University Participant Program: Practices and Findings from Year One

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Where is Western Carolina University?

Cullowhee, North Carolina and WCU
What is the UP Program?

• The University Participant (UP) Program is a two year, inclusive program for college-aged individuals with intellectual disabilities.

• Operated as a pilot program from 2007 to 2010; 2 participants completed the program by 2010.

• Expanded to 4 participants in 2010, 4 additional in 2011 for a total of 8 participants.

• Funded as a model demonstration site in 2010 by U.S. Department of Education.
Five UP Program Components

Participants must pay current university fees for auditing courses
UP Certificate Requirements

UP Certificate of Accomplishment

- 1800 hrs in 4 semesters
- 80% of objectives in IPCP*
- Recommendation based on satisfactory progress

*Individual Plan for College Participation (IPCP)
What do UP Participants do at WCU?

- Live in campus residence halls and experience college life with same age peers
- Have an individual plan that would allow personal development for post-UP success
- Attend and audit a limited number of classes
- Participate in social events and activities
Systems for Functioning in PSE

- Specific criteria for admission
- Consistent application of values (inclusion & self-determination)
- Inclusive opportunities in all of campus life
- Integration of work-based learning and transition to employment
- Administrative support of program development
- Support from student volunteers
What are Natural Supports?

• Are “resources inherent in community environments that can be used for habilitative and supportive services” (West, Kregel, Hernandez, & Hock 1997)

• “Natural supports refers to reliance on persons within typical environments,” (Westling & Fox, 2009, p. 565).
Natural Support: UP Definition

• Paid and unpaid WCU students of approximately the same age as participants who intervene as necessary to facilitate inclusive participation in dorm-life, course work, and social & recreational activities.
What do Natural Supports Do?

| Academic                      | • Attending and supporting participants in classes  
|                              | • Support/tutoring with projects and homework       |
| Social                       | • Attending sporting events                          
|                              | • Campus social events (e.g., religious groups, cheerleading, swimming, clubs, movies, plays, ballgames) |
| Vocational                   | • Serving as a job coach                             |
| Personal Development         | • Suitemate: morning and night routines               
|                              | • Personal care goals                                
|                              | • Attendance and input at person centered planning meetings |
|                              | • Help collecting data on IPCP goals                 |
## Organized Yet Individualized

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1/30/12</th>
<th>1/31/12</th>
<th>2/1/12</th>
<th>2/2/12</th>
<th>2/3/12</th>
<th>2/4/12</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MONDAY</td>
<td>TUESDAY</td>
<td>WEDNESDAY</td>
<td>THURSDAY</td>
<td>FRIDAY</td>
<td>SATURDAY</td>
<td>SUNDAY</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:05-9:55 am HEALTH CLASS IN REID 117 Hannah Kiziah 828-502-XXXX</td>
<td>9:30-10:45 am CRIMINAL JUSTICE CLASS IN BARDO ARTS CENTER 130 Hilari Griffin 828-305-XXXX</td>
<td>9:05-9:55 am HEALTH CLASS IN REID 117 Hannah Kiziah 828-502-XXXX</td>
<td>9:30-10:45 am CRIMINAL JUSTICE CLASS IN BARDO ARTS CENTER 130 Hilari Griffin 828-305-XXXX</td>
<td>9:00-11:00 am WORK IN LIBRARY/ CIRCULATION Chloe Mutz 919-457-XXXXX</td>
<td>9:30 – 10:00 pm EVENING ROUTINE</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00-11:00 am HOMEWORK Natalie Cannon 828-808-XXXXX</td>
<td>10:45-11:15 am TRAVEL TO LIBRARY A’Kasha Johnson 704-918-XXXXX</td>
<td>10:00-11:00 am HOMEWORK Hannah Kiziah 828-502-XXXXX</td>
<td>10:45-11:15 am TRAVEL TO LIBRARY Stephanie Anne Smith 828-553-XXXXX</td>
<td>11:00am-12:15 pm HOMEWORK Destiny Jordan 910-571-XXXXX</td>
<td>10:00 pm – 7:45 am SLEEP Haley Gower 704-648-XXXXX</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00-11:15 am TRAVEL TO KILLIAN 108 Destiny Jordan 910-571-XXXXX</td>
<td>11:15am-1:30 pm WORK IN LIBRARY/ CIRCULATION A’Kasha Johnson 704-918-XXXXX</td>
<td>11:00-11:15 am TRAVEL TO KILLIAN 108 Destiny Jordan 910-571-XXXXX</td>
<td>11:15am-1:30 pm WORK IN LIBRARY/ CIRCULATION Stephanie Anne Smith 828-553-XXXXX</td>
<td>TURN IN SCHEDULE/ WEIGHT IN</td>
<td>10:00 pm – 7:45 am SLEEP Haley Gower 704-648-XXXXX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:15am-12:05 pm CAREER CLASS KILLAN 108 Destiny Jordan 910-571-XXXXX</td>
<td>1:30-1:45 pm TRAVEL TO LUNCH Faith Corbit 904-708-XXXXX</td>
<td>11:15am-12:05 pm CAREER CLASS KILLAN 108 Destiny Jordan 910-571-XXXXX</td>
<td>1:30-1:45 pm TRAVEL TO LUNCH Faith Corbit 904-708-XXXXX</td>
<td>12:15-12:30 pm TRAVEL TO LUNCH Brittany Crain 828-289-XXXXX</td>
<td>10:00 pm – 7:45 am SLEEP Haley Gower 704-648-XXXXX</td>
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Year One Evaluation Components

