

University-to-Work Preparations ... Career Readiness Competencies Measure Up!

CANNEXUS19

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Today's Agenda

- The Edwards School of Business/SECC Partnership
- About the SECC
- Project Rationale
- Research Objectives
- Research Design and Methodology
- Analysis and Results
- Limitations
- Conclusion and Recommendations



The Partnership

- Conduct a Services Marketing Audit for a Local Provider
 - Background - identify the events that led to the marketing problem
 - Marketing - identify and articulate the decision problem that is confronting the client
 - Research - objectives should specify what you want to know when the research has been completed
 - Information Needs – a detailed breakdown of the research objectives that will guide you in developing your questionnaire
 - Target Population – identify the research population that is proposed to be studied in order to address the research objectives



About Us - Website



The SECC contributes to student/alumni success by empowering students/alumni with the necessary tools, resources and supports to make a successful transition from education to career



About Us - CareerLink



The screenshot shows the CareerLink website header with the University of Saskatchewan logo and the text "CareerLink". Below the header is a navigation bar with links: Home, Login, Registration, and Forgot Password. The main content area features a large image of silhouettes of people walking in a city, with the text "Welcome to the University of Saskatchewan's CareerLink!". Below this is a paragraph stating that CareerLink is managed collaboratively by career centre staff across campus to provide support for career development, employment and experiential learning needs. A list of collaborating departments follows: Student Employment and Career Centre, Edwards Career Services, College of Engineering, Engineering Student Centre, and Department of Computer Science. The page is divided into four columns: STUDENTS, ALUMNI, EMPLOYERS, and STAFF AND FACULTY. Each column has a header image and a list of services or login instructions.

UNIVERSITY OF
SASKATCHEWAN

CareerLink

Home Login Registration Forgot Password

Welcome to the University of Saskatchewan's CareerLink!

CareerLink is managed collaboratively by career centre staff across campus to provide support for your career development, employment and experiential learning needs.

- Student Employment and Career Centre
- Edwards Career Services
- College of Engineering, Engineering Student Centre
- Department of Computer Science

STUDENTS

To access CareerLink, please login using your PAWS login and password.

- Search and apply for jobs
- Sign up for workshops, events and information sessions
- Participate in experiential learning

ALUMNI

Login to CareerLink to:

- Search and apply for jobs
- Sign up for workshops, events and information sessions

EMPLOYERS

Login to CareerLink to:

- Post jobs
- Post volunteer opportunities
- Build your brand and recruit
- Participate in career development and employment activities

STAFF AND FACULTY

Login to CareerLink to:

- Post jobs
- Post volunteer opportunities
- Engage in career and employment events

CareerLink is managed collaboratively by career centre staff across campus to provide support for your career development, employment and experiential learning needs

