

Year in Review

Action Steps

In light of the new [strategic direction](#) of the University can you modify your action steps or develop new action steps that will aid in the implementation of the University's Strategic Indicators?

Many of the Career Center's current and future initiatives directly support the University's Strategic Initiatives of Experiential Learning and Community Engagement. For example, our significant emphasis on developing and coordinating internships obviously contributes directly to students' experiential learning opportunities. Additionally, for this effort to be successful, we must engage the community at large, and employers specifically, to build long-lasting successful internship partnerships.

Secondly, the Career Center has been and will continue to be the "prime mover" in developing the tools to effectively manage the University's internship effort. A University Internship Handbook has been written and is being staffed through the University hierarchy for ultimate approval and publication. Additionally, an Internship Repository has been established as part of Career Center operations. This searchable database management tool should be operational by the beginning of the Fall 2005 semester.

In short, the Career Center will continue to be a "force multiplier" or catalyst to help bring together (1) supremely qualified, liberally educated, pragmatically experienced, and highly motivated graduates with (2) successful, growing, and dynamic employers, offering outstanding career opportunities, motivated and excited about hiring ISU graduates. If we are successful developing and nurturing both ends of this relationship, the University's success will be evident, graduates and employers will become our best public relations representatives, enrollment will grow, and pre-eminence will be obvious and renown.

Do you have any further progress you would like to report?

1. Significant growth in Sycamore Career Link, our premier web based tool to connect employers and prospective employees, continues with 577 new employer accounts added this year. Additionally, there were 3,219 new full-time/part-time/temporary job listings posted this past academic year and 5,400 new co-op/internship listings added during the same time frame.
2. The Career Center has developed an intensive partnership with Clarian Health Partners in Indianapolis. Nine summer '05 interns have been placed in various disciplines throughout the Clarian system. We anticipate growth in this incredibly successful initiative. Additionally, initial steps have begun to establish similar types of relationships with at least two other employers. One local

employer initiative looks particularly promising. Hopefully, at least one more intensive relationship will be partially in place by the end of the summer.

3. Development of a University-wide Internship Repository is well underway and should be fully operational by the beginning of the fall semester. Details as to the “size and shape” of each record have been finalized. Additionally, data capture procedures, for the most part, have been identified and disseminated. Although there are still some lingering misunderstandings across the University as to the reason for and nature of the repository, most of these fears and misunderstanding have been calmed. Once in place, we will have searchable information about all internships across the institution.

4. Assistant Director, Dr. Mark Frederick, has developed and is presenting a series of weekly professional development lectures focusing on the theoretical basis of career counseling. This dynamic series has been well attended by the Career Center staff and is available to all faculty and staff members throughout the University.

5. After nearly a year of development, our new relational, comprehensive database management system is nearly ready for launch. This system will allow us to capture critical operational data as it pertains to all facets of Career Center operation. Although the deployment of this management system is a bit behind schedule as originally perceived, the system has “grown” in its pervasiveness and the accompanying complexity. This simply means it is taking longer to fully develop and implement. However, the additional investment in time is well worth the wait. We still anticipate we can have the system up and running by the beginning of the fall semester.

Assessment

What are two ways in which you evaluated the quality or effectiveness in your area last year? What changes did you make based on those assessments?

1. During the 2004-2005 academic year, we surveyed students who participated in our Practice Interview program. Students were surveyed “pre” and “post” the actual practice interview session in an attempt to measure their skill development as a function of the actual experience. The assessment results seem to indicate that students developed an appropriate mix of verbal and non-verbal communications skills and became more comfortable and confident in job interview situations they expect to encounter during their job search. Generally, students felt better prepared after the experience than they did before the practice interview.

Based on these findings we plan to expand the marketing effort for this valuable program, hopefully reaching more students earlier in their college career. Additionally, we plan to upgrade our ability to record these experiences, using CD ROM technology so that students may take the recording with them for further review in their residence.

2. We have begun a survey of every single student visit to the Career Center. We hope to learn the level of customer satisfaction with Career Center programs and services offered to students. Additionally, however, we also hope to measure the level of student skill development as a result of our student encounters. Although this is a relative new effort begun during the spring semester of 2005, we’re certain it has great promise in helping us tailor our programs and services to maximize student benefit.

3. Lastly, even though assessment of specific programs or services is valid, we still feel assessment is better viewed as a pervasive issue throughout all facets of Career Center operations. Consequently, we will continue to approach assessment and research in the aggregate, rather than focusing solely on individual programs or processes. We have begun developing a comprehensive research/assessment plan for the Career Center focusing on three distinct areas of investigation: (1) Customer Satisfaction, (2) Program Evaluation, and (3) Academic Inquiry. The specifics of this plan are still under development, but we feel this document will ultimately be the kind of “road map” we need to focus our assessment efforts.

Future Goals

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Please describe the progress you have made on these action steps.

EL – As discussed earlier, the university-wide Internship Handbook and the Internship Repository are both very nearly complete. These two initiatives will combine to greatly improve the management and assessment of this vital experiential learning component.

IM – The Career Center has not been as successful as hoped in developing a fully comprehensive internal marketing plan. However, working with two student consultative groups this past year did result in some significant improvements in our overall marketing effort. Additionally, integration of these changes into the University’s Integrated Marketing Plan has been nearly seamless. Printed materials and PowerPoint presentations now mirror the “look and feel” of the University’s new image.

CE – Involvement of Career Center staff in community outreach activities has indeed increased. Perhaps most importantly, the Career Center has become involved with the Wabash Valley Advanced Manufacturing Cluster, a sub-set of the Chamber of Commerce involving 28 of the largest and most influential manufactures in the local area. This relationship has the potential to result in greatly increased internship opportunities for ISU students. Lastly, ISU now has an intensive internship relationship with Clarian Health Systems in Indianapolis, placing 9 summer interns in various disciplines throughout the Clarian system.