Re-Thinking the Co-Curricular Experience

Skill Building Opportunities Outside the Classroom
The Anatomy of a Study

EAB Research Process and Overview

**Comprehensive Literature Review**
- Scholarly publications and dissertations
- Conference presentations
- News articles
- Social media and blog posts

**100+ Interviews**
- Vice Presidents of Student Affairs
- Career Center Directors and Advisors
- Directors of Experiential Education
- Directors of Student Activities
- Greek Life Coordinators

**Data and Benchmarking Resources**
- Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System
- National Association of Colleges and Employers Job Outlook Surveys
### The New Freelance Economy

**Jobs, Careers, and Work for the Millennial Generation**

#### Entering the Workforce: Then and Now

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Era of Big Work</strong></td>
<td><strong>The Rise of the Free Agent</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 9 to 5 typical schedule, 40 hour work week</td>
<td>- Freelance, independent, and temp work on the rise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Staying at an employer for long periods of time was the norm</td>
<td>- Job hopping is the norm, average tenure at one company is 2.6 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Climbing the corporate ladder on a single career path was the ideal</td>
<td>- Emphasis on work-life balance and job fulfillment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Compensation, stability, and employer sponsored benefits were key</td>
<td>- Looking to build and enhance skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Company loyalty and seniority highly valued</td>
<td>- Will likely have 15-25 jobs across the course of a 50 year career</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Post-Graduation Success Is Everyone’s Responsibility

Career Development Is a Campus-Wide Ecosystem (Rather than a Place)

The Ideal Career and Professional Development Timeline

1. Assessing Values, Interests, and Skills
2. Exploring Jobs and Potential Career Paths
3. Taking Courses that Relate to Career Goals
4. Gaining Relevant Skills and Work Experience
5. Building Resume and Professional Network
6. Launching a Strategic Job Search
7. Finalizing Plans

Moving from Exploration to Concrete Plans

Pre-Enrollment → First Year → Sophomore → Junior → Senior

The Effects of Underpreparation

Today’s Graduates Face Increased Workforce Competition

Unemployment Masks Larger Problem

*Labor Participation by Age Group, 2012*

- **Unemployed**
  - Jobless, but available to work and actively seeking work
  - Age 20-24: 7.3%
  - Age 25-29: 4.7%

- **Underemployed**
  - Working at a job that does not require college-level skills
  - Age 20-24: 40.7%
  - Age 25-29: 31.5%

---

Increased Competition

“There are only so many entry-level jobs and competition is fiercer than ever. Our students are still graduating at age 22 but they are younger in a sense. Employers want them to be more mature and older, like a 29-year-old in terms of experience. Employers don’t want to develop new graduates in training programs; they want people who are ready to work. It is up to us to prepare competitive graduates for the workforce.”

*Director, Career Services*  
*Private Research University*

New “Tough Questions” in Admissions
Prospective Students and Parents Increasingly Focused on Outcomes

Questions for Admissions (2002)

- What is Greek Life like on campus?
- Do many upperclassmen move off campus?
- How many students study abroad?
- What is the average class size?

Questions for Admissions (2014)

- How soon should I start doing internships?
- Can I major in history and still get a job?
- When do students start working with career counselors?
- How many students have jobs at graduation?
No Shortage of Interested Parties

Experiential Education the Go-To Response for Outcomes Questions

What is Experiential Education?

Challenge and Experience followed by Reflection leading to Learning and Growth.

That is experiential education expressed most simply as it is utilized and performed by individuals across disciplines, settings and geographies. AEE members are transforming lives in so many different ways.

Experiential education is a philosophy that informs many methodologies in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, clarify values, and develop people’s capacity to contribute to their communities. Experiential educators include teachers, camp counselors, corporate team builders, therapists, challenge course practitioners, environmental educators, guides, instructors, coaches, mental health professionals... and the list goes on. It is often utilized in many disciplines and settings: Non-formal education, Place-based education, Project-based education, Global education, Environmental education, Student-centered education, Informal education, Active learning, Service learning, Cooperative learning and Expeditionary learning.

The principles¹ of experiential education practice are:

- Experiential learning occurs when carefully chosen experiences are supported by reflection, critical analysis and synthesis.
- Experiences are structured to require the learner to take initiative, make decisions and be accountable for results.
- Throughout the experiential learning process, the learner² is actively engaged in posing questions, investigating, experimenting, being curious, solving problems, assuming responsibility, being creative, and constructing meaning.

