THE IRIS CENTER

3 + 2 Briefing Book

IRIS@VU
Modules and Materials Development
Vanderbilt University
(800) 831-6134
IRIS@Vanderbilt.edu

IRIS@CGU
Technical Assistance and Training
Claremont Graduate University
(866) 626-IRIS
IRIS@CGU.edu

Project Officers: Sarah Allen, Tracie Dickson - Project #H325E120002
SECION 1: PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT ................................................................. 1
  Current Goals and Objectives .......................................................................................... 3
  Table 1: IRIS Objectives and Progress to Date ............................................................... 3
  IRIS Logic Model and Theory of Action ........................................................................ 5
  Figure 1: IRIS Conceptual Framework .......................................................................... 5
  Figure 2: IRIS Center Logic Model–Outcomes Model Abbreviated ............................ 6
  Table 2: IRIS Theory of Action .................................................................................... 7
  Target Audiences and Solicited Input ............................................................................ 8
  Significant Revisions to the Original Proposal ............................................................. 9
  Table 3: Key Personnel ................................................................................................ 10
  Figure 3: IRIS Center Organizational Chart (2014) ...................................................... 13

SECION 2: ACTIVITIES ............................................................................................................ 14
  Description of Major Project Activities and Engagement of Target Audiences or Customers ............................................................................................................. 14
  Key Outputs .................................................................................................................... 17
  Table 4: Key Project Outputs ....................................................................................... 18
  Project Work Plan and Milestones ................................................................................ 20
  Table 5: IRIS Center 5-Year Work Plan ....................................................................... 21

SECION 3: EVALUATION PLAN ............................................................................................ 23
  Formative Evaluation Plan and Progress to Date ........................................................... 23
  Summative Evaluation Plan and Progress to Date ........................................................ 25

SECION 4: EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS ...................................................................... 28
  Evidence that Products and Services Are of High Quality ........................................... 28
  Evidence that Project Is Reaching Intended Target Audiences or Customers ............... 28
  Evidence that Target Audiences or Customers Find Activities Relevant and Useful ....... 29
  Project Has Achieved Direct Short-Term Outcomes Expected by This Stage of the Project ........................................................................................................... 30
  Project Has Achieved Intermediate Outcomes Expected by This Stage of the Project ..... 30
  Project Demonstrates National Leadership, Serving as (a) an Important Resource for Stakeholders and (b) an Effective Collaborator with Other Organizations and Projects ..................................................................................................... 30
  Project Is Having a Significant Influence on Target Audiences Through Dissemination of Knowledge and Best Practices .............................................................. 31
  Table 6: IRIS Center Impact Studies: Round 1 (Summer 2014–June 2015) .................. 32

SECION 5: OSEP-CUSTOMIZED ITEMS ............................................................................... 33
  Early Intervention/Early Childhood (EI/EC) Efforts ...................................................... 33
  Table 7: EI/EC Representation Within Overall IRIS Workscope .................................. 34
  Evidence that Project Has Effectively Collaborated with Other OSEP-Funded Early Childhood Centers ................................................................. 35
  Evidence that Project Has Effectively Collaborated with Centers and Organizations in the Broader Early Childhood Field ................................................................. 36
SECTION 6: LOOKING AHEAD TO YEARS 4 AND 5 ......................................................... 37
Description of Organizational or Situational Barriers ................................................. 37
Figure 4: Visits to the IRIS Website by Quarter ......................................................... 38
SECTION 1: PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Funded by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), the IRIS Center and its agenda are unique. The overarching purpose of IRIS is to translate research into practice, making available high-quality instructional materials and resources about evidence-based practices (EBPs) to improve results for infants, toddlers, children, and youth, especially those with disabilities (ages birth to 21). These resources—developed in collaboration with key researchers and experts in the field and available online without restriction or cost—are for use in college coursework, professional development (PD) activities, and independent learning. The Center’s target audiences are 1) college and university faculty preparing future education professionals, 2) PD providers working with practicing educators, and 3) independent learners. For the remainder of this document, these groups will be referred to as faculty, PD providers, and independent learners. Secondary consumers are college and university students preparing for careers as education professionals—such as general and special education teachers, professionals who provide early intervention services, and related service providers—and all practicing education professionals. In addition to creating, producing, validating, and disseminating a wide array of instructional materials and resources, the Center offers technical assistance and training services to those who use IRIS resources in their courses or PD activities. No other center funded by OSEP has this mission.

The IRIS Center is built on the foundation of two previous OSEP-funded centers. Because some knowledge of these earlier—and quite different—efforts is necessary to understand the current Center’s expanded workscope, a brief history of these projects follows. After the passage of IDEA in 1975, as increasing numbers of students with disabilities (SWDs) attended their neighborhood schools and received their education alongside classmates without disabilities, teachers, administrators, and other school personnel frequently indicated that they were ill-prepared to meet these students’ academic and behavioral needs. These educators felt that their college programs had ill-prepared them for the realities of working with SWDs. Many of the textbooks used in teacher education courses lacked content about special education students, and college faculty often lacked confidence in their knowledge regarding the inclusion of SWDs.

To answer those challenges, in 2001 OSEP funded the IRIS Center for Faculty Enhancement at Vanderbilt University (VU) to create and disseminate instructional resources concerning SWDs. The Center served non-special education faculty in the areas of general education (i.e., elementary education, secondary education), school leadership, school counseling, and school nursing. IRIS combined adult learning theory and distance delivery models to develop an effective system for infusing knowledge and skills about working with SWDs into pre-service preparation programs. Advances in Web-based technology allowed the inexpensive dissemination of course enhancement materials to faculty across the country. Pearson Publishing, the world’s largest education publisher and an IRIS partner, included information and links to IRIS resources in its college texts. The original IRIS products were well received and positively evaluated. In an analysis of OSEP-funded Centers conducted by Westat, IRIS signature products received high ratings on a 5-point scale for quality (4.33) and relevance/usefulness (4.47). The entire report, including the section on IRIS on pp. 23–26, can be found at http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Eval-of-PDP-_2013.pdf

When OSEP released an application package in 2006 for a second 5-year cycle, the work of the Center expanded to encompass all education professionals: general and special educators and related services providers. OSEP likewise expanded the Center’s work to include significant dissemination, scaling-up, and outreach components. In response to that RFA, the IRIS team developed a proposal and in October 2006 was awarded funding. Under the direction of Naomi Tyler, the new IRIS Center for Training Enhancements remained at VU and continued with the product
development and Website management. Deb Smith directed a subcontract at Claremont Graduate University (CGU which coordinated the Center’s training, outreach, and national scaling-up efforts. The aforementioned IES/Westat analysis of OSEP-funded Centers also examined signature products from this Center, which received high ratings on quality (4.75) and relevance/usefulness (4.47) (see pp. 51–54 of that report).

In 2012 OSEP released an application package for a new center that would engage in many of the same development and training activities as the IRIS Center for Training Enhancements while significantly adding to and expanding its workscope. Whereas the focus had been on K–12 education, the new Center’s focus would include both young children (birth–age 5) and older adolescents (through age 21). Further, the Center was tasked with developing tools to help faculty and PD providers improve college coursework, curricula, and PD activities. Naomi Tyler and Deb Smith competed for and were awarded this new Center as co-directors.

The proposal for the current Center listed a start date of October 1, 2012, though this was later delayed by OSEP to January 1, 2013. The co-directors spent some time during those three pre-award months addressing OSEP requests regarding personnel. Specifically, because the previous IRIS work had focused solely on K–12, OSEP wanted assurances on adequate involvement from early intervention/early childhood (EI/EC) 1 special education experts. As a result, Ilene Schwartz and Vivian Correa were added to the Center’s Leadership Team, Mary Louise (ML) Hemmeter and Rob Corso were added to the Vanderbilt team, and the EI/EC Task Force was established (for more detail, see pp. 9–12).

The cooperative agreement for the newly funded Center also contained a number of negotiation items required by OSEP before work on many of the Center’s objectives could begin. The co-directors and external evaluator worked across Year 1 on the following: Put together a Center Leadership Team (approved by OSEP on 01/25/13) and revise the Steering Committee membership (approved on 06/06/13); present at the Center’s Kick-Off meeting (03/04/13); and develop a Conceptual Framework (approved 04/15/13), form a Vision Statement and a Mission Statement (approved 05/21/13), revise the Logic Model (approved 6/18/13), and formulate an evaluation plan (approved 12/12/13). Although the workscope was markedly different from that of the two previous IRIS Centers, the project directors were permitted to retain IRIS Center as its name, given compelling data showing strong public awareness and recognition of the IRIS brand. For example, at the time the new Center’s funding began, over 360 universities, state education departments, school districts, and professional organizations had direct links to the IRIS Center’s Website, and 24 of the top 30 Google searches that led visitors to the site contained the word “IRIS.” Clearly, the IRIS Center had become a trusted resource for education professionals, and keeping the name to ensure continued “searchability” was a logical decision.

During the initial months, Center staff was engaged in the needs assessment process (described on pp. 8–9), the identification of extant resources for new tools (e.g., Video Vignettes, EBP Summaries with direct links to the original reports), formation of five work groups, and the revision of the Website, which was launched on August 2, 2013, just in time for Fall college courses. Technical assistance and training activities were dependent on the completion of the new site. Hence, once the Website was launched, the development and revision of the Center’s many training materials began, along with development of various new tools, the planning and scheduling of training activities for Years 1 and 2, and the process of soliciting, selecting, and supporting Impact Studies (see Section 2, pp. 15–16, Section 3, pp. 26–27, Section 4, pp. 31–32).

---

1 In this document, the term early childhood (EC) is used to refer both to infants and toddlers receiving services under Part C and children ages 3-5 receiving services under Part B.
Current Goals and Objectives

The proposed goal of the IRIS Center was to improve the awareness, knowledge, and application skills of current and future school personnel working in inclusive settings. The ultimate aim is to ensure that more struggling students, particularly those with disabilities, are taught with EBPs (IRIS proposal, p. 12). This goal was further defined through our cooperative agreement as follows: (1) help address State-identified needs for highly qualified personnel in special education, related services, early intervention, and regular education to work with children, including infants and toddlers with disabilities; and (2) ensure that those personnel have the necessary skills and knowledge, derived from practices that have been determined, through evidence-based research and experience, to be successful in serving those children (Cooperative Agreement, p. 1). Refinement of this goal is apparent in the Center’s Vision Statement: To be national leaders in transforming personnel preparation and professional development programs for educators by building the capacity of higher education faculty and professional development providers to prepare effective personnel skilled in the use of evidence-based practices. Detailed in Table 1 below are the project’s originally proposed objectives, modifications to those objectives through the cooperative agreement, and brief summaries of progress on the overarching activities for each objective, which are then described in more detail in Section 2.

Table 1. IRIS Objectives and Progress to Date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Proposal Objectives</th>
<th>Cooperative Agreement Objectives (pp 3–5)</th>
<th>Progress Toward Meeting Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Conduct needs assessments and maintain feedback loops | Not included in cooperative agreement | 7 focus groups held (44 participants)  
Online survey (n=488)  
2 sets of textbook analyses: K–12 (38 texts), EI/EC (21 texts)  
Needs assessment data reviewed by 6 early childhood stakeholder groups, National Center for Intensive Interventions, IRIS Steering Committee  
Recent graduate survey (n=53)  
Revision and piloting of field-test forms |
| 2. Develop coursework and online resources | Knowledge development activities | Identified extant resources: 15 Information Briefs; 203 Video Vignettes  
Innovation Configurations developed on key topics (4 extant by CEEDAR, 1 by DECRP, and 1 in development by IRIS)  
Developed resources and learning tools: 4 Modules in progress, EBP Summaries (new tool, 87 entries), revisions or updates to Web Resource Directory and Films: Portrayals of People with Disabilities; Books: Portrayals of People with Disabilities (new tool, 100 entries), 5 new EC Activities, developing a Module on autism spectrum disorders (ASD) requested by OSEP  
Collaborated with content experts to develop resources, representatives from personnel preparation programs and PD providers who serve on IRIS Work Groups to develop training materials and tools for faculty and PD providers |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Proposal Objectives</th>
<th>Cooperative Agreement Objectives (pp 3–5)</th>
<th>Progress Toward Meeting Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Develop coursework and online resources <em>continued</em></td>
<td>Knowledge development activities <em>continued</em></td>
<td>• Developed new training materials for faculty and PD providers: 65 Wrap-Around Concept Maps, 14 Sample Syllabi, 7 Coursework Planning Forms, quick reference guides for faculty and for PD providers, 5 PD Planning Forms, Seminar Materials and Companion Guide, 3 Sample Curriculum Matrices (in progress)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Deliver products using innovative, barrier-free technology</td>
<td><em>Not included in cooperative agreement</em></td>
<td>• Redesigned, updated, CMS-based Website launched on 8/2/13 with improved navigation, adaptive design, and the transfer of over 5,000 existing pages of content. Ongoing reformatting should be completed in Year 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Promote and conduct technical assistance (TA)/training and dissemination activities</td>
<td>Technical assistance and dissemination activities</td>
<td>• Dissemination Plan: created in Year 1, revised in Year 2 • Strategic Planning: collected data on the use of IRIS resources at institutions of higher education (IHEs) with approved SE licensure programs to help determine IHEs to target • Provided a continuum of services ° <em>Universal:</em> Conferences or meetings (n=20); Social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube); Listserv notices (n=16) ° <em>Targeted:</em> Faculty Seminars (1 completed, 3 scheduled for Fall 2014); PD Seminars (2 completed); Webinars (1 completed); Web Tours (3 completed) ° <em>Intensive:</em> Work Sessions (2 completed); Impact Studies (4 studies funded and being conducted in Year 2; RFA for round 2 will be released in December 2014) • Trained 12 TA providers to conduct training on IRIS products and services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Engage in leadership and coordination activities</td>
<td>Leadership and coordination</td>
<td>• Established 3 Leadership Teams to help guide work: IRIS Leadership Team, EI/EC Task Force, IRIS Steering Committee • Created 5 work groups to guide the following: Sample Syllabi, EBP Summaries, Impact Studies, Training Materials, Dissemination • Established partnerships and collaborated with entities such as HECSE, CEEDAR, Deaf-Blind Consortium, TED, Professional Learning Lab at ASU, Project READ (CA SPDG), CA State Department of Education, Utah State Department of Education, George Mason University, University of Cincinnati, DEC RP Collaborative Group, Early Intervention/Early Childhood Professional Development Community of Practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Engage in leadership and coordination activities continued

