

# Creating a Better Understanding of Postsecondary Education Opportunities for Students with Intellectual Disabilities

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**Driven to Discover<sup>SM</sup>**

# What do Persons with ID and Their Families Want?

- A postsecondary experience that fits the student's unique profile of abilities, disabilities.
  - Adaptive skills (conceptual, social, practical)
  - Emotional/behavioral strengths & challenges
  - Level of motivation
- Basis for making an informed judgment about tradeoffs between costs (personal and financial) and benefits (tangible and intangible)

# How Can You Compare Diverse Programs for Students with ID?

## ...with a Taxonomy

- A classification scheme that reveals the underlying similarities and differences among the diversity of postsecondary opportunities available
- Multiple uses
  - Families – Basis for comparing programs
  - Research – Do some clusters of programs work better than others? Why? Depending on what?
  - Practice – Promotes evidence-based programs
  - Document evolution of programs, and the field



# Why Develop Taxonomies?

## Appearances can be Deceiving

### ■ Huge Red King



### ■ Tiny Blue Hermit Crab



- ❑ Different Forms – different size, shape, color ... but
- ❑ Similar Anatomy – such as asymmetric claws
- ❑ Similar Behavior
- ❑ DNA (structural elements) links these two crabs more closely than 100+ other crab species

# Taxonomy of PSE programs for Persons with ID

## Two Parts

### ■ Elements

- “Compare & contrast” – Standardized basis for comparing program characteristics and goals
- “Program Clusters” – Basis for grouping like programs and comparing their effectiveness

### ■ Hypothesized Links

- “Decision tree” – Test the priority of decisions
- “Logic model” – Test links between program elements and different outcomes

# Clustering Programs Based on Shared Elements (hypothetical)

	Institution			Entrance/Application		Source of Supports			Person Centered Planning	Individualized Supports	Academic Domain		
Program Name	2-Year	4-Year	Other	Open Enrollment	Competitive	Program Inclusion Staff	Disability Services	External	Degree of:	Degree of:	Courses w/ Nondisabled Students	Courses w/ Disabled Students	College Readiness Courses
	I-2	I-4	I-O	OE	C	PIS	DS	ESS	PCP (1-10 scale)	IS (1-10 scale)	A-CNS (%)	A-CDS (%)	A-CRC
Program A		X			X	X	X	X	10	10	25%	75%	X
Program B		X			X	X		X	7	8	50%	50%	X
Program C	X			X				X	3	4	50%	50%	X
Program D	X			X		X		X	5	4	0	100%	

	Social Domain			Independent Living Domain			Vocational Domain		
Program Name	Social Skills Courses	Clubs /Sports	Peer Interaction Opportunities	Life Skills Courses	Other Independent Living	Dormitory	Vocational Courses	Internships	Job Shadowing
	S-SSC	S-C/S	S-PI (1-10 scale)	I-LSC	I-O	I-DE	V-VC (% Credits)	V-I	V-JS
Program A	X	X	6	X		X	25%	X	
Program B		X	8	X		X	0	X	
Program C	X		7	X	X		65%	X	X
Program D	X		2	X			80%	X	X

