

Assessment of Inclusive Post-Secondary Education for Young Adults with Developmental Disabilities

Judith Mosoff (University of British Columbia)

Joe Greenholtz (HJG Consulting)

Tamara Hurtado (STEPS Forward)

November 2009

“... what I learned more than anything else is that labels are labels and that’s about it. Once you get to know the individual that label doesn’t stick. You realize you don’t have to speak any differently or act any differently. You don’t have to be condescending or patronizing in any sort of way. It’s not required. Because they’re screaming perfectly well in their own voice. As we all do!”

(Professor, Faculty of Arts, University of British Columbia)



This work was funded by a contribution from the Canadian Council on Learning

All documents produced by the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) will be available in both French and English. However, documents produced by external organizations for CCL will be posted on the website only in the language of origin. When a full translation is not available, CCL will ensure that an executive summary is available in the other official language.

The opinions expressed herein are solely those of the authors. The Canadian Council on Learning bears no responsibility for its content.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
BACKGROUND	6
I. Purpose	6
II. Rationale of Inclusive Post-Secondary Education	7
III. What is Inclusive Post-Secondary Education?	8
ASSESSING INCLUSIVE POST SECONDARY EDUCATION	11
I. Challenges of Assessment	11
II. Approaches Based on Assessment of Programs for Persons with Developmental Disabilities	12
III. Approaches based on the Assessment of Undergraduate Education	13
PARTICIPANTS AND METHODS	15
I. Participants	15
II. Student Profiles	16
III. Methodology	22
RESULTS	23
I. Concerns with the Method of Gathering Data	23
II. Spheres of Analysis	25
A. Components of Inclusive Post-Secondary Education.	25
B. Specific Perspectives vs. Common Overarching Themes	38
DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	41
BIBLIOGRAPHY	44
APPENDICES	47
Appendix I: Student Interview Questions	47
Appendix II: Family Interview Questions	49
Appendix III: Faculty and College/University Teaching Staff Interview Questions	51
Appendix IV: Inclusion Support Staff Interview Questions	52
Appendix V: Non-Academic Staff Interview questions	54
Appendix VI: Data Components of Inclusive Education	56

Executive Summary

Inclusive post-secondary education (IPSE) is relatively new, and sparsely researched. Usually developed through the efforts of parents who have a son or daughter with a developmental disability, IPSE is designed to provide the opportunity for young adults with developmental disabilities to take part in all aspects of the campus life of post-secondary institutions. In this context, the gold standard for inclusion is that the experience of students with developmental disabilities is roughly the same as that of other, more typical undergraduates. This means that students with developmental disabilities participate in regular classes, join clubs based on individual interests, and spend time in more casual environments and at social events. For most purposes, we reject the use of diagnostic labels or psychometric indices to describe persons with developmental disabilities because such categorizations have contributed to the stigmatization of people with developmental disabilities and are irrelevant to the outcomes sought by the students in this context. However, in order to clarify this report, we take the term “developmental disability” to refer to a wide range of labels, conditions, or diagnoses where a person has a mental impairment discerned early in life that affects cognitive functioning, generally.

The project described here is Phase 1 of a three-part study. The overall purpose of the larger study is to develop a comprehensive assessment protocol for inclusive post-secondary education in Canada. We began by examining two other approaches to assessment: assessment techniques commonly used for other programs delivered to persons with developmental disabilities, and tools used to assess undergraduate education generically. Neither approach was entirely appropriate.

The goal of this first phase of the study was to hold preliminary conversations with persons who had significant interests in inclusive post-secondary education in order to identify themes that should be included in an assessment. We held conversations with

32 individuals in British Columbia who were members of five different groups: students, faculty, inclusion staff, non-academic staff, and parents. An analysis of the data suggested a consensus among the groups about what was significant in inclusive post-secondary education. At least three groups identified the following five themes as important:

- confidence
- student engagement
- impact on the institution
- individuality and choice, and,
- authenticity.

While we found agreement among groups about these components, the groups differed on what each considered the most important. We discovered some difficulties with the conversation format for those students with communication challenges, an important absence of input from employers, and the necessity for improved technical resources. Finally, we identified two overarching perspectives that all participant groups mentioned, the challenges or anxiety associated with inclusion and the critical importance of appropriate support.

We recommend moving into the second phase of the research to develop a more comprehensive assessment protocol, based on the testing of the thematic analysis of this study on a regional basis, before moving into the third phase of the research in which data would be collected nationally.

BACKGROUND

I. PURPOSE

The impetus to assess inclusive post-secondary education stems from a number of sources. Governments want to know whether it “works.” The young adult with a developmental disability¹ wants to know whether it is a good option for him or her. Parents seek a way to improve the life chances of their sons and daughters. Colleges and universities would like to find out whether this enhances the institution, while individual faculty members are interested in the impact of inclusive post-secondary on their courses, either in a positive or negative sense. Given the number of differing interests, assessment is a complicated process from the outset.

The overall purpose of this three-phase study was to develop an evaluation protocol for inclusive post-secondary education, a relatively new, complex, and as yet under-researched initiative in education and community living. The current project was Phase 1 of a larger study. It consisted of a series of exploratory conversations held in British Columbia to define the dimensions that would underlie a fuller protocol. Participants in the conversations were associated with inclusive post-secondary initiatives at the University of British Columbia (UBC), the University of Victoria (UVic) and the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design (ECIAD).² At this stage, there was no intention to

¹ In this context “developmental disability” may refer to a wide range of labels, conditions, or diagnosis such as cerebral palsy, or Down Syndrome. Developmental disability is characterized by a mental impairment discerned before adulthood that effects cognitive functioning generally. For the purpose of identifying potential students for inclusive post-secondary education, developmental disability is defined by self identification or identification by family.

² In 2008, this institution acquired university status and is now the Emily Carr University of Art + Design.

evaluate any particular initiative in inclusive post-secondary education at any college or university, nor was there any longitudinal perspective to the experience of inclusive post-secondary education, as was carried out in the groundbreaking work by Anne Hughson et al (2006). Phase 2 would involve the development of the complete protocol. In Phase 3 the assessment technique would be field-tested in three other Canadian jurisdictions.

II. RATIONALE OF INCLUSIVE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Initiatives in inclusive post-secondary education for persons with developmental disabilities address one of the last remaining systemic obstacles for including this population as full members of Canadian society. Although research on post-secondary education suggests that students with developmental disabilities should remain with their peers, rather than be shunted off to specialized semi-segregated environments (Salovita, 2000; Moon and Inge, 2000; Tashie et al, 1998; Smith and Puccini, 1995), impediments to mainstream college and university experiences continue the social “othering” of people (Slee, 2000; Bauman, 1991) of previous eras. Post-secondary inclusion acknowledges an entitlement to an adult life, a fluid trajectory implicit for most people (Corbett and Bartan, 1992), rather than the artificial practice of entering adulthood through structured transition programs designed for an already marginalized group (Uditsky et al, 1988). Inclusive post-secondary education produces economic and social benefits not only for the students with developmental disabilities (Hartt and Zafft, 2002) but also to the institution as a whole (McDonald et al, 1997). Inclusive post-secondary education is not an end unto itself. Instead, it is one conduit to adulthood that includes aspects of a broader set of values that sees people with developmental disabilities as having a valued place in society as true citizens.

III. WHAT IS INCLUSIVE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION?

Over the last twenty-five years, initiatives in inclusive post-secondary education have commenced in at least five jurisdictions in Canada (with Alberta leading the way), as well as internationally.³ Although the term “inclusive post-secondary education” has been used in a variety of ways⁴, we use it to describe a specific set of practices based on the principle of access to education generically, rather than to specialized programs targeted at individuals with developmental disabilities. Inclusive post-secondary education rests on a fundamental principle of “zero exclusion.” This means that level of ability, previous academic performance, or diagnostic categories are not grounds for denial. Motivation to learn is the criterion for acceptance to enrolment in regular post-secondary education programs available to the general population. Thus, we do not take inclusion to mean separate programs that are delivered on the campus of a post-secondary institution, or where opportunities exist for social, but not academic, activities with typical students (Hart et al, 2006). The aim is to offer students with developmental disabilities a full range of opportunities to participate in mainstream college and university life, alongside their non-disabled peers. From a starting point that college or university is a community with a diverse population, students with developmental disabilities are neither set apart from others, nor is their disability hidden. Eventually, their presence in the community should be an entirely unremarkable phenomenon.

