

ABSTRACT

To fully understand the impact and areas of improvement to Western Carolina University's student employment program, the Center for Career and Professional Development launched two surveys: one for student workers, totaling 962 students, and one for their supervisors.

Ongoing assessment and evaluations are crucial to ensure the relevance and efficiency of the student employment program. Although surveys have been deployed to students and their supervisors in the past, this report is the first formal assessment analysis for the Center for Career and Professional Development.

Because many faculty and staff supervise student workers but who do not necessarily approve student timesheets, the survey was sent campus-wide as the number of actual supervisors is not known. Fifty-one supervisors completed the survey.

Overall, 66% of supervisors reported they understood the hiring process for Non Work Study, Work Study, or Graduate Assistantships; 88% reported they were satisfied with the quality of student workers within their department; 94% reported student workers contributed "a great deal" to their departments; and 76% reported they were satisfied with the student employment programs for Non Work Study, Work Study, and Graduate Assistantships.

Additionally, roughly half (52%) of respondents reported they do not currently have or use a student employment manual within their department, and 55% said they perform either formal or informal evaluations with their student workers.

Additional information including supervisors are advertising positions, suggestions for supervisor training topics, and how departments are reinforcing learning outcomes for student workers are included in this report.

BACKGROUND

The Center for Career and Professional Development's mission enhances the teaching and learning of students and alumni by supporting them in the development of self-awareness, identification and integration of career and academic goals with real-world experiences, and expansion and articulation of professional competencies to succeed in post-graduate experiences.

In addition to providing students with financial support while completing their collegiate degrees, the Student Employment Office, within the Center for Career and Professional Development, enhances student learning in the five global outcomes promoted by WCU:

- Communicate effectively and responsibly
- Practice civic engagement
- Integrate and apply information from a variety of contexts
- Solve complex problems
- Clarify and act on their own purpose and values

The goal of the student employment program is to foster positive working and educational environments that meet one's financial, personal, and academic goals and to support those who manage and supervise student workers for a mutually beneficial environment.

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE

A 17-question survey was created to assess supervisor opinions or information in the following areas: developing learning outcomes; improvement in student professional development; support for supervisor training; and overall satisfaction with the student employment program at WCU.

The survey was sent electronically to all divisions April 5, 2016 and was "live" for three weeks. The CCPD used Qualtrics to house and analyze the survey results. A total of 51 supervisors completed the survey.

FINDINGS

Q1 - Which type of student do you employ? Check all that apply

Answer	%	Count
Work Study	70.00%	35
Non Work Study	68.00%	34
Graduate Asisstant	22.00%	11
Total	100%	50

Q2 - How many student employees do you supervise during a typical semester?

Answer	%	Count
0-25	92.00%	46
26-50	2.00%	1
51-75	4.00%	2
76-100	0.00%	0
100+	2.00%	1
Total	100%	50

Q3 - How many student employees do you typically supervise during the summer months?

Answer	%	Count
None	48.00%	24
1-25	52.00%	26
26-50	0.00%	0
51-75	0.00%	0
76-100	0.00%	0
100+	0.00%	0
Total	100%	50

Q4 - How do you advertise student job openings in your area? (check all that apply)

Answer	%	Count
JobCat	58.00%	29
Work Study website	46.00%	23
Word of Mouth	40.00%	20
Fliers	6.00%	3
Professor Recommendation	16.00%	8
Student Employment Fair	36.00%	18
Other	20.00%	10
Total	100%	50

Q5 - Do you use a student worker handbook or offer a resource guide to your student employees to orient them to your department and their job responsibilities?

Answer	%	Count
yes	52.00%	26
No	48.00%	24
Total	100%	50

Q6 - Do you evaluate performance or complete a student employment assessment at least once a year?

Answer	%	Count
Yes	55.10%	27
No	44.90%	22
Total	100%	49

Q7 - As a supervisor, do you have learning outcomes for your student employees? If so, how are they assessed?

This question is qualitative. Please see Appendix A for answers.

Q8 - How often do you have conversations with your student employees about professional development such as time management or attention to quality?

Answer	%	Count
Never	6.00%	3
Once a year	22.00%	11
2-3 times per semester	38.00%	19
Once a month	16.00%	8
More than once a month	18.00%	9
Total	100%	50

Q9 - Do you encourage your student workers to take what they are learning in the classroom and incorporate it into their workplace experience? If yes, please provide examples.

