, electronic, and on-line formats. Regional training and free curricula will be provided to foreign language instructors in area colleges, community colleges, and high schools. National dissemination of the curriculum will be achieved through extensive outreach through professional organizations, conferences, publications, and a project LINC Web site.

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PR Award Number: P333A080036
Grantee: National Louis University
Skokie, IL
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National-Louis University (NLU) is an independent not-for-profit university composed of three colleges: National College of Education, College of Arts and Sciences, and the College of Management and Business. Its eleven campuses are located in Illinois, Wisconsin, Florida, Virginia, and Poland. NLU serves 14,166 students. The National College of Education is the largest college with over 50 percent of the total student population. Since inception, NLU has provided opportunity for students who have historically encountered barriers to higher education. The vast majority of NLU students are working adults. NLU's mission is to provide access to quality higher education and nurture opportunity for students through innovative teaching and scholarship, community engagement, and service excellence. The NLU community has created an educational environment with high regard for the culture, background, experience, and dignity of everyone. Our faculty and staff understand that education has the power to transform lives, organizations, and communities. To this end, NLU links tested theory and practice with the experiences of its students, is sensitive to the changing needs of society, and is responsive to the students and publics it serves.

This grant project is built around three themes (3-C's) that run throughout each project goal and activity. **Content** refers to three types of content knowledge needed to provide students with a quality education: technological content, practical content, and theoretical content. **Context** refers to three contexts of teaching and learning: contexts internal and external to the university, contexts that are both face-to-face and virtual, and contexts that are local and national. **Culture** refers to a culture of inclusion for which all community members are responsible. This entails creating visibility, accessibility, and possibility.

NLU's 3-C project has two goals for providing students with disabilities a quality postsecondary education. **Goal #1** is the development of an innovative, effective, sustainable, and efficient model for providing quality education to students with disabilities. **Goal #1** objectives include: **(a)** increase institutional capacity for providing quality education for students with disabilities; **(b)** provide ongoing faculty and staff development and support to improve instruction and other learning opportunities for students with disabilities; and **(c)** recruit and retain students with disabilities. Activities include: capacity building institute, assessment of campus climate, assessment of accessibility and redesign of NLU's Web site and Web-based systems, identification of students with disabilities, training of Institutional Technology staff in accessible Web design, faculty and staff professional development, ongoing face-to-face and virtual support for faculty and field-based placement providers, marketing and recruitment strategies designed to increase the number of students with disabilities attending NLU, extensive data collection, analysis, and documentation, and development of the 3-C Model.

Goal #2 is the production and dissemination of resources useful for supporting students with disabilities in postsecondary education and dissemination of results of the project. **Goal #2** objectives include: **(a)** establish a virtual resource center; **(b)** hold an annual virtual conference; **(c)** produce useful resources based on the results of this project (e.g., podcasts, written materials, syllabi); and **(d)** disseminate results of project (including synthesis of research). Activities include: national networking between NLU's virtual resource center and others (e.g., CAST-Center for Applied Special Technology, AHEAD-Association on Higher Education and Disability,

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NFB-National Federation for the Blind; Webinars, live chats, threaded discussions; podcasts and other materials; development and dissemination of synthesis of research on postsecondary education for students with disabilities, extensive data collection, analysis, and documentation.

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PR Award Number: P333A080068
Grantee: University of Texas-Pan American
Edinburg, TX
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The Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) at the University of Texas - Pan American (UTPA) is proposing to develop a demonstration project to enhance quality instruction for students with disabilities in institutions of higher education through an innovative and effective model of inclusive service provision. The proposed project will provide faculty, administrators and "first points of contact" staff for student services, the skills, strategies, customized training and individualized on-site technical assistance necessary to implement inclusive teaching techniques/methods, and services to students with disabilities.

Project participants will be exposed to and have hands-on training in: disability legislation and awareness; common kinds of disabilities (physical, cognitive, psychiatric, and learning); students with disabilities adjustment to college life; behavioral and attitudinal stereotypes; knowledge and use of assistive technology/accommodation; universal design, universal design for learning, successful inclusive strategies for teaching, learning, evaluating and servicing students with disabilities. Activities will include the synthesizing of research and information related to postsecondary educational services to students with disabilities and best practices. The project will be replicated and customized, using a case management model, to other institutions of higher education. The proposed promising practices and activities will be widely disseminated.