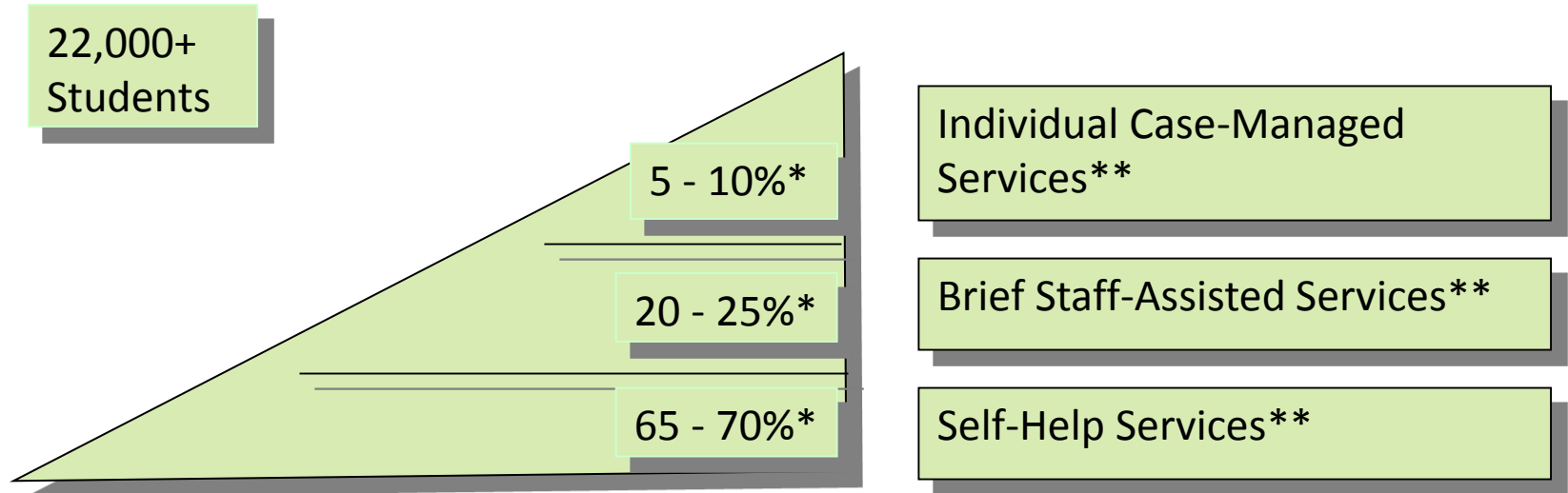
careerlink.usask.ca/

About Us – SECC Statistics

- **3rd** highest viewed content on students.usask.ca after “Money” and “Academics”
- **51%** of students logged into CareerLink (4% more than last year), and over 1000 alumni
- 341K+ total job views (increase of 30K from previous year)
- **3900** job postings
- **979** organizations posting jobs
- **2/3** of Saskatchewan’s Top 30 employers recruited on campus
- **1/3** of Canada’s Top 100 employers recruited on campus
- **62%** of employers are likely to use competency-based skill sets in their hiring process/job descriptions
- **98%** of students/alumni agreed or strongly agreed that the programming they attended is a valuable service
- **96%** would recommend the program/service to other students/alumni



About Us – SECC Service Delivery Model



*Percentages represent targets of the SDM

**Sampson, Reardon, Peterson, and Lenz (2004)

Project Rationale

- The SECC have identified “career readiness” as a top priority for USask students
- The SECC would like to develop programs, policies and content that promote career readiness
 - Insights about how students view the importance of non-technical competencies in their university education
 - The degree to which they have a sense of self-efficacy in their employability skills
 - Whether and where in their educational journey they would like to enhance them



Research Objectives

- 1st – to assess importance students attach to career readiness preparation
- 2nd – to gauge student reflections in their state of career readiness
- 3rd – to measure demand for and preferred sources of career readiness initiatives



Career Readiness

- “Career Readiness” is defined as the attainment and demonstration of competencies that broadly prepare university graduates for a successful transition into the workplace.

National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)



Career Readiness

The four step process for integrating career readiness into your post-secondary education and career preparation:

1. Awareness:

An introduction to the eight competencies and their importance to your education and career.

2. Understanding:

Gaining a deeper knowledge of the competencies and their skill components. Reflecting on the competencies in relation to your ability level, your program expectations, career needs and opportunities for development.

3. Developing:

An active and conscious step whereby you seek out opportunities to develop and demonstrate your competencies.

4. Articulating:

Expanding your ability to describe/market your competencies to potential employers, both in writing and verbally.





Professionalism/ Work Ethic

- Personal accountability and effective work habits, i.e. punctuality, works productively with others, time workload management, and understands the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image.
- Integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and is able to learn from their mistakes.



Teamwork/ Collaboration

- Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, religions and viewpoints.
- Work within a team structure and negotiate and manage conflict.



Digital Technology

- Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks and accomplish goals.
- Effective adaptability to new and emerging technologies.



Global/ Intercultural Fluency

- Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations and religions.
- Openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, interact respectfully with all people and understand individuals' differences.
- Substantive knowledge of Indigenous peoples and their history.



