

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT REPORT AND STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE Year: 2007

Area or Unit Name:	VIRGINIA MURRAY SOWELL CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATION IN VISUAL IMPAIRMENT		
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Section 1. Goals and Accomplishments

Goal 1: Preparation of exemplary specialists in visual impairment, orientation and mobility, and deafblindness.

- Graduated 10 students from the personnel preparation program in deaf education, 12 in the teacher of children with deafblindness and 7 in teacher of children with blindness and orientation and mobility specialists.
- Received external funding of \$864,166 for personnel preparation to provide stipends to students.
- Updated the Sowell Center website.
- Participated in statewide, regional, national and international advisory boards concerned with the training of professionals serving students with blindness and visual impairments and deafness and hard-of-hearing.
- Participated in research activities with graduate students that culminated in presentations and publications (book and journal articles).
- Submission of grant proposals and subcontracts to internal and external funding sources for funding of current personnel preparation training programs.
- Revised curriculum to better prepare highly qualified personnel.

Goal 2: Promotion of the highest quality of research addressing the academic and social needs of school-age children and adults with visual impairments

- The Sowell Center faculty and staff received \$269,000 to conduct research activities.
- Six new grant proposals/subcontracts were submitted and not funded; 4 proposals are still under review.
- Faculty, students and staff disseminated research project findings by presenting at conferences, submitting manuscripts and publishing articles and a book.

Goal 3: Provision of public service to assist local, national, and international constituencies.

- The Center faculty and staff served on advisory boards and professional organizations and community organizations' committees.
- The Sowell Center lecture on autism and visual impairment was held at TTU in fall 2007.
- Faculty, students and staff attended recruitment fairs for TTU and the College of Education.

Section 2. Universal Quantitative Data

There are no Universal Quantitative Data for this area/unit.

VIRGINIA MURRAY SOWELL CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATION IN VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

Area/Unit Specific Information

Section 3a. Quantitative Information

Calendar Year	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Research						
Publications				17	7	16
Funding(\$)				\$919,510.00	\$1,214,462	\$1,133,166
Presentations				10	13	13
Grants and subcontracts received				9	9	15
Number of professional development activities attended				4	7	12
Service						
Number of advisory boards and community organizations' committees faculty serve on				21	15	29
Number of distinguished lectures held				1	1	1
Number of times Braille was provided				2	15	5
Personnel Preparation						
student scholarships/stipends				\$179,950	\$160,000	\$349,771
Number of graduates				27	29	29
Number of advisory boards concerned with personnel preparation faculty participate on				6	6	5
Honors/awards					1	1

There is No Area Specific Data in Fall Section.

Fiscal Year	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Donations						
					\$1,500	\$1550

Section 3b. Qualitative Information.