The goal of the project is to: **Provide Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) technical assistance and professional development activities for faculty, professional staff and administrators to offer them the skills and support that they need to effectively teach students with disabilities.** The following objectives are designed to accomplish the project goal:

(1) UTPA PILOT PROJECT - FACULTY: Provide professional development activities and training in disability awareness, sensitivity, innovative inclusive teaching methods, and use of assistive technology to 37 out of the 41 (90 percent) academic faculty chairs.

(2) UTPA PILOT PROJECT – FIRST POINT OF CONTACT STAFF: Provide professional development and training in disability awareness and inclusive service provision to 47 out of the 52 (90 percent) of the "first points of contact" staff that work with students with disabilities.

(3) UTPA PILOT PROJECT - ADMINISTRATORS: Provide professional development and training in disability awareness, legal aspects to the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), and inclusive service provision to 34 out of 38 (90 percent) of the key academic and student services administrators.

(4) NATIONAL OUTREACH TO IHEs: To provide national outreach about project services and recruitment efforts to all IHEs including 100 percent of the Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs).

(5) CUSTOMIZED & INDIVIDUALIZED SERVICES TO IHEs: Based upon the UTPA pilot project and a case management model, provide training, professional development and on-site technical assistance to 36 other IHEs, with an emphasis on MSIs, during the 3 year project period.

(6) DISSEMINATION: To disseminate outcomes of best practices and successful case studies via trainings, journal articles, Web site, and national conference presentations to 100 percent of the IHEs.

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PR Award Number: P333A080050
Grantee: Northampton County Area Community College
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Northampton Community College (NCC) in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, will create the Achieving College Success Now! (ACS Now!) project with the goal to impact postsecondary academic success of students with disabilities by enhancing their classroom experience through faculty adoption of and infusion of transition support information and Universal Instructional Design (UID) strategies. The three-year project develops knowledge, skills, and changed instructional practice by targeting no fewer than 12 faculty members, 80 community college students with documented disabilities and 320 of their student peers with no documented disabilities.

This project advocates a marriage of new skills, knowledge and behaviors developed by: 1) creating and delivering two critical faculty professional development seminars, 2) creating a highly collaborative faculty and Office of Disabilities partnership team which serves as a Faculty Learning Circle, 3) utilizing the Faculty Learning Circle as a mechanism to encourage instructional practice change, guarantee assessment and foster support for utilization of classroom technology innovations, and 4) creating and disseminating a set of "tech-rich", portable materials designed for replication. These new faculty classroom practices will be informed by the transition experience of students with disabilities and the systematic infusion of the principles of UID into the curriculum.

The project will evaluate the impact of the professional development seminars, changed curriculum and practice, and the supportive Faculty Learning Circle to improve community college student persistence outcomes. Persistence is defined by improvement in course completion rates with a grade of C or better for NCC students with documented disabilities as compared to a control group from a class section of similar students in a 2008 baseline semester.

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PR Award Number: P333A080021
Grantee: Ball State University
Muncie, IN
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Ball State University has a distinguished history of providing access and opportunity for students with disabilities. While the Office of Disabled Student Development (DSD) is at the center of an integrated campus approach that facilitates access for students with disabilities, Ball State's success in serving students with disabilities is the result of a campus-wide commitment by faculty, staff, and administrators to academic and personal achievement for students with disabilities.

The proposal, Ensuring a Quality Education for Indiana's Students with Disabilities, outlines our strategy to create professional development opportunities for faculty, staff, and administrators in order to provide them with the skills and support they need to better teach and serve students with disabilities. The project consists of four components.

1. A Faculty and Administrator Training Series that will provide faculty members with contemporary information and resources on best practices for teaching students with disabilities.
2. The Faculty Mentorship Program that connects new students with disabilities with a faculty member in the student's major or career interest.
3. Outreach to secondary education educators on the transition to college for students with disabilities.
4. Dissemination of learning opportunities to all high schools in Indiana by a DVD, as well as campus-wide dissemination through the World Wide Web, serving as a resource to other states and institutions.

While this project would be implemented in Indiana, it will serve as a national model for providing a quality education for students with disabilities and could be replicated in other states.

