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More Than An Income: Learning Through Student Employment

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THESIS

MORE THAN AN INCOME: LEARNING THROUGH STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

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More Than An Income: Learning Through Student Employment

A Thesis

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis in loving memory of Cynthia White, aka our Jazzy Lady, and Toni Kampf. Cindy, thank you for being one of my biggest support systems since the day I was born. You were so much more than just a cousin. You were like a second mother to me and not a day goes by where I don't think about you. Thank you so much for all of the fun, laughs, and love. I did it cousin. Toni, you were one of the people who inspired me to go into student affairs. You supported me throughout my undergraduate years. I thank you for the tough love and teaching me how to be confident in myself and as a leader.

Finally, I dedicate this thesis to my amazing parents and friends who are like family for supporting me and lifting me up. A special mention to Molly Rorick. We have been side by side since the first day of this program. We made it to this point together, just like we promised.

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Abstract

When attending university, many students choose to work, whether off or on campus, in order

to earn some money or enough to pay their way. Student employment can help students become

more acclimated to campus and aid in building transferable skills that will follow them

throughout college and beyond. However, on campus not every job is equal and not all students

can clearly say what skills were cultivated during their experience. To bridge the gap between

student learning and employment I propose a centralized student employment office which will

implement a training and advising program for student employees and their supervisors. The

program will not only utilize training workshops but also focus on the importance of reflection

and evaluation within student growth and learning.

Keywords: Student employment, Student development, Professional skills, Student
Affairs

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Chapter 1

Introduction

In this chapter I will highlight the personal experiences that influenced my decision to pursue a career within student affairs. I discuss the challenges I faced before entering higher education and the circumstances that led me to on-campus employment. I go on to explore how my undergraduate experience influenced my thematic concern.

Path to Higher Education

Growing up I was always asked "what do you want to be when you grow up?" As a kid I of course gave one of the popular answers: a veterinarian. Within a few years I quickly discovered that there was no way I would be going into any medical field so it was back to the drawing board. I went through a few other career ideas as an elementary school student and finally decided on the field of archaeology. I was dead set on it for years and prepared myself for it. It was not until my junior year of high school that I decided that there was no reason for me to stick with this field that I chose when I was 8 years old. So, once again, I was back at square one. Without a clear plan I applied to colleges and by default wrote down that I would be an English major since I loved the subject. I kept trying to find a major that I loved. I wanted that "Ah-ha!" moment that nearly everyone around me was having as they were applying to and getting accepted into programs. I was the odd one out but I still applied to colleges and decided on one two hours away from my family.

The best way to describe my first experiences as an undergraduate can be summed up in one word: confusion. Before I arrived on campus I changed my major to hospitality management thinking that this would be the field for me. I changed majors again within a week and decided to

be the dreaded "undeclared." Being undeclared made me feel liberated but also so lost. I felt as if

I had no direction while in reality I had the whole world in front of me. I was not tied down by a

strict curriculum and I was free to take any class in any subject that I desired, but at that time I

did not see it in this way. I questioned why I even entered higher education in the first place.

However, not going to college was never an option for me. Being the youngest and the one who

did well academically put a lot of pressure on me to go to school and make the right decisions.

However, many of my decisions were based off of what I thought others expected of me and not

what I wanted.

I was at my lowest point during this time. The constant homesickness coupled with the

constant questioning of what I wanted in life and the lack of support I felt at my institution lead

to me nearly dropping out of college altogether. That, of course, was not going to fly in my

family so I decided that my current institution was not a good fit for me. I still had no idea what

to study but I knew in order to give myself the best chance at success, I had to change my

environment. I transferred from a small private college to a large public university. I felt

instantly better knowing that I would be in this new environment that was closer to my family

and more diverse. I finally had that "Ah-ha" moment when it came to what institution I should

attend.

However, I was still afraid and confused as I still did not have a clear path set up for

myself. I became a Liberal Arts major and took any class that appealed to me. I even declared

multiple minors but still had no idea what I was doing. However, I did not want to go back to

being so miserable to the point of feeling like an outsider and choosing not to go to class. I

gained this newfound drive to make myself do something and it ended up being one of the best

decisions I have ever made. I decided to look into working on campus. I wanted to work in order to earn my own money and give myself the chance to make friends in this new environment. At the time I filled out my application I thought it was just a job but it turned out to be so much more. It was the kickstart to understanding what I wanted for my future.

Finding Work On Campus

One of the most influential experiences of my undergraduate career was in my place of work. I made the decision to work on campus in the student union as a paraprofessional student worker. As paraprofessionals, our job training and overall work experience was delivered to us as a teachable moment. Every job experience was meant to bestow upon us lessons that could be applicable to our lives in college and beyond. I went into my first job at the student union as an event staff member thinking it would just be a chance to make some extra money and get acclimated to a new campus. As a transfer student, I was looking into any way for me to branch and make new connections. I quickly learned that working in the student union would be so much more than just earning some extra money on the side. This became increasingly relevant when I moved to a higher position within the student union. I was given the chance to become a student director, which included more responsibilities and a larger time commitment to the job. We were considered to be the face of the union and would take on a supervisor role for the other student staff in the building.

Unlike many of the other jobs on campus, our training was a week long and took place during the week before the start of classes. Each day of training lasted from 8am until the early evening; however, the majority of the training sessions did not focus on the individual job duties. The majority of the training sessions were primarily focused on developmental lessons. We had

sessions on teamwork, leadership, diversity, conflict resolution, self-reflection, social justice, and overall professional development. On top of this, we did training together as a collective staff. This common training between all of us was meant to show that regardless of our positions, we should all learn key skills to better ourselves and no one of us was above the other. Our supervisors made it clear that our education came first and if our grades dropped, then our employment could suffer. This, along with the emphasis on being on time, contributed to our supervisors wanting us to learn how to hold ourselves accountable for our actions. This and other lessons were reinforced in our weekly staff meetings.

One specific meeting during my time as a student employee sticks out to me. The 14 of us that were in supervisory roles walked into our weekly meeting knowing it would be intense due to the email we had received beforehand. This came to be called "The Meeting." Our supervisors came into the room and sat at the front. The room was set up as a lecture hall so it felt as if we were being talked at and judged. The meeting was set to discuss all of the problems that had been happening on the job and between us as a staff. I for one could see the disappointment in my supervisors' faces and that was difficult. We talked about how there were staff members who were slacking off and leaving more work for others, making unnecessary mistakes, not being a team player, and being unprofessional. The student employees were given the chance to weigh in and explain certain situations and even offer suggestions for improvement.

While this meeting was difficult, it was necessary for us to experience. It reinforced the skills that our supervisors wanted to instill in us during our employment. After reflecting on this situation and my entire experience as a student worker, I realized how important the skills I

cultivated were. I took these skills into job interviews and I was more prepared than other candidates. I was able to be given tasks without much supervision and became more confident in my own abilities. All on-campus student employees should be exposed to work that is intentional to their overall development.

Thematic Concern

Student employment can help students become more acclimated to campus and aid in building transferable skills that will follow them throughout college and beyond. However, not every job, particularly on campus, is equal and not all students can clearly say what skills were cultivated during their experience. Personally, I have seen a lack of this intentional development within the Federal Work-Study Program (FWS). The FSW program went into effect in 1964 as a form of financial aid given to students as a part of a financial aid package. These students would be eligible for part time on campus employment in which the majority of their wages are provided by the federal government and a small portion from the institution of employment (McClellan, Creager, & Savoca, 2018). The main goals of the program are to help students earn money to cover the cost of education and provide job training. However, nowhere in the guidelines does it state that universities and students must follow any goals for overall student development. There are rules pertaining to the minimum amount students can be paid and hours worked but there are no overarching learning goals that institutions need to meet. Student work should "provide growth, development, and learning" (McClellan, Creager, & Savoca, 2018, p. 130).

Many of the student workers I encountered outside of the student union were trained in how to do their job and not much else. Their student employment did not come with learning

outcomes like I had experienced. The students, in my experience, were moreso being used as a

commodity. In the governmental system these students were commoditized, trained to enter into

a market that was not entirely meant to benefit them. Once they enter the market, they are not

seen as individuals but as another cog in the business machine. In this way, FWS students could

be seen as human capital.

According to human capital theory economic growth relies on the health and education of

the population (Ainsworth, 2013). There is an investment in training students through FWS to

gain skills to go straight into the workplace after college in order to benefit the economy

(Ainsworth, 2013). In this view a student's individual needs are not at the forefront and are

possibly not being met. However, even though in the end students were being trained towards

entering the economy, they were taught that all their success and shortcomings were completely

on them. Students were not challenged or encouraged to critique how the system has failed them

and how to better work together to change that system. They were workers but because they

were still students, and many on work-study, were not paid fairly. One of the few guidelines for

FWS is that students must be paid at least the federal minimum wage.

With the rising cost of tuition and living expenses the federal minimum wage may not be

enough for students to get by. While the institution must pay FWS students at least the federal

minimum wage they are allowed to increase pay depending on the job and skills required

(Federal Student Aid, n.d.). With FWS eligibility being granted through a student's financial aid

package, students will essentially be working for money that they have already been approved

for. Also, being approved for FWS does not guarantee a job. FWS jobs are limited so not every

eligible student is able to take advantage of the opportunity. These more negative aspects could

cause a student to find employment off campus in order to possibly earn a higher wage and work more hours. FWS should be doing more to encourage on campus work through "increasing meaningful employment opportunities for a significant number of students, particularly those with limited resources" (Baum, 2019, p. 1). A way to do this is through providing students with the opportunity to receive a guided and structured on campus work opportunity in which they would be exposed to skills that could benefit them far beyond earning an income.

Every aspect of higher education should be a learning experience. The entire college campus acts as a lab in which students are constantly immersed. Learning occurs in the classroom and beyond. Learning can be defined as "a comprehensive, holistic, transformative activity that integrates academic learning and student development occurring throughout and across the college experience" (Keeling, 2004, p. 4; McClellan, et al., 2018, p. 61). On-campus employment falls under this umbrella and it plays a critical role within higher education. Higher education should be seen as a public good that all can access and benefit from. Students are at the center and should play a key role in the decision making process on campus since those decisions will be affecting them directly. Students should be active in their education by being given the space to ask questions and challenge what others expect of them. Students also need to be given the space to engage in problem solving and reflection in order to gain new understandings about themselves and the world around them. They need to be prepared to take on the unknown and make independent and informed decisions. Even though this is student-focused learning, the teacher, or in this case the supervisors, need to provide this space for students and develop a curriculum that facilitates this type of learning (Dewey, 1916). The

university should be a place for exploration in which administrators assist students in recognizing and cultivating their full potential.

