

THE LANDSCAPE OF CANADIAN POST-SECONDARY CAREER SERVICES

Career Centre Resources, Services and Metrics: A Pan-Canadian Benchmarking Survey

Christine Sjolander
Simon Fraser University

In Canada, there have been few efforts to aggregate data regarding post-secondary career centre operations. This study was developed to provide current benchmarking data for major areas of concern including:

- Financial, human and special resources
- Services provided to students, alumni, employers and other stakeholders
- Metrics collected and reported

63 respondents (8 colleges, 49 universities, 4 polytechs, 2 other - centralized and decentralized career centres)

Budget (over the past 3 years)

- 41% ▲
- 31% ▼
- 28% remained the same

Human Resources

- Total average professional and admin staff **11.5 FTEs**

Services

92% to **alumni**

98% some services to **employers**

95% **collaborate** with one or more **internal groups** on campus

54% **support faculty** as an individual who might be seeking a job change

84% **work with faculty** to provide support for their work in the classroom

46% provide one or more services to **parents**

- An average of 24 different types of student services, 12.5 different online services

Metrics

- About **75%** use either satisfaction surveys or learning outcomes measurements with their students to assess quality
- **97%** collect statistics about overall office usage
- **97%** track at least some usage statistics for their services - on average, usage is tracked on 21 different student services

Current issues of concern:

Budget and resource cuts featured prominently

This study provided 3 significant conclusions:

1. Career centres continue to do more with less
2. Institutional alignment drives funding
3. More data are needed

Insight into Canadian Post-Secondary Career Service Models

Peter Dietsche PhD
Jim Lees MSW, RSW
PSE Information Systems

Goals

- Understand the landscape of career service models
- Examine the level of institutional commitment to career services

Methods

Online survey:

67 respondents (32 colleges, 35 universities - centralized career centres)

Website analysis:

207 sites (116 colleges and 91 universities)

Site Interviews:

15 institutions; 47 career services

- On average **60%** funding comes from institution
- **40%** have student assistants
- **33%** have close proximity to 2 other services
- **31%** serve **prospective students**

2 TYPES OF CAREER SERVICE MODELS: IMPRESSIVE AND CRITERION-SPECIFIC

Characteristics of the Impressive Career Service Model

- Services are evaluated regularly
- Service outcomes are measured
- Services are delivered proactively
- Staff collaborate/partner with campus stakeholders
- Partners' needs are met
- Value of services is demonstrated
- Department strategic plan aligned with institutional strategic plan

Criterion-Specific Model

(defined by a unique common characteristic)

- Use of student assistants
- Co-location of services
- Services for prospective students
- Student-based funding
- The Quebec Model

Institutional Commitment

Indirect Measures: Policies

- Commitment of senior administration
- Embedded career-focused curriculum
- Faculty engage students in career-related topics
- Career staff meet with classes
- Collaboration with campus stakeholders

Top 3 issues of greatest challenge for Directors

1. Resource challenges
2. Needs of students
3. Characteristics of institution

Copied and adapted with minor edits

Kellie Fay 2017

Sources

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WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY IS IT FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT & SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITIONS?

Addressing the Catch 22: RBC Career Launch Applicants' Recommendations for Improving School-to-Work Transitions

RBC Career Launch Program • Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF)

Education & Career Development: An Academic Mission for the 21st Century

Rod Skinkle • Phil Glennie • Academica Forum

Skills, Competencies and Credentials

Alan Harrison • Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO)

Addressing the Catch 22

CCDF was commissioned by RBC to conduct an analysis of recent graduates' applications to its Career Launch Program for the first 3 years of its operation.

A scan of the available information shows a wealth of data analyses and literature reviews on the subject of PSE-to-work transitions ...but certainly there is **limited work on capturing the voice of Canadian PSE graduates and their lived experience of the transition.**

Themes from a random sampling of approximately **5800** applicants covered in the essay portion of their applications....



Hiring criteria



Networking



Collaboration



Volunteer, volunteer, volunteer



Career learning



Open mindedness



Awareness of the labour market

Education & Career Development

Last October (2016), we (Skinkle & Glennie) argued that various changes in the post-secondary landscape have converged to create a compelling need—and opportunity—for PSE to shift toward a new paradigm of **Education & Career Development (ECD)**.

When university applicants (were) asked to select among 20 possible reasons for going to PSE, the four most commonly cited reasons are:

- 1) ...as preparation to enter my chosen career (77%);
- 2) ...for personal and intellectual growth (75%);
- 3) ...increased knowledge of an academic field (73%);
- 4) ...to explore options for my future (70%).

It is essential that we see career development as an integral part of the academic mission of PSE.

Metaphorically, this journey would resemble a double helix, in which the **student's career development and academic learning occur and progress in tandem** rather than in separate silos.



Skills, Competencies & Credentials

The graduating student's credential and the associated transcript indicate the extent of the student's knowledge of content, but neither directly conveys any information to employers about the level of the student's skills.

AWARENESS GAP

Students do not know their university education has helped them develop general skills.

SKILLS GAP

Graduates do not have the skills employers need.

Universities need to accept that it is their responsibility to prepare their students for the workplace, which means they have to come to terms with the fact that content is actually the vehicle for skill development.

...whether the academy likes it or not, students go to university in the hope that this will help them get "respectable jobs," and it is often these students (or their parents) who are most vocal in arguing they lack preparedness for the job market.

Summary

There is a clear need to improve the school-to-work transitions and the labour market attachment of youth in Canada. Today's young graduates need to be able to:

- anticipate shifts in careers
- manage uncertainty
- be creative
- have the ability to tap into finely honed career management skills
- develop an 'always learning' mindset
- stay abreast of labour market trends
- cultivate relationships to gain better access to work opportunities -CCDF

Employers say they seek students who are able to:

- communicate
- think critically and solve problems
- display resilience and creativity
- work well in teams -Harrison

All stakeholders - post-secondary institutes, government, corporate Canada and youth have a role to play. -CCDF

Sources

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