³ Salovita T., An Inclusive Adult Education Program for Students with Mild to Severe Developmental Disabilities: Experiences from a Pilot Project in Finland, available at <http://www.STEPS Forward.org/Research-Finland.html>

Wood, M. (2004). An analysis of the accessibility of inclusive post-secondary education at the University of Victoria, available at <http://www.STEPS Forward.org/researchcanada.html>

Zafft, C., Follow-up study of the Post-secondary Education Experiences of Twenty Youth with Cognitive Disabilities. National Center for the Study of Postsecondary Educational Supports, available at <http://www.STEPS Forward.org/Researchunitedstates.html>

⁴ Grantley, J. Towards Inclusion in University of People with Intellectual Disabilities, available at <http://www.STEPS Forward.org/Researchaustralia.html>

Hart, D., Grigal, M., Sax, C., Martinez, D. & Will, M. Postsecondary Education Options for Students with Intellectual Disabilities, available at <http://www.STEPS Forward.org/Researchunitedstates.html>

As it does for typical undergraduates, the inclusive college or university environment creates occasions for:

- furthering education and skills
- promoting employability
- learning and socializing with a diverse range of people
- forming life-defining relationships
- meeting the challenges of student life

Students are not enrolled in degree-granting programs. They are registered as auditing rather than “for credit” students, but take regular courses in the same classes as typical students and complete modified course reading requirements, assignments and exams. Each post-secondary institution sets out the formal framework for auditing status with its own rules for auditing students, such as fee structures, policies about transcripts or obligations of faculty. For example, students at UBC are registered in Access Studies, a generic category created to accommodate a variety of non-typical students who wish to pursue university courses with the proviso that these courses cannot lead to a university degree for credit. Although students audit the courses, they pay full course fees. The majority of students with developmental disabilities at UBC have been associated with the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Education. At UVic, the registration category is participatory auditor. The students at UVic have been involved with courses in a variety of faculties including Human and Social Development, Education, Fine Arts, Social Sciences, Sciences, Engineering, and Humanities. As auditors, students at UVic pay a reduced tuition, which means reduced access to laboratories, tutorials, and studios for some courses. Students at the ECIAD are admitted on the basis of their portfolios. All students with developmental disabilities take a preparatory year of continuing studies to produce a selection of artwork for their portfolios before applying to the Foundation Program (a four-year general program in Art Studies), as do many typical students. Students at ECIAD are registered as auditing students in the Bachelor of Fine Arts

Program with a concentration in a specific area of study. In all three institutions, a transcript shows that the student has completed courses as an auditor.

Students with developmental disabilities are not limited to specific courses, but as with any other auditor, the instructor must agree to accept the student into the class. Students with developmental disabilities are not identified as part of a cohort inside the classroom or in other campus spaces. Instead of any specialized curriculum or designated courses, students choose structured and non-structured activities both inside and outside of courses, based on individual interest. During the summer, as part of a co-op program, they find paid jobs, which provide income, apply knowledge gained from courses, and test the waters for a potential career. The principle of zero exclusion in inclusive post-secondary education means that students participate in courses, complete selected reading and writing assignments, presentations and exams, regardless of level of ability. Additionally, outside of the formal obligations of courses and summer work, students are engaged in many other activities such as clubs or recreational activities. They spend much of their time in completely informal settings such as cafeterias or other student spaces, where students simply talk, listen to music, drink beer, or study.

Students with developmental disabilities apply to an inclusion service for specialized support. Any person with a developmental disability can apply to receive the support required. In some cases the institution itself provides the inclusion supports, while a non-profit society delivers the supports in other initiatives. Criteria for receiving inclusion supports include motivation, interests, and individual goals that are consistent with the offerings of the institution. Students selected for the support service would not meet the academic criteria necessary for regular admission to the institution. Students with better reading, social, communication or other abilities are not given preference. However, the availability of inclusion supports limits the number of students supported. After a 4-to-5-year period of study, the student participates in a graduating ceremony and receives a Diploma of Completion.

STEPS- Forward Inclusive Post-Secondary Society (STEPS Forward), a non-profit society, provides inclusion supports for post-secondary students with developmental disabilities in British Columbia. This occurs in two contexts: support during the academic year from September through April (STEPS Campus), and in the employment context during the summer from April through August (STEPS Co-op). Inclusion support staff provide support to students at UBC, UVic and ECIAD. Thus, the educational program is delivered on a 12-month basis, with paid relevant employment expected during the summer months, and support provided on a year-round basis by STEPS Forward. The role of the inclusion staff is unique. In addition to supporting students to choose courses, complete course work, and participate in extracurricular activities, they liaise with the student, families, faculty, student services and other members of the post-secondary community in order to promote inclusion. Each student requires an individualized approach to support. Staff do not go to classes with students, or provide tutoring, or direct academic instruction. Rather, they must perform their role as invisibly as possible.

ASSESSING INCLUSIVE POST SECONDARY EDUCATION

I. CHALLENGES OF ASSESSMENT

The sparse research on the assessment of inclusive post-secondary education is a result of both its novelty and complexity. We began from two major starting points. First, we considered evaluation techniques based on methods previously used to assess other programs delivered to people with developmental disabilities. For many years, other services and programs for adults with developmental disabilities, such as employment programs or life-skills training, have been subject to evaluation. However, it was not clear that these would be relevant to the assessment of post-secondary inclusion. Secondly, we looked at an evaluation using tools developed to assess typical undergraduate education. As educational policymakers define an increasingly complex

mandate for undergraduate education, the assessment of the experience for typical students is itself challenging and goes beyond quantitative measurements of the achievements of individuals. It is to these two approaches that we now turn.

II. APPROACHES BASED ON ASSESSMENT OF PROGRAMS FOR PERSONS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Under the general category of assessments of programs for persons with developmental disabilities, the literature reveals the following three relevant perspectives: person-centred planning, quality of life assessments, and social role valorization (Greenholtz, 2007). According to Holborn et al (2000), the aim of person-centred planning is to re-design systems to support “consumer-defined outcomes” (p. 404) with an emphasis on a search for capacity within the individual person as well as family, friends, and community. This approach is a reaction to generic services that have failed to respond to the unique wants, needs, and histories of the individual receiving the service, who has often been silent in the process. Person-centred planning (O’Brien, 1987) takes seriously the plight of the person who exists at the margins, with a voice rarely heard, and considers the specific needs and desires of individuals. It evaluates success by looking at the means of setting and realizing self-defined goals.

A second method to assess services for persons with developmental disabilities focuses on quality of life assessments. This approach uses standard measures of overall general well-being. However, quality of life assessments can include both objective and subjective evaluations of physical, material, social, and emotional well-being together with the extent of personal development and purposeful activity, in the context of a personal set of values (Felce and Perry, 1995). In the field of special education, quality of life has emerged as an important concept, affecting both systems for delivering supports and their evaluation (Keith and Schalock, 1994; Schalock, 1995).

A final approach from the developmental disability literature is based in the concept of Social Role Valorisation (SRV) (Wolfensberger and Thomas, 1983; Wolfensberger, 1992). According to Wolfensberger (2000), the fundamental premise of SRV is that the welfare of a person depends extensively on the social roles he or she occupies. People who fill roles that are positively valued will generally be afforded the good things of life by others, but people who fill roles that are devalued by others will typically get badly treated by them. Social role valorization emphasises both the message and image imparted by a particular social role (Wolfensberger and Thomas, 1983). The impetus to afford people with developmental disabilities the opportunity to occupy the socially valued role of university or post-secondary student is consistent with SRV.

Before inclusive post-secondary education was a real option, the choices available to young adults with developmental disabilities leaving high school were limited to segregated skills-based training, segregated work programs, and day programs. These options were amenable to traditional instruments because they were really variants on other services. The limited outcomes anticipated were more likely to focus on the acquisition of specific skills or pre-employment readiness. Inclusive post-secondary envisions broader, more complex benefits, as expected for typical undergraduates. With the exception of the ideas associated with SRV, we found the other traditional approaches insufficient to form the basis of an assessment of inclusive post-secondary education.

III. APPROACHES BASED ON THE ASSESSMENT OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

A different starting point for assessment of inclusive post-secondary education moves away from the focus on developmental disability and looks instead to assessment tools used to measure the success of typical undergraduate education, where the current trend

is to address the relationship between the student and the institution. In recognizing the complicated dimensions of a successful post-secondary experience, modern assessment has moved away from simple quantitative measures of outcomes such as number of degrees completed, or number of students employed upon graduation. There is now more attention on the inherent benefits of the experience itself. This approach puts significantly more obligation on colleges and universities to support students in all their ongoing activities at the institution rather than a fixed orientation toward graduation. Increasingly popular is the National Survey of Student Engagement⁵ (NSSE), a survey that measures student engagement in a particular post-secondary institution. The NSSE is built on the principle that the success of an undergraduate experience depends most significantly on what a student does, rather than who s/he is, or which institution s/he attends. Valuing student engagement means increased responsibility on the institution to provide meaningful, interesting, and diverse opportunities for students.

The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education reflect a similar concern with the undergraduate experience.⁶ These guidelines prescribe standards of professional practice to guide higher education practitioners and their institutions, especially in regard to work with college students. Principles include the recognition of diversity, consideration of the student as a unique, whole person, acknowledgement that individualized resources are necessary, and a commitment to the whole of an environment as educational. Institutions are responsible for creating learning environments that provide a choice of educational opportunities and challenge students to learn and develop, while providing support to nurture their development.

Our working hypothesis was that an appropriate evaluative framework would of necessity be an amalgam of the above approaches. Since the objective of this stage of

⁵ National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). Bloomington, IN: Center for Postsecondary Research, Indiana University.

⁶ Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS). (1986). CAS Standards and Guidelines for Student Service Development Programs. Iowa City: American College Testing Program.

the research was to identify a range of factors considered important in the evaluation of inclusive post-secondary education, we anticipated incorporating elements from each of the above in our semi-structured conversations.

