

CASE: Connections for Academic Success and Employment

2017 College Inclusion Summit

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Burkhart Center for Autism Education and Research
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Partners in CASE

- Texas Tech University
- South Plains College
- Burkhart Center for Autism Education & Research
- Texas Workforce Commission—Vocational Rehabilitative Services
- Local employers



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY[®]
From here, it's possible.



Students with ASD & DD: An Emerging Population in Higher Education

- Many individuals with DD and/or ASD aspire to pursue post-secondary education (*Camarena & Sarigiani, 2009; Hart, et al., 2010; Stodden & Mruzek, 2010; VanBergeijk, et al., 2008*)
- Enrollment rates for individuals with ASD have increased from < 25% attending any kind of post-secondary program in 2005, to > 40% in 2009; number expected to grow exponentially. (*Chiang, et al. 2012; Migliore, et al., 2012; Office of Special Education Programs, 2009; Wagner, et al., 2005*)

Postsecondary Needs in Texas

- From Texas Education Agency annual reports, (2014, 2015):
 - 23,000 students with an IEP graduated in Texas in 2014.
 - Average of 10% of those had an ASD label in prior years
 - Thus, ~2,300 students with ASD graduated in TX in 2014 alone.
 - 14,854 students with ASD in Grades 7-12 in 2013
 - 25,548 students with ASD in Grades K-6 in same period
 - At least 40,000 students with ASD will be transitioning out of public schools in TX in next 10 years

Interventions

- Groundbreaking work first focused on students with DD & ASD participating in “college experience” (e.g., *Alpern & Zager, 2007; Zager & Alpern, 2010*)
- Many individuals with ASD have prerequisite academic skills to be admitted to post-secondary institutions, but often need more social and academic supports than peers with other disabilities such as LD or ADHD (*Alpern & Zager, 2007; Barnard-Brak, et al., 2010; Cai & Richdale, 2016; Hart et al., 2010; VanBergeijk et al., 2008; Zager & Alpern, 2010*)

Accessibility of Supports for Students with Disabilities in College

- Students must self-advocate and request necessary accommodations from disability services offices (*Torkelson, et al., 1996*).
- College students with disabilities (especially ASD) are not maximizing entitled services by not seeking services or seeking them too late (*Barnard-Brak, et al., 2010; Cai & Richdale, 2016*).
- Many services either short-term (temporary) or rely on the student's ability to initiate, navigate, and continually access them independently (*Camareana & Sarigiani, 2009; Zager & Alpern, 2010*).