Even If You Don’t Own Career Services…

A Unique Opportunity for Student Affairs

Career Services
- Interests and strengths assessments
- Resume workshops
- On campus recruitment and interviewing

Academic Affairs
- New and enhanced pedagogies
- General education reform
- Academic internships and co-ops

Student Affairs
- Greek Life
- Student Organizations
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Leadership Development
- Alternative Spring Break
- Outdoor Education

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
The Skills Gap: Real or Perceived?
Graduates Must Learn to Better Articulate Skills Gained

Skills Gap Perception Lingers

11% Of business leaders strongly agree that graduates have the necessary skills and competencies to succeed in the workplace.

45% Of senior executives in the United States believe that soft skills (e.g., communication, critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration) are where employees are most lacking.

Noticing the Skills Gap

“Employers… generally agree that new workplace entrants have an overall deficiency in the soft skills and/or essential skills required to navigate workplace culture and perform successfully.”

“Employers also expressed concern about the number of graduates who have no hands-on experience in the workplace.”

Talent is Not Enough: Closing the Skills Gap
Centre for Human Capital Policy

# Identifying High Demand Skills

## Surveys Reveal Top Skills Sought by Employers

### Top Skills U.S. Employers Want

1. Verbal communication
2. Teamwork
3. Problem solving
4. Organization
5. Critical thinking
6. Quantitative analysis
7. Technical skills
8. Technology skills
9. Written communication
10. Ability to sell or influence others

### Top Canadian Employability Skills

1. Verbal communication
2. Written communication
3. Critical thinking
4. Quantitative analysis
5. Problem solving
6. Teamwork
7. Positive attitude
8. Responsibility
9. Flexibility
10. Continuous learner

---

Helping Students Develop a Meaningful Career
The Emerging Imperative for Student Affairs Professionals

A More Holistic Experience

“Faculty and Student Affairs all need to be more engaged here….We need to look beyond the career center to a more holistic experience…the notion of developing a meaningful career is something students should be engaged in throughout their entire academic experience.”

“How do we take the experiences students have outside the classroom in student organizations and leadership experiences [and] translate that to something that has a career focus? How do we get [them to understand] some of the other competencies they need to succeed in the workplace, like intercultural skills? I think Student Affairs cuts across all of that.…”

Kevin Kruger, President
Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education (NASPA)
# Reimagining Experiential Learning

## A Study Roadmap

### I. Helping Student Leaders Translate Their Experiences

- #1 High Impact Program Add-Ons
- #2 Co-Curricular Capstone Experience

### II. Recalibrating the Student Employment Experience

- #3 Self-Service Resume Builder Tool
- #4 Skill-Focused Job Descriptions
- #5 Online Professional Development Modules
- #6 Structured Employee Reflections

### III. Hardwiring a Smarter Co-Curricular Experience

- #7 Skill-Building Branding Campaign
- #8 Self-Guided Involvement Portals
- #9 Student Engagement Coaches

### Coda: Navigating the Path Ahead

- Approach #1: Document Student Learning
- Approach #2: Develop Robust “Out of the Classroom” Curricula
- Approach #3: Implement Institution-Wide Requirements
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Tackling Low Hanging Fruit

A Definition of a Student Leader

Holds a leadership position on campus…

…either paid or unpaid…

…that carries significant influence and responsibility.

Student Leaders Across Campus

Student Government Officers
Resident Assistants
Student Organization Leaders
Peer Mentors
Greek Officers
Student Newspaper Editors

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Transitioning Away from a List of Things…

Student Leaders Need Help Connecting the Dots

A Missed Opportunity

“We find that students are really engaged and active on campus, involved with all kinds of experiential learning activities—internships, study abroad, student clubs and organizations. But when they come to us for help with their resume and to prepare for the workforce, those things do not come to the surface. They go from activity to activity but are not understanding what they are getting out of it, and how it connects with life after college.”

Director, Career Success Center
Private Research University

A Familiar Pattern

- 3-year RA uncertain how to talk about her work with prospective employers
- Highly involved student government leader struggles to articulate skills developed leading committee meetings
- Alternative Spring Break leader unsure whether to list co-curricular involvement on graduate school application

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
“Employers say they want these skills, and our student leaders have them, but they struggle to articulate them in their conversations with recruiters, and in their everyday lives.”