Leadership and coordination-continued

- Collaborated monthly with the OSEP Early Childhood Centers (ECTA, ECPC, DaSy)
- Submitted proposed products for Years 1 and 2 through the TACC database
- Ongoing communication with OSEP

6. Conduct internal and external evaluations

Evaluation

- Evaluation Plan developed (approved 12/12/13)
- Website data are monitored monthly
- All data collection forms regarding products and services have been updated
- Online Module survey data are reviewed weekly
- External evaluation will be conducted Yrs 3 and 5
- GPRA reports for 2013 and 2014 submitted on time
- Extensive data collection regarding use of IRIS Resources at IHEs with approved special education licensure programs

7. Manage the project effectively and efficiently

Not included in cooperative agreement

- Continual communication between VU, CGU, and Leadership Team
- Yearly Work Plans created, approved by OSEP, and monitored by IRIS staff
- Budgets developed, approved by OSEP, monitored

IRIS Logic Model and Theory of Action

The IRIS Center’s Logic Model (which can be found on the next page) is presented here in an abbreviated form in order to conform to the page, margin, and font-size specifications of this Briefing Book. We encourage reviewers to view the full 1-page Logic Model or the more detailed 16-page version included in the Appendix. The Logic Model builds on the Center’s IRIS-shaped Conceptual Framework (Figure 1), central to which is data-based decision-making, and highlights IRIS’s strategies to Develop, Disseminate, and TA/Train. Those primary actions are supported through Collaboration and Evaluation. Figure 1 shows the relationship among the resources invested in the proposed program (inputs), the activities that will take place as a result (strategies), the primary intended users of those activities (participants), the products and services provided for each primary intended user group (outputs), and the benefits or changes hypothesized to occur as a result of implementation (outcomes). Outcomes are also divided into columns to demonstrate that certain of them must be achieved before others can be realized. At a macro level, the Logic Model provides the hypothesized causal mechanism assumed to achieve the overarching purpose of the cooperative agreement. The aim of the Logic Model is to create transparency about the Center’s workscope and guide formative and summative evaluation efforts.

Figure 1. IRIS Conceptual Framework
Project Goals/Objectives: (1) Develop a national resource center for teaching and learning tools, coursework, and training modules, (2) Make available training modules, (3) Develop exemplary teaching and learning tools, coursework, and training modules, (4) Demonstrate the application of technology in coursework and training modules, (5) Use technology to develop, deliver, and disseminate Center products and services, and (6) Provide TA to support the use of Center products.

External/contextual factors & moderating and mediating mechanisms: Other federal; the policy, economic, and social environment; OSEP policies, processes, and procedures; social change models; evidence use models.

Figure 2: IRIS Center Logic Model - Outcomes Model Abbreviated

Data-Based Decisions
- Needs assessment: prioritize development
- Needs assessment: prioritize tiered dissemination

Evaluate
- Formative evaluation
- Summative evaluation
- Shared data collection and data sharing
- Conform to evaluation and human subject guidelines
- Facilitating impact studies

Collaborate
- Steering Committee
- EI/EC Task Force
- Exec Com of Partners
- EI/EC Centers
- Other relevant entities
- Tech advisors/consultants
- Leverage resources

Develop
- Web-based instructional materials
- Web-based teaching tools
- Materials and processes to facilitate dissemination, training and TA
- CEUs
- Field-testing process for products/services

Disseminate
- Universal: Broad-based
- Targeted: Address specific needs of consumers
- Intensive: On-going for specific consumer groups

TA and Training
- Universal: widely available
- Targeted: for faculty and PD providers
- Intensive: Face-to-face training activities with ongoing support for specific groups of faculty and PD providers

Build awareness of EBPs by independent learners

Build knowledge of EBPs by independent learners

Build the capacity of personnel prep faculty to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences grounded in use of EBPs

Build the capacity of PD providers to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and coaching activities grounded in the use of EBPs

Curricula, coursework, and coaching activities of ongoing PD grounded in use of EPBs

Personnel prep program curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences grounded in use of EBPs

Use of EBPs by practicing educators

Social, economic, educational, or environmental practice changes

High quality services and results for children, specifically children with disabilities (0-21) and their families

Personnel prep program curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences grounded in use of EBPs

Build awareness of EBPs by independent learners

Build knowledge of EBPs by independent learners

Build the capacity of personnel prep faculty to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences grounded in use of EBPs

Build the capacity of PD providers to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and coaching activities grounded in the use of EBPs

Curricula, coursework, and coaching activities of ongoing PD grounded in use of EPBs

Personnel prep program curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences grounded in use of EBPs

Use of EBPs by practicing educators

Social, economic, educational, or environmental practice changes

High quality services and results for children, specifically children with disabilities (0-21) and their families

Data-Based Decisions
- Needs assessment: prioritize development
- Needs assessment: prioritize tiered dissemination

Evaluate
- Formative evaluation
- Summative evaluation
- Shared data collection and data sharing
- Conform to evaluation and human subject guidelines
- Facilitating impact studies

Collaborate
- Steering Committee
- EI/EC Task Force
- Exec Com of Partners
- EI/EC Centers
- Other relevant entities
- Tech advisors/consultants
- Leverage resources

Develop
- Web-based instructional materials
- Web-based teaching tools
- Materials and processes to facilitate dissemination, training and TA
- CEUs
- Field-testing process for products/services

Disseminate
- Universal: Broad-based
- Targeted: Address specific needs of consumers
- Intensive: On-going for specific consumer groups

TA and Training
- Universal: widely available
- Targeted: for faculty and PD providers
- Intensive: Face-to-face training activities with ongoing support for specific groups of faculty and PD providers

Build awareness of EBPs by independent learners

Build knowledge of EBPs by independent learners

Build the capacity of personnel prep faculty to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences grounded in use of EBPs

Build the capacity of PD providers to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and coaching activities grounded in the use of EBPs

Curricula, coursework, and coaching activities of ongoing PD grounded in use of EPBs

Personnel prep program curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences grounded in use of EBPs

Use of EBPs by practicing educators

Social, economic, educational, or environmental practice changes

High quality services and results for children, specifically children with disabilities (0-21) and their families

Data-Based Decisions
- Needs assessment: prioritize development
- Needs assessment: prioritize tiered dissemination

Evaluate
- Formative evaluation
- Summative evaluation
- Shared data collection and data sharing
- Conform to evaluation and human subject guidelines
- Facilitating impact studies

Collaborate
- Steering Committee
- EI/EC Task Force
- Exec Com of Partners
- EI/EC Centers
- Other relevant entities
- Tech advisors/consultants
- Leverage resources

Develop
- Web-based instructional materials
- Web-based teaching tools
- Materials and processes to facilitate dissemination, training and TA
- CEUs
- Field-testing process for products/services

Disseminate
- Universal: Broad-based
- Targeted: Address specific needs of consumers
- Intensive: On-going for specific consumer groups

TA and Training
- Universal: widely available
- Targeted: for faculty and PD providers
- Intensive: Face-to-face training activities with ongoing support for specific groups of faculty and PD providers

Build awareness of EBPs by independent learners

Build knowledge of EBPs by independent learners

Build the capacity of personnel prep faculty to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences grounded in use of EBPs

Build the capacity of PD providers to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and coaching activities grounded in the use of EBPs

Curricula, coursework, and coaching activities of ongoing PD grounded in use of EPBs

Personnel prep program curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences grounded in use of EBPs

Use of EBPs by practicing educators

Social, economic, educational, or environmental practice changes

High quality services and results for children, specifically children with disabilities (0-21) and their families

Data-Based Decisions
- Needs assessment: prioritize development
- Needs assessment: prioritize tiered dissemination

Evaluate
- Formative evaluation
- Summative evaluation
- Shared data collection and data sharing
- Conform to evaluation and human subject guidelines
- Facilitating impact studies

Collaborate
- Steering Committee
- EI/EC Task Force
- Exec Com of Partners
- EI/EC Centers
- Other relevant entities
- Tech advisors/consultants
- Leverage resources

Develop
- Web-based instructional materials
- Web-based teaching tools
- Materials and processes to facilitate dissemination, training and TA
- CEUs
- Field-testing process for products/services

Disseminate
- Universal: Broad-based
- Targeted: Address specific needs of consumers
- Intensive: On-going for specific consumer groups

TA and Training
- Universal: widely available
- Targeted: for faculty and PD providers
- Intensive: Face-to-face training activities with ongoing support for specific groups of faculty and PD providers

Build awareness of EBPs by independent learners

Build knowledge of EBPs by independent learners

Build the capacity of personnel prep faculty to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences grounded in use of EBPs

Build the capacity of PD providers to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and coaching activities grounded in the use of EBPs

Curricula, coursework, and coaching activities of ongoing PD grounded in use of EPBs

Personnel prep program curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences grounded in use of EBPs

Use of EBPs by practicing educators

Social, economic, educational, or environmental practice changes

High quality services and results for children, specifically children with disabilities (0-21) and their families

Data-Based Decisions
- Needs assessment: prioritize development
- Needs assessment: prioritize tiered dissemination

Evaluate
- Formative evaluation
- Summative evaluation
- Shared data collection and data sharing
- Conform to evaluation and human subject guidelines
- Facilitating impact studies

Collaborate
- Steering Committee
- EI/EC Task Force
- Exec Com of Partners
- EI/EC Centers
- Other relevant entities
- Tech advisors/consultants
- Leverage resources

Develop
- Web-based instructional materials
- Web-based teaching tools
- Materials and processes to facilitate dissemination, training and TA
- CEUs
- Field-testing process for products/services

Disseminate
- Universal: Broad-based
- Targeted: Address specific needs of consumers
- Intensive: On-going for specific consumer groups

TA and Training
- Universal: widely available
- Targeted: for faculty and PD providers
- Intensive: Face-to-face training activities with ongoing support for specific groups of faculty and PD providers

Build awareness of EBPs by independent learners

Build knowledge of EBPs by independent learners

Build the capacity of personnel prep faculty to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences grounded in use of EBPs

Build the capacity of PD providers to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and coaching activities grounded in the use of EBPs

Curricula, coursework, and coaching activities of ongoing PD grounded in use of EPBs

Personnel prep program curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences grounded in use of EBPs

Use of EBPs by practicing educators

Social, economic, educational, or environmental practice changes

High quality services and results for children, specifically children with disabilities (0-21) and their families

Data-Based Decisions
- Needs assessment: prioritize development
- Needs assessment: prioritize tiered dissemination

Evaluate
- Formative evaluation
- Summative evaluation
- Shared data collection and data sharing
- Conform to evaluation and human subject guidelines
- Facilitating impact studies

Collaborate
- Steering Committee
- EI/EC Task Force
- Exec Com of Partners
- EI/EC Centers
- Other relevant entities
- Tech advisors/consultants
- Leverage resources

Develop
- Web-based instructional materials
- Web-based teaching tools
- Materials and processes to facilitate dissemination, training and TA
- CEUs
- Field-testing process for products/services

Disseminate
- Universal: Broad-based
- Targeted: Address specific needs of consumers
- Intensive: On-going for specific consumer groups

TA and Training
- Universal: widely available
- Targeted: for faculty and PD providers
- Intensive: Face-to-face training activities with ongoing support for specific groups of faculty and PD providers

Build awareness of EBPs by independent learners

Build knowledge of EBPs by independent learners

Build the capacity of personnel prep faculty to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences grounded in use of EBPs

Build the capacity of PD providers to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and coaching activities grounded in the use of EBPs

Curricula, coursework, and coaching activities of ongoing PD grounded in use of EPBs

Personnel prep program curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences grounded in use of EBPs

Use of EBPs by practicing educators

Social, economic, educational, or environmental practice changes

High quality services and results for children, specifically children with disabilities (0-21) and their families

Data-Based Decisions
- Needs assessment: prioritize development
- Needs assessment: prioritize tiered dissemination

Evaluate
- Formative evaluation
- Summative evaluation
- Shared data collection and data sharing
- Conform to evaluation and human subject guidelines
- Facilitating impact studies

Collaborate
- Steering Committee
- EI/EC Task Force
- Exec Com of Partners
- EI/EC Centers
- Other relevant entities
- Tech advisors/consultants
- Leverage resources

Develop
- Web-based instructional materials
- Web-based teaching tools
- Materials and processes to facilitate dissemination, training and TA
- CEUs
- Field-testing process for products/services

Disseminate
- Universal: Broad-based
- Targeted: Address specific needs of consumers
- Intensive: On-going for specific consumer groups

TA and Training
- Universal: widely available
- Targeted: for faculty and PD providers
- Intensive: Face-to-face training activities with ongoing support for specific groups of faculty and PD providers

Build awareness of EBPs by independent learners

Build knowledge of EBPs by independent learners

Build the capacity of personnel prep faculty to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences grounded in use of EBPs

Build the capacity of PD providers to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and coaching activities grounded in the use of EBPs

Curricula, coursework, and coaching activities of ongoing PD grounded in use of EPBs

Personnel prep program curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences grounded in use of EBPs

Use of EBPs by practicing educators

Social, economic, educational, or environmental practice changes

High quality services and results for children, specifically children with disabilities (0-21) and their families
The IRIS Theory of Action (see below) serves as a road map that guides the Center’s work from the original strategies outlined in the Logic Model to the activities the Center will engage in within each strand in order to reach our short-term (proximal), intermediate, and long-term (distal) objectives.

