After 22

The Story of Building, Sustaining, and Enhancing Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Programs

Who is Dani Smith?

"Transition is my jam!"

- **Consultant & Executive Functioning Coach**
- **Over 13 years experience in Special Education**
  - **LBS1**
  - **MA in Teaching & Learning**
  - **Disability Services in higher education**
  - **Transition Specialist for Chicago Public Schools**
  - **District Director of After 22 at City Colleges of Chicago**
- **Improviser**
- **Fitness Coach**
- **Mama**

What is a "CTP"?

DOE Designated Certified Transition and Postsecondary Program

- College program for students with **Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**
- Multi-year program including a combination of **credit and continuing education courses**
  - Must be in **inclusive courses** for at least **50% of their time in the program**
- Academic, life-skills, and employment focused courses based on an **individualized plan**
- Fully engaged in campus life; following **traditional campus schedule**
- Results in a certificate related to **competitive integrated employment**

Why is CTP designation important?

CTP designation is determined by the US Department of Education

- Designation makes the program **FAFSA Eligible**
  - This in turn makes the program **Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) eligible**

- March 20, 2025 – President Trump signed EO to close the Department of Education and return education authority to the states
  - Congressional approval required to dismantle DOE
- March 20, 2025 – Secretary of Education Linda McMahon released statement

"Closing the Department does not mean cutting off funds from those who depend on them – we will continue to support K–12 students, students with special needs, college student borrowers, and others who rely on essential programs"
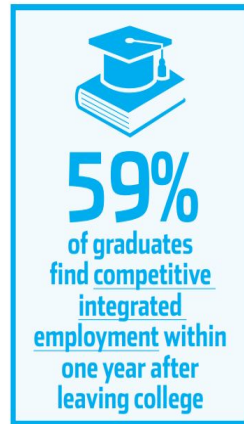

We'll take it!

Defining a CTP

What it is….

- IPSE
  - Inclusive Post Secondary Education Program
- College Program
  - CTP students are college students
  - Certain level of rigor to be successful
- Work Readiness Program

What it isn't….

- College for Life
- Day Training Program
- Supported Employment Program

315 programs across 49 states

Approximately 8000 students attend college each year

59% of graduates find competitive integrated employment within one year after leaving college

After 22 at City Colleges of Chicago

The Basics

- Two and a half year program
- 34 credit hours
  - At least 17 must be in inclusive classes
  - Mix of CE and Credit
    - Students can audit their classes
- Cohort Model
  - Foundational courses as a cohort
- At least one internship experience
- Individualized Pathway Plan (IPP)
  - Updated at least once per term
- Students earn a Career Advancement Certificate

Before we get into the meat and potatoes

https://thinkcollege.net/

So, you want to build a CTP program...

Where does the program sit?

- Who is running the program?
  - This is a full time position and then some
- What office owns the program?
- How will disability services be involved?

What is the ideal student Profile?

- Who do you want to bring in?
  - Disability category
- Assessments?
- Minimum academic requirements?
- How many?
- How often?

What is the length of the program?

- Number of hours?
- Number of semesters?
- Summer?
- Will there be foundational courses?

What credential will students earn?

- Pre-existing certificate?
- Industry recognized credential?
- Something new?

What is the application and intake process?

- Is there an interview committee?
- Do you have a rubric?
- What is the timeline from application to acceptance?
- Will you require letters of recommendation?
- How will you collect and organize documentation?

What will your Individual plans look like?

- Who keeps track of those?
- How often will they be updated?
- Do students own a part?
- What is the end product?

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What is the plan for the employment piece?

- Internship requirement?
- Employment partner?
  - Job placements
  - Career activities
- Who is doing each?

Do you have a handbook?

- One for students?
- One for parents?
- One for the program as a whole?
- Faculty resources?

What about faculty and staff?

- Are they aware of the program?
- Have they been trained?
- Is there a union that might put barriers in place?
- Will there be specific program faculty?
- Are they on board?!

The number one non-negotiable to start a CTP?

Is your Leadership on board?

Any questions? Thoughts? Concerns?

What worked for After 22

Things that After 22 does well

- Student Experience
  - After 22 students are integrated into the campus community
  - Students love their classes, faculty, and internships
- Course offerings
  - CCC has hundreds of course offerings that could be appropriate for After 22 students
  - Continuing Education Department was a key stakeholder in the program
    - Created unique classes for After 22 students
- Partnerships
  - Started because of a partnership between Special Olympics, Alderman Matt O'Shea, Anixter Center, Southside Occupational Academy, and CCC
    - SCC = pilot funding
    - Anixter = internships & job placement
    - SOA = Feeder school

Things that After 22 needed help with

- Systems
  - Back end internal processes
    - System didn't read CE or Audit as FA eligible
  - Completion rate
    - System didn't have a way to calculate CTP credits
- Course offerings
  - Though there were quite a few courses, not all of them were appropriate/relevant for our students
    - E.G. CIS 111 didn't have a pre-req, but most students had no idea what was happening
  - Books
    - Even just accessing, let alone paying for textbooks, was extremely difficult
      - Students needed one on one support
    - Foundational Courses
      - Used pre-existing curriculum that was not as relevant
      - Faculty do not know how to teach this population
- Student Profile
  - Too broad of a profile
    - Have to write 5 sentences on own
  - Not enough support for students with comorbid disabilities
  - Did not stress enough that students had to be motivated to be there

