

2020 STRATEGIC PLAN

CAREER SERVICES-TARLETON STATE UNIVERSITY

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ABOUT THE PLAN

This plan was developed through many venues including the culmination of meetings with key stakeholders on-campus, various professional articles, and an array of assessments. Through rigorous discussions with all five college deans, multiple department heads, the Vice President of Advancement and External Relations, and assessments from students and employers, a synergy developed resulting in this strategic plan.

ABOUT CAREER SERVICES

Career Services is a department within the Division of Student Life and a centralized center for Tarleton State University serving the main campus in Stephenville and satellite campuses in Waco, Fort Worth and Midlothian. We serve all students from undergraduates to graduate students, as well as alumni. The department provides one-on-one appointments for resume assistance, job search skills, mock interviews, and career counseling. Historically, we have produced four career fairs per academic year (Spring Job Fair, Fall Job Fair, Summer Camp Job Fair and Teacher Job Fair). Other services include an array of career development workshops, classroom presentations, Texan Shadow, graduate school preparation services, employment system (Hire a Texan), community presentations, and employer relations.

Career Services employs 4 full-time professional staff. All professional staff perform resume assistance, mock interviews, class presentations and job search assistance. One staff member is devoted to the services previously mentioned for the three satellite campuses. Of the four professional staff members, two full-time staff members conduct career counseling services, including the director. A master level career counseling intern volunteers twenty hours per week each long semester to assist in these efforts. The rest of the team is comprised of one support staff, two graduate assistants, three student workers, and typically four undergraduate interns.

FORWARD FROM THE DIRECTOR

This plan is a result of several months of data collection, hard work and a vision from the Career Services staff. This was developed during a significant growth pattern for the University. In the fall of 2012, Tarleton State reached an all-time record with just over 10,000 students enrolled. Subsequently, another record was reached in fall 2013 when student enrollment surpassed the 11,000 mark. Early predictions conclude that enrollment will continue to grow in the fall of 2014 as well. With record growth in student enrollment, the University charged into an 18 month strategic planning process which redefined the direction of this great institution. Accordingly, the Division of Student Life underwent a similar planning process which ultimately culminated into a fresh path for this department, division and University. This plan remains in line with the University's goals in academic innovation, student transformation, distinctive engagement and exemplary service.

MISSION

Career Services empowers students and alumni to synthesize, articulate, and leverage their academic and co-curricular knowledge to be competitive. We help students think globally and long-term through career and personal development. We build relationships with employers to provide opportunities for student/alumni success and meet their industry's staffing demands.

VISION

Career Services will integrate with academics and partner with industry leaders to help students/alumni develop both professionally and personally. Graduates will leave polished, competent, competitive and capable of navigating an ever-evolving world.

SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENTS

SWOT (STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS) ANALYSIS

In February 2012, the Career Services full time staff and Graduate Assistants conducted an internal SWOT analysis and developed strategies to address weaknesses and opportunities. In summary, the lack of human resources was cited as a significant obstacle to fully completing the mission of the department, equipping students with professional skills to be competitive in the job market. By and large, it was recommended that services be specialized by college/department/major, and the office should partner with employers to fully engage them into campus. View the full document in Appendix B.

FACULTY CAROUSEL

Conducted May 28th, 2013 (nine departments represented by eight-department heads and one faculty member). Four questions were asked in a carousel fashion and the top results are summarized below. For the activity, the Career Services Director welcomed and thanked the participants and encouraged blunt, direct feedback. Elizabeth Wallace (Student Life Studies) conducted the carousel without Career Services staff present to foster the sharing environment. View the full document in Appendix A.

- 1) **What one thing would you change about Career Services?**
 - a. Add Careers component to FYS – make direct connection to Career Services – exploration of career possibilities/options/opportunities
 - b. Stronger link between careers & degrees/skill set
 - c. Teaching students how to ‘sell’ themselves (FYS)
 - d. Another notable response “increased staffing” in Career Services
- 2) **How can Career Services assist faculty in connecting students to employers?**
 - a. Connecting with FYS instructors to introduce career planning/prep – pick a career
 - b. Invite more corporate speakers from Career Services
 - c. Other notable responses “encourage earlier engagement with students, career specific job fairs, capture employer information from departments”
- 3) **How does Career Services become a premiere student focused department?** (Faculty were not as receptive to this question as the comments were never ranked by order of importance). Answers included:
 - a. Work with departments to identify prospective employers and contact for fairs (relevance)
 - b. More deliberate way for Career Services to interact with departments on-going
 - c. Treating undecided majors with a more targeted focus
- 4) **What factors prohibit faculty from fully connecting students to Career Services?**
 - a. Faculty lack of time
 - b. Need more focused and timely communication about how faculty & Career Services can coordinate
 - c. Insufficient time
 - d. Lack of specific data/options
 - e. Other notable responses “Career Services should take initiative to go to faculty”

STUDENT SURVEY OF OVERALL ENGAGEMENT

Career Services conducted a paper and pencil survey in the Thompson Student Center. The assessment inquired about the reasons students do or do not participate in services. 121 students participated in the survey (freshmen-34, sophomores- 18, juniors- 14, seniors- 20, graduate-2). Below is a summary. View the full document in Appendix D.