- Award: Texas Tech University Faculty Academic Contributions Exhibit Award, 2007.
- Publication: Laman, E., Shaughnessy, M. F. & Davidson, R. C. (2007). An interview with Don Meyers: Siblings. *Exceptional Parent*, 37(7), 42-46.
- Publication: Laman, E., & Davidson, C. (In press). Using strength-based planning for transitioning students with deafblindness. In N. Griffin-Shirley, R. C. Davidson, M. F. Shaughnessy, E. Laman, E., & D. A. Lechtenberger, D. A. (In press). *Strength-Based Planning for Transitioning Students with Sensory Impairments* (Ch. 6). New York: Linus.
- Publication: Griffin-Shirley, N., Davidson, R., Shaughnessy, M., Laman, E., & Lechtenberger, D. A. (In press). *Strength-Based Planning for Transitioning Students with Sensory Impairments*. New York: Linus.
- Publication: Parker, A. T., Davidson, R.C., & Banda, D. (2007). Emerging evidence from single- subject design studies in the field of deafblindness. *Journal of Visual Impairments & Blindness*, 101,690-700.
- Publication: McKenzie, A. E., & Davidson, R.C. (2007). Emergent literacy environments of students who are deafblind: A case study. *Journal of Visual Impairments & Blindness*, 101, 720-725.
- Publication: Laman, E. Shaughnessy, M. & Davidson, R. (2007). An interview with Don Meyers: Siblings. *Exceptional Parent*, 37 (7), 42-46.
- Laman, E. Shaughnessy, M. & Davidson, R. (2007). An interview with Don Meyers: Siblings. *Exceptional Parent*, 37(7), 42-46.
- Publication: Davidson, R. (2007) Importance of Guardianship. *Lubbock State School Family Association Newsletter*. November.
- Publication: Smith, D.W.,Griffin-Shirley, N, Pogrund, R.L., Lan,W, Dignan, K.C., & Marsh, R.A. (in press). A Survey of Dual-Certified Educational Vision Professionals in Texas. Accepted for publication in *Re:View* (refereed journal)
- Publication: Pogrund, R.L. & Wibbenmeyer, K.A (January, 2008).Interpreting the meaning of the terms certified and highly qualified for teachers of students with visual impairments. *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness*.(refereed journal)
- Publication: Pogrund, R. Swift, S. & Wibbenmeyer, K. (in press) Chapter 2:"Defining Sensory Impairments" in *Using Strength-Based Planning for Transitioning Students with Sensory Impairments* (Edited by N. Griffin-Shirley, R. Davidson, E. Laman, M. Shaughnessy, & D. Lechtenberger). New York: Linus Publications.(peer-reviewed book chapter)
- Publication: Smith, D. & Kelley, P. (2007). A survey of assistive technology and teacher preparation programs for individuals with visual impairments. *Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness*, 101(7), 429-433.
- Publication: Pagliano, P., Zambone, A., & Kelley, P. (2007) Helping children with visual impairment develop humour. *British Journal of Visual Impairment*, 25(3), 267-279.
- Publication: Kelley, P., Maushak, N., & Smith, D. (2007). ATTIC: Assistive Technology for Teaching in the Inclusive Classroom. *Society for Instructional Technology and Teacher Education Conference (SITE), Conference Proceedings*.
- Publication: Journal: Griffin-Shirley, N., Kelley, P., Page, A., Matlock, D. (2006). Perspectives on orientation and mobility services for diabetic adults. *RE:view*. 38 (2), 86-95. This article was not published until summer 2007.
- Publication: Griffin-Shirley, N. (2007). Letter from the chair...Nora Griffin-Shirley, Ph.D. *Orientation and Mobility Division Newsletter, Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of Blind and Visually Impaired*. Winter,2007; Spring 2007; Summer 2007; Fall 2007.
- Presentation: Griffin-Shirley, N. Living with a visually impaired adult with diabetes. *Visionary Experience Shine On!, Texas Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of Blind and Visually Impaired 2007 Annual Conference*, March 29, 2007, Austin, TX.
- Presentation: Griffin-Shirley, N. Living with a visually impaired adult with diabetes. *Visionary Experience Shine On!, Texas Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of Blind and Visually Impaired 2007 Annual Conference*, March 29, 2007, Austin, TX.
- Presentation:Griffin-Shirley, N., Pogrund, R.& Smith, D., Qualitative study of effectiveness of the dual-certified service delivery model. 2007 Council for Exceptional Children Annual Convention, Louisville, Kentucky, April 18-21, 2007.
- Presentation:Davidson, R., Parker, A., & Banda, D. Emerging evidence from single-subject design studies in the field of deafblindness. (2007, July 16), Presented at the Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, 2007 Project Directors Conference, Washington DC.
- Presentation:Davidson,R., Broadston, P., & Laman, E. Research overview and project update of the Functional Hearing Inventory (2007, July 17), Poster presented at the OSEP Project Directors Conference, Washington, DC.
- Presentation: Laman, E., McDowell,L, & Davidson, R. (2007, July 17). Project to prepare personnel for learners who are deafblind: University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, MS and Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX. Poster presented at the OSEP Project Directors Conference, Washington, DC.
- Presentation: Daniel, C. & Davidson, R. (2007, June, 19). Technology used by deaf listserv users in TX. Presentation at the Texas Council for Exceptional Children Conference. Houston.
- Presentation:Laman, E., & Davidson, R. C. (2007, March) Adult siblings participation in the individual education plan, transition meeting of a brother or sister with significant disabilities. Presented at the American Council on Rural Special Education, Billings, MT.
- Presentation: Laman, E. (2007, October). Update of Deaf Education Program. Lubbock, TX.
- Presentation: Laman, E., Davidson, R. C., & Griffin-Shirley, N.. Equalization of Opportunities through Considerations of Ambient Sound Levels and Lighting in Settings for Students in Inclusive Settings. (2007, March 22-25). *American Council on Rural Special Education in Lexington, KY*.

