

THE IRIS CENTER  
COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT CFDA 84.325E  
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Administrative Progress Report  
for  
Year 2, Quarter 4

Submitted to:

Sarah Allen  
Tracie Dickson  
Research to Practice Division  
Office of Special Education Programs  
Office of Special Education & Rehabilitative Services  
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Naomi Tyler  
Deborah Deutsch Smith

## The IRIS Center Quarterly Report/October–December 2014 [Year 2, Quarter 4]

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The IRIS Center produces these Quarterly Reports as both a narrative of our effort and a detailed account of our work and progress. This Fourth Quarter of Year Two found the Center busy creating new instructional resources and materials, updating others, hosting trainings, and taking part in presentations and conferences. Read on to learn all the latest from the IRIS Center.

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### **BUILD PROJECT INFRASTRUCTURE**

*See this section for brief descriptions of those items having to do with our ongoing infrastructure development and enhancement.*

*Activities and Progress in This Quarter:*

**Certificates of Completion:** Work continues on a portion of our Website site that will offer a certificate of completion for Modules, which can be used to verify professional development hours. The portion has been constructed but has not yet gone live. We are currently working with several consultants to develop pre- and post-tests for each Module. Users will have the option of reporting these scores on their certificate.

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### **MAINTAIN PROJECT BUDGET**

The co-directors and budget managers at both locations carefully monitor expenditure and encumbrances. Costs for events and activities are under close scrutiny to ensure that no over-expenditures occur in Year 2. Deb Smith and Naomi Tyler are working on the OSEP-requested budget report regarding the EI/EC expenditures.

### **DEVELOP**

*The Center develops teaching and learning tools, and content and training modules reflecting evidence-based instructional and intervention practices. These tools are designed for use by IHE faculty, professional development providers, and practicing educators, and are high quality, useful, relevant, and non-duplicative.*

*Activities and Progress in This Quarter:*

- **STAR Legacy Modules:** Three Modules have been posted to the Website this quarter. One Module has been submitted to OSEP and is awaiting approval.
  - *Evidence-Based Practices (Part 1): Identifying and Selecting a Practice or Program:* This Module, the first in a series of three, discusses the importance of identifying and selecting evidence-based practices or programs.
  - *Evidence-Based Practices (Part 2): Implementing a Practice or Program with Fidelity:* This Module, second in our series of three, discusses implementing an evidence-based practice or program with fidelity.
  - *Evidence-Based Practices (Part 3): Evaluating Learner Outcomes and Fidelity:* This Module, last in the series, examines how to evaluate whether an evidence-based practice or program is effective for the young children or students with whom you are working.
  - *Early Childhood Behavior Management: Developing and Teaching Rules:* This Module includes information on how to create developmentally appropriate behavior rules for early childhood classrooms so that they link to a given school's behavior expectations. The importance of communication with families about rules and expected behaviors is also stressed. The Module has been submitted to OSEP for approval.
- **Seminar Materials:** Many of our IRIS Seminar resources and materials underwent extensive editing this quarter based on field-testing that took place during the Fall. Our Faculty Seminar Companion Guide and the Faculty Seminar PowerPoint have been revised and will undergo a new round of printing for 2015. Seminar PowerPoint presentations were likewise modified. A new "Participant PowerPoint Presentation" (P4) option was developed based on feedback from participants at Seminars. Those returning to their programs to share what they learned with colleagues unable to attend the event appreciate this option.
- **Knowledge Development:** Links to the CEEDAR Innovation Configurations (ICs) were included on the "Using IRIS" portion of the site: <http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/implementation/faculty/cedar-innovation-configurations/>. These ICs cover most of the "Knowledge Development Activity (a)" requirements originally intended for IRIS. Nancy Vye is working on the IC for adult learning theory and hopes to complete it

during the first quarter of Year 3.