PARTICIPANTS AND METHODS

I. Participants

Participants were drawn from one educational jurisdiction, British Columbia, with representation from UBC, UVic and ECIAD. Our overall approach in Phase 1 was to hold a series of exploratory conversations with members of five groups that are integral to inclusive post-secondary education. We wanted to solicit their views about the dimensions important to any assessment of inclusive post-secondary education. These groups included students, faculty, non-academic staff of the institutions, families, and inclusion staff. There was a total of thirty-two participants, comprised of:

Category	Description	#
Students	Students with developmental disabilities whose inclusion was supported by the staff of STEPS Forward. Brief profiles of these students are provided below.	8
Families	Parents of students with developmental disabilities.	8
Faculty	Members of faculty who have, at some point, taught a student with a developmental disability since 2002 at UBC, UVic or ECIAD. Faculty were drawn from the Faculty of Education, the School of Social Work and the departments of Psychology, English, Anthropology, Religious Studies, Biology.	7
Non-Academic Staff	Staff members at the college or university who were involved with extra-curricular activities or particular student services. They included the manager of a campus radio station, a worker at a Women’s Centre and a staff member from a Transition Centre, a service designated to assist students	3

	moving from the high school experience to university.	
Inclusion Staff	Inclusion facilitators employed by STEPS Forward who Support students at UBC, UVic and ECIAD	6

Although we emphasize the varying interests of the different groups affected by inclusive post-secondary education, it is students with developmental disabilities who are new to the post-secondary environment. They must be considered the most prominent group. In order to provide further context to this report, we will now highlight the individual circumstances of the students.⁷ We do not describe the level of ability of any individual student. Initially selected in part to ensure that a range of abilities was represented,⁸ none of the students has a high school diploma.

II. Student Profiles

“Rita Talavera”

Age: 20 years
PSE: Emily Carr institute of Art + Design
Program of Study: Bachelor of Fine Arts
Level of Study: 1st year

⁷ In order to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, the interviewees have been given pseudonyms.

⁸ Consistent with the policy of de-emphasizing levels of ability, there are no measurements of literacy, numeracy or other academic performance attached to any individual. Abilities range widely across this group of students. Some students cannot read, tell time, or do simple arithmetic. Other individuals perform at higher levels.

Background: In spite of being just out of high school, her art portfolio is extensive so the requirement to complete one year of portfolio preparation before entering the program was waived. Rita spent most of her high school experience in segregated resource rooms. She is finding social integration at ECIAD a challenge. She is extremely dedicated and determined to be a successful ECIAD student. She commutes 3 hours a day to attend, and has already scheduled a showing of her art at a local gallery.

“Adele Radcliff”

Age: 25 years

PSE: University of British Columbia

Program of Study: Bachelor of Arts - concentration in Psychology

Level of Study: 2nd year

Background: Adele enjoys public speaking and looks forward to a career in either advocacy, or work with children in special education. This year she is taking courses in Women’s Studies and Educational Psychology. Her experience this year is also quite different from last year. Last year she took courses in English Literature, Women’s Studies, and Family Studies. Her focus was extremely academic. This year Adele has reduced her course load and expanded her interests in her own spirituality and emotional well-being. She has participated in meetings of the Intervarsity Christian Fellowship, and she attends the Wellness Centre. Adele has begun to establish friendships from her contacts. She wants to take courses in religion and education next term. As well, Adele has experimented with classes in dance and meditation. The greatest change has been her taking control over what she wants

her educational experience to be. She has described her experience as a student as expanding her horizons, but does not feel she has established the social life she had hoped for.

“Makena Marlow”

Age: 25 years

PSE: Emily Carr institute of Art + Design

Program of Study: Portfolio Preparation – Foundation Program

Level of Study: Portfolio Prep Year

Background: Makena has taken two courses per term over the last two years. She was living at home last year but is currently living semi-independently. She attributes the confidence necessary to make this move to her experience as a student. Makena was invited to apply for formal admissions to the Foundation Program after completing her first year and portfolio. Because of the huge changes in her life over the past year, she has chosen to continue to take continuing studies courses at ECIAD. She works at a theatre two days a week.

“Elinor Everard”

Age: 21 years

PSE: Emily Carr institute of Art + Design

Program of Study: Bachelor of Fine Arts

Level of Study: 2nd year

Background: Elinor applied to ECIAD 4 years ago, but was turned down because she has only a high school leaving certificate, as opposed to a formal high school diploma. Elinor’s art is central to her being and she has been dedicated to it daily since her early teens. Last year Elinor took continuing studies courses to prepare her portfolio for acceptance to ECIAD. Her portfolio specializes in ink drawings and watercolour. Accepted into the program this year, Elinor has taken Art History, Drawing and Painting. Elinor works at a local art gallery.

“Jin Kinsley”

Age: 28 years

PSE: University of British Columbia

Program of Study: Bachelor of Arts - concentration in Political Science

Level of Study: 2nd year

Background: Jin is 28 years old and in his 3rd term at UBC. This is Jin’s first experience being fully included in school. He has a keen interest in political science and astrology. Jin studied political science and geography during his first term. This year he is taking classical studies, political science, and Canadian literature. Due to physical limitations, Jin takes notes using a tape recorder. Jin is pursuing his interest in political science with the Language Circle at International House and dropping in at the International House lunches. Language Circle practices different languages once a week by having students exchange terms from their native languages with students from different language backgrounds.

“Angela Powers”

Age:	28 years
PSE:	University of Victoria
Program of Study:	Psychology
Level of Study:	1 st year
Background:	Angela went to her community high school in Victoria. She enjoys wheelchair square dancing, going to the gym, and reading. Maintaining a keen interest in how the brain works, Angela would like to focus her post-secondary studies in psychology. In her first year, she took the introductory psychology classes. She would like to pursue this subject in second year, possibly taking courses such as Infant and Child Development and Health Psychology. Very focused on her academic achievements, Angela uses inclusion staff to modify textbook information and exams.

“Samantha Parks”

Age:	21 years
PSE:	University of Victoria
Program of Study:	unsure- trying out Film Studies and Sciences
Level of Study:	1 st year
Background:	Samantha was fully included in two high schools in the Greater Victoria area, finishing at South Island Distance Education School. Sam loves bowling, singing, and watching movies. She was unclear of her university goals when she first started at UVic. In her first year, she took film Studies, and earth and ocean

science. Over her first year, Sam revealed her love for going to the gym, belly dancing, and yoga. She took UVic exercise and dance classes, and joined the yoga club. Sam is using inclusion staff to explore PE and health-related classes such as Human Wellness and Potential and Recreational Dance for her second year. Staff are working to find Sam summer employment and are looking at possibilities at a local bakery.

“Jane Powell”

Age:	20 years
PSE:	University of Victoria
Program of Study:	unsure - trying out Music and Sociology
Level of Study:	1 st year
Background:	Jane was fully included during high school in Vancouver and Victoria. Jane did an extra year of high school in Victoria before starting at UVic. Jane is a frequent public speaker. She is known for her work in the Community Living movement. She belongs to a youth group that does presentations on inclusion in public schools. Jane loves popular culture and music, so she decided to try the Music department for her first course at university. The course ended up being very ‘classics’ focused and so Jane is looking into second-year classes in Public Speaking in the Theatre department. She enjoyed her second class in sociology, but will perhaps try something more specific such as Disability Studies in the new semester.

III. Methodology

To gather information, we developed a set of questions that would evolve and grow as the conversations progressed, a method modelled on grounded theory (Corbin and Strauss, 1990). The idea behind grounded theory is that a framework develops from the data gathered, to explain a phenomenon. In an iterative process, a thematic analysis begins early in the data gathering process that starts with open-ended questions. Emerging concepts are constantly compared with subsequent data until no new ideas or concepts emerge. In short, while we began the first conversations with some sense of the dimensions of inclusion, our task was to flesh out the range and depth of what others saw as important permitting those groups with interests in inclusive post-secondary education to provide direction to the research in phases 2 and 3 of the research.

Bearing in mind the broad parameters described above --of person-centred planning, quality of life, SRV, standards of education, and student engagement, our conversations began with open-ended questions about inclusion in post-secondary settings. As we progressed, we incorporated input from conversations held early in the process, into later conversations. Examples of additional areas included discussion about the discrepancy between abstract fears and the reality of the experience, as well as the significance of previous experiences with inclusion in other settings. Although the conversations were loosely set along the same parameters, the emphasis changed to fit the role of the individual in the process of inclusive post-secondary education. Consistent with the methodology of grounded theory, the final framework for conversation reflected a cumulative vision of indices of successful inclusion derived from the conversations themselves (Appendix 1).

Conversations lasted from 45 minutes to two hours. We decided it would be most practical to use inclusion staff to speak with the students since they were familiar with their speech and manner. For consistency, the inclusion staff also spoke with faculty,

non-academic staff of the institutions, and families. The Executive Director of STEPS Forward interviewed the inclusion staff.

All conversations were recorded with a simple tape machine, then transcribed and coded by two independent transcribers. The coding process evolved in much the same way as the conversation framework was formulated. Starting with themes based on the review of assessment approaches described above, the codes were expanded to reflect the new ideas brought by the individuals with whom we spoke.