- 1) Have you used Career Services (ex. Career counseling, mock interview, business etiquette dinner, Texan Shadow, resume assistance, etc.)? Yes- 50% No- 50%
- 2) Reason for not engaging with Career Services included- Over 50% do not know what is available

FIRST TIME IN COLLEGE AND MAJOR CHANGES COMPARISON

The graph below depicts the number of Tarleton State students who declared a major (not including undeclared students) and then changed it at some point during their college career. It is a longitudinal slice which suggests a possible positive correlation between the length of time on-campus and a change of major. The longer students remain at the Tarleton State campus, the more likely they are to change their major. This information points to the ever-growing need to engage first time students early with intentional and rigorous career exploration.

Term	Freshmen First Time in College Count	How many have changed majors	Percentage
Fall 2008	1295	626	48.33%
Fall 2009	1232	597	48.45%
Fall 2010	1468	624	42.50%
Fall 2011	1577	576	36.52%
Fall 2012	1726	192	11.12%

GRADUATE SURVEY

Three months post-graduation, Tarleton alumni receive a survey inquiring about their employment, salary, expectations while at Tarleton, etc. The survey is administered by Institutional Research at Tarleton State University. Based on the lack of feedback from the Graduate Survey, Tarleton State is lacking when it comes to tracking and staying connected with graduates. Out of the 3,983 graduates produced between fall 2010 and fall 2012, only 254 graduates responded to the survey. That is just over 6 percent of the graduating population, which is well below the national average return rate. This is a significant detriment as it pertains to branding and marketing the Tarleton legacy to prospective donors, employers, and students through alumni connections and relationships. The full results can be viewed in Appendix G1-4.

Graduation timeframe	# of respondents
May 2010	180
August 2010 - Fall 2011	74
May 2012	29
August 2012	29
December 2012	108

According to the NACE 2012-2013 Career Services Benchmark Survey (see Appendix P), “response rates to the at-graduation surveys tend to be better than the response rates for the after-graduation surveys. The average response rate for the after-graduation survey was 59 percent in 2011 and 63 percent in 2012. (See Figure 117 in Appendix P.) By comparison, the average response rate for the after-graduation surveys was 51 percent in 2011 and 52 percent in 2012.” The University stands to gain a significant amount of exposure and fiscal/in-kind donations by maintaining a strong connection with alumni. The current graduate survey was crafted by a partnership between Institutional Research, Career Services, Academic Affairs, and Marketing and Communications.

NACE POSITION STATEMENT: THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF INSTITUTIONAL FIRST-DESTINATION/POST-GRADUATION SURVEYS

“NACE recognizes the important public discourse regarding the escalating cost of higher education and the perceived returns on the significant investment in time, effort, and resources expended by college students and their families. This is reflected in part, for example, by the White House’s College Scorecard initiative. The association further acknowledges the growing importance of institutional outcome assessment efforts as they relate to improving higher education organizational performance and achieving regional and academic program accreditation standards.

In support of these vital issues, NACE expects that all higher education institutions will assess the career and employment outcomes for their graduates through a first-destination/post-graduation survey. These surveys are designed to understand more about the employment and continuing education goals and activities of college graduates, providing important information to help inform prospective students and their families as well as the general public about post-graduation outcomes.” To view the full document, please refer to Appendix S.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

For the University strategic planning efforts, the Dean’s Circles for College of Science and Technology (COST), College of Liberal and Fine Arts (COLFA) and College of Business Administration (COBA) each comprised of community members and employers, were asked to respond in writing to eight questions centering on the University’s image, strengths, future, concerns, growth plans, student needs, and student job market preparedness. Across the three colleges, there were some commonalities shared in the responses, but more differences were reported and can be viewed on the actual surveys. View the full document in Appendix E. The questions and common themes regarding Career Services areas are as follows:

1. *What skills does the job market for college graduates require? Are college graduates in general and TSU graduates in particular, entering the job market with those skills adequately developed?*
 - *Students/graduates need to have the ability to communicate (written and verbal) clearly as well as how they portray themselves through attitude, appearance, self-confidence, critical thinking and overall professionalism.*
2. *To what student need should TSU respond?*
 - *Bridging professional outside world with in and out of classroom experiences (employment, career placement, etc.)*
3. *How do we become a premier student-focused institution?*
 - *Keep low student: faculty ratio and emphasize relationships between students and faculty.*
 - *Students must be guided and led to explore employment options as well as their own strengths*
4. *What would you change about TSU, and how?*
 - *Integration between career field and college experiences*