Accessibility of Supports for Students with Disabilities in College

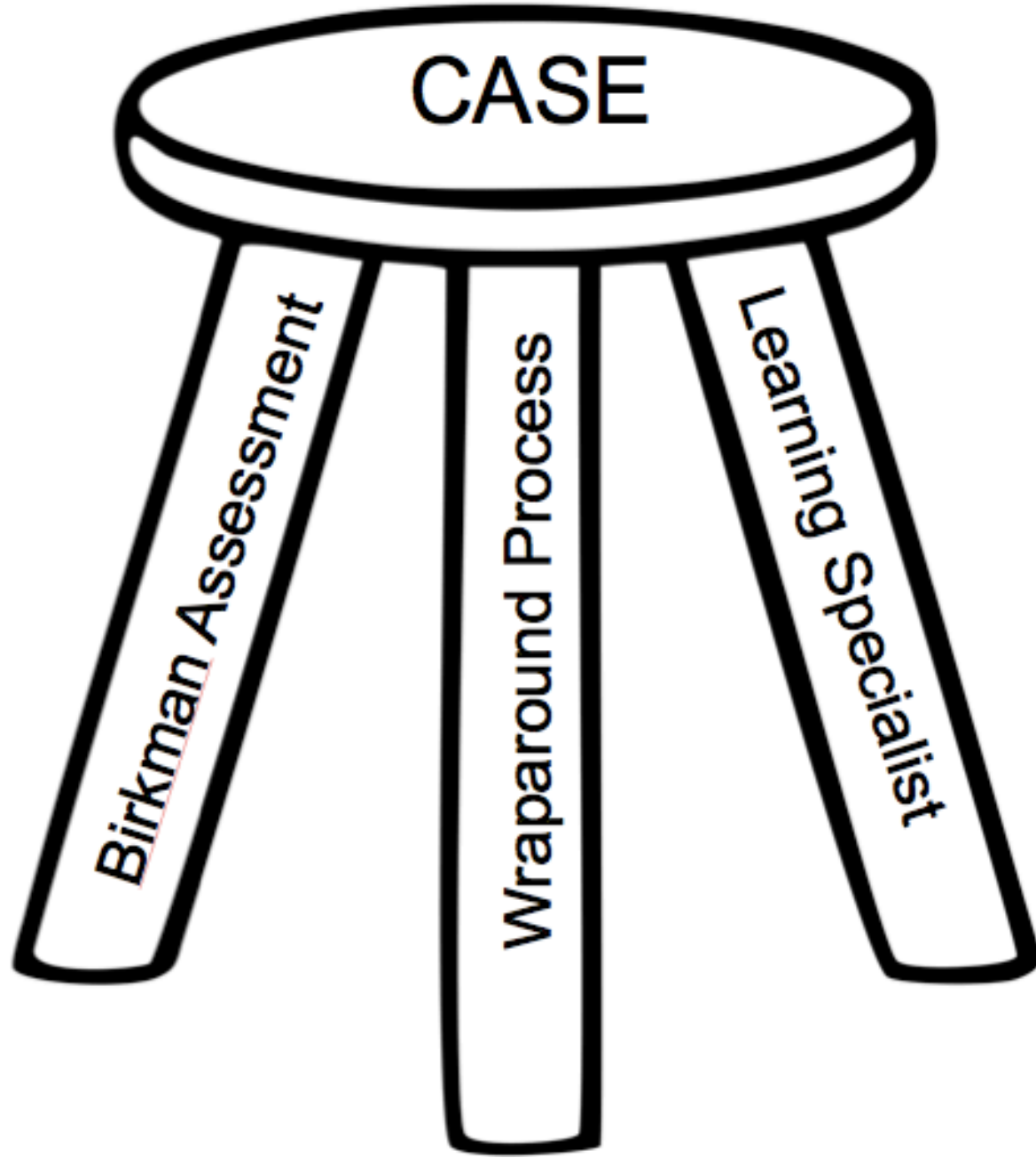
- Available services and current common methods of accessing them do not provide a comprehensive support system (*Camareana & Sarigiani, 2009; Zager & Alpern, 2010*).
- Gelbar, Smith, and Reichow (2014) completed a review of 20 articles describing services and supports for college students with ASD.
 - Only 45% of reviewed studies described non-academic supports including peer mentorship and assigned counselors or aides.
 - Very few reported empirical evidence of effectiveness of the described supports