- **Activities (Item 1):** Our entire library of 91 IRIS Activities have been reformatted, revised, and reposted to the IRIS Website. The titles of many Activities have been changed to allow for easier searching and sorting by visitors to our Website. For example, the case-based Activity formerly known simply as “A Broken Arm” has been retitled “Instructional Modifications & Co-Teaching: A Broken Arm.” URL redirects were implemented so that those who have bookmarked older links will be rerouted to the revised and retitled versions.
- **Activities (Item 2):** Three new Activities related to vocabulary instruction have now been posted to supplement the content from the *Secondary Reading (Part 2)* Module:
  - Vocabulary Instruction: Possible Sentences for English Language Arts
  - Vocabulary Instruction: Possible Sentences for Science
  - Vocabulary Instruction: Possible Sentences for Social Studies
- **Outlines:** The instructor outlines that accompany our *STAR Legacy* Modules have been reformatted and reposted.
- **Sample Wrap-Around Concept Maps:** These diagrams are designed to help instructors—both college faculty and professional development providers, as well as independent learners—extend and deepen the information included in our Modules and Case Study units through the use of supporting materials available on the IRIS Website, such as Activities, and videos. The Concept Maps have been revised to reflect changes to our collection of IRIS Activities (see above).
- **Sample Wrap-Around Concept Maps (Item 2):** Three new Maps have been created to reflect our new Modules related to evidence-based practices and programs.
- **WRD:** Our Web Resource Directory (WRD)—a list of other federally sponsored projects and centers that provide resources and information useful for educational professionals—has been revised and relocated to our IRIS Resource Locator.
- **CONNECT Modules:** Instructional Modules from Project CONNECT can now be accessed via our Website’s IRIS Resource Locator.

- **Coursework Planning Forms:** We have revised one of our Coursework Planning Forms—designed to help faculty as they revise either their individual courses or overall curricula for the initial preparation of education professionals—to reflect changes to our library of IRIS Activities.
- **PD Planning Form:** This resource for professional development providers has been revised to reflect changes to our collection of IRIS Activities.
- **Information Briefs:** Fourteen new Information Briefs have been added to our IRIS Resource Locator, many of which are intended to complement our recently posted Modules on evidence-based practices.
- **Video Vignettes:** Four new Video Vignettes—videos about individuals with disabilities, their families, advocates, teachers, and service providers—have been added to this growing online resource.
- **Evidence-Based Practice Summaries:** Five new Evidence-Based Practice Summaries—annotations of research about the effectiveness of instructional strategies and interventions—have been posted to the IRIS Website.
- **Glossary:** Our online glossary of disability related terms has been updated to reflect the content of our new resources.

*Activities Planned for Upcoming Quarters:*

- **PD Hours:** We continue to make significant progress toward being able to offer professional development hour certificates through the IRIS Website. We will pilot the program during Quarter 1 of Year 3.
- **STAR Legacy Modules:**
  - A Module on autism spectrum disorders, with content developed by expert Ilene Schwartz of the University of Washington, is also currently in development.
  - A pair of Modules about data-based individualization—in collaboration with CEEDAR and the American Institutes for Research (AIR)—are currently in development. Our experts for these resources are Rebecca Zumeta and Sarah Arden from AIR.
  - A revision of our *Bookshare: Providing Accessible Materials for Students with Print Disabilities* is now in the works and will be posted during the coming quarter.

- A Module about setting up early childhood classroom environments is temporarily on hold pending workscope clearance from OSEP.
  - **Sample Syllabi Collection:** This collection—designed to provide examples of the ways in which information about evidence-based practices, including IRIS resources on those topics, can be integrated into coursework about all children and students, especially those with disabilities—will undergo revision to reflect new standards.
  - **Spanish-Language Resources:** A Spanish version of our *Differentiated Instruction: Maximizing the Learning of All Students* Module will be posted in the coming weeks. IRIS Activities and Case Study Units will also be reformatted to accommodate our Center's new style guidelines.
  - **Sample PD Activities:** In conjunction with Silvia DeRuvo (WestEd Center) and Susan Courey (San Francisco State University), we are developing 3–4 PD samples appropriate for a two-hour event, two-week event, and long-term training event. These activities—which we plan to post sometime during the coming quarter—will then become a standard template/format for the development of more samples to be available for use at PD Seminars and for posting on our Website.
  - **PD Facilitator's Guide:** In January, we will be planning a generic Facilitator's Guide for IRIS events having to do with professional development. Deborah Reed is assisting us in this effort.
  - **Activities:** Two more new Activities are currently in development and will be posted to our site in the coming weeks.
  - **Case Studies:** Fifteen IRIS Case Study Units are currently being updated to reflect our new editing and style guidelines. The Case Studies will be posted in the coming quarter.
  - **Module Answer Keys:** These new resources detail possible responses to a given *STAR Legacy* Module's Assessment questions to support faculty grading in college coursework and PD providers during trainings. We will begin posting Answer Keys on our Website in the coming quarter and continue doing so for both older and newer resources.
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## DISSEMINATE