NOEL-LEVITZ- PROGRAM DEMAND SURVEY

Noel-Levitz conducted an Academic Program Demand Analysis for Tarleton State University during the summer and fall of 2012. The project included an analysis of secondary data (enrollment funnel data by program and degrees awarded); telephone surveys of prospective students in the Stephenville, Ft. Worth and Waco markets, and an online survey of employers. Though not included in the contract, Noel-Levitz purchased additional lists and included Waco and Metroplex in the employer surveys for Tarleton. The qualitative, mailed invitation to an online survey of employers was sent to 1,000 purchased employers in each market. Tarleton provided an additional list of approximately 2,000 employers from Career Services for the Stephenville campus. There were 270 employer respondents for Stephenville; 59 responses for Metroplex; and 70 for Waco. After reviewing the assessment items, employers were asked two open-ended questions about other degrees not mentioned and most critical needs. View the full document in Appendix F. The summarized topics most relevant to this department are as follows:

1. Career path is not linear. It is important to get a degree but for many areas, content is not the key, trainability is the selling point.
2. New graduates learning that they will have to work from the bottom up.
3. Improved communication skills (both written and verbal)
4. Internships are needed.
5. Graduates need to be willing to work hard in the workplace and take initiative.
6. Learning does not stop after the completion of the degree, it is just beginning.
7. Cultural diversity and the workplace

EMPLOYER SURVEY

Conducted at the Fall Job Fair 2012. Some items employers were asked about included average job fair fee, recruitment habits and benefits/services recruits seek in Career Services. A summary is provided below. View the full document in Appendix C.

1. The average job fair fee is between \$100-\$199
2. For advertising, companies value their logo on Career Service's website, in high traffic student areas and on Career Services social media sites.
3. Employers value close parking at job fairs
4. Recruiters value refreshments while on-campus
5. For specific services, they value prime booth placement at job fairs, targeting selected majors, recruiting on-campus, and speaking engagements on-campus.
6. Companies have a desire for Career Services staff to provide training to their employees regarding:
 - a. Customer service/professionalism and,
 - b. What not to post on social media sites.

SUMMARY OF THE LITERATURE

YOU MAJORED IN WHAT?

Brooks, K., (2009). *You majored in what? Mapping your path from chaos to career*. New York, NY: PLUME.

The Chaos Theory movement examines the myth that a major equals a career. More often than not, professionals find that their degree is not linear to their lifelong career field, and often the end career has little to do with their college major. The Chaos Theory promotes that life experiences are the primary factor in one's career. Although the path has not completely disappeared, the linear path between college major and career is fading quickly. This theory strongly considers abductive reasoning by using a holistic approach on how unexpected experiences impact a student versus a single trait/factor to determine a career path. Therefore, enriched experiences become a guiding force in career path. In summary, it is the duty of the University and Career Services office to provide enriching opportunities and exposure to experiences (volunteering, part-time work, company tours, networking with alumni and employers, faculty, etc.).

HOW DO THEIR INITIAL GOALS IMPACT STUDENTS' CHANCES TO GRADUATE?

Graunke, S., Woosley, S., & Helms, L. (2006). *NACADA Journal*, Volume 26(1) Spring 23006, page 13-18.

This article surmises that the best approach to assisting a student to declare a major is through intentional interactions and career explorations, similar to those offered through career counseling. The belief that first time students must choose a major early because it leads to student success is quickly being disproven as being "undeclared" is not a detriment, it is a rite of passage. Please see the full article in Appendix O.

THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM- OFFICE OF STATE RELATIONS

According to the Formula Funding Rates reported by the A&M System, juniors and seniors taking lower level courses are counted at a lower level funding rate for SCH (semester credit hours). Juniors and seniors taking upper level courses are counted at an upper level funding rate for SCH. Depending on the numbers from Tarleton State, the University could be leaving a significant amount of funding on the table when factoring in the various weights associated with each major and the costs linked with juniors and seniors enrolled in lower level courses.

THECB CAREER READINESS VS. NACE SKILLS EMPLOYERS RECRUIT

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board: Texas College and Career Readiness Standards. (2013).

National Association of Colleges and Employers: The Skills and Qualities Employers Want in Their Class of 2013 Recruits. (Oct. 2013).

There are striking similarities between the skills employers are seeking in new recruits and those aligned with performance indicators in cognitive and foundational skills (a comparison between the *2013 NACE- Skills & Qualities Employers Seek in Recruits* and the *Texas College and Career Readiness Standards*). To view the infographic comparison, please see Appendix H.

BCSSE 2010-2011

Tarleton State University, Office of Institutional Research, Administration of the Indiana University's "Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE)" Academic Year 2010-2011.

<http://www.tarleton.edu/institutionalresearch/documents/FINALSUBCSSESUMMARYFROMIR120612.pdf>

"In comparing high school performance to first year experiences, TSU students reported a decrease in the number of conversations with students of different races / ethnicities, echoing the results found in the YFCY. This lack of cultural competency and interaction with students of different backgrounds puts Tarleton students at a disadvantage in an increasingly global workforce.