An Exemplar Program

CASE

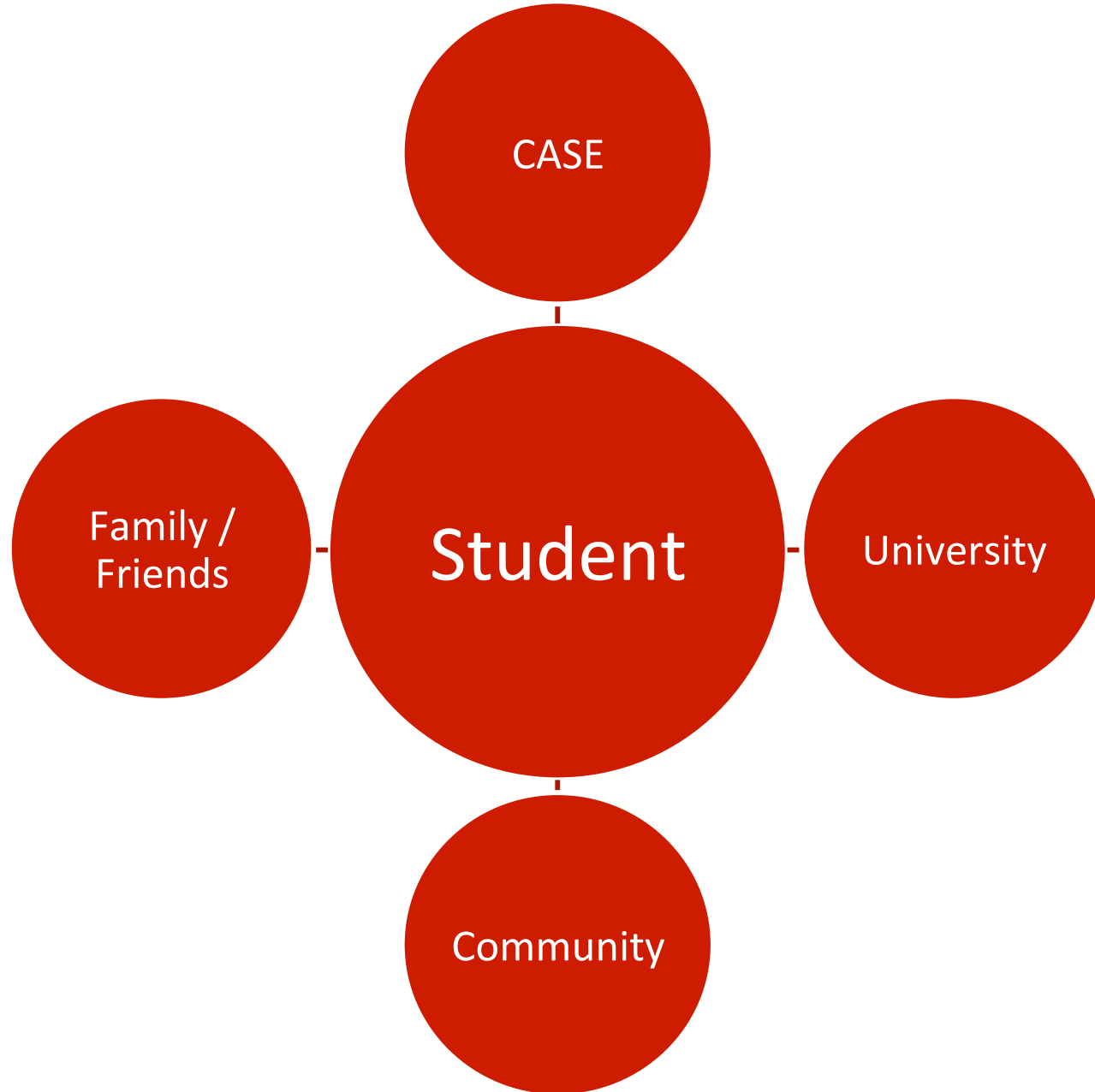
Connections for **A**cademic **S**uccess & **E**mployment

- **Purpose:** Assist college students with ASD and other DD to earn a college degree or certificate in a career field of their choice and gain integrated, competitive employment after graduation.
 - Utilizes a strength-based approach to intervention and supports.
 - Wraparound Planning Process
 - Birkman Method Assessment---About U Report



Wraparound Team Approach

- Wraparound Model: Comprehensive, community-based, strength-based services that help clients and their families access care in community (*Behar, 1986; VanDenBerg, Burns, & Burchard, 2003*)
 - Validated with children and adolescents with Emotional Behavior Disorder, mental health issues, etc.
 - Since expanded to additional populations
 - Project CASE – first known extension to college-age population
- Focus of program on helping students identify and access school and community based resources needed to address their individual goals and needs



Our Team

Who is involved:

- Students
- Program Director: trains & coaches staff & students
- Learning Specialists: direct support staff
- Campus Partners (4 year university & community college)
 - Student Disability Services
 - Student Wellness, Counseling Center, Tutoring, Writing Center
 - Campus Life, Academic Advising, Career Center
- Community partners
 - Employers
 - Vocational Rehabilitation Services
 - Toastmasters and other Community Organizations/Agencies
- Families of CASE students

How Project CASE Wraparound model different from traditional wraparound:

- Focus on self-advocacy and self-determination of student
- Parents/family only involved as invited by student
- Learning Specialists play a more active direct services role

CASE Process

- Gain admission to university or college
- Register with Student Disability Services
- Apply for increased services and support from Project CASE
- Enter program, complete Birkman, attend orientation, and identify initial Wrap Team members
- Meet monthly with assigned Learning Specialist and Wrap Team to develop/revise individual goals in a Wrap Plan
- Complete internship(s) in their area of study before graduation
- Graduate