Demonstration Projects to Ensure Students with Disabilities Receive a Quality Higher Education

PR Award Number: P333A080013
Grantee: University of Vermont and State Agricultural College
Burlington, VT
Director's Name: Sylvie Butel
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Diversity among college and university students across the nation increases each year. Among those are students with disabilities, some of whom until recently might never have considered pursuing higher education, and some for whom successful completion of courses or programs has been difficult. Universal Design (UD), a concept that emerged from the field of architecture, keeps with the wisdom that, rather than provide an accommodation or adaptation to an individual who has specific needs as an afterthought, it is more efficient and effective to design from the start in such a way that everyone and anyone can have access, regardless of personal characteristics. The **overall goal** of this project is to develop a system of campus-wide supports and resources for the creation of learning environments and experiences that serve the diverse learning needs of University of Vermont (UVM) students based upon principles of Universal Design (UD), and to increase the use of UD principles and practices by faculty members campus-wide.

The project's goal will be achieved by addressing the following specific objectives:

- 1) To develop a comprehensive **Resource Map** of UVM's current resources for faculty, staff and students with respect to UD;
- 2) To measure **faculty attitudes, knowledge and experiences of disability and of accommodations** as baselines for this project, as well as for future studies of change over time;
- 3) To develop a model of **collaborative technical assistance and training** using **Universal Design Consulting Teams to assist faculty** teaching students with disabilities by providing semester-long assistance with problem-solving, creative applications, and technology support for implementing UD;
- 4) To **infuse into orientation** activities for all new faculty and Graduate Teaching Fellows (GTFs) basic knowledge and information about tools and resources to support **the use of UDL and accommodations** for students with diverse learning needs and identified disabilities; and,
- 5) To develop a **comprehensive system of resources** on UD for UVM faculty, staff and students that is readily accessible, user-friendly, and builds upon the work of the New England Consortium for Equity and Excellence in Higher Education (E&E), and regional and national leaders in UD, extending it to include contributions of UVM faculty, staff and students developed through this project.

The proposed project addresses the need to increase use of principles of UD and to improve the quality of UVM academic offerings to students with disabilities. Project staff will work collaboratively with ACCESS services, student groups and the Center for Teaching and Learning personnel to develop, implement, and evaluate the technical assistance model and all training and dissemination activities. Anticipated outcomes of the project include: increased knowledge of UD among first-year faculty and GTF's; increased demonstration of effective UD practices by faculty who use the consulting services; increased satisfaction of students with course instruction and learning experiences with target faculty; improved course completion and retention rates for students with disabilities in target courses; increased awareness across the campus community of disability as a dimension of diversity; and widespread awareness of UD and supporting resources available. This project will contribute to better integration of UD practices and knowledge of accommodation pedagogy to the benefit of all students.

Demonstration Projects to Ensure Students with Disabilities Receive a Quality Higher Education

PR Award Number: P333A080056
Grantee: Eastern Washington University
Cheney, WA
Director's Name: Romel Mackelprang
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Persons with documented disabilities continue to experience significant difficulty at institutions of higher education and as they subsequently transition to the workplace. Eastern Washington University (EWU) has developed strategies to provide Universal Education Access that integrates best practices in teaching, technology, access, and student services to promote quality education to students with disabilities. The recently created Center for Disability Studies and Universal Access (Center) at EWU has taken a lead in these efforts.

This grant application describes EWU's plans to develop a higher education climate that promotes the success for students with disabilities. We will develop programs and activities that welcome and support these students as they transition to college, in the classroom and in community-based learning, in student life and as they transition to post-college life. We will partner with campus student services and academic programs and with state and local organizations and agencies such as Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Independent Living Councils (ILC) to accomplish our goals. We will provide formal support to bolster the association for students with disabilities and build a peer mentoring program. In addition, we will provide training, collaboration, and technical assistance for community organizations involved in community-based learning with students to build bridges to employment. All these activities will integrate students with disabilities as valued members of a vibrant university community.

Our project will create greater physical, electronic, knowledge and social access for our students with disabilities. We will expand our Universal Education Access (UEA) faculty, staff and administrator training to include continued online workshops, individual consultations and tailored departmental and group trainings. We will then export UEA curriculum to regional college partners and then to other institutions of higher education to modify and adopt as their own.