- Presentation: Kelley, P. & Smith, D., Maushak, N. (April, 2007). Assistive Technology for Teaching in the Inclusive Classroom. Presented at Council for Exceptional Children International Conference. Louisville, KY.
- Presentation: Kelley, P., Maushak, N., & Smith, D. (March, 2007). ATTIC: Assistive Technology for Teaching in the Inclusive Classroom. Presented at the Society for Instructional Technology and Teacher Education Conference (SITE), San Antonio, TX.
- Presentation: Texas Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired, "It's More Than a 'How's it Going'- Making Consultation Service Delivery by VI Professionals Really Work!" (Austin, TX, March 30, 2007)(State)
- Grant: Project Co-Principal Investigator with Nora Griffin-Shirley & Lee Deumer, "The Effectiveness of the Dual-Certified Vision Professional Service Delivery Model: A Qualitative Study." Texas Tech University College of Education Research Grant Competition, 2006-2007 (\$4500).
- Grant: Project Team Member with Nora Griffin-Shirley, Mary Frances Agnello, Steve Crooks, and David White, "Learning Media Assessment Software Evaluation Study." Texas Tech University College of Education Research Grant Competition, 2006-2007 (\$5000).
- Grant Project Co-Principal Investigator with Steve Crooks Mary Frances Agnello, Nora Griffin-Shirley, & David White, "Reopening Doors to the Accessibility of Web-Based Instructional Resources for Teachers of Students with Visual Impairments: Increasing Utilization through Interface Redesign." Texas Tech University College of Education Research Grant Competition, 2007-2008 (\$5000).
- Grant: Project Co-Principal Investigator with Nora Griffin-Shirley & Lee Deumer, "A National Study of the Effectiveness of the Dual-Certified Vision Professional Service Delivery Model." Texas Tech University College of Education Research Grant Competition, 2007-2008 (\$4945).
- Grant: Davidson, R., & Laman, E. "Field Test of Functional Hearing Inventory (FHI) Protocol and Validation of FHI Instruction Manual." Texas Tech University College of Education Research Grant Competition, 2007-2008 Funded. (Awarded) (\$5000).
- Grant: State Grant contract: Texas Educational Agency Authority, The nontraditional deaf education certification program for teachers. Funded. \$667,500.
- Grant: Research Validation & Implementation Projects for Children Who are Deaf-Blind (CFDA 84.324D) Functional Hearing Project to Identify Criterion-related Validity and Inter-rater Reliability. Funded \$1,000,000 (in the last year of the 5 year project).
- Grant: Research Validation & Implementation Projects for Children Who are Deaf-Blind (CFDA 84.324D) Functional Hearing Project to Identify Criterion-related Validity and Inter-rater Reliability. Funded \$1,000,000 (in the last year of the 5 year project).
- Grant: 2007 Project Investigator: Reach Across Texas. Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. \$336,000.
- Grant: 2007 Project Investigator: ABC Braille Study. American Printing House for the Blind, Louisville, KY. \$49,013.
- Grant: 2007 Project Investigator: National Center for Leadership in Visual Impairment. Pennsylvania College of Optometry. \$130,316.
- Grant: TX Department of Assistive and Rehabilitation Services "Proposal for a cooperative internship program with DARS/DBS and Virginia Murray Sowell Center. \$1800.
- Subcontract :Region 1 Education Service Center, TX, up to \$7000.
- Subcontract for student support: Region 4 Education Service Center of TX \$10,000
- Grant: University of Utah \$5000
- Sowell Center Scholarships given: 2 given in fall 2007.
- Distance Education courses offered: EDSP 5380, 5381, 5382, 5383, 5384, 5386, 5387, 5388, 5389, 5390, 5093.
- Advisory Board: American Council on Rural Special Education (ACRES) Board Member
- Board: Member of Texas Education of Blind and Visually Impaired Students Advisory Committee representing TTU.
- Board: Member of Texas Education of Blind and Visually Impaired Students Advisory Committee representing TTU.
- Committee: Invited by TEA to be a member of a committee to develop a Statewide Plan for Students Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired- March 6-7, 2007.
- Service: Invited by TEA and Pearson Educational Measurement to be a member of the Braille Task Force to evaluate the Texas Student Assessment Program for blind students- October 29, 2007.
- Advisory Board: Invited to be a member of Project Advisory Committee for Project IDEAL at TTU and attended first PAC meeting in October, 2007.
- Service: Serve as representative for Texas University Professionals in Visual Impairment (TUPVI) to the Alliance Of and For Visually Impaired Texans and attend meetings quarterly
- Service: Consult regularly with the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, a Professional Development School of the COE.
- Advisory Board: Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER) Board Member July 2007 - present.
- Service: Chair of the Orientation and Mobility Division July 2006 to present.
- Service: AER Publications Committee Member 2002-present
- Service: AER Chair of the Task Force for the Publications Committee Fall 2007.
- Service: AER AER Position Paper Review Panel member 2007-2008.
- Service: Council of Exceptional Children Member, PAC member 2007; Archives Committee 2007; Chair of Audit and oversight