Birkman Method About U Report

October 10, 2012

Compass Settings, Ltd. SM

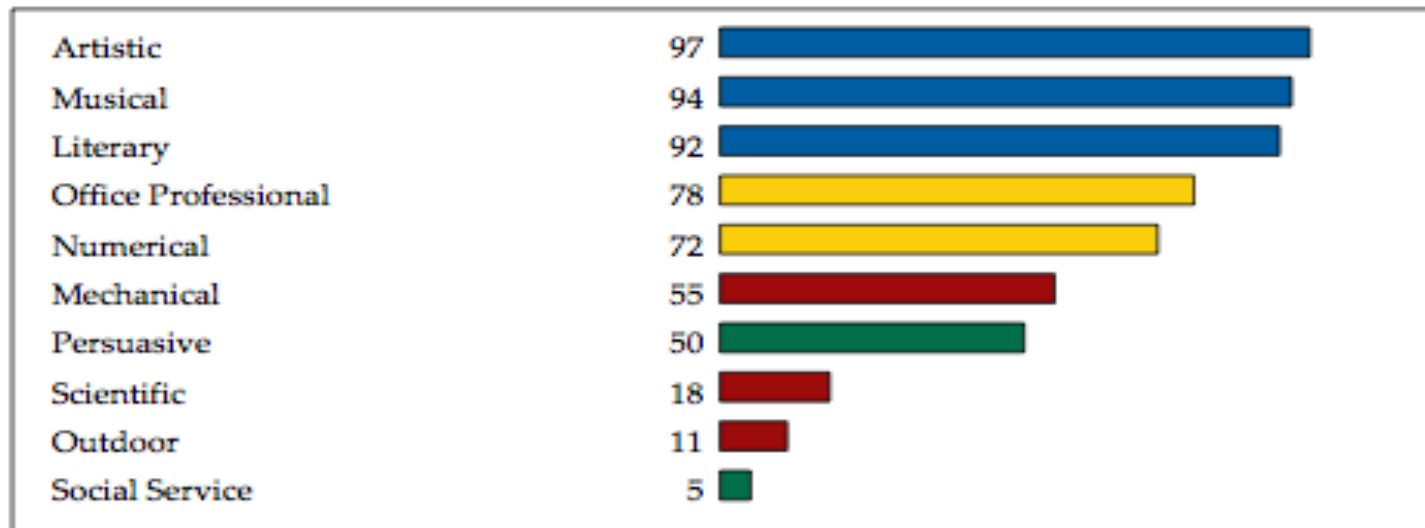
About U SM Report

Powered by The Birkman Method[®]

Your Personal Interests, Strengths and Needs

INTERESTS WITH BASIC COLORS

These are your individual scores. Highest areas of interest: The kinds of activities you like. A score >85 shows a strong interest. High scores show what drives and energizes you. Scores >90 show activities that are more than interests; they are areas that you NEED to be involved in to feel fulfilled.



Elements Explanation

[Redacted]	About USM Report Powered by The Birkman Method SM Your Personal Interests, Strengths and Needs
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The Birkman word for this is the Need for Acceptance

SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Alone vs. Group

**MOST
EFFECTIVE
BEHAVIOR**

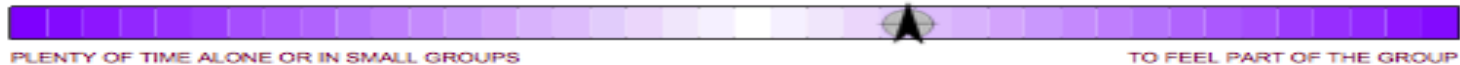


Your natural tendency is to spend time in your own company or with one or two other people who are very close to you. You enjoy having close, sometimes intense relationships with a few "special" people.

STRENGTHS

- able to be alone
- withstands group pressure
- enjoys own company

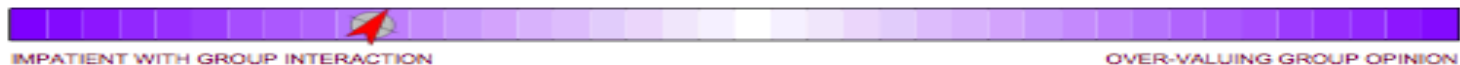
**WILL
NEED**



NEED: In addition to the close relationships which add much to your sense of well-being, you also need a certain amount of group acceptance and support. Occasional encouragement from the group helps keep your strengths to the fore.