*The Center will build IHE faculty and PD providers' awareness and knowledge regarding the infusion of IRIS and other federally funded products into their courses, program curricula, and PD trainings through multiple dissemination efforts.*

### *Activities and Progress in This Quarter:*

- **Presentations:** Throughout the year, the IRIS Center attends regional and national conferences to present on our training and instructional resources and to keep audiences up-to-date on everything that is new with IRIS. Information about presentations is below.
  - **DEC:** In October, we presented on our Center and resources at the annual meeting of the Division of Early Childhood (DEC) in St. Louis, Missouri.
  - **TN-CEC:** In October, we presented on our latest resources—including *STAR Legacy* Modules—at the annual meeting of the TN-CEC in Nashville.
  - **CCTE/CAPSE:** On October 23–25, we shared our IRIS resources at the annual conference of the California Association of Professors of Special Education/Teacher Education Division's (CAPSE/TED) in San Diego. Some forty faculty members took part in the session.
  - **TECBD:** Also in late October, we presented at the annual gathering of the Teacher Educators for Children with Behavior Disorders (TECBD) in Tempe, Arizona.
  - **TED:** On November 5–8, we made multiple presentations at the Teacher Education Division (TED) Annual CEC Conference in Indianapolis, Indiana. Attendees were given a guided tour of the new IRIS Website, with an emphasis on our resources designed specifically for faculty.
  - **ASHE:** Also in November, the IRIS Center presented at The Association for the Study of Higher Education's (ASHE) annual conference.

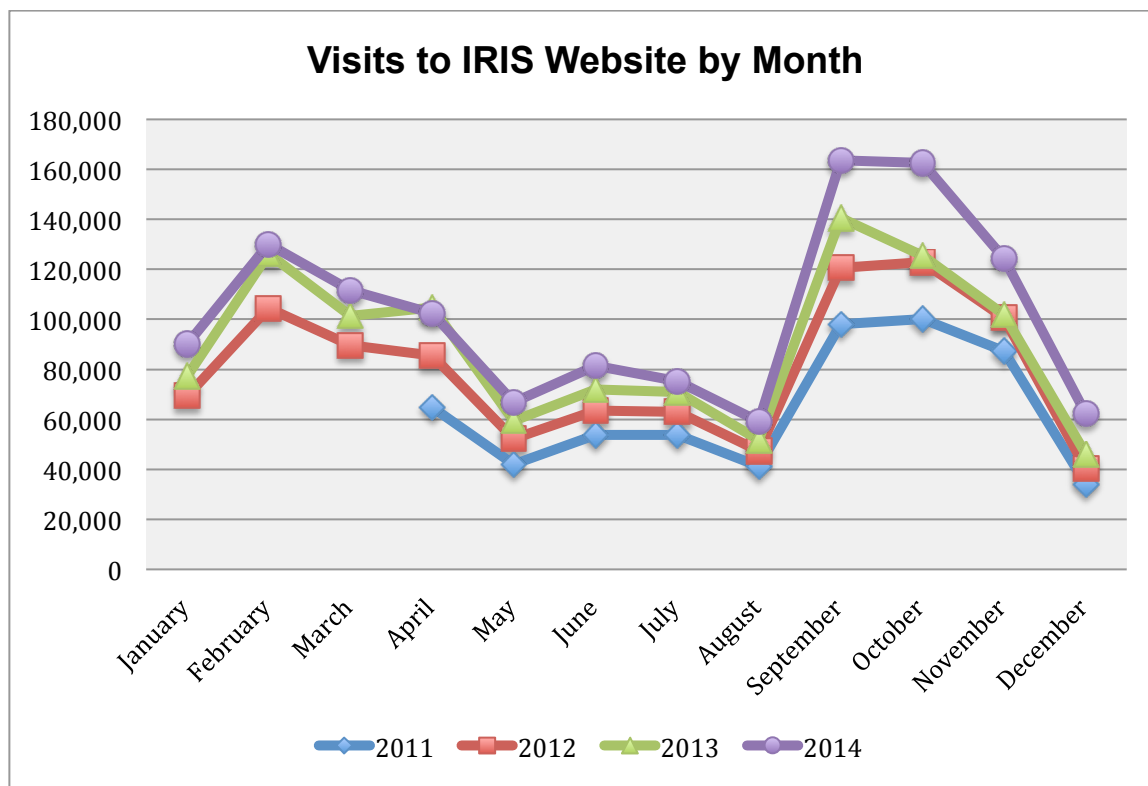
**Web Tour:** In October, the IRIS Center conducted for faculty members in the state of Wisconsin. The tour included mentoring to help those faculty to imbed IRIS resources into their curricula.