After the final determination of the themes, the data were re-analyzed separately by the two observers. Only where both observers agreed that a particular comment fell into a theme, was the statement ultimately assigned to that theme.

RESULTS

Our results indicated some general problems with the data gathering process. Despite these concerns, we saw two spheres of analysis emerge from the conversations. The first sphere of analysis suggested a consensus around five themes that mark successful inclusion. These would form the framework to develop a further protocol. The second sphere focused on the different emphases of the groups. Here we identified the priorities articulated by each group of participants.

I. Concerns with the Method of Gathering Data

The primary concern with the data gathering was that the format was inappropriate for many of the students. We found students were extremely compliant in the interviews

and gave what seemed to be overly positive answers about their post-secondary experience. They were reluctant to disclose any disappointments, difficulties, or to make suggestions for improvements. Although we were careful to explain that the information was confidential and there were no “right” answers, the results suggest a tendency to answer in a manner that confirmed the goals of inclusive post-secondary education, answers that would please the other person in the conversation. While the decision to use inclusion staff was an attempt to create a relaxed environment, the students may have been particularly shy to express any negative feelings to the support staff.

The students also had difficulty answering questions that depended on time projections, especially where these involved comparing experiences from one time to another. Many of the students had poorly developed concepts about time over a range of contexts. During the conversations, it was sometimes difficult for students to remember and compare, with any detail, their high school experiences and their post-secondary experiences. Similarly, most students were unable to project themselves 5-10 years into the future and to anticipate how their post-secondary experience would relate to their lives. The abstract or hypothetical nature of the question was probably too difficult, producing answers that were not helpful

Another problem with the data gathering arose from the poor quality of the technology used. Unfortunately, the recording devices were not very good. Compounding the problems with the recording equipment, conversations often took place in locations where there was background noise, like coffee shops or lounge areas at the college or university. While we selected these venues deliberately to increase the comfort level of the participants, the noisy environments made the sound quality of the recordings even worse. Several students are non-verbal, using communication devices instead of speaking which further exacerbated the problem of poor sound transmission. The

combined result of these problems was that some data were lost and some transcriptions were incomplete.

A final weakness in the data collection was a failure to arrange conversations with employers. Inclusive post-secondary education as practiced in British Columbia always incorporates an employment component. One assumption of inclusive post-secondary education is that it produces benefits in developing skills to initiate and maintain real relationships. It is assumed that this leads to more successful inclusion in a variety of settings, including more rewarding and long-term employment, and retention of social connections. In British Columbia, STEPS Forward delivers its service on the year-round model of co-op education; an increasingly important program in many colleges and universities, more generally. While increased employability is decidedly not the only goal of inclusive post-secondary education, the workplace community is another important vantage point from which to look at inclusion.

II. Spheres of Analysis

A. Components of Inclusive Post-Secondary Education.

The analysis revealed five components of inclusive post-secondary education considered important by members of at least three groups.⁹ These were:

- Effects on the developing confidence of the student (**Confidence**)
- Engagement of the student in ongoing processes at college or university (**Student Engagement**)
- Impact of students with developmental disabilities on the life of the institution (**Impact on the institution**)

⁹ Three groups represent a simple majority of the five groups of participants.

- Recognition of individuality of each student with a developmental disability (**Individuality and choice**)
- Authenticity and coherence of the experience with that of the typical undergraduate student (**Authenticity**).

As expected, the particular focus, within each component identified, varied with the perspective of the interviewee. In order to demonstrate the complexities of each component, we will begin the description of each with one interview extract to provide a highlight of its meaning from an overall perspective. Within each section, we will outline the approach to the component taken by each of the three groups. Appendix VI: Data Components of Inclusive Education, sets out examples from the data, from each group of interviewees, which identified a component as important.

a. Confidence: Social Role Valorization and enhanced aspiration

This component connects the experience of post-secondary education with an increase in students' confidence, self-esteem, and competence to engage in further socially valued activities. A key premise of inclusive post-secondary education is that being a college or university student is a socially valued role in our society, one that produces a shift in one's own identity and in others' perceptions. Moving the individual to a more valued status affects the perceptions of others, but the individual also becomes more committed and confident in pursuing important goals and dreams. Thus, encouraging persons with developmental disabilities to flourish in the socially valued role of post-secondary student should produce the confidence to try things otherwise considered beyond the reach of persons with developmental disabilities.

We heard this cycle described by all of the groups, albeit with differing emphases. While some interviewees focused on perceptions of competence in academic skills that

arose from the post-secondary experience, others stressed the social relationships and sense of identity that emerged. Here we report the issue of confidence from the vantage point of students, non-academic staff, and families

(i) Students

“In high school I was kinda put to the side like ‘we don’t know what to do with you so here is this room at the back of the school’ . . . you know every single year you get the same socials and the same history and every year you get the same book, same page like nothing would ever change . . . I mean it was awful.

My favourite memory was the first day of my first year at Emily Carr. It was in the auditorium and I was sitting there with 200 students that had been selected that year and I was one of them. Hearing that was really amazing and people from Mexico and Russia and all over Europe and Italy. I was basically told that there would be no hope of ever going because I was disabled.

I’ve always wanted to be an artist since I was little. So that’s what I planned to do and that’s what I’m doing now.”

ECIAD Student, 3rd Year

For all of the students, the most important benefit of inclusive post-secondary education was an increase in self-esteem. Every student mentioned an increase in his or her confidence and a brighter outlook for the future. Students told us that they had gained enough confidence to believe they would get good jobs after completing college or university. As well, students told us that making friends with typical students in elite institutions enhanced their own social status. One student said that her high school counsellor told her she could ‘never, never, never’ go to university. Now that she was a student, she realized that she could look for the same jobs as other students.

(ii) Families

Parents were very sensitive to the importance of SRV and the enhanced expectations that ensued for their sons and daughters, especially in relation to employment. In contrasting

the college programs for persons with developmental disabilities that concentrated only on developing employment readiness, parents commented on the poor possibilities for meaningful jobs. They told us they were convinced that their sons and daughters could exceed the expectations usually set for them.

However, parents were clear that the benefit of the student role went beyond the acquisition of specific employment skills. While some parents referred to the formal content of courses, the emphasis was on learning social “keys”, patterns of social contact and conversation within our culture. Most important was the confidence the role brought and the change in the perception of others. One parent described the role of university student as a type of negotiable currency that immediately enhanced social opportunities.

(iii) Non-academic staff

Non-academic staff told us that they observed persons “grow” into their roles as students. Students increasingly identified with particular roles they chose to assume in the non-academic life of the campus, such as the role of radio station volunteer or transition centre worker, nurturing the sense that they were able to contribute to the campus community. In combination, the acquisition of useful skills and identification with a valued role produced significantly increased confidence. Non-academic staff told us that the increase in confidence was a process that occurred over time, not by a “sink or swim” approach to inclusion but with the artful inclusion support provided in British Columbia by STEPS Forward.

b. Student Engagement

“You know I was researching for my psychology paper and I found out more about myself . . .it made me feel good because I know who I am through these courses. I enjoyed taking the literature courses. I love reading and that’s who I am . . .I am a reader. I am a writer..

Fourth Year Student, UBC

Student engagement refers to the nature and degree of involvement of the student in the ongoing life of the institution, the emphasis being on the range and intensity of what the student does in the college or university experience. Engagement could refer to any aspect of student life: participation in classroom activities, course material, structured extracurricular activities, friendships, or informal social events. In this section we describe the importance of engagement from the perspective of students, faculty and inclusion staff.

(i) Students

Some students became completely involved in their course work, expressing a complete engagement with their intellectual endeavour, including the expectations for reading, studying, and discussions and completing assignments. Totally immersed in her courses, one student described engagement in her academic studies as a way of finding joy and validating her identity. Many art students described a similar process. Their activities as artists, a central aspect of their identities, constituted the significant aspect of their experience.

Other students spoke more enthusiastically about their involvement in extracurricular activities, such as volunteer work at a campus Women's Centre. Outside the classroom, students tested interests, political views, or fitness regimes. As such, their engagement with the institution focused on varying aspects of extra-curricular activities, rather than exclusively on classes and courses. In some cases, the student came into contact with like-minded people such as in religious clubs that held discussion groups about doctrine and organized charity events such as Hallowe'en door-to-door drives for the food bank. In other cases, the activity itself engaged the student, such as the experience in radio work or the bicycle repair co-op, which represented both a long-standing interest and a career goal.

(ii) Faculty

Faculty members said that the degree to which students with developmental disabilities engaged was roughly similar to typical students, acknowledging that both typical students and students with developmental disabilities failed to engage with classes universally. Despite any preconceived notions to the contrary, teaching faculty described the personalized, unusual, sometimes intense ways that students engaged with academic material. Often faculty referred to the unique slant that the student brought to the curriculum characterized by unusual humour, interpretation, or application of concepts. For example, one faculty member in the School of Social work described the enthusiasm with which a student with a developmental disability was able to translate theoretical concepts into the experience of his everyday life by completing a project on aggression based on observations and interviews at the campus arcade.

