

# Report of the Action Item Team on Cooperative Education

April 2, 2007

Team Charge: Consider the development of an IUPUI model for connecting the academic curriculum with student work experience. Formalize the process and involve faculty. Include work on campus whenever possible, but aggressively seek external opportunities as well. Consider both concurrent work and curricular combinations and more traditional sequential formats for cooperative education. Look at programs at the University of Illinois at Springfield, Drexel University, Purdue University, and Northeastern University as possible models.

Committee Members: Teresa Bennett, Cathy Buyarski, David Lewis (chair), Steve Jones, Ken Rennels, Jacqueline Singh, and Sloane Thompson.

Core Finding: The team believes this is not the time for IUPUI to undertake a formal broad based cooperative education program.

However, IUPUI has strong and developing internship and campus employment programs that can, and should be, enhanced. Specifically we recommend:

1. An emphasis on *real world* experience should become the distinguishing hallmark of an IUPUI undergraduate education and distinguish IUPUI from other Indiana University campuses. Students should be required to complete one of the following experiences as a requirement for graduation:
  - a. An internship experience, broadly defined (inclusive of non-credit, applied experiences);
  - b. A clinical, practicum, or fieldwork experience;

- c. An undergraduate research project, or
  - d. Study abroad
2. The Solution Center's leadership role in the development of internship opportunities should be recognized and formalized. The work that it and the Internship Council have begun should be continued and supported. Recommendations to appropriate campus groups and administrators on adjustments to campus policy and practice to enhance the internship experience will emerge from these groups.
  3. The infrastructure to support internships in a number of schools needs to be enhanced and strengthened. Attention should be given to advising students, from the beginning of their IUPUI career about the *real world* requirement—and, how they can use it to their best advantage.
  4. Garnering financial support for internships should be a campus leadership priority for the coming IUPUI Campus Campaign. The IUPUI experience of providing grants to support internship and research experiences in Indiana businesses, non-profit organizations and government agencies, through the Lilly Endowment grant, administered through the Solution Center, demonstrates the impact such funding can have. The Campus Campaign should seek monies to support a similar grant program to be administered through the Solution Center, and the Solution Center should also develop models for schools to use in fundraising for students' internships. A goal of \$500,000 per year to support the internships program should be established for the Solution Center, additionally schools should develop their own goals.
  5. Whenever possible, but not to the exclusion of internship opportunities, students should be encouraged to engage in on-campus work that provides co-curricular learning and develops workplace skills. These on-campus experiences will strengthen students' credentials when they seek off-campus internship experiences. The current campus employment program can be enhanced through additional departmental funding tied to campus jobs that have formal learning plans for student employees.

## Background

For years, many of the IUPUI schools have offered a variety of internships, practicum, and other *real world* work experience as an option or requirement for their academic programs. In typical IUPUI fashion, this diversity of school-based programs has afforded many opportunities, but also to some confusion, especially in the central Indiana community. The founding of the Solution Center provides a single-point of entry to access the talent at IUPUI, and to our external business and nonprofit neighbors. Solution Center staff serves as facilitators and champions by working with nonprofit, business and government leaders to provide assistance in defining need, discerning required resources, and identifying appropriate partners and programs at IUPUI among the schools, research and resource centers, and programs.

The Solution Center model has proven to be an effective agent for change among schools and across the campus. Since its launch in May 2004, Solution Center staff has worked to affect the culture for internships and experiential learning in schools, and to create new resources to facilitate resource requirements. This has included encouraging schools to incorporate internships into their curriculum, providing *real world* community projects for use in schools as “applied case studies” for course work, granting funds to five schools to assist in establishing formal internship and career planning programs, as well as the administration and support for the new online posting system known as [iupuitalent.net](http://iupuitalent.net).

The [iupuitalent.net](http://iupuitalent.net) resource site allows external businesses, government agencies and nonprofit organizations to post internship, volunteer, or professional positions. The system easily facilitates candidate searches for positions that require skills and knowledge gained through departments in multiple schools, multi-disciplinary teams of students, and/or individuals of very specific and defined disciplines from just one central point of contact. In addition, the Solution Center has established effective partnerships with the offices of Work-Study, Service and Learning, the Career Center, Undergraduate Learning, and other school-based and relevant programs to facilitate additional internships and resources for projects in the community.

The Solution Center was founded with representation of all of the IUPUI schools and chairs the IUPUI Internship Council. This group has developed policy, procedures, and practices relating to internships for the campus, and

will recommend adjustments to enhance the overall goals and objectives for IUPUI internship programs. In conjunction with other Civic Engagement committees and the IUPUI Registrar, the Solution Center and the Internship Council have developed new policies and procedures for “transcripting” professional internships, and they are working with schools to create new internship course offerings. Under the Solution Center’s leadership, the fourth annual Intern Connections Fair in February 2007 involved the widest cross-section of IUPUI schools and students and brought more than 50 employers seeking interns to campus for this event.