This question is qualitative; please see the responses in Appendix B.

Q10 - In what ways do you see students' job skills develop over the course of the semester?

This question is qualitative; please see the responses in Appendix C.

Q11 - Would you be willing to pay your student workers to attend training sessions organized by the Student Employment Office?

Answer	%	Count
Yes	77.08%	37
No	22.92%	11
Total	100%	48

Q12 - If yes, what three training topics do you feel would be most beneficial to student employees?

Answer	%	Count
Customer service	67.50%	27
Web time entry (submitting timesheets via MyCat)	10.00%	4
Office professionalism and etiquette	75.00%	30
Sexual harassment	7.50%	3
Emergency preparedness	30.00%	12
Time management	52.50%	21
Interviewing and resume building skills	60.00%	24
Other (please specify)	10.00%	4
Total	100%	40

Other: Developing soft skills and systems thinking approach; coding with sql; budget doesn't support being able to do this; Along with the resume building skills, having them think about how every job (preferred or not) is an opportunity to gain a positive reference.

Q13 - As a supervisor, would you be willing to attend training on effective student employment practices?

Answer	%	Count
Yes	78.00%	39
No	22.00%	11
Total	100%	50

Q14 - If yes, which three training topics would benefit you the most?

Answer	%	Count
New supervisor training	24.32%	9
Web time entry (approving timesheets via MyCat)	10.81%	4
Suggestions for interviewing and evaluating student workers	75.68%	28
Roundtable discussion on solving student employment issues	59.46%	22
How to create a student worker handbook for your department	62.16%	23
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0

Q15 - Which of the following training formats would be most beneficial?

Answer	%	Count
traditional classroom	10.87%	5
Roundtable discussion	32.61%	15
Emailed PowerPoint presentation	30.43%	14
Monthly newsletter	15.22%	7
Recorded webinar	10.87%	5
Total	100%	46

Q16 - Overall, I:

Question	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree		Total
have a great understanding of the hiring process	0.00%	0	12.00%	6	22.00%	11	38.00%	19	28.00%	14	50
am satisfied with the quality of my student workers	0.00%	0	2.00%	1	10.00%	5	40.00%	20	48.00%	24	50
am satisfied with the student employment program on campus, including Work Study, Non	2.00%	1	4.00%	2	18.00%	9	48.00%	24	28.00%	14	50

Work Study and Graduate Assistantships feel student workers contribute a great deal to my department	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	6.00%	3	18.00%	9	76.00%	38	50
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Q17 - Please provide any feedback, comments or suggestions to improve student employment on campus.

This question is qualitative; please see responses in Appendix D.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the data within this report, the Center for Career and Professional Development recommends the following:

- Offer at least four professional or personal development workshops per semester targeted specifically to student workers and work with faculty and staff to market these workshops for their students
- Offer at least three supervisor workshops per semester, targeting areas of improvements as stated by student workers, including hiring and evaluation processes, strategies for managing student workers, and how to create a departmental student employment handbook
- In addition to email marketing strategies, use tangible marketing such as banners, flyers, sidewalk posters, etc. to market student professional development opportunities
- Connect with faculty and staff to do in-class or in-meeting workshops on resources, professional development, and the services the CCPD provides

APPENDIX A

As a supervisor, do you have learning outcomes for your student employees?...

Observation/listening with customer service related work; regular review of work products; conversations with students encouraging self-reflection.

N/A

In our initial interview with students, we require them to submit a resume and talk with them about their career goals. When hired, we collaborate with the student to put together a work plan that will help them reach those goals. Our mid-term and final evaluations include discussion of how successfully the work plan was followed, and how that work helped to advance the student's expressed career goals.

No

Yes!! I expect them to be better at their job 8 weeks in to their hire than they were the first week or I don't think their trying their best and i feel I'm wasting my time teaching them. VERY FRUSTRATING!!!

No, but that would be a good idea if I could find the time to do so.

Yes. I expect my student workers to learn and understand very specific marketing software and to develop a basic understanding of marketing strategy. I assess by reviewing student work on the software application which tunes me in to student understanding of the software as well as whether he or she is successful using marketing tactics.

