CANVAS Meeting Minutes, 11-19-21

Participants in Attendance:
- Annette Bade (Nova Southeastern University)
- Ariel Cascio (Central Michigan University)
- Auston Stamm (Saint Mary's College CA)
- Ava Gurba (Stony Brook University)
- Bella Kofner (College of Staten Island)
- Bertrand Monthubert (Aspie-Friendly, France)
- Beth Felsen (Spectrum Transition Coaching LLC)
- Brett Ranon Nachman (NC State | College Autism Network)
- Brian Irvine (ACER, University of Birmingham)
- Brianne Tomaszewski (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)
- Courtney Butler (Rutgers University)
- Dan Burger (Vanderbilt University)
- Dayna Holbel (Emory Autism Center)
- Denise Davidson (Loyola University Chicago)
- Elinor Lim (University of Southampton/University of Portsmouth)
- Eric Endlich (Top College Consultants)
- Faith Frost (James Madison University)
- Florencia Ardon (Cornell University)
- Jackie Lorrainne (Maryville University)
- Jess Monahan (University of Delaware)
- Jessica Johnson (UCLA)
- Katie McDermott
- Keivan Stassun (Vanderbilt University)
- Kirstie Pickles (University of Nottingham, UK)
- Kristen Gillespie-Lynch (CUNY)
- Laurie Ackles (RIT)
- Lee Williams (College Autism Network)
- Leigh Ann Tipton-Fisler (Western Illinois University)
- Lindsay Blankenship (NYU Langone)
- Lisa Pennisi (University of Nebraska-Lincoln)
- Lynn Koegel
- Sasha Zeedyk (Cal State Fullerton)
- Tom Beeson (Clemson University)

CANVAS Updates
- Join our CANVAS list-serv - Our primary means of connecting, sharing info
  - Click here to join
  - Send email to the list
    https://groups.google.com/a/collegeautismnetwork.org/forum/#!forum/can-canvas/join by emailing can-canvas@collegeautismnetwork.org
- College Autism Summit Reflections

- o Attendees enjoyed Lydia's keynote, the networking, and presentations.
- **<mark>Share a Resource!</mark>** Are you conducting any research studies that you'd like the community to know about? Read an interesting article recently? Discovered a cool resource? This is your chance to briefly share that news with the CANVAS group! List your name and any relevant links below so others may access it at their convenience!
  - o [Stanford Neurodiversity at Work program article](#) (Nachman will mention it)
  - o "[Truly Inclusive Admission: Recruiting Students with Disabilities](#)" - article Eric Endlich recently for the Journal of College Admission
  - o Brian Irvine mentioned how, in the UK, there is some traction going on with Hector, M. (2020) Arriving at Thriving - [Learning from disabled students to ensure access for all. Higher Education Commissio](#)n. Particularly the recommendation for making pro-vice chancellors responsible and accountable for ensuring change in HEIs.

Research Presentation by Dr. Mary Baker-Ericzén (San Diego State University)
Presentation Topic: "College SUCCESS: Supported, Comprehensive Cognitive Enhancement & Social Skills Intervention to increase academic soft skills."

Dr. Baker-Ericzén holds a variety of roles including as a Research Professor at San Diego State University, as well as Operations Director and Research Scientist at the Child and Adolescent Services Research Center. She's also Director and Clinical Psychologist at the Intricate Mind Institute.

Presentation Notes:

- Mary serves as a community services researcher and clinical psychologist, and these lenses inform the development of the College SUCCESS program.
- Students' illustrations of the program were scattered across the slides.
- College SUCCESS is an acronym that stands for Supported,Comprehensive Cognitive Enhancement and Social Skills, though she recognizes that "social skills" is not as commonly embraced.
- This community-based participatory research endeavor involved researchers, government agency administrators, educators, community program providers, autistic self-advocates, and family members.
- From here Mary laid out context about the core features that encompass programming.
- Program is based on principle of Self-Determination. Self-determination reflects that every person is their own decision-maker.
- The curriculum is centered on soft skills, which often relates to "executive functioning abilities and social graces that make someone a good student/employee and compatible to interact with."
- Mary discussed how the program was initially developed referring to cognitive restorative-centered literature addressing rehabilitative and compensatory methods.
- They define the executive functioning package of cognitive skills as encompassing a variety of components, including sustained attention, cognitive shifting, cognitive flexibility, problem-solving, contextual awareness, and prospective memory. They

emphasize how all of these skills are additive and intertwined, though breaking them down is helpful and providing information on one at a time.

