

THE IRIS CENTER
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Administrative Progress Report
for
Year 1, Quarter 3

Submitted to:

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The IRIS Center Quarterly Report/July-September 2013 [Year 1, Quarter 3]

The IRIS Center produces these Quarterly Reports as both a narrative of our effort and a detailed account of our work and progress. This Third Quarter of Year One found the Center launching an entirely redesigned Website, creating new instructional materials and resources, and hosting a Faculty Seminar. Read on to learn all the latest from the IRIS Center.

BUILD PROJECT INFRASTRUCTURE

At OSEP's request, the IRIS Center has undertaken a number of important activities designed to create a coherent conceptual and organizational structure for the new Center. A brief description of these is below.

Activities and Progress in This Quarter:

- **Steering Committee:** In coordination with OSEP, an inaugural meeting of our Steering Committee is in the planning stages. The prospective meeting—the focus of which, in part, will be on the prioritization of topics for new IRIS resources—is scheduled for the first week of December (either Dec. 4–5 or Dec. 6–7), with participants gathering in Nashville, Tennessee, for the face-to-face event. We are in the process of surveying committee members to determine the best date.
- **Leadership Team:** We continue to hold weekly calls with our Leadership Team for the purpose of creating the Center's infrastructure, as well as to facilitate the ongoing development of instructional and training resources. Ilene Schwartz is particularly involved with the creation of our collection of Evidence-Based Practices (EBP) Annotations and our work with focus groups, as well as being a representative on monthly calls with the early childhood centers. Vivian Correa is involved in the syllabi collection process, development of training materials, and focus groups.

Activities Planned for Upcoming Quarters:

- **Work Plan:** To outline the steps necessary to meet specific development and dissemination goals, the Center has initiated the process of creating a point-by-point Work Plan. This plan was submitted to our OSEP project officers on September 3, 2013, and approved on September 26, 2013.
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MAINTAIN PROJECT BUDGET

The co-directors continue to monitor budget expenditures carefully.

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:

- **Video Vignettes:** We have posted our first selection of Video Vignettes—representations of classroom and instructional scenarios, as well as stories about individuals with disabilities, their family members, advocates, teachers, and service providers—to the IRIS Website. At present, there are some 128 vignettes, with more updates in the works on an ongoing basis.
- **Wrap-Around Concept Maps:** Recently posted to our Website, these resources are designed to help IRIS users supplement a specific *STAR Legacy* Module or Case Study Unit with other resources and materials.
- **Evidence-Based Practices (EBP) Annotations:** The Center is developing a library of EBP Annotations representing evaluations and descriptions of a wide variety of instructional and behavioral practices and interventions. To accomplish this, we are working with a task force made up of noted researchers Don Compton, Kathleen Lane, Diane Bryant, Phil Strain, Deborah Speece, and Ilene Schwartz.
- **Syllabi Collection:** The IRIS Center has made significant progress in our efforts to collect syllabi and curriculum matrices from college faculty who are also IRIS users. The collection was piloted at a recent Faculty Seminar, with initial feedback being quite positive. More feedback will be collected as the development of this resource continues. The work group for this endeavor includes Kate Mitchum, Cindy O'Dell, Darcie Peterson, Kim Snow, Michelle Marchant, Vivian Correa, Nancy Hunt, Melba Spooner, in addition to the IRIS Center's Deb Smith, Naomi Tyler, Kim Skow, Michael Nee, and project assistants Taryn VanderPyl, Sara Werner, and Cammy Purper.

- **Book Directory:** Under the guidance of Mary Anne Prater of Brigham Young University, the Center's new directory of books for children and adolescents that are about, feature, or have to do with individuals with disabilities is currently under construction.
- **Knowledge Development Activity (a):** In conjunction with OSEP, the decision was made to develop innovation configurations for this task focusing on the following six areas: 1) Use of technology for the delivery of PD and personnel preparation, 2) early intervention/early childhood, 3) personnel preparation, 4) professional development, 5) intensive interventions, and 6) adult learning principles. A number of these are already under development by the Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform Center (CEEDAR) with which IRIS is collaborating. Our Center has begun contacting experts to develop the remainder.

Activities Planned for Upcoming Quarters:

- **Training Materials:** The Trainers' section of the Website is still under construction. To reflect our new Website, the Center will post a revised and reformatted collection of training materials, including PowerPoint presentations for faculty and PD providers, new Seminar Workbooks, and revised Tips Sheets.
- **Instructional Materials:** In the coming quarters, the Center will enter an extensive period of editing and reformatting its library of instructional resources to reflect our revised format parameters.
- **IRIS Resources:** We are currently developing objectives for a module for college and university faculty about developing a college course, including information on using evidence-based practices.

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:

- **Website:** On August 2, the IRIS Center launched our new online home! This completely rebuilt site features a redesigned IRIS Resource Locator; significantly expanded information about our services; and an extensive section on the implementation of IRIS resources for faculty, PD providers, and practicing educators, among much, much else. Based on feedback from IRIS users, *STAR Legacy* Module navigation has been substantially overhauled to make it easier and more intuitive, as well as to incorporate elements of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Everything about this new IRIS site is designed to help our visitors search through a wealth of information about effective evidence-based practices and interventions. While work continues to further refine and develop the site and its resources and information, initial feedback from our users has been overwhelmingly positive.
- **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 upcoming presentations is below.
 - ❖ In mid-July, the IRIS Center previewed the new Website and new services at the 2013 Annual OSEP Project's Directors' Conference in Washington, DC.
 - ❖ In late September, Sara Werner presented in part on behalf of the IRIS Center at the annual conference of the Council for Children with Behavioral Disorders (CCBD) in Chicago, Illinois. The conference's theme was "A Brighter Future: Prevention and Intervention on Behalf of Students with Challenging Behaviors."
 - ❖ On September 25–26, the Center presented at meetings of Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) in Los Angeles and San Bernadino Counties. Approximately 45 PD providers were present at each location.
- **Promotional Materials:** Following the launch of the Website, we have posted a revised collection of promotional brochures about our resources related to a number of important instructional topic areas, including response to intervention, behavior management, and reading. More brochures are currently in the works and will be posted in the coming quarter.