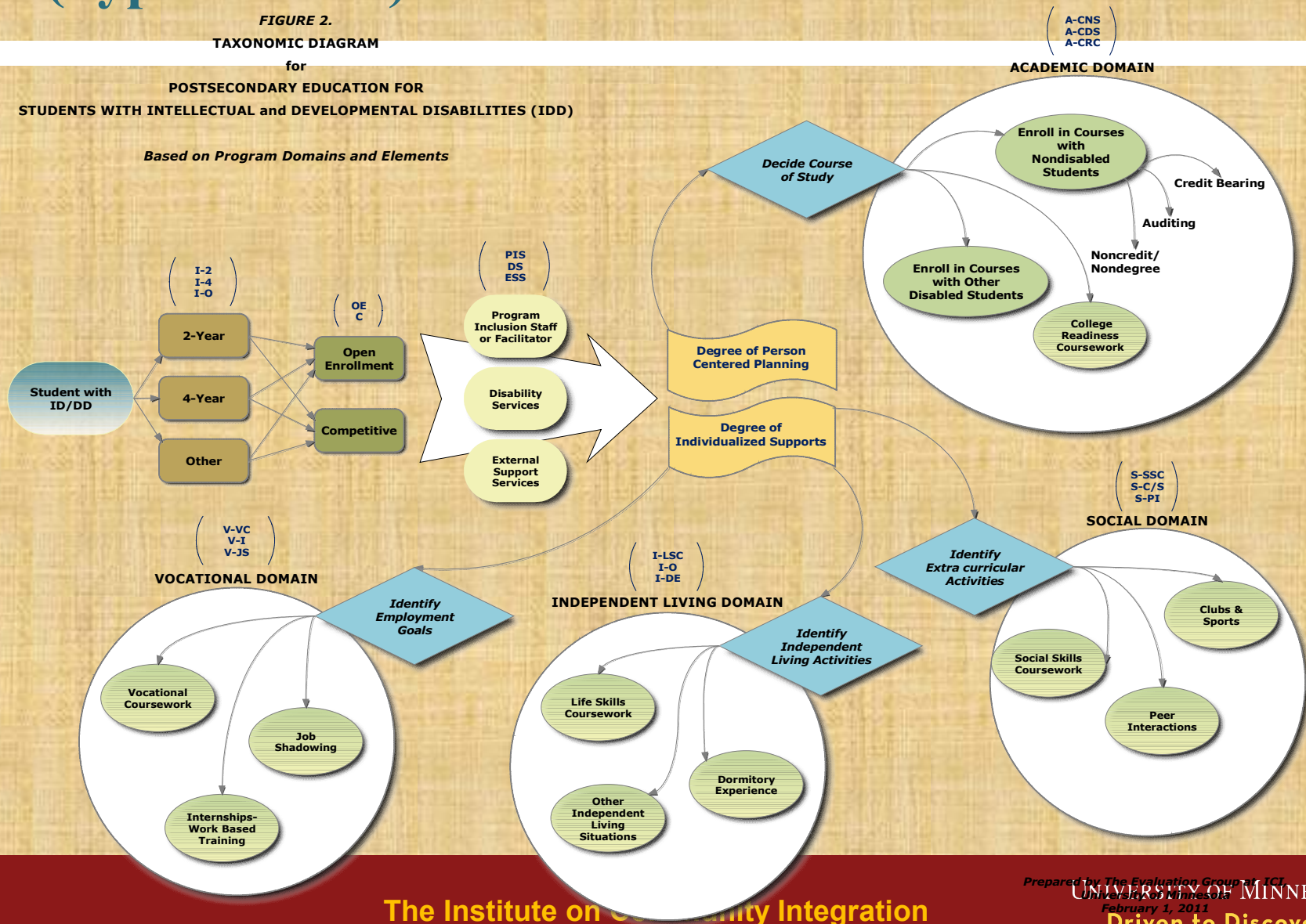


# Decision-Tree Diagram (hypothesized)

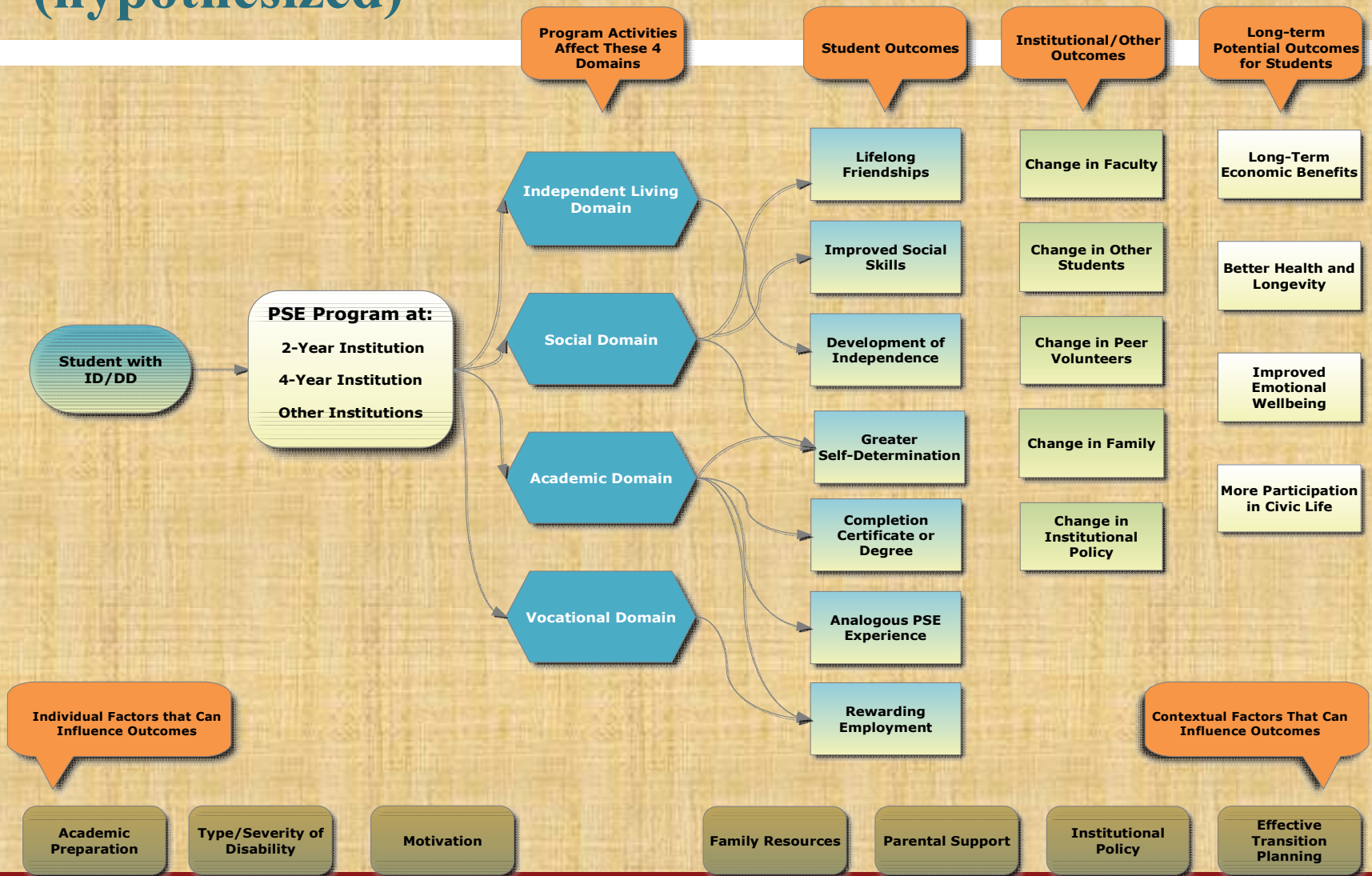
FIGURE 2.  
TAXONOMIC DIAGRAM

for  
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION FOR  
STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL and DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (IDD)

Based on Program Domains and Elements



# Logic Model Guide (hypothesized)





# Next Steps

## Finalize the Taxonomy

- Interview a diversity of programs nationally
  - Expand the list of elements
  - Clarify the hypothesized decision tree & links
- Update the literature review
  - Educational research on students without disabilities (selection effects on outcomes, social adjustment, etc.)
  - Latest research on programs for students with ID (published surveys of programs, new studies)

# What Issues Should Be Considered?

- Issues faced by all students
  - What are admission criteria?
  - Adequate high-school prep?
  - What is an “authentic college experience”?
  - Is student ready for greater independence?
  - Is it worth the cost?
  - Why do I want (my student) to attend college?

## More Information

### PSE for Students with IDD: A Critical Review of the State of Knowledge and a Taxonomy to Guide Future Research

Policy Research Brief (vol. 21, No. 1)

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