

INCLUSIVE POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND QUALITY OF LIFE:

A CASE STUDY

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**FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH**  
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### **Abstract**

The following study explores the experiences of students in the Inclusive Post-Secondary Education (IPSE) program, *Campus For All*, at the University of Regina. The case study examines the experiences of the students while using elements of the Schalock, Bonham, and Verdugo (2008) Quality of Life (QOL) framework as a guide for the semi-structured interviews and data interpretation.

IPSE programs began to emerge in Canada almost thirty years ago to allow students with intellectual and developmental disabilities the opportunity to attend post-secondary institutions with the intent of offering an authentic and inclusive student experience. Since then a modest body of literature has emerged and little has been done collectively in Canada to expand IPSE opportunities. Currently only a small number of studies capture the student experience directly from students while the rest of the data relies on other stakeholders speaking to the student experience.

The themes that emerged tell the story of a positive social-experience and an advent of a positive self-concept. Furthermore, connections are made between the positive social experience, positive self-concept and QOL, drawing on similarities between QOL domains and the student experience. Future consideration for IPSE are discussed.

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Finally, I would like to thank the students enrolled at the University of Regina through the *Campus For All* program. It is your voice that I wanted to share and without your participation there would be no story to tell.

### **Dedication**

I would like to dedicate this thesis to the many people labeled with intellectual disabilities that I have had the privilege to meet and live alongside. Throughout my life time it has been our interactions that have taught me so much and inspired me to keep learning.

To my parents, Dave and Kathy Adams, I would like to thank you for your unwavering support and encouragement. To my cousins, Jared, Colleen and Cason Buitenhuis, thank you for putting a roof over my head on numerous occasions so I could work on this project. Thank you to the many colleagues, friends and family members who offered encouragement along the way. Finally, thank you to my partner, Jay Sunaert, for always making my academic venture a priority.

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**List of Abbreviations**

ID	Intellectual Disability
IPSE	Inclusive Post-Secondary Education
DSE	Disability Studies in Education
QOL	Quality of Life

## Chapter One: Introduction

In 2007 as I sat waiting for an undergraduate lecture to begin a young woman whom I thought might be labeled with an intellectual disability (ID) casually strolled into class and sat next to me. I had met this woman through Special Olympics and when she sat down I shockingly asked “why are you here”? The woman replied, sounding a little annoyed but without hesitation, “because I have class”. Instantly I was curious about this woman and her experience at university. I later learned that she was part of an Inclusive Post-Secondary Education (IPSE) program supported by the university. I sat with her in multiple classes, spent time studying with her, and embarked on recreation activities on campus until it came time for both us to graduate. Since then, I have worked alongside people labeled with ID in all realms of their lives; personal, social, employment, and educational, never forgetting those experience and always with a hunger to learn more.

The experience of working alongside people with disabilities and through academic inquiry I have had the opportunity to learn and develop a deeper understanding of this population. I embarked on this study with a keen awareness of the disability community in Regina, the *Campus For All* program, and many of the students involved in the study and as a result need to acknowledge my place within that community and the information that position affords me. As per LeCompte and Preissle’s (as cited in Merriam, 1998) suggestion that the investigator’s assumptions and theoretical background be explained to understand his or her position within the group and the context in which the data is being collected (p. 206). In a sense I am an outsider looking in, but I have also been strongly connected with the community and am careful to be aware of the biases and assumptions I hold. Creswell (2014) reminds researchers that we

must examine and be forthcoming about our past experiences to acknowledge any bias, favourable or unfavourable interpretations of the participants, site and data that is collected (p.188). Therefore, to be specific about my experiences, I have previously been employed by the University of Regina *Campus For All* program but left the program in July of 2014. Prior to beginning the study I had knowledge of the *Campus For All* program and the students. As part of the *Campus For All* team we employed a reflective practice to question current operations and engage in critical conversations about the services and supports that were being offered to the students. One data collection method used in the study was student interviews. My prior knowledge of the students, the program and the university in general helped me to better understand the contexts to which the students referred to as they described their experiences. However, I maintained an awareness of potential bias within collection, analysis, and interpretation of data. For example, during the interviews I was cautious about the probing questions that I used, as I did not want to solicit specific responses that would confirm or refute any prior knowledge of the students that I had. In addition, since the participants knew me, there was a possibility that they may have wanted to provide answers that they thought would please me. Participants were reminded to tell me what they thought and I reassured them that I was interested in their thoughts and experiences. My prior knowledge of the students and the *Campus For All* program were also taken into consideration when analyzing the data. As themes emerged in the data I was careful to ensure that they were data driven themes and not themes I was generating from my prior knowledge of the students. I was very diligent in making the entire process a reflective process and always taking time to reflect on my position within the research.

Lastly, through my time with the *Campus For All* program I developed a strong curiosity about IPSE and the lives of people with ID. Those curiosities have motivated me to understand more about IPSE.

### **1.1 Key Terms**

Inclusive Post-Secondary Education (IPSE) refers to post-secondary opportunities for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID) within university and college settings. IPSE has many definitions and the initiatives exist differently across campuses, provinces and countries. In Canada IPSE is predominately used to describe programs that offer students with intellectual disabilities access to post-secondary education through a mature student auditing status. Students actively participate in non-segregated (inclusive) academic, social and employment experiences. An inclusive college or university experience promotes employability, further education, learning and socializing with a diverse group of people (ability, age, cultural background, academic interests, etc.) which exemplifies the typical student experience (Mosoff, Greenholtz, & Hurtado, 2009, p. 9). “The role of the students at college or university, and their participation in the same activities as others, gives them status and legitimacy with their peers and the community that would otherwise be unattainable or at the least, very difficult to achieve” (Weinkauf, 2002, p. 33). Uditsky and Hughson (2012) believe that there are five contexts that make up an authentic student experience and that each IPSE program should strive to provide opportunities and supports in each of these areas: (a) academic, (b) social, (c) associational, (d) employment and (e) family context. Within these contexts belonging, learning, identity and contribution are promoted as key elements of the authentic student experience and IPSE programming (p. 299). The term

IPSE can also be used to describe a spectrum of segregated, mixed/hybrid or inclusive supports. Specifically, within the United States and the Ontario College system we see IPSE used to describe models that do not always align with the predominate “fully inclusive” definition used in Canada (Hart & Grigal, 2010; Uditsky & Hughson, 2008; Ontario Colleges, n.d).

Intellectual Disability (ID) is a term often used to describe individuals who experience disabilities that are predominantly cognitive and sometimes co-exist with physical disabilities. ID is sometimes used interchangeably in literature with terms like developmental disability, learning disability, mental disability and mental retardation. For the purposes of this paper I am working from the definition of The Canadian Association for Community Living:

Intellectual disability is a term used to refer to the challenges that some people face in learning and often communication. These challenges are usually present from the time they are born or from an early age. Often the most serious challenges people with intellectual disabilities face are the stereotypes, negative perceptions and discrimination by others in response to unique and different ways of learning and communicating (CACL, 2016; retrieved from <http://www.cacl.ca/about-us/definitions-terminology>).

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of language and the limitations of using a label or diagnosis to describe an individual or group of people. The term ID is used throughout this study for reader usability.

Another key term is Quality of Life. Quality of Life is a concept that emerged from the fields of sociology and social psychology which explore physical, social,

emotional, and spiritual well-being and their intersection with cultural and individual values and norms (McVilly & Rawlinson, 1998, p.199). Quality of Life, in the most simplistic sense, refers to a good life.

## **1.2 The Problem**

IPSE offers an alternative to existing programs and services for people with ID; many of which are still segregated day programs or sheltered workshops (CACL, 2013, p.6). Although services and supports have come a long way over the last few decades, we are still failing a large majority of people with ID who continue to experience exclusion and poverty (CACL, 2014, p.3). The United Nation's Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was signed by Canada in 2008 and ratified in 2010 and has been a catalyst for identifying areas where the rights of people with disabilities have been denied and where barriers still exist (CACL, 2014, p. 4). Section 24 of the United Nations (2006) CRDP proclaims that "State Parties (those nations committing to the CRPD) shall ensure that persons with disabilities are able to access general tertiary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning without discrimination and on an equal basis with others. To this end, States Parties shall ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities." As a result, access to post-secondary education has become a priority of disability advocates in Canada shedding light on the importance of IPSE opportunities nationwide. The Canadian Association for Community Living (CACL) recognizes normalizing inclusive education from early childhood education through to the post-secondary system as one of their 2014 Vision to Action Benchmarks (CACL, 2014, p. 6, n.d.). However, little has been done collaboratively in Canada to strategically expand and sustain inclusive

opportunities across the nation (Bruce, 2011, p.7). This is also true for many educational projects as there is no federal department of education in Canada. Education is a matter of the provinces and territories thus making nationwide priorities difficult to navigate. More research is needed to create more opportunities nationwide and to ensure that current opportunities are meeting the needs and fundamental human rights of all people.

### **1.3 The Purpose**

The purpose of the thesis is to explore the experiences and perspectives of students who have been labeled with ID enrolled in an IPSE program, examined within the framework related to the key domains of Quality of Life. Schalock et al. (2008) identify eight domains of QOL: (a) personal development, (b) self-determination, (c) interpersonal relations, (d) social inclusions, (e) rights, (f) emotional well-being, (g) physical well-being and (h) material well-being.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

This chapter explores the theoretical underpinnings that have guided this research project. Quality of Life is explored as a way of understanding the lives of people with intellectual disabilities and their participation in IPSE. This chapter also looks at the current context of IPSE in Canada and delves into the research that has formed the foundation of our current understanding. Lastly the students' voice will be discussed in conjunction with the importance of including those with intellectual disabilities in research.

### **2.1 Disability Studies in Education**

The theoretical perspective provides an orientation to the study and shapes how questions are asked, how data is collected, how data is interpreted and analyzed, and

creates a call to action (Creswell, 2014, p. 64). This research project is influenced by a Disability Studies perspective.

Disability Studies is a field of study that emerged in the 1970's when the movement towards social inclusion for people with disabilities began. Researchers and practitioners have viewed *disability* through a variety of lenses such as the: (a) medical model of disability where disability is viewed as an impairment that medical professionals can fix, cure or accommodate for, (b) social model of disability where disability is viewed as a form of social oppression, and (c) minority group model of disability where individuals with disabilities were claimed to have experienced discrimination and stereotyping just like other minority groups (Connor, Gabel, Gallagher & Morton, 2008, p. 442) A new emerging sub field in Disability Studies is Disability Studies in Education (DSE). "Broadly, the aim of DSE is to deepen the understanding of the daily experiences of people with disabilities in school and universities, throughout contemporary society, across diverse cultures, and within various historical contexts" (Connor et al., 2008, p. 442). Connor et al. (2008) acknowledges that many different perspectives are held by DSE researchers; however, they find common ground in understanding that disability is a social construct (p.447). Furthermore, DSE researchers agree that (a) people with disabilities should be treated with full equality, (b) teaching practices should allow for the greatest participation and should work towards eliminating segregation and isolation, (c) human dignity should be ensured for all students, and (d) there is common interest in solving the largest barriers in the way of these goals (Baglieri, Valle, Connor & Gallagher, p. 276).

Inclusive education is an expanding field with a strong focus on primary and secondary education. Within the last few decades more research has emerged looking at post-secondary education, with the vast majority of the literature focusing primarily on students who meet traditional admission requirements to post-secondary. A deeper understanding of the experiences of students with ID within a post-secondary environment is important to support equality, dignity and inclusion for all learners.

## **2.2 Quality of Life**

What constitutes a good Quality of Life (QOL)? What constitutes a good QOL for a person with ID? The answer to these questions is still highly subjective and forever evolving. “QOL is not a phenomenon or term subject to broad consensus” (Lyons, 2010, p. 78). The idea of a good life has been pondered for years dating back to early Greek philosophy. According to Einfeld (as cited in Lyons, 2010) QOL developed international interest upon the creation of the United Nations in 1945 and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. For the next half a century QOL crossed interdisciplinary boundaries, and many theories emerged.

Today QOL is often discussed in terms of factors, domains and indicators. “The term *Quality of Life domains* refer to the set of factors composing personal well-being” (Schalock, 2004, p. 205). Brown, Hatton, and Emerson (2013) acknowledge that since the early 1990’s obvious differences in Quality of Life concepts have emerged in the literature highlighting variances in domains and indicators (p.318). Having said that, a recent analysis of the literature has shown a substantial agreement amongst eight main QOL domains including: (a) interpersonal relations, (b) social inclusion, (c) personal development, (d) physical well-being, (e) self-determination, (f) material well-being, (g)

emotional well-being and (h) rights (Schalock, 2004; Schalock et al, 2008; Lyons, 2010). The core domains are the same for everyone, but are influenced by personal values and are culturally sensitive (Buntinx & Schalock, 2010). The use of domains to evaluate QOL for people with intellectual disabilities became more prominent as deinstitutionalization and research about community living began to popularize the literature (Timmons & Brown, 1997, p.59). Each domain has a set of indicators, which are the aspects of human life where QOL can be measured (Lyon, 2010, p. 85). Furthermore, the literature suggests that all QOL indicators should include both objective and subjective measures of QOL taking into account individual values and collective norms (Brown et al., 2013; McVilly & Rawlison, 1998).

Currently, there is a growing interest and concern amongst researchers and professionals for the individual's social and psychological well-being, self-determination, and participation in society versus the collective well-being approach (Schalock, 2004, p. 204). According to Buntinx and Schalock (2010) research using QOL concepts is valued in the field of ID because (a) the focus is on the person's life condition, (b) QOL indicators can be both objective and subjective and (c) the person with ID is the most suitable respondent (p.286).

QOL has moved from a quality of care, support, and programming to focusing on QOL for the individual, therefore encouraging the construct to be applied in real life settings (Lyons, 2010, p. 103). Education is a real life environment where the constructs of QOL can be applied. Inclusive education practices have been seen as gateway to a better QOL for people with ID. Timmons and Brown (1997) would argue that schools should not be limited to one avenue for learning and that education must be robust by

including the social learning experiences one has within their community and family. Furthermore, issues of inclusion are not school issues alone, they are issues of real and perceived QOL (p.189).

IPSE itself is not a catalyst for a good QOL, but as Timmons and Brown (1997) suggest, when schooling is more than just academics and is viewed holistically by educators and parents then it is much more consistent with QOL models (p.191). The IPSE literature has not yet been contextualized to QOL, however the IPSE research has emphasized an “inclusive life” which carries some similarities to indicators and domains of QOL.