Executive Director
Office of Student Activities
Private Research University

Typical Student Leader Schedule

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>10:00-12:00</td>
<td>Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00-13:00</td>
<td>Group Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13:00-14:00</td>
<td>Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:00-16:00</td>
<td>Shift in Writing Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16:00-18:00</td>
<td>Student Government Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18:00-20:00</td>
<td>LSAT Prep Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20:00-21:00</td>
<td>Study for Midterms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
#1 High Impact Program Add-Ons

Meeting Student Leaders Where They Are

Salisbury University’s Flyers Help Students Market Skills and Experiences

Key Elements

- **Available online and in print at the Career Center**
- **Raise awareness in student leaders of skills they have already developed**
- **Provide guidance in articulating skills and experiences on resumes**

Source: “Marketing Your Club and Organizational Experience on Your Resume,” Salisbury University Career Services, [http://www.salisbury.edu/careerservices/students/resumes/MarketExperience/Club.html](http://www.salisbury.edu/careerservices/students/resumes/MarketExperience/Club.html); EAB interviews and analysis.
Targeted Materials to Encourage Reflection
Salisbury Has Resources for an Array of Co-Curricular Experiences

Offering Targeted Support

How to Market RA Experience
How to Market Athletic Experience
**How to Market Club & Organizational Experience**
How to Market Greek Life Experience
How to Market Study Abroad Experience
How to Market Military Experience

Marketing Your Club and Organizational Experience on Your Resume

Too often being a member of an organization is ignored [undervalued] by students, who then miss an opportunity to demonstrate examples of their skills and abilities. Many employers are interested in knowing how candidates developed and used their professional skills and abilities. Being a member of an organization is an excellent way to highlight these. Think about incorporating the following qualities into your resume:

- **Interpersonal/Diversity**: How well you relate to others and are willing to share your time and energy. Employers are constantly searching for employees who bring a diverse background and have experiential learning beyond the classroom.

Increasing Student Leaders’ Job Search IQ

University of St. Francis’s Mock Hiring Groups

**Mock Hiring Group Exercise**

You are hired to recruit candidates for two companies: Caterpillar, Inc. and The Condon Group LTD. You have two open positions and six candidates. Who would you choose and why?

**Supporting Materials**

- Two job descriptions
- Six resumes
- Sample hiring rubric

---

Student leaders divided into small groups and provided with blinded resumes and job descriptions

Groups develop their own hiring rubrics based on the job descriptions

Each small group ranks their top candidates and then presents their selections to rest of the group

Students work with peers to critique and improve their own resumes using knowledge gained from the exercise

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Making It Real

Hiring Groups Help Student Leaders Identify and Inventory Key Skills

Key Elements of the Program’s Success

A New Perspective
Exercise helps student leaders appreciate the importance of highlighting high demand skills

Targeting Low Hanging Fruit
Student leaders learn how to translate and more effectively articulate their skills

Immediate Application
Students enjoy hands-on learning, updating their resumes during the session

Recognizing Marketable Experiences
“The students were really impressed...One of the things that employers are looking for on resumes is leadership skills, and the general feedback from students (after the exercise) is, ‘Gosh, I do have a lot of leadership skills.’ I think that sometimes students might not realize the value of their activities until they do an exercise like this.”

Kelly Lapetino, Former Director, Career Success Center
University of St. Francis

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
#2 Co-Curricular Capstone Experience

## Preparing Student Leaders for Life After College

UNC Wilmington’s Senior Transition Workshop Series

**“Seahawks Taking Flight” Co-Curricular Capstone Program**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 1</th>
<th>Session 2</th>
<th>Session 3</th>
<th>Session 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identifying Meaningful Skills and Experiences</strong></td>
<td><strong>Financial Planning</strong></td>
<td><strong>Career Sessions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Life After Commencement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Leading students in an exercise to inventory noteworthy college accomplishments</td>
<td>- Learning to navigate insurance and benefits upon hiring</td>
<td>- Articulating high demand skills in resumes, cover letters, and networking</td>
<td>- Discussing issues students may face as they transition out of college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Practicing their 30-second elevator pitch</td>
<td>- Creating a budget and managing expenses on your first salary</td>
<td>- Preparing to be a successful graduate student or professional</td>
<td>- Preparing students to become members of the alumni community and laying ground for future engagement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
A Capstone to Their Co-Curricular Experience

Program Helps Student Leaders Reflect on Their Experience

**Logistics**

- Committee of senior staff created curriculum based on knowledge of student needs and modifications are made based on student feedback
- Vice Chancellor sends personalized email inviting nominated students to attend
- Four groups meet once per week on different weekday evenings
- Staff throughout the division rotate facilitating the sessions
- Students who complete the program are invited to a celebratory reception to network with local alumni

**A Session in Brief**

**Agenda – Week One**

*Topic: Identifying Meaningful Skills and Experiences*

1. Pair and Share Exercise
2. Small Group Leadership Discussions
3. Skills Inventory Worksheet Exercise
4. Group Debrief and Reflection
“Articulating the Wilmington Experience”
Student Leader Feedback Highlights Program’s Impact

Before this program I didn’t realize what I did learn. This helped me process my time here and even increased my gratitude for everything they have taught me.