Tarleton first-years also demonstrated lower levels of academic challenge, and active and collaborative learning than peer institutions. While there is improvement by their senior year, it is concerning that Tarleton students are demonstrating low levels in these areas so early in their careers, as this speaks directly to students' ability to think critically, a quality strongly desired by employers and often bemoaned by these same employers as lacking in the new graduates.

Tarleton seniors *are* engaging in more enriching educational experiences (practicum / internships, co-curricular activities, volunteer work, foreign language coursework / study abroad, etc.) than freshmen. However, Tarleton falls below comparison groups in this area. These activities can have a profound impact on student's development, and provide strong content for resumes. It is imperative that students understand the importance of such activities (or lack thereof) on their careers.

This data reflects some concerning trends amongst Tarleton students that potentially have negative long-term consequences. Our role is to assist students in their career development, beginning when they set foot on campus. Greater awareness amongst incoming students of the need for critical thinking and cultural competence – and the consequences of not possessing these qualities – will help our students begin their education on a stronger foundation. Greater efforts to encourage enriching educational experiences throughout our students' college careers will only reinforce classroom knowledge, encourage community and global awareness, and make our students more competitive. "

THECB: THE COLLEGE OF 2020

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board: The College of 2020. (2009, June).

This article brings to light the competition that for-profit higher education poses for traditional universities. Increasing personal contacts with employers will aid in efforts to compete with this projected hurdle. See the outtake from page 28. Please see the full article in Appendix L.

"The for-profit industry sees great opportunities for more growth. Six of the 10 occupational categories that are expected to grow the fastest between 2006 and 2016, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, require less than a four-year degree. While the government forecasts that job opportunities requiring a four-year degree will increase 17 percent during that time period, it also estimates that job opportunities requiring a two-year degree will increase 19 percent, according to statistics compiled by the Career College Association.

For-profit colleges are now eyeing a new possible market: employers that will accept multiple certificates, or effective but noncredit online training, as prerequisites for employment, rather than degrees. That is an area for-profit colleges could dominate quickly if it became popular. The for-profit colleges also acknowledge that they are

beneficiaries of difficult economic times, because that is when students historically have gone back to college to burnish their skills or obtain new ones.”

NACE TIPS FOR CONNECTION WITH FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS- AUGUST 7, 2013

National Association of Colleges and Employers: Tips for Connections with First-Year Students. (2013, August 7).

In a recent article produced by NACE, it was noted that the best way for Career Services professionals to connect with first-year students is to a) engage parents at orientation b) hold an open house c) embed career development programming in academics, and d) recruit student advisors. Please see the full article in Appendix I.

CAREER SERVICES MUST DIE

Grasgreen, A. (2013, May 15). Career services (as it now exists) must die new report argues. *Inside Higher Ed*. Retrieved <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/05/15/career-services-it-now-exists-must-die-new-report-argues>

In summary, the article strongly suggests that the traditional model of Career Services is antiquated and is in dire need of revamping. The suggested structure is Career Development Specialists for each college/department/major. Additionally, it conveys that graduates leave the university with great career/academic content but are not able to articulate their abilities or obtain professional skill sets required by employers. Please see the full article in Appendix J.

NACE DATA SHOW CAREER SERVICES STAFF IMPACT EMPLOYER OFFER RATES

National Association of Colleges and Employers: Data Show Career Services Staff impact Employer Offer Rates. (2013, January 9).

According to a NACE study, employers were more likely to offer a position to a student who attended a school where the career services professionals were viewed as helpful and attentive. Other factors are at play as well, such as academic majors, the employer’s recruiting experience on campus, student’s salary expectations, etc. Please see the full article in Appendix K.

CAREER SERVICES: ESSENTIAL FOR RETENTION

Shoemaker, W. and Hellwege, M. Career Services: Essential for Retention, Research Brief.

“Results of the first study indicate that career coaching may influence the development of career decision self-efficacy and vocational identity. They also indicate that career coaching interventions that increase career decision self-efficacy and vocational identity may increase institutional integration and persistence to graduation. Also, it appears that career competence and institutional integration have potential to predict persistence to graduation. It appears that increasing career competence is a valid consideration for career services at post-secondary institutions who would like to actively increase students’ potential for degree completion. Given the reality that as many as 60% of college students will not graduate, this research provides a practical framework to post-secondary institutions about what they can do to increase graduation rates.” View the full document in Appendix M.

COLLEGE CAREER CENTERS VITAL LINK

Lytle, T. (2013, May). College Career Centers Vital Link. *HR Magazine*, 34-41.

The article discusses the traditional model of Career Services, which is very similar to the current set-up of this office. It continues that “the best career services centers have shifted from being moderators or go-betweens for students and employers and into career development preparations around the students”. (p. 36). Please see the full article in Appendix N.

NACE 2012-2013 CAREER SERVICES BENCHMARK SURVEY

National Association of Colleges and Employers: NACE 2012-2013 Career Services Benchmark Survey for Colleges And Universities. (2013, April).

Student/Professional Staff Ratio

Students per Professional Staff Ratio vary from college to college. NACE provides annual data on this topic and it can be sliced in a variety of ways.