We will develop an online interdisciplinary 16 credit hour Disability Studies program to students who are currently unable to enroll in disability studies. We will build a joint Disability Studies program with our neighbor, Washington State University, and provide Disability Studies to students nationwide.

Our project design offers ongoing, intensive evaluation that includes both formative and summative assessments. We plan to utilize an outside evaluator to help us keep in constant focus on our progress towards objectives and goals. We have built in formative assessments to inform progress throughout the project. The summative assessments will provide empirically-based, replicable knowledge and techniques for supporting the academic success of students with disabilities in postsecondary education. We will share and celebrate our lessons learned at a Regional Training Conference targeting institutions of higher education in four states at the end of year three.

Demonstration Projects to Ensure Students with Disabilities Receive a Quality Higher Education

PR Award Number: P333A080082
Grantee: Lane Community College
Eugene, OR
Director's Name: Aaron Shonk
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Project ShIFT, Shaping Inclusion through Foundational Transformation, will build on the excellent resources created by previously funded grants to demonstrate a model that offers sustainability in institutional change by addressing underlying systems and campus-wide conceptualizations of disability. Curricular change and faculty development activities will be implemented through a systemic analysis and retraining of the campus disability service (DS) staff. This initial emphasis on creating progressive philosophical constructs of disability within the DS office, uncovering and correcting negative messages that are transferred to faculty, and assuring skills in faculty development will provide the basis for a profound campus shift. Once DS offices have begun to incorporate social model thinking and universal design (UD) into their own operations, project activities will guide them in transferring this knowledge and skill to faculty. They will serve as leaders for faculty in the redesign of curriculum, the use of UD instructional strategies, and the infusion of disability into course content.

Project ShIFT consists of a three-part Summer Institute that will provide resources and professional development activities for two groups of higher education professionals: DS staff and faculty. In year one, DS staff will examine the policies and practices of their offices and create an action plan to infuse a social construction of disability and UD into their operations. In year two, the DS staff will invite one faculty member to accompany them back to the Institute and guide that faculty in creating curriculum and teaching strategies that infuse new conceptualizations of disability and UD into their classes. In year three, emphasis will be on summarizing, documenting, and sustaining successful changes and in increasing capacity. Project participants will be supported in their activities through curriculum materials and guides, monthly technical assistance conference calls, and a project Web site.

The ultimate objective of Project ShIFT is to improve the quality of higher education for students with disabilities, measured through:

- (1) The difference between the rate at which students with documented disabilities complete courses taught by faculty trained in project activities and the rate at which other students complete those courses, and
- (2) The percentage of faculty trained in project activities that incorporate elements of training into their classroom teaching,

Additionally, the project will create and disseminate training curriculum for DS staff to analyze and enhance their own policies and practices and guide faculty in the development of more inclusive courses, the template for a DS action plan, implementation plans for faculty, and a replication manual. Campus-wide dissemination will be through trained DS staff and faculty with the goal of increasing institutional capacity; national dissemination will be through publication, presentation, and a Project Web site.

Recognizing the importance of a strong evaluation plan, the project includes a full-time evaluator who will track long-term data on student outcomes and develop assessment measure for all project activities throughout the project duration. All objectives are presented in measurable terms.

Demonstration Projects to Ensure Students with Disabilities Receive a Quality Higher Education

PR Award Number: P333A080020
Grantee: West Virginia University Research Corporation
Morgantown, WV
Director's Name: Jeanne Grimm
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Higher Education Access: A Universal Design Demonstration", will be established at the Center for Excellence in Disabilities (CED) at West Virginia University (WVU), the largest institution of higher education in West Virginia with an enrollment of 30,413 students, including its Potomac State and WVU Tech campuses. The CED would administer the grant. The CED is federally certified as a Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service (UCEDD).

