UNIT REPORT
Annual Highlights Report
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SPCD Department Highlights 2020-21

NON-ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UNITS ONLY: Highlights of the Year:

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UNITS: Goal #1:

Implemented an online-tutoring clinical experience in collaboration with faculty, community partners, undergraduate, and doctoral students.

In Fall 2020, Dr. Samantha Gesel received approval from the Office of School and Community Partnerships, the Exceptional Children Program in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, and Hornets Nest Elementary to offer a virtual clinical experience for Dual Majors in Special Education and Elementary Education taking SPED 3173 and SPED 4275. Students enrolled in these courses received online professional development to be tutors. Tutors used *Road to Reading* (adapted for online use by Dr. Gesel) to provide explicit instruction in foundational reading skills to struggling first graders at Hornets Nest Elementary. SPED Faculty and doctoral students served as coaches throughout the school year. The number of tutors (Junior-year SPED majors) nearly tripled in the spring 2021 semester.

Types of Accomplishments Discussed Above::

External Partnerships (internships, joint ventures, community engagement)

Student Success (Retention, graduation, high impact experiences, publications, scholarships, awards)

New Student Support Programs

Student Access (new or increased online delivery, number of course offerings, time to degree)

External Public Relations/Outreach

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UNITS: Goal #2:

Produced a substantial number of publications and a record amount of external funding in 2020.

Department faculty (n = 23) in SPCD had a substantial number of publications in 2020 and increased the overall publication rate by 30 compared to 2019. Sixty of 89 (67%) publications appeared in peer-reviewed journals, and several publications included our doctoral students as co-authors. Faculty published in some of the field's top journals such as *Exceptional Children, The Journal of Special Education, Teaching Exceptional Children, Young Exceptional Children, Dimensions of Early Childhood, Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, Journal of Learning Disabilities, Learning Disability Quarterly, Reading and Writing Quarterly, Journal of Advanced Academics, High Ability Studies, Gifted Child Today, Teacher Education and Special Education,* **Career Development and Transition for Exceptional Individual,** *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research,* Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities, Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Education and Treatment of Children,* and *Journal of Applied Educational and Policy Research.*

SPCD faculty continued implementing externally funded grant projects (5E Model PD, ECSEL Goal-Setting Challenge App, INTACT, TIES, NTACT, Project IMPACT, Student-Centered Transitions Network, CCR4T, two US Department of Education Leadership Grants, NCDPI grants, SIS-C, Adapted Partnership for Robotic Treatment of Autism). New funded-projects over the past year have secured over $22 million. NTACT-C ($20 million) became the university's largest grant ever funded.

Types of Accomplishments Discussed Above:: Faculty Success (Publications, grants, awards)

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS UNITS: Goal #3:

Implemented a highly successful virtual Summer Reading Program and Online Tutoring

Due to Covid-19, the UNC Charlotte Summer Reading Camp was delivered virtually. The Summer Reading Camp, led by Dr. Kristen Beach (SPCD) with support from Dr. Jean Vintinner (REEL), Dr. Erin Washburn (REEL), Dr. Sam Gesel (SPCD), is a partnership with Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Aldersgate Retirement Community, and the HELPS Education Fund. The Mebane Foundation, Stephen L. Cornwell Foundation, and the Cato College of Education provide financial support for the camp, which allows all students to attend free of charge. The camp had another highly successful summer as measured by positive outcomes in student attrition, attendance, oral reading fluency, mastery of skills, and teacher and parent perspectives.

Types of Accomplishments Discussed Above:: External Partnerships (internships, joint ventures, community engagement)
New Educational Programs

Examples of Data-Based Improvements :

The Department used a variety of data sources such as the College of Education Data Dashboard from the Office of Assessment and Accreditation, and the Office of Institutional Research Fact Book Dashboards. Faculty review enrollment data for each program to determine recruitment needs and long-term program viability. Faculty received Recruitment Grants from the Cato College of Education to develop promotional videos and materials. Faculty reviewed foundations and licensure pass rates to determine program support. This year we added a team comprised of department

faculty to supports students during their edTPA implementation during student teaching/internships. In each program, faculty reviewed SLO data and discussed goals for coming year. As a Department Chair, I reviewed faculty teaching evaluations to determine faculty supports (e.g., CTL) or needed mentorship.

Other Major Accomplishments: :
Successfully provided 100% online instruction in all programs during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

In March 2020, all full-time and adjunct faculty moved all courses in the department to 100% synchronous or asynchronous instruction, and the department held all program and department meetings virtually. Faculty did an incredible job making the necessary pivot and continued to provide high-quality instruction. Faculty provided online instruction through Spring 2020, Summer 2020, Fall 2020, and Spring 2021 semesters. In February 2021, two faculty members received permission to offer face-to-face classes on campus while following all Covid-19 health and safety guidelines.

Start: 07/01/2020
End: 06/30/2021
Progress:
Providing Department: Special Ed & Child Dev