We ask you to join us in creating a culture that reflects…

Access and Inclusion

and

Civility and Respect

…this week and in all aspects of our organization.
Promoting Self-Determination in Challenging Times

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Moderator: Patty Violi (UNLV)
A Campus-wide View

- Our focus is on all students, including those with disabilities
  - Each wave of the NLTS-2 data documents a drop in the number of college students with disabilities who formally request accommodations
  - Self-determination is a key component of human wellbeing

- Like the social justice movement, self-determination recognizes the dynamic interplay of the individual and the environment

- Like UDI, self-determination is a proactive approach
Learning Outcomes

• Define “self-determination” and identify positive research-based outcomes of young adults who are highly self-determined.

• Describe how the promotion of self-determination strengthens a student’s wellbeing and mental health.

• Identify practical strategies for fostering students’ self-determination.
The *Opportunity* of Higher Education

- Find or further develop your voice (dreams/goals/passions)
- Explore your interests by studying a variety of disciplines
- Develop critical thinking skills by taking calculated academic risks and learning from your experiences
- Become an independent decision-maker who builds healthy relationships that inform and support that process
- Have fun!
The Growing *Reality* of Higher Education

• On paper, Gen Y and Gen Z have looked more academically prepared than prior generations of incoming students.

• Once on campus, however, a record number of these students show a lack of resilience and grit, limited initiative and problem solving, poor persistence, aversion to informed risk taking, and alarming rates of depression.

• For more than a decade, campuses have reported a dramatic rise in students’ need for mental health services.
The Growing *Reality* of Higher Education

• More than 50% reported feeling hopeless, more than 60% reported feeling overwhelming anxiety, more than 80% reported feeling exhausted.
  
  - 2016 American College Health Association (ACHA-NCHA)

• 73% of presidents and student affairs officers reported that mental health would be the highest focus of resources in next 5 years.
  
  - *The Student-Centered University* (Chronicle of Higher education, 2017)

• Between 2009 – 2015, college enrollment increased 5.6% while the number of students seeking campus counseling appointments grew by 38.4%.
  
  - Center for Collegiate Mental Health (2015)
How Did We Get Here?

Becoming Self-Determined: Creating Thoughtful Learners in a Standards-Driven, Admissions-Frenzied Culture

Sharon Field, Ed.D. and David R. Parker, Ph.D. (Editors)

AHEAD (2016)
• 1999: Columbine
• 2001: 9/11 terrorist attacks
• 2004: Facebook is launched
• 2007: Virginia Tech shooting; first iPhone is sold
• 2008: Worldwide financial crisis (“The Great Recession”)
• 2012: Sandy Hook shooting and Aurora, CO theater shootings
• 2013: Boston Marathon bombings
• 2015: Charleston, SC shootings at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church
• 2016: Orlando nightclub shootings
• 2017: Las Vegas mass shootings
• 2018: Parkland, FL shooting and March for Our Lives
• 2019: UNC-Charlotte shootings
• 2020: Mayfair WI mall shooting
A Perfect Storm

- Widespread Mass Shootings
- Recession Financials
- “Do Over” Schools
- “Bubble-Wrap” Parenting
- College Recruiting Gone Amok
- Social Media
- Mental Health Stigma Lessened

“Parenting has changed over the last decade, and most students today have been raised with limited, or protected risk...we have students who might not have taken risks and failed before.”

- Anna Gonzalez, VP for Student Affairs (2019)

What Is Self-Determination?

• "Self-determination is the ability to identify and achieve goals based on a foundation of knowing and valuing oneself."