Conclusion

On-campus employment gives students the opportunity to take what they learn in the classroom and intertwine it with the lessons learned from the job. An on-campus job has the ability to give students the skills to become independent thinkers that engage in critical thought on how the university can better serve them. This can happen during staff meetings or meetings with their supervisors in which they reflect on the work they have done and the benefits they have received from it. Through my on-campus employment I built my confidence as a leader and was pushed to constantly better myself. My relationships and experiences had a greater impact than I could ever imagine. I felt a sense of community and was taught that my role mattered. It was a challenging time that prepared me to enter the world of work and inspired me to become a student affairs professional.

My experience learning through student employment is what led me to writing this thesis. I want to give more students the chance to experience learning and growing through an on-campus job. In the following chapters I examine the issue of student employment and how it is not being utilized to its full potential in student development. I argue that the current state of the FWS program falls short meeting student needs. I also propose a student employment program that will focus on student training, development, and evaluation. I will then outline assessment and leadership techniques that will aid in the success of the program.

Chapter 2

Introduction

In this chapter I will provide a brief overview of the topics to be discussed in the following chapters. I go on to address my thematic concern followed by the conceptual frameworks I have used. I end by providing definitions of terms that will be used throughout this thesis.

Thematic Concern

On-campus employment provides students with the opportunity to earn an income in a position that works with their academic schedules and provides them with real world job experience. An on-campus job can act as an extension of the learning that happens within the academic classroom. I see the entire university as a learning lab that can help students to develop in multiple aspects of their lives. Currently, standards for student employment varies between institutions, departments, and job positions. I had the opportunity to be a paraprofessional student worker during my undergraduate years and I strongly feel that the intentional learning goals and mentorship from my supervisors greatly shaped how I view myself and my work. All student workers should have the chance to have that same rewarding experience. An on-campus job does not have to be just earning money. It can also provide students with professional and personal skills that benefit them well beyond their time as a student worker. Student employment needs to be held to higher standards and taking advantage of how beneficial it can be for our students.

Conceptual Framework

Philosophies

The works of John Dewey (1916) connect to my views on what student employment can become. Dewey's (1916) philosophy prioritizes an experiential approach to learning. He also argued that students and teachers should be learning and growing together. The focus on student exploration and challenging the traditional lecture style of learning aligns with what I view as the ideal educational experience. Student workers should have a hands-on learning experience that includes open discussion with their supervisors.

I also utilize an action research approach in the reflection and assessment of the program. Students can be an integral part of what student employment becomes. Since this student employment program will be impacting students it is important for them to be involved in the process of deciding which skills would be most relevant for them to learn when it comes to making improvements (Brydon-Miller, Greenwood, & Maguire, 2003). Having student reflection and taking action on that reflection will aid in this program succeeding and being modified for each unique group of students. The works of Dewey (1916) and action research are the key building blocks for my intervention.

Historical Influences

The history of student employment can be traced back to the first colonial colleges (McClellan, Creager, & Savoca, 2018), but for the purpose of this thesis I will be looking at the origins of modern on-campus employment. Student employment in the United States as it exists today began in 1964 with the Economic Opportunity Act (Baum, 2019). This legislation was put in place to combat the national War on Poverty, a set of legislation put in place intended to help end poverty in the United States (Cooley, 2020). A component of the 1964 Act was the creation of the Federal Work-Study Program (FSW). The program was created in order to help

low-income students earn funds to aid in their educational journey. I offer a fuller discussion of the history of student employment and FWS in the following chapter.

Student Development Theories

In this section I will be briefly presenting the student development theories that I chose to build this program upon and the reasoning behind doing so. I created this program based on three key theories: Schlossberg's (1989) Theory of Marginality and Mattering, Astin's (1984) Theory of Involvement, and Baxter-Magolda's (2001) Self-Authorship Theory. I chose these frameworks based on my own experience as a student worker and how my on-campus job acted as a guide through my development. Also, my philosophy of everyone being learners regardless of one's position of power is what I want to reflect the most in this program.

With these theories and my educational philosophy I want to empower students to know their worth and just how influential they are while at the same time reminding professionals to take a step back and learn from their students. An on-campus job with a supervisor who is involved and acts as a mentor can give students that important sense of belonging and get them more greatly involved in their campus. They can become a proud representative of the institution and feel empowered to learn more about themselves and even advocate for change.

Other Factors That Influence Thematic Concern

One of the main influences behind my passion for learning through student employment is the law and policy behind the FWS. Nowhere in the policy does it state that students participating in FWS should have learning outcomes associated with their role as a student worker. I want to bring attention to this pitfall and use this program to fill this gap. FWS jobs should have a participatory role in the education of its students. Also, this program aims to

address the power differences between supervisors and student workers. They should be educating and learning together instead of falling into the traditional teacher/student dichotomy. These influences will be discussed in detail in chapter three.

Experiences

The few experiences I have had relating to student employment have been extremely insightful. I have had two experiences in which I have been directly involved with student workers, one group being entirely of work-study students. These experiences occurred at vastly different institutions and each approach to student employment was unique. Also, during my attendance of higher education conferences I have only seen two presentations, one poster and one session, that focused solely on student employment. Seeing this made me truly realize how overlooked this area is. I connect to these experiences further in Chapter 5.

Research Questions

Throughout this thesis and intervention I aim to address the following questions:

- What can students learn through student employment?
- What role do supervisors play in student employee learning?
- How can supervisors benefit from a student employment office/program?
- In its current state, is FSW exploitation of student workers?

Definition of Terms

The following are terms that will be used throughout thesis and their definitions:

1. Student employee/worker - an undergraduate student employed through their university working part-time on campus for pay.

2. Federal Work Study Program (FWS) - "Federal Work-Study provides part-time jobs for undergraduate and graduate students with financial need, allowing them to earn money to

help pay education expenses. The program encourages community service work and work related to the student's course of study." (Federal Student Aid, n.d.)

3. Career Readiness - "Career Readiness is the attainment and demonstration of requisite competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition into the workplace." (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2019)

4. NACE Competencies - "The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), through a task force composed of representatives from both higher education and corporate sides, has developed a definition and identified competencies associated with career readiness for new college graduates." (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2019)

5. Learning Outcome - Purpose of a workshop or activity/skills to be learned or gained by the end of the program.

6. Schlossberg's Theory of Marginality and Mattering - Schlossberg's (1989) theory focuses on a student's sense of belonging being crucial to their success and development.

7. Astin's Theory of Involvement - This theory argues that student "development of self-support systems and strategies correlates directly to campus engagement" (McClellan et. al., 2018, pg. 106). Astin defined involvement as "the amount of physical and psychological energy that the students devotes to the academic experience" (Astin, 1984, pg. 297, as cited in Perozzi, 2009, p. 20).

8. Self Authorship Theory - "The internal capacity to define one's beliefs, identity, and social relations" (Baxter Magolda, 2008, p. 269, as cited in McClellan, et al., 2018, p. 28).

ACPA/NASPA Professional Competencies

While this thesis will focus on how student learning can be integrated into on campus employment programs, I also focus on how professionals in student affairs can also learn from such an intervention. Within my proposed student employment program there will be a strong emphasis on how supervisors will be the driving forces behind the implementation of intentional learning for their student employees. Learning for these professionals can be tracked through the ACPA/NASPA Professional Competencies. The competencies that directly intersect with my intervention are as follows.

Assessment, Evaluation, and Research

>   The Assessment, Evaluation, and Research competency area focuses on the ability to design, conduct, critique, and use various AER methodologies and the results obtained from them, to utilize AER processes and their results to inform practice, and to shape the political and ethical climate surrounding AER processes and uses in higher education. (ACPA & NASPA, 2015, p. 20)

This competency can be seen within the obtaining student reflection during the program and using that information to further improve how the program operates.

Leadership

>   The Leadership competency area addresses the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required of a leader, with or without positional authority. Leadership involves both the individual role of a leader and the leadership process of individuals working together to envision, plan, and affect change in organizations and respond to broad-based constituencies and issues. (ACPA & NASPA, 2015, p. 27).

The program will have a focus on giving students leadership training and opportunities while also building upon the leadership styles of the supervisors.

Student Learning and Development

"The Student Learning and Development competency area addresses the concepts and principles of student development and learning theory. This includes the ability to apply theory to improve and inform student affairs and teaching practice" (ACPA & NASPA, 2015, p. 32). The entire program is built on the concept of student learning. This includes learning through work and supervisors being required to learn the basics of student development theory.

Advising and Supporting

The Advising and Supporting competency area addresses the knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to providing advising and support to individuals and groups through direction, feedback, critique, referral, and guidance. Through developing advising and supporting strategies that take into account self-knowledge and the needs of others, we play critical roles in advancing the holistic wellness of ourselves, our students, and our colleagues. (ACPA & NASPA, 2015, p. 36).

Ideally all supervisors will be in the position to be a supportive resource to their student workers. They will be using this competency extensively throughout the program.

Conclusion

In this chapter I gave a brief overview of my thematic concern, historical and theoretical influences, and definitions of terms. In the following chapter I will be expanding upon the history of student employment within higher education and the federal work-study program. I

also discuss how my experiences have influenced my passion for the reform of student

employment.

Chapter 3

Introduction

In this chapter I provide a review of the literature concerning student employment. I first discuss my personal philosophy of education followed by how student affairs connects to my philosophy. I go on to provide a brief history of higher education and student affairs, history of student employment and the FWS, and a discussion of the influence of power and privilege within student employment. I conclude by expanding upon how my experiences have influenced my views on student employment.

Philosophy of Education

Learning can be defined as "a comprehensive, holistic, transformative activity that integrates academic learning and student development occurring throughout and across the college experience" (Keeling, 2004, p. 4; McClellan, et al., 2018, p. 61). With this is mind, I would describe education as a never ending process of learning. The labels of teacher and student are interchangeable since everyone can learn from each other and new knowledge is created everyday. Education should be cultivating the talents that all individuals have throughout multiple means. Education is not limited to the traditional classroom setting. The world around us is a lab of learning and some of the best lessons may not come from textbooks but from lived experience. I believe everyone regardless of title is a learner and teacher in the sense that there will always be new knowledge to learn and each individual can contribute their own unique knowledge (Freire, 1968).

My philosophy of education includes the belief that learning is a two-way street and that everyone acts as a learner and teacher. Each student is unique and brings something new to the

table and should be in an environment where the skills important to them are focused on. Student affairs professionals should also be learning from every student they come across. They learn and grow with them (Freire, 1968). My intervention takes this to its core.

Lecturers and professors can also add to the experience by bringing in new and creative ideas. A large lecture facing one person in the front of the room can be a closed off type of learning. Even the way a lecture hall is creates an apparent power difference. The person at the front facing the seats is seen as the all-knowing teacher talking at the class. Also, with the seats only facing forward those in them may not be physically comfortable and since they cannot see the faces of all of the class participants, being fully engaged with a discussion can become difficult. Learning should be fun. There should be the opportunity for movement, eye contact, and a free flow of ideas. Personally, many of the lessons that were taught to me in a classic lecture have not stuck with me through the years.