(iii) Inclusion Staff

Inclusion staff took a more practical perspective in their comments on engagement. Recognizing that a disengaged student is not, and cannot be, included in the sense anticipated in initiatives in inclusive post-secondary education, the inclusion staff saw the fundamental goal of their jobs as promoting student engagement. Not surprisingly, they spoke about the challenges and the need for creativity and patience in looking for ways to facilitate the engagement of each individual. Inclusion staff told us that certain classroom techniques such as group projects were more likely than individual reading assignments to promote student engagement. Several staff spoke of the ripple effect of engagement. If students were engaged in their courses or other activities, they were more likely to become involved with other people as friends and with different aspects of the campus experience. Thus, it was important to find an initial niche for a particular student's involvement in the post-secondary experience in order to facilitate broader satisfaction.

c. Impact on the Institution.

“If you want an experience that enriches the classroom, then do it. Really. If you’re concerned about intrusiveness . . .no, doesn’t happen. If you’re concerned that these students or the others will flunk, nope, doesn’t happen. If you want to see the light in someone’s eyes who’s actually learning and experiencing and engaging with the materials, then I’d say it’s something you should do.”

(Professor, Faculty of Arts, University of British Columbia)

This component refers to the ways that inclusion affects ongoing processes at the university or college, either within the classroom or outside. Closely related to the component of student engagement, this component is really the institutional perspective of the same phenomenon. Predictably, comments about impact on the institution from faculty members were most frequently related to course work and classroom atmosphere. However, persons involved in extra-curricular contexts at the institution also spoke about the impact of students with developmental disabilities on campus services and clubs. Inclusion staff, who work with members of all the groups interviewed in this sample, also believed that impact on the institution was a critical component of inclusion.

(i) Faculty

Many faculty members admitted strong initial misgivings, worrying about the increase to their workload as well as the venture into the unknown. Their concerns tended to dissipate with the experience. At the outset, faculty members often wondered what kind of adjustments they would need to make, how much extra time inclusion would involve, whether they had the proper expertise, and what the student would get out of a subject

geared to the advanced level of a post-secondary course. Despite their initial concerns, faculty members said they were bound to cover a planned curriculum, and did not change their teaching techniques in any fundamental way. Contrary to the concern that students with developmental disabilities would have a negative effect, many faculty members reported that a student with a developmental disability enriched the course in explicit ways. For example, one faculty member reported that the student with a developmental disability had taken the initiative to form study groups in the class. According to this faculty member, the study groups were the key to bringing the class together. A faculty member in the Psychology department explained that she tried to impart a critical perspective on the traditional conceptions of intelligence or I.Q., her message being that other forms of intelligence are equally important, especially “emotional intelligence” (an increased sensitivity to or intuition regarding the feelings of others) rather than cognitive abilities. When this faculty member spilled her own coffee all over the stage during a lecture, the student with the developmental disability was the only person to get a towel and help her after the mishap. Another faculty member described the importance of true diversity in his class as presenting teaching opportunities that are unavailable when a group is more homogeneous. From his perspective, a mix of students from different backgrounds, possessing varied abilities and interests, inevitably enhances learning.

Not every comment was positive. One faculty member described the challenges that came with a small seminar and the need to re-think group dynamics in this environment, where the level of discussion was abstract and intense. However, the presence of the student with a developmental disability produced numerous subtle and unexpected positive effects in the smaller group. For example, students who felt inhibited about expressing opinions during tutorials were more likely to become involved in the discussion; teaching assistants became more practiced in identifying the essential elements of the discussion topics and explaining them to the class as a whole.

(ii) Non-academic staff

Outside of the classroom, non-academic staff interpreted the impact of inclusion apart from classes, course work, and formal study. These interviewees spoke of the ways that the inclusion of students with developmental disabilities affected the specific mandate of the club, organization, or activity and helped to promote values and skills associated with citizenship. For example, a staff member at a women's centre described the important role of the student with a developmental disability in its efforts to make the centre a welcoming place for women of different characteristics. As well, non-academic staff referred to the ways that the presence of students with developmental disabilities produced positive outcomes for the greater student body. For example, a campus radio station manager described how a student volunteer with a developmental disability had precipitated a clearer training procedure, a process that clearly benefited all trainees.

(iii) Inclusion Staff

Inclusion staff observed that the presence of a student with a developmental disability brought subtle, but important, changes in teaching style. For example, inclusion staff thought that faculty members spoke more plainly and slowly when there was a student with a developmental disability in the class. As well, inclusion staff mentioned that their own conversations with faculty resulted in unanticipated benefits for other students, such as a fuller and more detailed description of course expectations to the class that followed a conversation about modified assignments for one student with a developmental disability.

d. Individualized Paths and Autonomy

“ . . . what I learned more than anything else is that labels are labels and that’s about it. Once you get to know the individual that label doesn’t stick. You realize you don’t have to speak any differently or act any differently. You don’t have to be condescending or patronizing in any sort of way. It’s not required. Because they’re screaming perfectly well in their own voice. As we all do!”

(Professor, Faculty of Arts, University of British Columbia)

The next component refers to the recognition that each student with a developmental disability is a unique individual, defined less significantly by disability than by many other personal characteristics. As all other undergraduates, students with developmental disabilities have different career goals, interests, talents and personalities, during this period of their lives they become increasingly autonomous adults with the right to make their own choices, sometimes good and sometimes not. In this section, we discuss individuality, choice, and autonomy from the perspective of students, inclusion staff, parents and non-academic institutional staff

(i) Students

For many students, the reality of choice was a new experience. An art student told us that in a segregated setting at high school her choices were discounted. Until her inclusion at ECIAD, a standard repetitive curriculum in many high school subjects with no advancement in art skills undermined her lifelong desire to pursue art. Some students told us that, they found making decisions difficult despite the fact that it made them feel more like adults. Several students said they had not been allowed to take any chances in the past. As a result, making decisions now created great anxiety in many contexts, from relatively straightforward matters such as choosing between a course in art history or religious studies, to more complicated questions like whether or not to go on a pub crawl.

(ii) Families

Parents emphasized that their sons and daughters were increasingly insistent that they wanted to make more choices for themselves, and were generally more assertive about what they wanted to do. One parent told us that, unlike previous occasions when her son would take any job that he could get, he refused a summer job that did not interest him. In contrast to other programs for young adults with developmental disabilities, parents said that inclusive post-secondary recognized and supported their sons and daughters in their unique career goals, interests and talents. A parent told us that her daughter aspired to be a creative writer, but this goal was discouraged in college pre-employment programs for adults with developmental disabilities, since it was not one of the employment options connected to the program. This parent was impressed with the support for her unique path in an inclusive setting and its implications for the long term. In her view, it was likely that this pattern would continue beyond graduation because of the support her daughter received in forging her own path in the university or college experience.

(iii) Inclusion Staff

The inclusion staff described the ambivalence they observed in students who were working out their need for independence and the need for support. Through the practical experience of supporting students through difficult points in their college and university experience, the inclusion staff underscored the particular challenges of asserting autonomy for students with developmental disabilities. Inclusion staff commented that families continue to play a very large role in the lives of their sons and daughters in contrast to other post-secondary students. The inclusion staff saw their role as acknowledging the varied ways in which individual choices should be honoured.

e. Authenticity

...when Reading Break came, they were glad. Now they were going to be working over the reading break, reading some extra texts and getting ready for the assignments that were coming up after the reading break. So to me there was no difference from any other student. They were obviously connected to the classes they were in . . . I saw that as being a success. I heard no difference in their comments”

(Student Transition Centre Staff, University of Victoria)

This component captures the extent to which the presence of students with developmental disabilities blends with the experience of typical students, measuring the success of inclusion of students with developmental disabilities by the total unremarkability of their presence. To some interviewees, this component reflected the authenticity of the experience. The extent to which opportunities, expectations, processes, and consequences for the student with a disability approximate those of the typical student, should create a sense, both for the student with a developmental disability and others, that the experience is real and genuine, not just a limited imitation version of a college or university education.

(i) Families

Parents described the importance of particular courses and services in the same terms as other persons of the age of their son or daughter. One parent told us that she was delighted that her daughter would choose a course in women’s studies because this was a priority in the education of any young woman. Another parent stressed the importance of her son taking tests and exams and completing assigned projects, even if these were somewhat stressful, in part, because the shared experience of anxiety was an important element of the university experience. Yet another parent commented on the significance of her daughter seeking out counselling services on campus; the use of generic resources being a sign that she belonged in that community.

(ii) Faculty

Faculty told us that it was important that students with developmental disabilities were seen as part of a diverse population within a class. For the most part, faculty members told us that these students did not stand out, although this took some time with certain students. In order to encourage authenticity, faculty mentioned the importance of students with developmental disabilities participating in all aspects of the academic experience. For example, one faculty member mentioned that the restrictions on labs that came with the status of an auditor, led classmates to question the legitimacy of that student as a genuine member of the class.

(iii) Non Academic Staff

The non-academic staff witnessed the cycles of student life both through individual academic years and over the course of students' four-to-five year sojourns at college or university. They told us that they observed patterns in the lives of students with developmental disabilities identical to those of more typical students, suggesting that the experiences were similar. All students displayed typical patterns of anxiety that occurred during exam periods or around due dates for term papers. When they were new at the institution, they were often nervous, gradually easing into the student role over the course of three or four years. By the end of their studies, many students were ready to move on, while others were reluctant to leave the campus environment.

