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An Exploration of Postsecondary Education Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Public Universities and Colleges in Florida

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AN EXPLORATION OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES IN FLORIDA

by

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ABSTRACT

Through The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 and The Workforce Innovative Opportunity Act of 2014, legislators have created opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities to participate in postsecondary education with their typically developing peers. This study utilized the results of web-based survey data from public universities and colleges in the state of Florida to explore the varying options available for students with intellectual disabilities.

This study applied a quantitative approach to the survey of 12 state university system (SUS) and 28 college system (CS) institutions in Florida to explore current program options and services afforded students with intellectual disabilities desiring postsecondary education in Florida. The web based survey yielded a 48% response rate. Findings indicate in 2016 there are 10 postsecondary education programs for students with intellectual disabilities within the public university and college system of Florida.

Implications of the findings and recommendations for the future are discussed. Notably, future research should consider exploring national postsecondary programs and explore outcomes for students with intellectual disabilities.

I dedicate this dissertation to the children of my heart: Brian, Michael, Patrick, Ciara, Sinead, Sean (in memoriam), and Dillon Mulvaney, Dean and Jack Buckley, my sisters Alice and Amanda, and I could never forget the infamous Juan L. Roman. Before I became a certified teacher and I was only practicing to be one, you all allowed me to act like I knew what I was doing. The greatest joy in my life has been the ability to grow and develop as both a teacher and leader while having a part in shaping the amazing people you all are today. Each and every one of you helped me become the Educational Leader I have worked hard to become. I hope I helped all of you become lifelong learners. Remember: turn can't into can and dreams into plans.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

CS	College System
CTP	Comprehensive Transition Program
HEOA	Higher Education Opportunity Act
ID	Intellectual Disability
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IDEIA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act
IRB	Institutional Review Board
NLTS2	National Longitudinal Transition Survey 2
PSE	Postsecondary Education
SUS	State University System
TC	Think College
TPSID	Transition and Postsecondary Program for Students with Intellectual Disabilities
WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

CHAPTER ONE
THE PROBLEM AND ITS CLARIFYING COMPONENTS

Introduction

For students with intellectual disabilities, postsecondary education has not typically been a primary goal due to limited opportunities (Sanford, Newman, Wagner, Cameto, Knokey, & Shaver, 2011). Until federal legislation created a continuum of postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities in the first decade of the 21st century, only 15% of all students with disabilities attended a four-year college (Harkin, 2013). At that time, only 150 educational programs, at the postsecondary level, were available for students with intellectual disabilities in the United States (Lee, 2009). However, two pieces of federal legislation, The Higher Education Opportunity Act (2008) and The Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (2014), have attempted to expand access to educational opportunities for students with disabilities, including students with intellectual disabilities. The two pieces of legislation resulted in additional opportunities in postsecondary education and training for students with intellectual disabilities, leading to post-school employment and independent living success (Grigal, Hart, & Weir, 2012). The goal of a college degree, once considered a dream for students with intellectual disabilities, has become a reality (Lee, 2009).

The Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) was signed into law on August 14, 2008 by President George W. Bush (Higher Education Opportunity Act, 2008). HEOA included amendments providing inclusive postsecondary education (PSE) to

students with intellectual disabilities (Grigal & Hart, 2010). The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 defined students with intellectual disabilities as:

> (A) A student with cognitive disability impairment, characterized by significant limitations in – (i) intellectual and cognitive functioning; and (ii) adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills; and (B) Who is currently, or was formerly, eligible for a free appropriate public education under the Individuals with Disabilities Act, (HEOA, 2008, Sec 760, part 2)

As a result of the amended Higher Education Opportunity Act, students with intellectual disabilities now qualify for Federal Student Aid and Federal Work Study at postsecondary institutions that have applied for and have been approved as comprehensive transition programs (Lee, 2009).

Further, HEOA provided funding for institutions of higher education to develop comprehensive transition and postsecondary programs for students with intellectual disabilities (Parent-Johnson et al., 2014; Lee, 2009). Students with intellectual disabilities, traditionally served in postsecondary educational programs through local school districts, became eligible for enrollment in state university and college systems in an inclusive setting (Parent-Johnson et al., 2014). HEOA (2008) established model comprehensive transition program serving students with intellectual disabilities (TPSID). These model sites were called TPSIDs and provided individualized supports for academic and social inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities. According to HEOA 2008 guidelines, 27 TPSID grants were funded in 23 states. Each TPSID site was required to collaborate with Think College, the national coordinating center which is a project of the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts Boston, in the

evaluation of their program and the development of standards (Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, PL 110-315, 122 Stat. 3078, 2008). As a result, students with intellectual disabilities sought enrollment into universities with programs designed especially for their unique needs (Klinert, Jones, Sheppard-Jones, Harp, & Harrison, 2012).

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (2014) was enacted to ensure students with disabilities, including intellectual disabilities continued to receive postsecondary education and to assist workers, including those with barriers to employment "access employment, education, training, and support services" (U.S. Department of Labor [USDOL], 2014, p. 1). WIOA legislation specifically included recommendations to assist states with inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in workforce services and career and technical education programs (USDOL, 2014).

Under, WIOA, students with disabilities, including intellectual disabilities, qualified for expanded career and technical education beyond age 22, when eligibility for traditional educational support services expire (USDOL, 2014). Historically, once students with disabilities, including intellectual disabilities, became ineligible for support services through local school districts, few options for furthering their education or gaining employment were available (Harkin, 2013). Under WOIA, students with intellectual disabilities were afforded additional opportunities to attend postsecondary institutions to acquire the 21st century skills vital to enter and remain competitive in the workforce (USDOE, 2014). The "primary focus [of WIOA] is to assist job seekers that

will benefit from education, skills training, and employment and support services" (USDOL, 2014, p. 1).

Problem Statement

Due to changes in federal legislation, there was a lack of research and profiles on postsecondary education programs for students with intellectual disabilities at public universities and colleges within the state of Florida. The problem to explore was the lack of data on the current state of postsecondary education and services afforded to adults with intellectual disabilities in public institutions of higher education in the state of Florida. The current study provided a baseline on the prevalence and types of postsecondary education options within Florida's public state university system (SUS) institutions and college system (CS) institutions. See Appendix B for a list of public universities and colleges. Additionally, program goals and the support services in place to facilitate opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities at these institutions were analyzed.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study to explore postsecondary education options for students with intellectual disabilities at Florida's 12 State University System (SUS) institutions and 28 College Systems (CS) institutions. This study was exploratory in nature, collecting descriptive information on the status of postsecondary education options for students with intellectual disabilities at Florida's State University System and College

System institutions. Finally, this study established a baseline in the field of postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities in Florida regarding the prevalence as well as created a baseline of the systems and supports currently in place.

Definitions

Accommodations: services and supports available for students with all types disabilities to ensure academic access and success (Stodden, Jones, & Chang, 2001).

Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Program: a degree, certificate, or non-degree program that is offered by a college or career school and approved by the U.S. Department of Education (Higher Education Opportunity Act, 2008).

Free and appropriate public education (FAPE); Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states "no otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States shall solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance" For a public school districts, this means districts must identify an individual's special educational needs and provide services to meet those needs until the student is 22 years old (Grigal & Hart, 2010).

Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (HEOA): enacted on August 14, 2008 the law contained several provisions to improve access to inclusive postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities. The law includes requirements for financial aid for students with intellectual disabilities and establishes a coordinating center known as Think College, responsible for providing technical assistance,

evaluation, and development of standards and benchmarks for model programs (Higher Education Opportunity Act, 2008; Lee, 2009).

Inclusion: When individuals with and without disabilities participate in activities together (May, 2012).

Integrated/Inclusive program: a postsecondary education program allowing students with intellectual disabilities to participate in current coursework at the university or college alongside their typically developing peers (Grigal et al., 2012; Kleinert et al., 2012).

Intellectual disability (ID): as a disability characterized by significant limitations to intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior (American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, 2015).

Mixed program: a postsecondary education program designed to allow both inclusive participation in regular coursework and campus activities as well as classes specifically designed for students with intellectual disabilities (Grigal et al., 2012a; Kleinert et al., 2012).

Stand alone, or separate program: a postsecondary education program offering classes on a college or university campus. However, classes are aimed solely for students with intellectual disabilities (Grigal et al., 2012c; Kleinert et al., 2012).

Transition Planning: a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process which promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment

including supported employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living or community participation (IDEA, 1998, Section 602).

Transition and postsecondary program for students with intellectual disabilities (TPSID): twenty-seven postsecondary education programs that were grant funded through HEOA with the assistance of Think College (Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008)

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA): law passed July 2014 to ensure those with barriers to employment have access to resources such as education and training (USDOL, 2014).

Research Questions

Through funding from the National Institute on Disability Rehabilitation and Research, Think College developed standards, benchmarks, and quality indicators for postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities (Grigal et al., 2012b). The standards align with requirements of the HEOA framework. Four of the standards: (a) integration with college systems and practices, (b) coordination and collaboration, (c) sustainability, and (d) ongoing evaluation, relate to program infrastructure and have been utilized to develop research question one. The remaining four cornerstone standards: (a) inclusive academic access, (b) self-determination, (c) campus membership, and (d) career development, were used to develop the remaining five research questions that guided the study.

1. What are the characteristics of education options for students with intellectual disabilities within Florida public universities and colleges?
2. How do education options vary in model design, funding, and approach within Florida public universities and colleges?
3. To what extent do Florida public universities and colleges provide accommodations and supports to students with intellectual disabilities?
4. To what extent do Florida public universities and colleges facilitate the development and promotion of self-determination in students with intellectual disabilities?
5. To what extent do Florida public universities and colleges facilitate participation in campus wide activities with typically developing peers?
6. To what extent are students with intellectual disabilities involved with employment activities while enrolled in Florida public universities and colleges?

Conceptual Framework

Prior to the 1975 passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142), students with intellectual disabilities were not guaranteed a public education. At the time, no documented students with intellectual disabilities were attending postsecondary education in an inclusive setting (Kleinert et al., 2012). The Education for All Handicapped Children Act gave persons with intellectual disabilities the rights to free and appropriate public education (FAPE; Grigal et al., 2012b). Prior to

1975, the educational needs of students with intellectual disabilities were primarily served in separate day schools (Grigal, Hart, & Lewis, 2012).

In 1990 the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA; PL 101-476) replaced the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. IDEA required students with disabilities, including students with intellectual disabilities, to be educated in the least restrictive environment possible, including classroom settings with nondisabled peers. Additionally, the legislation required transition planning for students with all types of disabilities (Hardin & Hardin, 2002). Under IDEA (1990), transition planning was defined as,

> a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process which promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment including supported employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living or community participation. (p.3)

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects the rights of people with disabilities to participate in and benefit from programs that are federally funded (Grigal, Hart, & Weir, 2013). All universities and colleges receiving federal funding are required to comply with Section 504 (Grigal, Hart, & Weir, 2013). (Katsiyannis, Zhang, Landmark, & Reber, 2009).

In the 40 years since the passage of The Rehabilitation Act and other special education mandates (see Table 1), a growing number of students with intellectual disabilities have sought access to postsecondary educational programs. Many of these students have attended secondary school in an inclusive setting and desired an inclusive

college experience as well (Hart et al., 2006). Responding to the need, lawmakers passed or amended laws to provide students with intellectual disabilities opportunities to further their education through inclusive postsecondary programs (McEathron, Beuhring, Maynard, & Mavis, 2013).

Table 1

Timeline of Special Education Law

Development of Federal Special Education Mandates and Laws	Year
The Rehabilitation Act	1973
Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA)	1975
Americans with Disabilities Act	1990
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	1990
Higher Education Opportunity Act	2008
Workforce Innovative Opportunity Act	2014

When the federal government reauthorized HEOA in 2008, state universities and colleges responded by creating programs specifically designed for students with intellectual disabilities. McEathron et al. (2013) noted the newly acquired access to educational programs allowed students with intellectual disabilities to attend classes and participate in campus events similar to that of their typically developing peers.

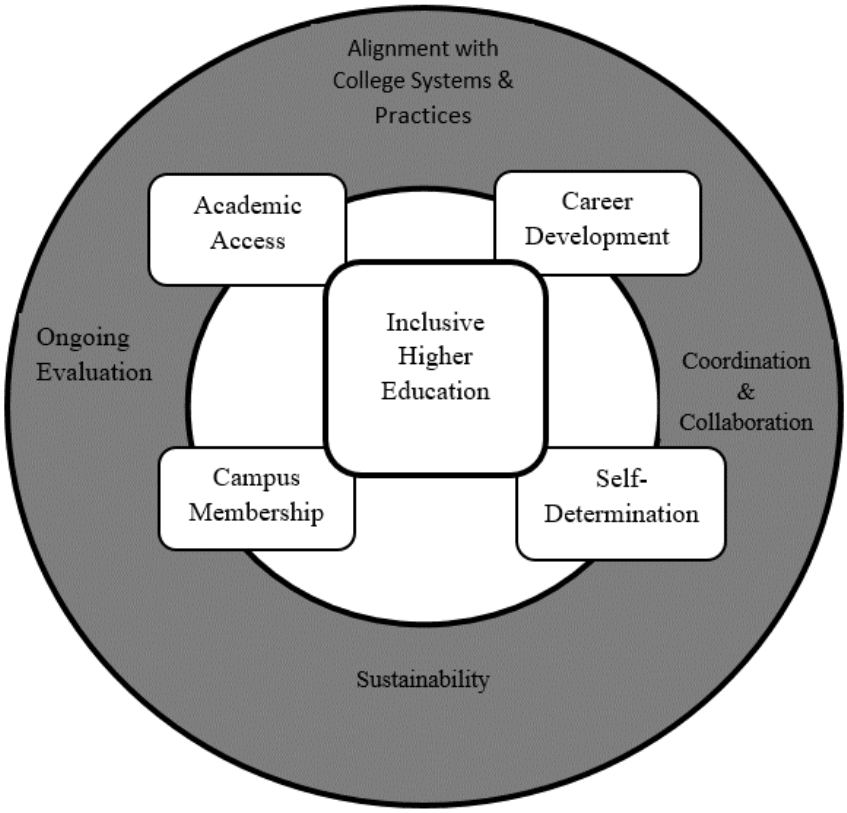
Section 760, Part D, Title Seven of HEOA required the development of comprehensive transition programs (CTP) and postsecondary education programs (PSE) for student with intellectual disabilitie (HEOA, 2008). Postsecondary education programs vary across states and institutions of higher education (Hart et al., 2006). Though designed differently, three common types of programs exist: stand alone,

integrated, and mixed programs (Grigal & Hart, 2010; Hart et al., 2006; Kleinert et al., 2012).