Role of Higher Education and Student Affairs

The union of Student Affairs and Higher Education can make learning come to life if they are working together. The two truly show the value of learning in and outside of the traditional classroom. There is so much creativity that goes that happens on a college campus when it comes to ways in which students learn. Academic professors and Student Affairs professionals can learn from each other when it comes to lesson plans and programming for students. Also, with so many new students from different backgrounds constantly coming through the campus, new knowledge comes with them. Lessons outside of the classroom and reinforce lessons within the classroom and vice versa. The campus can be seen as a small version of society in which learning can occur freely in a contained space. When people come to a

college campus they are being given the chance to experience life outside of their norm and develop new and existing skills. They are challenged to try new things, question, and advocate for themselves. Higher Education and Student Affairs can give the space for exploring new ways of learning and the ability to help others identify what lessons may be important to them (Long, 2012).

Connection to Thematic Concern

Higher education should be seen as a public good that all can access and benefit from. Everything educators do is for their students. Students are at the center and should play a key role in the decision making process on campus since those decisions will be affecting them directly. Students should be active in their education by being given the space to ask questions and challenge what others expect of them (Freire, 1968). Students also need to be given the space to engage in problem solving and reflection in order to gain new understandings about themselves and the world around them. They need to be prepared to take on the unknown and make independent and informed decisions.

Even though on-campus employment falls under the umbrella of student-focused learning, the teacher, or in this case the supervisors, need to provide this space for students and develop a curriculum that facilitates this type of learning (Dewey, 1916). The university should be a place for exploration in which administrators assist students in recognizing their full potential and cultivating it. On-campus employment gives students that opportunity to take what they learn in the classroom and intertwine it with the lessons learned from the job. An on-campus job has the ability to give students the skills to become independent thinkers that engage in critical thought on how the university can better serve them. This can happen during staff

meetings or meeting with their supervisors in which they reflect on the work they have done and the benefits they have received from it.

According to Dewey (1916), society deems what education is important and what knowledge should be passed down through the generations. Society is focusing too much on formal teaching and not enough on the experiential learning of students. Dewey's (1916) philosophy also supports the notion of students being commoditized and seen as human capital. In his view, education has transformed from developing an individual's true potential to preparing them to become a part of the current society in order to reproduce that mindset and keep it thriving. Life lessons are not being taught in the classroom and this is where student employment can come in and attempt to fill those gaps.

Student employment can be that vessel for cultivating student potentiality and teaching them how their individual skills can benefit themselves and transform society. If there is an open dialogue between student workers and their supervisors, and eventually the government, students can engage in a democratic process in which they fight for their needs to be met and for the betterment of future generations. Community is extremely important in this view and since community (society) is what determines what education is valued, preparing students to become involved in the discussion and to be the ones who will be determining what education is important is key (Dewey, 1916). Students need the freedom to decide what is important.

The Historical Perspective

In this section I discuss the history of student employment within higher education. I first give a brief history of higher education and student affairs followed by the beginnings of the Federal Work Study Program in the 1960s. Then, I highlight the addition of the Work Study

Program into the Higher Education Act. I close by critiquing the pitfalls of the Federal Work Study

Program in regards to current students.

History of Higher Education and Student Affairs

The history of the university can be traced back to the European medieval period and many

of those early universities are still in existence, such as the University of Oxford and the University

of Cambridge. The American university took much of its influence from its European counterpart

(Labaree, 2017). This is due to the arrival of the European settlers and their founding of colonial

colleges. Harvard College, now known as Harvard University, was the first of these new institutions

for education. These early universities are what is now called the Ivy Leagues. The purpose of these

colleges was to train those going into the ministry and as years went on, more fields of study were

added to the curricula (Cleary University, n.d.). In the twentieth century there are now thousands of

universities across the United States. They are all a part of different complex systems that dictate

funding, attendance, administrative structure, and policies (Cleary University, n.d.).

Student Affairs also finds its roots within the first colonial colleges. In its early years student

affairs fell under the role of *in loco parentis*, meaning that the university faculty would manage and

supervise students in the place of parents. As time went on the main focus of the faculty became the

education of students and less on regulating conduct. This switch to a focus on academics left a

space open for a new type of staff to join the university. The key focus on the importance of student

affairs came with the publishing of the *Student Personnel Point of View* in 1937. This document is

the foundation upon which modern student affairs stands on today (Long, 2012).

History of Student Employment

The history of student employment can be traced to the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890 with the creation of more universities and opportunities for campus employment (McClellan, Creager, & Savoca, 2018). The modern beginning of student employment can be seen in the 1960s. The 1960s in the United States was a time full of civil unrest, war, activism, and protest. This time after the Korean War saw the rise in the Civil Rights Movement that became a defining aspect of the nation's history (Altbach & Petterson, 1971). This era was also that of a rising youth counter culture that went against the values and beliefs of the older generation. Anti-Vietnam War and civil rights movements were happening in society and within college campuses (Altbach & Petterson, 1971).

College students were the driving force behind many of the activist movements of the 1960s. Students were dissatisfied with the current American culture and pushed against the norms with liberation and a new start being the goal. College students were creating their own movements and political groups in order to rise against the dominant segregated and war infatuated society. This resurgence of student activism saw the inception of the New Left (Altbach & Petterson, 1971). The New Left was a broad political movement that stood for a variety of left leaning viewpoints and was not a typical political organization. Instead of using the traditional ways of organization they instead favored forms of protest and action. This activism did not go unnoticed and in 1964 the Civil Rights Act was signed into law and in turn made it possible for black and brown bodies to be more prominent within the broader higher education system. However, while these movements were prominent on college campuses, there is little emphasis placed on issues within the university itself (Altbach & Petterson, 1971).

The Civil Rights Act was not the only legislation that affected universities in 1964. The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 brought about the Federal Work Study Program (FSW). The program was put into place to help low-income students earn an income while enrolled. The intended goal was for these students to receive funds to aid them in their educational journey through part-time employment usually through the university that they attend. The passing of the Economic Opportunity Act was in response to the United States' War on Poverty (Baum, 2019). Acceptance into the FWS program is based on financial need and is given to students as part of their federal financial aid package. At its inception, preference for entrance into the program was given to students from low-income families (Baum, 2019). Funds are not given directly to students from the government.

Students can work on campus and the FWS program will give funds to the institution and from there the institution will allocate those funds to the students eligible. The majority of the students' pay will come from the FWS program while the institution of higher education will provide the rest. The one caveat of the student pay is that they must be receiving at least the federal minimum wage. The institution or specific job within the institution can decide to go above the federal minimum wage but it is often not much of an increase. The income earned is hardly enough for a student to live comfortably. Not only can the pay be miniscule, the amount of students eligible for a FWS job is relatively low largely in part due to the way in which financial aid is handled in the United States (Baum, 2019). Also, acceptance into the program does not guarantee a student to have a job. They must seek out employment that disperse work-study funds.

Critique of Federal Work Study Program

After its creation in 1964 the Work Study Program was moved to The Higher Education Act of 1965. The main facets of the program stayed intact, it just was now under the umbrella of education instead of labor (Campus Compact, 2019). Over the years only minor revisions have been made to the FWS program but it mostly remains unchanged from its beginnings in 1964. While this act came about in such a time of student activism, it went nearly unnoticed and no act of protest can be seen around it. Much of the focus was on issues of identity and anti-war. Mentions of class struggles were not at the forefront.

Even now there is little mention of the FWS since it serves so few students. In 2018 the number of students utilizing FWS was 600,000 students, less than 10 percent of the students receiving Pell grants (Baum, 2019). With the amount of money that can be allocated to institutions, FWS jobs should be available to more students across the board. Also, funds are not given to the institutions that could really use it for students (Baum, 2019). Much of the funding for FWS goes to elite private universities that enroll small numbers of low-income students (Baum, 2019). These private universities are given funds based on a complicated formula based on historical funding levels and participation in the program (Baum, 2019). If the purpose of the program is to increase part-time job opportunities and lessen the financial burden on students then changes should have been made overtime to match the changes that have been happening in society.

The cost of living and college tuition have skyrocketed but there have been no relevant revisions made to the FWS. This lack of attention is what can lead students seek secondary employment to offset the costs not covered by their work-study wage. Having a second or third job puts more unnecessary pressures on students when they should be using their time in

university to learn, explore, and grow. Even with the FWS wages, students may not see that money as being part of their financial aid package. Why do students have to spend hours away from their studies to work for money that has technically been allocated for them already through financial aid? If anything this current system puts more pressure on students and is in a way preparing them to enter a capitalist job market that causes them work more than take time for themselves. They are being taught to work long stretches of time for inadequate pay. Also, since students have to work to obtain the remainder of their financial aid package, this gives the government too much power over student finances. This control over monetary resources shows how deep the roots of capitalism are. FWS students are taught that the condition of getting the money owed to you is to give up time to labor for it. This is seen as acceptable since they have not yet seen that this ideology does not make sense and keeps them from reaching their full potentiality. A further evaluation of FWS policy and power dynamics within student employment will be discussed in the following sections of this chapter.

In this section, I briefly discussed the origins of higher education and student affairs. Then I highlighted the origins of student employment, the Federal Work Study Program, and its pitfalls. In the following section, I turn to the current state of student employment.

Current State of Student Employment

Student employment has a long history and has evolved over time. On-campus jobs where students are serving their campus community have become commonplace within institutions across the globe. With this practice being so widely used it would be expected for there to be a vast archive of literature and research on the topic. However, this is not the case. Finding research pertaining to learning through student employment is not a simple task. The

majority of early literature concerning student employment focuses on the effects that a job, on or off campus, has on a student's academics (Perozzi, 2009). A student's overall GPA was used as a qualitative measure to determine the outcomes of student employment and students participating in FWS. For example, in a study conducted by Scott-Clayton (2011) it was found that FWS had no positive impact on the academics of the student sample. However the overall sample size was small and that the results should be cautiously interpreted. Student employment is a stand out feature of campus involvement so it is interesting to see how little it is being researched from a learning and development perspective.

Thankfully, there does seem to be a change in the tide. Within the last decade more studies and books have been coming out regarding how intentional student work programs can and have been benefiting students. The studies have been looking at the different areas in which student employment can have an impact. Mitchell and Kay (2013) examined a program at Victoria University in Melbourne, Australia in which the intention was to link on-campus employment with a student's area of study. Students reported feeling more connected to their campus community and felt that their employability skills increased. Having a formal student employment program on campus "enhanced student-learning outcomes" (Mitchell & Kay, 2013, p. 185). A study conducted by Bentrim, Sousa-Peoples, Kachellek, & Powers (2013) also found that on-campus employment had a positive impact on leadership and collaboration skills. Students in the study also reported feeling more closely connected to the campus and academically motivated due to the GPA requirement for their employment.

