IOWA GROW®
Converting Student Employment into a High-Impact Practice

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Learning Outcomes

After participating in this session, participants will be able to:

• Understand what high-impact practices are and why they are important
• Explain how student employment can serve as a high-impact experience for students
• Identify the benefits of making student employment a high-impact practice
• Summarize the IOWA GROW® initiative
• Determine if something akin to IOWA GROW® could be effective at their institution.
High- Impact Practices

A fair amount of literature indicates that certain high-impact practices (HIPs) seem to have positive effects on students.

HIPs are intentionally-structured activities in which undergraduate students participate that are highly correlated with engagement in educationally purposeful tasks, desired learning outcomes, and persistence (Kuh, 2008).
High-Impact Activities

- First-Year Seminars and Experiences
- Common Intellectual Experiences
- Learning Communities
- Writing-Intensive Courses
- Collaborative Assignments and Projects
- “Science as Science Is Done”; Undergraduate Research
- Diversity/Global Learning
- Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
- Internships and Field Experiences
- Capstone Courses and Projects
AAC&U HIPs Resources

High-Impact Educational Practices

What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter

By George D. Kuh
With an introduction by Carol Geary Schneider and findings on student success from AAC&U’s LEAP Initiative

Ensuring Quality & Taking High-Impact Practices to Scale

By George D. Kuh and Ken O’Donnell
With case studies by Sally Reck
AAC&U HIPs Resources

Five High-Impact Practices
Research on Learning Outcomes, Completion, and Quality

Assessing Underserved Students' Engagement in High-Impact Practices

By Ashley Finley and Tia McWair

With an Assessing Equity in High-Impact Practices Toolkit
Developed by Estella Marie Bensimon, Alicia C. Dowe, and Debbie Peterson-Hanson of the Center for Urban Education at the University of Southern California
Essential Learning Outcome:
NSSE Deep/Integrative Learning

- Integrating ideas or information from various sources
- Included diverse perspectives in class discussions/writing
- Put together ideas from different courses
- Discussed ideas with faculty members outside of class
- Discussed ideas with others outside of class
- Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory
- Synthesizing & organizing ideas, info., or experiences
- Making judgments about the value of information
- Applying theories to practical problems or in new situations
- Examined the strengths and weaknesses of your own views
- Tried to better understand someone else's views
- Learned something that changed how you understand an issue
# Effects of Participating in High-Impact Activities on Deep/Integrative Learning and Gains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Deep Learning</th>
<th>Gains General</th>
<th>Gains Personal</th>
<th>Gains Practical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First-Year</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Communities</td>
<td>+++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Learning</td>
<td>+++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Senior</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Study Abroad</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>++</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student-Faculty Research</td>
<td>+++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internship</strong></td>
<td>++</td>
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<td>++</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Learning</td>
<td>+++</td>
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<td>+++</td>
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<tr>
<td>Culminating Experience</td>
<td>++</td>
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+ p < .001, ++ p < .001 & Unstd B > .10, +++ p < .001 & Unstd B > .30
# Effects of Participating in High-Impact Activities on Student Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First-Year</th>
<th>Senior</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Communities</strong></td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Culminating Experience</strong></td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

+ $p < .001$, ++ $p < .001$ & Unstd $B > .10$, +++ $p < .001$ & Unstd $B > .30$
Graduation Rates by Ethnicity and Participation in High-Impact Practices

Source: CSU Northridge Institutional Research
August, 2010
Employers assess the potential value of high-impact educational practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% saying each would help a lot/fair amount to prepare college students for success</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>84%</strong></td>
<td>Students complete a significant project before graduation that demonstrates their depth of knowledge in their major AND their acquisition of analytical, problem-solving, and communication skills <em>(62% help a lot)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>81%</strong></td>
<td>Students complete an internship or community-based field project to connect classroom learning with real-world experiences <em>(66%)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>81%</strong></td>
<td>Students develop research skills appropriate to their field and develop evidence-based analyses <em>(57%)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>73%</strong></td>
<td>Students work through ethical issues and debates to form their own judgments <em>(48%)</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
High-Impact Activities
Increase Odds Students Will:

✓ Invest time and effort
✓ Interact with faculty and peers about substantive matters
✓ Experience diversity
✓ Get more frequent feedback
✓ Reflect & integrate learning
✓ Discover relevance of learning through real-world applications
✓ Publicly demonstrate competence
What if we made work something akin to a high-impact activity?
Advance Organizer

• What steps could you take to ensure disciplined implementation if you decide to adapt a version of IOWA GROW® at your institution?