CAUSES OF STRESS: Because of your need to balance group and individual activities, you are likely to find that too much of either one makes you feel restless.

**TRY
TO
AVOID**



POSSIBLE STRESS REACTIONS WHEN NEEDS ARE NOT MET:

- withdrawal
- eagerness to please the group

Individual Wrap Team Activities

- Monthly meeting

- Develop individualized Wrap Plan
 - Go over student strengths from Birkman Assessment About U Report
 - Review prior month's plan for updates & to identify additional strengths
 - Identify 3-4 challenges *prioritized* by the student
 - Identify goals & strategies, timelines, responsible person(s)
 - Set up next Wrap Team Meeting date

- Between ongoing meetings

- Learning Specialist and/or Wrap Team members send supportive emails, texts, and meet informally with student to coach them on time management, organization skills, social situations, and general encouragement. CASE staff also plan social events and workshops over topics of student interest and need each month

Student (N=43) Diagnoses

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (34)
 - Without a Comorbid Disability (25)
 - With a Comorbid Disability (9)
- Another disability (8)
 - ADHD, Anxiety, Specific Learning Disability, etc.

Summary of Students Served

- **Collectively: N = 43**
- **Participants** (Enrolled in program via cohorts)
 - Cohort 1: n = 14
 - Cohort 2: n = 11
 - Cohort 3: n = 7
 - Cohort 4: n = 11

Broad Outcome Measures

- 32 of 43 students graduated or continued into second year of program
 - First year retention = 74.42%
- Average GPA in Project CASE = 3.0
- 23 graduates
 - 3 went on to graduate school (2 have already earned graduate degrees)
 - 3 transferred from SPC to TTU to pursue 4-yr degrees
- 27 have completed an internship
- 25 have gained competitive employment

College Majors Linked to Internships

- Academic Majors at 4 Year University----TTU
 - architecture, music, mass communications, engineering, arts and sciences, human sciences, agriculture, horticulture, business systems, general studies, accounting, university studies, theatre
- Certificate/Associate Degree programs—
Community College---SPC
 - business management, child development, computer science, video production, graphic design, sound technology, biology/chemistry, telecommunications, wind energy

Internships: Preparing for Employment

- KLBK TV Studio
- Web-Pro
- AT&T
- Adling Associates Architect Firm
- College of Education Software Development
- TTU Therapeutic Riding Center
- U.S. Representative, Randy Neugebauer's Lubbock Office
- Texas Congressman, Jeb Hensarling of Dallas
- Double T Radio
- Ronald McDonald House
- Student Scholar Program at SPC Science Laboratories
- School of Rock
- Agri-Life Extension Center
- United Supermarket
- TTU Theatre Department
- Burkhart Center Research
- Buffalo Springs Lake
- Local Day Care Centers
- Local Banks
- Local Food Venues
- Event Center Staff at the United Spirit Arena
- Natural Resource Management

