




OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM

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Creating Career Pathways for Students with Disabilities

- ▶▶▶ Students with disabilities need to explore careers and potential pathways to these careers
 - ▶▶▶ Postsecondary education provides opportunities for students with disabilities, even those who are considered nontraditional college students
 - ▶▶▶ Postsecondary education is necessary to successfully prepare for 21st century careers
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Paid Employment

Youth who participated in inclusive postsecondary education:

- ▶▶▶ Were 26% more likely to leave Vocational Rehabilitation with paid employment
- ▶▶▶ Earned a 73% higher weekly income
- ▶▶▶ Need greater access to inclusive postsecondary education supported by Vocational Rehabilitation

Data Set: RSA 911

Migliore, A., Butterworth, J., & Hart, D. (2009). Postsecondary Education and Employment Outcomes for Youth with Intellectual Disabilities. Fast Facts Series, No. 1. Boston, MA: Institute for Community Inclusion

Inclusive Postsecondary Education Models

Substantially Separated

- Academics are taught with other students with disabilities
- Interaction with peers w/o disabilities primarily through social activities

Mixed

- Academics part of the time with peers w/o disabilities
- Social activities are integrated

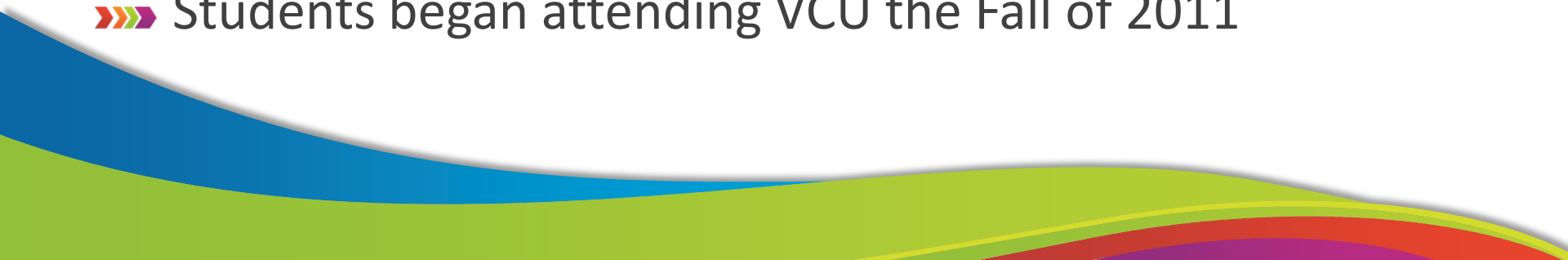
Inclusive Individualized Model

- VCU implements this model
- Students with disabilities included in all aspects of the college
- No separate program, classes, activities, etc.

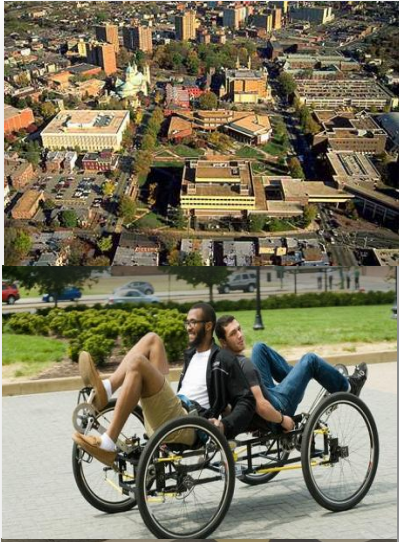
Reach for the Sky



Overview of ACE-IT in College

- ▶▶▶▶ 5-year demonstration grant through US Department of Education
 - ▶▶▶▶ Postsecondary education opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities (cognitive, autism, or traumatic brain injury)
 - ▶▶▶▶ Program of one established at VCU
 - ▶▶▶▶ Replication at two community colleges beginning in Year 3 of the project
 - ▶▶▶▶ Students began attending VCU the Fall of 2011
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Virginia Commonwealth University



- ▶▶▶ We are the VCU Rams!
- ▶▶▶ Urban university in the city of Richmond
- ▶▶▶ Two campuses total enrollment 31,000
- ▶▶▶ In-State tuition \$9,517 (Full-time)
- ▶▶▶ Diversity of student body, faculty, and staff is a central mission of VCU



It's the Right Thing to Do



Collaboration is Key



Partnership for People
with Disabilities

Linking people. Changing lives.

www.partnership.vcu.edu

VCU Rehabilitation Research and Training Center

Worksupport.com

Information, resources and research about work and disability issues




VCU School of Education

BRIDGING OPPORTUNITIES

Eligibility for ACE-IT in College

- ▶▶▶▶ Have a documented intellectual disability, traumatic brain injury, autism, or multiple disabilities.
- ▶▶▶▶ Have completed or will complete high school with a Modified Standard Diploma, a Special Diploma, or a Certificate of Program Completion.
- ▶▶▶▶ Be able to commit to a 30 month (5 semesters) college certificate program and take 4 – 8 hours per week of classes. Internships are integral part of program.
- ▶▶▶▶ Final semester students work with employment specialist to pursue employment in non-traditional settings.