“An inclusive life offers people with developmental disabilities the best chances to experience good things: the resilience, resources, pleasures, and challenges that come with belonging; learning that develops one’s capacities; an identity that includes a sense that one can set and achieve meaningful goals through hard work and the support of others; and opportunities for meaningful contribution. (O’Brien et al., n.d., p. 6)

Many of the foundational principles of IPSE are infused with indicators of QOL and cross multiple domains of QOL. Uditsky and Hughson (2008) describe the foundational principles of IPSE to be (a) normative pathways, (b) valued context, (c) high expectations of learning and participation, (d) normative and valued identities and roles, (e) diversity of relationships, (f) relevant and expansive curricula, (g) pathway to a career identity, (h) enriching experiences, (i) possibilities, choices and opportunities, (j) economically sound and (k) lifelong learning. Understanding the student experience and the subjective

measures of QOL may help professionals in the field shape and adjust the current foundational principles of IPSE.

The following QOL conceptual framework guided the development of the research questions and data interpretation for this study. The framework developed by Schalock, Bonham, and Verdugo (2008) provided a lens in which to focus the study and to analyze the experiences of the students (see Table 1). This particular framework was chosen because the most recent review of the literature has established considerable agreement amongst the listed factors, domains and indicators. Sixteen studies that were analyzed produced a total of 125 indicators of which 74.4% related to the eight agreed upon domains (Schalock, 2004, p.205). Further to that, the most common indicators were decided upon after an analysis of 9749 abstracts and 2455 articles (Schalock, 2004, p.206).

Table 1.

*Quality of Life conceptual model: factors, domains, and indicators.*

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Domains</b>	<b>Exemplary Indicator</b>
Independence	Personal Development	Education status, personal skills, adaptive behavior
	Self Determination	Choices/decisions, autonomy, personal control, personal goals
Social Participation	Interpersonal Relations	Social networks, friendships, social activities, interactions, relationships
	Social Inclusion	Community integration/participation, community roles, supports
	Rights	Human rights, legal rights
Well-being	Emotional well-being	Safety & security, positive experiences, contentment, self-concept, lack of stress

Physical well-being	Health, nutrition status, recreation, leisure
Material well-being	Financial status, employment status, housing status, possessions

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*Note:* This table was developed by Schalock, R., Bonham, G., & Verdugo, M., 2008, p. 182.

### **2.3 Inclusive Post-Secondary Education: The Canadian Context**

IPSE in Canada is documented through program websites, a small number of program assessments, and a limited number of published articles. The program websites often offer limited information about the programs. The most influential effort in developing and sustaining IPSE programs in Canada can be found in Alberta (Mosoff, Greenholz, & Hurtado, 2009, p.8). Inclusion Alberta (formerly known as the Alberta Association for Community Living) is a provincial, non-profit organization that centrally supports IPSE initiatives across the province of Alberta. Inclusion Alberta is recognized as a leader in this field with almost thirty years of experience advocating for, developing, and growing opportunities for IPSE (Weinkauff, 2002, p.28). In 1987 the first IPSE program was formed in Alberta and was called the On Campus Program (Weinkauff, 2002, p. 32). Inclusion Alberta now works in collaboration with 18 post-secondary institutions to offer IPSE programs province wide (Inclusion Alberta, n.d.). Outside of Alberta IPSE programs have been established in a variety of post-secondary institutions across the nation. In British Columbia IPSE programs exist on six campuses including Nicola Valley Institute of Trades and Technology, University of British Columbia Okanagan, University of Victoria, Emily Carr University of Art and Design, University of British Columbia Vancouver and Simon Fraser University. The initiatives are supported through a partnership with an organization called Steps Forward (Steps

Forward, n.d). The University of Regina is home to the only IPSE option in Saskatchewan, called *Campus For All* (*Campus For All*, n.d.) and The University of Manitoba is home to the only IPSE opportunity in Manitoba called Campus Life (Campus Life, n.d.). Currently in Ontario there is one documented IPSE opportunity and it is offered in partnership through Queens University and the H'art School (H'art School, n.d.). Axxess Acadia is the only IPSE program in Nova Scotia housed at Acadia University (Axxess Acadia, n.d.). In some cases, programs like the Community Integration for Cooperative Education (CICE) offered through colleges in Ontario can be described as IPSE for people with ID. However, the CICE programs are fundamentally different in that they offer life skills and employment curriculum specific to people with disabilities alongside the regular academic offerings of the university (Ontario Colleges, n.d.). With no governing body, programs can be identified as IPSE but not subscribe to the same guiding principles.

According to O'Brien et al. (n.d) there are five contexts where students can engage in an authentic student experience including the academic, social, associational, employment, and family contexts. As there is no central body or governing body IPSE functions differently from province to province and from institution to institution. However almost all of the programs strive to support students in the academic, social and employment realms, differing in only the degree to which supports are provided (Inclusion Alberta, n.d, Steps Forward, n.d, *Campus For All*, n.d, Campus Life, n.d., H'art School, n.d, Axxess Acadia, n.d.).

## **2.4 Inclusive Post-Secondary Education Program Outcomes**

Perhaps the most recognized pieces of research in a Canadian context include a series of program assessments spanning from 2002 to 2009 (Weinkauff, 2002; Mosoff et al., 2009; Hughson et al., 2004; Thompson 2008). These assessments took place within three different regions where IPSE has been implemented including Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. The assessments are similar in that they aim to include multiple perspectives of IPSE stakeholders and try to link outcomes to the guiding principles. The published Canadian research also consists of a small number of reports that propose the development of new IPSE initiatives (Bruce, 2011; St. Peter's College, 2011). Finally, there is the one Canadian report sharing the stories of students at the University of Manitoba (Wilson, Bialk, Freeze, Freeze, & Lutfiyya, 2012). Additional promotional pieces and short articles exist in newsletters and on program websites that report on student or programmatic successes (AACL Connections, 2015; Campbell, 2015; Lakeland College: Feature Stories, 2016). Inclusion Alberta has published an assessment tool for practitioners to use that aims to assess the level of inclusion in IPSE programs (O'Brien, Bowman, Chesley, Hughson & Uditisky, n.d., p. 2). The assessment tool outlines eight benchmarks of IPSE and provides guiding questions that professionals can use to assess program outcomes. Lastly, Uditisky and Hughson (2008) published a book that looked at the ten years of IPSE history and discusses the foundational principles, IPSE in practice, employment outcomes, and governance.

The four separate reports by Weinkauff (2002), Hughson et al. (2005), Thompson (2008), and Mosoff et al. (2009) have described IPSE in Canada and have contributed our most current understanding of IPSE. Weinkauff (2002) recognized a fundamental problem in the public school system where thousands of Canadian students were being denied the

opportunity to pursue post-secondary studies and the pathway to employment and community participation entirely because of their intellectual disability (p.29). In response, Weinkauff (2002) looked at three IPSE programs in Alberta and explored their inclusive philosophies and practices. Weinkauff (2002) collected data from seven senior staff members from various IPSE initiatives in Alberta. Through interviews, Weinkauff (2002) gathered data, analyzed it and developed a guiding definition of IPSE and a timeline of IPSE initiatives. Eleven guiding principles of IPSE emerged from the data. The eleven guiding principles included: (a) IPSE is available to any adult with an intellectual disability, (b) IPSE is totally inclusive and is coherent with what other students experience, (c) students in IPSE programs assume socially valued roles, (d) IPSE programs provide individual student supports, (e) IPSE programs provide support for others as well, (f) IPSE programs encourage self-determination of students, (g) IPSE programs involve families, (h) IPSE programs view students as adult learners, (i) IPSE programs see friendships as educational outcomes, (j) IPSE is tool for community education, and (k) IPSE programs believe that education extends beyond the classroom. Lastly five benefits to students were identified by the senior staff members including: (a) self-esteem and confidence, (b) academic skills, (c) self-determination, (d) job skills and (e) social status enhancement. It is not clear how the senior staff members arrived at the five key benefits to students. Perhaps it is apparent that one voice is missing from the study and it is that of the student. Other limitations of the research are that it was isolated to Alberta and data was only collected from senior staff. However, the findings from the study laid a base for future work and began a movement towards more research of IPSE in Canada.

Hughson, Moodie, and Uditsky (2005) published *The Story of Inclusive Post-Secondary Education in Alberta*. With almost a twenty-year history of IPSE in Alberta Hughson et al. felt that it was time to capture, understand, and share knowledge learned through the years to families and advocates of IPSE. Hughson et al. collected data from students supported by the IPSE initiatives, students without disabilities, facilitators, and families from six IPSE initiatives throughout Alberta, including programs in college and university settings. Participatory Action Research was used to capture all of the relevant voices from these initiatives. The research team completed a series of site visits, observations, interviews, surveys and document reviews in an attempt to (a) describe elements of the current initiative, (b) chronicle personal experiences of various stakeholders, and (c) develop a framework to accumulate more experience and build a foundation of IPSE knowledge. The results were summarized into four main themes; successes, successes-contributing factors, challenges, and possibilities to watch for. Key to this research is the part of Hughson et al. research that captured the student voice. Hughson et al. captured the student voice through surveys and interviews. Forty-two students and alumni completed the survey. Fourteen students and eleven alumni participated in the interviews. In the findings the students described their successes as meeting new people, making friends, and trying new things. Furthermore, they reported such successes as gaining independence, having a career, and developing a personal identity. Students attributed their successes to being treated like an adult, meeting new people, making decisions, and the support received from a facilitator in doing the coursework. They further stated that getting to know faculty and learning alongside peers also contributed to their success. Hughson et al. also focused on employment related

outcomes, as programs were initially structured to support students in finding employment. The outcomes were optimistic indicating that the majority of students who attended IPSE found employment after graduation. Lastly, the students identified challenges in meeting new people, making and keeping friends, the academic work, and difficulty finding employment. Although we have gained some insight into the student experience, the nature of this study does not allow us to fully understand the experience of the students and how they fully described those factors that contributed to their successes and challenges. Demographic included the year the students participated, gender, age, type of institutions they studied at, where they lived, program of study and diagnosis of their disability. Further knowledge of the students and their interaction with program elements is needed to explore aspects of the IPSE experience that contribute to reported successes.

The third major piece of research in a Canadian context is from Saskatchewan where Thompson (2008) used survey data to evaluate the *Campus For All* program at the University of Regina. Thompson begins by describing the *Campus For All* program from a historical perspective to the present day operations at the time of the study. At the time of the study *Campus For All* was still a pilot project at the University of Regina in partnership with two community-based organizations. Classmates, tutors and instructors from five different classes completed surveys that garnered both qualitative and quantitative data. The findings revealed that tutors, classmates and instructors all felt that students with intellectual disabilities benefited socially from the experience. Students, tutors and instructors were able to identify more social benefits than academic gains. Thompson concludes the assessment by making recommendations to advance *Campus*

*For All* programming at the University of Regina. The researcher acknowledges the limitations of this study because it does not include the perspective of students with intellectual disabilities and recommended that further research is needed to include students with ID and to explore QOL issues. Along with the recommendations made by Thompson to guide further research, it would be of value to see how students in the program perceive their experiences seven years later.

The fourth research project in a Canadian context was phase one of a larger researcher project focusing on IPSE. Mosoff et al. (2009) intended to use the findings to develop an assessment protocol that could be used by IPSE initiatives across Canada however this has not yet been published. Mosoff et al. acknowledge that there are many stakeholders who would benefit from a comprehensive assessment of IPSE including students, government, families, and post-secondary institutions. To begin, assessment frameworks relevant to IPSE were identified. Aligning with traditional models of assessment used in programming for people with disabilities, the researchers considered Social Role Valorization (Wolfensberger, 2011) and Person Centered Planning (Claes, Van Hove, Vandeveld, Loon and Schalock, 2010). Social Role Valorization suggests that based on cultural and societal values some members of a society are devalued and when those individuals assumed a valued role they begin to experience the societal benefits of being valued (Wolfensberger, 2011, p.437). Person Centered Planning is an approach often used in program planning for individuals with ID and is fundamentally focused on change balancing both what is important for and to the individual. Person Centered Planning is often individualized, goal oriented and is focused on community participation, positive relationships and competence (Claes et al., 2010, p.432). To

contextualize the assessment, Mosoff et al. (2009) also considered assessment on student engagement in post-secondary education. They conducted semi-structured conversations with 32 participants including students, families, faculty, non-academic staff, and program staff from British Columbia. Using grounded theory, a set of evolving questions was used to gather information. Five components of IPSE were deemed important by three or more groups interviewed: (a) development of student confidence; (b) student engagement in existing university activities; (c) the impact students with ID would have on the institution; (d) student individuality and choice; and (e) authenticity of the experience. Relevant to this thesis were the findings that shared the student perspective. Students reported a positive change in their self-confidence. Additionally, students reported positive engagement in both their academic and social experiences on campus. Mosoff et al. (2009) also shared more overarching themes which highlighted both successes and concerns. Mosoff et al. (2009) made recommendations for better data collection methods, the inclusion of employers in this type of assessment, and the expansion of this type of research nationwide.

## **2.5 The Student Perspective**

Historically people labeled with ID have had their experiences interpreted and shared by other people; their story has been told by someone else. Neither have people with ID traditionally been included in research activities. Fortunately, there is a small body of research of Canadian IPSE that includes the student perspective. In two larger Canadian studies positive outcomes have been expressed by a number of students who have been involved in IPSE. (Hughson et al, 2004, Mosoff et al, 2009). In only a couple of cases has the student experience been captured through research. In a recent doctoral

dissertation Gallinger (2013) used a phenomenological approach to understand the experiences of seven students with ID participating in IPSE experiences at two Ontario colleges. Gallinger completed multiple interviews with the students as well as the use of photo elicitation methods during the interview process. The students participated in a two-year Community Integration through Cooperative Education (CICE) college program in Ontario. The students felt that the opportunity to attend post-secondary education gave them a better start toward their future goals. Additionally, they felt like they had experienced academic growth, had better potential for a career, built friendships and were given the opportunity to make more choices. As mentioned earlier, CICE programs in Ontario Colleges are different in their delivery of life skills and employment curriculum in comparison to other Canadian IPSE initiatives which makes it challenging for other IPSE programs to make connections to the results and therefore may not be comparable to other IPSE programs. O'Brien et al. (2009) also explored the experiences of students at an IPSE program at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland. Nineteen students participated in the phenomenological approach through focus groups, questionnaires, Photovoice, and a document analysis. Similar to other studies, findings showed that students felt more independent, confident and had developed a stronger social network. Both of these studies explored programs that operated on a different framework than most Canadian IPSE program, therefore, it is difficult to make comparisons between the findings. Furthermore, both studies used photography as a way to elicit responses, where as I have chosen to use the student portfolios instead of photos. More importantly, the results from the studies by Gallinger (2013) and O'Brien (2009) were not contextualized to QOL. We still have much to learn from the lived experiences of the students.

