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 2002-2008 were compiled in Access for the Class of 2008 grads (X07 + F07 + S08) and linked to their employment outcomes as identified in the annual grad survey conducted by Career Services 6-18 months after May graduation.

The Class of 2008 included 941 unduplicated grads, 726 of whom responded to the survey; this high response rate (77%) is due to Career Services’ diligence in collecting this information. Joe W. Floyd, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus of Sociology, analyzed Class of 2008 outcome data in SPSS as he did for Classes of 2006 & 2007 grads.

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 field at higher rates than grads who did not use Career Services.

Summary of Selected Findings

This year for the first time, the respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with Career Services. 91.4% of the 269 respondents who answered this question said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the services they received from Career Services.

54% of all grads used services while they were students, and some used multiple services: career counseling (252 grads), CareerLink (378 grads), PT jobs (71 grads) Cooperative Education internships (191 grads), credential files (28 grads), and/or community service work study (58 grads).

86.1% of those receiving at least one service are employed compared with 80.1% employment of those receiving no services; statistically significant at p<.05. Not quite statistically significant (p = .086), 66.8% of respondents who received at least one service are employed in their major compared with only 60.4% of those who received 0 services.

This year 8% of respondents indicated they are seeking employment while only 4.7% of Class of 2007 survey respondents were seeking employment, possible evidence of current economic downturn. 63.9% of the survey respondents are employed in their major and for 92.4% of those respondents (59.1% of all respondents), their employment is full-time.

Slightly more respondents who did a Cooperative Education internship are employed (85.6%) than are respondents who did not do an internship (82.8%). Similarly, slightly more respondents who did CE internships are employed in their major (68.5%) compared with respondents who did not do an internship (62.8%).

For College of Allied Health respondents, 93.1% of those who did an internship are employed full-time while only 75% of those who did no internship are employed full-time; data not statistically significant.

For College of Business respondents, 81.1% of those who did an internship are employed in their major while only 61.1% of those who did no internship are employed; nearly statistically significant at p = .072.

For College of Technology respondents, 97.1% of those who did an internship are employed while 82.2% of those who did no internship are employed; statistically significant (p < .05).
Younger students use more services: A significant t-test (p < .001) shows the mean age of those who received 4 services is 24.86, while the mean age of those who used 0 services is 31.03. The mean age of respondents who received one or more services is 28.7 and this mean age is also statistically significantly different (p < .001) from the 31.03 mean age of those receiving no services.

No statistically significant relationships were found between age, gender, or ethnicity and being employed, being employed in major, or being employed full-time in major.

Conclusions

Our hypothesis is that students who use Career Services are employed in their major at higher rates than are those who use no services. We did find that 66.8% of respondents who received at least one service are employed in their major compared with only 60.4% of those who received 0 services, but this finding was not quite statistically significant (p = .086). 91.4% of those using Career Services rated themselves as "satisfied" or "very satisfied."

26.2% 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.

As reported by the Department of Labor & Industry in March 2009, Montana’s seasonally adjusted unemployment rate is 6.1%, considerably higher than 3.6% in March 2008, while national unemployment is currently 8.9%. Using assistance from Career Services is especially helpful in finding career employment when unemployment is rising.