- Social cognition training entails familiarizing individuals with others' minds and mental states. Components include perspective-taking, social awareness, social knowledge, emotional awareness, and social communication.
- The College SUCCESS team incorporates comprehensivecognitive training and social thinking and social behavior. It encompasses 26 classes, often for a few hours per week, and involves adults. In the spring they're piloting it for a 4-credit class. Different sites may have varying numbers of participants, anywhere from 4-10 students, and have offered it in various formats (non-credit course, group through counseling services, group through disability/accessibility services). There's a psychoeducational group with hands-on experience and weekly practice assignments that enable students to apply concepts in real life.
- The content focuses on a variety of factors, with the first chunk focused on executive functioning, later turning over to social cognition and communication. The program uses logic models in teaching many of the constructs as a way to provide a basis for understanding and to support individualized decision-making. A few examples were provided related to social cognition and communication concepts.
- The Logic Model of Social Awareness entails accounting for roles (e.g., type of hierarchy), relationships (the dynamic, how well you know the person), and context clues to help students determine the types of social interactions they may engage in.
- The Logic Model of Social Communication allows people to think through how to interact with other individuals, accounting factors like perspectives and social interactions, ultimately resulting in making sense of spacing, nonverbal, and verbal elements. Students can then process intentions, outcomes, and actions.
- The College SUCCESS study was a feasibility study that took place across many campuses (UCSD, SDSU, CSUSM and the San Diego Community College District) as part of disability services. 25 students engaged, and 96% reported receiving an autism spectrum diagnosis. About ¾ were male, 36% were Hispanic, and 40% identified as students of color. 68% of students lived at home with family. Most participants were in their first couple of years of college.
- Mary shared a summary of outcomes, including a number of points. A majority of participants reported improvements in executive functioning skills and social functioning. Most liked the curriculum.
- Participant stories indicated that they had accomplished many objectives, including landing jobs and dating.
- Recently they tested the program at College of Marin (community college) in northern California among 11 students. Students were utilizing executive functioning and social functioning strategies more following program participation; facilitators also recognized that. Students were interacting with their classmates more as well. They reported high levels of satisfaction.
- Lessons learned entailed, to name a few: the social cognitive and communication content require more time; students exhibited a confidence boost; facilitators need training; and the program holds merit in both in-person or online spaces.

Q&A

- Kirstie: "re outcome measures of improved exec functioning etc - were these maintained or were they just measured at end of study?"
  - Response: There is no follow-up data quite yet.
- Sasha: "I was wondering (if you have time) if you could describe the CBPR process? How were the autistic individuals involved in the research process?"
  - Community-based participatory research entailed the team met biweekly regarding how the program should be designed, and the researchers brought in ideas from the literature. Feedback helped inform content development. Adapting other curriculum enabled the team to ask partners for their input on clarity, fit, etc. This was about 1.5 year process.
- Brianne: "Is the 4-credit course something that is funded by the college itself through student tuition?"
  - Yes. Another component that will be piloted this spring will be available to all, including undergraduate and graduate students, even if not identifying as autistic.
- Denise: "Amazing amount of work! Just curious, how did you recruit autistic students? Could you speak on your outreach to obtain participants?"
  - The campus reached out to autistic students they knew, distributing flyers, etc.
- Bertrand: "Is the material available for translation? Would be interested to test it in France"
  - Handling copyright issues right now, and then it will be more widely available for other campuses.
- Brian: "Picking up on the facilitators comment, is there scope for teaching such a curriculum more widely? And as a corollary, the extending teaching NTs understanding of autistic modes of communication?"
  - Yes, they're working on the copyrighting process. Regarding supporting neurotypical understandings, the team is working on the next iteration of the program being expanded to neurotypical students.

CANVAS meetings will once again resume monthly, starting in January 2022. Stay tuned for updates on our upcoming dates and presenters!