I found that the most helpful aspect of these workshops was the discussions with other students about reflections from time here at the university.

I feel as though these workshops really helped me to understand what I can contribute to a job or whatever is next.

These workshops helped me articulate my goals, skills, and the UNCW experience.

**Strong Participation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>60-80</th>
<th>Students participate in the program each year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90%+</td>
<td>Of participants persist across all sessions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Guiding Student Leaders to the Next Level

EAB Next Step Recommendations

Quick Wins

- High impact resume exercises
- Co-Curricular capstone experiences

Long-Term Strategies

- Role-specific development workshops
- Career development “one-on-one” sessions

Provide just in time resources to support the job search

Develop tailored development and reflection opportunities

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
## Reimagining Experiential Learning

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Approach #1: Document Student Learning

Approach #2: Develop Robust “Out of the Classroom” Curricula

Approach #3: Implement Institution-Wide Requirements
Seizing a Valuable Opportunity
Student Employment Provides a Ripe Opportunity for Skill Development

Access point to large pool of students
Professional environment
Pre-existing opportunities for skill development

Developing Desired Skills On Campus

“When employers recruit new college grads, they are not only looking for a major, but they are looking for a skillset. Any on-campus job can provide students with the opportunity to learn professional skills such as communication (verbal and written), teamwork, time management, and customer service" while also providing opportunities to build a professional network.”

Debbie Kaylor, Director, Career Center
Boise State University

Unlocking the Potential of Student Employment

Lack of Recognition of the Value of Working On Campus

$ Students get jobs on campus because...
- They need to make money
- It is a financial aid supplement
- They can secure a class-friendly schedule
- Supervisors are sympathetic to student pressures

? ...But overlook high-impact benefits, such as:
- Experience in a professional environment
- The development of technical skills
- The application of academic learning
- The opportunity to develop high demand employer skills

Lack of Value Recognition

“We believe learning is happening in the on-campus work environment, but the students don’t recognize it and supervisors don’t know how to reinforce it. We need to teach supervisors how to help students articulate the value of their employment and learned skills.”

Associate Director, Student Union
Public Research University

Articulating the Value of On Campus Employment

University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill’s Self-Service Resume Builder

Covers an extensive list of positions
Easily accessible online
Shared with students during career appointments and workshops
Low cost tool, developed in-house by a career services staff member
Provides explicit guidance on articulating skills to potential future employers
Reframing the Student Employment Experience

Ryerson Rewrites Job Descriptions to Focus on Skills and Outcomes

1. Established division-wide learning domains for student employees

2. Initiated small pilot program across three offices on campus

3. Supervisors submit their job descriptions to a designated career services staff person

4. Job duties are reviewed to ensure that all nine skills are represented

5. Supervisors make any necessary adjustments to the job’s duties and description

6. 2014-15: Division-wide mapping of 300 student job descriptions

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Transitioning to a Learning Framework

Intentional Language Reinforces Employment as a Development Opportunity

Key Components

- Job responsibilities
- Learning outcomes
- Essential skills required
- Option for performance-based format
- Learning outcomes mapped to essential skills

The position will help develop the following Essential Skills:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Requiring the use of the following Essential Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate clearly and effectively with a variety of audiences</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify key issues when making a decision or solving a problem</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan and organize job tasks to ensure efficient and timely results</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work both independently and cooperatively with others</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design static and animated graphics and interactive interfaces/applications using desktop publishing</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design and maintain websites, ensure web usability, author support and training materials</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produce digital audio/video</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Marked Improvement in Student Engagement
Learning Focused Job Responsibilities Enhance Student Commitment

Promising Initial Results
- Improved punctuality
- Greater productivity
- Better quality work
- Finishing term of employment
- Students are able to articulate the value of their positions

Next Steps
- Map all division job descriptions to learning domains
- Train supervisors to integrate learning outcomes
- Implement pre- and post-surveys to track student learning

Setting the Tone for Learning and Development
"This whole system is designed to help students understand that their on-campus job - even with occasional mundanity - is actually directly related to their employability after graduation. The learning domains, and this exercise, help student practice to articulate their skills to prospective employers."