## **2.6 The American Context**

In the United States there are a growing number of post-secondary programs for students with ID and research being produced consistently through a centralized research organizations called Think College (2016). Thoma et al. (2012) reported there were approximately 250 post-secondary options including both inclusive and hybrid programs for students with intellectual disabilities in the United States as of 2010 (p.176). Along with a massive growth in IPSE opportunities there is new research emerging to discuss the wide range of current opportunities and issues. The research has explored a variety of service models, changes to legislation, and funding options to ultimately answer the question “what is the desired impact?” (Thoma, 2013, p.293). Grigal, Hart and Paiewonsky (2010) capture the current state of IPSE in the United States by highlighting a mix of both American and Canadian quantitative and qualitative research; however, the authors note that the work explored gives “very little knowledge about the long term outcomes associated with IPSE” (p.12). Think College (2016) has captured the student experience and published many stories via special publications and their website. It is important to acknowledge the American context because IPSE in a Canadian context is under researched. Researchers, professionals, and families may be looking to the United States for innovations, trends, and best practices.

## **Chapter Three: Methodology**

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences and perspectives of students enrolled in an IPSE program and to explore the findings as they relate to the key indicators of Quality of Life. The research questions are: “What are the experiences and perspectives of students enrolled in an Inclusive Post-Secondary Education program?”

and “How do the student experiences and perspectives relate to indicators of Quality of Life?”.

### **3.1 Methodology**

Qualitative research methods were employed for this study because the purpose of the study is to understand the experiences of the students. “Qualitative research is an umbrella concept covering all forms of inquiry that help us to understand and explain the meaning of social phenomena with little disruption of the natural setting as possible” (Merriam, 1998, p.5). Qualitative research is exploratory in nature and can be used to address research questions where little is known about the phenomenon (Creswell, 2011, p.16). Furthermore, qualitative research aims to make meaning of the participants’ experiences. Qualitative data is not derived through questionnaires, inventories and computer programs, but rather the researcher is the instrument used for data collection (Merriam, 1998, p. 7).

### **3.2 Case Study**

The research study is a qualitative case study. Merriam (1998) suggests that case study knowledge is developed by reader interpretation and that findings can be considered and applied to knowledge from past experience or research (p.32). Choosing a *particularistic* route allowed the study to focus on students from one particular program which in turn provides the reader with rich descriptive information. A detailed analysis of the site, in this case *Campus For All*, allows for a deep understanding of the program, operations and nuances. “The case itself is important for what it reveals about the phenomenon and for what it might represent” (Merriam, 1998, p.29). Students from the *Campus For All* program offered at the University of Regina, in Regina, Saskatchewan

were chosen for the case. Multiple data sources were employed by including multiple students' perspectives in the research. Merriam (1998) suggests that case study knowledge is more contextual and concrete than other forms of qualitative research and is enhanced by the reader's interpretation (p. 31).

### **3.3 Site Selection**

*Campus For All* at the University of Regina was chosen as the program because I am familiar with the program and campus. Although the *Campus For All* program is a convenient place to conduct the study, there are also many other factors that make it the ideal place to conduct research. *Campus For All* is also one of the only programs in Canada that is funded directly by the university (Savarese, personal communication, 2015). Specific elements of the program were important when choosing a site as I wanted to capture the experience of students in an inclusive model. The fully inclusive model is most common in Canada therefore other colleagues in the field may be able to relate to elements of the findings. A more detailed description of *Campus For All* is available in the next chapter and offers rich descriptive information which was gathered through an open ended interview with the program coordinator and through a document analysis. An interview guide was developed to facilitate a comprehensive interview (See Appendix G).

### **3.4 Participant Selection**

Six third- and fourth-year students were selected from the *Campus For All* program. Third- and fourth-year students were chosen because these students have more experiences to reflect on. The *Campus For All* Coordinator assisted in sharing preliminary information about the study to the eight current third- and fourth-year students. Through information sessions I provided a full explanation of the study in

person for those students who were interested in learning more about the study and possibly participating. Four information sessions were held. Two information sessions were one on one with the interested student and two information sessions were held in a group format with a total of seven students attending. One interested participant contacted me via telephone to arrange a different meeting time than those advertised on the recruitment poster.

Working with vulnerable populations brings forth some ethical concerns in participant selection; using a Check for Understanding Guide I asked the students to verbally describe the study and the risks of their participation (Appendix F). One student appeared to not understand the study and what it would mean to participate in the study. As a result, this individual was not eligible to participate.

In the proposal I had indicated that I would select five students to participate in the study. At the time random selection did not appear to be a good strategy to reduce the number of participants as it may have eliminated certain perspectives such as gender, age, race, socio-economical background, etc. due to the size of the sample. Therefore, I chose to continue the study with six participants.

### **3.5 Data Collection**

Data collection is an important and complex part of the research process. According to Creswell (2011) qualitative data collection is a multi-step process that includes identifying participants, gaining access to the site, choosing a data collection approach, and developing data collection instruments that are coherent to ethical standards (p. 205). Data sources included individual semi-structured interviews with student participants, family member/caregiver of the student, a member of the campus

community who knows the student well (classmates, professors, tutors, gym buddy, friends, etc.), and the students' portfolios. Six individual semi-structured interviews were completed with students. Two interviews were completed with family members and one interview was completed with a member of the campus community. Lastly, an interview with the *Campus For All* Coordinator and a document review was conducted to gain a better understanding of the *Campus For All* program.

Table 2  
*Interview Schedule*

<b>Student</b>	<b>Interview</b>	<b>Family Member</b>	<b>Member of Campus Community</b>
Student A	April 13	April 15	N/A
Student B	April 13	April 20	April 21
Student C	April 14	N/A	N/A
Student D	April 15	N/A	N/A
Student E	April 15	N/A	N/A
Student F	April 19	N/A	N/A

*Note:* \* N/A means that no interview took place

### **Interviews**

There are unique challenges to interviewing people with intellectual disabilities. Although working with a vulnerable population, all of the students identified as participants consistently made decisions and choices in their daily activities and were responsible for their own safety for the vast majority of each day. It was also important

for me to remain mindful of multiple identities that the person has and not let the label of disability shade other characteristics of the individuals.

People with ID vary in their capability to verbally express their thoughts and ideas and sometimes have limited conceptual language skills (Hall, 2013, p. 129).

Additionally, people with ID also vary in their ability to understand, interpret and respond to questions (Brown et al., 2013, p. 321). It was important for me to not let the identification of an ID overshadow the capabilities of the individual. Interview questions were designed using plain language and multi-part questions were intentionally avoided so that the questions would be clear and easy for the students to understand.

As an interviewer it was important for me to be aware of the different capabilities to respond verbally. All the students were able to respond verbally so I did not need to adapt the interview. In some interviews where verbal expression was unclear I would ask for clarification or for the student to repeat their answer. Hall (2013) reminds us that it is helpful to maintain a flexible interview schedule to accommodate differences when interviewing people with ID. One interview session was booked with each student, however, I was available should the students require a second or third session to finish the interview. The flexibility allows for differences in the abilities such as the length of time it takes to respond, attention span, and fatigue (Hall, 2013, p.136). All of the students finished within the forty-five-minute time frame of the original interview. There were no second sessions scheduled.

Given the challenges of interviewing people with ID, a person who knows the person with an intellectual disability well can also be included in the data collection process (Brown et al., 2013, p. 321). The intent was for a parent, family member or

caregiver who knows the student well will be interviewed. Knowing that the parent, family member or caregivers are not always on campus it can be assumed that they do not fully understand the day to day interactions and activities the student is having on campus. Therefore, members from the campus community (professor, classmate, tutor, co-worker, or peer) who know the student well and who interact with them on a regular basis were also identified as a source of data. Using multiple sources of data collection within the analysis is known as triangulation and this strengthens reliability and internal validity of qualitative research (Merriam, 1998, p. 206). Brown et al. (2013) remind us that in no way are the thoughts of others equal to the thoughts of the person with an intellectual disability; the opinions of others alone do not reliably reflect the thoughts of the person with an intellectual disability. The intent for interviewing the parent, family member or caregiver and a member from the campus community was not only to understand their own individual experience with *Campus For All*; but more importantly to assist with understanding the data received from the interviews with the students. However, conflicting data was also acknowledged and included in the data analysis. Participating students were given multiple copies of the recruitment materials for parents and members of the campus community after their interview. Participating students were encouraged to pass on the information to people they felt comfortable. The participating students were also reminded that the *Campus For All* coordinator could support them in contacting members of the campus community if need be. I was contacted by two parents and one member of the campus community to participate in the study. A limitation could be the delivery and sharing of the recruitment material, time constraints or perhaps the reluctance to talk about someone else's experiences.

All of the interviews were recorded to ensure an accurate record of the conversation (Creswell, 2011, p. 221). Written consent was obtained before the interview and ongoing verbal checks for consent occurred throughout the interview. For the students, the consent form was read verbally before they signed it. I was fortunate to have a pre-existing relationship with each of the students and was strongly aware of those students who are generally agreeable. The rapport I had established with the students through our past relationship had made them feel safe in disagreeing or saying no to me from time to time. I reminded the students of our respectful relationship and after checking for understanding respected their decision to participate. The students were verbally reminded that their participation or non-participation had no impact on our relationship or their participation with *Campus For All*. All of the student interviews were held in a private study space in the Centre for Student Accessibility. The Centre for Student Accessibility is home to the *Campus For All* office so it was a space where all of the students could easily access and feel comfortable. Family members and the member of the campus community read and signed the consent form. Interviews took place where the family members and member of the campus community felt comfortable. Two of three interviews were conducted at the University of Regina in a private office or study space in the Centre for Student Accessibility while one family interview took place in a quiet coffee shop at the request of the parents. One student attended the interview with his parents. His parents felt that it was important for the student to be there and it was a way to show respect to their son. An interview protocol was used facilitate the smooth and consistent execution of all of the interviews (Appendix H and I).

The open ended interview questions were influenced by QOL using Schalock, Bonham, and Verdugo's Quality of Life conceptual model as a guide (Schalock et al, 2008, p. 182). "During the past decade, its (Quality of Life) role has expanded to include: (a) a conceptual framework for assessing personal outcomes; (b) a social construct that guides program practices and quality improvement (QI) strategies; and (c) a criterion for assessing the effectiveness of those practices and strategies" (Schalock, R., Bonham, G., & Verdugo, M., 2008, p. 181). According to Brown et al. (2013) most QOL instruments emphasize the importance of capturing the perspective of people with intellectual disabilities (p. 321). QOL is socially constructed therefore objective and subjective measures are important in measuring Quality of Life (Brown et al., 2013, p.319). The interview questions were designed using Schalock, Bonham, and Verdugo's (2008) Quality of Life conceptual model as a guide.

In qualitative research open ended questions are asked so that the participants can voice their thoughts without constraints or influences from the researcher (Creswell, 2011, p. 218). Creswell (2011) also puts forth that open ended questions allow for open ended responses where the participants create the option for responding (p. 218). Hall (2013) reminds us that when interviewing people with ID you may have to ask the same question multiple ways until they understand it. Furthermore, Hall reminds us that it is important to include probing questions related to multiple contexts including people, activities and places (p. 134). "The purpose for the most part is not to get a simple yes or no answers but a description of an episode, a linkage an explanation" (Stake, 1995, p. 65).

The students participating in the study had a tendency to provide positive answers in relation to their experience but occasionally a contradicting message could be heard. For example, when an overwhelmingly positive experience was shared many times there was no recall or articulation of what could have contributed to that feeling. Silence or lack of recall does not necessarily mean that the positive experience is untrue but it does suggest further inquiry may be needed to truly understand the positive statements that were made. On occasion, a positive answer was given and through further investigation a negative experience or feelings surfaced.

### **Portfolios**

Individuals in the *Campus For All* program have developed portfolios capturing their experience as students. These portfolios typically include artifacts from (a) the classes the student has taken (b) social experiences the students have had on campus, and (c) employment related experiences the students have had including items like a resume, cover letter, letter of reference, and reflections on work experience. The portfolios were used as a prompt during the interview for the students with ID to help them elaborate on their answers. Five out of the six students had their portfolio available for the interview. Hall (2013) recommends that researchers use other artifacts to supplement interviews (p. 139). Permission to collect data through the portfolios was included in the consent form. I developed field notes as I went through each of the portfolios. Data from the field notes were coded the same as the information gathered from the student interviews. Data collected from the portfolios assisted in understanding the student responses as well as providing a context to certain responses.

### **3.6 Document Analysis**

Separate from the interviews, data was collected in the form of document analysis. Policy and procedure documents along with publications about the *Campus For All* program were analyzed to assist with creating a description of the program. Documents provide important information that can enhance the understanding of the phenomena (Creswell, 2011, p. 223).

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

Data collected from the interviews was transcribed verbatim and field notes from the portfolios were collected. To begin the coding process, I engaged in a preliminary exploratory analysis. A preliminary exploratory analysis is a first glance at the data during which a general sense of the data is developed and organization of the data begins (Creswell, 2011, p. 243). The exploratory analysis of the data was very important as it helped me to gain an understanding of the big picture before the application of any codes or analysis through any specific lens. This process took a significant amount of time because I want to make sure that I understood the entire data set before exploring it through the provisional codes. A list of provisional codes based on Schalock et al. (2008) Quality of Life domains was used to begin this process. The provisional codes included (a) personal development, (b) self-determination, (c) interpersonal relations, (d) social inclusion, (e) rights, (f) emotional well-being, (g) physical well-being, and (h) material well-being. The next step was to make sense of the data by breaking it into codes and labelling such data. Additional codes were developed as needed and data was analyzed for commonalities as well as to identify discrepancies and disconfirming evidence.

Field notes from the portfolios as well as interview data from parents and the campus community were used to assist in understanding the student perspective. The

field notes and transcribed interviews from the parents and the member of the campus community were coded the same provisional codes as the student interviews. Additional codes were developed as they emerged. It was important to include data collected from other sources as a means of member checking. Member checking allows research participants to review the data collected for accuracy and palatability adding another layer to of triangulation (Stake, 1995, p. 115).

The next phase began with identifying overlapping ideas and redundant concepts resulting in a reduction of codes (Creswell, 2011, p. 243). At this time, connections were made between the exploratory analysis, provisional codes, and the new and disconfirming evidence. The reduced, coded data was then categorized into themes. Themes are similarly coded data brought together to form a major idea from the data (Creswell, 2011, p. 245). Creswell (2011) highlights four different types of themes that influence the major emerging ideas: ordinary themes, unexpected themes, hard to classify themes and major/minor themes (p. 249).