Additionally, books by McClellan, et al. (2018) and Perozzi (2009) specifically explore the ways in which intentional student employment programs can be utilized for student learning.

Both books outline how student development theory can be applied to student employment and supervisors and give suggestions on how to implement a successful program. Also relevant is a recent report that explored the current ways in which on-campus employment is being implemented as a high impact practice. "The term *high-impact practices* (HIPs) refers to institutionally structured student experiences inside or outside the classroom that are associated with elevated performance across multiple engagement activities and desired outcomes, such as deep learning, persistence, and satisfaction with college" (McClellan, et al., 2018, p. x). Burnside, Wesley, Wesaw, & Parnell (2019) composed a report not only examining the work of other institutions but also offered suggestions for a successful student employment program. While there are currently no theoretical models exploring the connection between student employment and learning outcomes, as the topic begins to gain more attention there is a greater chance for theoretical development (Riggert, Boyle, Petrosko, Ash, & Rude-Parkins, 2006).

The Federal Work-Study Program

The Federal Work-Study program (FWS) as it is known today came to fruition in 1964 as an aspect of the Economic Opportunity Act. The goal of FWS was to help low-income college students earn an income while attending institutions of higher education. Income would be earned through part-time employment usually through the university attended. Acceptance into FWS was/is based on financial need and is granted through a student's financial aid package. At its inception, preference for entrance into the program was given to students from low-income families (Baum, 2019). While the student FWS income is funded through the Federal Government, students do not receive these funds directly. Institutions are given a certain amount to be used for FWS wages. Students accepted into the program will work on or off campus and

the majority, around 75%, of their wages will be provided through the FWS funds given to the university. The university will cover the remaining 25% of the wages. FWS positions have to follow one main rule: students must be receiving at least the federal minimum wage but the institution or the specific job can go above that requirement (Baum, 2019). However, the probability of coming across a FWS job that aligns with a student's career goals can be miniscule. The goal of FWS was to help low-income students earn wages and explore careers and it is currently failing to achieve either (Palmer, 2019).

FWS funds are disproportionately dispersed between universities. The majority of the money, 41%, goes to private, nonprofit institutions in the northeast (Palmer, 2019) (Baum, 2019). This is due to funding being decided based on funding levels established by institutions that have historically participated in the program. The funding model is complex but can be broken down into two parts: a base guarantee and a fair share. Essentially, within this funding model the base guarantee is based on whatever amount an institution received in the previous year is what would be granted in the current year (Scott-Clayton, 2011). "More than half the funds are allocated on this legacy basis" (Baum, 2019, p. 5). Remaining funds are dispersed to institutions using a "fair share" formula, which bases funding based on student need represented (Scott-Clayton, 2011).

Since these institutions that enroll only a small amount of low-income students are receiving the majority of funds, the students that could benefit the most at other universities are neglected. Overall, FWS does have its benefits but the program as a whole needs to be reevaluated in order to better serve current and future students. Funds need to be accurately allocated to universities based on student need and the jobs offered must have some significance

or benefit to students when it comes to their career goals.

While the major set back of FWS is the funding model, the goal of career preparation is more obtainable depending on the job and the institution. A job on campus can be incredibly beneficial to students. Having a FWS or on-campus job in general gives students the opportunity to be connected to their campus community in a unique way. Since academics and work take place within the same campus, student workers are more likely to be involved on campus and may even dedicate more time to studies. This close vicinity of work and school can also take away the burden of having to travel long distances between the two. Most campus jobs will be within walking distance from classes. If a student lives on campus then the benefit of not having to travel to work is even greater. Student workers are able to interact with the student body and may have the opportunity to work with professionals in administrative positions. They are gaining mentorship and insights that may not be known or available to the majority of the student body.

Working on campus also gives students more flexibility when it comes to their schedules. On-campus positions are generally more understanding with the fact that being a student and academics take precedent over work. Supervisors are usually more accommodating when it comes to modifying a work schedule when school work needs to be done (Soliz, Terry Long, 2016). While the extra income is a major factor, the skills that a student can learn while on the job can help them when it is time to search for a full-time position after graduation. On campus employment can teach students valuable skills such as leadership development, critical thinking, communication, and much more. The intentionality of the student position is what can determine if these learning outcomes are achieved. If the student's employment is not modeled around any

learning outcomes then there is a chance that the job may not be beneficial beyond earning income. Student work should "provide growth, development, and learning" (McClellan, Creager, & Savoca, 2018, p. 130).

Studies have found that student employment has the greatest positive impact on leadership development and collaboration (Bentrim, Sousa-Peoples, Kchellek, & Powers, 2013). Having strong leadership skills go far beyond employment. Leadership and other skills are key in a student's development throughout their higher education journey. Lessons learned within the classroom are equally as important as co-curricular ones. Student affairs professionals are in a position to create the on-campus jobs and opportunities that lead students through their developmental milestones. While the job itself is important, none of the lessons and outcomes will be clear without the intentional involvement of supervisors. This intentional involvement can start with the hiring process. Supervisors have the opportunity to create a hiring process that closely mimics the processes of professional jobs. This is an opportunity for students to learn how to apply for a job after graduation. They have the opportunity to learn how to write a proper resume and cover letter and get to experience the interview process. Being exposed to this early in their higher education career can prepare them and possibly alleviate some of the stress involved with the professional hiring process (McClellan, Creager, & Savoca, 2018).

Another aspect in which supervisors can have an impact on student workers is through regular feedback and evaluation. Having conversations with students in order to understand what their learning goals are for their employment better prepares the supervisor to create professional development opportunities that will benefit the students. There is a program at the University of Iowa that takes on this supervisory structure. The Iowa GROW model aims to make campus

employment purposefully educational. Supervisors are required to have structured conversations with student employees that cover the student's learning experiences on the job. Results from the 2016 survey of student employees reports that student workers achieved the

> Ability to more effectively work with diverse others; development of communication, time management, problem solving, and conflict resolution skills; the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills to real-world situations; the opportunity to connect their work to their academics and career intentions. (McClellan, Creager, & Savoca, 2018, p. 95)

This program proves that when done correctly and intentionally, student employment can have an enormous positive effect on student development. Without structure FWS jobs could just be a chance to earn money with any intentional benefits for students.

While there are benefits to working during college, there have been some proven drawbacks. The current research highlights that having a work-study job has a negative effect on GPA (Soliz, Terry Long, 2016). However, this may not be true for all FWS participants. Many on-campus jobs have a GPA requirement and falling below that could mean losing the job. Student workers who have a GPA requirement may feel more compelled to focus on keeping their GPA up in order to keep their job. I cannot say this is a perfect practice since it can add an extra layer of stress for students but it is there as an option.

The potential for the FWS program is great if it is utilized properly. As it stands with its funding model so many students are being neglected as funding goes to institutions with small populations of FWS eligible students. The majority of students who could benefit from FWS are not at old private institutions but at public community colleges. Community colleges serve a diverse array of students, many of whom work throughout school. Community college

populations are also usually much larger than private institutions. The community of students is there but the FWS funding is miniscule, only 18% of FWS funds have been awarded to community colleges (Baum, 2019). Community colleges will receive their FWS funding after the institutions that benefit from the current funding model. This small amount of funding means that community colleges are limited in the amount of FWS positions that they can offer and the amount of students they can hire. If the goal of the program is to help low-income students then why are so many being left out of the equation? While the money may not be a lot, it can offer something to help students with some of the costs of education and they are offered the chance to gain career readiness skills. If funding was more fairly distributed then more students could reap the benefits and be given the opportunity to explore career paths and give them a leg up when it is time to apply for jobs. Providing career readiness and taking away some financial burden could level the playing field for many students who felt they were being left behind.

Power and Privilege in Student Employment

Power and privilege are woven throughout the topic of student employment. This thesis aims to research how to make on-campus student employment into a high-impact intentional practice. Within student employment there is the obvious power difference between student employees and their professional staff supervisor. As it currently stands there is assurance that student employees are given the space and encouraged to use their role as a way to explore the power they have and how to challenge other forms of power. They may not even have the chance to do this form of exploration.

Most student positions have a GPA requirement in order for the student to be able to work (Bentrim, Sousa-Peoples, Kachellek, & Powers, 2013). Students are pressured to keep up

grades in order to keep an on campus job. The students who have an affinity for academics may not have to worry much about their GPA in order to keep their job but the students who find studies more difficult may be at a disadvantage. With this GPA requirement students who fall out of that range may not even be eligible for a job that they could greatly benefit from, be it for the monetary gain or for the professional experience they could gain. Every student should have the opportunity to apply for and be considered for an on-campus job but having a GPA requirement puts even more pressure on students. If all of their time is studying in order to work and then working, when will they have the time to just enjoy their time as students?

Another aspect of student employment that displays power differences are student wages. Student workers are usually not making much in the form of wages. The wages can vary but are not enough to be considered a livable wage. For a student that does not have to worry much about money then this may not be an issue but the same cannot be said for the students who struggle financially. The wages students are paid may be just enough for some and not nearly enough for others. There are student workers who wish to fight for higher pay but they are met with the opposition of either there not being enough funding for a pay raise and/or the students are part time and have not yet obtained their degree so they can not get paid more. However, keeping the wages low may cause students to work more hours or seek additional employment off campus in order to make ends meet (Baum, 2019). All of this just further takes away from the time that could be used for themselves or for their studies (Baum, 2019). It may seem easy on paper to keep student wages low but once the effects of those low wages are seen the conversation should be revisited.

Forces of power can also be seen within the Federal Work Study Program. Students in this program are usually working in positions that are set aside for that program. Having this difference in the jobs in which work-study and non work-study students have created an us/them dichotomy. This separation does nothing more than divide students and put a spotlight on different privileges (Altbach & Peterson, 1971). Privilege is not a bad thing but students may not want what privileges they have or do not have on display in this way. Also, the FWS program also shows how much power governing bodies have over education. FWS is an aid program so a student's wages are a part of their aid package. Instead of giving students the money they are awarded, they have to work for what is left of their aid. Having this much power over student finances and still having them in debt show just how deep the roots of capitalism are (Althusser, 2014). FWS students are taught that the condition of getting the money owed to you is to give up time to labor for it. This is seen as okay since they have not yet seen that this ideology does not make sense and keeps them from reaching their full potentiality (Althusser, 2014).