Activities Planned for Upcoming Quarters:

- **Impact Study:** To help evaluate the effectiveness of IRIS outreach efforts, we are conducting an Impact Study to determine the extent and speed with which the curricular infusion and increased use of IRIS resources occurs in a particular state or region following a Faculty or PD Seminar. Preliminary data indicate a positive link, though further analysis is necessary. Work on the study will occur on an ongoing basis.
 - **Presentations:**
 - ❖ In October, the IRIS Center will make a presentation at the Division of Early Childhood's (DEC) 29th Annual International Conference on Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families, to be held in San Francisco.
 - ❖ In November, we will present on our new Website and latest resources and services at the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC) annual convention in Washington, DC.
 - ❖ Also in November, we will present on our resources at the meeting of the Teacher Education Division (TED) in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida.
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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:

- **Faculty Seminars:** The overarching purpose of these state or regional events is to improve preservice teacher preparation through infusion of IRIS resources in college curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences that are grounded in the use of evidence-based practices.
 - ❖ On September 26–28, the Center held a Faculty Seminar in conjunction with Tribal Colleges in Rapid City, South Dakota.

- **Syllabi Collection:** The IRIS Center has made significant progress in our efforts to collect syllabi and curriculum matrices from college faculty who are also IRIS users. The collection was piloted at a recent Faculty Seminar, with initial feedback being quite positive. More feedback will be collected prior to the inclusion of this resource on the IRIS Website.

Activities Planned for Upcoming Quarters:

- **Symposia:** Held annually at the Council for Exceptional Children's (CEC) Teacher Education Division's conference, Symposia bring together doctoral students and junior faculty interested in studying the effectiveness of IRIS resources in applied teacher education or professional development activities. There is currently a Symposia Work Group and focus groups for TED taking shape in order to be sure this endeavor is handled properly.
 - ❖ One such event scheduled to take place to coincide with this year's Teacher Education Division's (TED) annual conference is currently in the planning stages. The conference will take place in November in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Revisions/Reschedules/Cancellations of Activities

- A scheduling conflict at the state level led the Center to cancel our Faculty Seminar in collaboration with Tribal Colleges in Billings, Montana.

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:

- **Needs Assessment:** We are continuing our needs assessment to inform the product development process. Potential topics for EI/EC and K–12 education have been identified, and questionnaires from IRIS users have been collected and subjected to further evaluation. The list of potential topics, in turn, was used to inform the textbook analyses process.

- **Textbook Analyses:** We have engaged in a pair of detailed analyses of textbooks. Analyses of K-12 textbooks and textbooks for early childhood have been completed. The purpose of these analyses is to identify low-frequency topics that might provide the foundation for future module or other resource development.
- **Focus Groups:** Our first EI/EC Focus Group was held—via a GoToMeeting teleconference—on September 23. Taking part were members of our EI/EC Task Force as well as an EC representative from our Steering Committee. The purpose of the session was to help the Center select and prioritize topics for module production. We will schedule a follow-up call for those who were unable to take part.
- **Feedback:** We are currently collecting feedback about our seminar materials and faculty tips booklets with an eye toward the development of new materials, manuals, and documents.
- **Outreach Surveys:** Likewise, to further inform our work and to help us to learn more about IRIS users, we are revising and updating our Outreach Surveys.

Activities Planned for Upcoming Quarters:

- **Focus Groups:** The Center is looking for faculty and PD providers to sit on a number of other focus groups, all of which will be completed on October 21–22. As with our EI/EC Focus Group, meetings will be conducted via teleconference. We are asking those who take part to supply us with the names of recent graduates. The focus groups in the planning stages are:
 - ❖ Elementary education (K–6)
 - ❖ Secondary education (7–12)
 - ❖ Transition
 - ❖ Intensive interventions
 - ❖ New faculty

We are currently collecting the names and information of interested parties.

COLLABORATE

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

Activities and Progress in This Quarter:

- **Collaborative Calls:** IRIS has participated in a number of collaborative calls with the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA), the Early Childhood Personnel Center (ECPC), and the Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems (DaSy). The purpose of these calls is to work on collaborative partnerships and undertakings.
- **Resource Development:** The Center is providing its insight and experience about module development to members of CEEDAR and has also participated in a number of conference calls with that Center with an eye toward future collaboration and efforts to avoid project overlap (e.g., innovation configurations). We met with representatives of CEEDAR in July during the annual Project Director's meeting in Washington, DC, and continue to collaborate via telephone and email as warranted.
- **Needs Assessment:** We have exchanged initial survey needs assessment results with the Early Intervention-Early Childhood Professional Development Community of Practice. We will use this information to supplement our own needs assessment data. A follow-up call to further discuss states' needs will be scheduled during the coming quarter.

PERSONNEL

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

- **New IRIS Personnel:**
 - ❖ On July 1, the Center welcomed Sara Warner, who takes on the role of Project Assistant at IRIS@CGU. Among other duties, Sara has played an important role in both our Sample Syllabi and EBP Annotations projects.
 - ❖ On July 30, we welcomed Brenda Rae Trevethan. Brenda is a programmer and WordPress expert who is playing a key role in our extensive module cleanup process.