Not surprisingly, each group had a unique emphasis. It is to these specific perspectives that we now turn our attention.

B. Specific Perspectives vs. Common Overarching Themes

In contrast to the first sphere of analysis that rested on consensus among groups, the second sphere of analysis looked at agreement within groups. Here we identify the modal response of the group; the component mentioned most frequently by members of the particular category.

For students, the most important aspect of inclusive post-secondary education is the confidence they acquire. Not one of the students said they had enjoyed high school. They reported feeling marginalized and bored regardless of whether they were in a segregated or an integrated environment. When included at college or university, students felt free, a context which, over time, increased their feelings of independence and confidence.

The most common family response also referred to confidence. Responses from families were unique because these represent a perception over time. Unlike the faculty or staff who had a single snapshot in time of a student, families had the longer view of the individual and their comments had a more global quality. Families noted that their son or daughter was more determined, confident or “had something to say now” because of the college or university experience.

For faculty members, the universal concern was about the potential impact of inclusion on themselves or their classrooms. Most often, the worry was about an increased workload. Faculty also felt anxious about teaching a person with a developmental disability in the post-secondary environment, having never done that before. Despite their initial reservations, every faculty member who had taught one student was willing to teach another. In no case did the faculty member explicitly modify their teaching technique, curriculum, or course requirements because of the student with a

developmental disability. For many, the experience turned out to be a pleasant surprise with unexpected benefits to class dynamics.

Non-academic staff shared the concern of faculty members regarding impact on the institution. However, they stressed particular ways that inclusion enriched the environment. Less focussed on the academic purposes of the post-secondary education, these interviewees looked at inclusion through the more specific lens of extracurricular activity or campus service. Including students with developmental disabilities invariably broadened the ambit of the club or service, driving home the message that post-secondary education involves learning to be good citizens.

The most common response of inclusion staff was engagement, with an emphasis on the complexity and practicality of engaging students with development disabilities. Since the specific job of members of this group is to promote inclusion, they inevitably interact with all of the groups, the students themselves, their families, and the faculty and campus staff. As a result, the perspective of inclusion staff referred to the nuances, challenges, and inconsistencies in encouraging engagement.

Apart from the five components of inclusion identified through the interviews, two additional overarching perspectives emerged. First, all subject groups said they were tentative when first introduced to the idea of inclusive post-secondary education. Most students described unpleasant high school experiences characterized by disrespect, isolation, and boredom. Understandably, they were ambivalent about an extension of their education. Faculty members were worried about whether they could do their jobs. Although parents were the primary advocates for inclusive post-secondary education, they were nervous, even sceptical. However, as one parent said about her initial reaction to the idea of inclusive post-secondary education:

“I thought it was absolutely insane . . . Insane as in the way that things are insane that you feel you have to do because if you don’t do it, you’ll never know what the possibilities are . . .”

The second overarching issue concerned support. This topic came up in all the interviews, ranging from what qualitatively constitutes ideal support, to how much is required, and where it should come from. Faculty members said they wanted more information from the beginning, specifically, information about what to expect. Some faculty members wanted a clearer indication of their role in relation to the additional support provided. Parents varied in their comments about support, with some wanting more support in general, in some cases for traditional academic learning, and others for job searching or social relationships. Everyone agreed that support was critical and suggested that the failure to provide appropriate support was the single most likely factor that could lead to the failure of inclusive post-secondary education. In fact, many interviewees said that appropriate support was the key to success in any community inclusion.

The universal recognition of inclusion as unusual, difficult, or anxiety producing reflects a long history of devaluation and segregation. Until recently, the only possible reason that persons with developmental disabilities would be involved at post-secondary education institutions was as research subjects, the objects of a practicum, or in a segregated program. It is important for advocates of inclusion to be aware of such recent history.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Our major findings recognize that measurements of successful inclusive post-secondary education incorporate principles from all of the approaches to assessment outlined earlier. Nevertheless, it is clear that a specialized assessment is necessary for the complex mandate of inclusive post-secondary education.

The value of person-centred planning is clearly linked to the element identified here as individuality and choice. This element underscores the importance of establishing individualized paths for students with developmental disabilities at college or university. Examples include taking care that students with developmental disabilities are not identified as a cohort within the institution, students' choosing courses and activities relevant to their individual interests, and developing means of participation that draw on the individuals' strengths. The key approaches in a quality of life analysis, SRV, and psychosocial development are present here as the element of confidence, fuelled by SRV. What this suggests is that persons with developmental disabilities can thrive in a milieu characterized by higher expectations. In fact, it is a setting in which the "bar is raised" that produces confidence to follow newly elevated aspirations and identities. This cycle improves the quality of life for persons with developmental disabilities while they are attending school, but improved self-esteem is also likely to enhance the individual's quality of life after graduation.

In addition to the components that focus on the individual, other aspects are concerned with the systemic impact of inclusion, with the impact on the classroom and institution being a strong factor in the data, especially with the faculty members. Consistent with the findings of the NSSE (see note 5), we found student engagement to be an important component of inclusion. While there was a general agreement that engagement was critical, not all interviewees were satisfied with the level of engagement that the students attained. In particular, students complained that they did not have the informal social relationships that

other students seemed to enjoy. It is clear that a measure of engagement is a critical indication of success of any educational experience, but our data suggest that it is important to recognize the wide range of possibilities of what constitutes meaningful engagement.

Authenticity bridges the focus between the individual and institution. Feelings of authenticity in the individual come from having experiences analogous in the context. It is the legitimacy of the role of student, derived from the processes of the institution, which contribute to the confidence and increased aspirations of the individual. Through an institutional culture that values the contribution and uniqueness of each student, students with developmental disabilities become unremarkable as part of a diverse student community.

Recommendations:

Having completed the first phase of this project we recommend: (i) carrying out project phases #2 and #3 (as described in the Background section of this paper); (ii) developing a more detailed interview protocol with field testing on a regional basis; and (iii) collecting data on a national scale.

We further recommend that the development of a more detailed protocol incorporate the following lessons learned from Phase 1:

- (a) Address the difficulties identified for students in Phase 1 regarding conceptions of time by formulating questions such that responses do not require time estimates, significant reference to pinpointing events, or reference to past or future feelings.
- (b) Utilize more sophisticated recording equipment and consider potential background noise in setting the location of interviews.
- (c) Include the students' employers as an important group of participants.
- (d) Develop questions based on the five dimensions specified in this paper as components of inclusive post-secondary education: (i) confidence, (ii)

student engagement, (iii) impact on the institution, (iv) individuality and choice, and (v) authenticity.

- (e) Formulate interview questions to suit the specific perspective of each group, but organize the questions around the five dimensions distilled from this study.
- (f) Develop additional questions to probe ideas about the nature of support required for successful inclusion.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bauman, Z. (1991). *Modernity and Ambivalence*. Cambridge, UK: Blackwell Publishers.

Chickering, A. (1969). *Education and Identity*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Chickering, A. & Reisser, L. (1995). *Education and Identity*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Corbett, J. & Barton, L. (1992). *A Struggle for Choice: Students with Special Needs in Transition to Adulthood*. NY: Routledge.

Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. (1990). *Basics of Qualitative research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Felce, D. & Perry, J. (1995). Quality of life: its definition and measurement. *Research in Intellectual Disabilities* 16, 51-74.

Greenholtz, J. (2007). *Inclusive Post-Secondary Education Literature Review*. Canadian Council on Learning.

Holburn, S., Jacobson, J. W., Vietze, P. M., Schwartz, A. A. & Sersen, E. (2000). Quantifying the process and outcomes of Person-Centered Planning. *American Journal on Mental Retardation*, 105(5), 402-416.

Keith, K. D. & Schalock, R. L. (1995). *Quality of Student Life Questionnaire*. Worthington, OH: IDS Publishing Corp.

McDonald, L., MacPherson-Court, L., Frank, S., Uditsky, B. & Symons, F. (1997). An inclusive university program for students with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities: Students, parent and faculty perspectives. *Intellectual Disabilities Bulletin*, 25(1), 43-67.

Moon, M.S. & Inge, V. (2000). Vocational preparation and transition. In M. Snell & F. Brown (Eds). *Instruction of Students with Severe Disabilities* (5th Ed). 591-628. Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Merrill.

O'Brien, J. (1987). A guide to life-style planning: Using the activities catalogue to integrate service and natural support systems. In B. Wilcox & G. T. Bellamy (Eds). *A Comprehensive Guide to the Activities Catalogue: An Alternative Curriculum for Youth and Adults with Severe Disabilities*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.

Slee, R. (2000). Talking back to power: The politics of educational exclusion. *International Special Education Congress 2000*, University of Manchester.

Smith, T.E.C. & Puccini, I.K. (1995). Position statement: Secondary curricula and policy issues for students with MR. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation and Intellectual Disabilities*, 30, 275-282.

Salovita, T. (2000). An inclusive adult education program for students with mild to severe intellectual disabilities: Experiences from a pilot project in Finland. *Intellectual Disabilities Bulletin*, 28, 27-39.

Schalock, R. L. (1994). The concept of Quality of Life and its current application in the field of mental retardation/intellectual disabilities. In D. Goode (Ed). *Quality of Life for Persons with Disabilities: International Perspectives and Issues*. Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books.