committee 2006-2007; Orientation and Mobility Committee Member 2007; Program Review Committee Member 2007.

- Professional Organization Memberships: Member, Council for Exceptional Children-Division on Visual Impairments Member, Association for Rural Special Education Member, Association for Education and Rehabilitation of Blind and Visually Impaired Member, TASH.
- Professional Organization Memberships: Deafblind International (DBI) Committee for research The Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps (TASH) Division International Special Education Service (DISES) Division of Early Childhood (DEC) Division for Communicative Disabilities and Deafness (DCDD) Division for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners (DDEL).
- Professional Organization Memberships: Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired, 1985-present Division 7 (Low Vision) 1985-present Division 9 (Orientation and Mobility) 1988-present Division 16 (Itinerant Personnel) founding member 1992-present Division 17 (Personnel Preparation) 1988-1998 Texas Division 1985- present.
- Professional Development Activities: Attended Jo Taylor Leadership Institute for leadership personnel in the blindness field on the topics of research and policy in Dallas, March 23-24 2007. Attended pre-conference workshop on grant writing sponsored by the Personnel Prep Division of the Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired in Dallas on March 22, 2007. Attended Texas AER state conference in Austin, March 29-31, 2007.
- Professional Development Activities: FCS Teacher Education Great Plains IDEA Distance Education Training at the University of Nebraska, April 2-4, 2007. 2007 Josephine L. Taylor Leadership Institute, March 23-24, 2007 in Dallas, TX. A Collaborative Conference on Autism with Low Incidence Disabilities, The Crowne Plaza Columbus North, Columbus, OH, July 30-August 1, 2007.
- Professional Development Activities: AER-Lift Leadership Conference, April 13-15, 2007, Hilton Mark Center, Alexandria, Virginia. Texas AER Conference, March 29-31, 2007, Austin, TX. EEO for Managers, TTU(online training). Attended Community Voices Meeting on Feb. 8, 2007 in Lubbock, TX.
- Professional Development Activities: Attended 2007 Texas Focus Conference in San Antonio, June 18-20, 2007. Attended 9th Annual Sowell Center Distinguished Lecturer Series on Autism Spectrum Disorders and Visual Impairment in Lubbock, November 10, 2007.
- Advisory Committees/Boards: 1. Consultant, Louisiana Department of Education. 2. Consultant, Intervener Training Project, Utah State University. 3. Advisory Board Member, Mississippi Deafblind Project. 4. Member, Research Committee for National Consortium on Deafblindness (NCDB). 5. Member, Personnel Preparation Committee for NCDB. 6. Member, Advisory Board, Texas Deaf Education Task Force.
- Service: faculty advisor for the Seeing Eye Educational Trip for TTU graduate orientation and mobility students; May 2007; and planning for the trip in 2008. co-chair with DeAnn Lechtenberger of the proposed LIFE program which met monthly to develop a post-secondary education program for people with developmental disabilities. Paid the membership fee for Texas University Professors in Visual Impairment to belong to the Alliance for Visually Impaired Texans; attend meetings via conference calls.
- Service: representing the COE and TTU on a variety of state and regional committees and at activities in Austin and by serving as the SBEC representative to COE.
- Service: State School, Lubbock, TX Prevent Blindness by helping to screen for visual disorders Habitat for Humanity by helping to build houses.
- Professional Organization Activities: Co-chair, 2006-2008 International Committee, Division 9 (Orientation and Mobility) Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired, member 1994-1998.
- Service: Special Olympics by helping fund raise and work at the local Olympics.
- Service: Faculty and staff wrapped Christmas presents at Lubbock State School.
- Professional Development: Staff attended training offered by TTU on travel and computer training.