	Mean	Median
Students per professional staff	1889.1	1156.8

Overall, the Mean is 1:1889 and the Median is 1: 1156 nationally. When it is broken down by size of college, the numbers decrease significantly. Below is a listing of the national averages when compared to the size and type of the university.

	Mean	Median
Baccalaureate - Arts & Sciences	635.6	558.0
Baccalaureate - Diverse fields	1,108.3	901.5
Baccalaureate/Associate	1,342.2	1,322.7
Master's- Large	1,825.4	1,453.0
Master's- Medium	1,676.3	1,273.3
Master's- Small	1,614.2	1,364.8
Doctoral/Research universities	1,508.7	1,156.4
Research universities (high research activity)	1,912.5	1,394.4
Research universities (very high research activity)	1,734.7	1,073.4
Schools of art, music, and design	598.1	514.0
Schools of business and management	727.0	524.5

As of the 12th class day for fall 2012 enrollment in each college was at an all-time high, including bachelor and post-bachelor seeking students. Currently, Tarleton Career Services ratio is 1: 2566 including the Director, Assistant Director, Career Services Coordinator (primarily used for marketing and promotions) and the newly created Career Development Coordinator for the satellite campuses. Consequently, based on these numbers, to keep in line with national standards alone and better serve the students' career development needs, we would need to employ, at minimum, one FTE-Career Development Coordinator for each college. See the breakdown below. (*Note- COSS students were included in this chart to account for the entire student population for the Fall 2012 semester even though, going forward, students will not have "undeclared" as their major).

Student one-on-one appointments with Career Services staff- Aug 1, 2012 through July 31, 2013

	Student Appts	% of pop		Fall 2012 enrollment
COAES	222	14.0%	COAES	1589
COBA	314	13.7%	COBA	2289
COE	155	6.6%	COE	2343
COLFA	121	8.3%	COLFA	1454
COST	184	8.1%	COST	2283
MISC	20		COSS	307
TOTAL	1016	9.9%		10265

* includes total appointments (face to face, email or phone) /does not separate multiple contacts per student
 ** does not include classroom presentations, workshops, business etiquette dinners, Upward Bound, alumni, or community outreach.

NACE- National Association of Colleges and Employers annual survey
 Full Time Professional Staff

	Mean	Median
Nat'l	1 per 1889	1 per 1156

Depending on school type and size

Art/Design	1 per 598	1 per 514
Large/Masters	1 per 1825	1 per 1453

TSU	1 per 2566
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CAREER SERVICES COMPETENCIES

National Association of Colleges and Employers: Professional Competencies: For College and University Career Services Practitioners. (2013).

The department recognizes the importance of professional competencies as positions are created and developed. NACE provides National Competency Area Levels information. Each core competency is divided into basic, intermediate, and advanced levels, which represent the progressive levels of knowledge, skills, and abilities required to function successfully in roles of increasing responsibility within the profession. NACE summarizes that these competencies can be the heart of a strategic plan as a guide for staff development, individual development, an increased position alignment and functionality. Areas relevant to this office include: Career Counseling, Connection, Information Management, Promoting, Program Administration, Research, Training, and Management. Please see the full article in Appendix Q.

SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

MEETINGS WITH COLLEGE DEANS

Face-to-face discussions were held between each college Dean and the Career Services Director to brainstorm strategic alignments. Discussion topics centered on the proposed hybrid model of operation including a Career Development Coordinator per college to tailor career development towards specific majors and an Employer Relations Coordinator to bolster employer relationships. Below are the summaries of each meeting.

College of Education- Supportive of the future planning of specialized staff to focus on certain majors by college.
College of Science and Technology- 100% advocate for Career Services representatives in the building. Although COST has other immediate as well, they are in agreement with the hybrid model.

College of Liberal and Fine Arts- The dean is very supportive and invited the Director of Career Services to meet with the department heads. They expressed extreme support with the personal and professional development initiative. They proposed ideas about theming job fairs (retail, service, medical, etc.) They unanimously expressed the belief that decentralizing through a hybrid model will have a greater impact on their students.

College of Business Administration- Agreed that having a Career Development Coordinator per college (at minimum) to provide specialized professional and personal development is the way of the future. Dr. Benavides also mentioned that in his strategic plan for COBA, he has requested office space that would match with this initiative. Subsequently, Interim Dean, Dr. Steve Steed, has since agreed to co-facilitate funding for a Career Development Coordinator for fall 2104.

College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences – Agreed that a hybrid model for Career Services would be most effective in providing career development to COAES students. Dr. Cawthon noted that in his strategic plan for a new building, he has included office space for a Career Development Coordinator for this college.

MEETING WITH ADVANCEMENT AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS

The Director of Career Services and the Vice President of Advancement and External Relations discussed the most recent version of the University's strategic plan, specifically the "Distinctive Engagement" and the charge to increase internships and career opportunities for students through Dr. Richardson's area. Career Services' efforts fall directly in line with that of Advancement and External Relations. It was agreed that these efforts could be tackled through a concerted group effort between the two entities.