John Austin, Executive Director of Student Affairs
Ryerson University

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Provision Targeted Training and Development

Willamette University’s Online Modules for Student Employees

Notable Features

- Employer-sourced content
- Interactive brainstorming exercises
- Embedded reflection activities
- Prompts for supervisor debriefs
- Additional resources
- Available online for public use

Source: Image retrieved from: http://willamette.edu/dept/careers/students/passport/index.html; EAB interviews and analysis.
#8 Structured Employee Reflections

## Embedding Structured Reflection in Campus Jobs

University of Iowa Uses Supervisors to Prompt Student Development

### Spring 2009
Survey revealed that students were not engaged with on campus work

### Summer 2009
Staff developed and piloted high-impact student-supervisor interactions

### Fall 2012
IOWA GROW is expanded to the entire Division of Student Life

## IOWA GROW Structured Conversations Based on Four Key Questions

1. How is this job fitting in with your academics?
2. What are you learning here that’s helping you in school?
3. What are you learning in class that you can apply here at work?
4. Can you give me a couple of examples of things you’ve learned here that you think you’ll use in your chosen profession?

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Supervisor Led Reflections

Brief Structured Conversations Guide Student Growth

Streamlining Supervision

“IOWA GROW helped me formalize and prioritize what was already happening: hands-on learning. This is a tremendous program that we can all benefit from, and helps to encapsulate what we're already doing: preparing students for the post-graduation world.”

IOWA GROW Supervisor
University of Iowa

Source: Image retrieved from: http://vp.studentlife.uiowa.edu/initiatives/grow/implementation/
EAB interviews and analysis.

Logistics

- Minimum of two reflective GROW conversations per semester
- Conversations happen midway through and near the end of the semester
- Embedded into supervisor job descriptions, introduced at department orientations

Models student-supervisor conversations
Helps supervisors troubleshoot difficult conversations
Reinforces the four core questions
Providing Next Level Support
Scaling Up Linkages Between Student Employment, Academics, and Goals

Deepening the Conversation

Supervisor survey revealed that additional structure was needed to engage returning student employees.

Additional questions are provided online for supervisors to use with students in their junior and senior years.

Sample Additional Questions

- What have you learned about communicating effectively with your supervisor that also is effective with faculty?
- What types of problems have you solved at work and how will you use that in your courses?
- Are there aspects of this job that have helped you discover things you might want (or not want) in a career?
- What is one thing you’ve learned here about workplace culture and expectations that you think will help you in a full-time position?

Source: Division of Student Life 2014 Student Employment Survey Summary, University of Iowa: EAB interviews and analysis.
Promising Participation and Reported Learning
GROW Employees Experience Significantly More Meaningful Work

2013-14 Participation

1,925
Student participants across the Division of Student Life

300
Supervisor participants across the Division of Student Life

Small Commitment, Large Impact

68%
Percent of IOWA GROW participants who agree/strongly agree that their job has helped prepare them for the world of full-time employment

75%
Percent of IOWA GROW participants who agree/strongly agree that their supervisor helped them make connections between work and life as a student

75%
Percent of IOWA GROW participants who agree/strongly agree that their job has helped use critical thinking skills to form opinions and solve problems

1) Compared to only 36% of non-GROW participants.
2) Compared to only 36% of non-GROW participants.
3) Compared to only 50% of non-GROW participants.

Source: Division of Student Life 2014 Student Employment Survey Summary, University of Iowa: EAB interviews and analysis.
Recalibrating the Student Employment Experience

EAB Next Step Recommendations

Quick Wins

- Frame student employment as a skill-building opportunity
  - Self-service resume builder tools
  - Frontloaded career training

Long-Term Strategies

- Develop opportunities for professional reflection and growth
  - Online professional development modules
  - Structured employee reflections

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
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<td>Approach #3: Implement Institution-Wide Requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>#6 Structured Employee Reflections</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Approach #1:** Document Student Learning

**Approach #2:** Develop Robust “Out of the Classroom” Curricula

**Approach #3:** Implement Institution-Wide Requirements
A Plethora of Occasions for Skill Development

Significant Learning Already Happening Within Student Affairs

Division of Student Affairs

Greek Life
- Leadership
- Conflict resolution

Student Organizations
- Teamwork
- Communication

Student Employment
- Problem solving
- Time management

Volunteer Experience
- Taking initiative
- Project management

Student Government
- Collaboration
- Critical thinking

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Missed Opportunities for Experiential Learning

Students Fail to Recognize Value of Co-Curricular Involvement

**Students Get Involved Because of…**

- Peer Influence
- Identity Group Affiliations
- Personal Interest

**…With Little Consideration for**

- Skill Development
- Professional Goals
- Learning Outcomes

**Shifting the Focus of Co-Curricular Involvement**

“We know that our students are learning through their co-curricular activities, but they do not recognize that they’re learning skills that are relevant to their future goals. We need to help students realize that their involvement can help them build skills that they can later leverage when they leave the university and are networking and interviewing in a professional setting.”