Student employment is also a capital influenced part of the university that has the potential to bring in and benefit from questions of recognition politics and redistribution (Fraser, 2000). On its surface student employment is a space in which students are being trained to enter a capitalist workplace but with the right initiatives in place on-campus employment could be used to teach students about transformational leadership and redistribution of power and wealth. The stories of the students who work on campus can shed light on the privileges and inequalities present on campus (Fraser, 2000). Whether students are working for extra spending money or for their livelihood shows just how many students are affected and disadvantaged by the price of living and education. Also, the pressure for students to work during school just to get by takes

away from the time that could be used for learning. What I propose is for student employment to become a space for intentional learning and encouraging change within the traditional power structure of the university.

The start of student employment focusing more on what students learn rather than on capital starts with the supervisors. Supervisors for on-campus employment are in an extremely unique position (McClellan et. al., 2018). They are in contact with students outside of the traditional classroom setting and have to chance get to know their students without the pressure of grades. Also, being employed on campus may be the only non-academic activity that students have so it is important to seize this opportunity as one for a different type of education. Within the program I aim to create there will be the opportunity for students to be intentionally taught about how student affairs professionals can work towards transformational change within the university. This will initially start in the training process leading up to starting their jobs and will be continued and reinforced through their supervisors. Supervisors will set aside meeting times during training and throughout the academic year where a multitude of topics covering inequalities, identity, and redistribution will be discussed. It will be meant to be a conversation in which students will voice their opinions and given the opportunity to ask questions and learn from either.

As employees, students are in contact with the greater campus community and should know just how influential that role can be. This is essentially since these students also have insights into the interworking of the university due to their position (McClellan et. al., 2018). Supervisors can also use this opportunity to redefine what leadership looks within the university. They can let go of the traditionally held belief that what the supervisor says is absolute and not

up for discussion. They can teach their students how to give feedback, trust in their decisions, and challenge authority to understand just how much power they hold (Fraser, 2000; Brydon-Miller et. al., 2003). If a supervisor can step back and give students the space to discover just how much they can do then the traditional notion of leadership being someone at the top dismantles and teaches that a true leader is one who not only leads but is willing to be led.

The goal of student employment should not just be preparing students to enter the working world. While that is a sad reality, student employment should be an opportunity for further education and cultivating the student voice. This is especially true for students involved in the federal work-study program since the real goal of that program is for students to gain job training. Those students are purely being trained to become capital and I want to challenge that through giving all student employees the chance to question society and their positions within it. Students are not cogs to be added to the bigger machine (Althusser, 2014). They can be pieces that cause the machine to stop and become rebuilt. Students are not the only ones that can achieve this. Faculty and staff can also use their time in the university to learn from their students and question how they fit into the current society and the role they can play towards creating a focus recognizing inequalities and coming up with solutions. Faculty, students, and staff should be asking their university why there is so much talk about identity and inclusion but no mention of class and how it impacts students (Fraser, 2000). They can push for actions instead of words for marketing purposes. If there is a mission statement promoting transformation then there should be actual work towards that goal.

Experiences That Informed My Concern

The reevaluation of FWS is extremely important to me since my passion lies within

development through student employment. In my undergraduate career I decided to take on the responsibility of having a job on campus. It was one of the most rewarding experiences I had while in school. While it was stressful, it forced me to pay extra attention to my studies and taught me how to better manage my time. While my job was not one of FWS, the experience I had was so valuable and I want other student workers to experience the same. My aim is to have FWS and non-FWS students being taught as paraprofessionals. No matter what their job on-campus is their experience should go far beyond earning money. My supervisors were the driving force behind my co-curricular education. My supervisors had set up very clear goals of what skills they wanted us to have. I was exposed to leadership, conflict resolution, self-reflection, social justice conversations, and overall professional development. However, it was not until I became a graduate student and interacted with other student workers that I realized that not every student got exposure to those core skill building lessons. Many of the students I encountered were trained in how to do their job and not much else. Their student employment did not come with learning outcomes like I had experienced. I have worked with students who have been a part of FWS and those who have not. Those who had a job with clear learning outcomes and goals voiced being more satisfied with their position. Their job being intentional in benefiting them felt more fulfilling.

Within higher education and student affairs the majority of students will be working. With the rising cost of living and tuition more and more students will be turning to some type of work to offset the cost. Student work is a reality and student affairs professionals should be equipped with the tools to help those students throughout their journey. Even if a professional staff member does not act as supervisor, they could ask their students to look for ways in which

their work connects to their academics and career goals. Professionals also need to be aware that while students are in school to learn, they also have a financial burden that may make some things difficult for them. This reality has to be acknowledged and student affairs professionals should be ready to support students in any way that they can.

If one is in a supervisory position then being aware of the current state of FWS is of high importance. A supervisor has the ability to create jobs with learning outcomes. Even if the FWS program does not have an overarching structure, professionals can take it upon themselves to make sure student workers get the most out of their experience. This should not just be a job for students. It needs to be a beneficial experience. For this thesis I want to create such a program; one in which supervisors take on a key role in the development of their student workers. This would take place starting with the hiring process and continuing throughout the duration of a student's employment. Professionals are in a position to voice their concerns about the FWS and funding education. They have the ability to advocate for their students and become involved in seeking for changes to be made FWS. FWS has barely changed since its inception and that is unacceptable. The students of 1964 had completely different needs when compared to current students. Tuition prices have risen and students are being pulled in multiple directions. They are struggling and those within higher education have the ability to help them. Getting FWS amended would help current and future students. It will not fix the issues of rising tuition costs but it could be a start. Higher education is constantly changing and the policies that affect it should follow suit.

Those within student affairs need to be up to date on what is happening within the FWS program and within financial aid since these are aspects that determine whether students can

attend higher education. Not only can they advocate for students on a federal level, they have the ability to fight for them on our campuses. Research can be done to look into ways not only to make jobs beneficial but can also look into how to possibly raise wages for students. This may be easier accomplished depending on the institution. Also students must be listened to in order to make changes based on their needs. This includes encouraging them to perform self-reflection and evaluation. This is also an opportunity for education into the best practices of student employment. Supervisors are growing alongside their students and they should have the opportunity to evaluate their supervisors and give feedback. Along with knowing about the struggles and needs of our students, they should know that only a small percentage of student workers fall under that FWS umbrella. Not enough students benefit from it and it is not easy to be accepted into the program. Acceptance into the program is determined through FAFSA so there needs to be an awareness of ways to help students when it comes to figuring out that process. Financial aid is confusing and some students may not know that they could be eligible for FWS. An option could be to help in showing them what their options are. Student affairs is here to serve students so there has to be an awareness of the policies that affect them. I will continue to work on creating a program that will benefit the development of all student employees and will advocate for a better FWS program. I want to focus on advocating for funding to go more to community colleges and public universities. These are the institutions with higher populations of low-income students who could benefit from a FWS job.

In my graduate career I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work directly with student workers in two vastly different settings. I have worked with FWS students at a large community college and with non-FWS student workers at a small liberal arts college. Both

groups of students were extremely unique with different responsibilities and my time with them informed how I looked at student employment. I previously only had my own experience as a student worker to draw from but now I got to see student work from the perspective of students from all different backgrounds, skill sets, and needs. Also, each institution had a different supervision style for the student employees. At the community college weekly staff meetings were utilized to keep the students informed and on task and for any issues to be brought to the table. I truly enjoyed that there was time set aside in those meetings for the students to each mention a success and challenge they had during the week. This gave them not only the opportunity to bring attention to their accomplishments but also opened the floor for them to ask for advice from their coworkers and supervisor. However, I will critique that these FWS students were not given any funding from the institution for professional development training. The retreat for the students to go out and have fun between themselves and their supervisors was paid out of pocket by the supervisors. It saddened me to see that these students were not given the resources to properly engage in learning through work.

In contrast, at the small liberal arts institution the student workers had the resources and opportunities to engage in leadership and teambuilding activities. This is largely due to the small size of the staff and the funds provided to the office in which they worked. Each student worker also had a specific position assigned to them. They each performed routine customer service responsibilities but other than that they each had their own role that aligned with their skill sets and interests. For example, a student in an arts related field was given a role in graphic design. Each role was intentional based on the student. Also, this institution has been conducting research regarding the centralization, hiring processes, and wages of student workers (Haverford College,

2019). They also are aiming to put a focus on implementing "Career Readiness" (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2019) practices. It was by luck that I ended up at an institution that shared my desire for student employment to be an intentional high-impact practice for all student workers. Being at this institution further solidified by passion for this topic and knowing that others are actively pursuing implementing learning through student employment gives me hope that more institutions of higher education will follow suit.

Conclusion

In this chapter I provided an in-depth discussion of the beginnings and a critique of student employment and the federal work-study program. I concluded by providing an overview of my experiences with student employment. In the following chapter I will introduce my proposed intervention which will connect on-campus employment and student learning.

Chapter 4

Introduction and Program Interview

In its current state, student employment is not utilized to its full potential in preparing students for the working world and aiding them through their developmental journey. Much of the focus on student employment has been on a student having a job but not intentionally using that on campus job as a way to better prepare them for their entrance into the job market. Not only can students gain professional skills through on-campus work, they also have the opportunity to gain personal and societal insights within a safer and contained environment.

I am proposing a two phase intervention with the aim of filling the educational and developmental gaps within student employment, especially Federal Work Study. This program would house all of the elements of student employment starting from the creation of the job description through the end of a student's employment on campus. I would like to create a centralized office that houses all student employment. This office could be a new "stand alone" office or a branch of campus career services or human resources. My plan is for this office to be staffed by professionals who are passionate about student development and have experience supervising student employees. At least one of the staff members will have to be well-versed in the workings of the Federal Work Study Program in order to properly transition into having those students within the new student employment program. This office will also keep track of the supervisors and students that participate and will evolve as feedback comes in and the needs of the students change.

The student employment office will handle the creation and implementation of training workshops for student workers, student development training for supervisors, and will be the hub

for student job applications. A professionalized job application process will be housed in this office. Any department on campus that is participating in the program must have their student job descriptions written in a way in which all of the job duties and requirements are clearly presented. For applications, students will be tasked with creating a professional resume and cover letter. Students will be encouraged to work with career services to craft their application materials. The collaboration with career services encourages students to use more on-campus resources and creates exposure for on campus jobs. Once applications are in the departments, hiring will handle interviewing students for the specific jobs. This whole process is meant to simulate what a job search will be like after graduation.

From this office there will also be some basic guidelines that supervisors of student employees will be asked to follow. These supervisors will be asked to have at least three one-on-one meetings with their student employees to discuss the various positions, the skills the student wants to build, to give and receive feedback, and in general, to work on building a mentor/mentee relationship. Supervisors who participate will also be required to attend a training that focuses on the basics of student development theory and supervisor skills. Not every person who comes into a supervisory role for student workers has a background in student affairs theory and philosophy. In my experience many people fall into student affairs and I want to give some background into the theoretical basis of this program. The goal will not be to tell the supervisors how to manage their student staff but rather to offer suggestions and tips they may find helpful based on their specific groups of students. I want the supervisors in this program to fully understand the purpose and why it is so important for the students' personal and professional development to be put as a top priority.