THE CRITICAL ISSUES

While the department continues to provide top notch quality services to students, it is evident, from the review of the literature, assessments and meetings with key stakeholders that a paradigm shift is in order. Although many topics were reviewed through the aforementioned data collections, three main themes rose to the surface:

- 1) A strong level of support throughout the colleges for a hybrid approach to inserting career development elements within each college beginning with freshmen and continuing after graduation.
- 2) All constituents from Academic Affairs, Advancement and External Relations, Student Life/Career Services will benefit from intentional employer engagement on-campus through in-kind and fiscal support.
- 3) Students must be engaged in intentional, rigorous, uniform career exploration early in their college career and when deemed at-risk.

In order to effectively empower students and alumni with proper career development tools, we must bridge classroom learning into the professional world which encompasses much more than academic content. Career Services stresses that career development is not an optional, co-curricular activity. It is an integral, longitudinal component to the academic program requiring mandatory components that are built into both the curriculum and co-curriculum, ensuring that all Tarleton students are equipped with the tools and soft skills to put their education and learning to use.

The department evaluated the critical issues and implemented new goals that were rolled out fall of 2013.

1. Empower students/alumni to demonstrate, articulate, and leverage their academic and co-curricular knowledge to be competitive.
2. Provide industry expertise to effectively and consistently promote student/alumni employment and employer hiring needs.
3. Partner with Academic Affairs to integrate major related career development tools in and out of the classroom.

HOW TO MOVE FORWARD

A successful directional change within a department is handled with a balance of care, precision and risk-taking. A deployment of University, divisional and departmental resources is needed to drive this ambitious plan into action. In order to enhance and increase the enriching opportunities and exposure to career development experiences, the following factors have been identified:

HUMAN RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

In the fall of 2007, Career Services initiated a comprehensive program review utilizing the standards set forth by the Council for Advancement of Standards on Higher Education (CAS) and the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Professional Standards for College and University Career Services Evaluation. The review team consisted of both internal and external constituents meeting twice a month for six months. One of the most observable conclusions from this self-study/review is that Career Services is understaffed, a theme that has continued relevance today.

The new, proposed model of operation points to a complete transformation from a centralized model to a hybrid model with decentralized elements and centralized management. Content and relationship-specific positions would be housed in the academic colleges. Positions central to non-specific academic areas, would remain in the main Career Services office.

To effectively deliver the specified services and answer a great University need, Career Services proposes the following staffing positions. This organizational chart reflects a ten year plan. Please see the Appendices R & R1 to view the Proposed Organizational Chart in its entirety:

HUMAN RESOURCES-DECENTRALIZED

Career Development Coordinators- Coordinators will be responsible for conducting resume assistance, classroom presentations, mock interviews, business etiquette dinners and partnering with faculty to integrate career development into their courses at all levels. They would be in charge of infusing career development tools as soon as first year students arrive on-campus to serving alumni countering the ever common thought process that only seniors, in their last semester, should start thinking about a resume, interview skills and networking. This position will assist in the University's efforts of tracking alumni long-term and staying connected with, in what we would hope to be, a fruitful relationship for the students, departments, University and ultimately employers.

- Five Career Development Coordinators (one per college) housed in each college. Depending on staff: student ratio, some colleges may need more than one.
- One additional Career Development Coordinator to serve Waco and Midlothian (as student growth is expected to support this need).

Employer and Alumni Relations Coordinator: Track all alumni and establish/maintain working relationships with industry representatives to integrate with students and faculty for either professional/personal development (hiring tips, facility tours, internships, on-campus interviews, employer classroom visits, research with students and/or faculty, etc.). Each position will also supervise a Texan Shadow intern to place students in their college in shadowing opportunities with employers.

- Five Employer and Alumni Relations Coordinators (one per college) housed in each college. Depending on staff: student ratio, some colleges may need more than one.
- One additional Employer & Alumni Relations Coordinator to serve Fort Worth, Waco and Midlothian (as anticipated student growth is expected to support this need).

HUMAN RESOURCES- CENTRALIZED

Career Counselor- (centralized) Provide career counseling to all incoming first time students to assist Academic Affairs efforts in placing a student into a major early on in their college career. Engage with students who are placed on academic probation or suspension by the deans.

According to the International Association of Counseling Services, counselors should spend no more than 65% of their time in direct-client care (individual, group or intake). Career Counseling is performed by Licensed Professional Counselors, LPCi's or graduate level counseling student in their practicum. With roughly 1800 freshmen required to declare a college or a major, there will be a significant increase in the necessity of direct, one-on-one career counseling for incoming first time students in a strong attempt to aid in the University's retention efforts with the FYS course. Historically, all students in a DGS 101 course linked with a Learning Community had to take the MyPlan assessments which considers personality, interests, skills and work values for career development. In continuing with this momentum, all first time students in FYS need career development direction that cannot be accomplished in the classroom alone. Career counseling offers tailored, personalized attention in the student's decision making process. Currently, almost all FYS students utilize the MyPlan assessment, but with limited human resources, few FYS students matriculate into a career counseling session. Since there are multiple variables at play in determining a major, we suggest the following:

- Three Career Counselors to aid and assist students during their first year with a safe explorative environment to consider career options available.
 - It is also recommended that students who meet the following criteria be required to complete career counseling:
 - do not file a degree plan within the 45 hour mandate, or
 - are placed on academic probation and suspension.

