THE IRIS CENTER
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Administrative Progress Report
for
Year 2, Quarter 2

Submitted to:

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The IRIS Center
Quarterly Report/April–June 2014
[Year 2, Quarter 2]

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

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:

- **Website Host**: Beginning in July, we will have a new host for our online home. The IRIS Center Website will be hosted by WP Engine, a change from Pressable.

- **Accessibility**: Text descriptions of the graphic and photo elements of our *STAR Legacy* Modules have been added in order to improve the accessibility of our resources to those who with visual impairments.

- **Style Guide**: An IRIS Style Guide that includes substantial revision to numerous aspects of our standard usages, Website appearance, and resource formats has now been completed and distributed to IRIS staff for use as a reference.

MAINTAIN PROJECT BUDGET

The co-directors continue to monitor budget expenditures carefully. Proposed Year 2 budgets were submitted to OSEP. Budget expenditures are on track for Year 2.

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:

- **Films: Portrayals of People with Disabilities**: This online search tool—which represents an attempt to catalogue the representation of people with disabilities in motion pictures—has been updated with information about recent movies, short films, and documentaries.

- **Video Vignettes**: This collection—which links to Video Vignettes about or having to do with people with disabilities, their teachers, and their families—has undergone extensive external review to help us determine which of the videos are the most useful and relevant to our visitors. The tool itself, which now includes 139 videos, has also been substantially revised and improved for usability.

- **Sample Agendas**: Anyone interested in an advance look at what an IRIS Faculty Seminar, PD Seminar, or Work Session might be like can now download and view the sample agendas for those events posted on the Website in the section on "Our Services."

- **User Guides**: Two new quick-reference resources—"Faculty Guide to Using IRIS Resources" and "PD Provider Guide to Using IRIS Resources"—can now be downloaded from our Website.

Activities Planned for Upcoming Quarters:

- ***STAR Legacy* Modules**: We are currently developing IRIS Modules on identifying and selecting evidence-based practices and on implementing those evidence-based practices in the classroom. Meanwhile, we continue to develop content for a pair of EC modules, one on behavior and a second on setting up classroom environments.

- **Spanish-Language Resources**: A Spanish-language version of our *Universal Design for Learning: Creating a Learning Environment that Challenges and Engages All Students* Module is forthcoming sometime in July. This accompanies an overall redesign of our Spanish resources—including Case Study Units, Activities, and Module outlines—in order to bring them into line with the Center's current formatting standards.

- **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 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.

- **Sample Syllabi Collection**: This resource is composed of detailed syllabi examples from actual college courses implementing IRIS resources. Six new syllabi will be added in the coming quarter, with more anticipated on a periodic basis.

- **Module Answer Keys**: These new resources detail possible responses to a given *STAR Legacy* Module's Assessment questions. We will begin posting Answer Keys on our Website in the coming quarter and continue doing so for both older and newer resources.

- **Books: Portrayals of People with Disabilities**: Curated in conjunction with Mary Anne Prater, a leading expert in the field today, this online search tool contains information and synopses of children's and young adult literature about or having to do with people with disabilities. This information includes the name of the author and illustrator, year of publication, publisher, appropriate grade level, and award status. An update of this tool is anticipated sometime in July.

- **Sample Wrap-Around Concept Maps**: These resources—designed to help college faculty, professional development providers, and independent learners to extend and deepen the information included in our Modules and Case Study units—are currently being revised to reflect the changes to our Video Vignettes tool.

- **Curriculum Matrices**: Our Curriculum Matrices Work Group has gathered to begin the process of breaking down vast amounts of information into smaller, more palpable pieces to be posted on the IRIS Website. The group consists of fourteen people, of which seven are from colleges and universities collaborating with IRIS.

- **Standards**: In conjunction with Nancy Hunt of California State University, Los Angeles, we will soon add to our Website standards related to the Division for Early Childhood's (DEC) recommended practices for our Modules, as well as our Case Study Units and Activities. We will also be revising the CEC standards and adding CAEP standards. Additionally, the online standards tool will itself be completely overhauled.

