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Student Employment: Incorporating learning on the job

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Higher Education Today

- ▶ Colleges and universities are facing a period of unprecedented change
- ▶ Colleges and universities are under increased scrutiny in key areas:
 - ▶ Completion
 - ▶ Progress and persistence
 - ▶ Gainful employment
 - ▶ Development of employer-valued skills

Students are working

- ▶ Nearly 4 out of 5 U.S. students - including those in high school, community college, online college, or traditional college or university - work while in school
- ▶ They are working an average of 19 hours a week during the school year
- ▶ Having come of age during the Great Recession of 2008, many of today's students experienced a financial “wake-up” call
- ▶ Students are paying more for their own expenses

Five reasons why a student should get a job on campus

- ▶ Experience - fill out resume
- ▶ Social life - “pulled out of [residence hall] and mingle with other students”
- ▶ Flexibility - jobs designed for students to work between classes
- ▶ Independence - “learn about scheduling and limits”
- ▶ Moolah - earn extra spending money or start a savings account
 - ▶ Huhman, H. (2011). USA Today,

High Impact Practices (AAC&U)

- ▶ Students invest time and effort to purposeful tasks
- ▶ Students interact with staff, advisors, and peers about substantive matters usually over extended periods of time
- ▶ Students experience diversity through contact with people who are different from themselves
- ▶ Students get frequent feedback
- ▶ Students have the opportunity to integrate, synthesize, and apply knowledge gained from their classroom/discipline
- ▶ Student engagement occurs
 - ▶ AAC&U = Association of American Colleges and Universities)

Student employment

- ▶ Provides context in which students acquire efficient organizational skills and normative work habits that benefit them after college (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005)
- ▶ Students are most successful in “seamless environment” where they can make connections between classroom and out of classroom experiences (Kuh)
- ▶ Promotes undergraduate and graduate learning
- ▶ Areas most promoted include but are not limited to:
 - ▶ Collaboration
 - ▶ Problem solving
 - ▶ Critical thinking
 - ▶ Communication

Things to Know

Clearly differentiate assessment of learning from employee performance review

Learning outcomes may differ from instructions given by supervisors

- ▶ How do these activities change students?
 - ▶ Curriculum
 - ▶ Academic major
 - ▶ Certificate program
 - ▶ Course
 - ▶ Student employment
 - ▶ Student development experience
 - ▶ Experiential learning activity

Person who does _____ will be able to do _____ to a degree...

- ▶ Someone who does _____ will be able to do _____ to a degree and it is demonstrated by their doing _____ which can be shown to _____ who requires it for _____.

Work = Experiential Learning

- ▶ Work done by student employees for campus departments represents experiential learning. Employment is a learning experience on multiple, often simultaneous levels.
- ▶ Working in teams
- ▶ Working effectively with others
- ▶ Intercultural maturity
- ▶ Personal accountability
- ▶ Specific job/role content
- ▶ Communication
- ▶ Etc.

Student Employment Training

- ▶ Pre-Service and In-Service Training are required
 - ▶ Pre-service and in-service training must address the specific desired learning goals and transferable skills; training plans, materials, etc.
 - ▶ Students must be informed of assessment that will take place
 - ▶ Students must be informed of performance evaluation process
 - ▶ Student employment learning goals = transferable life skills
- ▶ Student learning outcomes are not employee satisfaction measures

Creating student employee learning Outcomes - Getting started

- ▶ Examine University learning goals
- ▶ Examine values, plans, and other important documents for university, division, and departments



Output and Timeline

Learning outcomes created for all positions held by student employees across unit by established deadline.



Divide work into manageable phases

Suggested Phase One

- Review selected student employment job descriptions
- Pre-survey of selected student employees
- Structured interview of supervisors of selected student employees across campus
- Create list of current “internships” and “practicums” linked to academic colleges



Team 1 - Pre-survey design

- ▶ Design a pre-survey for student workers to create a baseline
- ▶ Suggestion...keep it short (around 20 questions)
- ▶ Sample questions -
 - ▶ Because of my job, I am more able to work effectively with individuals with a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and cultures
 - ▶ My supervisor helps me make connections between my work and my life as a student
 - ▶ My job has helped me improve my written communication skills

Team 2 - In person interviews with supervisor

- ▶ Create guidelines and oversee process - structured interviews with supervisor
- ▶ Purpose - to have supervisors reflect on the learning that is occurring for their student employees on the job that may have impact on that student's academics and career choices
- ▶ Responsibilities
 - ▶ Create interview protocol
 - ▶ Create questions
 - ▶ Create timeline for interviews

Team 2 - Interview with supervisor

- ▶ Sample questions

Team 3 - In person interview with students

- ▶ Create guidelines and oversee process - structured interviews with students
- ▶ Purpose to have students reflect on the learning that is occurring on the job that may have impact on their academics and career choices
- ▶ Responsibilities
 - ▶ Create interview protocol
 - ▶ Create questions
 - ▶ Create timeline for interviews

Team 4 - Interview with student employees

- ▶ Sample questions
 - ▶ How is this job fitting in with your academics?
 - ▶ What are you learning here that is helping you in school?

Question and Answer

Contact

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