Job Fair Coordinator (centralized) this position would implement, organize and execute all themed job fairs throughout the year.

Experiential Learning Coordinator: (centralized) In the future, this position will supervise Texan Shadow program and interns, recruit and cultivate for internships with faculty for those required in degree plan, oversee the Applied Learning Experience Internship initiative. (The Graduate Assistant position currently funded to assist with ALE's will end 2015). Depending on numbers and increased need, possibly additional full time staff to support this initiative on the college level.

Associate Directors/ Executive Director of Career and Professional Development

With the implementation of the new academic integrated programs and an increase in staffing needs, supervision will be instrumental in continuity and strategic information sharing among the college specific Career Development Coordinators, Career Counselors and Employer Relations & Alumni Coordinators. The need for additional Administrative Assistants will also arise. It is proposed that the following supervisors will streamline the processes more effectively:

- Associate Director for Career Counseling
 - Conducts career counseling and supervises Career Counselors and interns
- Associate Director of Academic Career Development
 - Supervises Career Development Coordinators and works with focused populations (Gateway/SSMI, Upward Bound, High School/Community, MENTAL Freedom, student worker/supervisor trainings with Athletics, Intern 2 Learn, BOLD, international, etc.)
- Associate Director of Employer and Alumni Relations
- Associate Director of Promotions & Event Planning
- Reclassify Director to Executive Director of Career and Professional Development

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO THE COMMUNITY

In an effort to expand and broaden our scope, Career Services recognizes the verbalized need from employers to provide specialized trainings covering topics such as Digital Dirt and Social Media, Customer Services, Professionalism, Personalities in the Work Place, etc. Career Services staff are eager to meet the

needs of the employer and through professional development and certification training, this can be met. This will undoubtedly impact employer partnerships, donations and in-kind services to the University.

FACILITIES

In order to provide the services and staff power as suggested to the students, additional office space is critical both in the current suite and in the academic buildings. Two of the deans (COAES and COBA have already factored in an office space for a Career Development Coordinator in their plans for building renovations and new structures. Currently, interns share work stations in the waiting area for students thus prohibiting privacy during phone calls and appointments. When employers and retirees volunteer to conduct mock interviews, almost all staff (including GA's) are ousted from their personal office space to accommodate the volunteers at various times. This is work prohibitive. A preliminary estimate of facility needs is as follows:

Stephenville

- Three new office spaces to accommodate the new full time Career Counselors (centralized in current suite)
- Cubical setting for student interns (Texan Shadow, Marketing, Employer Recruitment and Promotions, etc.)
- Ten office spaces within academic buildings averaging, initially, one per college for Career Development Coordinators as well as Employer and Alumni Relations Coordinators (decentralized)
- Two spaces for the Job Fair Coordinator and Experiential Learning Coordinator (centralized)

Waco, Midlothian and Fort Worth

- One permanent office space in Waco for Career Development Coordinator (currently it is a temporary office space)
- Additional office space to accommodate a Career Counselor, as a temporary office and then eventually as a permanent office at both Midlothian and Fort Worth campuses (Career Counseling is currently being conducted on the Waco campus through the student counseling center).
- One permanent office space for Employer and Alumni Relations Coordinator (Waco, Fort Worth and Midlothian)
- Eventually, with the rise in student services at the satellite campuses, administrative assistance will be needed as well as event planning with job fairs, etc.

OTHER AREAS OF CONSIDERATION

This report would be incomplete if we did not address the organizational chart in reference to the divisional location of Career Services. An overwhelming abundance of Career Services offices are under the Student Life umbrella (3/5th according to NACE benchmarking survey) and about 1/5th reside in Academic Affairs. The remaining 1/5th includes Advancement and External Relations, Enrollment Management, etc. It is understandable that the majority of the career centers fall within either Student Life or Academic Affairs. Student Life provides the co-curricular aspect of the college experience while Academic Affairs equips the students with enriched content. Bridging the two spheres is optimal. As a Career Services office, we have to ask ourselves how we can fully integrate career development aspects into the academic curriculum for all majors. Employers are not only seeking students with high academic content, but also candidates with professionalism and poise. If graduates cannot function properly in a highly competitive job interview or cannot write an effective resume to even obtain an interview, then how successful is their college degree? Therefore, career development is not an optional, co-curricular activity. It is an integral component to the academic program and should be built, cohesively, into the curriculum and co-curriculum ensuring that all Tarleton students are equipped with the tools and soft skills to put their education and learning to use.