**Table 2. IRIS Theory of Action**

IRIS Vision: To be national leaders in transforming personnel preparation and professional development programs for educators by building the capacity of higher education faculty and professional development providers to prepare effective personnel skilled in the use of evidence-based practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strands of Action</th>
<th>If IRIS</th>
<th>Then</th>
<th>Then</th>
<th>Then</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Develop</strong></td>
<td>...develops a) Web-based instructional materials, b) Web-based teaching tools, c) materials/processes to support development, dissemination, and TA and training, d) continuing education units</td>
<td>...faculty and PD providers will conceptualize curricula, coursework, clinical experiences, and PD coaching activities grounded in the use of EBPs</td>
<td>...independent learners will demonstrate an increased awareness and knowledge of EBPs</td>
<td>...personnel preparation and ongoing professional development program curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences and coaching activities will be grounded in the use of evidence-based practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Disseminate</strong></td>
<td>...provides universal, targeted, and intensive services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TA and Training</strong></td>
<td>...engages strategically with other federally funded programs, ED programs, states, and organizations</td>
<td>...IRIS will more effectively leverage resources to develop and disseminate high quality, relevant, and useful products and services for faculty, PD providers, and independent learners</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...collaborates with experts in the field to translate research to practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Collaborate</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluate</strong></td>
<td>...implements formative and summative evaluation processes</td>
<td>...development, dissemination, TA and training efforts will reflect needs of consumers</td>
<td>...products and services will be of high quality, relevant, and useful</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>...uses data to prioritize, continuously improve, and evaluate products and services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Target Audiences and Solicited Input

During Year 1, a multi-faceted needs assessment process was used to elicit input and identify the needs of IRIS consumers, including both general and special education faculty, EI/ECSE faculty, PD providers, and other education professionals. These consumers offered input about possible topics for new IRIS resources and services. This process involved collecting data from an online survey, two textbook analyses (i.e., EI/EC, K–12), seven focus groups, and a survey of recent college graduates now employed in education settings. The results at each stage were reviewed by the following stakeholders and partners for input: the IRIS EI/EC Task Force, the staff from the OSEP Early Childhood Projects (i.e., ECTA, ECPC, DaSy), the Early Intervention/Early Childhood Professional Development Community of Practice, and staff from other relevant OSEP-funded Centers (i.e., National Center on Intensive Interventions, National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center, Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center). The final data and feedback were then presented to the IRIS EI/EC Task Force, the Steering Committee, and OSEP Project Officers and used to select and prioritize topics for resource development during Years 2–5. The individual components of the needs assessment process are described below. The results from all the needs assessments can be found in the Appendix on pp. A18–21.

**Online survey.** Participants in an online survey were solicited through the IRIS listserv (>5,000 members) and those of our partners (e.g., SPDGs, other TA centers, the Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children). Respondents (n=488) rated nine topic areas on a scale of 1 (indicating “not at all”) to 4 (indicating “definitely”) in terms of the extent to which they would like to see new IRIS materials developed. For the broad topic areas they endorsed, respondents suggested more specific topics and/or the type of IRIS resource (e.g., Module, Case Study) they would like to see developed on that topic. Self-identified EI/ECSE personnel rated EI/ECSE topics and self-identified K–12 personnel rated K–12 topics. Further, participants were surveyed regarding the types of IRIS services they would like to receive (e.g., Faculty Seminars, Work Sessions).

**Textbook analyses.** This portion of the needs assessment identified gaps in initial personnel preparation textbook coverage of the online survey’s highest-rated topics (i.e., those topics that received an average rating of 3 or higher). The Center’s publishing partners supplied textbooks commonly used in the areas of early childhood education, early childhood special education, curriculum and instruction, reading and literacy, and special education. These textbooks were coded for comprehensiveness of coverage of the most highly-rated topics from the needs assessment survey.

**Focus groups.** Five Webinar-based focus groups were conducted with faculty and PD providers (n=33) who self-identified as working in EI/EC, intensive interventions, elementary education (K–6), secondary education (7–12), and secondary transition. Participants provided information on topic-area needs based on the topics identified in the online survey and textbook analyses, as well as their preferences regarding resources and services. A sixth focus group consisted of new faculty (n=4) who identified areas of need in conceptualizing and developing coursework. An IRIS staff member moderated each group, asking questions about gaps in the preparation of personnel and types of extant and the training resources needed to address these gaps. Faculty participants were asked to nominate 3–5 graduate students to take part in the online Recent Graduate Survey. Bianca Montrosse-Moorhead held a seventh focus group of doctoral students (n=7). As soon-to-be faculty, the participants provided input on the types of resources and services that would help them develop and deliver college coursework.

**Recent graduate survey.** Fifty-three of the nominated graduate students completed the Recent Graduate Survey. This online survey consisted of four open-ended questions: 1. Given your experiences as a recent graduate, in what area(s) would you have liked to have had better training
in college? 2. What are the biggest challenges you face in the classroom setting? 3. What are the area(s) for which you find yourself the best prepared? 4. In what area(s) would you like to receive professional development training now?

**Significant Revisions to the Original Proposal**

Although there is no separate evaluation area on the reviewer’s form for this important topic, we believe it is important to explain why and how revisions to the original proposal occurred. Important revisions were negotiated with OSEP and included in the cooperative agreement, particularly regarding input and participation from experts in EI/EC. As was mentioned above, Ilene Schwartz (University of Washington) and Vivian Correa (University of North Carolina at Charlotte) were added to the Center’s Leadership Team. Ilene Schwartz guides the EI/EC needs assessment and resource development work while Vivian Correa’s focus is on the technical assistance and training workscope. ML Hemmeter and Rob Corso (Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning, Head Start National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning) were added to the Vanderbilt team. These experts help with resource development and review, recommend State and district personnel for input and collaboration purposes, offer expertise in professional development, and support dissemination efforts leveraged through NCQTL trainings. The EI/EC Task Force consists of Ilene Schwartz, ML Hemmeter, Vivian Correa, Phil Strain (University of Colorado, Denver) and Cindy O’Dell (Salish-Kootenai College). This group of EI/EC experts—research, personnel preparation, and professional development personnel from IHEs ranging from community colleges to doctoral-training universities—serve in an advisory capacity and guide the EI/EC workscope by helping to develop the online needs assessment survey questions, identifying topic areas for the survey, reviewing the needs assessment data and making resource topic recommendations to the Steering Committee, developing resource content, reviewing resources, serving on work groups, and consulting across different aspects of the Center’s work. Vitae for the EI/EC experts can be found in the Appendix, pp. A22–33. As per the cooperative agreement’s negotiation items, the Steering Committee’s membership was adjusted to include more representatives from personnel preparation programs (see Appendix, p. A34).

The second revision is related to the development of the new IRIS Website. The original proposal included a personnel line for a part-time programmer. It soon became apparent, however, that the new Website would require significantly more effort than one part-time person could possibly accommodate, so proposals were solicited and an external Web design company—SquareOne Solutions (SQ1)—was contracted. In a very short timespan, and with significant involvement from the IRIS tech team, SQ1 was able to develop the new Website using a highly customized content-management system (CMS) that included greater accessibility for individuals with disabilities, responsive design (allowing ease of use on a variety of devices like laptops, tablets, and phones), easier navigation, and a more aesthetically pleasing design. Over 5,000 pages of existing content from the previous IRIS Center were imported into the new CMS. Testing and initial code cleanup was handled by MindSpark, an offshoot of SQ1 that trains and employs individuals with autism spectrum disorders in specialized work environments. The IRIS tech team continued code cleanup for approximately one year after launch. That the new Website was conceptualized, developed, had 5,000 pages imported and cleaned up, and was launched in roughly six months and in time for the Fall 2013 academic year—despite a 3-month delay in the Center’s start date—is an achievement of which we are very proud.

**Key personnel**

The Center’s key personnel remain consistent with those outlined in the proposal (i.e., Tyler, Smith, Robb, Skow, Nee) (see IRIS proposal, pp. 24–28, and vitae in proposal Appendix D3). As we suggested above, the additions of Schwartz and Correa to the Leadership Team and other early childhood experts to various roles within IRIS strengthened its EI/EC expertise. Table 3 below
summarizes the Center’s key personnel, their skills, qualifications, and roles. It highlights all of the staff and consultants who now make up the Center’s rich cadre of EI/EC experts. Finally, all of the Center’s personnel and consultants are illustrated in the IRIS Center’s organizational chart (Figure 3). A Center is only as good as the people who do its work and we are fortunate to have a team whose broad expertise and multidisciplinary backgrounds reflect the entire birth–21 age group, and who have the depth to cover many resource topics and support IRIS’s tiered services.

### Table 3. Key Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Personnel (FTE)</th>
<th>Skills and Qualifications</th>
<th>Management Structure</th>
<th>Roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Naomi Chowdhuri Tyler (.60) | • Extensive grants-management experience  
• Parent of child with a disability  
• Co-author of intro SE text  
• Instructor of undergraduate and graduate intro courses | • Co-PI  
• Director of IRIS@VU  
• Member of the Leadership Team | • Oversees overall budget  
• Ensures resources are developed on time and are of high quality  
• Develops resources  
• Represents IRIS at OSEP and stakeholder meetings  
• Conducts presentations |
| Deborah Deutsch Smith (.65) | • Extensive grants-management experience  
• Extensive knowledge of teacher ed programs: staffing and instructional delivery  
• Co-author of intro SE text  
• Sibling of an adult with disabilities  
• Instructor of SE doctoral seminars | • Co-PI  
• Director of IRIS@CGU  
• Member of the Leadership Team | • Oversees budget for TA/training and dissemination efforts  
• Coordinates and develops coursework materials and services  
• Resource reviewer  
• Conducts presentations, TA/training events  
• Oversees Impact Studies |
| Ilene Schwartz (40 days/year) | • Expertise in EI/EC, ASD  
• Director, Haring Center for Applied Research and Training in Education  
• Started Project DATA (a school-based early intervention program for children with ASD) | • Member of the Leadership Team  
• Member of the EI/EC Task Force | • Informs decisions on resources/dissemination efforts targeting EI/EC education professionals  
• Member of the EBP Work Group  
• Develops Module content  
• Represents IRIS on EI/EC panels, presentations, collaborations |
| Vivian Correa (34 days/year) | • Professor/researcher in the field of SE and ECSE  
• Expertise in diversity, families, ECSE | • Member of the Leadership Team  
• Member of the EI/EC Task Force | • Member of the Sample Syllabi Work Group  
• Member of the Impact Studies Work Group  
• TA Provider |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role and Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Kim Skow** (.75)          | • Master’s degree in SE  
• Considerable experience coordinating large, federally funded projects       |
| **Michael Nee** (.75)       | • Project mgmt experience  
• Communications and dissemination expertise  
• Extensive logistics expertise       |
| **Dr. Susan Mortorff Robb** (Yr 1 = .20  
Yr 2-5 = .30) | • Experience in higher education administration for teacher education  
• Experience with delivery and revision of personnel preparation programs  
• Advisory experiences with state departments |
| **ML Hemmeter** (.05)       | • Extensive EI/EC SE research  
• Director, Center of the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL)  
• PI, Head Start Center on Quality Teaching and Learning |
| **Rob Corso** (.10)         | • Co-PI, Head Start Center on Quality Teaching and Learning  
• Extensive experience coordinating federally funded EC projects  
• PD training for EC personnel |
| **Amy Harris** (.75)        | • Experience directing EI/EC programs (12 yrs)  
• Master’s degree in ECSE  
• Former director Easter Seals pediatric rehab  
• Parent of child with a disability  
• Program Manager  |
|                             | • Coordination/supervision of Center activities  
• Assists with grant mgmt/technical reports  
• Resource developer |
|                             | • Coordination/supervision of the Center’s TA/training and dissemination efforts  
• Assists with overall management of IRIS@CGU |
|                             | • Coordinator of Training Services (CGU)  
• Facilitates and delivers Faculty and PD Seminars  
• Trains new IRIS TA providers  
• Prepares new training materials |
| **Early Intervention/Early Childhood Expertise: Faculty, Staff, and Consultants** | |

**ML Hemmeter** (.05)  
• Extensive EI/EC SE research  
• Director, Center of the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL)  
• PI, Head Start Center on Quality Teaching and Learning  
• Member of the EI/EC Task Force  
• Member of Sample Syllabi Work Group  
• Informs decisions on resources/dissemination efforts targeting EI/EC education professionals  
• Develops content

**Rob Corso** (.10)  
• Co-PI, Head Start Center on Quality Teaching and Learning  
• Extensive experience coordinating federally funded EC projects  
• PD training for EC personnel  
• TA and training  
• Represents IRIS at national conferences  
• Facilitate EI/EC dissemination activities