ACE-IT in College Components

- ▶▶▶ Person-Centered Plans
 - ▶▶▶ Academic Supports (individual plans & education coaches)
 - ▶▶▶ Career Exploration (business mentors, internships)
 - ▶▶▶ Social Networks (campus life)
 - ▶▶▶ Financial Literacy and Planning
 - ▶▶▶ Competitive Employment
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School of Education Certificate

▶▶▶ Students who complete the program will earn existing certificate through School of Education

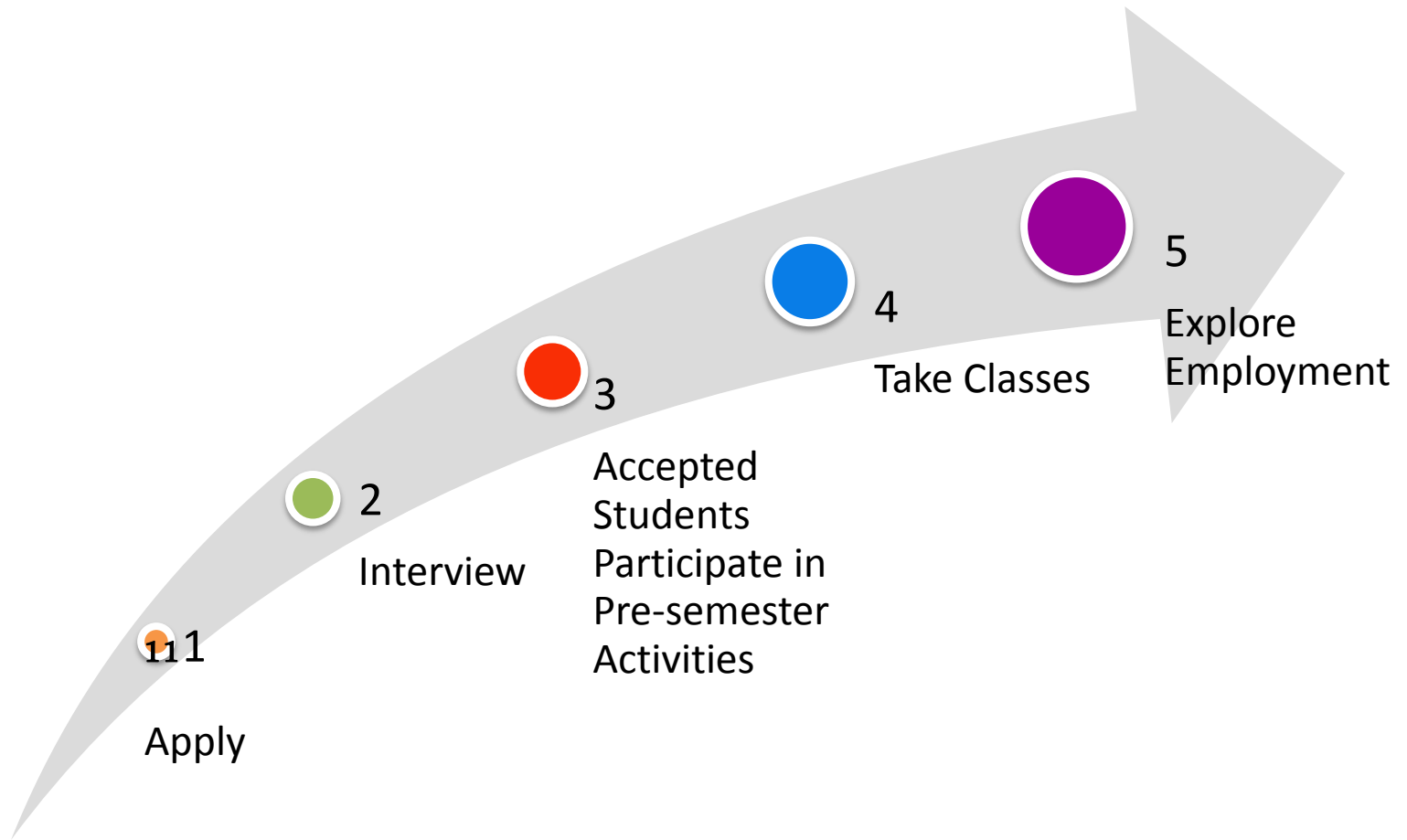
▶▶▶ 21 credits

▶▶▶ 4 required courses (10 - 11 credits):

- Intro to university
- Science/environment/natural
- Literature/writing/art/music
- Social studies/civilization/global community

▶▶▶ Up to 4 electives (9 - 11 credits)


The ACE-IT in College Process



Step 1 - Apply

- ▶▶▶ Students are recruited
- ▶▶▶ Interested students complete an application
- ▶▶▶ Applications are submitted via email or mail to ACE-IT in College staff

