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Inclusive Concurrent Education Partnership

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Summary/Abstract

The Inclusive Concurrent Education Grant was implemented at the beginning of the fall 2012 semester after a planning period covering the spring and summer of 2012. Seven students from Boston Public Schools participated in the program's first semester at UMass Boston, auditing a class each chosen from their personal interests. Five students completed.

Goals and Objectives

The objective of the Inclusive Concurrent Education partnership is to provide secondary students with significant intellectual disabilities an opportunity to take an undergraduate course at UMass Boston. The goals are to provide an opportunity for these students to pursue their interests and to learn such skills as self-advocacy and self-sufficiency in a post-secondary school setting.

Approaches and Methods

- Students are identified through our partners at Boston Public Schools' STRIVE program and Braintree Public Schools' PROVE program. Student selected are above the age of 18, have been diagnosed with significant intellectual disabilities and will "age out" of secondary school without having passed the MCAS requirement for graduation.
- Students identify areas of interest and are enrolled in classes that most closely match these interests.
- Representatives from the Clark Athletic Center introduced the students to the various programs and activities available to them.
- In the spring of 2013, we began to match students participating in ICE with peer mentors in order to nurture a stronger connection to the Campus community.
- With technical assistance from the Institute of Community Inclusion, we sponsored a workshop for UMass Boston faculty about Universal Design for Learning.

Results/Impact

- Results and impact focus upon the students' increased sense of self-advocacy, and sense of involvement in a community outside of their secondary school setting.
- Students have learned to advocate for themselves in terms of accommodations.
- Students have begun to join in various social events and opportunities on Campus. Students have taken swimming lessons and have used the gym and track.
- Students have begun to expand their social circles to include other students on Campus: One student returned for the spring semester and took on a leadership role, mentoring new students and showing them around Campus.
- Three students used their UMass Boston IDs and took a trip to the JFK Library.
- Students have begun meeting with peer mentors (matriculated undergraduate students).

Conclusion/Next Steps

Next steps include:

- Further developing a mentoring system which will provide students participating in the ICE program with a stronger sense of community involvement at UMass Boston.
- Increasing opportunities for job shadowing on Campus.
- Expanding partnerships to surrounding public schools systems.

References and Resources

The Institute for Community Inclusion
(www.communityinclusion.org)
Think College
(www.thinkcollege.net)

Additional Partnerships, Information and/or Contacts

Institute for Community Inclusion

Boston Public Schools

Braintree Public Schools