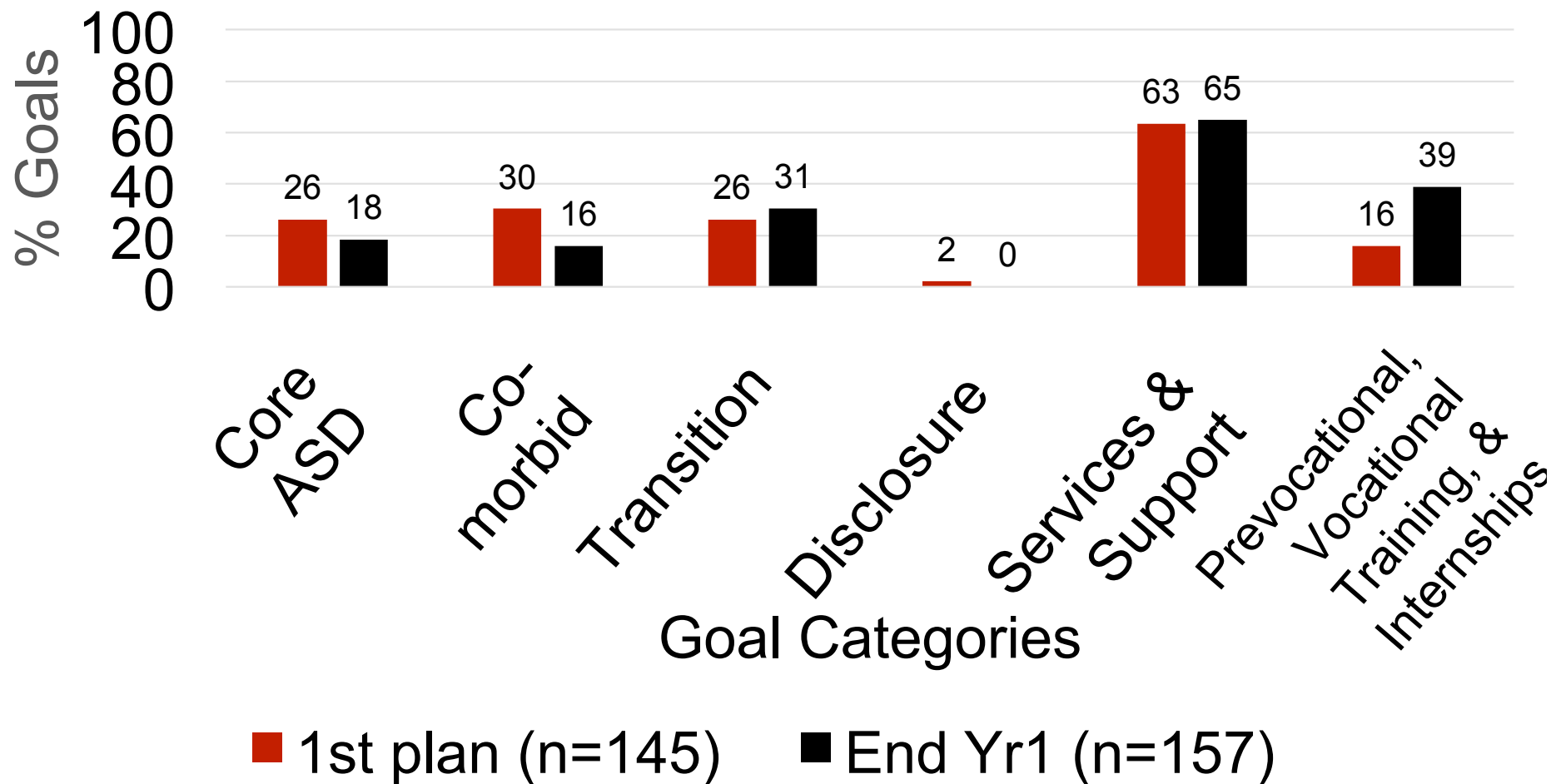
An Initial Analysis of Wrap Goals

- Extensive literature about reported or hypothesized needs of college students with ASD (*Alpern & Zager, 2007; Barnard-Brak, et al., 2010; Cai & Richdale, 2016; Hart et al., 2010; VanBergeijk et al., 2008; Zager & Alpern, 2010*)
- None of those studies report analysis of actual treatment plans or programs
- Most recent study (*Cai & Richdale, 2016*) conducted focus groups with college students with ASD and their families, and categorized resulting needs into 5 categories
 - *Core ASD Features*
 - *Co-morbid conditions*
 - *Transition*
 - *Disclosure*
 - *Services and Support*

