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## Student Employment: Incorporating Learning on the Job

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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

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