Research over 25 years has established that youth with disabilities who are more self-determined achieve education-related goals at higher rates and experience more positive employment and community living outcomes upon graduating. The focus of this presentation will be to provide an overview of the construct of self-determination, effective assessments that can be used to measure students’ self-determination, and interventions that can be implemented to promote self-determination. Recently, KU researchers have developed the Self-Determination Inventory: Student Report (SDI:SR), a self-report measure of self-determination for adolescents and aligned with Causal Agency Theory, a theoretical framework that defines self-determination and its development. The SDI:SR is to be used by both practitioners to make decisions about intervention and instruction, and by researchers to evaluate the efficacy of interventions, examine factors related to and contributing to self-determination, and assess the relationships between the promotion of self-determination and transition-related and academic achievement outcomes.

Following assessment, practitioners and researchers alike can use results to make data-based decisions and plan interventions that promote the development of self-determination. An evidence-based practice, the Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction (SDLMI), has been developed for use by teachers to enable students to develop self-determination. The SDLMI is a teaching model designed to enable teachers to teach students to self-regulate problem-solving to (a) set educationally relevant and valued goals; (b) create an action plan to achieve those goals, and monitor and evaluate their progress toward their goals; and (c) revise the action plan or goal as necessary based upon those evaluations. These skills (e.g., goal-setting, problem-solving, self-regulation) are infused throughout all secondary content standards, including career and college readiness standards for which all students are responsible. There is an ongoing need to promote the wider adoption of the SDLMI in practice and in teacher education. Attendees will be provided with information on the utilization of the SDI:SR and SDLMI in special education and the larger, general education contexts to enhance outcomes for all students.

Presenter: Sheida Khamsi