Tashie, C., Malloy, J.M.M. & Lichenstein, S.J. (1998). Transition or graduation? Supporting all students to plan. In C.J. Jorgensen (Ed). *Restructuring high schools for all students: Taking students to the next level*. 234-259. Baltimore, MD: Paul H Brookes.

Uditsky, B., Frank, S., Hart, L. & Jeffery, S. (1988). On campus: Integrating the university environment. In D. Baine, D. Sobsey, L. Wilgosh & G. Kysela (Eds). *Alternative Futures in the Education of Students with Severe and Multiple Handicaps*. Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta.

Wolfensberger, W. (1983). Social Role Valorization: A proposed new term for the principle of normalization. *Mental Retardation*, 21, 234-239.

Wolfensberger, W. (1992). *A Brief Introduction to Social Role Valorization as a High-order Concept for Structuring Human Services* (revised edition). Syracuse, NY: Training Institute for Human Service Planning, Syracuse University, Leadership and Change Agency.

Wolfensberger, W. (2000). A brief overview of Social Role Valorization. *Mental Retardation*, 38(2), 105–123.

Wolfensberger, W. & Thomas, S. (1983). PASSING (Program Analysis of Service Systems' Implementation of Normalization Goals): Normalization Criteria and Ratings Manual (2nd ed). Toronto: National Institute on Mental Retardation.

Zafft, C. & Hart, D. (2002). Follow-up study of the post-secondary education experiences of twenty youth with cognitive disabilities. National Center for the Study of Post-secondary Educational Supports. *A Rehabilitation Research & Training Center. Findings Brief 9*.

APPENDICES

Appendix I: STUDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What was high school like for you? (What did you like about it? What did you not like about it?)
2. When you finished high school, what sorts of things did you think you would like to do next?
3. What were your high school friends planning to do after high school?
4. How did you feel when you first heard that you could go to university (college)?
5. And when you felt _____ (*above*) what did that mean to you?
6. What did you think going to college or university would be like?
7. What were you looking forward to at university (college)?
8. What were you afraid of about going to university (college)?
9. What do you think your parents were feeling when you said wanted to go to university (college)?
10. What did that mean to you and how did it make you feel?
11. What was the most the important thing about going to university (college) for you?
12. Can you tell me about some of things that you have done at university (college) that you really enjoyed?
13. How did those things make you feel?
14. What do those feelings make you think about yourself?
15. What are the best parts of being a student?
16. What things don't you like about being a student?
17. If another person your age asked you about whether they should go to college and university what would you tell them?
18. What would you like to tell your friends about what it is like for you to be a student?
19. How can your parents make being a student better for you?
20. How can your friends make being a student better for you?
21. When you first started university (college) and were told that staff were going to support you, how did that make you feel?

22. Now that you have been a student for a while how do you feel about staff supporting you?
23. What things does staff do that really bug you?
24. What sorts of things do you want staff to do to support you?
25. What is one really important thing that you want to do at university (college)?
26. After you finish university (college) what is one thing you wished you had done with other students?
27. After you finish university (college) what is one thing that you wished that you had not done?
28. When you started university (college) did you know any other people on campus? Who were they?
29. How about now?
30. Do you go to coffee or hang out with anyone you have met at university (college)? Who are they?
31. How do you feel right now about being a student?
32. What does _____ (above) _____ give you that is important to you?
33. How has this made you think differently about your life and the things you can do?
34. What do you know about yourself now that you did not know before?
35. What did you learn about yourself from your classes?
36. What did you learn about yourself through extra-curricular activities?
37. Before you first started university (college) what do you think people you met liked about you?
38. Do you think this has changed? How?
39. How do you know that being a student has been a good thing for you to do?
40. What would you say to future students about would make going to university (college) better?
41. How do you think you will know when you are finished with being a student and ready to move onto something else?
42. What will the next thing be?
43. What is it about that that appeals to you?
44. Do you think you would be doing that if you had not gone to university (college)?
45. Describe your favourite memory of being a student at university (college)?

Appendix II: FAMILY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. When you first heard about inclusive post-secondary education what were your feelings about it?
2. How did you first hear about it?
3. What sorts of things did they say about it that resonated for you?
4. How is IPSE different from what your son/daughter experienced in high school?
5. How did you feel going to post-secondary might change your son/daughter's life?
6. What were your expectations for your son/daughter when she started coming to university?
7. Have these expectations changed?
8. What kinds of changes have you seen in him/her?
9. What kinds of changes have you seen in yourself about your expectations for your son/daughter?
10. If another parent was struggling to figure out whether ipse was working for their son or daughter what would you tell them to look at?
11. What were your thoughts about the possibility of your son/daughter finding paid employment in his/her life before she started?
12. How have those thoughts about employment changed?
13. How do you think your son's/daughter's life will be different because s/he was a student?
14. If you were to tell another parent why IPSE is important to everyone in the community, what would you tell them?
15. When you look at your son's/daughter's life right now, what are your fears or concerns for him/her as a student?
16. In what ways do you think staff can address those fears?
17. What changes in the way staff support him/her do you think your son/daughter would like to see?
18. What do you hope your son/daughter gains from the experience?
19. What do you think your son/daughter is hoping to gain from this experience?
20. How do you know if what your son/daughter is doing is successful for him/her?

21. Is there something about the way STEPS staff supports students that you think is critical to the successful experience of your son/daughter as a student?
22. Has staff done something to support you or your son/daughter that at the time you disagreed with and wanted to do differently?
23. Did you tell staff at the time?
24. How would you like to have had that handled that differently?
25. Was there some way the staff supported your son/daughter that left you in awe about the potential for inclusive post-secondary; a eureka moment that gave you some insight you didn't have, and if so, what was it?
26. Has there been some change in your son/daughter because of being a student that made you feel that his/her life has improved?
27. What was that change and what do you think brought it about?
28. What do you think the STEPS staff/service could do to better support families?
29. Do you feel your son/daughter is needing or wanting something from university that he/she isn't getting?
30. What kinds of things could be added to make his/her experience more fulfilling?
31. What is your vision for the STEPS service? What would you like to see happen in the future?
32. If 10 years from now inclusive post-secondary education no longer existed, what do you think would have been reasons it was not sustainable?
33. Given that part of the role of staff is to support students to become independent of their parents and confident they have a confidential relationship with staff, what are the biggest concerns for you?
34. In order for families to feel part of the process of implementing IPSE in BC, what do you think STEPS Forward could do to include their voices?

Appendix III: FACULTY AND COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY TEACHING STAFF

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How did you first hear about inclusive post-secondary education?
2. What were your thoughts about inclusive post-secondary education when you heard about it for the first time?
3. What were your major concerns when you were asked if a student with a developmental disability could audit your class?
4. How did you feel your teaching would be affected?
5. In what ways do you think the dynamics of the classroom were changed?
6. How was the way you taught the class changed?
7. What did you feel the other students took away from the experience of having one of their peers in the class have a developmental disability?
8. In what ways did you find staff support to be helpful to you?
9. How do you think staff could have provided better support to:
 - a. You
 - b. Other students
 - c. The student themselves
10. In what ways did the student participate in class?
11. Now that you have had a student with a developmental disability in your class how have your impressions about inclusive post-secondary education changed?
12. Can you tell us about what effect this has had on the other students or the dynamic in the class?
13. What stands out for you about the participation of the student with either the course work or with the class?
14. What would you like other instructors to know about having a student with a developmental disability in their classes?

Appendix IV: INCLUSION SUPPORT STAFF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. When you first heard about inclusive post-secondary education, what were your feelings about it?
2. How did you first hear about it?
3. When you applied for the job of facilitator, how did you think you could make a difference in the lives of young adults going to college or university?
4. How did your expectations change as you gained more experience supporting students?
5. What do you think students would like the most support with?
6. What do you think is the most important aspect of the support you provide students?
7. What kinds of changes have you seen in the students you support?
8. What kinds of changes have you seen in yourself about your expectations for the students?
9. What do you think are the biggest barriers to students' success as students?
10. What do you think the students think is the biggest barrier to their feeling they are authentic students?
11. What do you think parents think the biggest barriers are to their sons' and daughters' success as students?
12. What kind of interactions have you found to be the most successful for establishing relationships between the students and their peers?
13. What do you think are the biggest barriers to making connections with other students on campus?
14. In what ways do the other students in the class feel that inclusive post-secondary education is a positive experience?
15. What changes in the way staff support the students do you think they would like to see?
16. What sorts of anecdotes have teaching staff told you about how IPSE has changed the dynamics of their class?
17. What do you think faculty members have gained from having a student with a developmental disability in their classes?
18. What do you think the students have gained by taking courses alongside their peers and being actively involved in the course demands?
19. In what ways have students contributed to the class or to extracurricular activities on campus?

