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BUILDING AN ONLINE COMMUNITY FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES



Overview

- Rationale for the project
- Review of model components
- Academic community activities
- Recruiting strategies
- Monitoring community usage
- Future activities
- Extending beyond D/HH
- Q & A



The Project

- Deaf STEM Community Alliance
 - Only Alliance specifically for D/HH students
- Supported by the National Science Foundation, HRD #1127955
- 3-5 year project (Sept 2011- Aug 2016)
 - Now in our 4th year

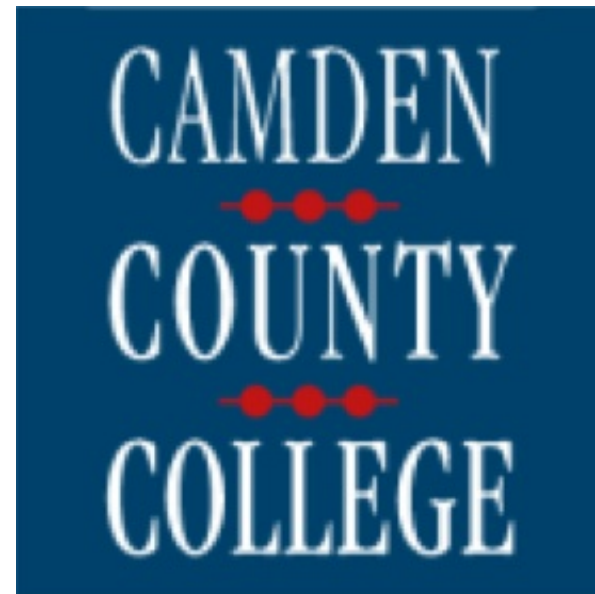




Campus Partners



RIT is the lead institution for this project, with Camden County College and Cornell University as partners.



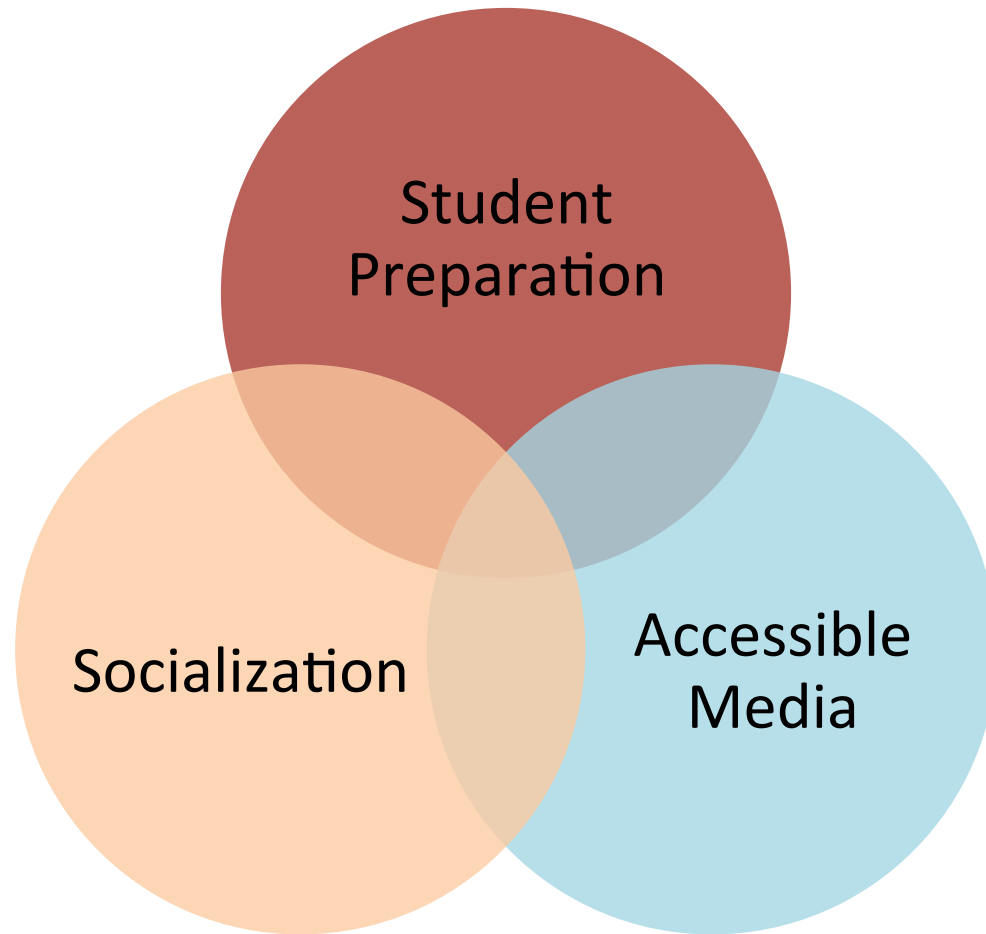


Project Rationale

- Participation gap in STEM exists for students who are deaf or hard of hearing (D/HH). This gap negatively impacts:
 - Bachelor's degree graduation rates
 - Advanced degrees
 - Between 1997-2006, 420 out of 265,790 (~.2%) of new STEM PhDs were D/HH
 - Employment opportunities in STEM:
 - Hearing 17.9% v 15.5% D/HH
 - Hearing in higher-earning STEM sectors than D/HH



Barriers to Success in STEM





Project Rationale

- Solution: Deaf STEM Community Alliance
 - Student preparation
 - Remote tutoring
 - Remote captioning
 - Remote interpreting
 - Socialization
 - Remote mentoring
 - Peer interaction
 - Accessible media
 - Curated collection of STEM resources



Goal and Objectives

- Goal

Create a *model* virtual academic community (VAC) to increase the graduation rates of postsecondary D/HH STEM majors in the long term

- Iterative and incremental (Cockburn, 2008)

- Iterative – testing what works and revising what doesn't
- Incremental – building model in stages instead of all at once



Goal and Objectives

- Objectives
 - 1) Document and disseminate a description of the process of creating a model VAC for replication
 - 2) Increase the GPAs and retention rates of D/HH students in STEM majors



Remote Tutoring

- Framework based on traditional, face-to-face model used at RIT/NTID:
 - NTID faculty provides tutoring to D/HH students who are enrolled in other RIT colleges (more than 14,000 hours in STEM tutoring to ~500 students in 2011-12)
 - Appointment-based (not walk-in)
- Synchronous vs. asynchronous models