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

Ethics approval from the Research Ethics Board at the University of Regina was obtained on April 4, 2016 (Appendix J). Informed consent (informing for consent) is an important part of this study. Including vulnerable people in research raises ethical concerns regarding informed consent. Ethical concerns arose initially with participant selection. I orally provided information describing the study to each student who was interested in participating in the study. I completed a check for understanding by asking the interested students to verbally describe the study and their rights and risks in

participating. If the student appeared to not understand and could not make an informed decision about their participation they were not chosen as a participant.

I provided the students with an informed consent document that was written in plain language and information about what the study is researching, why they have been chosen to participate, the risks and rewards for participating and ultimately let them know it is their choice to be involved or not. Some of the participants did not have the ability to read the consent form therefore it was imperative that oral consent was also sought. Oral consent was audio recorded. Informed consent was not acquired strictly through the signing of paperwork; therefore, consent was verbally discussed at the beginning of the interview.

During the information session I informed the students verbally that that they were allowed to withdraw from the study at any time. Withdrawal from the study would not have an impact on the student or their participation in *Campus For All*. If a participant was to withdraw from the study, their data would have been deleted from the study and all documents including transcripts would have been destroyed.

Confidentiality and anonymity when reporting information were maintained throughout the study; however, it is not guaranteed. Although pseudonyms and no identifying information were used, some participants may be identifiable by others who know them well due to the small number of participants in the program. Direct quotes and experiences unique to the individual may be recognized by others, outside the study, who may know the participant. All of the participants were asked if they would like to review the quotes that were being used. Six participants provided consent for the quotes to be used but did not want to review them. Five participants reviewed the quotes and

provided consent for the quotes to be used. The participants provided a pseudonym and other identifiable information, like specific class names, classmate names, professor names, staff names, etc. were excluded. Audiotapes and transcripts are stored and will be destroyed according to university policy.

Although minimal, there were some inherent risks for the participants that came from participating in this study. The first risk was for potential discomforts when participating in an interview. Although every effort was made to establish rapport and facilitate a relaxed interview, there was the possibility that participants may bring up personal information that could have resulted in feelings such as sadness, anxiety, disappointment, etc. Participants were told to answer only the questions they were comfortable with responding to. Students who participated in the study had access to free counselling through Student Services at the University of Regina and were reminded about the supports in the consent form. Debriefing sessions are an important element of studies that require people to reflect on their personal experiences (Creswell, 2011, p. 232). One student chose to meet for a debriefing session two days after the original interview. The student wanted to acknowledge some of the feelings she felt and opinion she expressed during the interview. We talked about the value in her sharing her honest opinion, the confidentiality of the study, and her option to withdraw. I wrapped up the debrief by letting the student know we could debrief again and that she has access to counselling supports through Student Services.

The second risk was that the participants may be identifiable and that negative comments could be viewed by people who might recognize the participant. To reduce the risk, any quotes or data that could place the student at risk if read by an outsider of the

study were reviewed with the participants. Any questionable responses were reviewed with the Faculty Supervisor and members of the Master Thesis Committee.

The third risk was in response to the pre-existing relationship I had with the *Campus For All* students. I have had a previous relationship with the participants of the study as an Educational Facilitator with the *Campus For All* program. I worked with *Campus For All* from December 2011 to July 2014. As a result, most of the third and fourth year students know me well. I have not worked for *Campus For All* since July of 2014 and have had little contact with the students since leaving. I am in no position of power or authority over the students' participation in the program. A rapport had been established between the participants and myself in the past, therefore it was important that I let the participants know that their participation in the study would have no effect on that pre-existing relationship. The pre-established rapport may have been beneficial in helping the students to feel comfortable in sharing. In my role as an Educational Facilitator students could address with me any issues they were having without judgment.

The research proposal was reviewed and approved by the University of Regina Ethics Board before starting any steps of the research process. Information on how to contact the Ethics Board was provided to the participants in the event they had further questions.

Lastly, a summary of the results was made available to the participants. Students were reminded that assistive technology was available free and accessible to the participants through the University of Regina Centre for Student Accessibility should they require it to access the summary. The participants were provided with an email address that they can contact to receive the summary.

## Chapter 4: The Case

The purpose of the case study is to look specifically at the experiences and perspectives of students in the *Campus For All* program at the University of Regina as they relate to QOL. In order to understand the experiences of the students it is important to also understand the context of their experiences. To develop an understanding of the *Campus For All* program, data was collected through an interview with the *Campus For All* Program Coordinator and through a document analysis. With the majority of the literature on IPSE in Canada coming from Alberta, *Campus For All* offers a different perspective to add to the literature. As the only IPSE program in the province of Saskatchewan, *Campus For All* works in isolation, which is in direct contrast to the programs in Alberta where there is a large provincial network of collegiality, professional development, and guidance. Furthermore, each institution offers its own unique opportunities and challenges to IPSE. Therefore, looking specifically at *Campus For All* at the University of Regina will allow for connections between student experience and program structure. This chapter will explore *Campus For All's* historical context and current practice.

### 4.1 History

*Campus For All* began in 2005 as a pilot project addressing the need for more literacy, academic, and social opportunities for persons with intellectual disabilities in Regina, Saskatchewan (Thompson, 2008, p.5). People First, Inclusion Regina (formerly known as Regina and District Association for Community Living), and the University of Regina Faculty of Education worked with an advisory committee to fund and employ a graduate student to support the first three students. Funding was initially provided for literacy development. As a result of the funding, early on *Campus For All* did not mirror

previously established programs in Alberta until years later. The intention was that *Campus For All* would eventually be taken over by the University of Regina in its entirety and until that happened would run primarily out of the Faculty of Education.

In 2011 the University of Regina took full responsibility for the program and hired two full-time staff members to support the initiative. Enrollment in the program grew to twelve students and the Centre for Student Accessibility became the home for the *Campus For All* program. This period of time allowed for development and growth in the *Campus For All* program while using the Alberta experience and foundational principles as a guide.

#### **4.2 Admissions**

*Campus For All* offers admissions to students who not meet the University of Regina general admissions criteria. Students must be 22 years of age and self-identify as having an intellectual disability. Historically, *Campus For All* admitted students on a first come, first serve basis – there was no set criteria for selection. In current practice applications are accepted annually which includes an application form, personal statement, parent expectation form, and references. A selection committee short lists candidates and then invites those candidates to an interview. Successful candidates typically express the desire to study something offered at the University of Regina, they are committed to making university a priority and they want an inclusive life. The committee also considers socio-economic status, cultural background (specifically Indigenous ancestry), and ability to include a diverse group of students. It is important to note that the admission process for students entering *Campus For All* is more rigorous than that of a typical student applying for an undergraduate program.

*Campus For All* students are charged a typical auditing tuition fee, however, bursaries exist for all *Campus For All* students. As a result, *Campus For All* students are only financially responsible for books and supplies. Students with financial need can apply for additional bursaries to help cover the cost of book and supplies. Tuition is not a barrier for students to participate, however, finances can still be a barrier if attending post-secondary results in other financial strains such as increased costs or change in costs for housing, child care, etc. *Campus For All* would like to move towards a scenario where students who can pay tuition without financial hardship will have the opportunity to pay tuition. This would follow the normative pathway of other students and remove the stigma of charity sometimes associated with people with disabilities. Students in the *Campus For All* program do not have access to student loans, study grants, and scholarships like many degree seeking students, so in order to follow a normative path access to alternative sources of funding would be needed.

#### **4.3 Intended Outcomes**

*Campus For All* strives to be an inclusive program providing opportunities for students to seek normative pathways and an “authentic student experience” (O’Brien et al., n.d.) whenever possible. The intended purpose is for students to engage in three fundamental pillars of post-secondary life; (a) academics, (b) social and (c) employment. Students and family members participate in a MAP (Making Action Plans) to determine some of the preliminary goals and dreams of the student before they enter the *Campus For All* program. *Campus For All* does not have documented data outcomes that they want to achieve with each of the pillars, rather they focus on anecdotal evidence from the students, peers, family and faculty to understand each students’ engagement and

experience within the program. Challenges are observed, shared and discovered every semester and supports are provided to make gains in overcoming the challenges. Students are asked informally but regularly about their desires in terms of academic, social, and employment opportunities. With an individualized, person centered programming approach the program coordinator suggests that there are still some overarching ideas that guide the experience academically, socially and within employment. In some ways, this is normative as most university students do not have documented outcomes as they related to the different aspects of their university experience. In some ways, it is non-normative in the way the student experience is monitored and participation in encouraged in relation to each pillar of IPSE.

With each class the staff strive to set the bar high enough for the students to be academically engaged by actively participating in their class and assignments. Working with the professors and the student they attempt to have the student reach outside of their comfort zone and experience new potential. Students attend regular university classes and complete assignments to fulfill the academic requirements of the program. Some students focus on a specific field of study while others choose a more interdisciplinary route. There is no separate curriculum, required courses or structured program. Some assignments are modified and some are not; this varies for each student, each class, and each assignment. Other students in the class are recruited to work alongside the student on assignments, readings and with in-class support. The program staff works with professors and instructors to modify assignments and support the student in their participation in the class.

Socially, the students are encouraged to expand their social network through meeting new people and joining groups on campus. *Campus For All* has seen students participate in the campus choir, campus band, Student Ambassador Program, and a small number of clubs. According to the *Campus For All* Coordinator, participation in social opportunities varies from student to student. Some students in *Campus For All* will make time during the day and evening to participate and others have very limited time to engage. For the most part, students comment to the program facilitator that the most enjoyable experiences include meeting new people, typically through in class experiences or through arranged tutors, study groups, and gym buddies.

The employment part of *Campus For All* has evolved greatly since the university gained responsibility for the program. Employment was never the intended outcome for the program; however, following a normative pathway approach would see employment as a typical outcome for most university students. *Campus For All* formed a partnership with another community based organization and several local businesses to focus on employment and have launched a 4 to 40 strategy to develop employment opportunities in the community. The 4 to 40 strategy connects employers with employees and provides support to both throughout the duration of the employment. The team behind the 4 to 40 strategy believes in meaningful work with a fair wage and work with organizations that are committed to inclusion and believe in natural supports. The name 4 to 40 is in references to hours worked per week and is intended to highlight the individuality of meaningful employment (4to40, n.d). Students have risen to the challenge of employment; some students are employed when they enter the program and maintain their employment while attending post-secondary. This employment is sometimes within

the community and sometimes in segregated places. The real challenge lies in finding opportunities for the students where they have choice through multiple job offers and the chance to expand their role or grow within the organization. Some graduates are leaving *Campus For All* with a strong focus on a particular field of work so the goal is to find employment that relates to that field.

#### **4.4 Student Supports**

The *Campus For All* staff provide the most formal supports to the students. They assist in the participation and access to opportunities on campus. The *Campus For All* staff support the students to make choices and function as independently as possible on campus. This is achieved through a *Campus For All* specific new student orientation. The students are strongly encouraged to attend existing University of Regina pre-orientation and orientation events. The *Campus For All* staff facilitate an ongoing orientation to university that includes getting to know each other (students, families, and staff), and practical items. The practical items include but are not limited to gaining familiarity with the webmail and student information systems, getting student identification, getting lockers, and picking courses are all key elements of the *Campus For All* orientation. Transferrable skills in communication, organization and scheduling are instilled in students to aid with independence.

The *Campus For All* staff work to coordinate supports that are less formal and more natural to the student experience. Degree seeking students are recruited from the class to work alongside the student in class and outside of class on assignments. Students are recruited from an Education class to provide additional supports outside of the class;

either academic or social supports. Degree seeking students from across the university are recruited to connect with students in a social way.

Through the 4 to 40 initiative, *Campus For All* students have access to an Employment Broker who helps them identify career goals, search for opportunities and provides assistance in maintaining employment. *Campus For All* students also have access to a job coach while actively engaged in employment.

#### **4.5 Campus Engagement**

*Campus For All* has been accepted by the broader university community. The *Campus For All* Coordinator credits the University of Regina President, Dr. Vianne Timmons in playing a crucial role in expanding and growing *Campus For All*. In recent years the President has commissioned a promotional video of *Campus For All* (Campbell, 2015) and attends many events such as the *Campus For All* Annual Year End Showcase. *Campus For All* compliments the university's overall strategic plan that supports diversity and inclusion.

Faculty members have been very supportive of students joining their classes. In almost every case the faculty members have been accepting of having students in their class and are eager to learn from the experience.

As the program grows various aspects of the university experience emerge where access for *Campus For All* students needs to be advocated for. Sometimes the challenge itself lies in the auditing student status of *Campus For All* students. As a non-degree seeking student, there can be barriers to particular services or opportunities. The *Campus For All* students have access to many student services but ultimately, many work directly

with *Campus For All* staff instead of pursuing mainstream supports such as accessibility, learning skills, writing skills, and career services.

#### **4.6 The Students**

For this study it is important to get a sense of who the students are and what they value. The following are brief descriptions of each of the students and some of the characteristics they used to describe themselves and relevant aspects of their day to day lives. The descriptions of the student are summarized into a table at the end of this section (Table 3).

June (pseudonym) is 28 years old and comes from a family where all of her siblings are currently attending post-secondary education. June describes herself by the numerous extra-curricular activities she participates in. At the time of the interview June was residing with her parents. June was part of an alternative education program in high school and describes her experience as good for the most part. However, June did express that she experienced bullying from peers in an inclusive high school setting. At the time of the study, June was in her eighth and final semester at the University of Regina. June took courses from a variety of faculties; however, she always chose to take courses with a connection to the fine arts. June volunteered while attending the University of Regina and found employment in her final year of university.

Bud (pseudonym) describes himself as friendly, outgoing and a fast learner. Bud lives with his parents and proudly shared the career achievements of his siblings and parents. Bud proclaimed that he enjoyed high school but was ready for it to be done. At the time of the study Bud was in his eighth and final semester of university. Bud explored

a variety of courses in education, social sciences, and kinesiology. Bud talks excitedly about the two jobs he has held throughout his time at university.

Billie-Bob (pseudonym) is twenty-nine years old and comes from a large family. He lives with a roommate and pets. Volunteerism was the first interests Billie-Bob shared about himself and the diverse groups of people he hopes to help with the volunteer work he does. He has had the same job throughout his time at the university and also spends time participating in extracurricular activities. Billie-Bob was enrolled in an alternative education program in high school. Billie-Bob was in his eighth and final semester of university at the time of the study. He focused his time at the University of Regina on taking Education courses and working towards his career goal of working with children. Billie-Bob experienced multiple practicums with his program and summer employment that related to his career goal.