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.

   o **CEC**: In April, we presented a detailed overview and guided tour of our Center, new Website, and a host of newly posted resources at the CEC Conference in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

   o **CAEYC**: Also in April, Cammy Purper presented on behalf of IRIS at the California Association of the Education of Young Children Annual Conference in Pasadena. Her presentation was entitled "Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs) in Early Childhood."

   o **CDE**: In June, our Center took part in a Leadership Team meeting in association with the California State Department of Education, in Sacramento.

   o **21ˢᵗ Century Teaching and Learning Conference**: Also in June, the IRIS resources were presented to a targeted audience that included K–12 teachers, higher education faculty, college students, and other learning practitioners with the goal of developing and exchanging best practices in teaching and learning. Presentations included hands-on workshops and research-based current strategies to engage today's learners. The event was sponsored by the College of St. Scholastica, School of Education.

▪ **Exhibit Halls**: We frequently make appearances at conferences and exhibit halls to make available informational brochures and other handouts about our Center. We also send brochures for others to share.

   o **AACTE:** In March, we were in Indianapolis at the annual conference of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education to make available information about our resources. The event was held in Indianapolis, Indiana.

- o **CAEP**: Also in March, we could be found in the exhibit hall of the annual meeting of the Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation in Nashville.

- o **TN MegaConference**: In May, we made available informational brochures about our Center and resources for attendees of the Tennessee Disability MegaConference, which was held in Nashville.

- o **NAEYC**: In June, we were on hand in the exhibit hall at the National Association for the Education of Young Children's National Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development to be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

- **TED Newsletter:** Information about a number of our new resources—with a special emphasis on our Website's "For Faculty" section—appeared in the spring/summer edition of TEDLines, the newsletter of the Teacher Education Division that is distributed to faculty across the nation.

- **Dissemination Plan**: Our Dissemination Plan Work Group currently includes three members: Virginia Lanigan, Kevin Davis, and Cecilia Rios-Aguilar. Their work will continue throughout the coming quarters.

- **Mathematics Resources Brochure**: This handy resource about our IRIS resources related to mathematics instruction—and ideal for dispensing at conference presentations, poster sessions, or training events—is now also available to download from the IRIS Website.

- **PD Flyer**: We have developed a one-page flyer—"Free Online Resources for Professional Development Providers"—for dissemination at conferences, seminars, and other events and appearances.

Activities Planned for Upcoming Quarters:

- **Project Directors' Meeting**: In July, Naomi Tyler and Deb Smith will attend the OSEP Project Directors' Meeting in Washington, DC, and take part in a panel that will include 325T project directors discussing their revised curriculum and inclusion of IRIS resources. Meanwhile, Amy Harris of the IRIS Center and Ilene Schwartz (a member of our EI/EC Task Force)—will present on the use of IRIS resources to support the DEC recommended practices.

- **TACC**: In late July, we will lead a short Webinar to highlight our main resources for the Technical Assistance Coordination Center (TACC).

- **IARLD**: Also in July, we will present on our Center and resources at the thirty-eighty annual International Academy for Research in Learning Disabilities (IARLD) conference in Vilnius, Lithuania. Additionally, a summary of two IRIS studies focusing on college students' knowledge acquisition and application skills resulting from the use of IRIS Modules in coursework was prepared for the conference and was posted on the IRIS Website.

- **DEC**: In October, we will present on our Center and resources at the annual meeting of the Division of Early Childhood's (DEC) in St. Louis, Missouri.

- **TN-CEC**: In the Fall, we will present on our latest resources—including a number of new *STAR Legacy* Modules—at the annual meeting of the TN-CEC in Nashville.

- **Head Start**: We will send brochures to be displayed on the OSEP Early Childhood Team's resource table at this year's Head Start National Research Conference on Early Childhood to be held in July in Washington, DC.

