Interdisciplinary Programming for Early Intervention Specialists: One University’s Experience

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Our Interdisciplinary Team

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Gallaudet University
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Presentation Overview

• Benefits and Challenges of Interdisciplinary Professional Preparation
• Program Development Process
• Faculty Perspectives
• Confronting Challenges
• Sharing Your Experiences
What is Interdisciplinary Programming?

- Collaboration of disciplines
- Recognition of common goals
- Linking faculty and students
- Rich and diverse experiences
- Challenges traditional departmental and program structure
Why Interdisciplinary Preparation?

• Infants, toddlers and families have complex needs
• Families work with many professionals
• Early Intervention demands collaboration
Interdisciplinary preparation

Interdisciplinary practice

(Mellon & Winton, 2003)
“...interdisciplinary coursework and degrees should be available to prepare for collaboration and teaming across disciplines.”

Winton & McCullom (2008)
Barriers to Interdisciplinary Preparation

• History
• Accreditation and Professional Licenses
• Differences in Theoretical Frameworks
• Codes of Ethics and Practice Guidelines
• Standards and Requirements
• Money, Power and Control
Traditional Early Intervention Preparation

- Audiology
- Psychology
- Deaf Education
- Speech - Language Pathology
- Social Work
- Special Education
Interdisciplinary Model of Early Intervention

Deaf Education/Special Education
Speech-Language Pathology
Audiology
Psychology
Linguistics
Social Work
Counseling

FAMILY
IDEA and Interdisciplinary Preparation

coordination

collaboration

interagency

cooperation

multidisciplinary

partnership

team
Gallaudet University
Early Intervention Professional Preparation History

- Education Department
  1984 - 2009

- Hearing Speech and Language Sciences from 1997

- BLI Certificate Program
  Developed 2007

- Interdisciplinary Program
  Developed 2010-2011
Interdisciplinary Program Development at Gallaudet

- Advisory Council (2009-2010)
- Interdisciplinary Work (2009 – Present)
- Interdisciplinary Certificate Program (Begins 2011)
Advisory Council

Guidance to Program Planning Process

– Meets needs of field
– Reflects best practices
– Aligned with University mission
– Reflects interdisciplinary philosophy
– Resources and infrastructure needs
– Timelines
– Delivery Approaches
Interdisciplinary Work Group Process

• What is Early Intervention?
• Why Interdisciplinary?
• Collected Documents of Recommended Practices from Respective Disciplines
• Developed Document of Theoretical Perspectives
• Mission, Audience and Program Description
• Selected SLO from Knowledge & Skills Document
Core Knowledge and Skills

1. Screening, Assessment and Evaluation
2. Infant and Toddler Development
3. Language Acquisition and Communication Development
4. Technology: Auditory, Visual and Tactile
5. Family-Centered Practice
6. Socially, Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Practice
7. Planning and Implementing Service
8. Collaboration and Interdisciplinary Practice
9. Professional and Ethical Behavior
    • Stredler Brown, Moeller & Sass-Lehrer (2009)
Deaf and Hard of Hearing Infants, Toddlers and Families: Collaboration and Leadership

| Course 1 | Socio-Cultural and Political Contexts for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Infants, Toddlers and their Families  
On campus and online (hybrid), May 20-June 3; May 20 – 23 on campus |
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| Course 2 | Communication, Language and Cognitive Development: Deaf and Hard of Hearing Infants and Toddlers  
Online, June 6-July 29, 2011 |
| Course 3 | Leadership Perspectives on Families with Deaf or Hard of Hearing Infants and Toddlers: Their Cultures and Communities  
Online, Fall 2011 (dates TBA) |
| Course 4 | Strategies for Developing Communication, Language and Cognition for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Infants and Toddlers  
Online, Spring 2012 (dates TBA) |
| Course 5 | A Developmental Approach to Programming for Infants, Toddlers and their Families  
On campus and online (hybrid), May 2012 (dates TBA) |
Perspectives

• Family is most important resource and advocate for infants and toddlers who are deaf or hard of hearing.
  – Forced to re-think our assumptions
  – Are all families able to assume this role?
  – What expectations do we have for families re: advocacy? What training and support do we provide to equip them for this role?
Confronting Challenges

- Territory and Ownership Issues
- University Structure
- Time and Resources (e.g. costs)
- Widespread support from university and field
- Documentation of Best Practices
- Proposed creating a separate interdisciplinary program (independent of departments)
- Proposal outlining tasks and timelines;
- Linking to University Mission
Share Your Experiences
It’s About Time

Time to Practice what we Preach
Time to Invest in Interdisciplinary Collaboration
Time Passes Quickly for Infants and Young Children