Oral/Written Communications

- Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside of the organization.
- Public speaking skills; express ideas to others; and can write/edit memos, letters, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively.



Critical Thinking/ Problem Solving

- Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions and overcome problems.
- Obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data in this process, and demonstrate originality and inventiveness.



Leadership

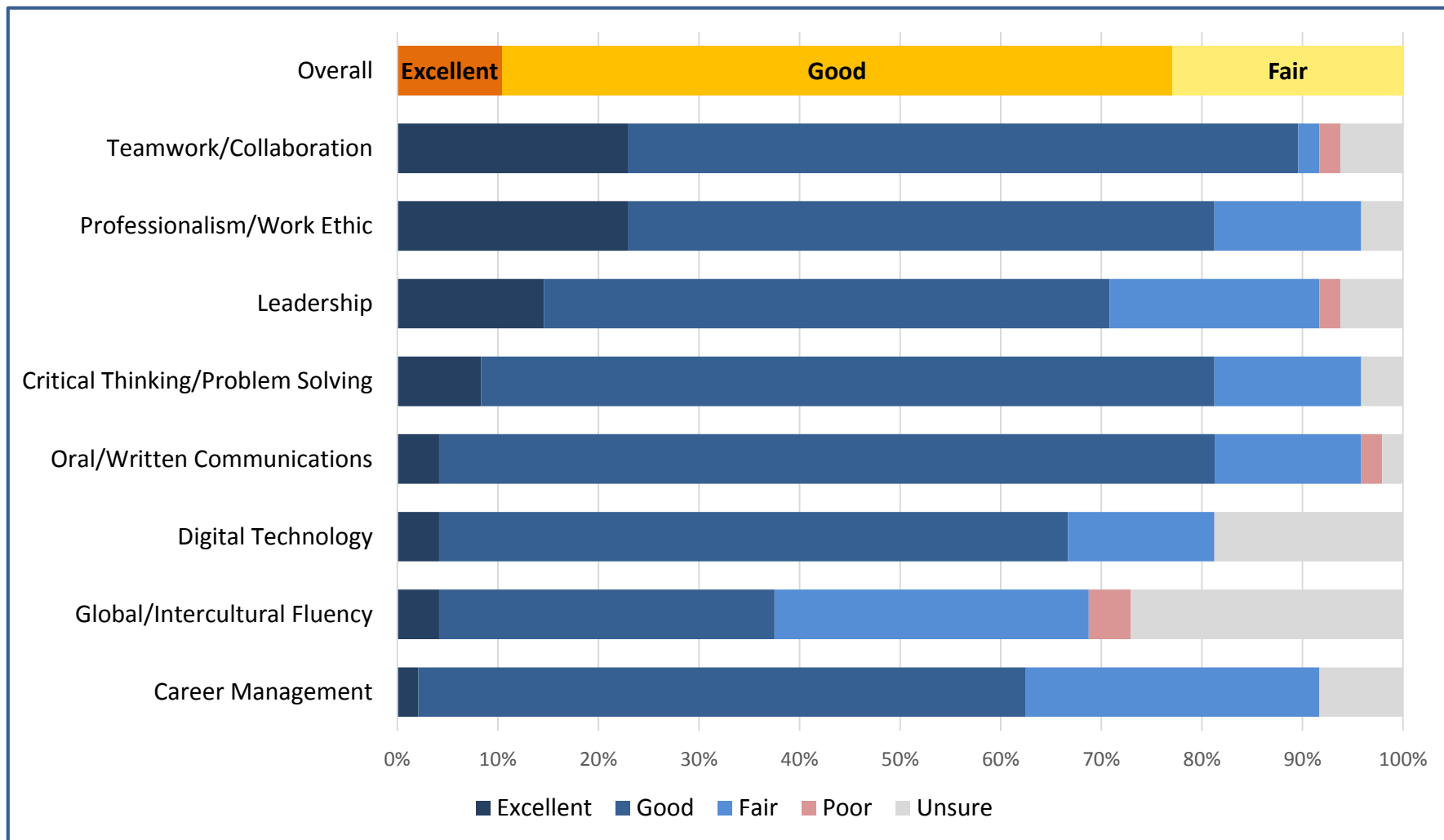
- Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals, and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others.
- Assess and manage their emotions and those of others; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize and delegate work.