Higher Education Access will focus on providing professional development, technical assistance and accessibility advice to faculty and administration at West Virginia University and its two satellite campuses at Potomac State College and WVU Tech. It is expected that through the activities of the proposed demonstration project, students with disabilities will receive a quality higher education at West Virginia University comparable to that of students without disabilities. The CED proposes to accomplish this goal with a multifaceted approach that addresses weaknesses in current services, infrastructure and opportunities for WVU students with disabilities. Higher Education Access will:

- 1) Use West Virginia University's Extended Learning Program to provide an online professional development course that will be made available free to all WVU administrators and faculty. This professional development program will provide information on universal design in instruction and assistive technology accommodations. Faculty and administrators who complete the course will be asked to provide data on the effectiveness and use of the professional development course in their classrooms. The course will also be offered on-site through the WVU Human Resources Department's Professional Development Workshops series on each campus in one-day trainings.
- 2) Develop a Web Accessibility Board. The Board will consist of representatives from the Offices of Extended Learning and Information Technology, and other key figures who do Web design at WVU. The Board will explore the projected difficulty, time and cost to repair WVU online content that is currently inaccessible and select applicants who apply for grant funding to repair their inaccessible sites.
- 3) Provide technical assistance to WVU faculty, administrators, and students through a toll-free hotline. The toll-free number will provide assistance to individuals who have questions about issues that affect students with disabilities in higher education. The CED will also provide technical assistance through a form e-mail on the Higher Education Access web page on the CED web site.
- 4) Foster a relationship between the CED Assistive Technology Assessment Clinic and WVU Disability Services to provide quality assistive technology assessments to WVU students with disabilities referred to the clinic by the Office of Disability Services.

Periodic evaluations will be conducted to assess the value of Higher Education Access on a) The percentage of faculty trained through project activities who incorporate elements of their training into classroom teaching b) The difference between the rate at which students with documented disabilities complete courses by faculty trained through project activities and the rate at which other students complete the same courses taught by faculty that did not participate in project activities.

Demonstration Projects to Ensure Students with Disabilities Receive a Quality Higher Education

PR Award Number: P333A080065
Grantee: University of Massachusetts
Boston, MA
Director's Name: Debra Hart
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Community college retention and completion rates are extremely low for students with disabilities (SWD), who often place into developmental/remedial courses upon entering college. Further, a high rate of students who take developmental courses drop out either during or directly after taking a developmental course. **The project intends to address this problem by training faculty who teach developmental courses on how to integrate Universal Course Design (UCD) strategies into their courses. The project will then measure the impact of UCD strategies on retention and completion rates of SWD in developmental courses using a randomized control research design.** This project will have a tremendous impact on the lives of SWD, the disability field, and higher education by identifying practices that support SWD in completing developmental classes and entering a certificate or degree track.

UCD provides instructors in higher education with approaches and tools for creating highly accessible courses by assisting faculty in the creation of course materials, instruction and assessments for students with diverse learning styles. One strong UCD strategy that promotes fully accessible courses encompasses putting materials, instruction and assessments online. This strategy is especially effective if the course design is scaffolded within the Learning Management System (LMS) environment in which the instructor is creating the course. To address the need for universally designed online courses and/or hybrid courses that use both face-to-face and online delivery of instruction, this project will create three easy-to-use online UCD tools that will facilitate the adoption of strategies by faculty in the development of high quality, highly accessible syllabi, instruction and assessments.

The UCD online tools will be created using an open source approach, ensuring that the tools are compatible with any Learning Management System. The project will work with engineers from Blackboard, Inc., (BB) the largest LMS provider in the country, who will facilitate the first integration of UCD strategies into its LMS. Additionally, the project will work with BB to identify inaccessible components currently in its LMS and assist Blackboards' software engineers to make these features fully accessible to students with disabilities.

At the end of this project, 80 faculty (including controls) will have universally designed 240 developmental courses. As a result, approximately 3,200 students will be enrolled in universally designed courses, including 1,660 SWD. The partnership with BB and their commitment to disseminate UCD to any other LMS free of charge illustrates the ability of this project to impact faculty nationally. Project goals include the following:

1. Implement a management structure, including UCD Advisory Council (UCDAC), comprised of key stakeholders from Institutes of Higher Education, SWD and UD experts;
2. Create UCD training and technical assistance materials including plug-ins for use with LMSs to ensure that online/distance education and face-to-face instruction are accessible to SWD
3. Train 40-implementation site faculty on UCD, including use of online tools, over the course of a semester, using group, face-to-face, virtual, and one-on-one technical assistance. Train 40 control site faculty through the same methods in the third year of the project;
4. Conduct a randomized controlled design to determine the efficacy of the integration of UCD strategies into developmental courses compared to 40 faculty not using UCD strategies; and
5. Nationally disseminate information on UCD via Web site, clearinghouses, BB, other LMSs, journal articles, and presentations at local and national conferences.