• What assets do you already have in place that could help support a similar intervention on your campus?
The University of Iowa

- 31,000 students (22,000 undergrads)

- 8,000 students employed part-time, on campus

- Division of Student Life is largest student employer with over 2,000 employees
IOWA GROW®
Guided Reflection on Work

• Campus employment has often been viewed as a “throwaway” activity in higher education

• IOWA GROW® uses brief, structured conversations between student employees and their supervisors to make the learning that is occurring through student employment more “visible” to students.
IOWA GROW® Guided Reflection on Work

IOWA GROW® conversations use 4 key questions:

- How is this job fitting with your academics?
- What are you learning here at work that’s helping you in school?
- What are you learning in class that you can apply here at work?
- Can you give me a couple of examples of what you’ve learned here that you think you’ll use in your chosen profession?
IOWA GROW® Priorities

• Supporting integration across contexts (work, academics, future career)

• Providing scaffolded practice with reflection

• Cultivate adaptive expertise – ability to use learning flexibly in various contexts

• Metacognition – helping students view themselves as learners no matter the setting
IOWA GROW® Process

• Supervisors are provided training on the logistics and theoretical underpinnings of IOWA GROW®.

• Supervisors have two structured conversations with each of their student employees each semester.

• Small group and 1:1 conversations are acceptable.

• Additional questions may be asked but the 4 core questions are an expectation.
### IOWA GROW® participants are more likely to report...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>% agree/strongly agree</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IOWA GROW® (N=275)</td>
<td>Non-GROW (N=222)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My supervisor helps me make connections between my work and my life as a student. *</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can see connections between my job and major/coursework.*</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My job has helped prepare me for the world of full-time employment.*</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My job has helped me learn about career options.*</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Their job contributed positively to:
- Written and oral communication skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Conflict resolution skills
- Time management
IOWA GROW® participants are more likely to...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>IOWA GROW® participants</th>
<th>Non-GROW participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Please describe one specific way your work as a student employee has positively influenced your experience at the UI.</td>
<td>Gaining Work/Career-Related Skills</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time Management Skills</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Forming Relationships</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enhancing Communication Skills</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning about Diversity</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

% of responses by IOWA GROW® participation

- Be able to explain at least one thing they have learned as a result of employment
Pre-Medicine Student (Tutor)

“My job has helped me learn to explain things in multiple ways…to think of problems from different perspectives….to make complicated things simpler, and to be patient when explaining things in order to help others understand.”
Pharmacy Major (Desk Clerk)

“I’ve learned to work more effectively as a part of a team. Eventually I’ll be working with nurses, physicians, etc. and on my job I’ve learned that each of us contributes to overall processes working smoothly. Sometimes that means conflicts, and I’ve learned key conflict resolution skills in working with the public.”
## Connecting Work to Academics – the BIG picture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UI Institutional Learning Goals</th>
<th>Key Outcomes from IOWA GROW®</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Build a broad knowledge base</strong> inside and outside the classroom</td>
<td>• Specific content knowledge such as software, project management, teaching methods, etc.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **Intellectual and practical skills** (communication – oral/written, teamwork, problem solving, critical and creative thinking, information literacy) | • Communication  
• Teamwork  
• Critical thinking/problem solving  
• Conflict resolution |
| **Develop intellectual, personal, and social responsibility** (responsibility, intercultural knowledge) | • Time management  
• Multicultural competence  
• Relationship skills  
• Study skills |
| Learn to apply knowledge in new settings (integrate ideas across experiences within and beyond the classroom) | • The very nature of IOWA GROW® is connecting across contexts |
### Potential Barriers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **Time**                                                                  | • Small groups vs. 1:1  
• Provide questions ahead of time  
• Build time for questions into regular meetings  
• Reframe the conversation as an investment |
| **Concerns about “carrying” the conversation**                            | • Provide questions ahead of time  
• Reframe the conversation as an investment  
• Demonstrate genuine care |
| **Not sure what to do if something else comes up (e.g., student opens up about a problem)** | • Reframe as a sign of trust  
• Learn referral resources  
• Acknowledge, support, refer |
Tips From the Trenches

- Know what skills and knowledge students should gain from their position
- Start the trend early
- Take the time to care
- Empower and support supervisors
- Start with a pilot
Benefits for Supervisors

“The conversations gave me instant feedback on how the students were coping with balancing both work duties and classes and gave me valuable information on how to help students with any issues they were having. I also found it helpful to see how the students were learning their jobs and relating to other employees in the workplace.”

-Bill Kelly, University Housing & Dining
“The student perspective provides a mirror for me – it points out aspects of our work that I sometimes take for granted or just assume everyone knows because I have been in this work environment for so long.”

-Tanya Villhauer, Student Health & Wellness
The Major Tasks

Teach students to:

- **Reflect** – think about experiences inside and outside the classroom
- **Integrate** – connect what they are learning from different courses, out-of-class experiences, and life beyond the institution
- **Apply** – transfer and use what one has learned in different settings presenting novel challenges and opportunities
Small Group Discussion

• What steps could you take to ensure disciplined implementation if you decide to adapt this intervention at your institution?

• What assets do you already have in place that could help support a similar intervention on your campus?
More on IOWA GROW®

http://vp.studentlife.uiowa.edu/initiatives/grow/

- Includes implementation resources
- Additional questions
- Training materials
- Background readings
May the Force be with us
Questions