Career Management

- Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals, and identify areas necessary for professional growth.
- Navigate and explore job options, understands and can take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities, and understands how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace.

Rating of Recent Grads' Career Readiness Competencies



From the SECC On Campus Recruitment Survey 2017

Research Design and Methodology

- A cross-sectional, small-scale survey research design (sample size of 600)
- The population of interest for this research was defined as all undergraduate students registered in the following direct entry colleges: Agriculture and Bioresources, Arts and Science, Education, Edwards School of Business students, and Engineering
- To select the sample from this population, quota sampling was used
- The primary method of data collection used was the intercept mode
- The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)



Analysis and Results ... Survey Sample

Characteristic	Sample Profile	Population Profile
College:		
Agriculture and Bioresources	11.5%	9.4%
Engineering	13.7%	12.8%
Education	10.8%	11.6%
Edwards School of Business	12.5%	11.4%
Arts and Science	51.5%	54.8%
Year in University:		
First Year	22.3%	
Second Year	27%	
Third Year	25.5%	
Fourth Year+	25.3%	



Analysis and Results... 1st Objective

- Importance Students Attach to Career Readiness Preparation

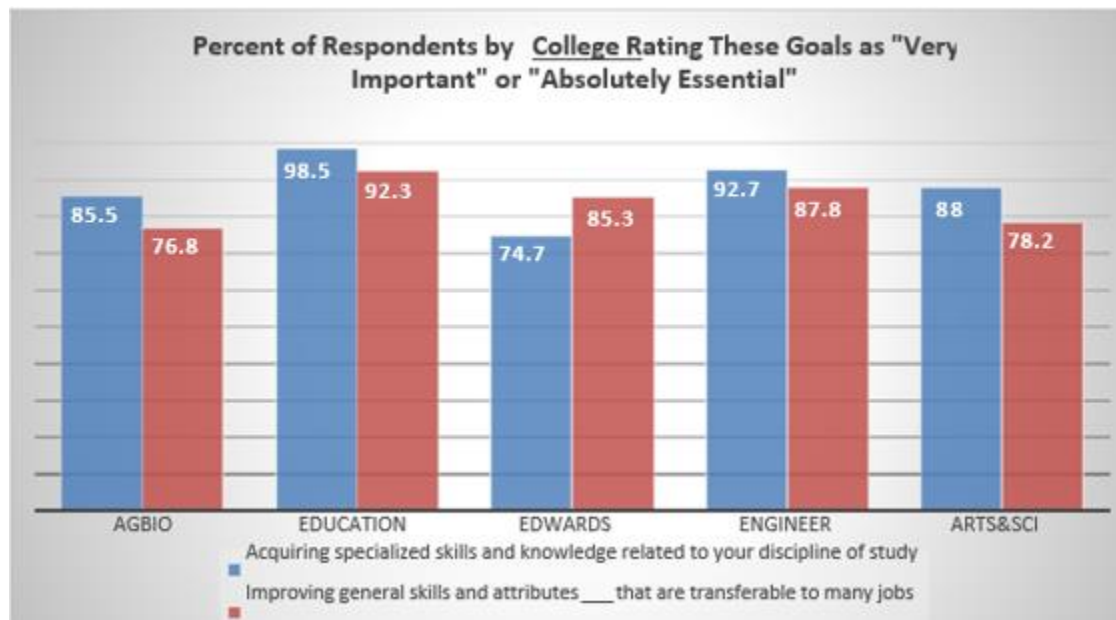
Asked Respondents - Acquiring specialized skills and knowledge related to their discipline of study

Asked Respondents – improving general skills and attributes that are transferable to many job settings

Nearly 82% of respondents indicated that honing their transferable skills in their university studies was “very important” or “absolutely essential,” compared to 88% who answered likewise for the acquisition of discipline-specific skills.



