Introduction of Hypothesis

Since 2002 Career Services has been using Banner to track students’ use of services while enrolled at MSUB: counseling appointments, Cooperative Education internships, PT and community service work study jobs, and credential files. A new jobs database service, CareerLink, was implemented F06.

These data for 2002-2007 were compiled in Access for the Class of 2007 grads (X06 + F06 + S07) and linked to their employment outcomes as identified in the annual grad survey conducted 6-18 months after graduation by Career Services. The Class of 2007 included 792 unduplicated grads, 618 of whom responded to the survey; this high response rate (78%) is due to Career Services’ diligence in collecting this information.

New in the Class of 2007 survey were data about the source of employment and relationship of prior work experience/internships with wages. As he did for Class of 2006 grads, Joe W. Floyd, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus of Sociology, analyzed Class of 2007 data in SPSS.

For the second year, we hoped to identify the positive impact of interaction with Career Services on grads’ employment in their major field of study: Grads who used Career Services were employed in their major at higher rates than grads who did not use Career Services.

Summary of Selected Findings

44% of all grads used 1-5 services while they were students; some used multiple services: career counseling (200 grads), CareerLink (174 grads), PT jobs (154 grads) Cooperative Education internships (136 grads), credential files (31 grads), and/or community service work study (23 grads).

153 grads used 1 service; 74 used 2 services; 81 used 3; 41 used 4; 2 grads used 5 services.

Among grads who used 1 or more services, 45.9% were employed, and 46.2% who used 1-5 services were employed in their major field. Only 4.7% of respondents indicated they were seeking employment; 69.3% were employed in their major and 64.1% were employed full-time in their major.

Internship experience positively influenced grads’ employment:

- 76% of CAHP grads who did an internship were employed FT in their major; statistical significance, p=.047. By comparison, 47.8% who did not do an internship were employed FT in their major.

- 96% of CAHP grads who did Cooperative Education internship were employed FT; statistical significance, p=.023. 68.8% of those who did not do an internship were employed FT.

- Among the respondents who were employed, 90% of CAS grads who did an internship were employed FT; 100% of COB grads who did an internship were employed FT; 93% of COT grads who did an internship were employed FT.

Age makes a real difference. A significant negative correlation between number of services and age shows that people aged 27 and older were more likely not to use any services than were people 26 years and younger. A significant t-test (p=.001) shows the mean age of those who received at least 1 service was 30.01, while the mean age of those who used 0 services was 33.18.

Ethnicity and gender were not significantly related to being employed in major, but age categories were. People between 24 and 30 were more likely to be employed in their major than were younger or older people; p=.047.

40% of respondents who said they’d used Career Services also evaluated their satisfaction with services. 90% (N=71) ranked their satisfaction as “satisfied” or “very satisfied” (3.13 on scale of 1-4).
Conclusions

Data did not support our hypothesis: Grads who used Career Services were employed in their major field at higher rates than grads who did not use Career Services. However, the internship experience positively impacted grads’ employment with statistically significant evidence that grads who did internships in CAHP, CAS, COB, and COT were employed at higher rates than were grads who did no internships.

As reported by the Department of Labor & Industry, Montana still enjoys one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country (3.6% in March 2008); the national unemployment rate rose to 5.1% in March. According to Labor Commissioner Keith Kelly, “national economic instability has not had a significant impact on Montana’s economy,” so Class of 2007 grads who wish to be employed probably are working whether or not they used Career Services.

30.2% of respondents say they worked for their present employer before graduation. These people would likely not seek assistance from Career Services and therefore bias the findings of employment. People who don’t use Career Services are those who already have a job, while people who seek services need additional help and as a result are not as employable.