

A Tale of Two Learning Communities: Supporting Life, Liberty and Employment for University Students with Disabilities Through Student-Faculty Partnerships

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Intended Audience: Consumers, Education and Rehabilitation Professionals, Employers, Advocates

Session Description

This presentation describes the activities and outcomes of a student learning community and a faculty learning community, both on disability issues, whose purpose is to enhance community involvement and employability of post-secondary students with disabilities. Kent State University's Student Learning Community on Disability Issues was developed to enhance success for students with disabilities and to establish a campus climate that embraces the ideals of inclusion and full participation in society of Americans with disabilities. Open to students with and without disabilities, this learning community promotes an improved understanding of the educational, employment, and independent living issues facing students with disabilities as well as strategies and common solutions to these issues. This learning community facilitates a positive transition to higher education for students with disabilities and helps prepare students for careers in fields related to disability studies. For its part, the Faculty Learning Community on Disability Issues engages Kent State faculty and administration in the same considerations described above. Key activities of this learning community have included the development of an undergraduate minor in disability studies, and Employability Day program designed to place graduating Kent State students with disabilities in competitive jobs, a mentoring program that matches faculty with students with disabilities, and a week-long summer institute that is open to the entire Kent State community.