Step 2 - Interview

- ▶▶▶ Applications are reviewed by VCU ACE-IT staff and the VCU community
 - ▶▶▶ Qualified students are selected for an interview
 - ▶▶▶ The application and interview are scored using a rubric
 - ▶▶▶ Students are notified of acceptance/non-acceptance
 - ▶▶▶ 4-5 students are accepted per year
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Meet Zach: ACE-IT in College Student



Step 3 – Participate in Pre-semester Activities

Students who are accepted into the ACE-IT in College program:

- ▶▶▶ Participate in a person-centered planning meeting
- ▶▶▶ Apply to VCU for admission
- ▶▶▶ Meet with an academic advisor in the School of Education to select classes through VCU catalog
- ▶▶▶ Attend VCU orientation and register for classes
- ▶▶▶ Visit DSS Office & register for accommodations
- ▶▶▶ Select activities to attend during the welcome week and meet their VCU Education Coach

Step 4 – Take Classes

- ▶▶▶ Students attend VCU classes
- ▶▶▶ Education coaches assist students directly in class and/or outside of class for tutoring, social activities, etc.
- ▶▶▶ Meetings are held throughout the semester with students' Interagency Team:
 - Student
 - Family
 - Adult Agency
 - ACE-IT Staff
 - School Division Staff (when applicable)

What Faculty are Telling Us about ACE-IT in College


▶▶▶ 4 Year University Faculty

- For me, the student was just one of 'the gang' from the outset.
- I haven't had to alter anything [curriculum] at all yet and can't foresee this having to take place as we move forward.

▶▶▶ Community College Faculty

- ACE-IT in College fits the mission of community colleges.
- The student tends to work harder than anyone else in the class.

Step 5 – Explore Employment

- ▶▶▶ Outcome of ACE-IT in College is competitive employment in student's interest area based on courses and experiences at VCU
 - ▶▶▶ Part of curriculum includes such activities as internships, experiences in community service, paired with a business mentor, and part-time employment
 - ▶▶▶ Last 3-6 months of the program (along with finishing courses), students will be working with a job coach to enter competitive employment
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Eddie and Coach



Meet Amy: Education Coach



Eddie Snapshot: Started August 2011

VCU Student:	20 years old, received a Special Diploma
Interests:	Loves sports and fitness
Courses:	Freshmen Orientation and Strength, Endurance and Flexibility Training (exercise science)
Education Coach Focus:	Orient to campus, participate in class activities, answer questions
Career Goal:	Exploring opportunities through VCU

Eddie Update: May 2012

- ▶▶▶ Spring Semester Courses: ARTF 121 Introduction to Drawing-Received an A in the course
- ▶▶▶ HUMS 250 Reading Film (took course for audit)
- ▶▶▶ Learns best through demonstration and guided practice
- ▶▶▶ Is proficient in use of Blackboard, cell phone, & calculator
- ▶▶▶ Loves the VCU Rams basketball team



Kathryn Snapshot: Started August 2011

VCU Student:	21 years old, received a Special Diploma
Interests:	Working with children
Courses:	Freshmen Orientation and Intro to Teaching (service learning with elementary students)
Education Coach Focus:	Using assistive technology independently
Career Goal:	To own her own daycare center

Kathryn Update: May 2012

- ▶▶▶ Spring classes: TEDU 351 Children's Literature 1- Received a B in the course
- ▶▶▶ TEDU 411 Integrating Arts in the Curriculum for Young Children-Received an A in the course
- ▶▶▶ Proficient in using the Live Scribe pen, books on tape, calculator and is computer literate
- ▶▶▶ Initiates interaction with other students in class. Offered to take notes for her small discussion group

Current Career Experiences

- ▶▶▶ Kathryn works at the VCU Child Development Center in the 2-year old classroom
- ▶▶▶ Eddie works at the Cary Street gym in facilities
- ▶▶▶ A third student, Loren also works at the Cary Street gym, but not clear on career goal
- ▶▶▶ This summer Loren will be involved in the Discovery Process to learn further about his unique skills and interests




Meet Kathryn: ACE-IT in College Student



What We Have Learned

- ▶▶▶ ACE-IT in College has a presence on the university's diversity committee to ensure students with disabilities are part of the plan and in the strategic plan of the university
- ▶▶▶ Internal Management Team create solutions to implementation of the model and sustainability as a result of their work on the model
- ▶▶▶ Team Members include:
 - Dean of the School of Education (Chair)
 - Vice Provost and Assistant Vice Provost for Students Affairs
 - Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
 - Vice Provost Division of Community Engagement

Best Practices in Place

- ▶▶▶ Universal design techniques to assist students
 - ▶▶▶ Use of technology for learning
 - ▶▶▶ Involvement of faculty and college administrators
 - ▶▶▶ Part-time employment to strengthen work related skills
 - ▶▶▶ Person centered planning to develop career goals and selection of courses
 - ▶▶▶ Education coaches to provide direct support
 - ▶▶▶ Inclusive practice-students are fully integrated on campus
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To Learn More about Virginia's Efforts

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National Websites

www.thinkcollege.net

www.going-to-college.org