

Assessment Project Proposal Cover Sheet

Angie Carlen, Experiential Learning Coordinator
Academic & Career Development
University College
Taylor Hall, Room 3037
815 W. Michigan St.
Indianapolis, IN 46202
317-278-8630 (Phone)
317-278-7588 (Fax)
acarlen@iupui.edu

Project Title: Evaluation of the affects of Student Participation in the Externship Plus Program and Relationship to the IUPUI's Principles of Undergraduate Learning

Project Dates: October 2010-April 2011

Abstract

The Externship Program is designed to reach out to first and second year students. The goal of the program is to provide structure, opportunity, motivation, and coaching for students beyond their first semester to begin their initial exploration of career options through experiential learning approaches such as networking, informational interviewing, job shadowing, externships, and volunteerism. The purpose of this assessment is to evaluate the program in the current state and use findings of the research for program improvement.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this research is to evaluate an experiential education program for first and second year exploratory students in learning communities. Approximately 24 students have been enrolled in the Externship Program since Spring 2009. Participants are required to fill out an application for the Externship Program that requires them to articulate interest in the program, current career and academic goals, and expectations of the program. After acceptance to the program, participants are required to meet with the program director and to complete an externship over Spring Break. An Externship is a short term job shadowing experience where students spend 2-5 days meeting with professionals in their career field of interest. Many students are allowed to participate in meetings, informational interview staff in the department, receive a tour of the facility, and occasionally complete a short project during their time at the site. The goal of the program is to provide structure, opportunity, motivation, and coaching for students beyond their first semester to help them begin their initial exploration of career options through experiential learning approaches such as networking, informational interviewing, job shadowing, externships, and volunteerism.

The current method of data collection is through the initial application, one web based reflection, and one post program meeting of all participants. Self-evaluations and host evaluations are currently being used to track individual growth, but are not being used to determine change in the group overall. The forms that are completed in the initial application are not being used to gather and track data, but rather to start a conversation with the student and to encourage self-reflection. Subsequently, information from these conversations has not been universally collected and tracked in a way that could be analyzed. Entrance and exit questionnaires are completed by participants on a web-based form at the beginning and end of the experience. These are also currently being used primarily as a means of self-reflection. To date, information has only been used for personal growth and reflection, not as data to assess the overall program.

Since the start of the program in Spring 2009, 24 students have completed an externship. The proposed study is for the Fall 2010-Spring 2011 group of students who will participate in the program starting in October 2010 and will complete the program April 2011. We seek to evaluate learning outcomes based on the IUPUI

Principles of Undergraduate learning of an Externship program for undergraduate students and to determine the value of this experience for career planning and preparation.

Intended Outcome of the Project

This research will explore how participants are engaged in the experiential learning process and will not only look at what participants are accomplishing, but what activities contribute to the value of these accomplishments. The research will provide a basis for a reproducible framework for other externship programs targeting first and second year students. By showing the value of this type of experience for undergraduates via learning outcomes, other career professionals will be better able to create and maintain similar programs.

Assessment Methods

To determine the relationship between participation in an Externship program and the Principles of Undergraduate Learning (PUL's) the following methods and data collection will be used:

- Entrance application for all participants
- Externship Agreement Form
- Major & Career Discovery Reflection
- KSA Description for Desired Career
- Skills Gap Assessment
- How to Acquire New Skills Form
- Timeline and Goal Setting Form
- Interviews with 50% of Externship Site Hosts
- Final Reflection for all participants
- Exit Interview with all participants

By collecting both quantitative data and qualitative data along the entire externship process we will be a better position to understand the impact of the Externship program across the program (quantitatively) and what particular contexts are conducive to the best experiences (qualitatively).

Data Analysis

In terms of process analyses, the formative evaluation will focus on describing aspects of the programs that are effective and which define what components work for different types of students based on their demographics. The consensual qualitative research (Hill, Nutt-Williams, & Thompson, 1997) model will be used to generate codes and elicit themes from interview and observation transcripts.

Methods of Evaluation and Dissemination of the Results

A final written report will be submitted within 30 days of the completion of the project. All published articles or conference papers will be submitted to the Program Review and Assessment Committee.

Intended Use of Findings for Program Improvement

The findings of the assessment of the Externship program will be used for program improvement by implementing changes in areas of the program that are deficient, intentionally evaluating the learning outcomes of the program to provide a more effective experience for participants, as well as presenting findings at professional conferences in order to share the knowledge among the professional community.

Budget

The current budget of the program can cover basic costs, but no additional staff assistance. Our grant proposal budget request is for the cost of a research assistant on campus to help collect and analyze data.

Item	Cost
Personnel (Research Assistant)	125 hours at \$12/hour = \$1,500.00
Total:	\$1,500

References

Hill, C. E., Thompson, B. J., & Williams, E. N. (1997). A guide to conducting consensual qualitative research. *The Counseling Psychologist, 25*, 517-572.

Application Form

Academic & Career Development Student Externship Application

Name:

Student ID:

Address:

Will you be at the same address for the externship?

If not, please list the city you would like to complete the externship in:

Phone:

E-mail:

Major:

Year in school:

1. Please write a brief statement of interest in the space below. Also note that you do not have to have any prior experience in the field to apply for the externship.
2. What are your current career or academic goals?
3. What kind of experiences do you expect to get out of this program?
4. What do you think will be your favorite part of the program?
5. What do you think will be your least favorite part of this program?

Externship Agreement Form

Please read the following statements and initial next to each one indicating that you agree with and understand the statement.