20. As a staff person, what kinds of support do you think would be essential to being able to support students successfully?
21. What kind of support have you wanted, but did not get?
22. How you like would to have had that handled differently?
23. Was there some way the staff supported students that left you in awe about the potential for inclusive post-secondary?
24. Was there some way the staff supported students that left you concerned for the student?
25. How would you like to have had that handled differently?
26. How do you think the student would have liked that handled differently?
27. What has given you the most concern about IPSE on a personal level?
28. What aspect of providing support to the students has given you inspiration about the potential for IPSE?
29. What kinds of things do you think make the students feel good about themselves?
30. What do you think would help other support staff, such as personal care attendants, appreciate and understand their own role in supporting the student to be a student?
31. What do you think are the biggest challenges to the students finding employment?
32. How do you envision the support you can provide the students to meet those challenges?
33. What is your vision for STEPS support service? What would you like to see happen in the future?
34. If 10 years from now inclusive post-secondary education no longer existed, what do you think would have been reasons it was not sustainable?
35. Given that part of the role of staff is to support students to become independent of their parents and confident they have a confidential relationship with staff, what are the biggest concerns for you?
36. In order for families to feel part of the process of implementing IPSE in BC, what do you think STEPS Forward could do to include their voices?

Appendix V: NON-ACADEMIC STAFF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. When you first heard about inclusive post-secondary education what were your feelings about it?
2. How did you first hear about it?
3. Did your feelings change as you became better acquainted with the students?
4. What do you think students would like the most support with?
5. What do you think is the most important aspect of the support you provide to students?
6. What kinds of changes have you seen in the students?
7. What kinds of changes have you seen in your own expectations for the students?
8. What do you think are the biggest barriers to students being successful as students on campus?
9. What kind of interactions have you found to be the most successful for establishing relationships?
10. What do you think are the biggest barriers to making connections with other students on campus?
11. In what ways do peers feel that inclusive post-secondary education is a positive experience?
12. What changes in the way staff support the students do you think they would like to see?
13. What sorts of anecdotes have peers or other staff told you about how IPSE has changed how they do things?
14. What do you think others have gained from having a student with a developmental disability participate fully in activities?
15. In what ways have students contributed to activities on campus?
16. What kinds of support do you think would be essential to a staff person to being able to support students successfully?
17. What kind of support have you wanted but did not get?
18. How would you like would to have had that handled differently?

19. Was there some way the staff supported students that left you in awe about the potential for inclusive post-secondary?
20. Was there some way the staff supported students that left you concerned for the student?
21. How would you like to have had that handled differently?
22. How do you think the student would have liked that handled differently?
23. What has given you the most concern about IPSE on a personal level?
24. What aspect of providing support to the students has given you inspiration about the potential for IPSE?
25. What kinds of things do you think make the students feel good about themselves?
26. What do you think would help other support staff, such as personal care attendants, appreciate and understand their own role in supporting the students to be students?

Appendix VI: DATA: COMPONENTS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

	Students	Families	Faculty	Non-Academic Staff	Inclusion Support Staff
Confidence	<p>#1 “I really enjoyed making friends, not just making friends in general but like making friends in a university setting. University makes me feel really proud.”</p> <p>#2“Before I didn’t have any confidence in myself because I wasn’t really told that I was good at anything. I am a lot smarter than I thought I was, more confident, more happy than I’ve been in a long time.”</p> <p>#3“Being supported by STEPS Forward I was really relieved, actually. Made me feel more confident. I wouldn’t have survived in the university world... relieved that I don’t have to do this alone.”</p> <p>#4“Well we’re almost out</p>	<p>#1 “He has been able to say to people that he is going to university. It’s worth a lot. Just like his sister...suddenly there is something to talk about with people...They never thought of you as doing that or being able to do that you know...”</p> <p>#2 “... she is better able to sort of find things, using books and doing research... so I think her chance should be greater but it’s mostly the sense of assurance about social keys that now she shares in the world, common knowledge and the common ways of getting knowledge”.</p>		<p>#1. “My experience has been that the longer they have been in the university, the more they seem able to access the services. There is a little bit of an increase in their level of confidence. They see themselves here as students of the university.”</p> <p>#2. “I think he gained a sense of assurance that he gained a skill and can contribute to an environment that is accepting of him and what his limitations are. But hopefully that doesn’t necessarily stop him from trying new things and from my understanding, his level of success in other environments has contributed to the time he spends here and maybe in other social circles.”</p>	

	<p>of time because I have to go to class. I know I'm ready to move on to something else. I am pretty confident that since I've spent four years here and background in student activities and skills... I am planning on getting a permanent job next year."</p>				
<p>Student Engagement</p>	<p>1. "I take my courses here very seriously. The lectures are really great, learning the history of the church, Christianity, and this other religion course I am taking. They are just fabulous.</p> <p>2. "I like doing the homework. It is interesting."</p>		<p>#1 ".his questions were really quite profound in relation to the materials. You could tell they were processing and engaged."</p> <p>#2 "I had to learn to ignore his constant raising of his hand but a lot of times his comments are dead on. They're really astute. On Tuesday we were talking about classification. How folklore is classified into different genres. Everyone classifies everything that's what makes us modern in a way. And he said.. you mean like CDs and CD selections? And I said that's it, that is exactly what we do. We put things in order."</p>		<p>#1 "[a] couple of students have spent a lot of time with student union organizations and it seems like the more time they spend there the more comfortable they get and the better chance they have to make friends".</p> <p>#2 "[t]he best avenue for students to participate is through group projects. These classes are the most inclusive and seem to work more for the student ."</p>

<p>Impact on the Institution</p>			<p>#1 “I was kind of unsure about how I am supposed to teach him at first. Kind of hesitant about trying to teach two different types of things. The first class was a little rocky for me at first because I didn’t really know what to expect. And once you got over the newness, it’s kind of normal now.”</p> <p>But then I realize I don’t have to do anything drastic.....”</p> <p>#2 If I’m going to have someone in my class who’s functioning at a very different level from everybody else, will this be disruptive, will this get me extra work to do.....So I cannot. I haven’t got time for this...and I’m pleasantly surprised in terms of how well it’s worked in the classroom in both cases.”</p>	<p>“... she brings to other students an awareness ..that we have an array of students with different abilities.. in some ways I think the others benefit morebecause they get to see that education is about more than for example getting an ‘A’.</p> <p>“(Non-academic Staff, Transition Centre)</p> <p>2. “...it just seems like it’s really helped the Women’s Centre to be a feminist action...it’s becoming more inclusive and the students with developmental disabilities have contributed more than some of the regular students in making that space a welcoming space. Also, some of the tangible volunteer tasks that need to be done often get ignored. Like domestic things and there’s one particular student who was really helpful to me. Another student gave a presentation to a class....she did an outreach for the women’s centre and I think we couldn’t have done a better job reaching other students.”</p>	<p>1. “One instructor said she learned to slow right down so that everyone in the class could understand her talking. Another instructor just never believed that the student in his class could do the term project and when she did he realized that he needed to re-evaluate what his expectations are for all the students in his class.”</p> <p>2. “It was clear that she made the class more cooperative. She brought the class together.”</p> <p>..</p>
---	--	--	--	--	--

<p>Individuality and Choice</p>		<p>#1 “He is going to make up his own mind about what he is going to do out of a universe of possibilities. That’s the major thing that has happened to him... He certainly won’t settle for something he does not want...</p> <p>#2“...those kinds of programs (pre-employment) don’t allow them to fulfill their potential. There are really have minimal expectations. Exactly the same expectations for everyone. They try to get these guys into paying jobs ...sticking labels on cans...”</p>		<p>#1 “Also I see each of them as their own individuals whereas right at the beginning I think I had the stereotype of people with developmental disabilities as one particular group and not with their own unique special qualities...I think my assumption was that they would all hang out together and fight for disability issues and want to have that identifying connection. Some of the students don’t even really know each other... Everyone just has their own separate experience at U_”</p> <p>#2 He has chosen to spend his free time here that.. because he is interested in radio. What I can say about the student is that he’s changed my perception of people with special needs. Not that I had a negative one before but just in the way. .some of my teaching and training methods have changed in order to accommodate this student. That translates in some ways to the way I interact with other volunteers.”</p>	<p>#1 “There is a real line students don’t want you to cross that the students put out where they want staff support and where they want to do things on their own. But that line is always changing as the students want to do more and more things on their own.”</p>
--	--	--	--	--	---

<p>Authenticity</p>		<p>1. "...the very first year she [take] a women's studies course. ...It is essential for a young woman to have exposure to women's studies...</p> <p>2. "one of the better things that happened to [my daughter] was being referred to counselling with a professional at U__ when she needed it over that traumatic thing she went through a couple of years ago. That's a skill she can take into the future...here's a way to access a professional to help me through it."</p>	<p>1. "And now it's moved to more of what I would consider regular students. They come they go. They miss a few classes. They laugh. They participate. They hand in their work."</p> <p>2. "It would have been a better experience for her if she could be included in the labs. She would have learned more and been more involved with the course."</p>	<p>1. ".....Now I've seen a lot of joyful students. I've seen them struggle. I have seen them do what typical students do as well in this environment. The change for me has been it has opened up possibilities for me of thinking this environment can be inclusive.</p> <p>2. "when Reading Break came, they were glad that it was over with and now they were going to be working on over the reading break for example, reading some extra text and getting ready for the assignments that were coming up after the reading break. So to me no different than any other student and obviously connected to the classes they were in ... I saw that as being a success. Cause I heard no difference in the comment"</p>	
----------------------------	--	---	---	---	--