- Individual interviews with participants
- Focus groups with family members
- Survey of faculty
- Focus groups of students
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policies and Procedures</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Recruitment</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Public awareness/communication</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Academic inclusion and support</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Residential and campus life</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Vocational opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outcomes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participant Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Why college?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adjustment: challenges; positives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Academic experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Work experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Changes: self; family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Goals</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Family Focus Groups

Two consistent themes related to families’ goals and dreams:

| Independence | Inclusion |
Student Focus Groups

- Student volunteers: most as class requirement but continuing by choice
- Training & support for their roles
- Support of UP students intensive, then fades
- Expectations vs. experience
- Strong commitment to the program

“People are more mindful now. It’s changed this university.”
WCU students:

• “I’ve learned not to make assumptions about what they can or cannot do.”

• “Everyone deserves a chance to learn and to have a job.”

• “As much as they learn, we also learn. If we could translate that into the community, the world would be a better place.”
Faculty Survey

- Many students with intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD) can benefit from a college experience with adequate supports.
• Typical college students can benefit from a college experience that includes students with I/DD.
Review of Systems

• Specific criteria for admission
• Consistent application of values
• Inclusive opportunities in all of campus life
• Integration of work-based learning and transition to employment
• Administrative support of program development
• Support from student volunteers
Integrating Evaluation with Program Development

- Setting initial goals
- Objective assessment of progress
- Specific criteria
- Ongoing input and exchange of ideas
- Measurable outcomes
- Collaborative efforts
College Students’ Attitudes about an Inclusive Postsecondary Education Program for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities
Survey questions and purpose:

1. What are the attitudes of college students regarding the enrollment of individuals with ID in an inclusive PSE program on their campus?

2. Does knowledge of the PSE program or its participants influence attitudes toward the program and inclusion?

3. Do previous contacts with persons with ID influence attitudes toward the UP program and inclusion?

4. Do students’ demographic characteristics influence attitudes toward the UP program and inclusion?
Survey Participants

- All undergraduate students (7,149) were requested through email to participate
- 572 undergraduate students opened the questionnaire
  - 385 females, 183 males (4 unidentified)
  - 128 freshman, 137 sophomores, 147 juniors, 155 seniors
  - 540 were full-time students
  - 367 lived on-campus
The Questionnaire

• Used SurveyMonkey to deliver questions, gather data

• Questionnaire included 17 questions
  • 3 about knowledge and experience with UP program or participants
  • 6 on attitudes toward UP program, participants, and inclusion
  • 2 on previous experience with persons with ID
  • 4 on demographic information
  • 1 for comments
  • 1 to leave name and phone number to enter a drawing
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of the UP program at WCU.</td>
<td>319 (55.8%)</td>
<td>212 (37.1%)</td>
<td>41 (7.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know at least one of the UP participants.</td>
<td>227 (39.9%)</td>
<td>253 (44.5%)</td>
<td>89 (15.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have been enrolled in a course with at least one UP participant.</td>
<td>99 (17.4%)</td>
<td>251 (44.1%)</td>
<td>219 (38.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Results: Attitude Toward UP Program, Participants, & Inclusion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Agree strongly</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree strongly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individuals with intellectual disabilities can benefit from attending college if given some support.</td>
<td>412 (72.3%)</td>
<td>132 (23.2%)</td>
<td>22 (3.9%)</td>
<td>3 (0.5%)</td>
<td>1 (0.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typical college students can benefit from attending a college that includes students with intellectual disabilities.</td>
<td>336 (59.2%)</td>
<td>173 (30.5%)</td>
<td>50 (8.8%)</td>
<td>6 (1.1%)</td>
<td>3 (0.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Including students with intellectual disabilities in a college class does NOT lessen the quality of the class for other college students.</td>
<td>307 (54.0%)</td>
<td>168 (29.5%)</td>
<td>71 (12.5%)</td>
<td>21 (3.7%)</td>
<td>2 (0.4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Results: Attitude Toward UP Program, Participants, & Inclusion