Figure 5: NACE 2012 Benchmarking

Figure 5: Organizational division

Academic affairs	191	21.7%
Enrollment management	26	3.0%

Institutional development	22	2.5%
Student affairs	506	57.4%
School within university	48	5.4%
Other	86	9.8%

As the delivery of services is enhanced and the infrastructure begins to take form, the department will make efforts to change its name from Career Services to a robust, all inclusive title, Career and Professional Development.

CAREER SERVICES STAFF AND UNIVERSITY EFFORTS ON AND OFF CAMPUS

Building relationships with faculty/staff around campus and partnering with entities beyond the gates is integral in this department's successes. The staff in the department not only conduct career development services and programming, but also play an active role on campus committees and assorted events on and off campus. Each month, staff within the division report hours spent on continuing education/professional development, service to the University as well as the community. In 2012-2013, Career Services staff contributed a total of 627 hours to the community, University and in professional development with the bulk of time spent in Service to the University (376 hours). While this is an important initiative for the department, it also comes with an expense in student career development appointments.

COMPARABLE UNIVERSITIES

Many effective programs are built on the heels of other institutions by tweaking and reframing variables significant to the campus culture. Universities said to be "Peer" institutions for Tarleton State would be Stephen F. Austin, West Texas A&M, and Western Oregon. Institutions considered as "Competitors" are Sam Houston, Stephen F. Austin and Texas State. Those institutions identified as "Aspirational" have been identified as New Mexico State University, Sam Houston and Slippery Rock University.

After exploring their respective Career Service departmental webpages, Texas State currently operates under a similarly proposed hybrid model where Career Development Coordinators and Employer Relations Coordinators are deployed into the colleges, yet managed through Career Services. Texas State also employs multiple Career Counselors. Sam Houston has one full-time Career Counselor and 2 graduate level Career Counseling interns. Sam Houston has one full time staff focused on Employer Relations and another as the Marketing and Event Coordinator. Interestingly, Sam Houston employs a specific person to manage their online employment system.

Several of these institutions employed Student Advisors to engage with students with interview skills, resume assistance and so forth. As the university prepares to shift directions in support of this plan, the above referenced institutions will be an invaluable resource in navigating potential learning curves.

UNIVERSITY ALIGNMENT

Bridging the departmental goals with that of the University's goals is imperative to a fluid relationship in working towards a common purpose. The newly devised University goals are as follows:

1. Academic Innovation
2. Student Transformation
3. Distinctive Engagement
4. Exemplary Services

The department's newly formulated goals and initiatives align seamlessly:

1. Student Transformation
 - a. U-OBJ: Assure that students achieve peak performance in all courses

- i. U-STRAT: Require a minimum of 3 ALE's for every student to include an internal/external internship; a multicultural experience through a service learning or study away/abroad; and the third of the student's choosing.
 1. *CS-Measure: The Career Services Internship and ALE Coordinator will increase ALE and internship participation.*
 - ii. U-STRAT: Implement a first-year seminar that increases learning and study skills in the discipline.
 1. *CS-Measure: All first time students will participate in career assessments and receive at least one career counseling appointment before the end of their freshman year.*
 - iii. *CS-STRAT: Promote the Career Services 4-year plan to engage students.*
 1. *CS-Measure: Each college's Career Development Coordinator will partner with faculty to integrate and implement the CS 4- year plan for career development.*
2. Distinctive Engagement (through the employment of Career Development Coordinators per college and Employer Relations Coordinators per college)
 - a. U-OBJ: Increase the University's commitment to outreach, partnerships and community engagement.
 - i. U-STRAT: Strengthen mutually beneficial partnerships with business and industry groups and friends of the University.
 1. U-MEAS: Increase the number of career/internship opportunities
 2. U-MEAS: Increase the number of innovative business partnerships
 - ii. U-STRAT: Establish a center for community engagement
 1. U-MEAS: Focusing on participation or revenue from community/continuing education initiatives

PLANS FOR RESEARCH

While the department has various takes on the exact question we want to study, the center revolves around two themes:

- 1) The impact of intentionally integrating career development aspects in the students' college career through academics (mock interview, resume help, networking event, employer applicant flip exercise, etc.) and how they compare to a cohort without the services.
- 2) Study the impact of the MyPlan tool coupled with a career counseling session and its effect on the number of times a student changes majors.

CONCLUSION

This is merely the scaffolding by which to build the optimal, most effective career development office at Tarleton State University. Reshaping the resources and infrastructure to support a hybrid model of operation will largely impact student success. Providing rigorous career explorations with all first time students and those who are at risk, by definition of the University, should impact retention. Engaging employers on and off campus in an intentional, continuous method can only lead to prosperous career opportunities for students and alumni as well as an abundance of resources for faculty, staff and the University at large. An exploration of fully embracing the Student Advisor role, and how to effectively implement such a model at Tarleton State, would be optimal as well.

There are many initiatives in this strategic plan and while the department believes strongly in each facet, in all fairness, some require priority while others can be phased in. As with any long-term strategic plan, variables may shift and take different form allowing this plan to be flexible and contour to the ever evolving University setting.

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