Lulu (pseudonym) is twenty-six years and excitedly proclaimed that she lives on her own. Lulu would describe her life a busy; she is someone who balances working, school and a wide range of extracurricular activities. Lulu was in her seventh semester as a university student at the time of the study. Lulu took a variety of courses while attending the University of Regina exploring courses in Business, Education, and the Fine Arts. Lulu admitted that working was her number one priority and that her time in university was also high priority next to work.

Jackson (pseudonym) immediately identified himself as a *Campus For All* student at the University of Regina. He lives with his parents and spoke excitedly about his siblings and what they are currently doing in terms of school, work and where they are living. Jackson was sad to leave high school indicating that he enjoyed his time there.

Jackson was in his seventh semester as a university student at the time of the study. He shared about the opportunities he had to work alongside a University of Regina athletics team. Jackson took courses in Science, Arts, Kinesiology and Fine Arts.

Kos (pseudonym) lives with his parents. Kos immediately shared that he had many friends and a girlfriend. He talked about his love for sports and, more importantly, players he knows. At the time of the study Kos was in his eighth and final semester as a university student. Kos took courses in Kinesiology and Music. Kos had many employment experiences throughout his time in university and was graduating with the hopes of getting another job.

Table 3

*Campus For All Students*

<b>Student</b>	<b>Description</b>
June	Age 28 Extra-curricular Studied Fine Arts Volunteer and was employed while attending university
Bud	Studied Education, Social Sciences, Kinesiology Employed at two jobs while attending university
Billie-Bob	Age 29 Volunteering is a favourite pastime Studied Education courses including practica and work experience Employed while attending university
Lulu	Age 26 Lives on her own Involved in lots of extra-curricular activities Studied Business, Education and Fine Arts Employment is very important to her, worked through university
Jackson	Employed while going to university Worked alongside Athletics team Studied Science, Arts, Kinesiology and Fine Arts

Kos

Many friends including friends on university sport teams  
Studied Music and Kinesiology  
Employed periodically throughout university

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## Chapter 5: Results

Two themes emerged as a result of the data collected through interviews, the portfolios, and the document analysis; the *positive social experience* and the *positive self-concept*. Within the two themes it was obvious to see that the student experience contributed to a good QOL across several of Schalock et al. (2008) domains. Although some of the students experienced challenges with verbal communication, the data was rich with information. Furthermore, the parents and the member of the campus community provided a similar account to the students', and when combined with the student experience, created a strong understanding of the student experience. This chapter will explore these two emergent themes and also discuss the results as they relate to QOL.

### 5.1 Positive Social Experience

The most prominent theme that emerged was the *positive social experience*. The students consistently reported having a positive social experience throughout their interviews. The students highlighted the social experiences that they had encountered, even in times when not explicitly asked about it. Additionally, all of the portfolios captured instances of positive social experiences and even had a section highlighting social experiences the students engaged in. Moreover, the parents and the member of the campus community felt strongly about the social opportunities and engagements the students participated in.

The *positive social experience* theme is comprised of identifiable dimensions to the social experiences of the students including; (a) the connection to the broader university community, (b) belongingness in classroom, and (c) the social connections they made with individuals on campus. Additionally, elements of the positive social experience connected strongly with three domains of QOL: *rights*, *social inclusion* and *interpersonal relationships*. It is important to note that the intention of this study was not measure QOL, rather to notice the relationships between the experiences of the students and the QOL domains. Throughout the chapter the value the students placed on the social experiences is evident and brings attention to the students' perceived access, belonging, and connectedness to the university campus and to their QOL.

In the broadest sense, all of the students identified themselves as being associated with the overall University of Regina campus community. The macro connection to the broader campus community is important to acknowledge as it may speak to the access students felt they had to the whole university. Furthermore, the macro connection that the students felt to the campus community parallels indicators of the *rights* domain of QOL (Schalock et al., 2008). Equal access to opportunities is an important factor of quality of life and the students perceived no barriers to accessing post-secondary education. Throughout the interviews it was easy to get the sense that the students felt that they were not segregated to only belong to specific classes or university departments. It was also easy to tell that the students did not see themselves as visitors, rather the university was their domain and all of the students declared their memberships to the university and *Campus For All*. Jackson (Interview, April 19, 2016) proclaimed his role as a university student by saying, "Member of U of R is good time because I know University of Regina

is so nice, it is a good place to study... people like me around because people around campus here.”

Parents who were interviewed would agree that the students were engaged with a vast number of people and had opportunities to connect with a variety of different groups and individuals on campus. Although the parents recognized an adjustment period to the university, there were no perceived limitations to the access students had to other individuals and groups on campus.

“Most people have to live four seasons in an environment before they feel comfortable and before they develop any sense of belonging. Once he [Kos] has that then the world is his. When I look at *Campus For All* the first two years was all about learning about what the environment rules and cues are. It is only in year two or year three that he [Kos] will mushroom, or grow exponentially. It is probably on the other side too in that other people have to build trust with others out there. Who is this guy that is a little bit out there? Who is this guy that is not afraid? Who is this guy who is not quiet, shy and does not stay in the corner? That is different amongst some of the people with special needs” (Parent Interview, April 15, 2016).

Many students identified with the socially valued role of a student. There is a feeling of normalization that occurs when students labeled with ID identify themselves in valued social roles and from a QOL perspective, community roles are an important aspect of *social inclusion* (Schalock et al., 2008). Jackson (Interview, April 19, 2016) referred to himself throughout his interview as a “first time university student with *Campus For All*” and proudly identified as a student and as a member of the campus community. Kos

(Interview, April 13, 2016) confidently and proudly proclaimed at the beginning of his interview “I am *Campus For All*”. The parents interviewed similarly felt that their children had taken on the role of a student just like any other student on campus.

“When I think of her [Lulu] in *Campus For All* my picture in my head is just her with head up strutting down the hallway and this presence that I belong here, I’m here, don’t ignore me, I’m just as important as anybody else” (Parent, Interview, April 20, 2016).

Even the chosen attire of the students showed proud membership to the University of Regina. Three students wore University of Regina clothing to their interview, while others modelled University of Regina clothing and accessories in pictures found in their portfolios.

Most of the students held membership with various groups on campus. Throughout the interviews participants shared experiences where they were part of a group and felt a sense of belonging to certain already formed campus groups. Membership and a sense of belonging are an important element of QOL and are crucial to *social inclusion* (Schalock et al., 2008). Membership can imply a level of participation versus a mere presence amongst a group. Four students talked positively about their role within established groups on campus such as the student volunteer programs, athletics teams and student clubs. A majority of the students had engaged in a student volunteer program on campus. Bud (Interview, April 15, 2016) who was part of the program expressed his satisfaction with the program stating, “I was part of the Student Ambassador Program and it was really cool because it was my first time. It was really cool being on the Student Ambassador Program.” The university athletics department

also opened their doors for membership. Students were not only in the crowd supporting the athletics teams, some students had the opportunity to work alongside the teams.

Jackson (Interview, April 19, 2016) who worked alongside the women's soccer team explained, "This year I'm involved with the soccer team. Helping out the coach of the team. Their season is going good. Got to know the players." Billie-Bob had previously been involved with a club and took a break from the club to work more hours. When asked about his previous experience with the club he spoke about the club leader stating:

"He knew I was willing to be there and partake and try my hardest. The past two years didn't work and he wish he could have me. He kept saying I want you back... when he sees his former [club members] he says hi" (Billie-Bob, Interview, April 15, 2016).

Campus groups and teams were not the only extension of campus life where students felt a sense of belonging. The classroom is a community within itself on a post-secondary campus. The role of being a peer and a feeling a sense of belonging is important. All of the students felt respected and valued by their classmates. Respect is a fundamental indicator of a good QOL and is seen as an element of the *rights* domain (Schalock et al., 2008). It was clear that the respect the students received from their peers had an impact on their sense of belonging. Lulu (Interview, April 13, 2016) sensed a feeling of belonging in her classes stating: "I didn't have trouble fitting in like I would find a person and I would just say hi... and we would just start chatting and it would work out okay." From the student interview data, fitting in appeared easy. It was also evident in the portfolios that the students had opportunities to engage with their classmates.

Although fitting in was easy, two students recognized that there were differences between themselves and their other classmates. The differences were not clearly defined, however that did not seem important as the students quickly justified that the differences did not have an impact on the respect they were given.

“I think that they value me just because they respect me in their class. To them they feel like it is different because it’s a big class and it’s different because I’m in there but overall I feel like they respect me... And I’m not afraid of speaking my opinions and speaking and feel like I can.” (Bud, Interview, April 15, 2016)

Billie-Bob (Interview, April 15, 2016) shared a similar experience stating:

“There are some [classmates] that look at you when they hear you are special needs and say he’s a special needs student I have to treat him nicer... but there are some that realize once they get told what the program [*Campus For All*] really is they are just normal students like you and I.”

The feeling of belonging with the classroom also speaks to the normalization process for those students without disabilities. Although initial differences may have been noticeable, it appears that the presence of a *Campus For All* students became the new normal of the classroom community.

The positive social experience was lived in the most personal or intimate sense through the individual connections the students made on campus with other students. It is obvious that relationships are fundamental to a good life; from a QOL perspective *interpersonal relationships* are imperative (Schalock et al., 2008). Throughout the data analysis, all of the students spoke positively about the interpersonal relationships they developed while on campus. Meeting new people on campus was consistently recognized

as a positive experience and a source of enjoyment for the students adding to their QOL. Kos (Interview, April 13, 2016) was excited to attend university each day simply because of the people, stating, “I so pumped, everyone likes me and I like them.” June shared her experience with meeting new people expressing, “I used to be the kid that just hangs out with the same people but now I have way more friends... I don’t get treated the way I did in high school [bullying]” (June, Interview, April 14, 2016).

The students used a variety of terms to describe the valued relationships they developed on campus such as gym buddy, social buddy, mentor, lunch date, or tutor. Bud (Interview, April 15, 2016) described his relationships by saying, “And I got to have all of the mentors for different semesters and all the different gym buddies and different social buddies.” The data revealed the importance of the variety of relationships the students embraced on campus and the subjective nature of relationships. It is important to recognize that social activities and interactions are fundamental to interpersonal relationships regardless of the depth of the relationship and that they still contribute to QOL. A response from the parents showed the same variety of terms used to describe the relationships that formed on campus:

“She has very much enjoyed the study buddy and gym buddy. In her usual way sees them whenever they see them. I don’t think they have done a lot outside of their specific time together. But they don’t hesitate to stop each other on the street. And with her fellow students there is nothing remarkable to say it’s different because of school. But it presents different opportunities” (Parent, Interview, April 20).

June (Interview, April 14, 2016) also used a variety of descriptors to describe valued relationships: “It’s fun and I have expanded my relationships... [Student name] is a girl I hang out with. She’s actually my gym buddy. We do a lot of things together.”

It was less common for the students to use the word friend to describe the people they interacted with. Regardless of label, all of the relationships appeared to hold value with the students. Billie-Bob (Interview, April 15, 2016) speaks of a time when a relationship with a classmate developed into more of a friendship:

“There was another student who I worked with this semester who said ‘you still have my number? If you want to hang out, do something together, let’s do it’. Because we realized we want to become friends more than just classmates.”

From the parental perspective, friendships did develop and in ways they had not before.

“I think that everybody here was surprised by how many people he [Kos] knew when he walked in the door. That hasn’t changed but I’m going to suggest that the way these have relationships happen have changed, that he has a lot of friends now. And it’s not because he is special needs. It’s because he actually has friends” (Parent, Interview, April 15, 2016).

It was also evident that the students valued the relationships that they had with the other *Campus For All* students. For all of the students these relationships formed years ago and remained valuable throughout their time in post-secondary. Friendships are obvious element of interpersonal relationships and it is clear that the rooted friendships they had with their *Campus For All* peers contributed to their QOL. Throughout the interviews a number of students named other *Campus For All* students when commenting

about friendships and important relationships. Bud (Interview, April 15) described his relationship with his *Campus For All* peers stating:

“So the people from *Campus For All*, I have really good relationships with them because they are the people that are in my *Campus For All* and I just feel like they are sort of my classmates but they are not really classmates but just friends I know really well and go way back with and people I know from when I was here in my second year, third year and fourth year.”

When asked “how often do you see your friends on campus” Kos (Interview, April 13, 2016) replied “I see [*Campus For All* student], Lulu and Bud a lot... hang out in hallway, talk, drink coffee, drink pop.” Furthermore, a member of the campus community noticed friendships amongst *Campus For All* students growing. The relationships with other *Campus For All* students was even evident to the member of the campus community:

“I think she Lulu has grown in her friendships. I’m not sure if that is just from the other *Campus For All* students. She will openly tell me a story about [*Campus For All* student] and Kos, and to me her using those nicknames is a clear showing of her growing those friendships” (Member of Campus Community, Interview, April 21, 2016).

All of the parents interviewed agreed that the social experience has been the most rewarding and positive outcome. One parent stated “Her [Lulu] social life has probably been the most fulfilling of her university career.” (Parent, Interview, April 20, 2016). Moreover, one parent acknowledged the expansions of his son’s network and wonders what the payoff of the social experience will be down the road? “I think that he has

expanded his [social] network, number one, and there is no doubt about that. So what does that mean? You don't know until it actually pays off in life." (Parent, Interview, April 15, 2016).

Overall, the *positive social experience* was continuously reported by the students, parents, and the member of the campus community. This theme reverberated through the interview data and portfolios highlighting an interconnected and barrier free campus, that affords the students many opportunities to experience social inclusion and enjoy experiences that contribute to good QOL.

## **5.2 Positive Self-Concept**

The second theme that emerged was the story of *positive self-concept*. Self-concept is used frequently in the field of psychology to describe how one sees themselves. Self-concept encompasses ones' attitude toward their self-image, self-esteem, sense of well-being, sense of intellectual ability, sense of social skills, level abilities, and skills (Popovicia & Buic-Belciua, 2013). This theme developed as all of the students shared responses that exuded positive self-image and self-esteem. The experiences and feelings of independence, confidence, and personal growth resounded in the data. Furthermore, the students' responses shed light on how new experiences, new challenges and new environments created opportunities for learning and personal growth that contributed to a positive self-concept. This theme is important because the *positive self-concept* was not isolated to one particular experience, rather it was connected to experiences in a variety of contexts throughout the university. Lastly, the *positive self-concept* theme was reflected in three QOL domains; *emotional well-being*, *self-determination* and *personal development*.