- **Articles**: The Center often publishes information about our work and our Center in various educational journals and newsletters. Among our recent and upcoming efforts:

  o An article entitled "Evidence-Based Behavior Management: Recommendations and Resources" by Sara Werner, Cammy Purper, and Taryn VanderPyl was submitted, approved, and will be published in the California Department of Education (CDE), Special Education Division's (SED) *Special EDge* publication later this summer.

  o An article called "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.

  o A third 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: There was a 6% increase in visits to the IRIS Website during the months of April, May, and June 2014 compared to the same period last year.

▪ **Website Analysis**: We continue to consider ways to more accurately record the number of visitors who use our Website and its resources than is currently possible given the limitations inherent in Google Analytics, our present system.
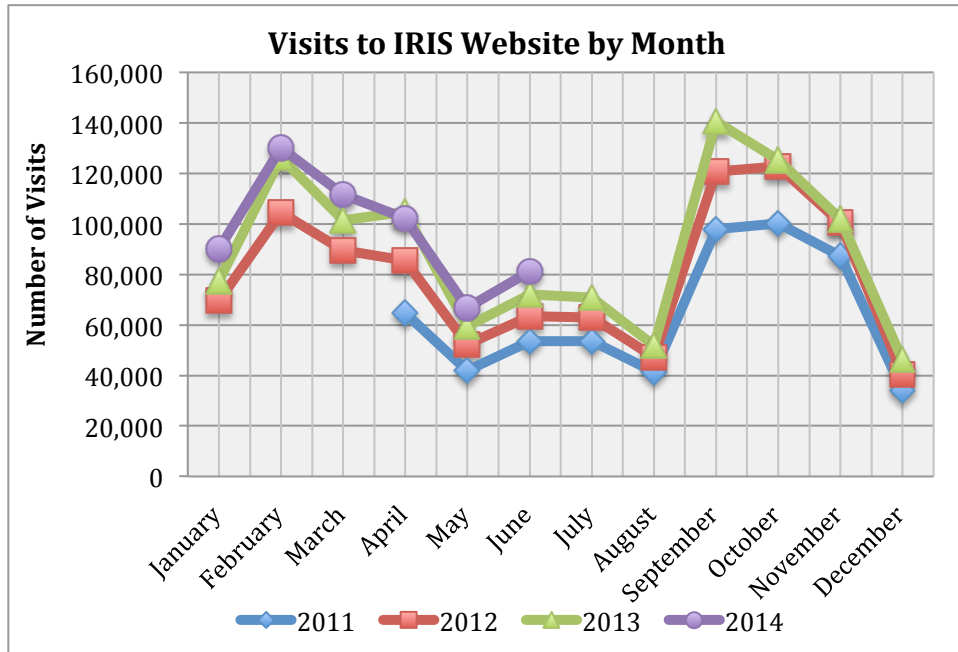
The IRIS online survey asks respondents to rate the Modules' usefulness, relevance, and quality on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the highest). This quarter, there were 684 respondents to our survey. The first table (below) summarizes descriptive information about the respondents.

Respondents	Number
Graduate Student	213
Experienced Teacher	194
College Student	149
New Teacher	65
Other (e.g., parent)	28
College Faculty	18
School Leader	10
PD Provider	7
Total	**684**

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

	Mean Ratings
Quality	4.42
Relevance	4.38
Usefulness	4.32

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

Response	**Number**
General education	253
Special education	211
Other	113
Early childhood education	75
Early intervention services	33
Early childhood special education	29
Total	**684**

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**: Fourteen RFAs for this IRIS Impact Study were submitted for external review, with the process concluded and four winners awarded at the end of May. Mentors have been assigned, and two of the four winners are in communication on Basecamp, software that makes communications, as well as uploading and sharing documents, much easier.