*Advisor, Greek Life
Public Research University*

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Changing Perceptions
Rebranding Campus Involvement

Changing Perceptions → Enabling Self-Service → Providing Direct Guidance

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
#9 Skill-Building Branding Campaign

Marketing Skill Building Opportunities

UNC Wilmington’s “Skill Seeker” Initiative

Career Center committee asks employers to identify core skills they seek in new employees

Faculty and staff are asked to identify specific opportunities within their units that align to the skills

Students are introduced to “Skill Seeker” initiative through multiple touch points

Committee identifies seven top skills based on employer feedback and national survey data

“Skill Seeker” branding and marketing is developed in 2011

Recognizing Learning

“Students don’t know how to articulate skills that they learned throughout their college experience. So Skill Seeker is very much about self-awareness and self-efficacy, and getting students to be able to say in a succinct fashion, ‘This is what I gained while I was in college.’”

Andy Mauk, Director of Student Affairs Assessment, Research & Planning
University of North Carolina Wilmington

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
“Become a Skill Seeker”

UNC Wilmington’s Initiative Re-Brands Existing Programming

Skill-Focused
Flyer introduces seven top skills sought by employers

Integrated Perspective
Both academic and non-academic activities map to each skill

Consistent Branding
Logo serves as a common thread throughout campus programming

Teamwork Skills - works well with others, flexible, adaptable:

- Lead a project team or committee in class, a student organization, or job
- Join a musical or act in a play
- Participate on intramural team or sports club

How to Develop Skills Sought By Employers

1. Communication Skills - oral & written
   - Write stories, advertisements, press releases or newsletters for Student Media, or a campus or community organization
   - Enroll in an academic class that is writing intensive, or includes presentations or speeches
   - Work in a campus office, i.e. on an information desk, in an operations or program assistant position
   - Improve the way you listen to others, use empathy and self-control when differing disagreements
   - Write your job search materials (resume, cover letter, interview preparation) at the Career Center
   - Act with a theater group, film or broadcast production
   - Do fundraising for charities or nonprofit events, volunteer to work on a political campaign
   - Help in a literary or conversational English program

2. Interpersonal Skills - relating well to others, self-confident, tactful, friendly, outgoing, sense of humor
   - Engage in situations with people different from you
   - Participate as an active team member in class, a campus organization, or at a job
   - Live in a group living environment (on or off campus)
   - Conduct interviews with people to gather information for a class project, organization or personal goal
   - Volunteer for a telephone hotline, women's shelter, after school program, hospital, nursing home, etc.
   - Work as a tutor, coach, camp counselor, mentor, literacy or conversation partner, or teacher
   - Work as a staff, info desk assistant, office or retail staff, recreation assistant, customer service staff, etc.
   - Become a personal assistant to an individual with disabilities
   - Develop interpersonal skills in classes that emphasize human relationships or intercultural issues

3. Teamwork Skills - works well with others, flexible, adaptable
   - Lead a project team or committee in class, a student organization or job
   - Use an internship, study group, class or research project to help turn a group of people into a team with common goals
   - Help a new team develop through the stages of forming, storming, norming and performing
   - Join a musical group or act in a play
   - Participate on intramural team or sports club, coach Little League, become a summer camp counselor or recreational leader
   - Contribute as a valuable member of a team focusing on team goals more than personal goals

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Source: Image retrieved from: http://uncw.edu/career/skillseeker.html; EAB interviews and analysis.
Consistent, Far-Reaching Messaging

“Skill Seeker” Concept Reinforced at Multiple Touch Points

First Year Orientation
- Goal Setting
  - *Skill Seeker* initiative introduced through flyer and discussion
  - Students set three goals for their first semester on a notecard

First Year Seminar
- Follow Up
  - Career Center leads a session halfway through first semester
  - Goals returned to students to assess their progress

Campus Activities
- Awareness Building
  - Campus activities office has prominent *Skill Seeker* display
  - Skills list used in presentations to student organizations

Student Trainings
- Skill Development
  - Student staff trainings explain how positions develop different skills
  - Emphasis on translating experiences to potential employers

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Reconceptualizing Involvement on Your Campus

A Light Lift to Integrate the Flyer into Existing Programming

Key Benefits

1. Low cost; printing flyers the only concrete expense
2. Requires minimal staff time to develop skill list with corresponding activities
3. Easy add-on to programming throughout the division
4. Highlights pre-existing opportunities

Constant Message Reinforcement

“Skill Seeker is the marketing thread that runs through it…this is exactly what campuses are already doing. It’s a new way to conceptualize and package it; and students can grab hold of it. We make sure to overlay the concept in almost all of our programs. Students are regularly told, ‘These are the skills you are learning,’ with specific reference to Skill Seeker.”