When asked “how do you feel about yourself now that you are a university student?”, a general positive feeling resonated for all of the students. June (Interview, April 14, 2016) responded immediately by saying “Pretty good. I am more confident. More outgoing.” Likewise, Bud (Interview, April 15, 2016) exclaimed “I feel great. I feel good, really good, of being a university student because I’ve learned so much and keep on growing when I was learning about stuff and feel really good about that.” Many of the students expressed a positive self-concept related to their experience as a university student. When we think about a good life we think about people who are happy and feel good about themselves. It was clear that the students were feeling positive towards themselves, which is an affirmative indicator in the *emotional well-being* domain of QOL (Schalock et al, 2008.). Billie-Bob (Interview, April 15, 2016) echoed the feelings of the other participants by saying “I feel happy, well rounded and real life guy...they [other students] look at me and are like you are interesting student to get to meet and know.”

The parents also noticed the positive impact on confidence:

“She [Lulu] has become more and more confident. It has given her exposure to another aspect of life that has allowed her to continue to flourish, mature and grow and become more and more confident in so many different ways” (Parent, Interview, April 20, 2016).

Student and parental interview data suggested that students experience a feeling of independence. All of the students felt a level of independence while on campus. The feeling of independence is a subjective idea and each student perceives it differently. However, the majority of the students expressed that they felt in control of their day with

opportunities to make choices and determine their plan of action. The ability to live a self-determined life where you can exert personal control is a staple in a good life. From a QOL perspective the students were able to engage in experiences that contributed to their *self-determination* (Schalock et al., 2008). Bud (Interview, April 15, 2016) spoke about what it feels like to be independent, sharing:

“I feel really good to be independent because I know that I do it on my own and feels like I can do that because I’m a grown up and I can do the independent stuff on my own when I am on campus.”

Some students stated that they already felt independent and their experience at post-secondary was an extension of that feeling. June (interview, April 14, 2016) asserted “I am independent to begin with. It is very nice for me to be independent on campus.” Billie Bob (Interview, April 15, 2016) explained that independence was something that grew over time at the university by stating, “Yes, after being here I realized that university made me more independent... I felt like I had control of for my part based on the school stuff you had to follow and attending classes regularly.”

The parents echoed this sentiment, noticing growth in their children throughout their post-secondary experience. A change was noticed in the level of independence but also in maturity as well.

“Independence, yes, to a degree. I’m going to say not to the degree I wanted or expected but it has absolutely changed... So when Kos arrived here I would rank him as less mature, less independent and it showed in his work experiences and just the way he conducted life. Whereas now somewhere between the natural

process of [maturation] again and this setting I think that he is far more ready for life.” (Parent, Interview, April 15, 2016)

Along with independence, personal growth also came through exposure to new ideas in classes and new experiences on campus. *Personal development* is acknowledged as an important element of QOL (Schalock et al., 2008). It is clear that the students engaged in opportunities that fostered learning and skill development. The students valued the learning experiences provided to them in the classroom situation. When asked “how important are the classes you take at U of R to you?” June (Interview, April 14, 2016) responded: “Important because I take classes that are interesting to me, that I like.” Most responses about learning opportunities were vague but what resonated was the value the students placed on those experiences. Responding to a questions about her classes Lulu (Interview, April 13, 2016) stated, “They [classes] kind of taught me a bit about the working world and how things work and just kind of gave me more knowledge of things that I didn’t know much about.” When asked about the learning experiences he has had over time at university Bud (Interview, April 15, 2016) responded by saying, “just stuff I’ve been learning about in class that kind of made me think about stuff I didn’t know before... if I take classes they are very important because I want to keep my grades up and complete it.”

The parents also provided responses about formal learning opportunities extending from the classroom, just like the students still felt positively about the overall value.

“I think it has made her worldlier. I think it’s [the classes] made her a more well-rounded person... If nothing else she knows the names of some of the painters

that made a pretty big impact on the world and musicians. It's just given her much broader understanding. It's not in depth but she just more well-rounded person than she would have been. It's just really opened her horizon" (Parent, Interview, April 20, 2016).

Lastly, without really being aware of it, many of the students shared instances where they experienced personal growth outside of the classroom. "I am more comfortable here than I was my first year" (June, Interview, April 14, 2016). The parents also felt that the new experiences and challenges had contributed to the students' personal growth.

"I'd say her organization skills have improved. Being able to plan her time accordingly, respond to deadlines, handle pressures has increased. Her ability to cope with those deadlines has gotten better every year. And handling the stress of the various classes has improved every year" (Parent, Interview, April 20, 2016).

Largely, it was clear that both the students and the parents felt that the students had maintained or enhanced their *positive self-concept*. Confidence, independence, and personal growth was evident for all of the students. Although it was difficult to gauge self-concept through the portfolios, it was clear that the students were expanding their engagement in their classes, activities and day to day life each year on campus. In the most simplistic form, it was evident that the post-secondary environment offered the students a space to grow and feel good about themselves.

Finally, as we make the connections between QOL and the students' experiences, it is important to keep in mind that the relationships between the *positive social experience*, the *positive self-concept*, and QOL is complex and subjective. With QOL research it is important to pause and recognize that what is considered good by one is not

necessarily good for all. Although relationships do exist between the findings and the QOL domains, it is not implied in that relationship that IPSE experience offer students they key to a good QOL. What the relationship does tell us is that there is a connection and that there are possibilities for people to enhance their QOL through participating in IPSE opportunities.

The following table (see Table 4) is intended to summarize the results for reader usability. The table shows the connections between the themes, QOL domains and indicators, and the student experience in IPSE.

Table 4.

*Quality of Life as it relates to Inclusive Post-secondary Education*

<b>Theme</b>	<b>QOL Domains and Exemplary Indicators *</b>	<b>Student Experience in IPSE</b>
Positive Social Experience	Rights: Human rights, legal rights	Respected and valued by classmates, access to the university <i>“Member of UofR is good time because I know University of Regina is so nice, it is a good place to study”</i>
	Social Inclusion: Community integration/participation, community roles, supports	Roles of student, member of the classroom community, member of campus clubs and teams <i>“I was part of the Student Ambassador Program and it was really cool because it was my first time”</i>
	Interpersonal Relations: Social networks, friendships, social activities, interactions, relationships	Relationships with individuals on campus (friends, social buddies, gym buddies, mentor, tutor, classmates) <i>“I used to be the kid that just hangs out with the same people but now I have way more friends... I don’t get treated the way I did in high school [bullying]”</i>

Positive Self- Concept	Emotional well-being: Safety & security, positive experiences, contentment, self- concept, lack of stress	Positive feelings towards self, confidence <i>“I feel great. I feel good, really good, of being a university student because I’ve learned so much and keep on growing when I was learning about stuff and feel really good about that.”</i>
	Self Determination: Choices/decisions, autonomy, personal control, personal goals	In control of own day, feeling of independence <i>“Yes, after being here I realized that university made me more independent... I felt like I had control of for my part based on the school stuff you had to follow and attending classes regularly.”</i>
	Personal Development: Education status, personal skills, adaptive behavior	Valued learning experiences, feeling of personal growth <i>“They [classes] kind of taught me a bit about the working world and how things work and just kind of gave me more knowledge of things that I didn’t know much about”</i>

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*Note:* Column\* was adapted from Schalock, R., Bonham, G., & Verdugo, M., 2008, p. 182

## Chapter 6: Discussion

Throughout the discussion I will look at how the results in this study relate to the current literature in IPSE. Later in the chapter, complexity in themes will be explored as they relate to the results and current literature. Limitations of the research and future considerations for IPSE research and programming will be discussed.

### 6.1 Connecting with the Literature

As the *positive social experience* story unfolded it was clear there were connections to the current IPSE literature. As with many IPSE programs in Canada, *Campus For All* intentionally puts effort into creating opportunities for social connections. An informal program outcome for students participating in *Campus For All*

is for the students to expand their social networks. The *positive social experiences* shared by the students in *Campus For All* painted the picture of an inclusive and connected campus with no barriers to access and participation. The positive social experience relates to what has been found in earlier Canadian studies on IPSE. Weinkauff (2002) concluded that one of the benefits to students would be enhanced social status. It was significant to learn that the students in *Campus For All* felt positively about their membership to the campus community. As with other studies on IPSE (Weinkauff, 2002; Hughson et al, 2005; Thompson, 2008; Mosoff, 2009) there is a clear social benefit to attending post-secondary education. Again, it was clear that the *Campus For All* students felt that they had made many connections and met many people. Consistent with other findings, in a study by Mossoff et al. (2009) students reported having positive engagement with both their academic and social experiences. All of the students in the study embraced the role of the student, identified as a member of the *Campus For All* and University of Regina community, and all of them reported a sense of belonging within their classes. The *positive social experience* is not an uncommon one and this finding helps us to define one of the greatest outcomes of IPSE. “Despite all of the gains in the last 50 years, we continue to see that the common narrative for the majority of people with intellectual disabilities and their families is one of exclusion and poverty” (CACL, 2014, p.4) It is clear through the literature and also this study that the social opportunities provided to participants of IPSE help to break the cycle of isolation and exclusion and offer many opportunities to gain greater membership to the broader community and move towards a good QOL.

The *positive self-concept* theme emerged indicating that students felt positively towards their post-secondary experience and that they developed feelings of independence, confidence and personal growth. This finding is also consistent with the literature as many past IPSE students have expressed positive feelings towards their experience as a student (Hughson et al, 2005; Mosoff et al., 2009). Other stakeholders such as program coordinators and administrators have also reported a positive experience for students (Weinkauff, 2002). Consistent with the findings in earlier studies (Weinkauff, 2002; Hughson et al., 2005; Mosoff et al., 2009) exploring IPSE in Canada the students felt a sense of independence. The *Campus For All* students felt that being in control of one's own daily life was important. As with other studies the students' independence led to the student feeling in control of their daily lives and involved in making decisions (Gallinger, 2013; O'Brien, 2009; Hughson et al., 2005).

Many of the students' experienced personal growth and valued the learning opportunities they engaged in on campus. In a study by Gallinger (2013) students also reported that they had experienced academic growth. Weinkauff (2002) found that staff believed students were experiencing academic benefits from IPSE. In a study by Thompson (2008) classmates, tutors and instructors could identify more social gain than academic benefits for the students. The classroom environment offered the students exposure to a variety of academic learning experiences just as seen in the previous studies.

With consistent recognition of the *positive self-concept* brings optimism that students can use their heightened confidence, independence and personal growth to continue challenging themselves with new opportunities and enhance their QOL. All of

the feelings observed in the literature and findings could translate into future successes for the students' where they feel confident to pursue future ventures such as employment, further education or independent living. Furthermore, the feeling of confidence could carry them into new social situations, new activities and new environments. Lastly, the personal growth offers potential for the students to develop a hunger to continue learning and growing, both in formal and informal ways. The value of the *positive self-concept* has not been explored for graduates of IPSE, but it would certainly be worthwhile to see how the graduates' self-concept has enhanced future opportunities beyond the campus perimeter and if there is a lasting effect on QOL.

Although the two themes that emerged in the data did not alert us to anything new to the literature, what we did learn is that similarities are starting to form from one IPSE program to the other. The students' voice is connecting to that of what was previously learned from program coordinators, parents, peers, professors, and a small group of students. Lastly, the positive outcomes speak to the inherent value of IPSE opportunities and provide leverage when advocating for the development and expansion of opportunities across Canada.

## **6.2 Complexities within Themes**

It is important to acknowledge that qualitative research is complex and that not all of the data that is gathered fits nicely into themes, nor does it always have all of the details we need to satisfy our curiosities. As the *positive social experience* theme emerged, it was noticeable that the descriptive detail was limited in regards to the interpersonal relationships that the students had with other people on campus. As the *positive self-concept* theme emerged, it was once again apparent that the descriptive

detail was limited in regards to the learning opportunities the students had. Both instances where descriptive detail was limited created a space for curiosity and discussion that will be explored further in this section. Furthermore, there were threads of data that emerged about employment that were not strong enough to warrant as a finding, but, they were noticeable enough to spike curiosity and merit discussion. Lastly, some of these complexities in the themes conflicted with what we previously have learned from the literature. It is important to discuss these instances to recognize and address gaps in programming, opportunities missed, or new research prospects within IPSE.

The first complexity within the data emerged when looking at the interpersonal relationships that the students formed. It was evident in the data that the students highly valued the interpersonal relationships they developed while attending the University of Regina, but what was unclear in the data was the longevity and relevance of the relationships that they had formed. Although prompted to elaborate on the relationships, all of the students provided vague answers when sharing about the relationships and in some cases had little recall for names or memorable experiences. Furthermore, some of the students were uncertain about the longevity of the relationships and appeared to have little concern for the permanence of the relationships. Proximity and context appeared to influence the relationships as many of the students could not see themselves staying connected outside of the university. The specific moments when time was being spent together seemed to be the most significant, but outside of that context the students did not necessarily yearn for more connectivity. For example, Lulu (Interview, April 13, 2016) expressed, "I'd not mind seeing them (people she met on campus) again if the opportunity came up. Whereas if I didn't it's fine too and I wouldn't be sad or anything in

the end.” The parents and member of the campus community also viewed the relationships differently. The findings showed some parents felt that meaningful friendships had formed, and others thought opportunities for socializing had occurred. Was the lack of recall by the students perhaps a result of how the questions were asked or probed? Would these types of answers be typical for other university students?

It is important to remember that interpersonal relationships are subjective and at this point we can also not make assumptions as to why the students could not express greater detail about their relationships and why some did not seem concerned about longevity. We need to respect that although the detail provided about the relationships was limited, we still need to acknowledge the value the students placed on the relationships. Lastly, this complexity in the data brings more attention to the voice in the literature that suggests the formation of longstanding relationships and social network is challenging. As Hughson et al. (2005) discovered one of the challenges for students is keeping friends. It is important for researchers to pursue a greater understanding of the relationships that students are developing while participating in IPSE. What can we do next to learn more about the relationships students develop on campus?

Many of the students valued the learning opportunities they were afforded during their IPSE experience giving them a sense of personal growth, however, the data lacked detail which made it difficult to understand the growing and learning opportunities that the students were engaged in. The data brought to light that most of the students showed a general interest in learning and gaining new knowledge through traditional classroom learning, but most participants were not able to share specifics about the content or outcomes of their learning experiences in detail. The lack of detail made it difficult to

determine what those experiences looked like and understand what made those experiences so valuable to the students. Additionally, the parents and the member of the campus community had mixed ideas around the learning and were better able to recognize the transferable learning outcomes than the course related learning outcomes. Without an understanding of the learning experiences it is difficult to truly identify what the students are taking away from their experience. Once again, the complexity in the data could be a result of the way in which the students, parents, and the member of the campus community were questioned in the interview and probed to elaborate about the learning experiences. It is obvious in reviewing that data that this could have been explored further and in particular with the parents, and the member of the campus community.

