How to use Inclusive Post-Secondary Education Programs as a Pathway to Employment

Jaclyn Camden, M.Ed.

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 Agenda

- Why is access to post-secondary education important?
- Brief overview of the HEOA of 2008 and TPSID programs
- Overview of VCU’s ACE-IT in College
- A look into how VCU ACE-IT in College’s utilizes career and training development to increase post-employment outcomes
Importance of Access to Post-secondary Education (PSE)

- Only 21.5% of people with disabilities are participating in the labor force
- Only about 15% of individuals with I/DD are employed

People with disabilities accessing PSE
- PWD are about half as likely to access PSE
- Students with ID are significantly less likely to access college than other students with disabilities
- Only 14% of PWD above the age of 25 have completed college
Unemployed Individuals with Disabilities

• Social isolation

• Living in poverty

• Health issues

• Connections to criminal justice system

Access and opportunity to employment is so vital!
Gaining Access

  – Funding and access for Comprehensive Transition and Post-secondary Programs (TPSID) for students with ID in Institutions of Higher Education (IHE)
  – Access to financial aid (Pell grants, FWS, and Supplement Education Opportunity Grants)
  – Currently 264 programs- about 6% of 2 and 4 year IHE
PSE & Employment

PSE programs positively impact

• Individuals with I/DD preparation for the competitive employment market
• Participation in integrated competitive employment
• Wages
• Economic self sufficiency
• More complex and demanding work opportunities
• Self-determination

Migliore, Butterworth, & Hart, 2009; Ross, Marcell, Williams, & Carlson, 2013; Moore & Schelling, 2015; Smith, Grigal, & Sulewski, 2012; Wehman & Scott, 2013)
VCU’S ACE-IT IN COLLEGE PROGRAM
What is VCU’s ACE-IT in College?

- Inclusive
- Employment Driven
- Collaboration
- Student Centered
Certificate Requirements

● 20-24 credits over 4 semesters in inclusive courses
● Paid campus employment
● Community internship
● One credit internship course
Academics

• Students audit regular inclusive VCU classes
  – 2 mandatory credited courses
• Academic Supports and advisors
• Academic Plan of Study
  – 3 mandatory courses
  – General Ed
  – 3 Electives (Career focused)
Employment

• $ campus employment
• Community Internship
• Employment Supports
• Data and evaluation driven
• Partnerships
Career Development
What specific experiences in education led to your post-grad career success?
Person-Centered Planning

- Enrollment Person-Centered Planning meeting
- Semester student-led team meetings
- Student-led choices
Alignment of Coursework

• Strategically aligning courses to promote career development
• Work with academic advisor closely each semester
• Advisors work across departments to get access to courses
# Sample Plan of Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Category</th>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Semester</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNIV 101</td>
<td>UNIV 101</td>
<td>Introduction to the University</td>
<td>Fall 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science – Physical, Natural, Environmental</td>
<td>CLLS 201</td>
<td>Clinical Lab Sciences</td>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
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<td>Language and the Arts</td>
<td>SPCH 121</td>
<td>Effective Speech</td>
<td>Spring 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internship</td>
<td>Independent Study: Internship</td>
<td></td>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective A</td>
<td>HPEX 121</td>
<td>Self Defense Aikido</td>
<td>Fall 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective B</td>
<td>MILS 101</td>
<td>Military Science</td>
<td>Fall 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective C</td>
<td>CRJS 181</td>
<td>Intro to Criminal Justice</td>
<td>Spring 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective D</td>
<td>SOCY 101</td>
<td>Introduction to Sociology</td>
<td>Fall 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective E</td>
<td>HSEP 302</td>
<td>Emergency Planning</td>
<td>Fall 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Individualized Technology

• Technology assessment
  – Build supports and training around results
• Individualized assistive technology support for employment and academics
• Partner with VR for AT evals
• Example: Marco Polo App
Strategic Employment Experiences
Campus Employment

- Meets interest or needed skill
- Fall and Spring
- Paid at or above minimum wage
- Goal Setting
- Mid and final evaluations
- Individualized supports
Paid Job Diversity

Frequency of Placement*

*Excludes students who continued pre-program employment
Internship

- Final semester
- 8 weeks
- Interest driven
- Paid or unpaid
- Supported
- Evaluations
- Coursework targeting 21st Century Workplace skills
- Finish semester with job development
Internships

Examples
● Federal Reserve Bank
● Altria Group
● Tussing Elementary
● Innsbrook After Hours
● VCU’s Siegel Center
● Holocaust Museum
● Powell Orthotics and Prosthetics
● VCU Clinical Lab Sciences
● Firehouse Theatre
● Hilton Hotel

26 Internships and 26 UNIQUE Placements
# Case Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer 2014</th>
<th>Fall 2014-Spring 2016</th>
<th>Fall 2016</th>
<th>Spring 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PCP Meeting</td>
<td>Class &amp; Work</td>
<td>Internship &amp; Graduation</td>
<td>Employment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Work in an office**
- Do the best that she can at whatever she does
- Tenacity to make life happen
- **Full time work-with benefits**
- Have friends

- Administrative and office positions
- Choice Group (off-campus)
- Partnership for People with Disabilities (VCU)

- **Paid internship**
- **$10/hr**

- 40 hrs/week
- **$14.50/hr**
- Healthcare
- 401K options

![Altria](Altria.png)
Leveraging Business Relationships

Use businesses not just for employment and Internships
Partners with businesses for:
• Mock interviews
• Workshops
• Job shadows
• Business tours
Student-Centered Supports

• Employment Supports
• Academic Supports
• Peer Supports
Evaluations and Goals

• Frequent S.M.A.R.T. goal setting and review
• Goal tracking
• Employer evaluations
• Reflective self-evaluations
Outcomes

90% post-grad employment rate

80% had employment within 3 months

100% of careers matched interest
Student Voice
For those that support or advise at the PSE, what can you implement to create experiences that lead to stronger outcomes?