Customer service and communication skills.

no

Yes, self-assessment tool and direct supervisor rating

no

Not applicable for this student worker

The outcomes are the successful data input of scores from the high school Second Life Virtual Science program that is held in five high schools throughout Western North Carolina.

Yes we post a list of expectations and learning outcomes

No

We do, and at the end of each semester during our individual employment assesment meeting we ask them specific questions and see how they answer to assess the SLO

No

yes, annual review

Student are assessed by the following: Attendance & Punctuality; Productivity & Reliability; Initiative; Attitude; Interpersonal Skills; Quality of Work or Accuracy; Job Knowledge; Adheres to Policies

There are not learning outcomes for the students based on the nature of their work.

N/A

I don't have learning outcomes, per se, but I do try and assess their interests and give them work that will be relevant to their coursework, future goals, etc.

NA

Graduate Assistant-written learning outcomes Work-study-verbal

Assessed on ability to complete tasks and maintain accurate records as I show them to.

No

My biggest outcome for student workers is professional development. I want the students to learn how to speak to coworkers, what is appropriate in a professional setting, and how to handle having a job. I asses their outcome purely from just getting to know them. I put students in a supervisor position at times to see how they handle themselves and other students.

Yes, Survey

APPENDIX B

Do you encourage your student workers to take what they are learning in the...

Yes. I often hire students in the arts disciplines and then encourage them to utilize the skill sets they are learning towards helping our office with programs and outreach. Also, my students who are involved in undergraduate research utilize those skill-sets in helping us research and implement new ideas and programs for various populations and initiatives.

No

Student research, synthesis, and writing skills are utilized in work on MHC educational programs and exhibits. Participation in exhibit installation and program presentation provide opportunities for hands-on application of concepts learned in the classroom.

Yes, planning programs/events for students that are focused on area of study. Project management of actual projects on campus.

As math tutors, it is encouraged to take ideas from upper level math courses and incorporate them when appropriate.

For one of our workers who has a technical background and a technical major, both of which are applicable to the work he does for us - yes. In fact, the student is using information and office resources to complete a course-related project, which at the same time provides future benefit to our office (if he stays on with us).

We try to utilize students skill in accomplishing our work when possible.

Haven't had the opportunity, but yes, I consistently ask about classwork to determine if there is any opportunity for cross over.

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Not applicable for this student worker

We have discussed the use of data entry with my student's graduate classes.

Yes, both in the edit lab and the equipment lab.

Yes, ensure compliance with OSHA lab standard by implementing it in our lab.

WE do this during meeting at least once a month and then in gernal conversations as well.

Yes. We specifically hire CIS/CS majors to help with programming tasks and encourage students to incorporate what they are learning into their projects. Also, we have an intern from HESA to help with accreditation and assessment tasks, directly related to his coursework.

We have students from varied departments in the Library--Although some of the basic tasks are done by all they are assigned to watch over books in library related to their where possible. One also who is an English major helping with our newsletter when needed.

no

Yes because as tour guides they need to share their classroom experience with potential students

No.

No - not sure how to relate

Yes, The work involves promotion of events and newsletters and is in line with marketing studies.

Yes because our work-study student does not take loans and works three jobs to pay what grants do not cover. He started in high school doing this, and he tells people all the time to watch debt!

Yes

Yes. We frequently utilize our students and their classroom work in research in our office and vice versa. We often utilize our students and their experiences to share with the Board of Trustees and other leadership opportunities including input into high level administrative searches.

No, majors are completely unrelated.

I try to incorporate their passion (their major) into the work place by helping them find their strengths and weaknesses and learn how to use it and tailor it to their job. For example, one of my students is a Social Work major and I try to help her relate her compassion to her job here on campus.

All the time!

APPENDIX C

In what ways do you see students' job skills develop over the course of the...

The first and most constant growth I observe with all my students over the years is self-confidence, which leads them in becoming more adept with solving problems (some complex and some straightforward). As young professionals, they quickly learn to step up and assume responsibility for their work and their attitude. I have also noted that many of my students successfully apply to work in other areas on campus for a second job or a summer position and that they also are more aggressive in seeking scholarship or internship opportunities, also with a high level of success.

Students became more confident in their duties.