Things that After 22 needed help with continued

- Policies
  - Audit Policy
    - Our students were the last to sign up and first to be kicked out
    - Audit did not count as credit
  - SAP Policy
    - Most students will not earn GPA, but must be held to SAP
  - FERPA & Guardianship
    - Still very blurry lines around how the two interact
    - What can and can't be shared with Guardians
  - Behavior & Title IX
    - Needed to include plain language & a contract for students
    - Safety and Security need to be trained
  - Handbook
    - All of the above should be included in a program handbook
- FUNDING
  - Grant only lasted so long, and sustainability of programs was not taken into consideration

So, you STILL want to build a CTP program...

Do your research!

- Look into pre-existing programs
- Get connected to **ThinkCollege!**
- Join the Illinois Alliance
- Talk to people already doing this work! (Talk to me!)
- Make sure your campus has the right foundation to hold a program

Build the Program First!

- Make sure the structure is in place before you admit students
- Ensure everyone at the college is aware of the program and on board
    - Everyone from admissions, to advising, to security
- Hire staff
    - MUST have a background in disability and understand IDD
    - Minimum 2 staff
- Curriculum
    - Foundational courses
    - CE & Credit course offerings
- Ideally 6 months

Establish an Employment Structure

- Internships and job placement is an integral part of a CTP program
  - Outside agency
  - Career Development Office
  - On campus internships
  - Job bootcamps
  - Additional CTP staff

Think about data

ACCREDITATION READY:
10 AREAS; 38 STANDARDS

- Mission
- Student Achievement
- Curriculum
- Faculty and Staff
- Facility, Equipment, and Supply

- Administrative and Fiscal Capacity
- Student Services
- Length and Structure
- Student Complaints
- Program Development, Planning, and Review

○ **Data and outcomes are key to the success of CTP programs**
○ **New IPSE Accreditation process through IHEAC**
  ■ **Build program so that it already meets these standards**
○ **Think about record keeping as well**
  ■ **Added to Disability Services system?**
  ■ **Shared database?**
  ■ **What info do you own vs. the college?**
    ● **Guardianship info**

An accreditation ready report card and guide is included in the toolkit

Create the application and Intake process

- Application logistics
  - What info will you collect?
  - When will it go live?
  - Will you require letters of rec?
  - When will interviews be held?
  - Who will make up the interview committee?
    - Are parents included?
- Determine size of cohort
- Create and plan orientation
  - Will students attend general new student orientation as well?

Sample Application Language

The application in its entirety is included in the toolkit

Paraprofessionals and personal aides are welcome at City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) in compliance with the Public Act 102-0568. However, they are not provided by the college and you will need to connect with the ACCESS Center on campus for current policies and procedures.

Age- 18 or older with High School diploma.

Disability Documentation- A documented intellectual or developmental disability required (ex. IEP or medical documentation from former high school).

Behavior- Exhibit socially adaptive and responsible behaviors in and out of the classroom and around campus. Must also adhere to the CCC conduct policy.

Campus Independence- Be able to travel independently to and from college; CCC does not offer transportation services. Student must also be able to independently navigate the campus including to and from class, college resource centers, and student events.

Self-Medication Ability- Be able to independently manage and self-administer medicine.

Communication Ability- Be able to independently and effectively engage with program staff, college faculty, and peers both virtually and in person.

Technology Ability - Be able to independently access and navigate technology (cell phone, email, laptop, etc.) for daily communication.

Academic Ability- Must have basic reading and writing skills, and the ability to stay focused and engaged in class for up to 2 hours at a time.

**** It is essential for students in the After 22 program to be self-motivated and actively participate in courses, activities, employment, and the CCC community as a whole.

*After being accepted into the After 22 program a student will need to complete the City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) Application.

Think about Training

- Before the program begins, all stakeholders should be trained on IDD and CTPs
  - Admissions
  - Advising
  - Office of instruction
  - Office of continuing education
  - Security
  - Title IX
  - Financial Aid
  - IT
  - Office of Policy and Procedure
  - Disability Services
  - Faculty
    - UDL
- Determine who will do the training and how often it will be held
  - ThinkCollege can help!

$$$

- Funding is an extremely important piece to building and sustaining a program
  - Grants
  - Foundation Money
  - Operational Budget
  - Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)

The process can seem daunting, but we are here to help!

Mini Toolkit

If you're interested in receiving the mini CTP toolkit, email Dani!

Includes:

Sample policies and procedures

Application guide

Accreditation score sheet and guide

Foundations checklist

Please join the Illinois Alliance

If you want to support IPSE and CTP development across the state, the Alliance meets quarterly, and shares resources, data, and best practice for creating and enhancing IPSE programs

CTP programs are only growing!!

Get in touch!

THANK YOU

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SCAN ME