**Amy Harris** (.75)  
• Experience directing EI/EC programs (12 yrs)  
• Master’s degree in ECSE  
• Former director Easter Seals pediatric rehab  
• Parent of child with a disability  
• Program Manager  
• Develops EC and K–21 resources  
• Coordinates EC Suite calls  
• Represents IRIS at conferences
### Cammy Purper (.15)
- Experience in EC personnel preparation
- Experience with EC field experiences
- State approval process expertise
- Project Assistant IRIS@CGU
- Prepares training materials
- Assists with dissemination activities
- Presents at conferences and meetings of both faculty and induction providers

### Leadership and Collaboration
**EI/EC Task Force**
- Vivian Correa
- ML Hemmeter
- Cindy O’Dell
- Ilene Schwartz
- Phil Strain

**Steering Committee Members**
- Laurie Dinnebeil
- Pam Winton
- Juliann Woods

### Work Groups
**Sample Syllabi Work Group**
(6 of 11 members)
- Vivian Correa
- Laurie Dinnebeil
- ML Hemmeter
- Nancy Hunt
- Cindy O’Dell
- Cammy Purper

**EBP Work Group**
(2 of 6 members)
- Ilene Schwartz
- Phil Strain

**Impact Studies Work Group**
(1 of 6 members)
- Vivian Correa
(1 of 5 coaches)
- Vivian Correa

### TA Providers
- Vivian Correa
- Nancy Hunt
Figure 3: IRIS Center Organizational Chart (2014)

Leadership and Collaboration

Steering Committee
• See Appendix A34 for Members

EI/EC Task Force
• Mary Louise Hemmeter (.05 FTE)
• Ilene Schwartz (10 days)
• Vivian Correa (10 days)
• Cindy O’Dell (10 days)
• Phil Strain (10 days)

EI/EC Leads
• Ilene Schwartz (30 days)
• Vivian Correa (24 days)

Project Coordinators
• Kim Skow (.51 FTE)
• Michael Nee (.40 FTE)

Administration

Leadership Team
Co-Directors
• Naomi Tyler (.50 FTE)
• Deborah Deutsch Smith (.30 FTE)

EI/EC Leads
• Ilene Schwartz (30 days)
• Vivian Correa (24 days)

Resource Development
• Kim Skow (.30 FTE)
• Naomi Tyler (.10 FTE)
• Amy Harris (.55 FTE)
• Janice Brown (.30 FTE)
• Taryn VanderPyl (.10 FTE, @CGU)
• Cammy Purper (.10 FTE, @CGU)
• Content Experts
• Work Groups
  (see Appendix p. A34–35)

Product Delivery
• John Harwood (.68 FTE)
• Brenda Trevethan (.88 FTE)
• Web Re-design Subcontract

IRIS@VU Support
• Pamela Dismuke (.90 FTE)
• Janet Church (.68 FTE)
• Jason Miller (.87 FTE)
• Amy Harris (.88 FTE)

IRIS@CGU Support
• Jackie Lewis (.70 FTE)
• Taryn VanderPyl (.20 FTE)
• Cammy Purper (.10 FTE)
• Jennifer Graham (.40 FTE)
• Sara Werner (.30 FTE)

Training & TA
• Sue Robb (.30 FTE)
• Michael Nee (.20 FTE)
• Deborah Deutsch Smith (.20 FTE)
• Rob Corso (.10 FTE, @VU)
• TA Providers
  (see p. A34)

Dissemination
• Michael Nee (.15 FTE)
• Deborah Deutsch Smith
  (.15 FTE)
• Work Group
  (see Appendix A35)

IRIS@CGU Support
• Jackie Lewis (.70 FTE)
• Taryn VanderPyl (.20 FTE)
• Cammy Purper (.10 FTE)
• Jennifer Graham (.40 FTE)
• Sara Werner (.30 FTE)

Consultant Bank: Content Experts, Needs Assessments, Partnerships, HPL Advisors, TA Providers
SECTION 2 ACTIVITIES

Description of Major Project Activities and Engagement of Target Audiences or Customers

Over the past 20 months, the IRIS Team has made significant progress in both its workscope and the cooperative agreement’s designated activities. An elaboration on these activities—as well as on the engagement of our target audiences and consumers—can be found below.

**Project infrastructure.** During Year 1, the Center received a list of negotiation items required by OSEP, all of which have been completed and approved by our project officers. Designed to create a coherent conceptual and organizational structure, the items included the development of a Conceptual Framework (approved 04/15/13), Vision and Mission Statements (approved 05/21/13), a revised Logic Model (approved 06/18/13), detailed Work Plans for Year 1 (approved 9/13), and a revised Evaluation Plan (approved 12/12/13). Additionally, the Center finalized the Leadership Team (approved 01/25/13) as well as the EI/EC Task Force (approved 01/07/14). Finally, a Steering Committee for the Center was approved (06/06/13) and had its first meeting on December 6–7, 2013.

**Knowledge development.** During Year 1, the Center completed a national needs assessment to inform its product development process. Data were collected from an online survey, two sets of textbook analyses (K–12, EC), seven focus groups, and a survey of recent graduates. The results (see Appendix pp. A18–21) were presented to the Steering Committee and topics for future Modules were identified for eight new Modules and one revised K–12 Module. Five topics were identified for EI/EC Modules (see Table 4, pp 18–20). Additionally, needs assessment data informed the types of TA and training services that consumers most wanted, as well as the types of training resources and tools to be used at those events. Additional knowledge development activities are listed in Table 5 below (pp. 21–22).

**Dissemination.** The Center’s Website is critical for universal dissemination of our resources. Much of Year 1 was devoted to its redesign, which involved the implementation of a content management system (CMS), easier navigation, responsive design to allow access from many devices (e.g., computers, tablets, phones), and the transfer of over 5,000 existing pages. Although the new site premiered on August 2, 2013, a considerable amount of additional time was required to reformat its content and ensure that all its features were operational. This ongoing task should be completed in Year 2. In addition, the Center developed and submitted a Dissemination Plan in Year 1. Other dissemination activities are outlined in Table 5 (pp. 21–22).

**TA or Training Events.** To better identify IHEs to target for training, during Spring 2014 the Center collected data on the use of IRIS resources at IHEs with approved special education licensure programs. This extensive and comprehensive assessment identified 904 IHEs in the United States that offer special education teacher licensure programs. Of those, 75.3% (or 681) use IRIS resources, 24.3% (or 220) received direct IRIS training services from the previous Center, and 99% of those that received services continue to use IRIS resources, in many cases years after initial training. (A complete copy of this report can be found on the IRIS Website at http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Use-Report-FINAL-71514-w-Apx.pdf). These use data help Center staff to strategically target and deliver TA or training events.

The IRIS Center offers a wide range of tiered services designed to assist faculty and PD providers to integrate information about effective EBPs into coursework and training activities. A full listing of TA and Training activities are listed in Table 5 (pp. 21–22).

IRIS Faculty Seminars are designed to assist faculty to reviseyllabi used in initial licensure programs and embed those into their universities’ course management systems (e.g., Blackboard). During these 1.75-day, face-to-face events, representatives from colleges across a state
or region convene for hands-on work. Faculty from both a given university’s general education and special education programs are encouraged to attend. States or regions are chosen based on IRIS Website use data, the locations of past events, and direct requests, often issued by a state’s Department of Education. The objective is to expand knowledge in areas where use of IRIS resources is low and IRIS has not conducted a training event, or in locales where the rate of faculty retirements and replacements is high. To be sure that every college with an approved program receives an invitation, we consult both the newly developed IRIS Master List of Personnel Preparation Programs and the list created by the National Center for Education Statistics. Email addresses for targeted faculty are gathered from the Website of every IHE with an approved program so that each faculty member receives a personal invitation. Participants register online and complete a needs assessment so that the Seminar can be tailored specifically to their needs. Travel arrangements and accommodations are supported for all who attend. Each attendee receives training materials, resources, and handouts for use during and after the seminar. Later, an evaluation is conducted and on-going support is offered as participants revise their syllabi. Beginning in 2014 faculty participants can voluntarily remain connected through an e-community of practice. A six-month follow-up evaluation completes the process. IRIS held one Faculty Seminar in Fall 2013 and has three scheduled for Fall 2014.

IRIS Professional Development (PD) Seminars offer TA and training to PD providers who either work through or for a state Department of Education or county office and who deliver training to practicing educators. These daylong, face-to-face events are specifically tailored to meet the needs of the supervising agency, which also selects the participants. The content of PD Seminars ranges from general use of resources about EBPs to developing training activities for specific sets of resources (e.g., reading and literacy, classroom and behavior management) found on the IRIS Website. Typically, state departments contact IRIS@CGU to request a training event. After an in-depth needs assessment process, PD Seminars are usually preceded by an individually arranged virtual Web Tour to ensure participants’ basic familiarity with the IRIS Website prior to the event. Virtual follow-up services are likewise available upon request. IRIS completed two PD Seminars in Summer 2014.

IRIS Work Sessions assist personnel preparation faculty engaged in revising their entire curriculum or developing new programs that meet certification requirements. Individual IHEs request technical assistance through the IRIS Website. Requests are vetted through email and an initial phone call to determine whether the department supports this initiative and whether faculty members are at a point in the revision process where this service would be helpful. A mentor/coach with extensive experience in program revision and expertise in the targeted area(s) of program improvement is selected from the IRIS pool of TA providers. She then conducts a needs assessment—either face-to-face or virtually—to customize the Work Session to the specific needs of the program. Following consultation with lead faculty, the desired program improvement outcomes are determined and a current curriculum matrix for the program developed. Before the daylong, face-to-face meeting, which is held on campus, IRIS staff provide a virtual Web Tour to ensure that all participants are familiar with the IRIS Website. Across the ensuing months, the coach and IRIS staff work closely with faculty as the program is revised and a new curriculum matrix developed. This living document is used to guide and assess the cohesiveness and comprehensiveness of efforts to integrate EBPs and related IRIS resources throughout the targeted program(s). IRIS completed two Work Sessions in Spring 2014 and is attempting to schedule another for Fall 2014.

The IRIS Impact Initiative serves a dual function: It is both a service and a part of the Center’s overall evaluation effort. This initiative is designed to support doctoral students, faculty, or other education professionals who wish to conduct research about the effectiveness of IRIS resources in teacher education or PD and their impact on college students’ or practicing teachers’
knowledge and use of EBPs. Applications are announced through email distribution lists and at conference presentations and submitted through the IRIS Website (often linked from partner organizations like TED or HECSE). Applications are selected through a panel-review process with standard evaluation forms. To ensure a total of at least 10 high-quality studies by the end of Year 4, the IRIS Center is making available to each funded project the coaching services of a national expert in research design and analysis. The Center is allocating limited funds (not to exceed $5,000 per study) to support a variety of research costs (e.g., data collection, reliability checkers, test instruments, software, participant incentives). Research coaches offer guidance from the beginning of the study, through its implementation, and on through data analysis. Upon completion of successful projects, the Center will also provide support for a conference presentation. For information on the four impact studies currently in progress, see p. 32 in Section 4.

**Professional Development Certificates**, referred to as Continuing Education Credits or Units in the original proposal, have long been requested by IRIS constituents to verify that they have completed a Module. This feature will be ready for piloting during Fall 2014, with plans to launch for nationwide access in January 2015.

**Collaboration.** The Center supports development, TA and training services, and dissemination efforts through a collaborative process to ensure that products and services align with developments in the field. Below is an abbreviated list of the Center’s efforts. For a complete list of collaborative groups and partners, see Appendix pp. A34–35.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EI/EC Efforts</th>
<th>Resource Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• EI/EC Task Force</td>
<td>• CEEDAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• EC Suite (ECTA, ECPC, DaSy)</td>
<td>• National Center on Intensive Intervention (<em>needs assessment, future Module</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Early Intervention/Early Childhood Professional Development Community of Practice</td>
<td>• National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (<em>future Module</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Council for Exceptional Children’s Division for Early Childhood (DEC), including Recommended Practice Collaborative Group</td>
<td>• Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center (<em>needs assessment</em>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TA/Training</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• California State Department of Education</td>
<td>• EBP Work Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• CalStateTEACH</td>
<td>• Sample Syllabi Work Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• BTSA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Impact Studies Work Group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Website Accessibility</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• CAST</td>
<td>• TED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consultants with visual disabilities</td>
<td>• HECSE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Dissemination**

- Pearson Publishing
- NASDSE

**Evaluation.** The Center carefully reviews consumer feedback and makes changes to resources and services as needed to improve their quality, relevance, and usefulness. Thus far, the Center has revised all formative evaluation forms (e.g., field test forms, training surveys) and is collecting data as indicated below. The field test forms have been piloted and will be implemented as soon as the first Modules are completed in late 2014. Formative evaluation efforts completed thus far are listed below.
### Website Usage
- Google Analytics (monitored monthly)

### Instructional and Training Resources
- Online Module feedback (monitored daily/weekly)
- Field test forms (instructor, students)
- Training surveys
- 6-month follow-up training surveys
- Expert reviewers (panel of 5)

### TA and Training
- Training surveys
- 6-month follow-up training surveys

Summative evaluation efforts are scheduled for Years 3 and 5. For more information on the methods used in formative and summative evaluation efforts, please refer to Section 3.

**Data-based Decision Making.** The Center uses data to guide decision-making and strategic planning in regard to knowledge development, dissemination, and TA and training. Examples of the data collected for each activity are included below.