Demonstration Projects to Ensure Students with Disabilities Receive a Quality Higher Education

PR Award Number: P333A080026
Grantee: Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO
Director's Name: Vincent Boganski
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The ACCESS II project at Colorado State University (CSU) will build on preliminary, successful implementation and dissemination of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles and strategies that create inclusive classroom instruction and accessible course materials, along with Self-Advocacy (SA) strategies that empower students to take an active role in their postsecondary education. ACCESS II will also provide compelling new evidence about the effectiveness of UDL and SA as methodologies for improving the learning experience, persistence, and retention of college students with disabilities. Focus areas and activities include:

1. Far-reaching expansion of UDL dissemination and implementation:

UDL principles and strategies will be implemented in multiple undergraduate courses in a variety of historically difficult content areas at CSU, addressing the issue of poor persistence on the part of students with disabilities in 'gateway' courses. As a component of a bold initiative to institutionalize and expand UDL implementation, a university-wide award will be instituted at CSU in recognition of innovative instruction involving UDL practices. UDL dissemination and program replication will also occur at the 33 institutions of higher education belonging to the Colorado/Wyoming (CO/WYO) Consortium of Support Programs for Students with Disabilities.

2. Comprehensive integration of Self-Advocacy principles and strategies:

Because educational success occurs at the intersection of good teaching and students' ownership of and responsibility for their learning, ACCESS II features an expanded role for Self-Advocacy (SA) education. As a complement to UDL implementation activities, the project will disseminate student SA guidelines and resources at multiple venues at CSU, across each of the 33 CO/WYO Consortium campuses, and at the 337 high schools across Colorado, to assist students with disabilities in their transition to college. With the incorporation of SA training and mentoring into ACCESS II, students with disabilities will improve their learning trajectories by purposefully identifying and requesting necessary accommodations and instructional modalities that match their learning styles and needs.

3. Measurement of faculty commitment and student outcomes:

The percentage of faculty trained in project activities that incorporate UDL strategies into their classroom teaching will be measured. In addition, student outcomes will be measured during the semester and at semester end to track students' learning experiences and performance. The effect of UDL and SA on student persistence will be determined by tracking individual student success in completing the courses that implement UDL, as well as the students who receive SA instruction and guidance. Comparisons, including student course completion, student persistence, and student performance, will be drawn between students with documented disabilities and those without documented disabilities who have participated in the targeted courses where UDL and SA are incorporated.

Predicted short-term outcomes include regional dissemination of UDL and SA, improved UDL research instruments, and compilation and analysis of data collected from students and instructors who participate in UDL and SA implementation. Anticipated intermediate and long-term outcomes include the publication of groundbreaking data about the effectiveness of UDL as a model for best teaching practices in higher education, along with a research model that can be replicated and expanded at other institutions. Further long-term outcomes will include the institutionalization of UDL and student SA in multiple university systems to ensure that students with disabilities receive a quality higher education for years to come.

Demonstration Projects to Ensure Students with Disabilities Receive a Quality Higher Education

PR Award Number: P333A080053
Grantee: University of Connecticut
Storrs, CT
Director's Name: Joseph Madaus
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Project Background: Enrollment in online and technology-blended courses in institutions of higher education is growing at a dramatic rate across the United States. According to an investigation of over 2,500 institutions by Allen and Seaman (2007), nearly 3.5 million college students were enrolled in at least one online course in 2006. This represented a 10 percent increase from the prior year, and 83 percent of the institutions surveyed anticipated offering additional courses. Despite this rapid growth, there is limited evidence related to effective teaching practices for diverse learners, particularly those with mild cognitive disabilities. Through previous Office of Postsecondary Education demonstration grant projects, the Center on Postsecondary Education and Disability (CPED) at the University of Connecticut (UConn) developed the nine Principles of Universal Design for Instruction© (UDI) [Scott, McGuire, & Shaw, 2001]. These Principles comprise a framework for inclusive practices relating to planning and delivering instruction and assessing learning outcomes.