*Activities Planned for Upcoming Quarters:*

- **CEEDAR Webinar:** We are currently working with the CEEDAR Center to host a joint Webinar sometime after the turn of the year.
- **Lilly Conference:** In February, we will present on our resources at the annual Lilly Conference on Evidenced-Based Teaching and Learning in Newport Beach, California.
- **AACTE:** Also in February, we will be on hand at the 67th Annual Conference of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) in Atlanta, Georgia, to dispense information about IRIS and our resources.
- **CEC:** In April, we will present on our resources at the annual conference of the Council For Exceptional Children in San Diego, California.
- **Ohio State Compact:** On February 5, we plan to present on our materials and resources before the state of Ohio's Compact Members.
- **Upcoming Articles:** The Center often publishes information about our work and our Center in various educational journals and newsletters. Among our upcoming efforts:
  - An article titled "Reading and Delinquency" by Taryn VanderPyl, Sara Werner, and Cammy Purper is currently being edited and will be submitted to the *Remedial and Special Education* journal in the near future.
  - Another article, "Early Childhood," by Cammy Purper, Taryn VanderPyl, and Sara Werner is currently being edited and will be submitted to *Young Exceptional Children* journal.



**Website Visitor Data:** Historically, the final quarter of the year has brought the Website the most visitors, and this year was no exception. There was a 28% increase in visits to the IRIS Website during the months of October, November, and December 2014 compared to the same period last year.



For the year 2014, there were a total of **1,229,343** visits to our Website, representing an increase of 14% over 2013. For the new year, 2015, we are pleased to announce that our Webmaster, John Harwood, has discovered a way to extract data from our server log files that is not reported by Google Analytics. We hope these additional data will allow us to more accurately convey the use of IRIS resources.

The IRIS online survey asks respondents to rate the modules' usefulness, relevance, and quality on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the highest). This quarter there were 558 respondents to this survey. The first table (below) summarizes descriptive information about the respondents.

Respondents	Number
Graduate Student	167
Experienced Teacher	134
College Student	128
New Teacher	45
Other (e.g., parent)	39

School Leader	23
College Faculty	14
PD Provider	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>558</b>

The next table (below) presents this quarter's survey respondents' overall ratings of the IRIS modules for quality, relevance, and usefulness.

	<b>Mean Ratings</b>
<b>Quality</b>	4.46
<b>Relevance</b>	4.50
<b>Usefulness</b>	4.48

Finally, respondents were asked to describe the area they worked or studied in. The table below summarizes the responses we received to this question this quarter.

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>
General education	194
Special education	173
Other	93
Early childhood education	69
Early childhood special education	21
Early intervention services	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>558</b>

## TA/ TRAINING

*The Center will raise IHE faculty and PD providers' awareness and knowledge regarding the infusion of IRIS and other federally funded products into their courses, program curricula, and PD trainings through a targeted and intensive system of technical assistance and training; and the development of high quality, useful, relevant and non-duplicative products and services.*

### *Activities and Progress in This Quarter:*

- **IRIS Impact Study:** Our Impact Studies Initiative required many meetings this year to ensure the timeline, rubric, announcement, and review panels were in place. Final Reports have been structured and should be ready for OSEP review by January 2015. Meanwhile, we continue to work toward a smooth RFA process to begin in January of the new year for the awarding of the second round of studies to be supported by the Center.

