

*University of Wisconsin – Whitewater
Division of Student Affairs*

**Career Services
Office Planning & Review (OPR)**

*Executive Summary
July 2003*

Career Services Office Planning & Review (OPR) Executive Summary, July 2003

INTRODUCTION

In an effort to improve the delivery of its programs and services, the Office of Career Services, under the Division of Student Affairs, conducted an extensive Office Planning and Review (OPR) process from June 2002 – April 2003. This review was coordinated by Brian Bredeson, Associate Director of Career Services, and included an office Self-Study, a Campus Team Review, and an External Team Review. The External Review Team was comprised of Dr. Robert Greenberg, Director of Career Services at the University of Tennessee – Knoxville and Marcia Harris, Director of University Career Services at the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill. The External Review Team met with numerous campus constituencies and officials during their visit on April 23-24, 2003, and assessed Career Services facilities, policies, services, budgets and programs. The External Consultant's Report was submitted in May 2003. Following is the Career Services' OPR Executive Summary, which follows the new OPR guidelines as approved by Chancellor's staff in April 2002.

MAJOR OBJECTIVES OF THE OFFICE

It is the mission of Career Services to assist students with developing, evaluating and effectively implementing their career plans. Career planning and employment services helps students to: engage in self-assessment; obtain occupational information; explore the full range of employment opportunities and/or graduate study; present themselves effectively as employment candidates; and secure optimal employment or advanced professional preparation. In addition, career planning and employment programs should promote a greater awareness within the campus community of the world of work and the nature of career development over the life span. This mission is compatible with divisional and institutional goals, particularly in the areas of experiential learning, retention, enhancing student transitions and growth, and collaborative programming partnerships with campus constituencies.

SELECTED FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS/ MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

Following are Selected Findings and Observations from the OPR Reports (*report identified in brackets []*):

- Mission & Goals: All Career Services staff indicated a high commitment level to serving students. Each staff member articulated very clearly the mission and goals of Career Services. [*Campus Review Team (CRT) Report*]
- The documents provided included goals statements for the academic years 2000-2001 and 2001-2002. The goals and associated activities suggest that the office is actively involved in retention efforts and earlier contact with students; they seem to be taking action to accomplish their stated goals. [*CRT Rep't*]
- It appeared that, overall, the Department of Career Services was well known and highly regarded by the UW-W community. [*External Review Team (ERT) Report*]
- There seemed to be a general opinion among faculty and staff that Career Services has improved significantly in the last few years. Some attributed this directly to new leadership in the department while others noted more obliquely that Career Services seemed more cooperative and helpful than it had in the past. [*ERT Report*]
- A number of faculty members commented that they were impressed with the work ethic of the professional staff and didn't know how they met all their commitments so well. [*ERT Report*]
- We were delighted to see how well Career Services and Academic Advising are already cooperating [*ERT Report*]
- We are pleased to see that the charge for recruiting at UW-W has been eliminated and the department compensated for this revenue source. It is not a recommended way to generate money because it can alienate employers and obstruct their hiring of UW-W students. [*ERT Rep't*]
- Supervision: Staff members feel comfortable with supervision provided. [*CRT Rep't*]
- Communication: Most staff members feel they are appropriately informed. [*CRT Rep't*]
- Participation/Evaluation: Most staff members believe they are working in concert. [*CRT Rep't*]

- The employer surveys identified a number of observations of the Career Services program, which include:
 - *Scheduling recruiting visits was seen as being efficiently handled and easy to do.* [CRT & Self-Study Rep'ts]
 - *Receiving recruitment confirmation and materials was also done efficiently.* [CRT & Self-Study Rep'ts]
 - *Staff assistance during their campus visit was also rated as being very positive.* [CRT & Self-Study Rep'ts]
 - *Contact with the Director about recruiting efforts was also seen as very positive.* [CRT & Self-Study Rep'ts]
 - *Arrangement of group presentations was rated positively.* [CRT & Self-Study Rep'ts]
 - *Quality of candidates interviewed was also rated high.* [CRT & Self-Study Rep'ts]
 - *Most underclassmen, freshmen through junior years, utilized Career Services at least once or twice a year, with usage understandably growing significantly during their senior year.* [CRT & Self-Study Rep'ts]
 - *Of those underclassmen who used Career Services, the overwhelming majority of respondents said they would recommend it to other students.* [CRT & Self-Study Rep'ts]
 - *Nearly 88% of respondents were satisfied with the Career Planning Services/Resources.* [Self-Study Rep't]
 - *Nearly 85% were satisfied with Employment Services/Resources.* [Self-Study Rep't]
 - *Some students could have prepared better for interviews.* [Self-Study Rep't]
 - *Necessity to update and improve interview facilities (feedback from numerous employers)* [Self-Study Rep't]