Andy Mauk
Director of Student Affairs Assessment, Research & Planning
University of North Carolina Wilmington

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Enabling Self-Service

Providing Students with the Tools to Make Informed Decisions

Changing Perceptions

Enabling Self-Service

Providing Direct Guidance

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
#10 Self-Guided Involvement Portals

Expanding the Major Map

Queen’s University Creates Double-Sided Maps with Focus on Skills

**Source:** EAB interviews and analysis.

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**DRAMA MAJOR MAP**

**BACHELOR OF ARTS honours (specialization) | BACHELOR OF ARTS honours (major) | BACHELOR OF SCIENCE/ARTS (minor)**

**Visit queen's.gums.ca/majormap.html for the online version with links!**

**2014 - 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1ST YEAR</th>
<th>2ND YEAR</th>
<th>3RD OR FINAL YEAR</th>
<th>4TH OR FINAL YEAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explore the fine arts to understand culture and society.</td>
<td>Take core courses in theatre production (THEAT 200), Drama History (THEAT 201), and Theatre Production (THEAT 202).</td>
<td>Complete the core course requirements, take theatre history courses, and develop the skills necessary to work in the industry.</td>
<td>Attend a final year seminar, take theatre history courses, and develop the skills necessary to work in the industry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interact with both the drama and media students to learn more about the arts.</td>
<td>Choose up to nine courses specializing in directing, acting, and musical theatre.</td>
<td>Take the opportunity to participate in national or international competitions with your theatre group.</td>
<td>Apply for graduation on campus, work on the campus theatre, or seek employment opportunities in the industry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1ST YEAR</td>
<td>2ND YEAR</td>
<td>3RD OR FINAL YEAR</td>
<td>4TH OR FINAL YEAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ajinomoto Theatre Production Competition</td>
<td>Build upon your acting skills through various roles and characterizations.</td>
<td>Take the opportunity to participate in national or international competitions with your theatre group.</td>
<td>Attend a final year seminar, take theatre history courses, and develop the skills necessary to work in the industry.</td>
</tr>
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**Getting what you need to succeed in the workplace**

**WHAT DO EMPLOYERS WANT?**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To succeed in the workplace, employers want employees with the following skills:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. People skills</td>
<td>2. Communication skills</td>
<td>3. Problem-solving skills</td>
<td>4. Analytical skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Leadership skills</td>
<td>6. Industry-specific knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HOW DO I GET THE SKILLS NEEDED?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How to develop the skills needed for success in the workplace.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Participate in extracurricular activities</td>
<td>Take on leadership roles in extracurricular activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Take courses in public speaking and communication</td>
<td>Participate in public speaking and communication courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Engage with industry professionals</td>
<td>Connect with industry professionals through networking events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Participate in internships</td>
<td>Participate in internships and work experience opportunities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WHAT CAN I LEARN STUDYING DRAMA AT QUEEN'S?**

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What can I learn studying Drama at Queen's University</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical production and design skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative writing and storytelling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative thinking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Source:** EAB interviews and analysis.
Emphasizing High Demand Skills

New and Improved Maps Emphasize the Value of Experiential Learning

Getting what you need to succeed in the workplace

**WHAT DO EMPLOYERS WANT?**
In a recent survey from the Canadian Council of Chief Executives, the top 6 skills sought by employers were:
1. People skills
2. Communication skills
3. Problem-solving skills
4. Analytical abilities
5. Leadership skills
6. Industry-specific knowledge

**HOW DO I GET THE SKILLS I NEED?**
It is important to develop a balanced skill set—many of which you will develop during your studies. To stand out from the crowd, take advantage of experiential learning through the multitude of clubs and activities in and around Queen’s. Check out ideas in the Get Relevant Experience section of this map.