Project Goals: This project will extend prior work in UDI into the online and technology-blended learning environment. The project will focus on “**faculty as designer**” in implementing innovative instructional practices in online and blended courses. This will be accomplished initially through collaboration with faculty and course designers across the UConn system to infuse UDI principles related to course planning, delivery and assessment in online and blended courses. Using a cycle of developing, piloting, and revising, the project will then extend its reach to faculty nationwide by creating and posting the **UDI Course Toolbox** of instructional modules and e-tools that support the implementation of the principles of UDI in online learning. Project outcomes will be disseminated via Facultyware (www.facultyware.uconn.edu), and through a UDI e-tools National webinar.

Project Objectives: Specific activities can be found in the narrative and in Table 1:

Objective 1: Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of faculty and students at local institutional and national levels related to instruction and learning in online and blended courses.

Objective 2: Identify effective, efficient, and peer-reviewed e-tools (i.e., teaching modules, materials, and strategies) for digital pedagogy to create a **UDI Course Toolbox** for use in online and blended courses.

Objective 3: Train faculty at UConn based on the concept of “**User as Designer**” to use the **UDI Course Toolbox** for the three components of instruction in online and blended courses: **course planning, course delivery, and assessment of learning outcomes.**

Objective 4: Assemble an online **UDI Course Toolbox** to support a **core** and **expanding** repository of e-tools for use in the planning, delivery, and assessment phases of online and blended courses.

Objective 5: Disseminate the UDI Course Toolbox of e-tools and faculty training activities for online and blended courses via Facultyware and other print, conference, and electronic methods.

Demonstration Projects to Ensure Students with Disabilities Receive a Quality Higher Education

PR Award Number: P333A080059
Grantee: South Carolina State University
Orangeburg, SC
Director's Name: Michelle Maultsby
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Since its beginning in 1972 as the first rehabilitation counseling program in a Historically Black College and University (HBCU), the South Carolina State University rehabilitation counseling program has dedicated itself to producing high quality professionals for the rehabilitation field. In keeping with this mission, the proposed project is in direct response to two identified needs related to rehabilitation issues and ensuring the accessibility, affordability, and accountability of higher education, and better preparing students and adults for employment and future learning: 1) Increase the percentage of faculty trained in project activities that incorporate elements of training into their classroom teaching; 2) Assess the difference between the rate at which students with documented disabilities complete courses taught by faculty trained in project activities, and the rate at which other students complete those courses.

This proposal has been developed in cooperation with the input from the Student Disability Services (SDS), and other programs in the rehabilitation community in South Carolina. The state agencies have committed to providing any needed release time, financial support, and assistance in helping their counselors to participate and be successful in the program. This proposal will strengthen the program in several ways if it is funded, including recruitment, preparing and training students with disabilities and individuals from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds on the rights to services and accommodations for students with disabilities.

The project will address the following objectives: 1) increase the percentage of faculty trained in project activities that incorporate elements of training into their classroom teaching; 2) to improve the quality of higher education for students with disabilities; 3) improve communications among students; and between students and faculty regarding disabilities; 4) increase the availability of assistive technology to ensure access and accommodations to higher education for students with disabilities; and 5) maintain and enhance cooperative relationships with Student Disability Services, state-federal VR programs and other cooperating non-profit rehabilitation agencies and facilities, and advocacy groups.

The primary benefit of this proposed project will be an improved opportunity for the quality of higher education for students with disabilities. Improving the quality of education is the first step to addressing the paucity of available services on most college and university campuses. If availability of services and awareness of disabilities are simultaneously increased, it may positively affect the outcome of students with disabilities seeking services and thus improving their overall educational experience.

Demonstration Projects to Ensure Students with Disabilities Receive a Quality Higher Education

PR Award Number: P333A080037
Grantee: University of Oregon
Eugene, OR
Director's Name: Christopher J. Murray
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Recent evidence suggests that attendance and graduation rates of students with disabilities in postsecondary institutions are far below that of their non-disabled peers (NCES, 2007; U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2003). These low rates of attendance and graduation are related to a number of factors, one of which is the availability of supports within university environments for students with disabilities (Allsopp, Minskoff, & Bolt, 2005; Lawler-Finn, 1998; Trammell, 2003).

Expanding Cultural Awareness of Exceptional Learners at the University of Oregon: A Culture Change Model of Faculty Development (Project ExCEL-UO) will improve the performance of students with disabilities at a large, public, research university by providing all faculty members at the university with additional information and training related to understanding and teaching students with disabilities. This model will be implemented collaboratively by faculty in Special Education and the Director of Disability Services (DS). The model includes three interrelated training components that together are designed to impact the overall culture of the university in ways that make it more responsive to the needs of students with disabilities.