Analysis and Results... 1st Objective

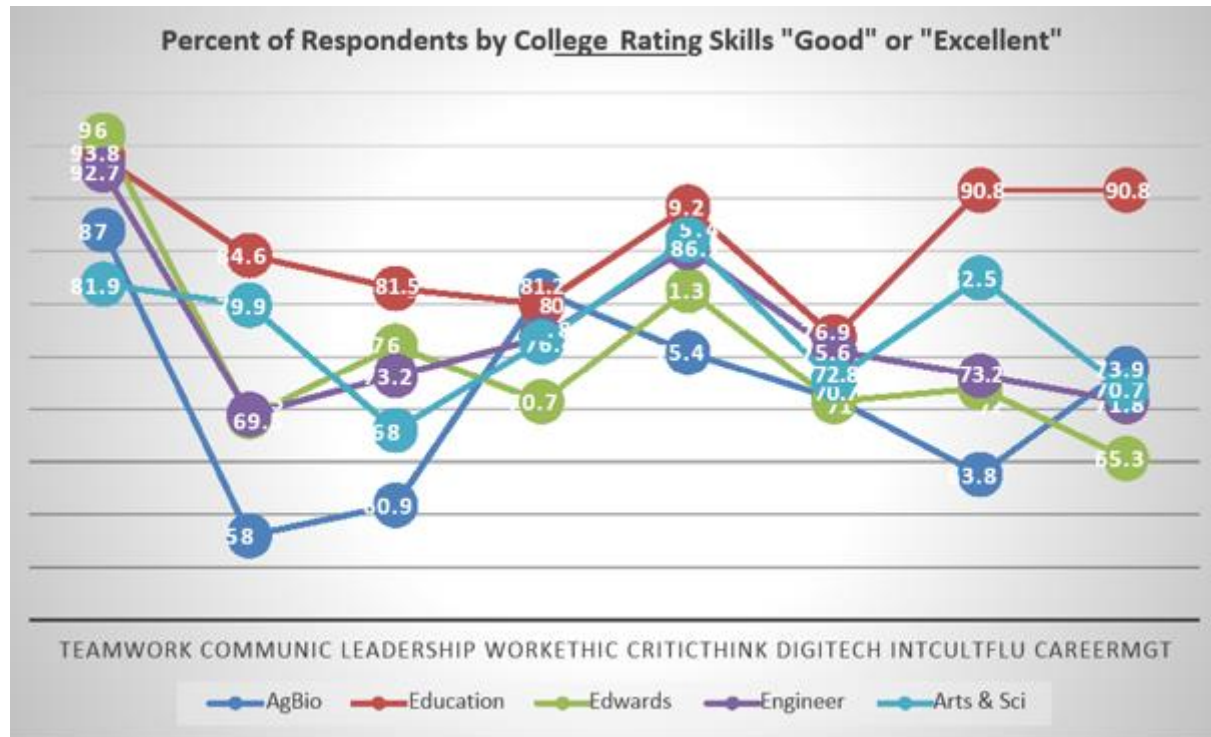


Analysis and Results... 2nd Objective

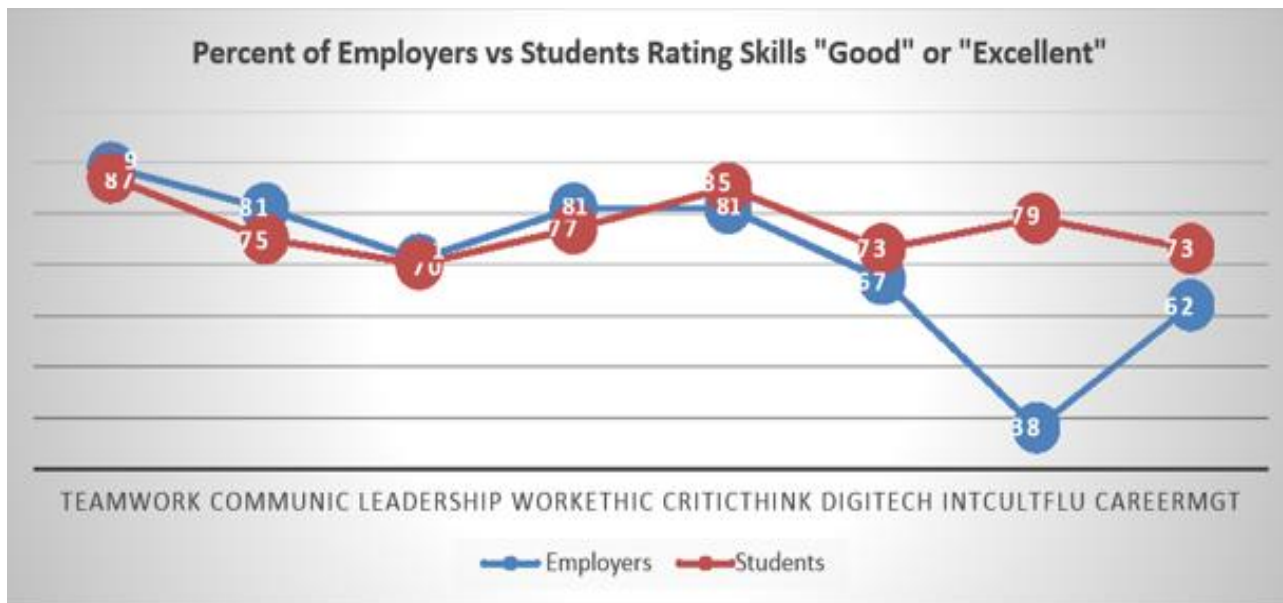
- Student Reflection on Their State of Career Readiness
 - Students' self-efficacy ratings on many of the competencies are quite high. Upwards of 85% of respondents report having “good” or “excellent” ***teamwork, leadership, and critical thinking skills***
 - About 75% of respondents provide similarly strong ratings for their ***communication and intercultural fluency skills***.
 - Self-ratings were ***lowest for the leadership competency***, where 70% of respondents described their skills as “good” or “excellent.”