#### Knowledge Development
- Needs assessment data (e.g., focus groups, online survey, textbook analyses)
- Online module feedback

#### Dissemination
- Website usage data (Google Analytics)
- Consumer input on social media
- IRIS Use Report

#### TA and Training
- Needs assessment data prior to each training
- Consumer input
- Focus groups
- Online survey
- IRIS Use Report

An illustration of the data-based decision making process might prove helpful: Though social media looms large in the public consciousness, a survey of IRIS users found that such online platforms were their least-preferred method for accessing information about IRIS or EBPs. More specifically, when asked how they would like to receive news about IRIS resources or EBPs, using a 4-point scale, users gave much lower average ratings to Facebook (1.98), Pinterest (1.85), LinkedIn (1.82), and Twitter (1.55) than they did to getting such news via emails (3.30), taking part in Seminars (3.20), accessing the information directly from the IRIS Website (3.13), or by attending conference presentations (2.93). In fact, when the data were broken down further, the respondents who could be conjectured to be the youngest—and therefore the most “hip” to technology (i.e., undergraduate students)—gave the lowest ratings to Pinterest (1.50) and Twitter (1.25). In keeping with the priority of making data-based decisions, the IRIS team maintained all of the aforementioned accounts except Pinterest (which had the least connection to IRIS dissemination efforts) as options for those who prefer them, but allocated dissemination time and effort in proportion to the data. All notices to the 9,209 constituents on our listserv are now sent using Constant Contact, an email dissemination company that allows customizable templates, accommodates sub-categories within lists (e.g., faculty, PD providers), and generates data about transmitted emails. For example, on May 5, 2014, we sent a request for field-testers to 2,753 subscriber who self-identified as faculty or PD providers. The subsequent data report showed that 867 people (32%) had opened the email and 2 (0.2%) had forwarded it to someone else. Such information helps us to know what types of notices consumers are more likely to open, providing valuable information on our dissemination efforts.

**Key Outputs**

The outputs listed in Table 4 below align with those specified in our full Logic Model. For the
complete output descriptions, we encourage reviewers to see Appendix pp. A2–17. The Logic Model does not contain outputs for non-resource/training activities, so accomplishments for the Collaboration, Evaluation, and Data-based Decision Making objectives are listed in the above section.

**Table 4: Key Project Outputs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Development Outputs</th>
<th>Total: 5 in development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Number/types of new IRIS Modules developed</td>
<td><em>Identifying and Selecting EBPs (Birth–21)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Evaluating EBPs (Birth–21)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Designing and Teaching Behavioral Expectations in Early Childhood Environments (EI/EC)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Setting up Natural Environments (EI/EC)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Autism Spectrum Disorders (OSEP-request)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Module topics identified for Years 3–5:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>(EI/EC) Working with other professionals, coaching</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>(EI/EC) Home visits</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>(EI/EC) Dual-language learners/families</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>(Intensive interventions) Data-based individualization: data</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>(Intensive interventions) Data-based individualization: interventions</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>(Transition) Interagency collaboration (age 18–21)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>(Transition) Student-centered transition planning</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>(Secondary education) Content/ accommodations/differentiation</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>(All ages) Selecting, implementing, and evaluating accommodations</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Number/types of new IRIS Web-based teaching tools developed</td>
<td><em>Video Vignette library (203 entries)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>EBP Summaries (87 entries)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Book Tool (99 entries)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Number/types of IRIS Modules updated</td>
<td><strong>Total: 1 in development</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Implementing EBPs (Birth–21)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Number/types of IRIS Web-based teaching tools updated</td>
<td><strong>Total: 4 updated</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Film Search Tool</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Web Resource Directory</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Glossary</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Standards (added CAEP and DEC Recommended Practices)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Number of IRIS product development, feedback, and revision loops conducted for new products and updates to existing products</td>
<td><strong>Total: 331 feedback loops</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Modules: 2 Modules, 1 each so far (ongoing)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Information Briefs: 18</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Video Vignettes: 224</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>EBP Summaries: 87</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Number/types of TA and Training delivery materials developed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total: 82 resources developed, 56 in progress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Revised Coursework Planning Forms (n=7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Faculty Seminar Companion Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wrap-Around Concept Maps (n=68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Planning Forms (PD) (n=5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Module Answer Keys (56 in progress)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Handouts (e.g., Tips, Using IRIS) (n=4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. IRIS product development prioritization process that is democratic and inclusive as evidenced by number of IRIS staff, Steering Committee members, EI/EC Task Force members, and content experts included in product development, feedback, and revision loops conducted for new products and updates to existing products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ongoing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposed product development list approved at IRIS Steering Committee meeting (December 2013) with input and collaboration from listed groups, with additional support from DEC Recommended Practices Workgroup (January 2014). Input and collaboration continue through development, feedback, and revision loops for products.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Number of CECs/CEUs documentation requests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Under development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Renamed Professional Development Hours, this feature is being piloted in Fall 2014 and will be available in January 2015.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Number/types of Universal technical assistance provided

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total: 6 types provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• IRIS Website redesign and launch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Social media accounts initiated (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Revised brochures (n=4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Listserv notices (n=16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Webinars (n=1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Website Navigation Videos (n=3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Number/type of emphasis areas/primary work setting of participants receiving Universal technical assistance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ongoing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>See page 29 in Section 4 for numbers/categories</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Number/types of Web visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ongoing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1,735,457 visitors from 1/1/13-7/31/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New visitors=42%, returning=58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. Number/types of technology enhancements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total: 5 completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Website revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Upgrade IRIS listserv from local email distribution list to Constant Contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use of Basecamp and Go-To-Meeting for collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Supplemental database for Seminar and Work Session participants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 2: Activities

TA & Training Outputs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number/types of</th>
<th>Total: 14 developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>new sample</td>
<td>Sample Syllabi (n=14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>syllabi, curricular matrices, and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sample curricula developed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number/types of targeted TA provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Web Tours (n=3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations (n=15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference exhibit halls (n=5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Seminars (n=1; 3 upcoming)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PD Seminars (n=2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number/types of intensive TA provided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work Sessions (n=2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact Studies (n=4 in progress)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number/type of emphasis areas/primary work setting of participants receiving targeted technical assistance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One Faculty Seminar held to date: 2 EI/EC, 1 SE, 1 middle school, 1 elementary ed, 1 transition, 1 field experience coordinator, 1 dean</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Number/type of emphasis areas/primary work setting of participants receiving intensive TA |
| Two Work Sessions are in progress; data are being collected. |

| Project TA&T prioritization process that is democratic and inclusive as evidenced by number of IRIS staff, EI/EC Task Force members, and TA&T trainers |
| Process was developed by 12 IRIS staff, EI/EC TF members, and TA providers. An average of 6 people involved in the decision-making process. |

Project Work Plan and Milestones

Table 5 on the next page provides a summary of our 5-year work plan. For years 1 and 2, target numbers are included in the top section of the cell; numbers completed are in the bottom section. In-progress activities or projects (see Year 2) are noted in red. In most cases, however, the Center has reached or exceeded the pre-determined milestones. Reviewers are encouraged to view the more detailed work plans for Years 1 and 2 in the Appendix (pp. A36–39).
### Table 5: IRIS Center 5-Year Work Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge Development</th>
<th>Yr 1</th>
<th>Yr 2</th>
<th>Yr 3</th>
<th>Yr 4</th>
<th>Yr 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop/revise at least 17 online Modules</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop/revise at least 4 Case Study units</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop at least 5 new Activities each year</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop 6 Web-based enhancements or tools (e.g., Video Vignettes, Book Tool, EBP Summaries)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update Web-based enhancements or tools (e.g., Films, Web Resource Dir., Glossary)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop/Revise 5 TA and Training materials (e.g., Faculty Seminar Companion Guide)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop PD certificate options</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop Innovation Configurations (n=6) Note: 6 were originally identified; 4 extant available through CEEDAR, 1 EI/EC extant available through DECRP, OSEP permission was given for IRIS to develop only the final IC.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop self-assessment tool to evaluate program curricula revisions</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Dissemination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>By the end of year 2, a) design/build new Website, b) transfer resources from old site, c) reformat information</th>
<th>a,b,c</th>
<th>c</th>
<th>n/a</th>
<th>n/a</th>
<th>n/a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop and implement a dissemination plan</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Universal Dissemination** (e.g., Website, social media accounts, brochures, listserv notices)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1+4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### TA & Training

**Universal TA and Training** (e.g., Web tours, Website navigation videos)

**Targeted Dissemination** (e.g., exhibit halls—not originally proposed, publishing partnerships)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>n/a</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Targeted TA and Training: Conference presentations, Webinars, Faculty or PD Seminars**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>9+6</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Intensive TA and Training: Work Sessions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Intensive TA and Training: Impact Studies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steering Committee, EI/EC Task Force</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In years 1–5, collaborate regarding development, dissemination, &amp; TA/Training</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In years 2–5, collaborate to co-develop products (n=5)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In years 2–5, collaborate to co-produce dissemination or TA/Training activities (n=5)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monitor Website data monthly</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7+5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In years 2–5, gather data on the Q, R, and U of online training modules using a) field-test survey, b) IRIS online survey, c) expert survey</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct post-training and follow-up surveys for Faculty, PD Seminars &amp; Work Sessions</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5+5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct external evaluations</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit quarterly and annual reports to OSEP</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3+2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact Studies</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data-based Decision Making</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Needs Assessment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs assessment prior to training events</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4+3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: The target number (of Modules, trainings, etc.) is included in the top section of the cell. The number completed is in the bottom section.*
SECTION 3: EVALUATION PLAN

The IRIS Center’s evaluation efforts are intended to serve two purposes: as a tool for program enhancement (formative evaluation) and a tool for external accountability (summative evaluation). Because the evaluation plan, approved by our Project Officers, is too long to include, it has been posted for your perusal at http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/3plus2links/. A more global perspective is presented here. Four broad-view questions guide all evaluation activities:

1. Needs Assessment: What are the needs of intended consumers of products and services?
2. Center Process and Implementation Assessment (IA): Are process goals and process performance criteria being achieved?
3. Center Outcome Assessment (OA): Are outcome goals and outcome performance criteria being achieved?
4. Efficiency Assessment (EA): Are resources used efficiently?

Formative Evaluation Plan and Progress to Date

Needs Assessment (Formative). The needs assessment process is fully described in Section 1 (see pp. 10-11). Readers are referred there for more information.

Center Implementation Assessment (IA) (Formative). An Implementation (Process) Assessment gauges the extent to which process goals and performance criteria are being achieved. Much of the data collected comes from the counting or content analysis of internal planning documents and products. The exception is a survey that was developed and administered to IRIS Seminar attendees (i.e., faculty and PD providers) prior to the meeting. The formative IA consists of:

1. An online needs survey, administered by IRIS to faculty and PD providers registered to attend a seminar. They are asked to describe their familiarity with and use of IRIS products and services and to identify their training needs.
2. A content analysis of the IRIS work plan, using a coding protocol developed by IRIS, to determine the number of proposed annual milestones completed.
3. A count of the number of targeted service requests.
4. A count of the number of conference presentation acceptances annually.

IRIS leadership, with assistance from the Dissemination Work Group, uses results internally to make decisions intended to improve the Center’s development and dissemination efforts. Results are also used for accountability purposes. In the latter regard, the performance criteria associated with this evaluation activity include GPRA program measure #5 (number of project criteria met), with the benchmark set at 90%, and 2 project process criteria measures.

Progress to date. All four protocols have been developed. The online survey has been distributed to those registered for an IRIS Seminar; content analysis and counts are ongoing.

Center Outcome Assessment (OA) (Formative). The bulk of our evaluation efforts are dedicated to a formative and summative OA and are designed to measure the extent to which outcome goals and associated performance criteria are achieved. This section covers formative OA efforts only; data are collected from faculty, PD providers, independent learners, a team of experts, and IHE programs.

Five surveys, all of which include a series of closed- and open-ended questions, make up our Formative OAs:
1. An online survey, for Module field-testers, addresses the quality, relevance, and usefulness of the Module. To identify participants, a call for volunteers is broadcast via the IRIS listserv. Field-testers are chosen on a first come-first served basis.

2. An external reviewer online survey for a review panel of content or topic experts assesses the quality, relevance, and usefulness of new Modules.

3. An online Module feedback survey assesses the quality, relevance, and usefulness of the Website’s Modules, as well as any navigation or technical issues encountered. This link is permanently embedded on the IRIS site; respondents are self-selected.

4. A post TA/training survey, administered immediately after TA and training activities, assesses the quality, relevance, and usefulness of services, online resources, and TA and training materials. It also gauged self-perceptions of awareness, knowledge, and skills related to the infusion of EBPs in personnel preparation activities.

5. A 6-month post TA/training survey assesses the same outcomes as the post TA/training survey. Further, the 6-month follow-up sent to PD providers will ask about their self-perceptions of their capacity to conceptualize PD and coaching activities grounded in the use of EBPs.

To improve the IRIS Center’s development and dissemination efforts, IRIS leadership use results obtained from the formative OA. To comply with OSEP accountability requirements, the performance criteria associated with this evaluation activity include GPRA program measure #1 (high-quality products and services), with the benchmark set at 85% of respondents will rate Modules and services as high quality; GPRA program measure #2 (relevant products and services), with the benchmark set at 85% of raters will rate Modules and services as relevant; GPRA program measure #3 (useful products and services), with the benchmark set at 85% of raters will rate modules and services as useful; and 18 project outcome criteria measures.

**Progress to date.** All surveys have been developed. The Module field-test survey and procedures have been piloted using the most recently developed Modules. Expert Module rating surveys have been developed, but not yet administered inasmuch as the Module development process is not far enough along. The online Module feedback survey has been posted to the IRIS Center Website and is collecting data on an ongoing basis. The post-TA/Training and 6-month post-TA/Training surveys are being conducted with PD providers attending IRIS PD Seminars; data collection is ongoing.