Funding for the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts, known as Think College, was also provided under HEOA (Kleinert et al., 2012). The purpose of Think College was to act as a coordinating and collaborative center for stakeholders to share best practices in inclusive postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities (Grigal & Hart, 2010). As the coordinating center, Think College, through a Delphi process, created a standards-based conceptual framework to assist institutions in developing and evaluating postsecondary education programs for students with intellectual disabilities, and to guide researchers studying the field (Grigal, Hart, & Weir, 2011). The framework includes eight standards, in addition to quality indicators, and benchmarks which provide a basis for planning, implementing and assessing programs (Grigal et al., 2011). Grigal et al. (2012b) noted four cornerstone standards which align with the definition of a comprehensive postsecondary and transition program as defined in HEOA: (a) academic access, (b) self-determination, (c) campus membership, and (d) career development. Grigal et al. (2012b) further noted the remaining four standards: (a) integration with college systems and practices, (b) coordination and collaboration, (c) sustainability, and (d) ongoing evaluation, represent interdependent elements of service or programmatic infrastructure necessary for the four cornerstone standards to occur (p. 6).

Figure 1

Think College Standards-Based Conceptual Framework (Grigal et al., 2012b).



Academic Access

In 2001, Nuebert and Moon noted in their literature review students with intellectual disabilities benefited from continued education past the age of 22. Furthermore, students with intellectual disabilities who participate in postsecondary educational programs earn higher wage when employed (Grigal & Dwyre, 2010).

Self-determination

Adjusting to college can be difficult for all students; even more so for students with intellectual disabilities (Kleinert, et al., 2012). Students with intellectual disabilities must be prepared to disclose their disability, understand how to access accommodations and supports within the college, and learn to navigate around campus. All of these required skills are essential elements of self-determination (Getzel, & Thoma, 2008). Getzel and Thoma (2008) define self-determination as the ability to advocate for what you need, understand one's disability and how it impacts learning, have self-confidence, be independent, and adjust personal schedules to ensure success (p. 79). Students with intellectual disabilities need self-determination skills to successfully transition to, adjust to, and remain in college (Getzel, & Thoma, 2008, p. 78).

Campus Membership

In a recent survey of stakeholders, when asked the most important components of postsecondary education program, respondents cited a college experience that included activities with students without disabilities (Benito, 2012). Empirical findings suggest that inclusive postsecondary education may have positive outcomes on students with and without disabilities (Novak, Feyes, & Christensen, 2011)

Career Development

Both the state and federal government recognize paid employment as a primary goal for improving the quality of lives for persons with intellectual disabilities

(Siperstein, Parker, & Drascher, 2013, p. 157). Postsecondary data indicate that with no additional formal education, students with intellectual disabilities are employed at less than half the rate of those of without a disability (Siperstein et al., 2013).

Changes in legislation in the past several years have led to expanding programs for students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education (Jones et al., 2015). As programs develop nationwide, they vary in type and practice (Lee, 2009). To assist institutions of higher education with these changes, Think College developed a framework for inclusive postsecondary education with standards, benchmarks and quality indicators (Grigal, Hart, & Weir, 2012). The framework is designed to guide institutions and researchers as they evaluate the current state of inclusive postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities (Grigal, Hart & Weir, 2012).

Methodology

This study benefited from a previous national study conducted by researchers at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. The previous study by Grigal Hart and Weir (2012) presented findings from a 2009 survey of postsecondary education programs across the United States (Grigal, Hart, & Weir, 2012). Validation, procedures, and findings from the survey have been published. Permission to use Grigal, Hart, and Weir's (2012) survey as a resource in the development of the survey in this research was obtained (Appendix B).

Participants

Within the state of Florida, there are 12 public universities and 28 state colleges (State University System of Florida Board of Governors [SUSF BOG], 2015; Florida Department of Education [FDOE], 2015). The number of institutions surveyed was small (n=40), therefore the survey was distributed to all Florida public university and colleges. Invitation emails were sent to the designees at each of the 12 Florida public universities and 28 Florida colleges. If designees could not be located through Florida Department of Education Disability Support Services Website or the State University System website, designees were found by directly contacting the office that serves students with disabilities at each institution via email. Each institution maintains contact information for the office that supports students with disabilities on their institution website.

Contact information for the researcher was provided in the explanatory survey cover letter should participants have questions, concerns, or additional information that need to be addressed prior to completion of the electronic survey.

Instrumentation

A quantitative method was utilized in conducting this study. Data from study was gathered through the administration of an Internet based survey, *A Survey of Postsecondary Education Options for Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Florida* (Appendix C) which was developed by the researcher. The survey was adapted from standards of the Think College Evaluation Tool: academic access, career development, campus membership, and self-determination. The survey was designed to describe the current state of postsecondary education options for students with intellectual disabilities

in public universities and colleges within the state of Florida and included program characteristics (Grigal, Hart, & Weir, 2012). Prior to the study, the survey was reviewed by a university professor with expertise in educational research and survey methodology to refine items and provide content validity. The survey was further reviewed by a panel of nine professionals knowledgeable in survey construction. Feedback from the panel led to further question refinement, editing prior to finalization of the electronic survey.

The survey consisted of 26 questions organized into five constructs: program characteristics, academic access, self-determination, career development, and campus access. Survey item one I give my informed consent to participate in this survey used a forced choice design with yes/no response option. Survey item two Does your institution currently have a program for students with intellectual disabilities" used a forced choice design with yes/no response option. If respondents answered "no" there was a contingent item "Does your institution have plans to create a program for students with intellectual disabilities" which used forced choice design with yes/no response option. Survey item three "Is your program a substantially separate program, a mixed program, or a fully inclusive program" used forced choice design with three options to select. Survey item four "How many students with intellectual disabilities are currently enrolled in your postsecondary education program" used forced choice design with the following range: 1-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12, 13-15, 16-18, 19-21, and more than 21. Survey item five "Which of the following statements best describes the supports in place for students with intellectual disabilities while enrolled in regular credit classes" used forced choice design with three

options a) there is a designated program to support students with intellectual disabilities, b) the office serving students with disabilities provide supports for students with intellectual disabilities in regular classes, c) other. Survey item six "How long has the program been in existence" used force choice design with the following range: 0-1, 2-4, 5-7, 8-10, more than 10 years response options. Survey item seven "Which accommodations are available to students with intellectual disabilities" used forced choice design with eleven options: accessible text, alternative format, advance material, ereader, laptop, peer notetaker, professor notes, priority seating, read/write software, spell/grammar check, screen reader. Survey item eight is a qualitative open ended item "During school year 2014-2015 what is the total funding amount for serving students with intellectual disabilities." Survey item 9 through question 26 asked respondents to report the extent to which they agree with provided statements on postsecondary experiences of students with intellectual disabilities and the institutions attended using the following Likert-type response scale, 1= strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, and 4= strongly agree. Additionally, two response choices, "don't know" and "Not Applicable," were included, off-scale, to provide an exhaustive list of response choices for each survey item (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). One qualitative open ended item asked participants to share additional information about students with intellectual disabilities attending colleges and universities in Florida.

Data Collection

The required permission was granted for research involving human subjects from the required Institutional Review Board (Appendix D). Following obtaining informed consent (Appendix E), each respondent completed the electronic survey. The survey was sent to each respondent via a link in an email sent to them by the researcher.

Procedures

The *Survey of Postsecondary Education Options for Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Florida* (Appendix C) was distributed electronically to a designee at each public university and college in the state of Florida. Internet based surveys have become common due to the low cost and efficiency in gathering and analyzing data (Dillman et. al, 2009). The designee was determined by searching for the email address of the Director or Department head of the Office for Students with Disabilities or similarly titled office at each public university and college in Florida. Contact information for state colleges was obtained through an Internet search of the Florida Department of Education Disability Support Services website. The Florida Department of Education Disability Support Services maintains a database of contact information for offices serving students with disabilities at each public college in Florida. The State University System of Florida, Board of Governors maintains similar information on their webpage, which was used to obtain contact information for state university designees. Participants received an email invitation to participate in the online survey with a unique link to the survey. A follow-up email reminder was sent after two weeks thanking those who

completed the survey, and asking those who have not to do so. In order to prevent coverage error, a survey request email was sent to the next level administrator if request to complete survey had not been responded by original email request. A final email reminder was sent two weeks later. If coverage email was necessary, both email addresses were sent a final email reminder. Two weeks following the final reminder email, the electronic survey was closed and the data analyzed.

The Internet was considered the most viable mode for administering the survey since the cost of administering, distributing, and maintaining is less than that of other survey modes (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). Previous national online surveys of postsecondary programs yielded a return rate of 67% (Grigal, Hart, & Weir, 2012). Participants were asked to complete the confidential survey online utilizing an electronic survey program called Qualtrics ®.

Data Analysis

Data collected from the completed surveys was analyzed utilizing the software program Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Data was aggregated and neither individual participant's identity nor institutions was identified by the data. Descriptive statistics utilizing frequencies and percentages was utilized to determine program characteristics, and demographics and to answer research questions. Each of the five constructs was measured by the average of the item. Table 2 shows the alignment between research questions, sources of data, construct, and the statistical analysis used to analyze the data.

Table 2

Research Questions, Data Source, Construct, and Statistical Analysis

	Research Questions	Data Source Survey Item Number	Construct	Statistical Analysis
1.	What are the characteristics of postsecondary education options for students with intellectual disabilities?	1, 2, 4, 19	Program Characteristics	Descriptive Statistics
2.	How do options vary in model design, funding options and approaches?	3, 5, 7 20, 21, 22, 23, 24,	Program Characteristics	Descriptive Statistics
3.	To what extent does each institution provide accommodations and supports to students with intellectual disabilities?	6 10, 11, 12	Academic Access	Descriptive Statistics
4.	To what extent do Florida SUS and CS facilitate the development and promotion of self-determination in students with intellectual disabilities?	8, 9	Self-determination	Descriptive Statistics
5.	To what extent do Florida SUS and CS institutions facilitate participation in campus wide activities with typically developing peers?	16, 17, 18	Campus Membership	Descriptive Statistics
6.	To what extent are students with intellectual disabilities involved with employment activities while enrolled in postsecondary education program?	13, 14, 15	Career Development	Descriptive Statistics

Limitations

There were several limitations to the study. The population was limited and restricted to public institutions of higher education in Florida. Further, participation in the study was voluntary and limited the response rate, the information gathered and overall return rate. Data collected was limited to that which could be gathered during Spring 2016. The survey data collected and analyzed in the study was based on reports from

listed designees of programs for students with intellectual disabilities at each university and college.

Delimitations

The programs studied were delimited to the 40 public institutions of higher education in the Florida State System. Programs at Florida private colleges were not studied. The boundaries of the study preclude the ability to make generalized statements about programs for students with intellectual disabilities in other states or in private institutions.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were important to consider when interpreting the results of the current study:

1. It was assumed respondents participating in the survey were knowledgeable concerning the program for students with intellectual disabilities at each state university or colleges.
2. It was assumed respondents shared honest and accurate information about their knowledge concerning their institution's program for students with intellectual disabilities.

Significance of the Study

Legislation over the past several years has resulted in a growing number of students with intellectual disabilities seeking access to public universities and colleges alongside typically developing peers (Grigal, & Hart, 2010). In order for students with intellectual disabilities to secure federal student aid and the institution to obtain recognition as having a comprehensive transition program (CPT) or a transition and postsecondary program for students with intellectual disabilities (TPSID), the institution must collaborate with Think College, which recently released standards, benchmarks, and quality indicators to guide postsecondary institutions in their practice.

Through analysis of data and consideration of subsequent findings, the present study provided a profile of the current state of practice of postsecondary education programs available within the Florida State University and College Systems. The profile utilized Think College standards, benchmarks, and quality indicators as well as the mandates of HEOA 2008. In addition, the study provided information that could assist program developers in the process of creating a program for students with intellectual disabilities. Finally, details highlighted in the study could be valuable to others when implementing new programs or to students with intellectual disabilities seeking admittance to one.

Organization of the Study

This research study has been organized into five chapters. The first chapter is the introductory chapter, including the background of the study, the statement of the problem, significance of the study, research questions, limitations, delimitations, and

assumptions of the study. The methods and procedures used to conduct the study have also been described.

The second chapter of the study presents a review of literature which includes the legislative and litigious history of the education of students with intellectual disabilities, transition education for students with intellectual disabilities and currents standards in place for postsecondary education programs. Chapter three will describe the methodology utilized in this research study including the participants, instrumentation, data collection and analysis procedures.

Chapter four will present the results of the data analysis and findings for each of the six research questions. Chapter five will provide a summary of the findings from the study and include a discussion of the implications for policy and practice and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

In this chapter, relevant research and literature focused on postsecondary education of students with intellectual disabilities are reviewed. To date of this writing, limited research had been conducted and a dearth of literature exists on postsecondary education options for students with intellectual disabilities. The research found in this literature review was gathered from several online research databases. Databases utilized to complete the review of literature included: EBSCO Host, ERIC, Web of Science, ProQuest and PsychInfo. Online databases were searched using key terms: postsecondary education, intellectual disabilities, and college student. Although these searches did not result in many articles, the articles found were in peer reviewed journals such as *Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities, Exceptionality: A Research Journal on Special Education, and International Journal on Inclusive Education.*

Grigal et al., (2011) found students with intellectual disabilities who participated in postsecondary education increased their academic and personal skills, their competitive employment skills as well as increased students' self-advocacy and self-determination skills. Prior to the Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1973, very few students with intellectual disabilities were attending public schools in the United States (Dudley-Marling & Burns, 2014). Students with intellectual disabilities attending school in 2016 have more prospects for successful transition to postsecondary education

and increased opportunities for competitive employment than students one or two generations ahead of them (Smith & Benito, 2011).