Component 1 is a train-the-trainer model of faculty development that will be implemented to maximize the impact of the project. Over the course of the grant, we will strategically select and train 120 faculty members from throughout the university. These individuals will participate in a paid four-day summer institute focused on awareness, understanding, and skills pertaining to teaching students with disabilities in postsecondary settings. These faculty members will then take these skills and the project training materials, and will provide training to other faculty within their own departments. By recruiting existing faculty from the institution to provide disability-focused training to other faculty we anticipate that this project will impact over 1,600 faculty members.

Component 2 will include the wide distribution of educational newsletters focused on issues pertaining to students with disabilities. As our training activities are being implemented by our faculty trainers, we will concurrently distribute print resources in the form of a bi-monthly "Disability Perspectives" newsletter. These newsletters will reinforce concepts being presented by our trainers, and will also provide opportunities to supplement our training activities with additional information.

To further enhance and reinforce the concepts being discussed by our trainers and in our newsletters, we will also redesign and expand the DS Web site (Component 3). This activity will encompass three major activities including (a) an expansion of the site to include information included in our training; (b) the addition of current research and streaming video materials that provide evidence and examples of instructional planning and delivery models, and (c) a pull-down menu of common problems and issues faced by faculty and staff with accompanying suggestions for addressing each issue. Specific outcomes of the project include (a) a reduction in the difference between the rates at which students with documented disabilities and students without disabilities successfully complete courses taught by faculty trained by the project, (b) an increase in the percentage of faculty that incorporate project strategies into their classroom teaching, and (c) positive changes in the attitudes, beliefs and practices of faculty regarding the characteristics, rights, and needs of students with disabilities across the university.

Demonstration Projects to Ensure Students with Disabilities Receive a Quality Higher Education

PR Award Number: P333A080070
Grantee: University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Lincoln, NE
Director's Name: Julie Poykkopost
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The overall goal of the Building Accepting Campus Communities (BACC) project is to design, develop, and refine an interactive, Web-based professional development program to provide postsecondary faculty and administrators with just-in-time online technical support in accommodating students with disabilities in postsecondary education. Specific objectives of the BACC Project are to:

- Develop and refine the **Accommodation Solutions Online (ASO)** tool to provide faculty and students the opportunity to work collaboratively in finding tailored solutions to specific accommodation issues. Often, accommodation training for faculty is focused on general categories of disability rather than on a given learner's individual needs in a specific learning environment. ASO will provide a personalized menu of accommodations that match a student's cognitive and physical characteristics to the essential activities or requirements posed by a particular course resulting in customized "accommodation fingerprints" and leads to better understanding and provision of accommodations.
- Develop and refine the **Faculty Accommodation Coach (FAC)** tool to provide technical assistance in the form of video case studies showing outstanding faculty demonstrating best practices for classroom accommodation of students with disabilities. Used in conjunction with ASO or as a stand-alone tool, these online video case studies will be supplemented with coaching, interactive questions, and expert feedback that elaborate on the video. Faculty will be able to see how their peers implement accommodations and work with students with disabilities. The video case studies will be scripted by and feature outstanding faculty from a variety of postsecondary institutions nominated by service providers and students for their ability to work with students with disabilities.
- Implement a comprehensive iterative design and evaluation process for ASO and FAC drawing on the expertise of service providers, administrators, faculty, disability experts, and students with disabilities. The process will culminate in the use of ASO and FAC by faculty in their courses and data-gathering on the impact these tools have on the performance of students with disabilities as compared to their non-disabled peers.

The outcome of these efforts will be a set of customized accommodation solutions available online that will provide models of exemplary faculty-student interactions. These solutions will be disseminated to other institutions of higher education for the purpose of supporting and sustaining the incorporation of accommodations in postsecondary education across the United States. The comprehensiveness of these activities will fulfill a national need to take full advantage of the technology available to move beyond today's generalized accommodation advice, which often creates more questions than it answers, to a future of individually-focused demonstrations and selection of best accommodation practices. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) is a unique environment because of its long history of service to individuals with disabilities and research into best practices for accommodating students with disabilities.