A second component of the formative OA involves an IRIS-led review of curriculum matrices. These matrices will be collected from each program at the same institution at two time-points: (a) prior to receiving intensive services that unfold the concept of Work Sessions for Curricular Improvement from IRIS, and (b) after the faculty groups have finished re-designing their licensure program and are poised to implement curricular revisions. These matrices will be content analyzed using a coding protocol, developed by IRIS, to determine the extent to which the capacity to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences grounded in the use of EBP practices has improved.

**Progress to date.** This protocol is under development. Pre-Work Session matrices have been collected from the two ongoing Work Sessions conducted in Year 2; no program has yet fully implemented program improvement.

A third component of the formative OA involves summarizing information contained in existing internal planning documents. These documents will be content analyzed using a protocol developed by IRIS to provide an annual count of (a) existing products (e.g., Modules, Module outlines, Case Studies, IRIS Seminar Workbook, manuals, answer keys) transferred to the revised IRIS Website, (b) existing products re-formatted to be aligned with the revised IRIS Website.
software, (c) the number of products co-developed as a result of IRIS partnerships, (d) the number of dissemination, TA, and training co-produced as a result of IRIS partnerships, and (e) the number of participants reached as a result of co-produced dissemination, TA, and training efforts.

Progress to date. All protocols have been developed; data collection is ongoing.

A final component of the formative OA includes an assessment of the IHEs that use the IRIS Center’s resources. This process requires multiple steps, each a prerequisite to the next. First, a comprehensive and accurate list of the nation’s IHEs approved to deliver coursework and/or degrees leading to licensure or certification in various fields (e.g., early childhood education, elementary education, special education) was developed. Second, a combination of information from Google Analytics and site queries using each IHE’s URL was used to determine the number of IHEs that use IRIS resources. Third, this list was triangulated against a master list of IHEs and faculty that have received IRIS services, maintained by IRIS@CGU. Fourth, each IHE was coded for capacity using dimensions identified in the SEFNA study (c.f., Robb, Smith, & Montrosse, 2012; Smith, Montrosse, Robb, Tyler, & Young, 2011). Lastly, a random sample of 10 states was selected to estimate the representation of teacher education programs without a special education option to better understand the characteristics (e.g., state support, size) of those with and without a special education option.


Center Efficiency Assessment (EA) (Formative). Using extant documentation, an EA will measure whether financial resources are being used efficiently. Using Google Analytics, the EA will track IRIS Website visitor statistics. In addition, IRIS expenditures related to resource development and training activities will be summed. These two pieces of information will determine the per-visitor cost for resource development and training. Results will be used for accountability purposes only. The performance criteria associated with this evaluation activity includes GPRA program measure #4 (efficiency). The IRIS-developed benchmark is that the cost for resource development and training will be no more than $0.50 per online visitor by the end of the five-year grant period.

Progress to date. IRIS has implemented Google Analytics and created a structure for tracking expenditures related to resource development and training activities.

Summative Evaluation Plan and Progress to Date

Center outcome assessment (OA) (Summative). The OA outcome goals correspond to the proximal and intermediate outcomes depicted on IRIS’s Logic Model, and as such center on the impact of IRIS resources on faculty and PD providers. Assessing true impact (i.e., cause-and-effect) is tremendously difficult and significantly more expensive than the budget allows. Thus, as a means to innovate by creatively maximizing resources, the IRIS Center—in collaboration with external evaluator Dr. Montrosse-Moorhead who serves on faculty at the University of Connecticut and has expertise in research design and evaluation—will develop and oversee a two-pronged summative evaluation process: (1) a summative evaluation of the IRIS center’s processes and proximal outcomes (hereafter referred to as the Summative External Evaluation) and (2) a competitive “IRIS Impact Study” Initiative designed to evaluate attainment of the IRIS Center’s proximal and intermediate outcomes (hereafter referred to as IRIS Impact Studies).

Those taking part in summative evaluation efforts will be different for the two components of the process. Participants in the Summative External Evaluation include faculty and PD providers, while participants in IRIS Impact Studies will vary by the study proposed and awarded (e.g., faculty, PD providers, graduate students).
**Summative External Evaluation.** The Summative External Evaluation will use a modified Success Case Method (mSCM) framework (cf. Brinkerhoff, 2003; Coryn, Schroter, & Hansen, 2008 for a description of the steps).

Three new protocols will be developed and finalized by Dr. Montrosse-Moorhead in Fall 2014:

1. **A Summative External Evaluation Survey instrument administered online at the beginning of Year 3 (January 2015).** The survey instrument will assess the quality, relevance, and usefulness of products and services and the extent to which use of Modules is associated with improved awareness, knowledge, and capacity to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences or coaching activities grounded in the use of EBPs. By conducting the survey process annually beginning in Year 3, the Summative External Evaluation will (a) identify movement across levels and (b) identify those who exhibit sustained outcomes.

2. **A focus group interview protocol with focus groups taking place in February and March 2015.** Dr. Montrosse-Moorhead will attempt to understand reasons for extreme response patterns in an effort to identify factors associated with successful and unsuccessful cases and how these factors might differ across groups. By conducting annual focus groups beginning in Year 3, the Summative External Evaluation will also identify (a) reasons for movement across time and (b) conditions that facilitate sustained success.

3. **An evaluative rubric to ensure the systematicity and transparency of the process used to generate summative evaluation conclusions.** This summative evaluative rubric will (a) define what aspects are important (i.e., criteria), (b) define how good is “good” (i.e., benchmarks), and (c) be used to make an evaluative judgment using these criteria and benchmarks. To develop summative evaluation criteria and benchmarks, Dr. Montrosse-Moorhead will seek guidance from users of IRIS Center services and products, IRIS staff, Steering Committee members, EI/EC Task Force members, and GPRA documents specific to OSEP.

Data will be analyzed and reported during Summer 2015. Additional waves of data will be collected during the beginning of Year 4 and 5 (January 2016 and 2017), with focus groups taking place in February and March of those years, and analysis and reporting occurring during the summer months.

**Progress to date.** Efforts associated with the Summative External Evaluation are just beginning. Because the IRIS Center has already developed a Logic Model, Step 1 of the mSCM is completed. The Logic Model illustrates how proposed strategies link to proposed proximal outcomes. This will be used as the “impact model.”

**IRIS Impact Studies.** As we discussed in Section 2 of this Briefing Book, these studies have a two-pronged purpose: They are services offered and they provide evaluation data. Dr. Montrosse-Moorhead, with input from other national experts in research design and analysis, developed a rubric to assess the quality of submitted proposals. Using that rubric, three national experts blind-review all proposals and enter their ratings into an online proposal rating system developed and maintained by the external evaluator. Next, the external evaluator summarizes the data and determines cut scores for three categories: (1) fund, (2) applicants must respond to questions before making a final ruling, and (3) do not fund. Those that fit within category #2 will be given two weeks to prepare responses to questions generated by rating scores and submit their responses to the IRIS Center. Further, proposals are not officially funded until IRB approval has been procured and documentation filed with the IRIS Center. Third, the IRIS Center makes available to each funded project consultation services from a national expert in research design and analysis to ensure that just-in-time research issues are handled in a way that does not compromise the study’s
validity. Fourth, successful recipients are expected to use Basecamp software (provided through the IRIS Center) to submit monthly progress reports. The same software is used to share the final report detailing study methods, findings, and conclusions to be submitted at the conclusion of the study.

To promote the dissemination of IRIS Impact Study results (a) funding to present results at national conferences will be considered on a case-by-case basis upon successful conclusion of the study, and (b) the final report that awardee’s submit to IRIS must be in the form of a manuscript ready for submission to a peer-reviewed journal.

Progress to date. The structural processes and procedures for the IRIS Impact Studies have been developed and implemented. The call for proposals was issued on January 20, 2014, with a proposal deadline of March 15, 2014. The proposal rubric was finalized on March 9, 2014, and the online proposal rating system was programmed into Qualtrics Survey Software by March 10, 2014. The online proposal rating system was field-tested by IRIS staff from March 10 through March 17, 2014, to ensure that technical issues were identified and addressed. The online rating system was officially rolled out on March 18, 2014. The proposal review process was completed by May 5, 2014. The first four studies, which are now ongoing, are outlined in Table 6 found in Section 4.

Summative evaluation decision-making and performance criteria. An annual Summative External Evaluation brief, detailing findings from the mSCM, will be delivered to IRIS staff at the end of Years 3 and 4 for internal decision-making. A final Summative External Evaluation report will be delivered in Year 5 to OSEP for external accountability. Regardless, the mSCM performance criteria and associated benchmarks will be detailed in the evaluative rubric. Further, for external accountability purposes, in Year 5, Dr. Montrosse-Moorhead will use IRIS Impact Study reports, manuscripts, and presentations to provide a summary of the evidence-base concerning the impact of IRIS. The project outcome criteria and associated benchmark state that a minimum of 10 impact studies will be funded and completed at the end of the grant period.
SECTION 4: EVIDENCE OF EFFECTIVENESS

External evaluations of the IRIS Center are scheduled for Years 3 and 5. Fully committed to a data-driven process, we have made formative evaluations an integral part of our work and continual evaluation effort. Recall that, according to the 5-year work plan, the focus in Year 1 was on the needs assessment process, Website redesign, revision and creation of new training materials, and development of new tools. Development and delivery of IRIS products, training materials, and TA events could not begin until the new Website was launched. Because of this, the creation of new IRIS products could not begin until the end of Year 1. Many products currently in development have a target posting date of December 2014, which means that evaluation data for those products are not yet available. The Website redesign involved extensive revisions not only to the site itself, but also to the navigation and accessibility, features of the online Modules. Data on the Modules are gathered daily via the aforementioned online Module feedback survey. We believe that the number of visitors who have offered their input and evaluation comments—to date, more than 3,000—is testament to the site’s value, as are the 58% of our visitors who are returning users. Reviewer ratings for the resources posted to date, and for the TA services and training resources, can be found below.

Evidence that Products and Services Are of High Quality

Nearly 360 Video Vignettes—all of them available on public (e.g., YouTube) or government-funded (e.g., Head Start Center for Inclusion, National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning) Websites—were initially identified for inclusion on the IRIS site. Links to those videos were then made available to panels of independent reviewers, who were asked to recommend whether the videos should be posted on the IRIS site and to identify appropriate topic areas for categorization (e.g., Collaboration, EI/EC). Reviewers also rated the quality, relevance, and usefulness of each video for inclusion in college coursework or PD activities using a 5-point scale in which 1=low quality and 5= high quality. Following the review, 203 videos were posted to our Website. The average quality rating for the selected videos was 4.41.

Eighteen Information Briefs were initially identified for addition to the IRIS site; after review, 15 were posted. These Information Briefs are gathered from entities such as federal investments (e.g., The National Center to Inform Policy and Practice in Special Education Professional Development) or professional organizations (e.g., National Association of School Psychologists). Using the same 5-point scale, the average quality rating for the selected Information Briefs was 3.98.

During Year 1, every Module in the IRIS collection was redesigned and re-formatted. Consumers who work through an online Module have the opportunity to fill out a Module feedback survey, which includes ratings for quality, usefulness, and relevance. Since the launch of the new Website, 3,313 users have offered us their feedback. Although all Modules posted were developed under previous IRIS investments, the ratings, using the same 5-point scale, for these redesigned post-launch Modules are included here. The average rating for the online Modules is 4.36.

Four TA and Training events have been held to date: one Faculty Seminar (targeted), two PD Seminars (targeted), and two Work Sessions (intensive). At the conclusion of these events, participants completed evaluation surveys on multiple aspects of the training. The average quality rating for IRIS’s online resources was 4.61, for services was 4.59, and for training materials was 4.58.

Evidence that Project Is Reaching Intended Target Audiences or Customers

The IRIS Website is the primary dissemination vehicle for the Center’s resources. Because those resources are continually updated, and to ensure that the most current versions of even the
"static" materials (e.g., Case Study or Activity PDF files) are accessed, we encourage faculty and PD providers to send their students or PD participants directly to the site. Therefore, an analysis of Website traffic should indicate whether the project is reaching its intended users. Google Analytics data show a total of 1,735,457 users from the project’s start date of January 1, 2013, through July 31, 2014. However, given that the site developed under the previous investment was in existence until August 1, 2013, it would make sense to start the data analysis instead on August 2, 2013, the new Website’s launch date. Google Analytics data show a total of 1,121,250 users during that period, with new and returning users representing 42% and 58% of the total traffic, respectively. In reality, however, these data indicate numbers that are a great deal lower than actual use—an issue discussed in detail later in Section 6 (pp. 37–38). Regardless, these numbers verify that the project is indeed reaching a very large number of consumers.

At consumers’ request, the IRIS site is completely open; we require no password or login information. As a result, our ability to identify user characteristics is limited. However, the 3,313 respondents to the online Module feedback survey self-identified as the following:

- College faculty (n=82, 2%)
- College student (n=1124, 34%)
- Graduate student (n=1089, 33%)
- PD provider (n=22, 1%)
- Experienced teacher (n=548, 17%)
- New teacher (n=240, 7%)
- School leader (n=42, 1%)
- Other/left blank (n=166, 5%)

Although not immediately intuitive, the lower ratio of faculty to college students, and of PD providers to practitioners, makes sense, given that one faculty member may teach up to 100 or more students in one course, and one PD provider may also work with large numbers of educators during one in-service training. Also, faculty and PD providers are less likely to complete the online Module feedback form, as they do not work through the Modules every semester and, if they experience issues, tend to contact IRIS staff directly.