The literature review begins with early inclusion rulings for students with intellectual disabilities. This section provides a historical examination of educating students with intellectual disabilities in the United States, including relevant legislation. This provides the reader relevant background knowledge on the evolution of postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities from its beginning and how legislation effected placement of students. Following that, milestone litigation regarding inclusive practices will be discussed. Throughout the research numerous cases were repetitively referenced by researchers. These cases and their impact on inclusive education will be explored. Each of these cases helped open the doors to postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities. The final section of the literature review will explore current postsecondary education options for students with intellectual disabilities.

Historical Legislation Relating to Educating Students with Intellectual Disabilities

Following the civil rights movement of the 1960s, advocates of students with intellectual disabilities were prompted to challenge the rights of another group of discarded students, those with disabilities (Gordon, 2006). After the success of *Brown versus the Board of Education,* advocates began to vocalize their point that separate classrooms and separate schools were not equal for all students (Gordon, 2006). Advocates felt the schools and classrooms were substandard and inadequate for students

with intellectual disabilities (Gordon, 2006). As the general public became involved in the advocacy movement for students with intellectual disabilities the federal government began to notice as well. Several key pieces of legislation as well as numerous court cases were all filed during this time frame (Keogh, 2007; Gordon, 2006).

Preparation of Teachers of Mentally Retarded and Other Handicapped Children Act of 1963

Section 302 of P.L. 88-164 established the Division of Handicapped Children and Youth within the Department of Education. Further, it expanded opportunities for training of professionals who work with disabled youth. The law also provided funding to universities to conduct research to prevent disabilities through biomedical and behavioral research (Osgood, 2005). The law was signed by President John F. Kennedy on October 23, 1963 based on recommendation by his Presidents Panel on Mental Retardation (Osgood, 2005). President Kennedy formed the panel to "consider a national approach to prevention and management of mental retardation" and was part of his "New Frontier" plan (Osgood, 2005, p. 67).

Section 504 Of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 also known as Public Law 93-113 protects the rights of people with disabilities to participate in and benefit from programs that are federally funded (Grigal, Hart, & Weir, 2013). The Rehabilitation Act (1973) also prohibits any agency or program funded through federal dollars to discriminate

based on disability. All universities and colleges receiving federal funding are required to comply with Section 504 (Grigal, Hart, & Weir, 2013). In regards to postsecondary education, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act specifically mandated: (a) access to facilities and activities (b) admission policies and practices that do not discriminate based on disability (c) assessment procedures with accommodations and (d) provisions of auxiliary aids and services (Rehabilitation Act, 1973). The Rehabilitation Act is what gave students with disabilities equal educational opportunities in postsecondary environments. The Rehabilitation Act mandated institutions of higher education begin to provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, but not compromise the integrity of programs (Grigal, Hart & Weir, 2013). A person who feels they have been discriminated against must file a complaint through the Office of Civil Rights (Grigal, Hart, & Weir, 2013). While postsecondary institutions have been required to provide access to students with intellectual disabilities since the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, yet in 2006 there were less than 1% of postsecondary institutions offering programs in the United States (Plottner & Marshall, 2014).

The Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975

Until the Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, children with disabilities were not guaranteed a public education (EACA; PL 94-142). In fact, prior to the enactment of PL 94-142 only one in five students with disabilities, including intellectual disabilities, were educated in the public school system (Dudley-Marling &

Burns, 2014). When the Education of All Handicapped Children Act passed over one million students were being excluded from public education because someone had determined they were uneducable. At the time, no documented students with intellectual disabilities were attending postsecondary education in an inclusive setting (Kleinert et al., 2012). The Education for All Handicapped Children Act gave persons with disabilities, including intellectual disabilities the right to free and appropriate public education (FAPE; Grigal et al., 2012b). Prior to 1975, the educational needs of students with intellectual disabilities were primarily served in separate day schools or in facilities (Grigal, Hart, & Lewis, 2012).

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

Considered to be the first comprehensive law written to protect people with disabilities, the Americans with Disabilities Act was introduced by Senator Harkin in 1990 and signed into law by President George W. Bush on July 26, 1990 (Whyte, 2015). The Americans with Disabilities Act was groundbreaking legislation at the time (Whyte, 2015). Until then, an employer could be put up a sign reading "people with disabilities cannot work here," and the sign would be legal and allowable under law (Whyte, 2015). According to Whyte (2015) most of the contention regarding the bill was whether businesses would have the burden of the expense to make everything accessible for all employees or if they were could wait to retro fit everything or even continue to not hire persons with disabilities due to the cost of compliance (Whyte, 2015).

Individual with Disabilities Education Act of 1990

In 1990 The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 was reauthorized and renamed as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA PL 101-476; Gordon, 2006). IDEA includes several fundamental conditions that have been a traditional focus of educating students with disabilities, including students with intellectual disabilities: (1) a free appropriate public education, (2) an individualized education program for each student, and (3) an education in the least restrictive environment (Gordon, 2006). The least restrictive environment means if a student is capable of being in classes with typically developing peers or general education classes, then that is where they should be placed (Gordon, 2006).

Additionally, the legislation required transition planning for students with disabilities, including students with intellectual disabilities (Hardin & Hardin, 2002). Under IDEA (1990), transition planning was defined as, a coordinated set of activities for a student, designed within an outcome-oriented process which promotes movement from school to post-school activities, including postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated employment including supported employment, continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living or community participation (p.3).

The Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992

In 1992 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act was amended. Included in the amendment (PL 102-569) state “disability is a natural part of the human experience and

in no way diminishes the civil rights of individuals". The amended Rehabilitation Act including specific mandates for institutions of higher education and financial implications for non-compliance. Institutions of higher educations must provide reasonable accommodations to all students with disabilities who self-identify, seek assessment and evaluation to verify disability, and seek reasonable accommodations. Institutions that are federally funded could potentially risk financial recourse for compliance violations (Stodden et al., 2002).

The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008

Public Law 110-315, known as the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) was signed into law on August 14, 2008 by President George W. Bush (Higher Education Opportunity Act, 2008; Lee, 2009; Grigal & Hart, 2010). The HEOA reauthorized the Higher Education Act (HEA) of 1965 and included several elements related to postsecondary education of students with intellectual disabilities (Higher Education Opportunity Act, 2008; Lee, 2009; Grigal & Hart, 2010). HEOA Title VII Section 760 Part D of the Act is designed to support students with intellectual disabilities who desire to continue their education at an institute of higher education so they may continue their education and prepare for gainful employment (Higher Education Opportunity Act, 2008; Lee, 2009; Grigal & Hart, 2010).

HEOA also provides funding for intuitions of higher education to develop programs for students with intellectual disabilities called transition and postsecondary

programs for students with intellectual disabilities or TPSIDs (Higher Education Opportunity Act, 2008; Lee, 2009; Grigal & Hart, 2010; Parent-Johnson et al., 2014). As described in the HEOA, (2008) the purpose in creating programs so that: students with intellectual disabilities seek to continue academic enrichment, socialization, independent living skills, and career experiences that will lead to gainful employment. In 2010, 27 TPSID grants were awarded nationally to grantees (Parent-Johnson et al., 2014).

For most colleges and universities, this means students with intellectual disabilities who were traditionally served in postsecondary education programs through their local school districts were now eligible for enrollment in state university and college systems in an inclusive setting (Parent-Johnson et al., 2014). As a result, students with intellectual disabilities have begun to pursue enrollment into universities with programs designed especially for their unique needs (Klinert, Jones, Sheppard-Jones, Harp & Harrision, 2012).

The HEOA of 2008 also created a national coordinating center for all projects relating to students with intellectual disabilities going to universities and colleges in the United States (Grigal & Hart, 2010). The national coordinating center, called Think College, is housed at the University of Massachusetts Boston (Grigal & Hart, 2010). Think College conducts program evaluations and collects information regarding current programs and best practices in academic, social, employment, and independent living components for postsecondary institutions providing services to students with intellectual disabilities (Grigal & Hart, 2010).

Workforce Innovative Opportunity Act

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (2014) was enacted to ensure students with intellectual disabilities continue to receive postsecondary education and to assist workers, including those with barriers to employment "access employment, education, training, and support services" (U.S. Department of Labor [USDOL], 2014, p. 1). WIOA legislation included recommendations to assist states with inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in workforce services and career and technical education programs (USDOL, 2014).

Under WIOA, students with disabilities, including students with intellectual disabilities, qualify for expanded career and technical education beyond age 22, when eligibility for traditional educational support services expire (USDOL, 2014). Historically, once students with intellectual disabilities became ineligible for support services through local school districts, few options for furthering their education or gaining employment were available (Harkin, 2013). Under WOIA, students with intellectual disabilities are afforded additional opportunities to attend postsecondary institutions to acquire the 21st century skills vital to enter and remain competitive in the workforce until they are 24 years old (USDOE, 2014). The "primary focus [of WIOA] is to assist job seekers that will benefit from education, skills training, employment and support services" (USDOL, 2014, p. 1).

In the 40 years since the passage of The Rehabilitation Act of 1970 and other special education mandates, a growing number of students with intellectual disabilities

have sought access to postsecondary educational programs. Many of these students have attended secondary school in an inclusive setting and desired an inclusive college experience as well (Hart et al., 2006). Responding to the need, lawmakers passed or amended laws to provide students with intellectual disabilities opportunities to further their education beyond secondary school now be included in postsecondary programs at colleges and universities as well as other postsecondary settings (McEathron, Beuhring, Maynard, & Mavis, 2013).

Historical Litigation Relating to Students with Intellectual Disabilities

At the same time legislation was written and passed, a number of law suits were filed on behalf of students with disabilities, including students with intellectual disabilties. Several legal challenges were fought to ensure children with disabilities, including intellectual disabilities, were given equal access to public education as their typically developing peers (Keogh, 2007). Referenced below are only a sample of special education court cases considered to be landmark cases (Keogh, 2007).

Pennsylvania Association for Retard Children (PARC) v. State of Pennsylvania

One such case occurred in 1972 with *PARC versus Pennsylvania.* Originally filed as a class action lawsuit, the Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (PARC) sued the state of Pennsylvania stating the state was not providing equal access to a free and appropriate public education which was constitutionally guaranteed to all students

regardless of their ability level through the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment (Keogh, 2007). The case was filed in January of 1971. At that time, current data showed a total of 46,00 students with intellectual disabilities were being educated in the Pennsylvania school system because they did meet the requirements to be considered educable (Keogh, 2007). However, another 70,000 to 80,000 were not receiving any kinds of educational services, therapeutic services, or social skills services at all because they did not meet Pennsylvania's strict guidelines for "educationally mentally retarded" (Keogh, 2007). The case was settled in 1972 when representatives for both parties filed a consent decree for many sections of the law suit and the Eastern District Federal Court settled the remaining claims in the law suit (Keogh, 2007).

Mills v. Board of Education of District of Columbia

Another case prior to the 1975 passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (Public Law 94-142), was *Mills versus the Board of Education.* The *Mills* case was a civil law suit brought against the District of Columbia by Peter Mills on behalf of himself and seven other African American intellectually disabled students (Mills v. Board of Ed, 1972). The students claimed their right to public education was being denied because they were told to stay home. The Board of Education advised their parents the students were unable to be educated due to the severity of their cognitive disabilities (Mills v. Board of Ed., 1972). The students and their parents argued the students could benefit from education and the students were being label as behavior

problems and “mentally retarded” without due process or a hearing of any type (Mills v. Board of Ed., 1972). The District court found in favor of the students and stated free and appropriate public education for all students regardless of disabilities was the responsibility of the school district, “regardless of the need, or cost” (Mills v. Board of Ed., 1972).

Battle v. Pennsylvania

In *Battle v. Pennsylvania* a federal court decided the school district was responsible for providing educational programs beyond the regular school year for students with intellectual disabilities qualifying for the program (Battle v. Pennsylvania, 1980). The court reasoned “at the center of the controversy ….is the definition of free and appropriate public education.” The court determined students with intellectual disabilities did suffer regression over the summer due to many factors including: teacher incompetence, parental failure, lack of functionality skill taught (Battle v. Pennsylvania, 1980). The court believed that all these factors led to regression but it was the responsibility of the school district to provide the education supports to ensure the regression did not occur. During the students’ annual individualized education plan meeting, the students’ teacher needs to provide data demonstrating a need for an extended school year, in order to prevent summer learning loss. Parents can accept or decline at that time (Battle v. Pennsylvania, 1980).

Board of Education of Hendrick Hudson School District v. Rowley

The first special education case to be heard by the Supreme Court of the United State Supreme Court was Board of Education of Hendrick Hudson School District versus Rowley (Yell, Katsiyannis, & Hazelkorn, 2007). The Rowley case involved an elementary student with hearing impairments and whether or not she needs the services of an interpreter. Amy Rowley, a first grader and her parents felt she would benefit from having a sign language interpreter with her at school throughout the day.