As a part of the employment program, students will be asked to attend three workshops per semester to develop skills in areas such as professionalism, social awareness, conflict management, leadership, etc. After each workshop a student will give a short reflection of what they thought of the session and what they did or did not gain from it. The reflection can be less than a page in length, I mainly want students to really think about how they can use what they have learned. However, having the reflections in place better helps the office track student progress and interest in the program. Having this data will help in creating future workshops that will have an impact on our students and their work.

At the start of their employment, students will complete a short intake survey to determine what skills are important to them, where their strengths lie and areas for growth. Students will again be given a similar assessment at the end of the academic year and will be asked in a one page reflection to compare where they were at the start at their employment to their current state months later. In this reflection they will also be promoted to give feedback on the program itself. I want students to know that their feedback is important and improvements to the program can be made based on what they feel needs to be changed. Once a student has completed an academic year of work and has attended all of the training workshops in the year, they will have the opportunity to be given a raise or promotion, depending on the position, if they choose to come back to the program for the next academic year.

Best Practices

The research on intentional on-campus employment is still in its infancy. There are not many books, studies, or theories that focus solely on the developmental benefits of on-campus employment. However, I have found a few extremely well thought out books and articles and

one well rounded program that focuses on this important subject. These sources inspired the phases of this intervention and highlighted how morr of a spotlight is being given to the developmental benefits of on-campus employment. Below I highlight a current program which aligns with my views on the importance of student employment and goal realization.

In this section I discuss the IowaGROW program from the University of Iowa. Most of the recent literature that I have found on student employment mentions this program and its success. This program highlights the importance of a supervisors role for student employees. GROW stands for Guided Reflection on Work and uses conversations with supervisors and student workers to help the students in connecting their classroom learning with their jobs (University of Iowa, n.d.). This reflection and conversation based program is one that I truly admire and I am happy to see that there are professionals who also want to improve how student employment is approached.

Action Research

Action research is a subjective form of research in which the researcher plays an active role in the study. It is a democratic process that takes place over time and aims to create positive social change (Brydon-Miller, M., Greenwood, D., & Maguire, P., 2003). Action research values and respects the knowledge and opinions of the community being studied and is an overall collaborative effort. The participatory aspect of this action research brings in this collaborative effort which helps to build that community. The focus is on creating action for change with the participation of the community and researcher(s). The researcher is not a bystander studying subjects but plays an active role in engaging which community they are studying (Brydon-Miller, M., Greenwood, D., & Maguire, P., 2003). Unlike most traditional forms of scientific research,

the goal of participatory action research is not to write a research paper that will be published for other scholars, but instead to lead an intervention.

Since the goal of my research is to improve training and learning objectives for students, having students involved in said research could make all the difference. The outcomes of this research project could affect these students so it only makes sense for them to have a say in what goes on during the process. Along with involving the students, the community would also include those who directly supervise students on a daily basis. However, the emphasis will be on the student workers since their development and treatment is the key concern. The students' experiences will be at the core for whatever aspects are changed/made. Not only will this ongoing transformative process involve action and dialogue, but also a reflection on the action being taken. Action without reflection defeats the purpose of starting a transformation. Reflecting on the actions could help with gaining a better understanding of how to help the community and highlight the flaws within the action research.

Purpose

The student employment program will provide students with professional job training within a low risk environment. Students will also be exposed to developmental and life skills that go far beyond employment. I want students to be more hirable for their future careers while also increasing their skills, abilities, knowledge, confidence which contribute to overall success. Ideally, the program will be responsible for hiring 100 students within its inaugural year while also providing resume and interview help in partnership with career services. With this partnership in place, even if a student applicant is not hired, they still had the opportunity to experience a professional hiring process.

Theoretical Frameworks

In this section I will expand on the theories mentioned in Chapter 2 upon which my student employment intervention is built. Three student development theories were utilized: Schlossberg's (1989) theory of marginality and mattering, Astin's (1984) involvement theory, and finally Baxter Magolda's (2001) self-authorship theory. I go on to discuss why I chose these frameworks and how they tie into the creation of the student employment intervention.

First, I will look at Schlossberg's (1989) theory of marginality and mattering. In my experience, my on-campus jobs and the mentorship I received from my supervisors gave me the sense of belonging I was searching for in a new environment. I was given a physical space to go to and was surrounded by people who provided me with friendship and comradery. Schlossberg's (1989) theory highlights how a sense of belonging and importance is crucial to a student's success. Just having a role on campus can create a sense of mattering but this theory can truly be seen in the impact that supervisors can have on their student workers. This theory is the fuel behind why I have chosen to put so much focus on the importance of supervisors in this intervention. Supervisors have a key role in making their student workers feel appreciated and that their job and presence holds importance. If the students have a strong sense of mattering there is a greater possibility for them to persist in their jobs and their academics (McClellan, Creager, & Savoca, 2018).

The next theory that influenced this thesis is Astin's (1984) involvement theory. This theory states that "the development of self-support systems and strategies correlates directly to campus engagement" (McClellan, Creager, & Savoca, 2018, p. 106). Campus involvement can be essential to a student's overall college experience, this includes the physical and mental

energy put towards studies and activities outside of the classroom (Astin, 1984). The more

involved and devoted a student is the more they will learn and develop overall. In relation to

student employment, if a student feels the job is interesting and important to them, the more

energy they will put into the job itself. This includes working on professional and personal skills.

This is reflected in the one-on-one meeting aspect of the program in which students have the

opportunity to speak with their supervisors and discuss the skills they want to develop and ways

in which their employment can better benefit them.

Finally, the third theory being used is Baxter Magolda's (2001) self-authorship theory.

Self-authorship is defined as "the internal capacity to define one's beliefs, identity, and social

relations" (Baxter Magolda, 2008, p. 269, as cited in McClellan, et al., 2018, p. 28). This

solidification of identity and beliefs is one of the key developments that can happen during a

student's time in college. Students are being put into a new environment and learning more about

themselves through these new experiences. They are becoming more independent and confident

within themselves through making decisions based on their internal beliefs rather than the

pressures of external forces. Supervisors can help students through this journey to self-authorship

through guided reflection in this intervention. This theory also influences the written reflection

aspect in which students will be asked to internally reflect on their experience and what it meant

to them.

Dynamic PREP

In this section I will expand upon the aspects of the program and the duties that will be

handled by the student employment office. The program to be implemented by the student

employment office will be called *Dynamic PREP,* PREP standing for prepare, reflect, employ,

proceed. There are two phases to this program: pre-application and implementation.

Phase 1: Pre-Application

Before any students are interviewed or hired there are structures and processes that need to be implemented.

Creation of a Centralized Office

All student employment will go through a centralized office.This is the office that will create learning goals, supervisor training and the student employee training. Having a centralized office can ensure that all student workers have similar goals and that there is a basic structure for the student employment program. Before the official start learning outcomes will be established as the basis for the program (Appendix 1). These learning outcomes will be based on the skills that would best prepare students for entering the world of work. Also, within this initial planning phase, the current student workers will be given a survey to share their ideas and I would like to have a few students volunteer to be on the planning committee for the program. Their input is the most valuable since the program is centered on them. The students should have a say in something that will affect them. The goal is for the students to be able to articulate the skills they want to gain throughout their time as an employee on campus.

*Supervisor*s

The influence a supervisor has on their student employees is just as important as the on-campus job itself. Due to this supervisors will be held to high standards in order to successfully guide students through *Dynamic PREP*. Supervisors that are participating in the program will attend a workshop to give an overview of the student development theories upon which the program was built and their supervisor duties. A requirement will be for supervisors to

meet with their student workers over the course of the semester/year to evaluate their progress in achieving the outcomes. This workshop focuses not only on how to facilitate the program in their separate areas but also how to be a support system for their students. To achieve this they will be provided with advising and supporting strategies. This training workshop will also cover the program learning outcomes and be prompted to think of ways those outcomes could be integrated into their specific area.

Phase Two: Implementation

After the planning process comes the implementation of *Dynamic PREP*. My aim is for this to be a joint process between the student employment office and the supervisors within the program. This phase will include the professionalization of the student hiring process, training workshops, supervisor check-ins, and reflections.

Hiring Process

Supervisors will first send the job descriptions and requirements to the student employment office. There the jobs will be reviewed to make sure the description is detailed and accurate. All jobs requirements need to be presented upfront in order for student applicants to properly disertain if the position connects with their goals and strengths. Job posting will go to one website that is under the student employment office in partnership with the career development office with sections for work-study and non-work-study jobs. Having this centralization will simplify the process of finding on-campus jobs. Students will have one place to go instead of having to search between different campus sites to find which offices are hiring.

The professionalization of the hiring process will include potential student workers being required to apply for jobs in a formal manner. This will include all applications requiring a

proper resume and cover letter. To assist students with this task there will be a link to the career development office for the students to seek help with formulating a good resume and cover letter. While a resume and cover letter will be required, the different areas of employment can set certain requirements for application based on the position. Having this type of job application process can give students a taste of what the requirements of a post-graduation job will be like. Regardless of if a student is hired or not all student applicants will receive experience in how to apply for a professional job. Once applications are received and reviewed, interviews will be conducted in the different areas of employment and the supervisors will notify the employment office of candidates that are hired.

Training - A key aspect of this intervention.

Each department conducts their own training that is specific to their jobs. However, the student employment office will host required student employee training workshops, three per semester, that will cover topics including but not limited to leadership, conflict resolution, time management, accountability, bystander training, diversity training, and career readiness. After the training workshops, the student workers will write a reflection on their experience and what they have or have not gained from them. These reflections will be submitted to the employment office and shared with the supervisors. At the start of their employment, students will complete a short intake survey to determine what skills are important to them, where their strengths lie and areas for growth (Appendix 2).

Supervisor Meetings

Once students are hired and training is underway, the implementation of regular one-on-one meetings with supervisors will commence. Supervisors will be responsible for

conducting at least three one-on-one meetings with their student employees over the course of a semester.

Initial Meeting

The supervisors and students will meet one-on-one to discuss what goals the students want to achieve during their employment. Within this initial meeting students will also be prompted to think about why they applied for the job and what they think will be the most valuable lesson they will walk away with. Responses will be noted and kept on record for reference in future meetings.

Midterm Evaluation

Halfway through the semester there will be another meeting to discuss if the goals that were mentioned in the first meeting were achieved. If not, the discussion will flow into what can be done to achieve those goals and if those goals are still important to the student. They will discuss how things are as a student and as a worker and any challenges that have come up. Students will also be asked to reflect on how what they have done at work has helped them in class and vice versa.