SELECTED RECOMMENDATIONS/DEVELOPMENT OF NEW GOALS

Programming & Marketing

- **Career Services should have the responsibility for managing all campus career fair events.** [ERT Rep't]
Employers who participate in career fairs tell us that they like it best when such events are limited to Career Services management. This is nationwide. The events are better run, more consistent, and more efficient for employers because there are then fewer of them. UW-W took some big strides in this direction but needs to move farther.
 - Career Services should take on the ownership of the 'Hawk Career Fair, which is an all-university event, with the majority of revenues going primarily to Career Services.
 - The Multicultural Career Fair should be run by Career Services.
- **Continue to collaborate with Academic Advising Center to involve Career Services with the undeclared student population.** [CRT Rep't]
 - Initiate referral tracking system. **(accomplished, October 2003)**
- **Continue to work with academic areas to create a centralized location for identification and dissemination of information on internships. Explore the feasibility of a multi-level internship fair. Develop a centralized location on Career Services website for internships and job opportunities for all colleges.** [CRT Rep't]
- **Student Employment belongs with Career Services** [ERT Rep't]
The Student Employment Program (Job Location and Development) currently housed in the Financial Aid Department belongs with Career Services. This activity can be funded by as much as \$50,000 out of Federal Work-Study funds. This single change would add an exempt staff member to Career Services with the primary charge of working with the region's employers, large and small.
- **Enrich the Career Services website.** [ERT Rep't]
Career Services needs to enhance the resources provided on its website. A review of sites from other institutions would offer some ideas on content that might be added.
- **Diversify programming for career fields that are not usually subject to campus recruiting.** [ERT Rep't]
Career Services can offer additional ways for students to gain information and make connections in popular fields such as publishing, advertising, non-profit management, the arts, etc. through speakers, panels and networking receptions.
- **Increased attention to graduate students and alumni** [CRT Rep't]
- **Make the employment/grad school follow-up survey more quick and efficient.** [ERT Rep't]
The follow-up survey can be automated so that students use the website to report their first destination information.
- **Begin to plan a Career Services Development Campaign with the University's Development professionals.** [ERT Rep't]
This activity is handled differently at different campuses but Career Services is an excellent source of potential alumni and corporate support.
- **Explore the possibility of a course fee for the three-credit career planning course.** [ERT Rep't]

Employer & Faculty Relations

- **Establish an Advisory Committee** comprised of Employers and key faculty that would be broadly representative of the programs offered on our campus, perhaps including alumni. [CRT Rep't]
- **Develop a Corporate partnership program** with a limited number of UW-W's key recruiting companies. [ERT Rep't]
Note: The objective of the partnership program is to develop continually closer relationships with your most reliable employers.
- **Continue to cultivate new relationships with faculty members and academic administrators.** [ERT Rep't]
The professional staff appears to have done a credible job of making themselves visible to key faculty and administrators. However, there is still room for improvement; the importance of developing faculty relations should not be forgotten. This is particularly true in areas that might be more foreign to on-campus recruiting activities, but where career planning efforts and job search skills training can be most valuable.
- **Educate more faculty members on the power of the Experience system.** [ERT Rep't]
Key faculty members need to know more about the resources available through the Experience resume and job posting system.
- **Conduct an Employer Satisfaction Survey.** [ERT Rep't]

Revenue Generation

- **Career Services should be encouraged to generate some additional revenue to support its activities.** [ERT Rep't]
 - Use the Career Services website as a potential way to generate revenue, or at the least to acknowledge corporate support of the department. (i.e. identify key corporate sponsors/partners on Web site home page)
 - Plan the campus career fair events (mentioned in 'Programming & Marketing' above) in such a way as to ensure that the majority of revenues goes primarily to Career Services. Employers will pay more for a very well run event.
 - Seek small gifts (computers, a Career Resource Center copier, subscriptions to print or on-line media, etc.) from employers, always acknowledging corporate sponsorships visibly.
 - Arrange an agreement with the University Center to charge employers a reasonable amount for their conducting of evening information sessions. A flat amount on the order of \$75 with \$30 going back to Career Services is reasonable.
 - Offer proposals to the Parents Association giving them the opportunity to support departmental improvements or enhancements.

Staffing

- **Analyze the roles of the Program Assistants** [ERT Rep't]
Additional areas in which the Program Assistants might become involved could include the following:
 - Aggressive web mining to locate jobs and internships for posting on the eRecruiting system.
 - Exploring other universities' career services web sites to identify information and resources that would be useful on the UW-W site.
- **Seek means for reallocating the time demands upon the professional staff.** [ERT Rep't]
It was clear that the professional staff of Career Services is fully occupied. The professional staff needs to identify all of its activities and prioritize them, an exercise that should cause them to see the areas of their jobs that might be diminished and others that might be heightened. (In order to add new programs, prepare new materials for students, generate revenue from employers, manage more career fairs, etc. there will need to be some things dropped.)

Facilities

- **Complete renovation of physical layout of office** [CRT Rep't] **(accomplished, August 2003)**
- **Upgrade lab computers (in Career Resource Center area)** [CRT Rep't] **(accomplished, August 2003)**
- **Move the Testing Center from the Career Services office area.** [ERT Rep't] **(accomplished, August 2003)**
- **Develop a plan whereby the current facilities can be improved.** [ERT Rep't]
 - A more attractive visible appearance for all constituencies served. **(accomplished, September 2003)**
 - Improved interview rooms with more comfortable furnishings.