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<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree strongly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Including students with intellectual disabilities in college classes can be beneficial to other college students in the class.</td>
<td>289 (51.0)</td>
<td>182 (32.1)</td>
<td>75 (13.2)</td>
<td>18 (3.2)</td>
<td>3 (0.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Including students with intellectual disabilities in campus life is beneficial to other college students.</td>
<td>334 (58.9)</td>
<td>183 (32.3)</td>
<td>44 (7.8)</td>
<td>4 (0.7)</td>
<td>2 (0.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities should be willing to include individuals with intellectual disabilities.</td>
<td>444 (77.9)</td>
<td>112 (19.6)</td>
<td>12 (2.1)</td>
<td>1 (0.2)</td>
<td>1 (0.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Results: Previous Contact with Persons with Intellectual Disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In my high school, students with intellectual disabilities were included in some classes or school activities.</td>
<td>392 (68.9%)</td>
<td>118 (20.7%)</td>
<td>59 (10.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a family member, friend, and/or acquaintance with intellectual disabilities (not including UP participants).</td>
<td>319 (56.1%)</td>
<td>220 (38.7%)</td>
<td>30 (5.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results: Significant Relationships (p. ≤ .05)

- Respondents were more likely to agree with this statement “Individuals with intellectual disabilities can benefit from attending college if given some support” if
  - They had a family member, friend or acquaintance with ID, or
  - They were female
Results: Significant Relationships (p. ≤ .05)

- Respondents were more likely to agree with this statement “Typical college students can benefit from attending a college that includes students with intellectual disabilities” if
  - They were aware of the program, or
  - Knew at least 1 UP participant, or
  - Had a family member, friend or acquaintance with ID, or
  - Were female.
Results: Significant Relationships (p. ≤ .05)

• Respondents were more likely to agree with this statement “Including students with intellectual disabilities in a college class does NOT lessen the quality of the class for other college students” if
  • They had been enrolled in a course with a UP participant, or
  • Had a family member, friend or acquaintance with ID, or
  • Were female
Results: Significant Relationships (p. ≤ .05)

- Respondents were more likely to agree with this statement “Including students with intellectual disabilities in college classes can be beneficial to other college students in the class” if
  - They knew at least 1 UP participant, or
  - They knew students with ID included in high school, or
  - Had a family member, friend or acquaintance with ID, or
  - Were female
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Results: Significant Relationships (p. ≤ .05)

- Respondents were more likely to agree with the statement “Communities should be willing to include individuals with intellectual disabilities” if,
  - They had a family member, friend or acquaintance with ID, or
  - Were female
General Conclusions

• Overall attitudes to the UP program, UP participants, and inclusion were positive.

• Awareness of the program and experience with participants increased positive attitudes toward UP program and participants.

• Those who had been in a class with a UP participant more often agreed that the participant did NOT lessen the quality of the class.
Limitations of the Study

- Sample was not randomly selected, may not be representative of all WCU students.
- Findings may not generalize to other colleges or universities.
- Responses to the Internet survey may have been erroneous in some cases.
- Responses may have been different if there were different participants with ID in the UP program.
Perspectives about UP Program
Questions?
Contact Information

Kelly R. Kelley - UP Program Coordinator
  • kkelley@email.wcu.edu

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  • cnmoffitt@email.wcu.edu

Carolina Institute on Developmental Disabilities Evaluators
  • Donna Carlson Yerby
    • Donna.yerby@cidd.unc.edu
  • Deborah Zuver
    • Deborah.zuver@cidd.unc.edu
Additional PSE Resources

• [http://up.wcu.edu](http://up.wcu.edu) - WCU UP Program website

• [www.cidd.unc.edu/psea/](http://www.cidd.unc.edu/psea/) - NC Postsecondary Education Alliance

• [www.transitiontocollege.net](http://www.transitiontocollege.net) - Post-Secondary Education Research Center (PERC). Info on options and trends.

• [www.ThinkCollege.net](http://www.ThinkCollege.net) – Database, TA, newsletters

• [www.nsttac.org](http://www.nsttac.org) -- The National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center