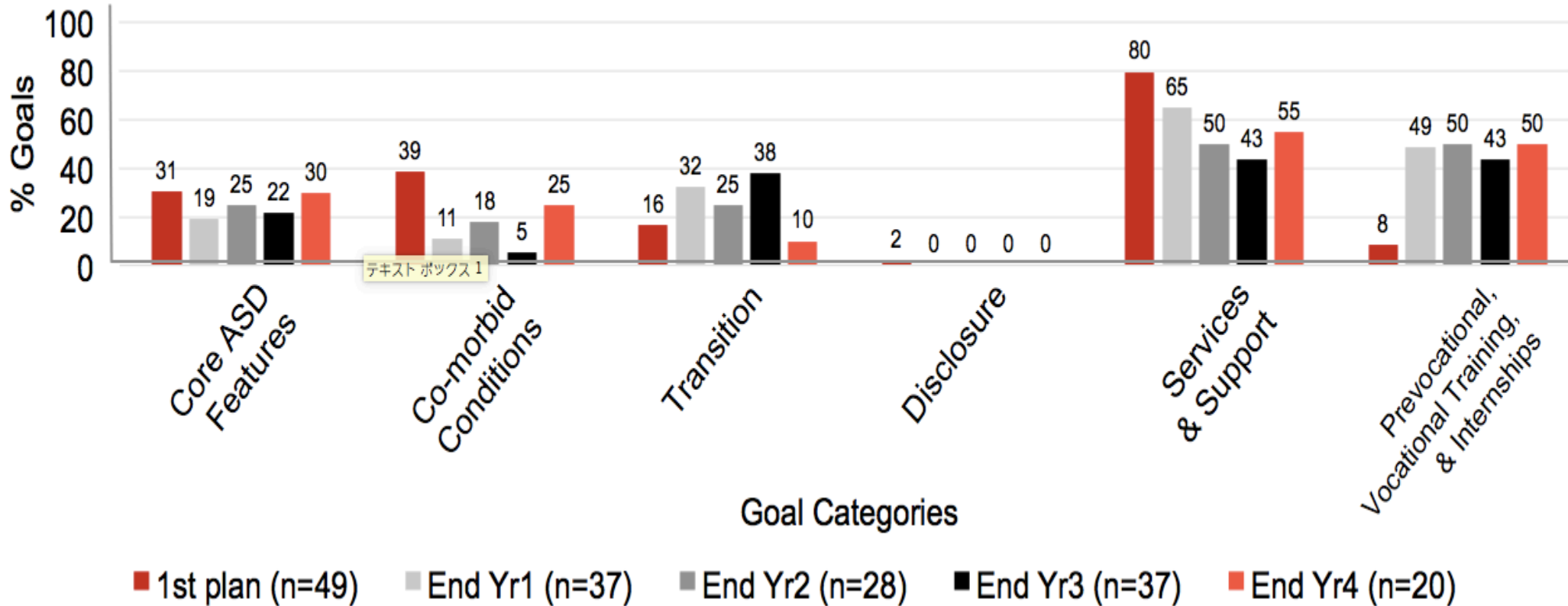
An Initial Analysis of Wrap Goals

- Analyzed content of wraparound plans for all students across first 4 years of program
- Scored each goal in every plan
- Each goal scored for inclusion into 6 categories (a goal could be scored for more than one category)
 - *Core ASD Features*
 - *Co-morbid conditions*
 - *Transition*
 - *Disclosure*
 - *Services and Support*
 - *Prevocational/Vocational/Internships*