At first, the school provided one, but later decided against it (Bd. Ed. Hendrick Hudson Sch. Dist. v. Rowley, 458 U.S. 176, 1982). The school district alleged the student was an exemplary student, had no academic concerns, and was even ahead academically of many of her typically developing peers (Bd. Ed. Hendrick Hudson Sch. Dist. v. Rowley, 458 U.S. 176, 1982). The District felt it was unnecessary for the student to have an interpreter since the student was already successful (Yell, Katsiyannis, & Hazelkorn, 2007). The parents took the school district through due process procedures and lost (Yell, Katsiyannis, & Hazelkorn, 2007). The parents continued to battle and won both the U.S. court and later in the Court of Appeals. The school district appealed to the Supreme Court and won (Yell, Katsiyannis, & Hazelkorn, 2007). Justice Rehnquist, who wrote the opinion, stated according to the Education for All Handicapped Children Act the school district was providing the student with an appropriate education to meet her potential (Yell, Katsiyannis, & Hazelkorn, 2007). The student was successful in classes with the supports she was given. Therefore, additional supports, in this case a sign

language interpreter were unnecessary (Bd. Ed. Hendrick Sch. Dist. V. Rowley, 1982). Chief Justice Burger as well as Justices Powell, O'Connell and Stevens agreed with Rehnquist (Yell, Katsiyannis, & Hazelkorn, 2007). Judges White, Brennan and Marshall all dissented believing Congress intended for Free and Appropriate Education (FAPE) to "provide personalized instruction with sufficient support for a child with a disability to benefit educationally (Yell, Katsiyannis, & Hazelkorn, 2007, p. 5).

Table 3

Timeline of Special Education Court Decisions

Special Education Litigation	Year
Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Children (PARC) v. State of Pennsylvania	1972
Mills versus Board of Education of District of Columbia	1972
Battle versus Pennsylvania	1980
Board of Education of Hendrick Hudson School District versus Rowley	1982

Postsecondary Education Options for Students with Intellectual Disabilities

When the federal government reauthorized HEOA in 2008, it was to prepare for the number of students with intellectual disabilities and other developmental disabilities who will need postsecondary education (HEOA, 2008). State universities and colleges responded by creating programs specifically designed for students with intellectual disabilities. McEathron et al. (2013) noted the newly acquired access to educational programs allowed students with intellectual disabilities the ability to attend classes and participate in campus events similar to that of their typically developing peers.

In 2009 The National Institution on Disability and Rehabilitation Research along with the Office of Postsecondary Education held a State of the Science Conference on Postsecondary Education for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (McEathron et al., 2011). The conference was attended by researchers, professionals and advocates from the field of postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities to discuss the current state of the field and make recommendations to guide research (McEathron et

al., 2011). The outcome of the conference proceedings revealed limited research exists on program characteristics, program participants, and program outcomes for students with intellectual disabilities participating in programs and attending colleges and universities across the United States (State of Science Proceedings, 2009).

The first postsecondary education programs for students with intellectual disabilities on college campuses were created in the 1970s (Grigal, Neubert, & Moon, 2002). What started out as only a handful of programs at small schools, has turned into almost 200 programs at various postsecondary education sites today (Papay & Griffin, 2013). Though postsecondary programs themselves have been in existence since the 1970s there continues to be a dearth of research or literature on the subject of postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities (Hart et al., 2010).

To date there have been just two complete literature reviews published on the subject of postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities (McEathron, Beuhring, Maynard, and Mavis 2011). Neubert, Moon, Grigal, and Redd (2001) published the first literature review on postsecondary education practices in the United States for students with intellectual disabilities. Neubert et al., explored postsecondary, vocational and transition program literature from 1970 through 2001 to "(a) identify a philosophical basis for providing such support, (b) identify practices and (c) summarize the efficacy of these practices" (p.155). The literature review revealed 27 articles discussing postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities. Neubert et al., (2001) concluded there were several gaps in the research literature. While

postsecondary institutions were designing programs according to the needs of their parents, communities and many times through collaboration with the local school district; the programs were being designed and implemented without consistency among institutions nor any guidelines from state or federal education entities (Neubert et al., 2001). The literature review was only able to identify a total of 13 programs for students with intellectual disabilities between 1972 and 2000 (Neubert et al., 2001) Further, with only limited information about programming, the researchers could not draw conclusions regarding efficacy of practices, outcome data on employment, and post-school living data was not obtained from students upon existing/ending participation (Neubert et al., 2001, p. 165). Additionally, little is known regarding the role of postsecondary institutions and their involvement in the design and implementation of programs, the school climate, and due to lack of research (Neubert et al., 2001).

The second review of literature by Thoma, Lakin, Carlson, Domzal, Austin and Boyd, completed in 2010 builds on the previous review of literature by Neubert, Moon, Grigal, and Redd (2001). Researchers sought to determine (a) whether there have been changes in the types of programs offered, (b) whether participating in postsecondary education program results in positive outcomes after program completion and (c) whether there is a difference between type of transition experience (Thoma et al., 2010, p. 178). Researchers studied 24 articles in the review of literature which were mostly descriptive studies collecting program characteristics, implementation information (McEathron et al.,

2011; Neubert et al., 2001; Thoma et al., 2011). Several studies were case studies on specific programs on services provided to students with intellectual disabilities.

Results of the second literature review provide similar evidence as the first literature review. While postsecondary education institutions are providing programs for students with intellectual disabilities, there are no consistencies across programs (Thoma et al., 2010). Progress has been made in establishing an evidence base for postsecondary education however, there is no taxonomy or program evaluation model considered standard at the time of this writing (Thoma et al., 2010, p.187) Furthermore, limited efforts have been made to "develop and test instrumentation for gathering valid, reliable, and sufficiently comprehensive objective data on the desired outcome of postsecondary education programs" (Thoma, et al., 2010, p.187).

Program Characteristics

Both literature reviews categorize postsecondary education programs for students with intellectual disabilities based on the profile of the students served and the level of inclusion with their peers without disabilities (Neubert et al., 2001; Thoma et al., 2010). In 2009, Think College, the national coordinating center completed a national survey of 254 programs and determined student status as a factor in programming decisions among postsecondary education programs (Grigal et al., 2012a). Additional literature included in this literature review confirms three types of programs prevalent nationally: integrated or inclusive, hybrid/mixed, substantially separate or stand-alone programs (Grigal, 2012a; Grigal, 2012c; Kleinert et al., 2012; May, 2012).

Student Status

One distinction between postsecondary education program types is determined by the students' current status under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Grigal et al., 2012a, p. 224). If a student is currently enrolled in a program through a special education program and is receiving special education services that are federally mandated through IDEA until the student is 22, the student is considered a "dual enrolled" postsecondary education student (Grigal et al., 2012a, p. 224). These postsecondary education programs are often designed and implemented in collaboration with the local school districts (Grigal et al., 2012a; Kleinert et al., 2012).

Another type of postsecondary education student is the adult learner. The adult learner is a student with intellectual disabilities who is over the age of 18 and is not enrolled in K-12 education (Grigal et al., 2012a). Programs for adult learners with intellectual disabilities are primarily provided on college and university campuses (Kleinert et al., 2012). Coursework for students with intellectual disabilities on college and university campuses depends on the specifically designed program type at the institution (Kleinert et al., 2012).

Program Type

Many local school district collaborate with two and four year public and private institutions to offer dual enrollment postsecondary programs to students with intellectual disabilities under IDEA (Grigal et al., 2012a, p. 224). Some postsecondary institutions offer degree programs, some offer on campus living, some offer employment experiences

(Kleinert et al., 2012). All of these programs fall into one of three categories of postsecondary program models: mixed/hybrid, substantially separate, or inclusive individually supported model (Grigal et al., 2012). In a mixed or hybrid program, students with intellectual disabilities participate in social activities, academic activities and resident life and employment activities with nondisabled peers as well as in specifically designed classes to meet their goals (Kleinert et al., 2012, p. 28). Grigal et al (2012) defined a substantially separate or stand-alone program as one where all course work and activities may take place on a postsecondary campus, however the students with intellectual disabilities rarely if ever interact with nondisabled peers. An inclusive or individually supported model can be defined as students with intellectual disabilities receiving services in college courses (Hart, Grigal, Sax, Martinez, & Will, 2006).

Academic Access

Completion of nearly any type of postsecondary education significantly improves an individual's chances of securing competitive employment after college (Causton-Theoharis, Ashby, & DeClouette, p. 2) Yet 8 years ago 6% of youth with disabilities were enrolled in any four year college or university compared to 28% of their nondisabled peers (Carroll, Blumberg, & Petroff, 2008). Since 2008 and the Higher Education Opportunity Act, students with intellectual disabilities were provided greater access to academic courses on campuses, but there are not specific certificate programs where students with intellectual disabilities can leave college with a degree or specific certificate (Thoma, 2015; Carroll et al., 2008).

Postsecondary education students with intellectual disabilities should be provided a wide array of college course types that are attended by students without disabilities (Grigal, Hart, & Weir, 2011). In its guidance on implementation of comprehensive transition and postsecondary programs the Higher Education Opportunity Act mandated a minimum of 50% of program time must be composed of access to academic courses populated by students without an intellectual disability (HEOA, 2008). With this in mind, students with intellectual disabilities should enroll in noncredit classes, or audit classes based on their ability, preference and goals. If feasible the student should have access to enroll in credit bearing courses offered by the institution when the courses are aligned the student's goals (Grigal et al., 2011).

Self-Determination

Students with intellectual disabilities need self-determination skills to successfully transition to, adjust to, and remain in college (Getzel, 2008; Thoma, 2008, p. 78). Self-determination became a significant part of transitions services and therefore part of postsecondary education when it was included in the Rehabilitation Act of 1992 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1997 (Getzel, 2008) As cited in Geztel (2008) Field and Hoffman (1994) describe self-determination as having the ability to define and achieve goals based on a foundation of knowing and valuing oneself (p. 382). In order for students with intellectual disabilities to continue to develop their self-determination skills, colleges and universities will need to ensure students are involved in establishing goals (Grigl et al., 2011).

Campus Membership

Advocacy for inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities of the benefit of postsecondary education is not limited to just academic access, but access to all aspects of campus life (Papay et al., 2013). For students with intellectual disabilities this means they have the opportunity to participate in extra and/ or co-curricular activities, clubs, and social sporting activities (Papay et al., 2013). Students with intellectual disabilities are for the first time going to college football games as students, and participating in other on campus activities (Papay et al., 2013).

Evidence shows inclusive practices promote social acceptance in students with intellectual disabilities (Izzo & Shuman, 2011). Students with intellectual disabilities participating in inclusive college programs where students were able to audit classes, participate in clubs and social activities that promoted their goals, had a high rate of paid employment after exiting the program (Izzo et al., 2011 p.322). Students without disabilities who were in class, mentored, or involved in any capacity with students with intellectual disabilities on campus had more positive perceptions of students with intellectual disabilities, and were more willing to interact in social settings than students who had no contact with students with intellectual disabilities (Izzo et al., 2011). This suggests including students with intellectual disabilities in an inclusive college experience will lead to better social acceptance and overcoming of stereotypes.

Career Development

A main goal of the Higher Education Opportunity Act is to increase competitive employment opportunities for persons with intellectual disabilities (HEOA, 2008). Postsecondary education programs are facilitating this goal with the development of career and employment skills training throughout postsecondary education programs (Izzo et al, 2011). The Workforce Innovative Opportunity Act further assists students with intellectual disabilities by providing funding for internship experiences (WIOA, 2014).

In 2010, the American Community Survey given by the U.S. Census Bureau to better understand how communities are developing was administered (Smith, Grigal, Sulewski, 2012). The survey included questions regarding students with intellectual disabilities and employment. Findings revealed students with higher education attainment also have higher employment attainment (Smith et al., 2012). Implications are that service providers should consider postsecondary education as they make recommendations to students.

Summary

A child born in the United States in 1992 with intellectual disabilities did not have the same educational experiences as a child born with intellectual disabilities will have today. Changes in legislation in the last twenty years have guaranteed students with intellectual disabilities the rights every other student has: the right to an education in the least restrictive environment (Dudley-Marling & Burns, 2014; Kleinert et al., 2012).

Students attending primary and secondary schools through inclusive models have naturally led them to seek postsecondary education inclusively as well (Grigal et al, 2010). Further changes in the Higher Education Opportunity Act (2008) have led colleges and universities to create and expand programs for students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education (Jones et al., 2015; Kleinert et al., 2012). As programs develop nationwide, they vary in type and practice (Lee, 2009). To assist institutions of higher education with these changes, Think College has developed a framework for inclusive postsecondary education with standards, benchmarks and quality indicators (Grigal, Hart, & Weir, 2012). When used as a guide the framework is designed to guide institutions and researchers as they evaluate the current state of inclusive postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities (Grigal, Hart & Weir, 2012).

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Changes in legislation over the past 50 years have led to greater opportunities for students with disabilities, including students with intellectual disabilities, to attend postsecondary institutions alongside their peers (Christ & Stodden, 2005). "The proportion of first time, full time students with [any type] of disability attending colleges and universities between 1978 and 1994 [have] tripled" (Christ et al., 2005, p. 23).

This researcher sought to better understand postsecondary education options for students with intellectual disabilities at public universities and colleges in Florida. At the time of this study in 2016, changes in federal and state legislation granted funding for postsecondary institutions providing opportunities to students with intellectual disabilities. The timing of such legislation presented a unique opportunity to explore the characteristics, and the current state of postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities in Florida.

Through this study, the researcher anticipated to contribute to the body of knowledge in postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities in Florida. Additionally, the study provided information program developers may find useful when creating postsecondary opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities. The chapter is organized into five sections: (a) research questions (b) selection of participants, (c) instrumentation, (d) data collection, and (e) data analysis.

Research Questions

The following research questions were used to explore postsecondary education options for students with intellectual disabilities in public universities and colleges in Florida:

1. What are the characteristics of education options for students with intellectual disabilities within Florida public universities and colleges?
2. How do education options vary in model design, funding, and approach within Florida public universities and colleges?
3. To what extent do Florida public universities and colleges provide accommodations and supports to students with intellectual disabilities?
4. To what extent do Florida public universities and colleges facilitate the development and promotion of self-determination in students with intellectual disabilities?
5. To what extent do Florida public universities and colleges facilitate participation in campus wide activities with typically developing peers?
6. To what extent are students with intellectual disabilities involved with employment activities while enrolled in Florida public universities and colleges?

Approval to Conduct the Research

After receiving approval to conduct research from the dissertation committee, the researcher submitted to the University of Central Florida's Institutional Review Board

(IRB). On December 22, 2015 the final approval to conduct the research was received (Appendix E) from the IRB Board. The study was approved to be conducted during the Spring of 2016.

