

CDCI Affiliated Faculty Researcher

Context

As a part of the national network of *University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)* (www.aucd.org), a primary function of the University of Vermont's *Center on Disability and Community Inclusion (CDCI)* is to engage in, promote, and disseminate research pertaining to individuals with disabilities across the lifespan, their families, and service providers. While there are some UVM faculty who are funded to work part or full-time to the CDCI, the university employs other faculty members involved in disability related research who have no established connection to the CDCI. During the 2010-2011 academic term, the CDCI Research & Evaluation committee, sought to identify these researchers across campus by inviting them to be included in the newly established, *Directory of UVM Developmental Disabilities Researchers*. The primary purposes of the directory are to: (a) raise awareness regarding the range of developmental disabilities research being conducted at UVM, (b) facilitate information and resource exchange among researchers, and (c) explore the potential for collaborative grant-writing and transdisciplinary research (this may include, but is not limited to, UVM's Transdisciplinary Research Initiative in Neuroscience). To date, UVM faculty from eight different departments (i.e., Communication Sciences and Disorders, Education, Engineering, Psychology, Pediatrics, Rehabilitation and Movement Science, Social Work) have signed on to the directory.

As an outgrowth of this initial effort, the CDCI Research & Evaluation committee, with the approval of the CDCI Executive Director and Dean of the College of Education and Social Services, has established a mechanism to connect UVM researchers studying disability to the CDCI. Specifically, a designation of *CDCI Affiliated Faculty Researcher* has been established for UVM researchers not currently connected to the CDCI through a part or full-time salaried appointment. This designation represents an informal and voluntary connection between these UVM faculty members and the CDCI, and therefore would differ from the various formalized types of [non-salaried UVM faculty appointments](#) described on the UVM Provost's web site. The following sections provide: (a) a definition, (b) potential benefits for UVM researchers, (c) potential benefits for the CDCI, and (d) a process for becoming a *CDCI Affiliated Faculty Researcher*.

Definition

A *CDCI Affiliated Faculty Researcher* is: (a) a UVM faculty member in any department; (b) who is currently involved in or is pursuing research pertaining to individuals with disabilities across the lifespan, their families, or service providers that is consistent with the mission and purpose of the CDCI; and (c) voluntarily establishes a non-salaried relationship with CDCI to explore individually determined and mutually beneficial research related activities.

Potential Benefits for UVM Researchers

- Opportunities to apply for CDCI research funding when available
- Access to professionals from a wide range of disciplines who specialize in disability issues (e.g., education, nursing, nutrition, occupational therapy, physical therapy, psychology, speech-language pathology, vocational rehabilitation)
- Connections to existing CDCI field-based networks (e.g., schools, families, disability organizations)
- Expanded exposure of the researcher's work across the national UCEDD network, via posting of information on CDCI website and the NIRS: National Information and Reporting System
- Notification of professional development, grant-writing, and research collaboration opportunities associated with CDCI.
- Being part of a local community of researchers with shared interests
- Potential source of new research collaborators
- May strengthen grant applications by demonstrating collaborative connections to transdisciplinary colleagues and expanded dissemination opportunities
- Access to CDCI resources (e.g., library of disability resources, Assistive Technology Try-out Center, preferred enrollment in CDCI sponsored professional development)
- May provide resources, information, and opportunities for UVM students associated with the research activities

Potential Benefits for the CDCI

- Increases awareness of CDCI and disability research within and beyond UVM
- Broadens the base of researchers across disciplines associated with CDCI
- Builds connections with other departments and centers at UVM
- Creates potential for grant-writing and other research collaboration
- Creates potential increase in CDCI publication credits by either partially funding research activities or providing human capital to support research endeavors
- Helps identify research needs for related to people with disabilities

Process for Becoming a CDCI Affiliated Faculty Researcher

- CDCI Executive Director extends invitation to a UVM researcher to become a CDCI Affiliated Faculty Researcher (primary source: Directory of UVM DD Researchers)
- Candidate completes and submits a one-page application along with a copy of his or her vita
- CDCI Executive Director (and/or designee) reviews the application to ensure that the candidate's research is consistent with the mission and purpose of the CDCI and notifies the candidate of his or her acceptance to a 3-year renewable term as a non-salaried CDCI Affiliated Faculty Researcher
- CDCI Executive Director (or a designee) meets with the new CDCI Affiliated Faculty Researcher to establish an individualized understanding about his or her relationship with the CDCI (which can be intermittent, situational or ongoing and range from minimal to extensive) with an emphasis on activities and outputs that are mutually beneficial.