- **Work Session**: On May 2, we conducted a Work Session at the University of Cincinnati. Materials—including meeting agenda, PowerPoint presentation, planning forms, and curriculum matrix—were prepared prior to the event. Web Tours were self-guided prior to the Work Session via

the IRIS Website. We are currently working with the university to obtain both pre-seminar and post-seminar syllabi to go along with our matrices.

- **Work Session**: We continue to follow-up and extend the work initiated at the George Mason University Work Session held this spring. Faculty there and our IRIS Team are working on program revisions to the overall curriculum. We anticipate these intensive interactions to continue through the Summer and into Fall 2014.

- **PD Seminar**: In June, we hosted an IRIS PD Seminar in Tumwater, Washington. Some twenty PD providers from across regions of Washington State took part in the event.

Activities Planned for Upcoming Quarters:

- **Faculty Seminars**: We are now in the early planning stages for upcoming Faculty Seminars to take place in Omaha, Nebraska (September 18–20), St. Louis, Missouri (October 9–11), and Charleston, South Carolina (October 23–25). All events are currently booked beyond their original capacity, and the Missouri event is considered two events in one with a wait list. Invitations have also been sent to faculty members in nearby states (e.g., Kansas).

- **PD Seminar**: We are currently working with the State of Utah to develop a PD Seminar on behalf of the state's efforts to redefine PD for the new century. The PD Seminar is set to take place in August 2014.

- **Faculty Seminar Companion Guide**: This standardized guide is currently being developed and will be printed in August. It will be ready for posting sometime during Summer 2014 and ready for piloting at the three Seminars to be held during the Fall.

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 USE, Schools List**: 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 is authored by Deb Smith, Jackie Lewis, and Bianca Montrosse-Moorehead, and we anticipate a manuscript to be prepared for submission to TESE in the fall.

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 holds 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). Beginning in July, the coordination of these meetings will move from ECTA to IRIS.

- **CEEDAR**: We have recently worked with the Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR) in order to offer requested feedback on that center's new Website.

- **EPB Annotation Work Group**: Because of unanticipated expenses due to the Impact Studies, the EPB annotation effort is on hold. We have already posted a substantial collection and once funds are available, the collection will be expanded. The EBP Annotations collection is designed to provide IRIS users with information about "what works" for which groups of learners at which age groups.

- **Curriculum Matrices Work Group**: This group is key in the development of our Curriculum Matrices resource.

- **Accessibility**: We are currently working with one of Susan Courey's (San Francisco State University) graduate students. This student, who is blind,

is offering invaluable assistance in making our Website more accessible to our visitors with vision disabilities.

▪ **TED**: The Teacher Education Division has offered valuable assistance in broadcasting news of our Sample Syllabi Collection to its membership.

Activities Planned for Upcoming Quarters:

▪ **Steering Committee Meeting**: We are in the early planning stages for a meeting of the IRIS Steering Committee to be held sometime in October.

▪ **Professional Learning Lab**: IRIS resources are being disseminated through the on-line PLB developed and hosted by Arizona State University. Because of this collaboration, the awareness of IRIS resources is being extended throughout the state of Arizona to PD providers and faculty working to improve educational programs offered to student with disability.

EVALUATE

▪ **Evaluation Plan**: A great many IRIS evaluation forms were updated and tied back to our Evaluation Plan. Among our recent efforts, the following forms have been revised:

  o PD Seminar survey
  o PD Seminar six-month follow-up survey
  o Faculty Seminar survey
  o Faculty Seminar six-month follow-up survey
  o Work Session survey
  o Work Session six-month follow-up survey
  o Online survey for visitors to the IRIS Website
  o Field-testing survey for faculty (Note: This is currently being piloted)
  o Field-testing survey for students (Note: This is currently being piloted)
  o Module expert review form (Note: This has been sent out for feedback)

▪ **Field-Testing**: We are currently in the process of piloting revised field-testing forms in order to prepare for field-testing new IRIS resources next Fall or Spring.