Participants

Within the state of Florida, there are 12 public universities and 28 state colleges (State University System of Florida Board of Governors [SUSF BOG], 2015; Florida Department of Education [FDOE], 2015). The number of institutions to be surveyed is small (n = 40) therefore the entire population known as a census will be surveyed.

Instrumentation

Survey of Postsecondary Education Options for Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Florida

Following a review of literature on postsecondary education options for students with intellectual disabilities, the survey instrument was developed. Data for the study was gathered through the administration of an Internet based survey, *A Survey of Postsecondary Education Options for Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Florida* (Appendix C) which was developed by the researcher. The survey was adapted from standards of the Think College Evaluation Tool: academic access, career development, campus membership, and self-determination. The survey was designed to describe the current state of postsecondary education options for students with intellectual disabilities in public universities and colleges within the state of Florida and will include program characteristics (Grigal, Hart, & Weir, 2012). Prior to the study, the survey was reviewed

by a university professor with expertise in educational research and survey methodology to refine items and provide content validity. The survey was further reviewed by a panel of nine professionals knowledgeable in survey construction. Feedback from the panel led to further question refinement, editing prior to finalization of the electronic survey.

Quantitative survey methodology was utilized in conducting this study through the use of data gathered through the administration of an electronic survey using Qualtrics ® Survey Software. The electronic survey *A Survey of Postsecondary Education Options for Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Florida* (Appendix C) was created by the researcher and adapted from standards of the Think College Evaluation Tool: academic access, career development, campus membership, and self-determination (Grigal, Hart, & Weir, 2012). The survey was designed to describe the state of postsecondary education options for students with intellectual disabilities in public universities and colleges within the state of Florida and will include program characteristics. As reported in Christ and Stodden (2005) a study by the National Council on Disability as many as 17% of all students attending postsecondary schools in the United States identify as having some type of disability. In order to meet the needs of these students and meet the needs of new federal legislation for students with intellectual disabilities postsecondary institutions will need to innovate how they provide accommodations while maintaining strict budgets (Christ et al., 2005 p.2). Christ et al., (2005) recommend developing survey constructs when comparing educational supports for students with disabilities in postsecondary education.

The researcher chose survey methodology considering it is a baseline year for data collection from universities and colleges and the body of existing literature on the topic is limited. Christ et al., (2005) report "surveys are most common source of data used to assess how postsecondary institutions provide services to students with disabilities" (p. 24).

Program Characteristics

The Program Characteristic items on the survey presented ten questions related to program design, number of students currently enrolled, how long the program has been in place, whether students qualify for student aid, whether students are given Vocational Rehabilitation information, and questions regarding how the program is funded. The data allowed the researcher to determine characteristics and create a profile of postsecondary education programs for students with intellectual disabilities in Florida as well as determine how postsecondary education options vary in model design, funding opportunities, and approaches.

Academic Access

The second section of the survey asked the respondents to answer six questions as they relate to the academic access of students with intellectual disabilities. In addition, whether students with intellectual disabilities had access to use of technology and educational coaches. The data allowed the researcher to determine the extent to which

each public university or college in Florida provides students with intellectual disabilities accommodation and supports.

Self-Determination

Three questions related to the promotion and development of self-determination are presented in the third part of the survey. These questions were related to public transportation, student choice in directing activities, and student interaction with peers.

Campus Membership

The fourth section of the survey included two questions related to campus membership. The first question asked respondents whether students with intellectual disabilities had "access to volunteer supports such as peer mentors, peer tutors, and campus ambassadors." The next question asked respondents whether students with intellectual disabilities had "access to all campus social programs."

Career Development

The fifth section of the survey presented three items related to career development to respondents. Items relating to access to job coaches, paid work experiences, and unpaid work experiences were queried in order to determine the extent student with intellectual disabilities were involved with employment activities while enrolled in postsecondary education programs.

Survey Design

The survey items were entered into electronic survey program Qualtrics® for dissemination to respondents. Survey item one, "I give my informed consent to participate in this survey," used a forced choice design with yes/no response option. Survey item two, "does your institution currently have a program for students with intellectual disabilities," used a forced choice design with yes/no response option. If respondents answer "no" there was a contingent question, "does your institution have plans to create a program for students with intellectual disabilities," which used forced choice design with yes/no response option. Survey item three, "is your program a substantially separate program, a mixed program, or a fully inclusive program," used forced choice design with three options to select. Survey item four, "how many students with intellectual disabilities are currently enrolled in your postsecondary education program," used forced choice design with the following range: 1-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12, 13-15, 16-18, 19-21, and more than 21. Survey item five, "which of the following statements best describes the supports in place for students with intellectual disabilities while enrolled in regular credit classes," used forced choice design with three options (a) there is a designated program to support students with intellectual disabilities, (b) the office serving students with disabilities provide supports for students with intellectual disabilities in regular classes, and (c) other. Survey item six, "how long has the program been in existence," used force choice design with the following range: 0-1, 2-4, 5-7, 8-10, and more than 10 years response options. Suvey item seven, "which accommodations are

available to students with intellectual disabilities," used a multiple-answer, check-all-that-apply format with eleven options: accessible text, alternative format, advance material, e-reader, laptop, peer note taker, professor notes, priority seating, read/write software, spell/grammar check, screen reader. Survey item eight was qualitative open ended item, "during school year 2014-2015 what is the total funding amount for serving students with intellectual disabilities." Survey items nine through question twenty-six asked respondents to report the extent to which they agree with provided statements on postsecondary experiences of students with intellectual disabilities and the institutions attended using the following Likert-type response scale, 1= strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, and 4= strongly agree. Additionally, two response choices, "don't know" and "Not Applicable," were included, off-scale, to provide an exhaustive list of response choices for each survey item (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). The final survey item was a qualitative open ended item, to allow participants provide "thick, rich, descriptive information" about students with intellectual disabilities attending colleges and universities in Florida (Dillman, et al., 2009, p. 115). Each of the five constructs will be measured by the average of the item

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection for this study were collected from February 17, 2016 through May 17, 2016. The following sections describe the data collection procedure used to collect the qualitative data and the one quantitative item from the electronic survey.

The *Survey of Postsecondary Education Options for Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Florida* (Appendix C) was distributed electronically to a designee at each public university and college in the state of Florida on February 17, 2016. The designee was determined by emailing the office serving students with disabilities at each public university and college in Florida. Contact information for state colleges was obtained through an internet search of the Florida Department of Education Disability Support Services website. The Florida Department of Education Disability Support Services maintains a database of contact information for offices serving students with disabilities at each public college in Florida. The State University System of Florida, Board of Governors maintains similar information on their webpage, which was used to obtain contact information for state university designees. If designees could not be located through online searches, calls to each institution by the researcher were placed to the Office of Students with Disability Services in order to determine the best person to whom to send the email request. Participants received an email invitation to participate in the online survey with a unique link to the survey via their email address.

The survey was distributed to all Florida public university and colleges. Invitation emails were sent to the designees at each of the 12 Florida public universities and 28 Florida colleges. When possible, the names of three individuals were selected from each institution's Office for Students with Disabilities. The first name selected was the head of the department, typically titled Director. The next name selected was Associate Director or comparable title, and finally the third name selected was Office

Manager/Office Coordinator title. The initial email was sent to the first name on the list for the college or university. After two weeks a reminder was sent to those who did not complete the survey. After, two additional weeks later, the second person on the contact sheet was sent an email along with the original contact. In order to prevent coverage error, the additional emails were utilized after two requests to respond to survey were not answered (Dillman et al., 2007).

The Internet was considered the most viable mode for the survey since the cost of administering, distributing, and maintaining is less than that of other survey modes (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). Participants were asked to complete the confidential survey online utilizing the electronic survey program Qualtrics®. All public colleges and universities in Florida were surveyed.

Data Analysis

The research was designed to determine a baseline, provide a program profile, and better understand current programming for students with intellectual disabilities at public universities and colleges in Florida. Data collected from the completed surveys produced data that were categorical and scalar in nature. All responses except one open ended question were analyzed utilizing the software program Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Data were aggregated and neither individual participant's identity nor institutions were identified by the data. The data were coded into two groups SUS for universities and CS for colleges. Each institution was given a corresponding number in random order. For example, SUS1 and CS2, coding was done to ensure the privacy of

each institution (Frankel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2009). The analysis was divided into two sections. The first section utilized categorical variables and descriptive statistics to determine baseline statistics on the scaled variables. The Pearson chi-square value was used to determine whether there were statistically significant differences between colleges and universities in terms of the prevalence of programs for students with intellectual disabilities. Christ et al., (2005) note creating constructs to analyze survey data in postsecondary education create reliability that can be measured. [Creating construct] is vital to understand how much of the supports and accommodations contribute to the success of students with intellectual disabilities in postsecondary education settings as school budgets may or may not be affected by increased enrollment of students with intellectual disabilities (Christ et al., 2005, p. 2). Further, the results are easier to interpret, making implications more useful to practitioners in the field (Christ et al., 2005). The second section analyzed the open ended qualitative question at the end of the survey. There was one qualitative question posed at the end of the survey prompting respondents to "please share anything else you would like the researcher to know about students with intellectual disabilities attending colleges and universities in Florida". Analysis of comments included identifying any themes which may exist

Summary

This chapter restated the purpose of the research and presented the six research questions. The participants were chosen for this study based on all public universities and colleges in Florida. Data collection procedures and analysis methods were discussed.

Results of analysis will be discussed in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore postsecondary education programs for students with intellectual disabilities in public universities and colleges in Florida. The problem this study addresses was the lack of research and program profile information on current programs for students with intellectual disabilities at public universities and colleges in Florida. Due to changes in legislation, universities and colleges are creating programs for these students, but there is a lack of data on the current programs and resources available to students with intellectual disabilities seeking entrance to these programs. This study is to give practitioners, researchers, and students a baseline on the prevalence and types of programs available in Florida.

Qualitative and quantitative results from the electronic survey (*A Survey of Postsecondary Education Options for Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Florida*) were used to complete the study and are presented in this chapter.

Population and Sample

The electronic survey (*A Survey of Postsecondary Education Options for Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Florida*) was emailed to selected representatives at all public universities and colleges in Florida ($N = 40$) for a census on programs in the spring of 2016 for students with intellectual disabilities. Of the 40 potential participant institutions contacted, 19 total responded from 17 different institutions. Two of the

respondents were duplicates of institutions, therefore duplicate answers from the same institution were eliminated. The first recorded response to the survey from each institution was kept, the second survey received was not included in the analysis. Thus the sample size in the study was $N = 17$. Nine of the institutions were public universities, representing 75% of universities within the Florida State University System (SUS). Eight of the institution were Florida public colleges, representing 28.5% of colleges within the Florida College System (CS). Total response rate for the survey was 42%.

Variables

The *Survey of Postsecondary Education Options for Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Florida* collected data on multiple variables. The variables were based on the five constructs of the survey which were the basis of the research questions. The constructs were: program characteristics, campus access, self-determination, campus membership, and career development.

The first construct, program characteristics, consisted of 11 survey items. Four items from the survey were utilized to answer Research Question 1. The remaining seven survey items were utilized to answer Research Question 2. The construct, academic access, consisted of six survey items. All survey items were utilized to answer Research Question 3. Next, the construct self-determination, consisted of three survey items. All three survey items were utilized to answer Research Question 4. Third, the construct, campus membership, consisted of two survey items. Both survey items were utilized to

answer Research Question 5. The final construct, career development, consisted of three survey items. All three items were utilized to answer Research Question 6.

Data Analysis for Research Question 1

Research Question 1: What are the characteristics of education options for students with intellectual disabilities within Florida public universities and colleges? A total of four survey items (1, 2, 4, and 19), were analyzed as they related to Research Question 1. The first item asked whether or not the institution had a program for students with intellectual disabilities. Respondents with programs in place for students with intellectual disabilities represented 58.8% (n = 10) of institutions. Institutions not offering programs for students with intellectual disabilities represented 41.2% (n = 7) of respondents.

Data revealed the presence of students with intellectual disabilities enrolled in both public colleges and universities. Six of the responding SUS institutions report the presence of a program while four of the responding CS institutions report the presence of a program. From this point forward in data analysis, all frequencies and percentages presented will be based on the number of institutions with programs for students with intellectual disabilities, (n= 10).

Chi-Square analysis revealed that there is not a statistical relationship between presence of students with intellectual disabilities enrolled and type of postsecondary institution (X^2 (1) = .637, p= < .05). Fisher's exact test was used to determine the significance because Pearson's assumptions was violated as a result of an effect size of

less than 5. Although the relationship is not statistically significant, it may be educationally important. Table 4 displays the analysis.

Table 4

Chi Square Analysis of Type of Institution Reporting the Presences of Students with Intellectual Disabilities (N=10)

Institution	Yes	No	Total	Test	Value	df	Sig	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
SUS	6	3	9	Fisher's	0.637	1		0.637
CS	4	4	8					

Survey item 2 asked respondents to select the type of program offered for students with intellectual disabilities at the institution. Definitions were provided for the terms separate program, mixed program, and inclusive program. Institutions offering inclusive programs represented 60% (N = 6) of total respondents, and mixed programs represented 40% (N = 4) of total respondents. It should be noted that no respondent selected separate program option.

Chi-Square analysis revealed there is not a relationship between the type of institution and type of program was offered in 2016 for students with intellectual disabilities (X^2 (1) = .190, p=<.05). Of those responding, five SUS institutions (83%) offer inclusive settings, while one (16%) SUS institution offers a mixed program. One

(25%) CS state college responded stating they offer an inclusive program, while three (75%) CS institutions offer mixed programs. Table 5 displays the analysis.