• “Self-determination is a combination of skills, knowledge, and beliefs that enable a person to engage in goal-directed, self-regulated, autonomous behavior. An understanding of one’s strengths and limitations together with a belief in oneself as capable and effective, are essential. When acting on the basis of these skills and attitudes, individuals have greater ability to take control of their lives and assume the role of successful adults.”
  - Field, Martin, Miller, Ward, & Wehmeyer (1998, p. 2)
An Action Model for Self-Determination

Know Yourself & Your Context
- Dream
- Know your strengths, weaknesses, needs & preferences
- Know options, supports, & expectations
- Decide what is important to you

Value Yourself
- Embrace all aspects of self
- Discover/develop strengths from weaknesses
- Recognize & respect strengths & responsibilities
- Take care of yourself
- Develop & nurture positive relationships

Plan
- Set goals
- Plan actions to meet goals
- Anticipate possible results
- Be creative
- Visually rehearse

Act
- Take risks
- Communicate
- Access resources & support
- Negotiate
- Deal with conflict & criticism
- Be persistent

Experience Outcomes and Learn
- Compare outcomes to expected outcome
- Realize success
- Compare performance to expected performance
- Make adjustments

Reference:
Why Is Self-Determination Important?

• A meta-analysis of 34 studies found that teaching self-determination skills (e.g., self-management and goal setting) to students with LD and/or ADHD could enhance academic performance, particularly in math.

• A significant relationship has been found between self-determination skills and both GPA and retention rates for college students with disabilities.
  - Jameson (2007); Sarver (2000)

• A meta-analysis of self-determination research in college students with disabilities found that an “increase in SD resulted in improvement in other key areas, such as knowledge of accommodation rights and responsibilities, self-advocacy skills, skills in requesting accommodations, and growth in executive functioning skills.”
Why Is Self-Determination Important?

• “Research in the past found that students experienced greater autonomous self-regulation when they perceived greater need support from their social environment, which in turn predicted greater psychological well-being and decreased maladaptive behaviors (Niemiec et al., 2006).”
  - Reported in Leow, Lee, & Lynch (2016, pp. 2-3)

• In a study of 235 college students, higher levels of autonomous self-regulation significantly predicted lower levels of depressive symptoms.
  - Leow et al. (2016)

• Post-school employment success is linked to the ability to take control and make conscious decisions; positive self-esteem and self-confidence are particularly related to employment success in female college graduates with disabilities.
  - DiYenno, Mulvihill, Wessel, & Markle (2019)
Mental Health Issues Limit Self-Determination

- Poor concentration
- Frequent absences
- Social withdrawal
- Limited to no communication with those who could help
- Depression, anxiety, increased risk of suicide
- Impaired problem solving
- Reduced retention/higher drop-out rates:
  - NAMI national report (2012): 64% of those who stated they did not graduate and are no longer attending college claimed a direct relationship with a mental health-related reason.
  - Additionally, 45% of the students responding did not receive support or accommodations and 50% of students did NOT disclose mental health conditions to their college.
Universally Important, Now More than Ever

- Self-determination: Sharon Field, Patricia(Patty) Violi
- Appreciative advising: Jennifer L. Bloom, Ye He, Bryan Hutson
- Universal Design for Instruction: Sally Scott
- Academic Coaching: Jodi Sleeper-Triplett, Christina Fabrey
- Contemplative practices: Sharon Field
- Resilience, grit and mental health: Anna Merrill, David R. Parker
- Students, parents and technology: Colin Beach, Maureen Beach
Promoting Self-Determination (UDI)

• Most relevant Universal Design for Instruction Principles:
  • **Instructional Climate** – create a welcoming environment and open communication channels
  • **Simple and Intuitive** – make course materials and discussion simple to navigate and easy to access for all students
  • **Flexibility** – build in options, supports, and resources that give students flexibility
  • **Classroom community** – promote structures and activities that promote a sense of community

- Sally Scott (2021)
Ten Steps Toward Universal Design of Online Courses

Implementing the principles of universal design in online learning means anticipating the diversity of students that may enroll in your course and planning accordingly. Designing a course with principles of universal design in mind is an ongoing and creative process. One does not achieve the level of usability desired through a simple checklist, but with an open mind and a commitment to making design and inclusion a priority.

There are a few elements, though, that if taken into consideration, can enhance access and usability greatly. Knowing and incorporating these elements on the front end of the design process can save hours down the line.