Further to this notion, the research in a Canadian context does not paint an overly clear picture when it comes to learning outcomes and academic gains. Although Academics are considered a pillar of IPSE it is unclear if there are more intentions for the pillar beyond providing a normative experience. In previous studies of IPSE (Hughson et al., 2005; Mosoff et al., 2009) the academic outcomes for students were not explored rather it was briefly suggested that students enjoyed having the opportunity to try new things and engage in different academic opportunities. We have not gained further insight from any other studies. Lastly, researchers and professionals in the United States are starting to feel pressure from funders and university administrators to measure the impact of the program and in some cases are considering the idea of offering a credential for completing the program (Thoma, 2013). The idea of offering a credential is an attempt to

validate the work the students are doing and create consistency in learning experiences across programs.

It is important to acknowledge the gray area we are in when it comes to understanding the learning and personal growth opportunities for students in IPSE program. This gray area creates curiosity and also sheds light on the importance of future research in this area. Is there something more we need to know about the learning opportunities for students enrolled in IPSE programs? Does the field need to define a purpose for the academic pillar and develop a clear understanding of what it means to be a participatory auditor? Do we need to be more intentional with determining and actualizing non-academic learning outcomes for the students so there are identifiable takeaways upon completing IPSE? Will Canadian IPSE feel pressure from funders and governing bodies to develop a credential or learning outcomes for IPSE similar to the USA?

Lastly, the final complexity within the data was in regards to employment. Employment is considered to be one of the pillars of IPSE and is still a focus of vast majority of IPSE programs in Canada. As a result, the students were asked about employment opportunities they had while attending university and their hopes and goals for the future. The unwavering response was that all of the students felt that *employment is important*.

Half of the students were able to elaborate on why they felt it was important. When asked “how important to you is it to have a job when you graduate university?” Billie Bob (Interview, April 15, 2016) responded by saying:

“Very because right now I do have a job... because I know people who are on assistance don’t get a lot by the time they done paying rent. They don’t have money to enjoy things and they have to go day to day to places that give them free food. Because I have a job I realize I can go enjoy some things away from work and enjoy sports and go things.”

Lulu (Interview, April 13, 2016) had very similar views in regards to employment and stated, “it [employment] will be more important once I am done because will have more cash coming in once I’ve put in a shift here and shift there to make it a full work week.”

June felt it was important to have employment as it gave her a sense of purpose. June (Interview, April 14, 2016) stated “I would be bored. It [employment] gives me something to do.”

All of the students valued having a job during and after university. It is easy to see from a normative pathways perspective that just like their degree seeking peers, all of the students felt the next progression after graduating would be to have employment. The students also all had some variation of a career ambitions as well. Some career plans were very specific such as keeping a current job or working more hours. Others were more grandiose with the dream of working in a variety of occupations. With that said, this did not become a theme in the data because the vast majority of students expressed no connection between their IPSE experience and employment. Whether this was an oversight in data collection or not, there was a void in the data. When reviewing the transcripts, it was clear that additional probing or alterations to the probing style may have produced clearer responses. However, one student did link his career goals to his post-secondary studies. “My career goals is hopefully not stuck in my same job now. My

career goals is eventually be in a school working alongside students with special needs in integrated education” (Billie-Bob, Interview, April 15, 2016).

Furthermore, some parents were really unsure as to what the next step will be for their son or daughter. “We have heard from other parents who don’t know what they are going to do with their kids after *Campus For All* graduation comes.” (Parent, Interview, April 20, 2016)

“I’d guess that the one big change would have been our realization that he needed to keep working on maturing and life skills. I’m not sure from his perspective that we helped him get a job with the classes that he was taking. But I also don’t know that any of us really had it on our minds at the start of *Campus For All* is that the goal was to end up with employment for these guys. Why wouldn’t we have it if that’s the goal of the university?” (Parent, Interview, April 15, 2016).

Weinkauff (2002) identified job skills as one of the benefits of IPSE. Hughson et al., (2005) reported that students reported having a career as one of their biggest successes. We are seeing a variety of perspectives and experiences in the employment experiences for the students. With the disconnect between the post-secondary experience and the employment experience emerging in this study it raises the question whether or not the field need to define the purpose of the employment pillar? How can we make employment part of the IPSE experience and not just an add on service? Do students need to relate their experiences in post-secondary to employment?

Complexities within themes are important for researchers to acknowledge as it creates a gateway for future opportunities. The spaces within the data and the threads of data connecting to themes, challenge our assumptions and encourage a deeper

understanding of the student experience. From this study, we can identify clear points of ambiguity that require further investigation.

### **6.3 Limitations and Future Research Considerations**

The context of this study makes it difficult to label limitations, however, it is important to reflect on this study and acknowledge places where different strategies could be beneficial in future research. Although limitations are more common from a quantitative research perspective, two limitations were observed in this study. Both of the limitations discussed in this section could also be seen as strengths of this particular study.

The first limitation was in regards to the depth of information received from the interviews. Many of the students experienced limitations with their expressive language and did not elaborate on their ideas with great detail. My first thought was that I should have considered different forms of data collection such as observation, photo elicitation or ethnographic research methods. However, once I sat with the data and really took a deep look at the responses I found that they were very rich and informative. Furthermore, I reevaluated my first assumption that this was a data collection oversight and thought about this through the lens of someone who experience challenges with expressive communication. If the value of a message is placed in how it is articulated, someone who struggles with expressive communication would never feel that their message is valued. The richness of the message is not found in how it is articulated; it is in the story being told. The purpose and strength of this study was to hear directly from the students about their experience with IPSE.

The second limitation was in regards to the data collection. Only three family members and one member of the campus community completed interviews. This data source was not used in the capacity that it was anticipated. This shortcoming may have been related to the recruitment strategy in which it was the students' job to share recruitment information with whom they chose. In future studies of this kind I would try alternative strategies to identify possible interviewees and determine whether there was a desire to ask additional interviewees. On the other hand, quite possibly, it may have been the students' desire to participate independently and as a result did not identify anyone else they wanted to participate. This perceived limitation also speaks to the strength of the study where the students were solely in control of their participation in the study.

### **Chapter 7: Conclusion**

In this chapter the results and discussion are pulled together to offer final insights and recommendations to the future administrators and practitioners of IPSE programs. First and foremost, it is important to acknowledge that the stories that emerged from the data were those of the students. The student perspective was magnified in the data and unlike many of the studies before, we learned directly from the lived experiences of the students. In the future, I would encourage more studies that include the students to help gain a deeper understanding of their experience. Furthermore, I would recommend that researchers employ multiples means of data collection and consider a variety of methods including case studies, ethnographic research, or participatory action research. I would encourage future researchers to use a variety of methods to collect data including surveys, interviews, observations, photo elicitation, and so on. Booth and Booth (1996) remind us that "it is possible to use narrative methods to give voice to people who lack words, and

to gain a measure of access to the lives of even the most inarticulate and unresponsive informants” (p. 59).

Secondly, it is important that we recognize the relationship between QOL and the IPSE experiences of the students. The IPSE experiences of the students are connected to multiple QOL of domains. When thinking about what denotes a good QOL, it is now possible to visualize how an IPSE experience can contribute. We can see how the positive social experience lends itself to positive outcomes in the social inclusion, interpersonal relationships, and rights domains of QOL. Furthermore, we can see how the positive self-concept relates to the emotional well-being, self-determination and personal development domains of QOL. It is clear that the guiding principles of IPSE not only strive for an inclusive life but that they also facilitate steps towards a good QOL. Although it was not clear from the students’ perspective that there was a relationship to material well-being and physical well-being domains, what we did see is that there is potential through the expansion of learning opportunities and employment opportunities.

Thirdly, from this study we have been afforded the opportunity to expand upon what we know. There was an obvious consistency between the two emergent themes and the current IPSE literature. IPSE is an under researched area of inclusive education and with only a small body of literature it is important to acknowledge where similarities emerge. The *positive social experience* theme has been recognized prior to this study by other researchers. We can say with greater assurance that the positive social experience is one of the most profound outcomes. With further studies specifically looking at the social experiences we can start to make generalizations and also develop a better understanding of the positive social experience. The same can be said for the *positive self-concept*

theme. There was a clear connection to the literature that offers those working in the field a greater understanding of the potential for the students. Again, with further research into this specific outcome we gain a better understanding across programs.

Lastly, there are obvious gaps in our understanding and knowledge that need to be addressed. At the conclusion of the study curiosities still exist around a number issues. To start we need to look more closely at the relationships that students develop on campus. We learned that the interpersonal relationships on campus were valued but we do not know much more than that. We do not know what makes them valuable and if they will be sustainable. IPSE strives to expand the social networks of students and a strong social network is considered an indicator of a good QOL. It is imperative that we look at the social connections developed on campus through a variety of lenses and gain a deeper understanding. Secondly, we need to dig deeper in the learning opportunities students engage in. Although we learned that students experience personal growth and were satisfied with their learning experiences, we did not gain much insight into what those learning experiences looked like. This is a larger issue of IPSE, as we see programs in the United States and Canada consider accreditation and specific curricula. More research is needed in this area to get a deeper understanding of what denotes a quality learning experience. A deeper understanding will provide advocates the leverage they need to prove the value of IPSE program to the broader community. Lastly, we should consider how employment fits with IPSE.

In conclusion, I would argue that “we have only just begun.” Connecting with the students from the *Campus For All* program has been a great honour and privilege, and I am thankful for their enthusiasm when telling their stories. I encourage practitioners to

see the many important ways IPSE experiences are aligning with the wants of the students and are offering positive outcomes related to a good QOL. Future governments, university administrators, program coordinators, families, students and potential students should work together to make IPSE a priority in research and in practice not only locally, but provincially, nationally and internationally. There is much more to learn and do.

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## Appendix A

University  
of Regina

Faculty of Education  
University of Regina



### **Campus For All students needed for RESEARCH in *Inclusive Post-Secondary Education***

We need Campus For All students to take part in a study of  
"Inclusive post-secondary education and quality of life: A case study"

Learn more about the study at one of the information sessions:

Session 1: Monday, April 11<sup>th</sup> @ 9:00am

Session 2: Monday, April 11<sup>th</sup> @ 1:00pm

Session 3: Monday, April 11<sup>th</sup> @ 6:00pm

Location: 251.23 Riddell Centre (University of Regina - Centre for Student  
Accessibility)

For more information please contact:  
*Courtney Adams, Faculty of Education* at



**This study has been reviewed and received approval  
through the Research Ethics Board, University of Regina.**

## Appendix B

University  
of Regina

Faculty of Education  
University of Regina



### Participants needed for RESEARCH in *Inclusive Post-Secondary Education*

We are looking for volunteers to take part in a study of  
*"Inclusive post-secondary education and quality of life: A case study"*

You have been identified by a Campus For All student as a potential participant for this study. You are either a family member or caregiver of the Campus For All student, or you are a member of the campus community who knows the Campus For All student.

Your participation would involve one interview which will be approximately 45-60 minutes.

Participation in the study is voluntary.

Courtney will be available for interviews on June 3, 4 and 5.

For more information or to volunteer for this study please contact:  
*Courtney Adams, Faculty of Education at*



**This study has been reviewed and received approval  
through the Research Ethics Board, University of Regina.**

## Appendix C

University  
of Regina

*Participant Consent Form - Student*

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Dear Student,

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study titled “Inclusive Post-Secondary Education and Quality of Life: A Case Study”. This study is being completed as a part of a Master’s in Education Thesis at the University of Regina.

The primary researcher is:  
Courtney Adams, Graduate Student  
Faculty of Education  
University of Regina

The thesis supervisor is:  
Dr. Wanda Lyons  
Faculty of Education  
University of Regina  
306-585-4620 or [Wanda.Lyons@uregina.ca](mailto:Wanda.Lyons@uregina.ca)

The purpose of the study is to explore the experiences and perspectives of students enrolled in an Inclusive Post-Secondary Education program (*Campus For All*) and to explore findings as they relate to a good life (the key indicators of Quality of Life). The research questions are: “What are the experiences and perspectives of students enrolled in an Inclusive Post-Secondary Education program?” and “How do the student experiences and perspectives relate to indicators of Quality of Life?”

Third or fourth year student in the *Campus For All* program can participate in the study. The study findings are intended to reflect your thoughts and ideas about participating in *Campus For All*.

**What does participating mean? (What do you have to do?)**

1. Interviews: If you choose to participate Courtney Adams will do an interview with you that will last about 45-60 minutes. If you are unable to finish your interview in time, you can schedule a second interview. You will be asked about your experiences at the university and your opinions. If a question makes you feel uncomfortable, you do not have to answer it. You can ask questions at any time. The interview will be held at the University of Regina and will be audio recorded.

2. Information Collected: With permission, Courtney will look through your portfolio and make notes about your experiences at the university. Courtney will not be keeping your portfolio. Quotations (exact words you say) from the interview may be selected when Courtney writes her report.
3. Thesis: Courtney will be writing the results of the study in a Master's Thesis. Courtney may also write a journal article or a conference presentation.

### **Possible Risks**

There is a small chance that you may say something that might make you feel uncomfortable. You only have to answer the questions you feel comfortable with. Courtney will arrange a meeting after the interview where you can share your thoughts and feelings. You can also see a counsellor through Counselling Services at the University of Regina if you have feelings you want to talk about. Counselling appointments can be made in person (251 Riddell Centre) or by calling 306-585-4491 or by talking to the *Campus For All* staff.

Your comments may be viewed by people who know you. Courtney will review comments with you before they are included in the research.

### **Confidentiality (Privacy)**

Courtney will try to keep who you are (your identity) private during the study, but sometimes people may be able to recognize you. To keep your identity private, Courtney will use a different name for you during the study. Courtney will not include class names, classmate names, professor names, staff names, etc.

Courtney may want to quote you during the study. This means that Courtney will use the exact words you say when she writes her report. Courtney will let you review your quotes before she uses them. Your name will not be used in the quotations. You can say no to being quoted.

When the study is over Courtney will securely store the interview transcripts at the University of Regina for a period of five years, and then they will be destroyed. The researchers will not use the recording(s) for any other reason than that/those stated in the consent form without your written permission.

### **Do I have to do the research study?**

You can quit (withdraw from) the study at any time one month prior to the defence without penalty. If you quit, all information collected about you will be destroyed.

This project has been approved on ethical grounds by the UofR Research Ethics Board on April 4, 2016. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to

the committee at (585-4775 or [research.ethics@uregina.ca](mailto:research.ethics@uregina.ca)). Out of town participants may call collect.