Table 5

Chi-Square Analysis of Institutions by Program Type (N=10)

Institution	Inclusive	Mixed	Total	Test	Value	df	Sig	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
SUS	5	1	6	Fisher's	3.403	1		0.190
CS	1	3	4					

Survey item 4 was a forced choice item, requesting participants to select the supports in place for students with intellectual disabilities at their institution in 2016. Response options included: there is a designated program to support students with intellectual disabilities, the Office for Students with Disabilities provide support for students with intellectual disabilities in regular classes or other. Eight (80%) respondents total reported there was a designated program in place to support students with intellectual disabilities. Two (20%) of the total respondents reported the Office for Students with Disabilities supports students with intellectual disabilities. It should be noted that no respondent selected other. Chi-Square analysis revealed there is not a relationship between type of supports in place and type of institution (X^2 (1) = .444, $p <$ .05. Six SUS institutions responded positively to having designated programs provide

support for students with intellectual disabilities, while three CS institutions report the same. Table 6 displays results.

Table 6

Supports for Students with Intellectual Disabilities at Postsecondary Institutions (N =10)

Institutions	Designated Program Available	Office for Students w/ Disabilities	Total	Test	Value	df	Sig	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
SUS	6	0	6	Fisher's		1		0.444
CS	3	1	4					

Survey item 19 used a Likert-style response scale item which was calibrated on the following scale: 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree), and 4 (strongly agree). The researcher used the scale to illustrate the extent to which respondents agreed with statements regarding students with intellectual disabilities qualifying for federal financial aid. Survey item 19 was used to identify institutions that offered qualified comprehensive transition programs as defined by Federal Department of Education standards. Two (50%) CS institutions responded positively and two (50%) responded negatively that students with intellectual disabilities qualified for financial aid. Two (33%) of the SUS institutions responded positively and three (50%) SUS institutions responded negatively that students with intellectual disabilities qualified for financial aid. Table 7 displays the analysis.

Table 7

Students with Intellectual Disabilities Qualify for Financial Aid (N=10)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable	Do Not Know
Institutions (*n*)	*f* (%)	*f* (%)	*f* (%)	*f* (%)	*f* (%)	*f* (%)
SUS (6)	2 (33)	1 (16)	2 (33)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (16)
CS (4)	0 (0)	2 (50)	1 (25)	1 (25)	0 (0)	0 (0)

Note: Due to rounding percentage totals may not equal one hundred percent.

Data Analysis for Research Question 2

Research Question 2: How do education options vary in model design, funding, and approach within Florida public universities and colleges?

To further explore the status of students with intellectual disabilities attending postsecondary education programs in public CS institutions and SUS institutions in Florida, and to answer Research Question 2, eight survey items related to education options were presented. Survey items: 3, 5, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25 were utilized to answer Research Question 2. Survey item three directed respondents to select the number of students with intellectual disabilities enrolled in the institution based on a range of choices. One (10%) of the responding institutions has between one and three students enrolled. One (10%) institution has between four and six students with intellectual disabilities enrolled. Two (20%) institutions have between seven and nine students with intellectual disabilities enrolled. Two (20%) institutions have between ten and twelve students with intellectual disabilities enrolled. One (10%) institution has

between 16 and 18 students enrolled. Three postsecondary education programs (*n* = 3, 30%) enrolled more than 21 students. Table 8 reflects the frequency distribution and percentage of the responses given by respondents.

Table 8

Frequency distribution of Students Currently Enrolled in Postsecondary Education Program Per Institution (N=10)

Students with intellectual disabilities enrolled	Frequency	Percent
1-3	1	10
4-6	1	10
7-9	2	20
10-12	2	20
13-15	0	0
16-18	1	10
19-21	0	0
more than 21	3	30

Note: Percentage represents both SUS and CS institutions.

In survey item 5 respondents selected how long their program had been in existence. Three of the postsecondary education programs have been in existence less than three years (*n* = 3, 30%). Two (20%) programs have been in existence between two and four years. Four (40%) programs have been in existence for five to seven years. One

(10%) program has been opened more than 10 years. Table 9 reflects the frequency distribution and percentages of the responses given.

Table 9

Length of Program (N=10)

Time	*N*	Percent
0-1 years	3	30
2-4 years	2	20
5-7 years	4	40
8-10 years	0	0
More than 10 Years	1	10

To further answer Research Question 2, survey items 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, and 25 included a Likert-style response scale. The responses were calibrated using the following scale: 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree), and 4 (strongly agree). Additionally, do not know and not applicable were offered as off-scale options. The scale items were used to indicate how postsecondary education options for students with intellectual disabilities vary in design, funding, and approach. Of the responding institutions, eight (80%) reported providing students with intellectual disabilities information regarding other financing options, such as Vocational Rehabilitation. Further, five (50%) of respondents reported utilizing state funds, IDEA funds, or grant funds to provide core funding to the program. Four (40%) of the institutions utilizing funding through state

funds, IDEA funds, or grant funds were SUS institutions. One (10%) of the institutions was a CS college. Three of the total responding institutions (30%) reported receiving funds through the Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) grant. Two of the institutions receiving TPSID grants were SUS institutions, one was a CS state college.

Six of the respondents representing institutions (n = 6, 60%), responded negatively when asked if their institutions received funds under the Workforce Innovative Opportunity Act. Four (67%) SUS institutions responded negatively when asked if their institution was receiving funds through the Workforce Innovative Opportunity Act. Two (50%) CS state college responded positively, and two (50%) responded negatively when posed the same question. Table 10 contains an analysis of the respondents' level of agreement as to whether students are provided information regarding outside funding options such as Vocational Rehabilitation, whether the institution utilizes state funds such as IDEA, was funded through Transition and Postsecondary Programs, or if the institution was receiving funding through Workforce Innovative and Opportunity Act.

Table 10

Level of Agreement to Institution Funding Options (N= 10)

Survey Item Stem	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree		Do not Know		Not Applicable	
	f (%)		*f* (%)		*f* (%)		*f* (%)		*f* (%)		*f* (%)	
The postsecondary education program…	CS	SUS	CS	SUS	CS	SUS	CS	SUS	CS	SUS	CS	SUS
provides students with information regarding financing options such as Vocational Rehabilitation	0 (0)	0(0)	0(0)	0(0)	1 (25)	0(0)	3(75)	5(83)	0 (0)	0(0)	0 (0)	1(16)
utilizes state funds, IDEA funds, or other grants to provide core funding for the program.	0(0)	1(16)	2 (50)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0(0)	1(50)	5(83)	1 (10)	0 (0)	1 (10)	0 (0)
is funded in part by a Transition and Postsecondary Program for Students with Intellectual Disabilities grant.	0 (0)	1(16)	1 (25)	1(16)	0 (0)	1(16)	2 (20)	1(16)	1 (25)	1(16)	0 (0)	1(16)
is receiving funding through the Workforce Innovative Opportunity Act.	0 (0)	2(33)	2 (50)	2(33)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (20)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1(16)	0 (0)	0 (0)
has a planning and advisory team.	0 (0)	2 (33)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (50)	2(33)	2 (20)	1 (16)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1(16)

Data Analysis for Research Question 3

Research Question 3: To what extent do Florida public universities and colleges provide accommodations and supports to students with intellectual disabilities?

Descriptive statistics were utilized in the analysis of all the survey items related to Research Question 3. Survey items 6, 10, 11, and 12 were utilized to answer Research Question 3. Survey item 6 asked respondents to select which accommodations were available to students with intellectual disabilities at universities and colleges in Florida. Respondents were given a list of 11 accommodations from which to select all that applied. Of the available accommodations, accessible text, alternative format and peer note taker all had the highest frequency for accommodations offered to students with intellectual disabilities (n= 9, 90%). Read/Write software was also a frequent accommodation offered to students with intellectual disabilities (n=8, 80%). Institutions did not regularly offer advance material as an accommodation, with (n= 3, 30%) of institutions selecting it as an accommodation offered at their institution. Table 11 reflects frequency distribution of the responses given and are listed in rank order.

Table 11

Frequency distribution of accommodations offered to students with intellectual disabilities at responding universities and colleges in Florida (N= 10)

Accommodation	*f*
Accessible Text	9
Alternative Format	9
Peer Note Taker	9
Read/Write Software	8
E-Reader	7
Spell/Grammar Check Software	7
Professor Notes (Hard Copy)	6
Screen Reader	6
Priority/Preferential Seating	5
Laptop Computer	4
Advance Material	3

Note: Respondents selected all that applied and therefore the total exceeds the N of 10.

Survey items 10, 11, and 12 used a Likert-style response scale. The responses were calibrated using the following scale: 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree), and 4 (strongly agree). Additionally, do not know and not applicable were offered as off-scale options. The scale items were used to indicate the extent to which postsecondary

education programs provide accommodations and supports to students with intellectual disabilities. Survey item 10 questioned whether students with intellectual disabilities had access to and instruction in the use of needed technology. Nine (90%) of the institutions reported that students with intellectual disabilities did have access to and instruction in the use of needed technology. When queried on access to educational coaches, eight institutions (80%) reported that students with intellectual disabilities had access to paid educational coaches. Finally, 90% reported that students with intellectual disabilities had access to volunteer peer support such as peer mentors, peer tutors, and campus ambassadors. Table 12 reflects the frequency and percentage of responses given.

Table 12

Level of Agreement on Accommodation Offered (N= 10)

	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree		Do not Know		Not Applicable	
Students with intellectual disabilities have…	*f* (%) CS	SUS	*f* (%) CS	SUS	*f* (%) CS	SUS	*f* (%) CS	SUS	*f* (%) CS	SUS	*f* (%) CS	SUS
access to and instruction in the use of needed technology.	0 (0)	0(0)	0 (0)	0(0)	1(25)	0 (0)	3(75)	5(83)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0(0)	1(16)
access to paid educational coaches.	0(0)	0(0)	1(25)	1(16)	1(25)	1(16)	2(50)	4(67)	0 (0)	0(0)	1 (25)	0(0)
access to volunteer peer support such as peer mentors, peer tutors, and campus ambassadors.	0 (0)	0(0)	0 (0)	0(0)	2 (50)	1(16)	2 (50)	4(67)	0 (0)	0(0)	0 (0)	1(16)

Note: Due to rounding percentage totals may not equal one hundred percent.

Data Analysis for Research Question 4

Research Question 4: To what extent do Florida public universities and colleges facilitate the development and promotion of self-determination in students with intellectual disabilities?

Analysis of Research Question 4 was completed through descriptive statistics analysis of two survey items. The two survey items consisted of Likert-style response scales. The responses were calibrated using the following scale: 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree), and 4 (strongly agree). Additionally, do not know and not applicable were offered as off-scale options. The scale items were used to indicate the extent to which postsecondary education programs facilitate the development and promotion of self-determination in students with intellectual disabilities. Survey item 8 asked if students with intellectual disabilities had access to courses that relate to their personal, academic, or career goal. Four (100%) of respondents representing CS institutions agree students with intellectual have access to courses that relate to their personal, academic, or career goal. Five (83%) of respondents representing SUS institutions in Florida agree students with intellectual disabilities had access to courses that relate to their personal, academic or career goals. Survey item 9 asked whether students with intellectual disabilities had access to and instruction in the use of public transportation. Four (100%) of those responding from CS institutions responded favorably. Five (83%) of responding SUS institutions positively agreed students with

intellectual disabilities had access to and instruction in the use of public transportation. One (16%) respondent selected not applicable.

Data Analysis for Research Question 5

Research Question 5: To what extent do Florida public universities and colleges facilitate participation in campus wide activities with typically developing peers?

Survey items 7, 16, and 18 were utilized to answer Research Question 5. Descriptive statistics were utilized to answer the research question. Survey items were all based on Likert-style response scale. The responses were calibrated using the following scale: 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree), and 4 (strongly agree). Additionally, do not know and not applicable were offered as off-scale options. The scale items were used to indicate the extent to which Florida public universities and colleges facilitate participation in campus wide activities with typically developing peers.

Survey item 7 asked respondents if students with intellectual disabilities had access to enrollment in college course attended by students without disabilities for which the student with intellectual disabilities receives academic credit. Nine (90%) of the respondents agree that students with intellectual disabilities are given access to courses attended by students without disabilities for which the student with intellectual disabilities receives academic credit. Four (100%) of the CS institutions responded favorably when asked whether students with intellectual disabilities are given access to courses attended by students without disabilities. Six (100%) universities in the Florida

State University System (SUS) responded favorably. It should be noted that no respondent answered negatively, not applicable, or do not know.

Survey item 16 posed whether students with intellectual disabilities had access to all campus social programs. Nine (90%) of respondents agree, students with intellectual disabilities are given access to all campus social programs. One (10%) respondent stated do not know when posed the survey item. When asked whether students with intellectual disabilities interact directly with faculty and employers, participants responded favorably seven (70%) of the time.

Data Analysis for Research Question 6

Research Question 6: To what extent are students with intellectual disabilities involved with employment activities while enrolled in Florida public universities and colleges? A total of three survey items were utilized to answer Research Question 6. Survey items 13, 14, and 15 all utilized Likert-style response scale. The responses were calibrated using the following scale: 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree), and 4 (strongly agree). Additionally, do not know and not applicable were offered as off-scale options. The scale items were used to indicate the extent to which students with intellectual disabilities were involved with employment activities while enrolled in Florida public universities and colleges.

Survey item 13 queried whether students with intellectual disabilities had access to job coaches. Eight (80%) of those responding stated their students did have access to job coaches. Four (100%) of respondents from CS institutions indicate their students had

access to job coaches. Four (67%) of respondents from universities indicate their students had access to job coaches. Additionally, one respondent (16%) strongly disagreed to the survey item and one respondent (16%) chose not applicable. Both of these respondents represented SUS institutions.

Survey item 14 asked whether students with intellectual disabilities had access to paid work experiences in settings with people without disabilities. Eight (80%) responded favorably to providing students with intellectual disabilities paid work experience. Additionally, one respondent (10%) strongly disagreed to the survey item and one respondent (10%) chose not applicable.