1. Include a welcoming access statement.
2. Provide simple, consistent navigation.
3. Choose tools carefully.
4. Model and teach good discussion board etiquette.
5. Use color with care.
6. Make sure text is readable.
7. Provide accessible document formats.
8. Describe graphics and visual elements.
10. Rethink, redesign PowerPoint presentations.
Promoting Self-Determination (Academic Coaching)

• Build an environment of trust and safety
  • Share your environment and take interest in the student’s environment.
• Recognize our unconscious biases. Rather than make assumptions, ask students: What do I need to know about your culture or identity to serve you best?
  • https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/
• Begin a session with a quick emotional temperature-taking
  • What is your personal weather status (sunny, cloudy, foggy…) today?
• Holistic check-ins with students about their perceptions of their learning environments
  • What is your support network during this time?
  • What is bringing you energy and joy right now?

- Jodi Sleeper-Triplett and Christina Fabrey (2021)
OnTrack at SU

Constructing your pathway to success

Enhanced academic support program for students with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and learning disabilities (LD)

Mission:
The mission of OnTrack at SU is to engage students in a collaborative coaching model by facilitating self-advocacy, self-awareness, and independence.

Expanded Services:
OnTrack at SU is a fee-based program designed to meet the growing demand for individualized structure and support among Syracuse University students with ADHD and LD. OnTrack expands service options for first-year students with ADHD and LD, aligning with the University’s commitment to meeting the unique needs of today’s students.

Goals:
The program’s goal is to address both academic and social-emotional readiness during the college transition with a focus on building independence and executive functioning. Students will meet regularly with an ADHD coach, who is trained in the internationally recognized JST Coaching & Training program, for academic structure, support, and guidance in connecting with other University and community services.

Focus:
Providing structure and support with time management, organizational skills, self-advocacy, planning, goal setting, self-awareness, creating a personal learning plan, building independence.

Scheduled meetings:
Twice weekly face-to-face meetings, multiple weekly check-ins, individualized support, student-driven plan of action, customized learning profile.

Fees:
$2,800/semester
(need-based scholarships available)

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We would like to recognize the support of
Promoting Self-Determination (Contemplative Practices)

• “Providing students with instruction and resources that help them enhance their awareness, both internally and externally, is essential to supporting increased self-determination. If students know more about what they want as well as the options, barriers, and supports that are available to them, they will be able to make more informed decisions.”

  - Sharon Field (2021)

• Contemplative practices (to model and encourage) include:
  • Meditation
  • Yoga
  • Journaling
  • Mindfulness courses
  • Quiet moments to stretch and reflect
Be REAL Youth Program

Promoting the well-being of college students

What’s Be REAL?

Be REAL (REsilient Attitudes and Living) is a six-week program that promotes college students’ well-being. It equips students with cognitive behavior skills to manage emotions and cope with challenging situations, mindfulness skills to strengthen self-awareness, and practices that promote compassion for themselves and others. Each weekly Be REAL session is 90 minutes and includes group
Promoting self-determination empowers students to discover what they want out of life and learn how to interact with their environment to achieve those goals.

Societal shifts have restricted students’ ability to develop self-determination while growing up.

Pandemic challenges have complicated students’ ability to experience autonomy, competence and relatedness in higher education.

Disability services professionals are uniquely equipped to promote campus practices that strengthen the self-determination of all students.

Now, more than ever, DS professionals can strongly influence the narrative about how to dismantle barriers in learning environments that restrict universal inclusiveness for all students. By claiming a bigger seat at the campus table, we nurture our own self-determination.
A New Paradigm for a New Generation?

- Prince Harry was appointed Chief Impact Officer at Silicon Valley start-up BetterUp, which provides coaching, advice and support for both businesses and organizations.

- "I firmly believe that focusing on and prioritizing our mental fitness unlocks potential and opportunity that we never knew we had inside of us… Being attuned with your mind, and having a support structure around you, are critical to finding your own version of peak performance. What I've learned in my own life is the power of transforming pain into purpose. Self-optimization is not about fixing something that's broken. It's about becoming the best version of ourselves, with whatever life throws at us - someone who is ready for the next challenge and can meet setbacks with courage, confidence, and self-awareness.”

March 23, 2021
Let’s Talk!

• What would you like to discuss?
• Be sure to check out the Resources Guide handout

• Thank you very much for your interest.
Session Evaluation

• Your feedback helps shape future programming.

• Thank you for attending!