Commentary:

The Sowell Center has had a productive year. Listed below are the responses to the three areas to be addressed by this report: 1. The level of attainment of expected learner outcomes for all degree programs is 80% passage rate on the Master's Comprehensive Examination and the professional state and/or national examinations as required by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education and the Association for the Certification of Vision Rehabilitation and Education Professionals. 2. The Center goals were not changed for 2007. Faculty continued to write grant proposals and sub-contracts and to receive funding for both student support and research activities. Students have successfully completed certification and degree programs. Finally, service by faculty, staff and students has been provided on the local, state and national level through a variety of ways. 3. The Center's Advisory Board, faculty and staff engaged in planning and assessment on a regular basis throughout 2007. Retreats were held at the beginning of each semester for the faculty and staff. For the first time, a Center Advisory Board was developed and met with Center faculty and staff in fall 2007 to review the Center's mission and goals. The Board decided to maintain the current mission and goals, to meet again in fall 2008 and to add a parent and an elderly person with a visual impairment as new board members. Discussion concerning the local and statewide impact of the Center was held. The annual lecture was viewed by the Board as a major contribution to the field as well as the personnel preparation programs. A discussion about future ideas, including the need for a low vision clinic and rehab facility in West Texas and the development of a Continuing Education Unit (CEU) for teachers on adaptive equipment and assistive technology (AT) occurred. The Board felt it would be necessary to hire an additional person, possibly a Master's student, to start up a CEU program on AT. The need to market the Center's activities to raise public awareness was also expressed by the Board.

Implementation Plan:

The changes and needed resources to make progress on the Sowell Center's objectives and benchmarks toward achieving its strategic goals include:

- Seeking continued funding for our personnel preparation programs through two new funding sources such as educational service centers and public school districts
- Engaging two more graduate students in research activities directed by Center faculty
- Seek 5% more funding for research activities through internal and external sources
- Develop more collaborative partnerships with two new TTU or other university faculty members to conduct cross-discipline research
- Explore the idea of a continuing education unit program on assistive technology for teachers and orientation and mobility specialists with the Sowell Center Advisory Board.

It is anticipated that if we receive more funding for student support and research projects then our enrollments will grow; new collaborative efforts between faculty and students will emerge; and assistive technology will be addressed in some manner initially on a small scale. Needed resources include maintaining our current faculty and staff and funding levels and adding more adjunct instructors to offer more distance education course offerings, especially in the summers.