Four (100%) responded favorably from CS institutions while four (67%) responded favorably from SUS institutions that students with intellectual disabilities had access to paid work experiences in settings with people without disabilities. Survey item 15 asked whether students with intellectual disabilities had access to participate in nonpaid internships, service learning, and other work related experiences with people without disabilities. Eight (80%) of those replying to the survey responded favorably. Four (100%) responded favorably from CS institutions revealing that students with intellectual disabilities do participate in nonpaid internships, service learning, and other work related experience. Four (67%) responded favorably from SUS institutions revealing they also provide access to nonpaid internships, services learning and other work related experience for students with intellectual disabilities. Table 13 reflects frequency and percentage of responses given for survey items 13, 14, and 15.

Table 13

Respondents Level of Agreement on Career Development Opportunities (N=10)

Survey Question Stem	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Agree		Strongly Agree		Do not Know		Not Applicable	
	f (%)		*f (%)*		*f (%)*		*f (%)*		*f (%)*		*f (%)*	
Students with intellectual disabilities have…	CS	SUS	CS	SUS	CS	SUS	CS	SUS	CS	SUS	CS	SUS
access to paid job coaches.	0 (0)	1 (16)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (50)	2(33)	2(50)	2(33)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (16)
access to paid work experiences in settings with people without disabilities.	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (16)	2 (50)	0 (0)	2(50)	4 (67)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (16)
access to participating in nonpaid internships, service learning, and other work-related experiences with people without disabilities.	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1(16)	1 (25)	0(0)	3(75)	4 (67)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1(16)

Data Analysis for Open Ended Survey Item

All participants were asked to respond to one open ended survey item. The open ended survey item read "Please share anything else you would like the researcher to know about students with intellectual disabilities attending colleges and universities in Florida". Six (35.5%) responded to the open ended survey item. The researcher read the responses three times each to determine if there was a theme among the responses.

One response related to not having a program during the school year prior to the survey timeframe. Therefore, five responses were noted by the researcher. Each response was unique and no theme emerged. Responses were then read one more time to determine if they aligned with research question constructs.

Two (40%) of the responses mentioned funding. Funding is an element of program characteristic construct. One respondent replied that postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities started through a federal Transition and Postsecondary Education Program for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) grant and was not an up and running comprehensive transition program. Another respondent provided information that during school year 2014-2015 the institution did not have a program and therefore did not have a funding dollar amount.

Two (40%) of the responses mentioned academic access. Academic access is a research question construct. One respondent replied that any student can attend who has obtained a general high school diploma (GED) or a high school diploma. In 2016 the postsecondary institution has two students with intellectual disabilities who had

successfully passed the GED and were enrolled in classes. Another respondent provided information that this type of experience for students with [intellectual disabilities] is critical for them to learn and develop the necessary skills to gain meaningful and relevant employment. The respondent further provided that the experience in postsecondary education transition education must include strong support system for students in the form of mentors and/or coaches.

One (20%) of the responses mentioned campus accessibility. Campus accessibility is a research construct. Regarding campus accessibility, the respondent replied the campus community had really embraced the students. All written responses that aligned to the research construct are provided in Table 14.

Table 14

Open Ended Survey Item Responses (N=5)

Respondent	Written Response	Construct
CS08	We don't have a program specific to students with Intellectual Disabilities. Any student can attend who has obtained a high school diploma or a GED. We currently have 2 students (that I am aware of) with Intellectual Disabilities who succeeded in passing the GED, therefore, they have the same access and benefits as any other student with a disability at our institution.	Academic Access
SUS24	This type of experience for students with [intellectual disabilities] is critical for them to learn and develop the necessary skills to gain meaningful and relevant employment. The experience in postsecondary education transition education must include strong support system for students in the form of mentors and/or coaches.	Academic Access
CS26	Our program started with a TPSID grant It is called Project ****	Program Characteristic
CS03	We were not in existence in 2014-2015 but there is no dollar amount for me to indicate that reality.	Program Characteristic
SUS22	VR is not "on board" with these programs in terms of flexibility in their view of supporting students in a "training program". Working with the LEA can also be a challenge, but it is do-able in most cases. The campus community has really embraced the students.	Campus Accessibility

Summary

Using descriptive statistics analysis procedures, the categorical variables were analyzed as they related to the research questions. Survey data illustrated the presence of postsecondary education programs for students with intellectual disabilities in colleges and universities in Florida. Programs were found to be more prevalent at the university level than at the college level. Based on the findings in 2016, six of the 12 SUS institutions offered some type of program for students with intellectual disabilities. Four of the 28 CS institutions offered some type of program for students with intellectual disabilities. Type of program varied greatly. At SUS institutions, the common type of program was an inclusive program. At CS institutions the prevalent type of program was the mixed program. No factor was found to be statistically significant when comparing CS institutions with SUS institutions, however several factors may be educationally significant. The type of program offered to students with intellectual disabilities, the number of students in the program, whether students are given the opportunity to practice their self-determination and self-advocacy skills, and how much access to campus activities with nondisabled peers are all factors that may impact educational significance.

In this chapter, the procedures used to collect the quantitative data were reviewed. Descriptive statistics using categorical variables were used in the analysis of the research questions. Finally, results of quantitative research was presented. The next chapter will present a summary of the findings, discussion, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This study has been conducted to explore postsecondary education programs for students with an intellectual disability at public university and colleges in Florida. This chapter has been organized to present a summary of the study, discussion of the findings, implications for practice, and recommendations for future research.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore postsecondary education options for students with intellectual disabilities at Florida's 12 State University System (SUS) institutions and 28 College Systems (CS) institutions. This study was exploratory in nature, collecting descriptive information on the status of postsecondary education options for students with intellectual disabilities at Florida's State University and College System institutions. Finally, this study established a baseline in the field of postsecondary education for students with an intellectual disability in Florida regarding the prevalence as well as created a baseline of the systems and supports in place.

There has been a dearth of research and profiles of the post-secondary education programs for students with intellectual disabilities at public universities and colleges within the state of Florida. A recent change in legislation led educational institutions to

address this issue. The problem explored was the lack of data on the 2016 status of post-secondary education and services afforded to adults with an intellectual disability in public institutions of higher education in the state of Florida. Through funding from the National Institute on Disability Rehabilitation and Research, Think College developed standards, benchmarks, and quality indicators for postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities (Grigal et al., 2012b). The standards align with requirements of the Higher Education Opportunity Act framework. Four of the standards: (a) integration with college systems and practices, (b) coordination and collaboration, (c) sustainability, and (d) ongoing evaluation, relate to program infrastructure and have been utilized to develop research question one (Grigal, et al., 2012b pg. 4). The remaining four cornerstone standards: (a) inclusive academic access, (b) self-determination, (c) campus membership, and (d) career development, were used to develop the final five research questions that guided the study (Grigal, et al., 2012b, pg. 4).

1. What are the characteristics of education options for students with intellectual disabilities within Florida public universities and colleges?
2. How do education options vary in model design, funding, and approach within Florida public universities and colleges?
3. To what extent do Florida public universities and colleges provide accommodations and supports to students with intellectual disabilities?

4. To what extent do Florida public universities and colleges facilitate the development and promotion of self-determination in students with intellectual disabilities?
5. To what extent do Florida public universities and colleges facilitate participation in campus wide activities with typically developing peers?
6. To what extent are students with intellectual disabilities involved with employment activities while enrolled in Florida public universities and colleges?

Discussion of the Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore postsecondary education options for students with intellectual disabilities at the 40 public colleges and universities in Florida. The postsecondary public institutions within the Florida State University and College System offered programs, accommodations, and supports to students with intellectual disabilities in 2016. Respondents (N=17) to the survey indicate that 59% (n=10) were offering postsecondary education opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities. Postsecondary education programs for students with intellectual disabilities were offered at 67% of the responding SUS institutions and 50% of the responding colleges. Students with intellectual disabilities were participating in campus activities 90% of the time at all 10 responding institutions. Additionally, students with intellectual disabilities at specific institutions were working and getting paid. The following discussion presents findings specific to each of the six research questions around which the study was organized.

Research Question 1

What are the characteristics of education options for students with intellectual disabilities within Florida public universities and colleges?

Based on the quantitative analysis of data, there are students with intellectual disabilities enrolled in public universities and colleges in Florida. The survey was sent to all 40 public institutions within the Florida State University and College Systems. Responses (*N=17*) indicated students with intellectual disabilities have been served in public universities and colleges in Florida for an average of 3 years. One program has been in existence longer than 10 years. Seven (41%) of respondents representing institutions identified themselves as offering inclusive opportunities, meaning the students participate in current coursework at the university or college alongside their typically developing peers (Grigal et al., 2012; Kleinert et al., 2012). Four (23.5%) of total respondents with programs identified themselves as offering mixed programs, meaning students with intellectual disabilities participate in both regular coursework and campus activities as well as classes specifically designed for students with intellectual disabilities (Grigal et al., 2012a; Kleinert et al., 2012). No postsecondary institution identified themselves as offering a stand-alone program, meaning students with intellectual disabilities are in classes aimed solely for students with intellectual disabilities (Grigal et al., 2012c; Kleinert et al., 2012). This finding is important, considering students with intellectual disabilities and their families are seeking postsecondary education opportunities that include more inclusive opportunities as a result of inclusive K-12 education (Kleinert et al., 2012).

At the time of the study, eight (80%) of respondents representing institutions with students with intellectual disabilities reported a designated program to support students with intellectual disabilities while they were enrolled in regular credit classes. Two (20%) of respondents representing institutions revealed the Office for Students with Disabilities assisted with accommodations and supports needed while the students were able to remain enrolled in regular academic classes.

Currently literature supports the findings. In a national study of 150 postsecondary institutions, more than half of the institutions were providing supports through specialized programming (Grigal et al., 2012c). Think College, the national coordinating center has identified eight standards of practice for inclusive education (Grigal, Hart, and Weir, 2012). Utilizing natural supports, or supports that are already in place for existing students, such as the Office for Students with Disabilities is an important factor, and just one of the standards to consider when designing and creating an authentic inclusive postsecondary experience for students with intellectual disabilities (Grigal, Hart, & Weir, 2012).

Research Question 2

Research Question 2: How do education options vary in model design, funding, and approach within Florida public universities and colleges?

Research Question 2 sought to explore how institutions with programs for students with intellectual disabilities varied by program type or model design, funding options available, and approach. Eight (80%) of institutions reported 7 or more students

enrolled. It is worth noting 30% of institutions had more than 21 students enrolled at the time of the study. In terms of funding opportunities, all institutions reported positively to providing students with intellectual disabilities additional funding opportunities through Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). Grigal, Milgliore, & Hart (2014) note a national need for Vocational Rehabilitation to disseminate information, policies and procedures regarding support for postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities (p.192). Vocational Rehabilitation is required to disseminate to all postsecondary institutions, local agencies, and any other related service providers on the programs and funding VR can provide. This finding is important considering a lack of funding is a barrier to postsecondary education for many students with intellectual disabilities (Nuebert et al., 2004; VanBergeijk et al., 2012). Currently there are limited financial resources available to students with intellectual disabilities who wish to attend postsecondary education programs. In order for students with intellectual disabilities to access Federal Financial Aid an institution must be an approved Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP) as defined by the U.S. Department of Education (VanBergeijk et al., 2012). Once an approved CTP students with intellectual disabilities can then apply for three specific types of financial aid: Federal Pell Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, and Work Study Grants.

Institutions positively reported their collaboration with the local education agency, IDEA funds, or other grants to provide core funding for the program. All programs reported a budget of less than $150,000. Plotner and Marshall (2015) report

funding as the persistent barrier to postsecondary education program success “persistent issue of funding may spell life or death for some postsecondary education programs” (p. 10). The literature also supports collaboration with outside agencies as a pathway to success (Grigal et al., 2012c).

Research Question 3

Research Question 3: To what extent do Florida public universities and colleges provide accommodations and supports to students with intellectual disabilities?

Stodden, Jones & Chang (2001) define accommodations as services and supports available for students with all types disabilities to ensure academic access and success. Research Question 3 examined the prevalence of accommodations and support offered to students with intellectual disabilities enrolled in courses in Florida’s public colleges or universities. Quantitative analysis of survey item 19 revealed that students with intellectual disabilities are receiving varied supports and accommodations at the 10 institutions. When asked, participants selected: peer note taker, accessible text, and alternative format as the accommodation most use in their institution. In the literature, peer note taker, professor notes, and priority seating were accommodations requested the most (Grigl et al., 2012c). In both the current study and in the literature peer note taker was a prevalent accommodation.

Research Question 4

Research Question 4: To what extent do Florida public universities and colleges facilitate the development and promotion of self-determination in students with intellectual disabilities?

Adjusting to college can be difficult for all students, for students with intellectual disabilities there are even more challenges (Kleinert, et al., 2012). Students with intellectual disabilities must be prepared to disclose their disability, understand how to access accommodations and supports within the college, and learn to navigate their way around campus. All of these required skills are essential elements of self-determination (Getzel, & Thoma, 2008). Getzel, & Thoma (2008) define self-determination as being able to advocate for what you need, understanding your disability and how it impacts your learning, having self-confidence, being independent, and adjusting your schedule to make sure things get done (p. 79). Quantitative analysis of survey items related to Research Question 4 reveal nine out of 10 of participants responded favorably to survey item question on whether students have access to courses relating to students' goals. Nine (90%) of participants responded favorably when asked if students had access and instruction in public transportation. Being able to navigate in the world around you in an essential independent living skill. This is an important finding considering self-determination has become a best practice in secondary and transition education for students with intellectual disabilities (Wehmeyer et al., 2012). Offering students with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to select their own courses, participate in events of their choosing, and even learn how to navigate public transportation provide them an

opportunity to be in charge of their own lives. This leads to an increased sense of self-determination (Hart et al., 2010).

Grigal, Dwyre, & Davis (2006) found several elements necessary when developing successful postsecondary programs for students with intellectual disabilities: self-determination and independent living skills were among them. In addition to that students with intellectual disabilities should have opportunities to learn about their rights and resources available to them at the college level. Students should also have the opportunity to increase their self-determination and independence skills in a setting appropriate to their age group. Based on the finding of the survey, Florida's public colleges and universities are currently providing these opportunities.