In addition to giving us information about types of users, the online Module feedback survey also provides self-identified data about the primary area in which those users work:

- Early childhood education (n=492, 15%)
- Early childhood special education (n=142, 4%)
- Early intervention services (n=26, <1%)
- General education (n=992; 30%)
- Special education (n=1107, 33%)
- Other/left blank (n=554, 17%)

Of particular interest is that, although the Center’s previous focus was K–12 students, 19% of current IRIS users are early intervention or early childhood personnel. As such, we can anticipate that these numbers will increase as the EI/EC resources under development are posted. It is also encouraging to see that, in the K–21 age range, general and special educators access the resources in nearly equivalent proportions.

Though the Website is the primary dissemination vehicle for the Center, it should be noted that IRIS also has an email distribution list and several social media accounts used to inform constituents of new offerings. Because our consumers have indicated that they prefer email communications over social media (see p. 17), the time and effort allocated to these dissemination vehicles is commensurate with user preference.

**Evidence that Target Audiences or Customers Find Activities Relevant and Useful**

As was indicated above, independent panel reviews were conducted for our Video Vignettes and Information Briefs. Module ratings were obtained from an online Module feedback survey, and post-event surveys were completed by those taking part in IRIS training events. Relevance and usefulness ratings were based on a 5-point scale in which 1=not at all relevant/useful and 5=very relevant/useful. The ratings for these products are included below:
Section 4: Evidence of Effectiveness

IRIS 3+2

3+2 BRIEFING BOOK

• Video Vignettes
  ◦ Relevance: 4.56
  ◦ Usefulness: 4.45
• Information Briefs
  ◦ Relevance: 4.19
  ◦ Usefulness: 4.07
• Online Modules
  ◦ Relevance: 4.37
  ◦ Usefulness: 4.33
• Training events
  ◦ Relevance (online resources): 4.52
  ◦ Usefulness (online resources): 4.55
• Training events
  ◦ Relevance (services): 4.53
  ◦ Usefulness (services): 4.52
• Training events
  ◦ Relevance (training materials): 4.51
  ◦ Usefulness (training materials): 4.49

Evaluation guidelines generally consider a score of 3 to be a typical benchmark, so the consistency of IRIS ratings at 4 or higher is impressive.

Project Has Achieved Direct (Short-Term) Outcomes Expected by This Stage of the Project

The short-term outcomes outlined in the Logic Model are:

• Through products and services, build knowledge of evidence-based practices by independent learners
• Using products and services, build the capacity of personnel preparation program faculty to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences that are grounded in the use of evidence-based practices
• Using products and services, build the capacity of PD providers to conceptualize curricula, coursework, and coaching activities that are grounded in the use of evidence-based practices

Given the Center’s timeline, no short-term outcomes are yet expected. Data will be collected from 6-month follow-ups to Work Sessions (i.e., curricular matrices analysis) and from Impact Studies. However, because some of these evaluation points will be aligned with the academic year’s semesters/terms, they may occur later than 6 months after the initial meeting. As such, the earliest these data will be collected is Year 3.

Project Has Achieved Intermediate Outcomes Expected by This Stage of the Project

The intermediate outcomes outlined in the Logic Model are:

• Personnel preparation program curricula, coursework, and clinical experiences grounded in use of evidence-based practices
• Curricula, coursework, and coaching activities of ongoing PD for educator development grounded in use of evidence-based practices

As with the short-term outcomes reiterated above, no intermediate outcomes are expected at this point in the Center’s timeline. These data will also be collected from the 6-month follow-ups to Work Sessions (i.e., curricular matrices analysis), and from Impact Studies. The earliest that these data will be collected is Year 3.

Project Demonstrates National Leadership, Serving as (a) an Important Resource for Stakeholders and (b) an Effective Collaborator with Other Organizations and Projects

In Spring 2014, the Center collected data to determine how many colleges and universities with state-approved special education personnel preparation programs use IRIS resources in their coursework. Designed to guide future dissemination and training efforts, the work was guided by four questions:

1. What percentage of the nation’s approved IHEs with special education licensure programs use IRIS resources?
2. Among IHEs with approved special education licensure programs, does the use of IRIS resources differ between those with greater and lesser capacity?
3. What percentage of the nation’s IHEs approved for special education licensure has received direct IRIS training services (e.g., Faculty Seminars, Work Sessions)?

4. What percentage of those that have received IRIS training services use IRIS resources?

In the United States, 904 IHEs offer a variety of special education preparation programs leading to licensure. The data show unequivocally that IRIS is an important resource for stakeholders:

- 75.3% (681 of the 904 IHEs) use IRIS resources.
- Of the 141 IHEs that receive funding from OSEP (an indicator of greater capacity), 98.5% (139 of 141) use IRIS resources.
- Of the 93 IHEs with doctoral programs (another indicator of greater capacity), 98.9% (92 of 93) use IRIS resources.
- Of the 739 IHEs with lesser capacity (no doctoral program or OSEP funding), 70.1% (515 of 739) use IRIS resources.
- Of the 904 IHEs approved for special education licensure, 24.3% (220 of 904) have received direct IRIS training services.
- Of those 220 IHEs, only 2 (<1%) verified that they do not use IRIS resources. The remainder are confirmed IRIS Users, many of whom received training years ago.

IRIS resources are also in high demand among state departments of education, school districts, and professional organizations. Web analytics data reveal that nearly 600 organizations link directly to IRIS, including organizations such as ASHA and NCLD and states like Washington and Oklahoma.

IRIS collaborates with other organizations and projects in multiple ways. Staff from these entities:

- Support dissemination by forwarding IRIS email notices to their constituents
- Respond to needs assessments
- Review needs assessment data
- Identify focus group participants, field-testers, experts, practitioners, or family members to conduct interviews for inclusion in Modules
- Develop content
- Serve as resource reviewers
- Disseminate information on new IRIS resources
- Guide the work of the project through Steering Committee and EI/EC Task Force appointments

A full account of the large number of entities with which IRIS has collaborated during the previous 20 months is included in the Appendix pp. A34–35.

**Project Is Having a Significant Influence on Target Audiences Through Dissemination of Knowledge and Best Practices**

As we have discussed throughout this Briefing Book, the IRIS Center resources were accessed by 1,121,250 users worldwide from August 2, 2013, through July 31, 2014. And this is a conservative estimate. Web analytics data indicate that these users are the primary and secondary constituents IRIS is funded to serve. Additionally, the IRIS Use Report found that the Center’s resources are used by 75% of the nation’s IHEs with special education personnel preparation programs. Our resources and training ratings in the areas of quality, relevance, and usefulness are consistently above 4.0, whether rated through internal formative assessments or through a large external evaluation of OSEP Personnel Development Projects.
Further evaluation of IRIS’s influence is planned for Years 3 and 5. Results from the IRIS Impact Study Initiative, though still in progress and continuing through Year 4, will also yield data about IRIS’s influence. This initiative began at the end of Year 1 when the Work Group met virtually using Basecamp software. In Fall 2013, the members of the Work Group and IRIS staff developed a process for soliciting, reviewing, and selecting proposals for the first round of Impact Studies. In December 2013, a request for proposals (RFA) and submission guidelines were developed and posted to the IRIS Website. Announcements were released via the IRIS listserv, emails were sent to former faculty participants of IRIS Seminars, and an announcement was posted on the HECSE Website. Work Group members in attendance at the HECSE Winter Summit in January 2014 explained the competition and encouraged applications. Fourteen applications were received by the close date in February, and three panels, consisting of Work Group Members, reviewed and rated the proposals in March. Four proposals were selected for funding. The authors of an additional proposal were asked to revise and resubmit, but on review it was not selected for funding. Table 6 below summarizes the four funded proposals.

**Table 6. IRIS Center Impact Studies: Round 1 (Summer 2014–June 2015)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name and School</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Preparation Program</th>
<th>Comments/Notes</th>
<th>Initiation Date</th>
<th>Award</th>
<th>Coach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carly Roberts (Faculty) Purdue University</td>
<td>Knowledge and Application</td>
<td>SE K–12 High-incidence Advanced UGs</td>
<td>Mixed Methods Video Tapes Focus Groups Lesson Plan Rubrics Observations</td>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>$4,400</td>
<td>Bob Algoz-zine and Vivian Correa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristin Sayeski (Faculty) University of Georgia</td>
<td>Knowledge Acquisition and Application</td>
<td>SE K–12 High Incidence</td>
<td>Study of delivery of IRIS modules Pre-post test design</td>
<td>Intro SE Course in Fall 2014</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>Larry Maheady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Snyder (Faculty) Univ. AL Birming.</td>
<td>Knowledge Acquisition while in practicum</td>
<td>SE K–12 325T project</td>
<td>Value added to a study of pre-service Pre-Post test</td>
<td>Spring 2014</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>Bob Algoz-zine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine Spence (Student) Univ. of IL Champ. Urbana</td>
<td>Knowledge Acquisition</td>
<td>EC, EC/SE &amp; Behavior Specialists; Families Collaboration</td>
<td>Mixed Methods Pre-Post test and Focus Groups</td>
<td>Families Course in Summer 2014</td>
<td>$3,200</td>
<td>Kevin Miller and Vivian Correa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION 5: OSEP-CUSTOMIZED ITEMS

Early Intervention/Early Childhood (EI/EC) Efforts

As we discussed in a previous section, considerable time was spent during the pre-award period (10/1/12–12/31/12) and the initial months of Year 1 reconfiguring portions of IRIS’s Leadership Team, Task Force, personnel, and consultant structure. Given the Center’s earlier focus on K–12 education, we were able to give our new emphasis on EI/EC the attention and representation it both deserved and required. This restructuring was in addition to members of the Center’s existing staff: Amy Harris, project manager and EI/EC resource developer (VU), and Cammy Purper, coordinator of the EC program at California Baptist University and CGU doctoral student. Over and above the addition of Ilene Schwartz and Vivian Correa to the IRIS Leadership Team, and ML Hemmeter and Rob Corso to the Vanderbilt development team, an EI/EC Task Force was developed (Schwartz, Correa, Hemmeter, Strain, O’Dell) to provide input from nationally recognized EI/EC professionals (see Appendix pp. A22–33 for vitae). This group has identified the EI/EC target audiences; provided feedback on dissemination and training materials; identified topics and questions for the online survey, textbook analysis, and focus groups; reviewed needs assessment data and recommended a prioritized list of topics for EI/EC products; and recommended content experts to serve as developers. Further, they will serve as external reviewers for IRIS EI/EC Modules.

In this section, we will highlight our EI/EC efforts throughout the needs assessment, development, training, and dissemination processes. The full needs assessment process—described in an earlier section (pp. 8–9)—included an EI/EC component of the online survey, an analysis of 21 EI/EC textbooks, and an EI/EC focus group. The steps enumerated below were used to identify topics and content experts for EI/EC resource development. Steps marked with an * are unique to the EI/EC process and were not employed for the parallel ages 5–21 process.

1. Topics for the online survey and textbook analysis were developed by Amy Harris, ML Hemmeter, Rob Corso, and Ilene Schwartz, based on DEC Recommended Practices as well as experience with CSEFEL and other national training activities.
2. * The EI/EC Task Force attended a half-day meeting at the 2013 CEC Convention during which they addressed issues related to IRIS’s primary EI/EC consumers, collaboration with other EI/EC Centers, and alignment with the DEC Recommended Practices. The Task Force condensed the list of suggested needs assessment topics and identified additional questions for the online survey.
3. These topics were shared with the directors of OSEP-funded EC Centers, and further input was solicited.
4. Two University of Washington ECSE doctoral students conducted the textbook analysis.
5. * The data from all the needs assessment components were reviewed by the EI/EC Task Force during a virtual meeting; recommendations for resources were developed.
6. The Task Force recommendations were shared with the staff from the OSEP Early Childhood “Suite”: ECPC, ECTA, and DaSy, as well as the Early Childhood Professional Development Community of Practice. Input was solicited and discussions focused on the coordination of work, recommended experts, collaboration, and leveraging of resources.
7. Recommendations from all groups were taken to the IRIS Steering Committee, which met in December 2013. Ilene Schwartz and Vivian Correa attended that meeting as representatives of the EI/EC Task Force and the IRIS Leadership Team. The Steering Committee selected topics for the five EI/EC Modules, suggested experts to develop the content, and prioritized the order of Module development (e.g., behavior first, environments second).
8. * The five EI/EC Module topics (and recommendations regarding experts) were re-
examined during an OSEP-sponsored meeting of the DEC Recommended Practices workgroup in January 2014. The workgroup preferred that, for continuity purposes, the same experts who were developing ECTA resources on the Recommended Practices also develop the IRIS content.

9. The recommended expert for the behavior Module was contacted by IRIS staff. In the end, this individual was unable to complete the content in the required timeframe, mainly because she was working simultaneously on ECTA resources.

10. During the monthly call with the Early Childhood Suite in March 2014, the issue of the overcommitted expert was discussed. Suggestions for Module experts reverted to those identified by the Steering Committee in December 2013. Those experts were contacted and agreed to develop the first Modules. ML Hemmeter is developing the behavior Module, while Ilene Schwartz is developing the Module on setting up classroom environments.

The topic and expert selection process took longer for the EI/EC Modules than for the K–12 Modules, due to the additional steps taken to coordinate with the DEC Recommended Practices Workgroup, the later-than-anticipated release of the DEC Recommended Practices, and the overcommitment of the development experts. As a result, the development of those Modules began later than was originally projected.