Analysis and Results ... 2nd Objective



Analysis and Results ... 2nd Objective



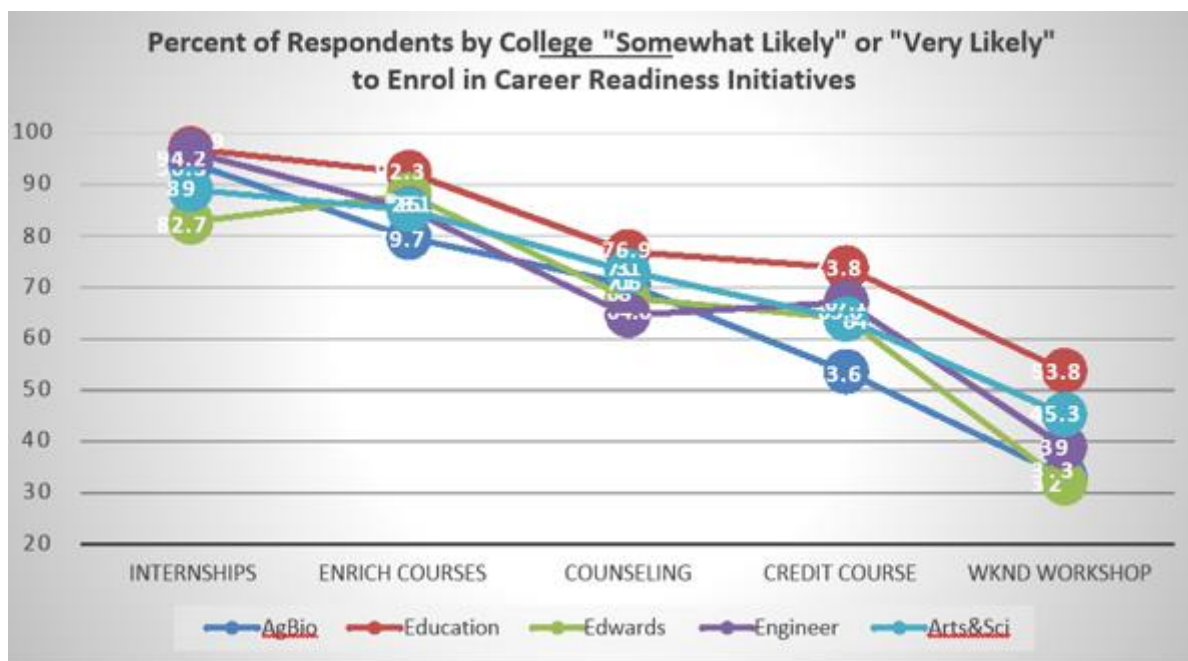
2017 SECC On Campus Recruitment Survey

Analysis and Results... 3rd Objective

- Demand For and Preferred Sources of Career Readiness Initiatives
 - About 56% of respondents feel their university experience has helped them improve their career readiness competencies to a substantial (“quite a lot” or “very much”) degree
 - This figure is significantly higher for students in Edwards (72%), Education (71%), and Engineering (67%), and lower for students in AgBio (49%) and Arts and Science (48%)
 - 89% of the respondents indicated that they would like more opportunities to develop their career readiness competencies while at university



Analysis and Results... 3rd Objective



Student Survey Responses

- Career readiness competencies should become a supportive component of each class but perhaps not a class on its own. (Edwards)
- I feel uncertain about my future career opportunities. To get a start, internships would be really helpful. I feel many undergrad students suffer anxiety about their future/feeling unprepared. (Arts and Science, Social Sciences major)
- My course work has taught me relevant theoretical knowledge that will at least come in handy in the future. However, I have not learned much in the way of specific career skills or practical skills that I will need for a career in my field. I am not very confident in my career readiness capabilities and feel I will have a large learning curve upon starting. (Arts and Science, Science major)
- Experiential learning should be at the forefront of career readiness competencies. (Edwards)
- Internships/co-op experience is the most important thing for career readiness. I would recommend everyone try it in the field they plan on working in. (Engineering)
- Thank you for a wonderful survey opportunity. (Arts and Science, Humanities major)
- I thoroughly enjoyed this survey. (Education)

Limitations

- The sample was selected using a nonprobability sampling method (it is difficult to establish that the sample represents the broader research)
- Every effort was made to develop survey questions that were understandable, relevant, and appropriate for respondents (there may have been reporting errors due to differing levels of motivation and/or consciously or unconsciously misrepresenting their answers)
- Many of the measurements used in the survey were subjective, and this may contribute to the presence of self-report bias
- There may have also been data capture errors (due to data coding or entry problems), as these tasks were carried out by business students with limited prior research experience and similarly differing levels of motivation to achieve accuracy
- The findings of this marketing research project are intended to aid in decision making so that the quality of managerial decisions might be improved



Conclusions and Recommendations

- A large majority of U of S students have a good idea about what careers they want to pursue, and claim to give a lot of thought to the general, transferable skills they will need to succeed at them
 - Acquiring and improving these skills is an important goal of their studies, and they expect the university to support them through programming in achieving it
- This study prompted students to reflect on their “employability skills,” and provides a sense of how they perceive their abilities in this regard
 - While the measures used to assess these skills were based on self-perceptions and were not objective, they do provide a baseline against which assumptions about the student condition can be checked
- There were also several differences in self-ratings on the competencies across colleges
 - There may be some benefit to exploring why these differences exist, and how practices that seem effective in one discipline might be used to orchestrate optimal learning experiences in another
- Because there may be some indication of an “awareness gap,” the University should adopt systems that allow students to monitor their own learning progress and to articulate and demonstrate their improvements in the underlying skills



Questions

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