Research Question 5

Research Question 5: To what extent do Florida public universities and colleges facilitate participation in campus wide activities with typically developing peers?

Descriptive statistics was used to examine respondent's level of agreement on whether students with intellectual disabilities participate in campus wide activities with typically developing peers. Concerning campus wide participation, nine (90%) of respondents agree students with intellectual disabilities do have access to participate in courses with students without disabilities. Further, nine (90%) of respondents agree students with intellectual disabilities have access to participate in all campus wide activities with students without disabilities. This is an important finding considering the college campus is the ideal local for students with intellectual disabilities to practice

social skills around age appropriate peers (Hart et al., 2010). Just as nondisabled college students are learning skills necessary for adult life and work environments, so too must students with intellectual disabilities (Hart et al., 2010 p. 143). Living, learning, and working in the same environment as nondisabled peers gives students with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to practice the social skills they are learning, build their social competence and receive social acceptance from others (Hart et al., 2010).

Students with intellectual disabilities who enrolled in inclusive college programs where they were able to audit or enroll in a variety of college courses, and participate in college clubs and internships that supported their career plans, had a relatively higher rate of paid employment after they exited the postsecondary education program (Grigal & Dwyre, 2010). Participating in courses, clubs, and activities with nondisabled peers allows students with intellectual disabilities to experience social acceptance. Based on the finding of this study, Florida's public universities and colleges are currently providing these opportunities.

Research Question 6

Research Question 6: To what extent are students with intellectual disabilities involved with employment activities while enrolled in Florida public universities and colleges

Descriptive statistics was used to examine respondent's level of agreements on employment activities while enrolled in postsecondary education options. Concerning accessibility to job coaches, most respondents agree that students with intellectual

disabilities did have access to job coaches while participating in programs. Concerning accessibility to paid work experiences, eight (80%) of respondents agree that students with intellectual disabilities did have access paid work while participating in postsecondary education programs. Finally, in terms of unpaid internship or unpaid work experiences, eight (80%) of respondents reported students with intellectual disabilities did have access to unpaid internships or work experiences. This is an important finding considering the ultimate goal of postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities is competitive employment (HEOA, 2008).

Changes in the labor force in the last thirty years has led to an increased importance of having some type of postsecondary education in order to compete in the job market (Stodden and Whalley, 2001). The National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS-2) found for students with intellectual disabilities, two years after high school, had the lowest percentage of employment, and the fewest resources to function independently of any category of disability (NLTS2, 2006). The NLTS-2 (2006) further found students with intellectual disabilities are the least likely to be involved in postsecondary education, community activities, and or any type of vocational training up to two years following high school graduation. Based on the finding of this study, Florida public colleges and universities are already providing these opportunities for students.

Implications for Practice

The findings of this study inform practice at the postsecondary level on the current trends, practices, and characteristics of programs for students with intellectual disabilities at public CS institutions and SUS institutions in Florida. The implications would be of interest to policy-makers, postsecondary institutions considering creating or expanding programs, researchers and practitioners.

1. Due to changes in legislation there will be an increase in students with intellectual disabilities seeking enrollment in postsecondary institutions in Florida. .
2. Florida CS and SUS institutions currently do have students with intellectual disabilities on their campuses, however based on current enrollment of students with intellectual disabilities and added funding access, institutions should expect an increase in enrollment numbers.
3. For students with intellectual disabilities, the opportunity to attend institution of higher education is now a reality.

Recommendations for the Future

The goal of this study was to explore postsecondary education options for students with intellectual disabilities in public universities and colleges in Florida. This study is believed to be one of the first of its kinds in addressing the topic of students with intellectual disabilities attending postsecondary education programs at public universities and colleges in Florida. It should be considered baseline for any future research on the

same topic. Data were collected via an electronic survey and used to answer six research questions.

As new legislation is written encouraging postsecondary institutions to open their doors to students with intellectual disabilities there is a need for continued research in area of program design, implementation, outcomes and employment outcomes for students with intellectual disabilities participating in these programs. The table below has been created to summarize recommendations from this study.

Table 15

Summary of Recommendations for Research

	Recommendations
1.	Continue to research ways to increase postsecondary enrollment and persistence for students with intellectual disabilities through secondary transition planning and orientation to higher education.
2.	Evaluate the effectiveness of new program implementation through program evaluation based on quality indicators, standards, and persistence to employment or completion.
3	Research what happens to students after attending CS and SUS.
4	Research how PK- 12 changes can promote opportunity and readiness for students with intellectual disabilities.

Summary

Evident through legislation and the increased awareness of on the issue, postsecondary education for students with disabilities has become a prevalent topic in the recent years. Hart (2012) gave several compelling arguments in support of students with intellectual disabilities being on college campuses: (a) postsecondary education is a natural progression for students with intellectual disabilities growing up the in the generation of inclusion. For students with intellectual disabilities who have grown up with inclusion, this group of students has been in traditional classrooms and it is natural for them to progress from the K-12 educational experiences the students are having; (b) there is a positive correlation between college attendance and positive employment outcomes; (c) positive impact the presence students with intellectual disabilities bring to the entire campus community (Hart et al., 2010; Wehemeyer et al., 2012). Postsecondary education is not a new idea or concept for students with disabilities. Equal access to public colleges and universities is not a new idea either. However, having the ability to live on campus, go to class on campus, and have a job on campus is a new concept for many students with intellectual disabilities (Nuerbet & Redd, 2008). While there are barriers to traditional postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities, there are opportunities as well. As a result of The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 and the Workforce Innovative Opportunity Act of 2014 students with intellectual disabilities have expanded opportunities to qualify for financial aid, live on campus, attend classes, and participate in paid employment. As George H.W. Bush said when he

signed the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 “Let the shameful wall of exclusion finally come tumbling down” (Bush, 1990).

APPENDIX A
LIST OF PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES WITHIN FLORIDA

Table 16

List of Florida State Universities and Public Colleges

State Universities and Public Colleges	Total Enrollment School Year 2014-2015 (SUS) School 2012-2013 (CS)
Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University	10,233
Florida Atlantic University	30,132
Florida Gulf Coast University	14,463
Florida International University	53,612
Florida Polytechnic University	547
Florida State University	41,255
New College of Florida	835
University of Central Florida	60,401
University of Florida	49,207
University of North Florida	16,187
University of South Florida	42,847
University of West Florida	12,627
Broward College	62,238
College of Central Florida	11,641
Chipola College	2,908
Daytona State College	24,488
Eastern Florida State College	23,402
Florida Gateway College	4,335
Florida State College at Jacksonville	51,627
Florida Southwestern State College (Edison)	21, 676
Gulf Coast State College	9,834
Hillsborough Community College	40,167
Indian River State College	28,092
Lake-Sumter State College	6,419
State College of Florida, Manatee-Sarasota	16,094
Miami Dade College	106,655
North Florida Community College	1,752
Northwest Florida State College	11,658
Palm Beach State College	43,206
Pasco- Hernandez State College	14,531
Pensacola State College	19,764
Polk State College	16,935
St. Johns River State College	9,935
St. Petersburg College	44,395
Santa Fe College	21,759
Seminole State College	31,098
South Florida State College	4,591
Tallahassee Community College	20,891
Valencia College	60,058

APPENDIX B
PERMISSION TO USE PREVIOUS SURVEY

From: Meg Grigal <Meg.Grigal@umb.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, July 29, 2015 2:58 PM
To: lisa.jester
Cc: Cathryn Weir; Debra Hart
Subject: Re: Postsecondary Education Programs for students with ID survey replication

Hi Lisa,
I'm happy to hear that you are looking at inclusive higher education as your dissertation topic. I would be happy to share the survey with you. I'm cc'ing Cate Weir who will be able to forward that to you. The survey tool itself I think is in need of refinement. I believe a number of other students have requested permission to use it but I'm not sure if they have modified or updated it. We are all in the midst of writing a large proposal so once that is finished (in a few weeks) we can circle back and give you some specific feedback on what worked and didn't work with the tool.
Hope this helps,
Best,
Meg
--
Meg Grigal Ph.D
Co-Director, Think College
Senior Research Fellow
Institute for Community Inclusion
University of Massachusetts Boston
www.thinkcollege.net
Twitter: @megrigal

APPENDIX C
SURVEY OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN PUBLIC FLORIDA UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

A Survey of Postsecondary Education Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Florida

Please complete the following survey and select responses that most represent your institution.

Name of Institution

1. I give my informed consent to participate in this survey
   Choose an item.
   **if the answer is no, then Thank You and exit survey
2. Does your institution currently have a program for students with intellectual disabilities?
   Choose an item.
   **if the answer is no, then there will be a contingent question:
   Does your institution have plans to create a program for students with ID?
   Choose an item.
   **if the answer is yes, then there will be a contingent question

   What is the timeframe for your institution beginning a program for students with intellectual disabilities?
   Choose an item.
3. Is your program a substantially separate program, a mixed program or a fully inclusive program?
   Substantially Separate - all course work is aimed specifically for student with ID.
4. How many students with intellectual disabilities are currently enrolled in your postsecondary education program?
   Choose an item.
5. Which of the following statements best describes the supports in place for students with intellectual disabilities while enrolled in regular credit classes?
   - ◉ There is a designated program to support students with intellectual disabilities.
   - ◉ The office for students with disabilities provide supports for students with intellectual disabilities in regular credit classes
   - ○ Other
6. How long has the program been in existence?
   Choose an item.
7. Which accommodations are available to students with intellectual disabilities?

(Select all that apply)

Choose an item.

8. During school year 2014-2015 what is the total funding amount for serving students with intellectual disabilities?

$

For the following questions, please use the Likert scale to determine your institutions current status.

Students with intellectual disabilities have…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Not Applicable
9. access to enrollment in college courses attended by students without disabilities. for which the student with intellectual disabilities receives academic credit.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. access to courses that relate to their personal, academic or career goals.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. access to and instruction in the use of public transportation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. access to and instruction in the use of needed technology.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. access to paid educational coaches.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

14. access to volunteer peer support such as peer mentors, peer tutors, and campus ambassadors.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. access to job coaches.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. access to paid work experiences in settings with people without disabilities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. access to participating in nonpaid internships, service learning, and other work-related experiences with people without disabilities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. access to all campus social programs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Students with intellectual disabilities…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Do Not Know	Not Applicable
19. direct their choice of courses, activities, and employment experience.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
20. interact directly with faculty and employers including the articulation of needed accommodations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
21. qualify for federal financial aid.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
22. are provided with information regarding other financing options such as Vocational Rehabilitation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

The postsecondary education program for students with intellectual disabilities at your institution…	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Do Not Know	Not Applicable
23. utilizes state funds, IDEA funds, or other grants to provide core funding for the program.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
24. is funded in part by a Transition and Postsecondary Program for Students with Intellectual Disabilities grant.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
25. is receiving funding through the Workforce Innovative Opportunity Act.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
26. has a planning and advisory team.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please share anything else you would like the researcher to know about students with ID attending colleges and universities in Florida:

Thank you for completing this survey

Submit

APPENDIX D
INFORMED CONSENT

An Exploration of Postsecondary Education Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Public Colleges and Universities in Florida

Informed Consent

Principal Investigator: Lisa B. Jester, Doctoral candidate
Faculty Advisor: Rosemarye Taylor, PhD

Investigational Site(s): Public College and Universities in Florida

Introduction: I am a doctoral candidate at the University of Central Florida and teacher of students with intellectual disabilities. You are being invited to take part in a research study which will include about 40 public colleges and universities in Florida. You have been asked to take part in this research study because you are a designee for your institution.
I am Lisa B. Jester of University of Central Florida, College and Education and Human Performance and my advisor is Rosemarye Taylor.
Purpose of the research study: The purpose of this study is to explore the inclusive postsecondary education options for students with intellectual disabilities in Florida's 12 State University System (SUS) institutions and Florida's 28 College Systems (CS) institutions. The researcher will examine the extent to which each Florida SUS and Florida CS institution is structured to facilitate student academic success, career development, and student self-determination, student participation in campus life, and program sustainability for students with ID.

Your confidentiality will be protected. Data will be aggregated and the data from your institution will not be identified specifically nor linked to you.
Time required: It is anticipated that completion of the survey will take between 10-15 minutes.
Risks: There are no anticipated risks associated with participation in this study.
There are no reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts involved in taking part in this study.
Benefits and compensation:
There are no perceived benefits or compensation to you for participating.

Study contact for questions about the study or to report a problem: If you have questions, concerns, or complaints, or think the research has hurt you, talk to Lisa B. Jester, Doctoral Candidate, College of Education and Human Performance, 407-719-5512 or Dr. Rosemarye Taylor, Faculty Supervisor, College of Education and Human at (407) 823-2233 or by email at Rosemarye.Taylor@mail.ucf.edu

IRB contact about your rights in the study or to report a complaint: Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board (UCF IRB). This research has been reviewed and approved by the IRB. For information about the rights of people who take part in research, please contact: Institutional Review Board, University of Central Florida, Office of Research & Commercialization, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246 or by telephone at (407) 823-2901.

To give your informed consent and take the survey, please click on the link that follows or copy and paste it into your browser.
Participants may opt out of this survey at any time by contacting researcher.

APPENDIX E
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board
Office of Research & Commercialization
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246
Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276
www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html

Approval of Exempt Human Research

From: **UCF Institutional Review Board #1**
FWA00000351, IRB00001138

To: **Lisa B Jester**

Date: **December 22, 2015**

Dear Researcher:

On 12/22/2015, the IRB approved the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review:	Exempt Determination
Project Title:	An Exploration of Postsecondary Education Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities in Public Colleges and Universities in Florida
Investigator:	Lisa B Jester
IRB Number:	SBE-15-11834
Funding Agency:	
Grant Title:	
Research ID:	N/A

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the Investigator Manual.

On behalf of Sophia Dziegielewski, Ph.D., L.C.S.W., UCF IRB Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Joanne Muratori on 12/22/2015 10:47:31 AM EST

IRB Manager

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