EI/EC expertise and input is integrated throughout our work. Our Sample Syllabi Work Group includes Vivian Correa (Leadership Team), Nancy Hunt (TA provider), Laurie Dinnebeil (Steering Committee), Cindy O’Dell (EI/EC Task Force), ML Hemmeter (VU faculty), and Cammy Purper (CGU Project Assistant). These experts were engaged in the overall process and also shared syllabi they use in actual coursework, syllabi that are now part of the collection. Similar EI/EC expertise is infused in much of our other work, as was indicated in Table 3 (pp. 10–12).

In addition, IRIS@CGU will be able to leverage Rob Corso’s work on other currently funded centers to assist with the dissemination of the IRIS EI/EC resources. These other centers already conduct large numbers of trainings per year, and IRIS resources will receive high visibility through this collaboration. Rob will also recruit participants at these awareness activities for IRIS PD Seminars, once a sufficient set of EI/EC resources are available.

Table 7 below summarizes the numbers and percentages of our EI/EC work thus far, in relation to the overall IRIS workscope. The table includes activities such as the identification of books for preschool children in our new Books: Portrayals of People with Disabilities tool; EI/EC centers added to the Web Resource Directory; EI/EC terms added to the Glossary; early childhood videos identified for the Video Vignette collection; and exhibits and presentations at conferences that address all age groups as well as targeted conferences (Head Start, DEC, NAEYC). These presentations are made by members of IRIS staff as well as members of the Leadership Team and EI/EC Task Force.

**Table 7. EI/EC Representation Within Overall IRIS Workscope**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total #</th>
<th>EI/EC # / %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledge Development</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modules (in progress)¹</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>129 / 35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case Studies, Activities</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6 / 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video Vignettes</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>80 / 39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Briefs</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12 / 30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Indicates modules that are still in progress.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EBP Summaries(^2)</th>
<th>87</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>16%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample Syllabi</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation Configurations (in development)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards (includes DEC Recommended Practices)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dissemination</strong></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibits</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TA/Training</strong></td>
<td><strong>85</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
<td><strong>25%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations (completed/proposed)</td>
<td>15 (3)</td>
<td>5 (1)</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact Studies</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Seminars (past participants/registered)</td>
<td>8 (55)</td>
<td>2(11)</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership and Collaboration</strong></td>
<td><strong>69</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
<td><strong>38%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Team</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EI/EC Task Force</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Assistance Providers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Syllabi Work Group</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBP Work Group</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact Studies Work Group</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Seminar Training Materials Work Group</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,226</strong></td>
<td><strong>772</strong></td>
<td><strong>18%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Survey Respondents (1/1/13-6/30/14)</td>
<td>4,226</td>
<td>772</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) The Modules included here are 2 EI/EC specific (behavior, environments) and 4 that address all age groups (Identifying and Selecting EBPs, Implementing EBPs, Evaluating EBPs, ASD) and include pages or examples specific to EC. Because the 3 multi-age group Modules can be used by EI/EC faculty and PD providers, they are included in the count.

\(^2\) Because IRIS EI/EC resources are to be tied to the DEC RP, the second wave of these summaries will reflect the DEC Recommended Practices, which were released in April 2014 and could not be tied to the EBP Summaries. The first wave of EBP Summaries are linked to the IES database (What Works Clearinghouse), which includes few EI/EC EBPs. The decision to produce the first wave of EBPs from this single source was made by the entire Work Group, which has 30% representation of EI/EC experts.

**Note:** Not included on the chart are the ongoing collaborations such as the monthly calls with the OSEP EC Suite—the coordination of which IRIS has now taken over—and ongoing collaboration with those centers and the leveraging of Hemmeter’s, Corso’s, and Schwartz’s roles on multiple other EI/EC Centers.

**Evidence that Project HasEffectively Collaborated with Other OSEP-Funded Early Childhood Centers**

The OSEP “Suite” of early childhood centers includes three whose workscope is fully dedicated to early childhood—ECTA, ECPC, DaSy—and one center whose workscope is birth–21 and therefore includes early childhood—IRIS. Every month, these centers meet virtually to coordinate their efforts in order to leverage resources and maximize efficiency. Initially, ECTA was
responsible for organizing these calls, but as of July 2014 IRIS had assumed that responsibility. Though our constituent groups—faculty and PD providers—are quite different from those of the other centers, we have nevertheless managed to share information and collaborate in productive ways. As we indicated above, IRIS solicited input from the EC Center directors regarding topics for the needs assessment; shared needs assessment results; solicited input on recommended resource topics; shared both the EI/EC Task Force’s and the Steering Committee’s final recommendations to avoid overlap in content development; met with the centers as part of the DEC Recommended Practices Workgroup to again discuss planned topics, resources, and resource developers; received further input and final agreement on an alternate resource developer when initial developer contacted was overbooked. Once the new EI/EC Modules have been developed, members of the ECTA team will serve as reviewers (along with members of our EI/EC Task Force and Steering Committee). Further, a member of the ECTA team will assist with content development for an OSEP-requested Module on autism spectrum disorders.

**Evidence that Project Has Effectively Collaborated with Centers and Organizations in the Broader Early Childhood Field**

IRIS has been fortunate to collaborate with the Early Childhood Professional Development Community of Practice (ECPDCP), sharing needs assessment topics and results. Further collaboration is planned as IRIS resources are developed, as the ECPDCP can solicit reviewers and field testers and can help to disseminate information to PD providers.

Further collaboration comes via the deep involvement of IRIS Leadership Team and Task Force members in national work. IRIS has access to all of the CSEFEL resources through ML Hemmert and Rob Corso, who—along with Ilene Schwartz—also serve as IRIS liaisons to Head Start’s National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning (NCQTL). In November 2014, IRIS will present to the disability coordinators from across the country through the NCQTL’s monthly call, allowing us to showcase our resources, which they can then use in their trainings. Further, thanks to Rob Corso’s professional development work with NCQTL, IRIS resources will be disseminated widely through the numerous trainings that center holds throughout the United States.

Our collaboration with other centers will broaden when the first of our EI/EC Modules are developed, and we look forward to expanding the IRIS reach beyond the self-identified 19% of EI/EC users who currently access our resources.
SECTION 6: LOOKING AHEAD TO YEARS 4 AND 5

The IRIS staff have already overcome nearly every challenge to our initial work schedule, most of which were described in earlier sections. Though by the end of Year 2 we anticipate achieving or surpassing our originally promised outcomes, we want to take a moment now to describe a few unanticipated challenges that we continue to struggle with.

Description of Organizational or Situational Barriers

Creation of a new Website. This undertaking turned out to be more complex than we originally predicted. The old site was built to house but a few online resources. As the Center grew, however, and more and larger resources were developed, the IRIS site became increasingly unfriendly to our users. Without any plan for its growth, it sprawled. Any rendering of its site map looked like nothing so much as an out-of-control graphic organizer. Though the eventual implementation of the IRIS Resource Locator (IRL)—a search engine that sorted our resources by topic area—served to somewhat ameliorate these issues, it remained the case that many sections of site were only infrequently accessed. More, from a purely aesthetic perspective, the twelve-year-old site’s appearance was badly dated.

Organized by a content management system (CMS), the new Website houses our existing resources, allows for the easy addition of new ones, and anticipates growth and new technology for five years into the future. However, creating a fully functioning CMS is a massive endeavor. Further complicating the issue was that we needed to modify the navigation of the STAR Legacy Modules, switching the order of the Assessment and Wrap Up sections, replacing the section-by-section navigation with a more open design, and allowing multiple paths for accessibility in line with the principles of Universal Design for Learning. The expertise required to create and implement all this was clearly beyond the .75 programming position described in the proposal budget.

Solution. In the end, we solicited proposals for Web redesign work. Four companies expressed interest, three submitted proposals, and SquareOne Solutions was selected as contractor. The next 6 months saw a flurry of activity as the site was designed and built and 5,000 pages were transferred into it by the end of July. This transference itself presented a new wrinkle. Many of the pages simply fell apart, tables “blew up,” pictures and photos wandered off their margins, and text configurations went wild. Nearly every member of the VU and CGU teams took a crash course in coding. They, along with MindSpark—a division of SQ1 that employs individuals with autism spectrum disorders—worked nearly around the clock to make the pages presentable enough for the start of the academic year. The IRIS tech team continued cleaning up the finer details of code, a job that will finally be completed in December 2014.

Website hosting. Once the Website was fully functional, however, we ran into problems with its host, Pressable. Formerly know as Zippykids, Pressable hosts and maintains WordPress-based environments. During Spring 2014, Pressable’s servers became unstable and experienced continual crashes, resulting in intermittent downtime for the IRIS site that ranged anywhere from 10 minutes to 25 hours.

Solution. After several weeks of these outages, the IRIS and SQ1 teams began the search for a new host. We selected WP Engine, the site was transferred 07/07/14, and has been running smoothly ever since.

Measuring use of the Website. Other tech challenges continue to surface. As can be seen in Figure 4 below, with the launch of the new site in August 2013, we ran into Web analytics problems. Janice Brown, IRIS internal evaluator, had previously run the raw data logs from the IRIS site (which had been hosted on a Mac mini computer in our Webmaster’s office) through a Web analytics program (Summary) to produce the Website use data. However, the site’s new host,
Zippykids, could not provide the raw logs, resulting in a loss of data. Because we previously tracked use with both Google Analytics (GA) and Summary, we were aware that GA data had always shown lower use. With only GA available to us post-launch, a great deal of time was spent trying to determine the cause of the discrepancy, which appears to be, in part, GA’s inability to track PDF downloads when users access those resources directly, rather than working through a path on the site. This type of download occurs, for example, when a faculty member includes a link to a Case Study in her syllabus or online course management system, which students then use to access the document. This is in contrast to a user who works through the IRL, finds a Case Study through a topic search, and clicks the link on the site, which then registers with GA.

Solution. The Center’s new server hosting site is able to provide raw log files. Unfortunately, the Summary program is no longer available (ironically, put out of business by the no-cost availability of GA), so Center staff have employed several strategies to try to recover the “missing” GA data, including software plug-ins and alternative log analytics programs. Finding another Web log analytics program, however, has proven difficult because most available programs are antiquated, due in part to the popularity of GA. One promising method, from Alex Moore at the Lunametrics Website, creates a virtual IRIS page click to capture PDF downloads and then sends those clicks to GA. Due to the unique configuration of our hosting site’s server, this method is still being tweaked to make it effective for the IRIS Website.

Another challenge is our inability to find GA data that can confirm an IHE’s use of our resources. This is in part due to the fact that around 60% of visitors type the Center’s URL directly into their browsers, providing no information about the institution they attend or work at. The use of commercial Internet service providers by many of the site’s visitors also limits our ability to identify visitors from a specific IHE.

Solution. We continue to research web analytics solutions to improve our data collection, analysis, and decision-making efforts.

Figure 4. Visits to the IRIS Website by Semester
**Waves vs. counts.** As part of our cooperative agreement, we developed Work Plans for Year 1 and 2. In those, we outlined our plan to post new resources in groups or “waves.” Our Year 1 Work Plan contained two waves of Sample Syllabi, two waves of Evidence-Based Practice Annotations, and one wave of Curricular Matrices. Unfortunately, we never defined how many syllabi, EBPs, or matrices constituted a wave. As a result, determining whether that activity was sufficiently completed has been challenging, not only in determining how to count but also in accounting for the unanticipated effort that has gone into each. For example, we initially anticipated that each wave of sample syllabi would contain roughly three examples, with each posted exactly as the instructors use them in their courses. Instead, the Sample Syllabi Work Group recommended the development of a standardized template to which all sample syllabi would be reworked to align so that IRIS users could more easily search for key items in each syllabus. The first wave contained 8 syllabi—twice the anticipated number—raising the issue of how to evaluate our progress. Inasmuch as we had posted 8 syllabi—the number originally planned for, albeit a number unspecified in the Work Plan—could we count those activities as completed, or did we still need to post a second wave? The same issue arose with the identification of EBPs for the newly developed EBP Annotations tool. The first wave contained 87 EBPs, far more than was originally estimated.

**Solution.** For future years’ Work Plans, we will plan for one wave of additions for each tool and specify the number to be included in a wave. As for the Year 1 Work Plan, some of those waves were pushed to Year 2 due to the time and effort involved. However, in our Year 2 Work Plan, we proposed 4 Sample Syllabi for wave 2; we have actually completed 6, all of which are now posted to our Website. We are working to complete all waves by the end of Year 2.

**Unanticipated costs and effort.** The Impact Studies Initiative and the Work Sessions have taken much more time, effort, and funding than originally anticipated. The Impact Studies Initiative required a whole new process and protocols (e.g., the development of review forms, development of the application process, paneling and ranking systems). More, 14 individuals applied for Impact Study support, nearly three times the number anticipated, which required more review panels, resulting in higher costs for the review process. Further, one individual was asked to revise and resubmit his proposal, which was subsequently repaneled, adding to the time, effort, and expense.

Work Sessions, too, have been more costly than originally planned for. The original budget included costs for an initial needs assessment, one day of face-to-face work, and follow-up through email, phone, and Basecamp software. In reality, a pre-Work Session site visit in conjunction with a needs assessment works better than does a needs assessment alone, allowing the mentor to gather more authentic information about the program and its faculty. Further, more follow-up than originally planned is often requested by the IHE.

**Solutions.** The Year 3 budget will reflect increased costs for Impact Studies and Work Sessions. In adjusting for the extra costs during the current year, one of the three Work Sessions planned for Year 2 has been put on hold, pending budget revisions. Further, we will look at leveraging resources and sharing costs that are incurred by our partners after the initial IRIS service.