This consent form has been reviewed verbally with me. I have had time to think about this and have had time to ask questions. I know that during the interview I will be sharing my thoughts and opinions about my university experience and that the interview will be audio recorded. I know I will meet with Courtney to go over the information she is going to write about me. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can quit (end my participation) at any time. I know that words I say (quotes) will be used in the thesis. I know that I can meet with Courtney to review a final copy of the thesis. I know that my participation is voluntary and that I quit (withdraw) at any time.

- Do you give permission to:
  - I grant permission to look at my portfolio:                      Yes: \_\_\_ No: \_\_\_
  - The different name I want you to use is : \_\_\_\_\_
  - You may quote me (use my exact words):                      Yes: \_\_\_ No: \_\_\_

<i>Name of Participant</i>	<i>Signature of Participant or Third Party</i>	<i>Date</i>
----------------------------	--	-------------

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Researcher's Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

I have read and explained this Consent Form to the participant before receiving the participant's consent, and the participant had knowledge of its contents and appeared to understand it.

<i>Name of Participant</i>	<i>Researcher's Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
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***Oral consent will be audio recorded.***

***A copy of the signed consent form will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.***

**Appendix D*****Participant Consent Form –  
Parent/Guardian & Campus  
Community Member***

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Greetings,

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study titled “Inclusive Post-Secondary Education and Quality of Life: A Case Study”. This study is being completed as part of a Master’s in Education Thesis at the University of Regina.

The primary researcher is:  
Courtney Adams, Graduate Student  
Faculty of Education  
University of Regina

The thesis supervisor is:  
Dr. Wanda Lyons  
Faculty of Education  
University of Regina  
306-585-4620 or [Wanda.Lyons@uregina.ca](mailto:Wanda.Lyons@uregina.ca)

The purpose of the study is to explore the experiences and perspectives of students enrolled in an Inclusive Post-Secondary Education program and to explore findings as they relate to the key indicators of Quality of Life. Eight Quality of Life domains will be used to guide the interview questions and data analysis including: (a) personal development, (b) self-determination, (c) interpersonal relations, (d) social inclusions, (e) rights, (f) emotional well-being, (g) physical well-being and (h) material well-being. The research questions are: “What are the experiences and perspectives of students enrolled in an Inclusive Post-Secondary Education program?” and “How do the student experiences and perspectives relate to indicators of Quality of Life?”

Those who are eligible to participate in this study have a pre-established relationship with a student from the *Campus For All* program at the University of Regina. You are either (a) a family member or caregiver of a *Campus For All* student or (b) you are a member of the campus community who knows a *Campus For All* student.

The study findings are intended to reflect the experiences of students participating in *Campus For All* as they relate to quality of life.

### **What does participating mean?**

4. Interviews: If you choose to participate Courtney Adams will interview you. The interview will focus on the experiences of the *Campus For All* student you know. The interview will be between 45 and 60 minutes and will be audio recorded. The interview will be held at the University of Regina.
5. Courtney will be writing the results of the study in a Master's Thesis and potentially in a journal article or conference presentation. You may be quoted based on your consent. Your name will not be used in the quotations. The thesis will be archived by the University of Regina on an electronic database and will be accessible by future researchers.

### **Confidentiality**

Although you will not be talking about anything controversial, confidentiality and anonymity when reporting information will be maintained throughout the study; however, it cannot be guaranteed. You can provide the researcher with a pseudonym. Identifiable information like specific class names, classmate names, professor names, staff names, etc. will be excluded. You will be able to review your transcripts and add, delete or change information as you see fit. You can also deny consent to be quoted.

Upon completion of the study Courtney will securely store the interview transcripts at the University of Regina for a period of five years, and then they will be destroyed. The researchers will not use the recording(s) for any other reason than that/those stated in the consent form without your written permission.

### **How can I withdraw from the study?**

Your participation is voluntary and you can answer only those questions that you are comfortable with. You may withdraw from the research project for any reason, at any time one month prior to the thesis defence without explanation or penalty of any sort. Should you wish to withdraw, all data will be destroyed.

This project has been approved on ethical grounds by the UofR Research Ethics Board on April 4, 2016. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to the committee at (585-4775 or [research.ethics@uregina.ca](mailto:research.ethics@uregina.ca)). Out of town participants may call collect.

I have read the Participant Consent Form and understand the description of the "Inclusive Post-Secondary Education and Quality of Life: A Case Study" study. I have had adequate time to think about this and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I am aware that the interview will be audio recorded. A copy of the interview transcript will be shared with me. Quotations from my interview may be incorporated into the final thesis with my

permission. Copies of the final research report will be shared with me after completion. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I can withdraw at any time.

- You may quote me: Yes: \_\_\_ No: \_\_\_
- Please use the following pseudonym: \_\_\_\_\_

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*Name of Participant*                      *Signature*                      *Date*

---

*Researcher's Signature*

---

*Date*

***A copy of the signed consent form will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.***

## Appendix E



### *Participant Consent Form – Campus For All Coordinator*

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Greetings,

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study titled “Inclusive Post-Secondary Education and Quality of Life: A Case Study”. This study is being completed as part of a Master’s in Education Thesis at the University of Regina.

The primary researcher is:  
Courtney Adams, Graduate Student  
Faculty of Education  
University of Regina

The thesis supervisor is:  
Dr. Wanda Lyons  
Faculty of Education  
University of Regina  
306-585-4620 or [Wanda.Lyons@uregina.ca](mailto:Wanda.Lyons@uregina.ca)

The purpose of the study is to explore the experiences and perspectives of students enrolled in an Inclusive Post-Secondary Education program and to explore findings as they relate to the key indicators of Quality of Life.

The purpose of the interview is to gain an understanding of the *Campus For All* program to build context for the case study and provide additional general information about the student experience. The interview questions will discuss program functions and management.

The *Campus For All* Coordinator is eligible to participate in this study.

The study findings are intended to reflect the experiences of students participating in *Campus For All* as they relate to quality of life.

#### **What does participating mean?**

1. Interviews: If you choose to participate Courtney Adams will interview you. The interview will focus on the functions and operations of the *Campus For All*

program. The interview will be between 45 and 60 minutes and will be audio recorded. The interview will be held at the University of Regina.

2. Courtney will be writing the results of the study in a Master's Thesis and potentially in a journal article or conference presentation. You may be quoted based on your consent. Your name will not be used in the quotations. The thesis will be archived by the University of Regina on an electronic database and will be accessible by future researchers.

### **Potential Risks**

You may want to share thoughts and ideas about negative experiences you have had with *Campus For All*. Negative comments may be viewed by people who know you. Courtney will review negative comments with you before they are included in the research.

### **Confidentiality**

Although you will not be talking about anything controversial, confidentiality and anonymity when reporting information will be maintained throughout the study; however, it cannot be guaranteed as you are the only *Campus For All* coordinator. You can provide the researcher with a pseudonym. Identifiable information like specific class names, classmate names, professor names, staff names, etc. will be excluded. You will be able to review your transcripts and add, delete or change information as you see fit. You can also deny consent to be quoted.

Upon completion of the study Courtney will securely store the interview transcripts at the University of Regina for a period of five years, and then they will be destroyed. The researchers will not use the recording(s) for any other reason than that/those stated in the consent form without your written permission.

### **How can I withdraw from the study?**

Your participation is voluntary and you can answer only those questions that you are comfortable with. You may withdraw from the research project for any reason, at any time one month prior to the thesis defense without explanation or penalty of any sort. Should you wish to withdraw, all data will be destroyed.

This project has been approved on ethical grounds by the UofR Research Ethics Board on April 4, 2016. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to the committee at (585-4775 or [research.ethics@uregina.ca](mailto:research.ethics@uregina.ca)). Out of town participants may call collect.

I have read the Participant Consent Form and understand the description of the “Inclusive Post-Secondary Education and Quality of Life: A Case Study” study. I have had adequate time to think about this and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I am aware that the interview will be audio recorded. A copy of the interview transcript will be shared with me. Quotations from my interview may be incorporated into the final thesis with my permission. Copies of the final research report will be shared with me after completion. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I can withdraw at any time.

- You may quote me: Yes: \_\_\_ No: \_\_\_
- Please use the following pseudonym: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Name of Participant*

*Signature*

*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Researcher's Signature*

*Date*

***A copy of the signed consent form will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.***

## **Appendix F**

### **Check for Understanding Guide**

1. Why are we doing this research study?
2. What will you be asked to do?
3. Do you have to do this?
4. What if you decide that you want to have the interview, but then change your mind later?
5. Do you have any questions?

## Appendix G

### Interview Guide – *Campus For All* Coordinator

1. Tell me about your role in the history of *Campus For All* and current responsibilities.
2. Tell me about the history of *Campus For All*.
3. Tell me about the philosophical ideals that have informed the structure and program delivery of *Campus For All*.
4. What are the student outcomes *Campus For All* hoping to achieve?
5. Tell me about the position *Campus For All* holds on campus.

Example of probing question: How do other departments engage with *Campus For All*?

6. Tell me about the funding model used for *Campus For All*.
7. Tell me about staffing for *Campus For All*.
8. Tell me about Admissions to the *Campus For All* program.
9. Tell me about the academic supports *Campus For All* provides.

Example of probing questions: How do the students pick classes? Tell me about how assignments are modified?

10. Tell me about the social supports *Campus For All* provides
11. Tell me about the employment supports *Campus For All* provides

## Appendix H

### Interview Guide – Students

1. Tell me about yourself.

Example of probing questions: Tell me about where you live. Tell me about your family. Tell me about how you spend your free time.

2. Tell me about your life before *Campus For All*.

Example of probing questions: Tell me about your high school experience. Tell me about what you were doing for employment. Tell me about your friendship.

3. How did you know that you wanted to go to university?

Example of probing questions: How important is attending university to you?

4. How do you feel about yourself now that you are a university student?

5. Tell me about the classes you have taken at UofR.

Example of probing questions: How important are the classes you take at UofR to you? How did you know you wanted to study that subject area? How do you feel after you have completed an assignment?

5. Tell me what it is like meeting people on campus.

Example of probing question: Tell me more about your relationship with \_\_\_\_\_? How often do you meet up? What do you do?

6. Tell me about those relationships you have with your classmates.

Example of probing question: What do you and your classmates do together?

7. Tell me about the relationships you have with other students on campus?

Example of probing question: How did you meet? How important is your relationship with \_\_\_\_\_ to you?

8. Who else do you know on campus?
9. Tell me about the activities you do on campus.

Example of probing question: How important is it to you to join and spend time with university clubs, teams or programs?

10. How do you feel as a member of the Uof R community?

Example of probing question: How do you know that you are valued and respected on campus?

11. Tell me about your career goals.

Example of probing question: How important is it to you to have a job when you graduate from university?

12. Do you think it is important to have a job while you go to university?
13. How do you think university prepare you for life after university?
14. Tell me about the supports you receive on campus.

Example of probing question: How do you decide what you are going to do each day on campus? How do you make choices while at university?

Do you feel independent when you are on campus?

15. Think back to your first day of university. What was it like?

Example of probing questions: How did you feel during your first semester as a university student?

16. How you think that your experience at UofR has changed over time?

**Hypothetical Questions:**

1. If you could go back in time would you choose go to university or would do something else? Why?
2. What do you think you would be doing if you didn't go to university?
3. How would your life be different if you didn't go to university? Good, bad, otherwise?

## Appendix I

### **Interview Guide – Family member/caregiver and member from the campus community**

1. In what capacity and context do you know the student?
2. Did you know the student prior to them starting university?
3. In what ways have you observed that attending university has made an impact on the students' level of independence?
4. In what ways have you noticed personal development in the student? (ex: change in social status, personal skills, etc.)
5. In what ways have you noticed self-determination in the student? (ex: decision making, personal goals, etc.)
6. Has the student ever expressed to you any feelings about their level of independence since starting university?
7. In what ways have you observed that attending university has affected the students' level of social participation?
8. In what ways have you noticed interpersonal relationships develop for the student? (ex: friendships, social activities, social interactions, etc.)
9. In what ways have you noticed social inclusion? (ex: roles, participation, community integration, etc.)
10. In what ways have you seen their human rights exercised? (ex: respect, dignity, access)
11. Has the student expressed to you any feelings about their level of welling-being since starting university?

12. In what ways have you observed changes in the students' emotional well-being?  
(ex: self-concept, experience, etc.)
13. Has the student expressed to you any feelings about their emotional well-being since starting university?
14. In what ways have you observed changes in the students' physical well-being since starting university? (ex: health, nutrition, leisure, recreation)
15. Has the student expressed to you any feelings about their physical well-being since starting university?
16. In what ways have you observed changes in the students' material well-being since starting university? (ex: employment, finances, housing, etc.)
17. How has the student expressed to you any feelings about their material well-being since starting university?
18. In general, have you observed any other way that the students' experience with CFA has impacted their Quality of Life?

## Appendix J

University  
of Regina

*Research Ethics Board  
Certificate of Approval*

REB # 2016-042

Investigator(s)	Courtney Adams	Dr. S. Anthony Thompson and Dr. Anna Mudde
Department	Education	
Funder:	Unfunded	
Supervisor:	Dr. Wanda Lyons	
Title:	<b>Inclusive Post-secondary Education and Quality of Life: A Case Study</b>	

APPROVED ON:	April 4, 2016	RENEWAL DATE:	April 4, 2017
APPROVAL OF:	Application For Behavioural Research Ethics Review		
	Recruitment Poster		
	Consent Form-Student		
	Consent Form-Non Student		
	Interview Scripts		
	Check for Understanding Guide		

FULL BOARD MEETING

DELEGATED REVIEW   X  

The University of Regina Research Ethics Board has reviewed the above-named research project. The proposal was found to be acceptable on ethical grounds. The principal investigator has the responsibility for any other administrative or regulatory approvals that may pertain to this research project, and for ensuring that the authorized research is carried out according to the conditions outlined in the original protocol submitted for ethics review. This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above time period provided there is no change in experimental protocol, consent process or documents.

Any significant changes to your proposed method, or your consent and recruitment procedures should be reported to the Chair for Research Ethics Board consideration in advance of its implementation.

### ONGOING REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

In order to receive annual renewal, a status report must be submitted to the REB Chair for Board consideration within one month of the current expiry date each year the study remains open, and upon study completion. Please refer to the following website for further instructions:

<http://www.uregina.ca/research/for-faculty-staff/ethics-compliance/human/forms1/ethics-forms.html>



Dr. Larena Hoeber, Chair  
Research Ethics Board

Please send all correspondence to:

Research Office  
University of Regina  
Research and Innovation Centre 109  
Regina, SK S4S 0A2  
Telephone (306) 585-4775  
research.ethics@uregina.ca