- **Faculty Seminars:** These events focus on improving beginning teachers' knowledge and skills about evidence-based practices, using our Website and instructional resources, embedding IRIS resources into course-management systems, and revising course syllabi. A number of IRIS Faculty Seminars were held during this quarter.
  - On October 9–11, 2014, we held a Faculty Seminar in St. Louis, Missouri. Some 30 faculty participants from the state took part in the event.
  - On October 23–25, the Center hosted a Faculty Seminar in Charleston, South Carolina, with 18 faculty members from across the State of South Carolina participating.
- **Work Session Follow-Up:** Dr. Kate Mitchem continued her work with the University of Cincinnati following our Work Session of May 2, 2014. The university provided pre-seminar and post-seminar syllabi to go along with our matrices. Work between IRIS and the university will continue into the new year.
- **Training Partnership:** We are currently engaged in partnership with California State University, Dominguez Hills and their new training project. IRIS resources will be integrated into the secondary prep curriculum for special education, general education, and professional development in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), where the project places some 20 trainees every year. On October 29, representatives of our Center took part in a presentation on the CSU-Dominguez Hills campus. Eleven key faculty members from the school's teacher education (including special education) program were on hand.

#### *Activities Planned for Upcoming Quarters:*

- **Faculty Seminar:** We have scheduled a Faculty Seminar to take place in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida in February. All available participant spots have been spoken for and a waiting list established.

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## DATA-BASED DECISION-MAKING

*The Center will implement a process for making decisions about development, technical assistance and training services, and dissemination efforts that align with developments in the field, reflect evidence-based instructional and intervention practices, and are responsive to the needs of IHE faculty, professional development providers, and practicing educators.*

*Activities and Progress in This Quarter:*

- **IRIS Reach:** This major and multi-part data-collection effort was designed to determine how many colleges and universities offering state-approved special education personnel preparation programs currently use IRIS resources in their coursework. Assessment of IRIS use is important for evaluation purposes and strategic planning. Not only will information about these institutions of higher education help guide the Center in reaching out to programs that prepare general educators who will need to address the educational needs of students with disabilities but it will also help the Center's staff understand those characteristics that need to be reflected in outreach efforts to help them include more information about EBPs in coursework. Our work to more deeply examine and understand these data will be ongoing throughout the coming years. A report detailing this effort and its outcomes and future has been authored by Deb Smith, Bianca Montrosse-Moorehead, Jackie Lewis, and Janice Brown and is located on the IRIS Website: [http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/IRIS\\_use\\_report\\_0912141.pdf](http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/IRIS_use_report_0912141.pdf). This report has been translated into a manuscript. It is currently in a penultimate version and is under internal review. The manuscript will be submitted to TESE for review during Winter Break.

*Activities and Progress in This Quarter:*

- **PD Survey:** To better serve our professional development constituents—through both PD Seminars and new resources—we conducted a short survey, disseminated via our listserv in October. Responses from those taking part will be used to guide our future development efforts.

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**COLLABORATE**

*The Center will support development, technical assistance and training services, and dissemination efforts through collaborative processes to ensure that products and services align with developments in the field.*

*Activities and Progress in This Quarter:*

- **Early Childhood Collaboration:** The Center coordinates monthly calls with the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA), the Early Childhood Parenting Center (ECPC), and the Center for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Early Childhood Data Systems (DaSy).

- **CADRE:** On October 9, we took part in a phone call with members of the National Center on Dispute Resolution in Special Education (CADRE) to discuss the creation and dissemination of online resources and materials.
- **NASDSE:** Our Center sent IRIS materials and information for dissemination at the annual conference of the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE) held in Denver, Colorado, October 4–7.
- **CPIR:** The Center for Parent Information and Resources (CPIR) has posted information about and a link to our Center's Evidence-Based Practice Summaries.
- **DEC:** The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) broadcast news of our upcoming *Early Childhood Behavior Management: Developing and Teaching Rules* Module to their listserv.

*Activities Planned for Upcoming Quarters:*

- **Module Development:** Two Modules on the topic of intensive interventions are under development in collaboration with AIR and CEEDAR, with content provided by Rebecca Zumeta and Sarah Arden of AIR.
- **Steering Committee Meeting:** With permission from OSEP, this meeting has been moved to early in 2015 so that the results of our recent 3+2 Meeting can be discussed.
- **CEEDAR Webinar:** As was mentioned above, we are currently working with the CEEDAR Center to host a joint Webinar sometime after the turn of the year.

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## EVALUATE

## PERSONNEL

*See this space for notes and information on new or outgoing IRIS personnel.*

- **IRIS@VU:** The IRIS Center at Vanderbilt University welcomed Corey Ross as our new Computer Systems Administrator. Corey replaces Erik Dunton, who moved to California in August.