All Cohorts: 1st Plan & End Year 1

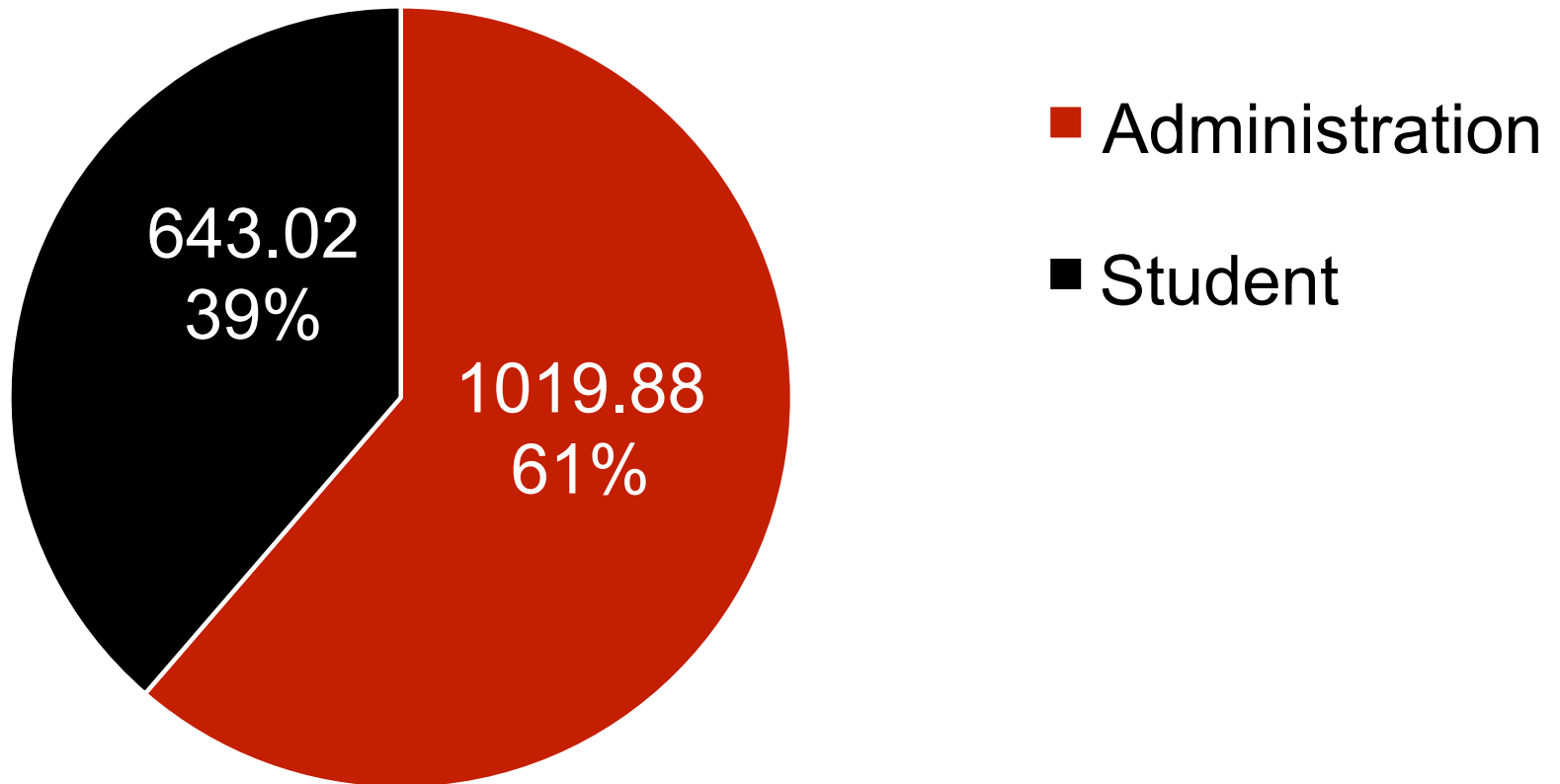


Cohort 1 All 4 Years



An Initial Analysis of Learning Specialist Time

Learning Specialist Time in Hours



Direct Student Activities

- Education
- Write-up and planning for wrap meetings
- Wrap meeting/Facilitator
- Vocational/Job/Internship
- Financial
- Crisis/Intervention
- Social/Recreational
- Travel/Commuting
- Medical/Self-care
- Residential
- Family
- Legal
- Safety

Administration Activities

- Admin (e.g., support for program as a whole to expand, mass e-mails to students)
- Supervision (e.g., phone calls)
- Recruitment (e.g., all contact with prospective students or families)
- Training (e.g., conferences, wraparound trainings)
- Evaluation (e.g., preparing and following up with data packets, meeting with research team)
- Travel/ Commuting (e.g., social event supplies or arrangements, internships/ job development)

Learning Specialist Conclusions

- 1 Learning Specialist for every 8-10 students
- Balance intensity of student needs across Learning Specialists

Lessons Learned From Implementing Project CASE:

- Multiple providers must be engaged to best serve students
 - Student Disability Services
 - Campus Administration & Services (Dean of Students, Housing, Campus Life, Counseling, Health Center, Police, etc.)
 - Community Services (Voc Rehab, Psychiatry, Medical, etc.)
 - Personal Community Members (Friends, family, faith, etc.)
 - Administrators
 - Faculty
- ***Collaboration and establishing buy in at every level vital***

More Lessons Learned:

- ***Collaboration and establishing buy in at every level vital***
- Learning Specialists must be flexible
- Recognize that partners have their own agendas and contingencies
- Start with buy-in and partnership with Student Disabilities Office on campus
- Gather as much information up front as possible about student needs and behavioral history
- Plan for Family Involvement (Parent orientation, expectations for involvement, confidentiality etc.)

Thanks for Coming!

For more information contact:

<https://www.depts.ttu.edu/burkhartcenter/case/>

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