Final Evaluation

During this final meeting at the end of the semester, the students and supervisors will discuss what goals were achieved or not achieved and why they think that is.
The supervisor will give feedback to the student on how they feel they have grown during their time of employment. The student will also have the opportunity to give feedback to the supervisor in order to suggest ways to make the job more beneficial to the needs of themselves and other student workers.

Final Reflection

At the end of the academic year the student employees, if they have chosen to stay employed for the year, will complete a one page reflection on their employment experience and the program (Appendix 3). Along with this end of year reflection, students at this point will have completed short, at least one paragraph, reflections on each of the training workshops they have attended. The following outlines the process for those reflections.

Students will be given an exit survey (Appendix 4), much like the one they took at the start of their employment, to assess their strengths and skills. They will have the chance to compare the current results with the ones from the first survey. In a one page final reflection students will be prompted to look back on their year of employment and discuss what was beneficial to them, improvements to be made, and what made the experience special to them. They will also be asked to reflect upon and compare their strength survey results and how their employment has affected them. The surveys and reflections will be used to improve the program over time. This could be adding or taking away certain training aspects or changing how supervisor meetings are conducted. Supervisors will also be given the task of reflecting on how their role as a supervisor has impacted them. They will be challenged with reflecting on their strengths and weaknesses, how to improve, and how to better serve students. Students are not the only ones who will learn and grow through this program. This will be the overall outline of how the intervention is conducted. The learning outcomes and training workshops can be changed depending on the institution and their student worker population.

Implementation

When it comes to implementing this program, it will be best suited for a small private

institution. At a small institution it will be easier to keep track of all student employees and supervisors. At a large institution it would be a massive undertaking to create such a complex program and collaboration between departments could prove to be difficult. Also, finding funding for a student employment office could be hard to come by at a large institution. When it comes to funding the office and its associated programs I anticipate requiring funds for 2-3 professional office staff members and 4-5 student employees within the office. I would also require funds to go towards the workshops and training for the student employees and their supervisors. In all, obtaining funding and space for this office and its programming would be the main challenges that I foresee.

Looking ahead, I would like this office to be a resource for the entire campus community. When it comes to encouraging students to look into an on campus job, I would look into partnering with admissions in order to get information and materials to students as they start their higher education journey. This could include having materials in the admissions office and within student acceptance packets. Also, since I plan to heavily collaborate with career services, I would plan for there to be a link for on campus employment on the career services site that automatically directs students to the student employment office.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have outlined my student employment intervention *Dynamic PREP*. This program will center on student training and reflection and highlights that impact that supervisors have on their student employees. In the following chapter I will discuss the leadership strategies which influence this program and outline the assessments which will determine the success of *Dynamic PREP*.

Chapter 5

Introduction

In this chapter I will discuss the importance of leadership within higher education and student employment. I will then go on to highlight the leadership skills and models that will be present in *Dynamic PREP* followed by how the success of the will be evaluated. I conclude by expressing possible limitations that my proposed intervention may face.

Leadership in Higher Education and Student Affairs

The ACPA and NASPA Professional Competencies (2015) describes leadership competency as addressing "the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required of a leader, with or without personal authority" (p. 27). Leadership can take on many different forms and definitions depending on the situation and the persons involved. What exactly defines leadership cannot neatly fit into a box. It is multifaceted, forever changing, and means something different to every individual. In a formal and traditional sense, one could automatically assign the title of leader to the individual who is in a visible position of power. Those who have the title president, manager, professor, and so on are typically what one might view as a leader. Essentially, in this view leadership is defined as a power relationship. Within student affairs the vice president of student affairs and the president of the university or college are in that position. Most of the policies that affect many functional areas are generated from these positions of power. Any institutional organizational chart will visually display these relationships. However, leadership is not limited to those who have a formal title. Every single person can and do act as leaders in their own right.

There is no need for leadership to be so binary, only leaving room for the position of leader

or follower. An organization could be successful if led entirely by one person or party without the input of others. An example would be the head of an organization utilizing a coercive leadership style. This type of leader takes on what could be considered dictator-like qualities and leaves no room for flexibility or change. Those on the team are more likely to become unmotivated and lose faith in their leader and work (Goleman, 2000). However, this style can come in handy in crisis situations in which decisions must be made quickly and there may not be time or room for discussion. In all it is better used as a short-term approach to be used in conjunction with other styles if necessary. A coercive style being used long-term can disintegrate team morale and many will not be motivated to bring new ideas to the table in fear of them being shot down (Goleman, 2000).

Ideally, every person will exhibit leadership characteristics and add to the success of their team. Within student affairs and higher education everyone from the administration to the students has leadership potential. Those within those positional powers have the opportunity to influence others and act as a role model as to what good leadership looks like. In my view, I define leadership as dynamic, collaborative, selfless, a process, and overall is an agent for positive change. A leader should also empower others to become leaders themselves and realize their potential.

A vice president of student affairs should take into account those on their team and ask for input. By "team" I am referring to those working with the vice president and those that will be affected by any decisions made. In my experience, some of the best leaders I have come in contact with in student affairs are those who ask questions and are in constant contact with others. Keeping everyone up to date and being as transparent as possible builds the trust that is essential to pushing any change forward.

Also, anyone who is in a formal assigned position of power should be ever changing

themselves. Being open to learning and growing along with the team will continue the process of positive change being made. Growth is inevitable and going against it may not be an option. A leader sets an example for their team and being able to accept change and staying positive can influence the attitude of the team (DiFranza, 2017). For example, on a college campus the community of students is constantly changing and with that the needs, values, and opinions change. Staying stagnant and not being open to change can cause a feeling of being stuck in the past and unprepared for the future (Daskal, n.d.). Examples of effective leadership can be seen in a democratic style such as when town halls and open forums are held in which everyone can have the chance to voice themselves (Goleman, 2000). Those voices cannot fall on deaf ears. They should be very carefully taken into consideration, even though when it comes to policy it may be impossible to please everyone.

After this democratic process a leader can take on a more authoritative style to do what is considered to be the best practice for the community. In all, leadership does not begin and end with the person or party in a formal position of power. Everyone has a voice that should be heard and their potential should be celebrated and cultivated. Collaboration, empathy, and being able to lead and follow are essential is my perspective of leadership within student affairs. A good leader knows how to let go of power and allow the space for others to realize their potential. The leaders who have influenced me have held these values and had a positive impact.

Leadership and Student Employment

One of the most valuable lessons I learned during my time as an undergraduate student employee was the importance of having good leadership skills and being an effective leader. I was taught how to lead and how to let go of the reigns and follow. My staff of fourteen student building

managers were given the chance to take the lead alone and as a team. My staff worked together as leaders, as role models for each other and other student staff members. These skills developed overtime, not only through training but also through time on the job. I was trusted with responsibilities in which I had to challenge and trust in ourselves to make the best decision. To this day I still carry those lessons with me and they influence the leadership styles I use currently. Due to this experience I have made cultivating leadership as a core value of *Dynamic PREP*. While there will be a training workshop that focuses on leadership and teamwork, leadership will be an underlying aspect of every workshop and the student positions. I feel that is one of the most important skills for anyone to have.

While reflecting on my time as a student worker and outlining the *Dynamic PREP* program I envisioned the type of leadership I would like the supervisors to embody. At least a foundational proficiency in the ACPA and NASPA (2015) leadership competency is expected of all supervisors within *Dynamic PREP*. Within the student development training that supervisors will attend, there will be a session going over the leadership competency and discussion of how they plan on meeting those goals and developing their own leadership skills. Along with acting as a mentor, supervisors act as a leadership role model for students. They ultimately will have the most influence on students as they have direct contact with students and should be using their best judgement to gauge what leadership styles are most beneficial. While leadership styles change depending on the person and the situation, there are some models that will best work within *Dynamic PREP*.

The main goal of *Dynamic PREP* is to foster learning through student employment and leadership styles that focus positive change, offer guidance, and do what is best for the group. A servant leadership style could be highly beneficial to the student workers participating in the

program. Servant leadership puts an emphasis on empathy and putting the needs of others first

(Northouse, 2016). The needs of the student workers are an essential part of the program. The

students are encouraged to articulate what their needs are and the program is meant to be adjusted to

accommodate those needs. If the supervision is not working for the student employees then the

program is not acting to its full potential. Through implementing servant leadership, a supervisor

will be encouraging the students to rethink the traditional power structures of manager and

employee and realize the power that they can and do hold. Being listened to and shown that the

program is committed to the students has the potential to produce a sense of mattering within them.

In addition to servant leadership, I suggest that supervisors make use of the strengths-based

leadership style. This style entails recognizing and developing one's own strengths and the

strengths of others (Northouse, 2016). Knowing one's strengths is essential in seeing which areas

best utilize those skills and having a team composed of individuals with varying strengths

encourages collaboration and influences leadership style. *Dynamic PREP* aims to help students

realize which skill areas they are proficient and build upon them while encouraging the cultivation

of new skills. This evaluation and cultivation of strengths can be seen in the surveys, workshops,

and reflections that make up phase two of *Dynamic PREP.* Supervisors will aid in the cultivation of

strengths through encouraging their staff to collaborate with each other. assigning jobs that reinforce

current skills and challenging students to learn new ones is also the role of the supervisor.

Finally, I encourage the use of transformational leadership within *Dynamic PREP.*

Transformational leadership hones in on the connection between a leader and their team. Like a

servant leader, a transformational leader is concerned about the betterment and well being of the

entire group rather than the self (Northouse, 2016). Through using this style the focus stays on

motivating the students to reach their potential and strive towards a common goal. Students are

challenged to think more critically and go against the status quo. Students are encouraged to learn

and grow within this program and motivating them to be critical thinkers and innovative employees

is a vehicle for that growth. I want students to realize their full potential, be confident in voicing

their beliefs, and willing to challenge the traditional view of power. Students have more influence

and power on campus than they may perceive or know.

Overall, I want all students involved to leave these positions having learned what type of

leader they are by exposure to a multitude of models. No matter what job position the students hold,

they will all be taught various leadership models and learn how to discover their own unique way of

being a leader and a member of a team. Leadership development within the *Dynamic PREP* program

is not limited to just the students involved. The supervisors will be learning and growing with their

student workers. Through the student development theory workshop and the one-on-one meetings

with their students, it is my hope that the supervisors will continue in developing their own

leadership skills depending on the needs of their students.

Assessment and Evaluation

The success of a program is determined through the ongoing assessment and evaluation of

data which displays the outcomes achieved. The results of those assessments can determine if a

program should continue, change, or be terminated. In most cases the data being collected is

primarily quantitative. Having tangible numbers and immediate results are favored by those who

provide the funding for a program to continue. If the data is static or negative then the future of a

program is at risk. However, the results of the collection of qualitative data is not immediately seen.