**WHAT CAN I LEARN STUDYING DRAMA AT QUEEN’S?**
- Technical production and design skills
- Oral and written communication
- Resource and time management - manage multiple long-term projects
- Real world problem solving - focus on effective processes
- Critical thinking – comprehensive analysis of issues and ideas before coming to conclusions
- Creative thinking – connect, synthesize, and transform material to generate new forms and solutions
- Intercultural knowledge and competence – adapt empathetically to unfamiliar ways of being
- Civic engagement – use theatre to make a positive difference in local communities
- Integrative learning – combine practical and theoretical knowledge and experiences

**WHAT MAKES ME SPECIAL?**
No one will get exactly the same experience as you. Take the time to think about what skills you have developed to be able to best explain them with compelling examples in future applications to employers and further education. For help with this, check out the Career Services "skills workshop.

Summary of skills that employers want

Emphasis on skill-building potential of clubs and activities

List of skills gained in the specific major

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Searchable Online Involvement Directory

Queen’s University Provides More Information in Selecting Opportunities

There are over 279 activities to search from.

SEARCH BY LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Collaboration and teamwork
- Confidence, self-esteem and autonomy
- Creativity and innovation
- Effective Communication
- Ethics and integrity
- Global perspective
- Health and wellness awareness
- Intercultural competence
- Leadership
- Problem solving and critical thinking
- Professionalism and time management
- Self-awareness
- Social and civic responsibility
- Spiritual awareness
- Technological proficiency

Steady Stream of Students

100-200 Average number of visits per month

Directory Searchable by...

- Learning Outcomes
- Category
- Keyword
- Time Commitment
- Activity or Position
Realizing the Benefits of a Self-Service Directory

Online Tool Serves Students While Saving Staff Time

Benefits to Student

- Self-service tool is student-friendly, providing guidance without requiring an in-person appointment
- Search feature primes students to reflect on skills they want to develop and make decisions accordingly
- Highlights the skill-specific value of each opportunity

Benefits to Institution

- Directory is populated by hosting organizations without overburdening Student Affairs staff
- Existing career services software platform hosts the database at minimal additional cost
- Scalable way to highlight the value of campus opportunities

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Providing Direct Guidance

Reaching Lesser Engaged Students

Changing Perceptions

Enabling Self-Service

Providing Direct Guidance

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Personalized Student Involvement Coaches

Stephen F. Austin State University Uses Peer Advisors to Engage Students

Program initially designed to find introverted students who struggle to attend involvement fairs

Space in student union becomes available, allowing for the creation of an “Involvement Center”

Peer Involvement Advising program is piloted in 2009

Participation expands as program becomes required by 20 sections of first year seminar courses

Topics Covered

What do you hope to learn?

What are your other time commitments?

Do you feel comfortable sharing your opinions?

Where do you see yourself in five years?
How Big Is Your Appetite?

Student Involvement Menu Guides Advising Sessions

**Appetizers** include one-time commitments, like special events and service projects.

**Main Courses** include more intensive commitments, like Greek Life and student organizations.
Following Through and Assessing Impact
Process Holds Students Accountable to Goals Set

**Logistics**
- Six peer involvement advisors are paid a $7.25/hour wage
- Peer advisors are supervised by a senior student peer
- Advisor training includes counseling skills and an overview of all involvement opportunities
- There are two Involvement Centers: one in the student center and one in the largest first year residence hall

**Assessment**
Paper survey given to students immediately following advising session with 10 basic assessment questions for quick completion

**Follow Up**
Personalized email sent to students two weeks after advising session to track their progress and link them to a longer assessment

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
Impressive Results for Program Participants

Peer Advisors Have a Meaningful Impact on Students’ Experience

Greater Participation in Student Organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Students who say they &quot;actively participate&quot; in a student organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Building More Student Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Students who say they are leaders of a student group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Higher Retention Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2009-10 fall-to-spring retention rate for first-year students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Advising</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“What Do You Hope to Learn?”

“This question often throws new students for a loop. Many have honestly not thought about their involvement outside of the classroom as being a learning opportunity. I think this is one of the most unique potentials of the involvement advising concept, that we are able to let students know at the beginning of their involvement experience that they can expect to learn something from it.”

Adam Peck, Dean of Student Affairs
Stephen F. Austin State University

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
EAB Next Step Recommendations

**Quick Wins**

- Skill-building branding campaigns
- Searchable online involvement directory

**Long-Term Strategies**

- Skill-focused involvement maps
- Personalized student involvement coaches

*Develop tools to highlight the value of campus involvement*

*Provide support for making strategic involvement choices*

Source: EAB interviews and analysis.
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Thomas Fringer  
Dedicated Advisor  
tfringer@eab.com