Recommendation One: An emphasis on *real world* experience should become the distinguishing hallmark of an IUPUI undergraduate education and distinguish IUPUI from other Indiana university campuses. Students should be required to complete one of the following experiences as a requirement for graduation:

- a. An internship experience, broadly defined (inclusive of non-credit, applied experiences);
- b. A clinical, practicum, or fieldwork experience;
- c. An undergraduate research project, or
- d. Study abroad

Such a requirement will reinforce the campus’ reputation as a place that values and encourages *real world* experience and the practical application of knowledge and would enhance the IUPUI “brand” among prospective students and in the general community. It will mean that a number of changes are required in campus structures and resources. Recommendations relating to the internship experience follow.

Recommendation Two: The leadership role of the Solution Center in the development of internship opportunities should be recognized and formalized. The work that it and the Internship Council have begun should be continued and supported. Recommendations to appropriate campus groups and administrators on adjustments to campus policy and practice to enhance the internship experience will emerge from these groups.

The role of the Solution Center and the Internship Council needs to be formalized in much the same way as the Office for Professional Development focuses on transforming the internal IUPUI culture through

“leadership and scholarly expertise that stimulates and supports innovations in teaching, learning, research and scholarly activity, and civic engagement.” Under this recommendation, the Solution Center would assume a formal role in building internal and external partnerships, promoting a culture of professional practice, experiential development and learning, and applied (community) research.

Because the Solution Center is a central unit for tying work to the curriculum it should report to the Dean of Faculties.

Recommendation Three: The infrastructure to support internships in a number of schools needs to be enhanced and strengthened.

Attention should be given to advising students, from the beginning of their IUPUI career about the *real world* requirement and how they can use it to their best advantage. Beginning with the orientation of new students and moving through the first two years at IUPUI, academic advisors must work with each student to explore and commit to the experiential learning opportunities that best support their academic and career plans. Further, the work of University College and the IUPUI Career Center must be focused on assisting students in achieving the intellectual and personal readiness required of advanced-level experiential learning. We recommend that the results of these efforts take the form of a “Personal Development Plan”. Each student would outline their academic and career goals, as well as a plan for achieving both as part of the Learning Community program. Integrating this planning with the Learning Community program will ensure 83% of all students have a plan in place, by the end of the first semester of enrollment, for completing an experiential learning requirement that fits with their educational and career goals.

The level of success with internship programs across the schools is uneven. A number of schools require clinical, practicum, or fieldwork experience, and as such might not need to focus on internships. Several schools have been quite successful. These schools usually fund their programs with a combination of program and course credit fees. A number of schools have had considerably less success and in most cases have not been able to provide the resources required for effective programs. We strongly recommend that schools be included in the Solution Center priorities in much the way that grants were awarded in 2006 to develop school-based

internship programs. In this way, Schools too could request funding from the Venture Fund for use in supporting innovative approaches to experiential or community-based learning programs. In addition, the Dean of Faculties should monitor school programs to assure that appropriate progress is being made to develop the required infrastructure and resources.

Recommendation Four: Garnering financial support for internships should be a campus leadership priority for the coming IUPUI Campus Campaign. The IUPUI experience of providing grants to support internship and research experiences in Indiana businesses, non-profit organizations and government agencies, through the Lilly Endowment grant, administered through the Solution Center, demonstrates the impact such funding can have. The Campus Campaign should seek monies to support a similar grant program to be administered through the Solution Center, and the Solution Center should also develop models for schools to use in fundraising for students' internships. A goal of \$500,000 per year to support the internship grant program should be established for the Solution Center, additionally schools should develop their own goals.

The Chancellor and Dean of Faculties should provide leadership to ensure ongoing funding of at least the level made available to the Solution Center by the 2004-2006 Lilly Endowment grant, which was used to award funds through the "Venture Fund" for community partners to create internships and research projects. This funding proved to be essential to the development of new relationships with nonprofit organizations, minority and women-owned businesses, small businesses and entrepreneurs, and government agencies—most of which had never before accessed the University—and, for ensuring a level of accountability in the quality and duration of those engagements. In return, all of the Solution Center partners offered our students and faculty a largely untapped reservoir of high-quality opportunities for experience, professional growth, research and analysis, and networking.

In addition, we suggest that schools pursue individual and discipline-specific funding for internship opportunities.

Recommendation Five: Whenever possible, but not to the exclusion of internship opportunities, students should be encouraged to engage in on-

campus work that provides co-curricular learning and develops workplace skills. These on-campus experiences will strengthen students' credentials when they seek off-campus internship experiences. The current campus employment program can be enhanced through additional departmental funding tied to campus jobs that have formal learning plans for student employees.

On-campus student employment must become more purposeful and directed toward learning that supports an individual student's curriculum. The IUPUI Student Employment program in partnership with Human Resources Administration should develop a program through which personnel who supervise student employees are trained in how to shape job descriptions, work tasks, and evaluations in a manner that supports the student's classroom experience and career goals. Due to budgetary constraints, most campus employers seek to hire the small number of students receiving Work-Study monies through their Financial Aid Award. Campus funds to support student employment should be made available to on-campus employers who utilize a more educationally purposeful approach to student employment. This funding strategy would serve as an incentive to move to a learning-based approach to on-campus employment, as well as to expand the number of on-campus jobs available to students who are not awarded Work-Study funds.