Qualitative data is the primary form of assessment utilized within *Dynamic PREP*. The continous

surveys and reflections track a student's development throughout their time in the program.

Given the importance of measuring student growth and the time it takes to measure that growth, collecting data in a single academic year may not be able to determine the success of the program. Longitudinal data may be appropriate for this project. This thesis outlines a pilot year for the *Dynamic PREP* program with a strong emphasis on the collection of qualitative data through written reflection. These reflections will hold the most value to the student employment office as they will be used for reference as to how the program evolves and changes for the students. In addition, quantitative data will be collected through the pre- and post- surveys in which the student employees will gauge their proficiency in the multiple skill areas that *Dynamic PREP* aims to address. The comparison between these surveys could be compiled to show the progression in skills from the beginning of the year to the end.

The success of the program could also be determined by the rate of retention of student workers. Retention is defined as "an institution-centric measure of degree of completion" (McClellan et al., 2018, p. 102). Astin's (1984) Involvement Theory states that campus engagement, in this case on-campus employment, encourages the sense of belonging and investment that is required for student retention (McClellan et al., 2018).

Limitations and Looking Ahead

While working during college is a reality for many students, *Dynamic PREP* only addresses those employed on-campus. Positions for on-campus employment are limited and therefore the students involved will be a fraction of the overall campus population. The program's reach will be limited and not every student who works will have the chance to experience this guided instruction. This limitation also applies to students who volunteer on-campus since they will most likely not be

considered to be a student employee. Ideally all students should have the opportunity to build the personal and developmental skills highlighted in the program. To bridge this gap, I would suggest the *Dynamic PREP* workshops being open to all students on campus. They would not be required to write a reflection and they would not be able to have supervisor meetings, but they would have the chance to join in on a learning opportunity.

Another issue might be supervisor participation. There is a chance that supervisors would not be open to the changes suggested or implementing the meeting and evaluation model. The student employment office may not have the power to require everyone with student employees to join the program. The invitation and suggestion to join will be sent to all supervisors on-campus and an informational meeting on *Dynamic PREP* detailing its goals and benefits could be conducted to encourage involvement. At the very least with all on-campus job postings going through the office the invitation to participate remains open.

Other limitations could be seen with obtaining the physical space and funding (Appendix 5) for the office and *Dynamic PREP*. An ongoing issue for universities is the availability of space for students and staff. Offices are constantly in competition for space and obtaining adequate staffing. Regardless of institution size, finding space will almost always be an issue especially for creating a new office. Funding may be an issue when it comes to staffing the office. The funding allocated would determine the size of the professional staff and if student employees could be hired within the office. It is very possible that a single person could end up executing the entire program which could be an overwhelming undertaking.

This type of program would work best at a small university. The student staffs would be smaller and it would be much more feasible for one-on-one meetings with a supervisor to take place.

At a large university this reliance on one-on-one supervision could prove to be difficult and tracking the progress of all student workers would not be a simple task. It could end up being a less personal and individualized process and certain aspects could be lost. The program would have to be modified to accomodate a larger student worker and supervisor population. *Dynamic PREP* would be conducted based on the situation and population presented but I feel this is possible and it could work for multiple institutions.

In the future I hope to implement this program and make it available to multiple institutions. As I start my professional journey into student affairs I will attempt to implement the reflection and evaluation aspects of *Dynamic PREP* with the student employees I will be personally advising and supervising. If I come across an institution that already has a student employment office in place I would like to collaborate with my colleagues to make this proposal into a reality. I am proud of what I have created and feel that it could benefit so many students and professional staff members. *Dynamic PREP* encourages the constant learning and growth of all those involved and that learning will go well beyond the job.

Conclusion

The world of work provides excellent opportunities for learning, not only about the task at hand, but skills such as relationship skills, leadership skills, organizational skills, appreciation of diversity and inclusion, and self-confidence. Students in college come to learn not only academics but more about themselves and exploring what the world has to offer. As an undergraduate I explored a multitude of topics that aided me in discovering my interests but unfortunately classes did not fully paint the picture of what I wanted to pursue in life. My on-campus job added the last "pieces to the puzzle" and coupled with the knowledge from my academics I was guided to student

affairs. I feel that I am not the only one who has had an experience of co-curricular activities greatly influencing skills and career paths. With this program I want more students to discover more about themselves outside of class to "paint a full picture" for themselves. Even if an on-campus job does not lead them to their overall career, they will at least walk away having discovered skills that could help them in any job they choose to pursue. College is a time for exploration and discovery and I will aid students in that journey in any way they need me to.

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Appendix 1

Dynamic PREP Goals and Learning Outcomes

Goals:
1. *Dynamic PREP* will prepare students for the professional and work world through cultivating skills in a low risk environment.
2. Empower students and build their professional skills.
3. Create an environment of support and encourage a sense of belonging.

Learning Outcomes:
1. At the end of their employment, student employees will be able to articulate 3 professional skills they learned/cultivated throughout their employment.
2. Students will be able to exhibit accountability through self-evaluation.
3. Students will be able to clearly and confidently communicate their needs.

Appendix 2

Dynamic PREP Pre-Survey

Please indicate your perceived proficiency level in the following NACE Career Readiness areas.

Critical Thinking/Problem Solving: Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems. The individual is able to obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data in this process, and may demonstrate originality and inventiveness.

◯ Very proficient

◯ Proficient

◯ Somewhat proficient

◯ Not very proficient

◯ Not proficient at all

Oral/Written Communications: Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside of the organization. The individual has public speaking skills; is able to express ideas to others; and can write/edit memos, letters, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively.

◯ Very proficient

◯ Proficient

◯ Somewhat proficient

◯ Not very proficient

O Not proficient at all

Teamwork/Collaboration: Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints. The individual is able to work within a team structure, and can negotiate and manage conflict.

O Very proficient

O Proficient

O Somewhat proficient

O Not very proficient

O Not proficient at all

Digital Technology: Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals. The individual demonstrates effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies.

O Very proficient

O Proficient

O Somewhat proficient

O Not very proficient

O Not proficient at all

Leadership: Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals, and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. The individual is able to assess and manage his/her emotions and those of others; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize, and delegate work.

O Very proficient

O Proficient

O Somewhat proficient

O Not very proficient

O Not proficient at all

Professionalism/Work Ethic: Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits, e.g., punctuality, working productively with others, and time workload management, and understand the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image. The individual demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and is able to learn from his/her mistakes.

O Very proficient

O Proficient

O Somewhat proficient

O Not very proficient

O Not proficient at all

Career Management: Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals, and identify areas necessary for professional growth. The

individual is able to navigate and explore job options, understands and can take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities, and understands how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace.

O Very proficient

O Proficient

O Somewhat proficient

O Not very proficient

O Not proficient at all

Global/Intercultural Fluency: Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions. The individual demonstrates openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individuals' differences.

O Very proficient

O Proficient

O Somewhat proficient

O Not very proficient

O Not proficient at all

What skills do you wish to gain through your employment? How do you plan on achieving them?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What will you need from your supervisor/Dynamic PREP in order to get the most out of your employment?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

National Association of Colleges and Employers. (2019). Career Readiness Defined.

Appendix 3

Dynamic PREP Reflection

Answer the following questions regarding your on-campus employment in *at least* a one page response.

1. What was your reasoning for pursuing a job within *Dynamic PREP*?
2. Examples of skills you have learned while on the job? How will they help you in your future pursuits?
3. How effective were the training workshops for you?
4. Will you return to the program? Why or why not?
5. Any constructive feedback you have for *Dynamic PREP*?

Dynamic PREP Post Survey

Please indicate your perceived proficiency level in the following NACE Career Readiness areas. Please provide examples of how you utilized these competencies within your job.

Critical Thinking/Problem Solving: Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems. The individual is able to obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data in this process, and may demonstrate originality and inventiveness.

    ○ Very proficient

    ○ Proficient

    ○ Somewhat proficient

    ○ Not very proficient

    ○ Not proficient at all

Example:

_____

_____

Oral/Written Communications: Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside of the organization. The individual has public speaking skills; is able to express ideas to others; and can write/edit memos, letters, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively.

O Very proficient

O Proficient

O Somewhat proficient

O Not very proficient

O Not proficient at all

Example:

_____

_____

Teamwork/Collaboration: Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints. The individual is able to work within a team structure, and can negotiate and manage conflict.

O Very proficient

O Proficient

O Somewhat proficient

O Not very proficient

O Not proficient at all

Example:

_____

_____

Digital Technology: Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals. The individual demonstrates effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies.

   O Very proficient

   O Proficient

   O Somewhat proficient

   O Not very proficient

   O Not proficient at all

Example:

_____

_____

Leadership: Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals, and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. The individual is able to assess and manage his/her emotions and those of others; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize, and delegate work.

   O Very proficient

   O Proficient

○ Somewhat proficient

○ Not very proficient

○ Not proficient at all

Example:

_____

_____

Professionalism/Work Ethic: Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits, e.g., punctuality, working productively with others, and time workload management, and understand the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image. The individual demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and is able to learn from his/her mistakes.

○ Very proficient

○ Proficient

○ Somewhat proficient

○ Not very proficient

○ Not proficient at all

Example:

_____

_____

Career Management: Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals, and identify areas necessary for professional growth. The individual is able to navigate and explore job options, understands and can take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities, and understands how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace.

○ Very proficient

○ Proficient

○ Somewhat proficient

○ Not very proficient

○ Not proficient at all

Example:

_____

_____

Global/Intercultural Fluency: Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions. The individual demonstrates openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individuals' differences.

○ Very proficient

○ Proficient

○ Somewhat proficient

◯ Not very proficient

◯ Not proficient at all

Example:

_____

_____

What skills important to you did you gain through your employment?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Did your supervisor/Dynamic PREP properly support you in achieving your goals? Why or why not?

_____

_____

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_____

_____

Any suggestions for improvements for Dynamic PREP?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

National Association of Colleges and Employers. (2019). Career Readiness Defined.

Appendix 5

Student Employment Office Budget

Expense	Cost	Benefits Cost	Amount	Total Cost	Funding Source
Director of Student Employment	$70k-$90k	$20,000	1	$90k-$110k	
Assistant Director of Student Employment	$45k-$55k	$20,000	1	$65k-$75k	
Administrative Assistant	$40k - $50k	$20,000	1	$60k-$70k	
Non Work-Study Student Employees	$9.25/hr for ~8 months at 15hrs per week		2	$19,425	Student fees through Student Services office
Work-Study Student Employees	$2.31/hr for ~8 months at 15hrs per week		2	$4,851	Financial Aid office (FWS) funding 75% of wages, Student fees