Participation in gathering and analyzing visitor comments on our programs and exhibits provides real-world experience in how a work product can be improved utilizing customer feedback. Students learn to produce a work product that is evaluated by customers rather than working for a grade.

Communication skills are sharpened in this job.

I try to focus on developing good communication, organization and project management skills.

I see an increase in confidence as well as better communication skills and people skills.

In the building trades they learn to work with their hands, create a talent for the trades work area and what a hard days work really is with the reward I did that and proud of it.

It depends on the position and the motivation of the student. For a technical student - the projects he does requires him to research vba code online, which builds his skillset as a vba code writer. For a clerical work study student, I don't see much of an improvement - but the work is quite redundant and clerical.

They become more confident and self assured as they go through the semester. They also learn valuable lessons about time management and how to behave in the work environment.

Punctuality improves. Timeliness in completing projects improves. Outgoing messaging becomes more clear and effective.

The office assistants I supervise are usually shy to begin with, but they become much more comfortable talking with students, communicating information, answering the phones, etc. Their customer service skills improve very significantly each semester.

Greater efficiency

Customer Service Skills Awareness of the different types of requests that comes across my desk on daily bases Daily Responsibilities they follow up on Communication Skills

Not applicable for this student worker temporary project

My student has become more accomplished in data entry and can apply this to his graduate work and future work environment.

They learn to be more professional. They learn how to interface with the public.

For freshmen, confidence seems to build during the first year.

Time management, responsibility, maturity, confidence, speaking skills, communication, awareness, knowledge, customer service

Their professionalism increases dramatically. They also become more involved in the work of the office, even providing suggestions on improvements.

Working directly with the students give us the opportunity to observe their growth

Being in the library, many of them tell me that they feel they have become somewhat more organized and come to realize the benefits of the library's resources and how to use them. Most of it is introduced in the first few weeks.. but they become overwhelmed in their first year with too much information at the start.

They become more independent and self sufficient

Day to day observation.

As they get a better handle on their responsibility, we training them on work that requires a higher level of attention or care, they are also able to answer other student's questions and communicate issues and solve them more easily

More assurance and confidence in the tasks. More self-initiative.

Both are confident and enjoy what they do.

Job responsibility and time management.

Professional manner, and attention to detail have greatly improved.

Our students professional demeanor is greatly enhanced, understanding of the university and the system as a whole and how it functions, etc.

Generally it goes in reverse, where the student only gets less focused and less skilled the longer the semester goes on. That makes sense, in a way, because their semester gets more stressful and they have more on their plate.

I see students improve on reliability and communication. They learn to communicate better with me and the other student workers.

APPENDIX D

Please provide any feedback, comments or suggestions to improve student emp...

We plan to make a handbook for work study students. Thanks for the survey because it helps me to see what else students need to get out of the process!

I think that students should be hired to assist not do the work for full time state employees and if they are given a chance, spoken to and disciplined, but are still not doing the job they were hired to do they should be terminated and explain to them why. This would be for their own good in the future if done appropriately. I think that a student worker handbook or offer a resource guide to the student employees to orient them to your department and their job responsibilities, do an evaluation on performance or complete a student employment assessment at least once a year would be an asset to proper and efficient employment of students.

It seems to be working pretty well for our office.

I would encourage graduate students to apply for these positions, as they are mature and are able to work independently with work assignments.

I know we would like to pay our student to attend training session but I doubt it would be in our budget. I would like to tie it to promotions. For example, saying that in order to be eligible for promotion you must attend two of these presentations. That way it volunteered and they show an investment into the application process for position advancement.

The only reason I said I wouldn't pay for a student worker to come to training is the fact that our office simply doesn't have the money. Otherwise, I would say yes.

My work study this year has been absolutely fantastic. The best employee I have ever had WCU (and even when I worked in the private sector). She is amazing!

Our student workers are invaluable to the operation of the library.

I attended the New Supervisor Training and was sort of disappointed with the content. Some of the content was very helpful (timesheets, how to hire, etc) but I was really hoping for more personal

information. I hoped to learn how to balance being a fun/friendly supervisor but still professional, tips for managing students, and things like that. I think it would be extremely beneficial since a lot of people like myself began supervising without any experience or training.

Hunter Library administration has recently implemented forms and procedures that make hiring and retaining work study and non-work-study students more difficult.