1. I will attend a one-time training session before my externship takes place.
2. I am responsible for any travel expenses associated with the externship.
3. I agree to be in the location of the externship opportunity on the day and time agreed upon.
4. I will maintain high standards of conduct while at the externship site.
5. I will respect the confidentiality of all situations in which I may be involved.
6. I will not discuss the nature of my host's work outside the organization or with any unauthorized person without express permission from my host.
7. I will not hold IUPUI, its officers or agents, my host's organization, its officers or agents, liable for any injury that I may sustain in this capacity.
8. I release IUPUI and my host from any liability whatsoever for damages to my person or property incidental to my participation in this externship.
9. I will complete an evaluation of my experience at the conclusion of my externship.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Major and Career Discovery Reflection

In the table below, jot down which careers interest you most and record the O*net number for future reference. You can find the O*Net website at <http://online.onetcenter.org>

Career Name

O*Net Number

1.	
2.	
3.	

What knowledge, skills, and abilities do you need for your career choices? You can find this out from O*Net too! Click on each career to find out this information.

Record the **K**nowledge, **S**kills, **A**bilities (KSA) and Tasks, Work Activities, Interests, and Work Styles for your desired career on the KSA Description Form (attached in this packet).

Have you discovered any interesting career options?

How do these options match your personality and interests? Write down what you find interesting about the career choices you listed above.

Were there careers listed that you do not interest you? Which were they? Why don't those interest you?

When doing your externship, think about how you can acquire some of these skills or learn some of these KSA's for your future career.

KSA Description for a Desired Career – Career:

Tasks:

Knowledge:

Skills:

Abilities:

Work Activities:

Interests:

Work Styles:

Skills I Have Gained from My Academic Classes

PULs (Principles of Undergraduate Learning)

The Principles of Undergraduate Learning are the essential ingredients of the undergraduate educational experience at IUPUI. Faculty members in each discipline have been charged with determining which of the principles will be taught and assessed in each of their courses – and what graduates in that major will know and be able to illustrate competence in each of the six areas addressed by these principles. Instructors must distribute the principles to students with descriptions of how the principles are enacted in the course.

Employers are also looking for these skills in potential job candidates and their employees. Please list examples of how you either already possess these skills or after your externship write down ideas of how you may gain these skills. If you don't know – ask your host at your externship. They will give you ideas of how you can gain these skills...

- 1) *Core Communication and Quantitative Skills*: the ability of students to express and interpret information, perform quantitative analysis, and use information resources and technology – the foundation skills necessary for all IUPUI students to succeed.

- 2) *Critical Thinking* is the ability of students to engage in a process of disciplined thinking that informs beliefs and actions. A student who demonstrates critical thinking applies the process of disciplined thinking by remaining open-minded, reconsidering previous beliefs and actions, and adjusting his or her thinking, beliefs and actions based on new information.

3) *Integration and Application of Knowledge* is the ability of students to use information and concepts from studies in multiple disciplines in their intellectual, professional, and community lives.

4) *Intellectual Depth, Breadth, and Adaptiveness* is the ability of students to examine and organize disciplinary ways of knowing and to apply them to specific issues and problems.

5) *Understanding Society and Culture* is the ability of students to recognize their own cultural traditions and to understand and appreciate the diversity of the human experience.

How Can You Acquire the Needed Skills to Fill Your Skills Gaps?

There are a variety of ways that you could acquire the needed skills. For example: If you needed to develop better oral communication skills, you could take a debate/speech class, get a job where you must communicate with people/do presentations and/or join a Toastmasters group. If you need to gain skill using Quicken software, you could take a course/class, get a job/practicum/internship where you would use Quicken.

Skill #1

Skill #2

Skill #3 .

Identify Top Three Needed Skills: _____

Then place a check by all methods that can help you learn/develop your top 3 necessary skills:

Skill #1

Skill #2

Skill #3

_____ Course Work/Class

_____ Job

_____ Internship or Practicum

_____ Participate in Professional Organization or Club

_____ Serve in a Leadership Position

_____ Volunteer/Service Learning

Set Timeline Goals

If you find that there are several ways to get the needed skill, consider your financial needs and time commitments to determine the best route for you. Make a timeline plan for yourself:

I will _____ where I can learn _____ during year/semester _____

I will _____ where I can learn _____ during year/semester _____

I will _____ where I can learn _____ during year/semester _____

I will _____ where I can learn _____ during year/semester _____

I will _____ where I can learn _____ during year/semester _____

I will _____ where I can learn _____ during year/semester _____

You are working on your academic credentials by completing classes and a degree at IUPUI.

Now you know how to attack the other piece you'll need for that after graduation job-winning resume to get the job you want - - by identifying and getting the needed experience and work skills to go into the career you want to pursue. You can and will do it!!

Externship Student Reflection

Student: _____
Job site: _____
Person(s) shadowed: _____
Department: _____
Dates of Externship/Job Shadow: _____

Please answer the following questions about your Externship experience on a separate sheet of paper:

1. Describe the department/work site you visited.
2. What type of work activities did you observe during your externship?
3. What did you like best about your externship?
4. What did you like least about your externship?
5. What surprised you most about what you observed, heard, did, or learned?
6. If you wanted to work in the department/work site you visited, what might you do to prepare in the next five years?
7. Would you consider a career in the type of industry in which you job shadowed? Why or why not?
8. From your perspective (your interests, abilities, and goals) identify aspects of the job that were:
Positive:
Negative:
9. What are your current career or academic (graduate or professional school) goals?
10. Did the externship experience influence your career choice/goals? How?