

Academic Support Unit Assessment

Office of Undergraduate Studies

Jobs PLUS

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**Northern Illinois
University**

Accreditation, Assessment and Evaluation (AAE)

Academic Support Unit Assessment

Part I: Assessment Plan

1. History and Context

Jobs PLUS was designed and founded by NIU staff member Chad Glover in the aftermath of the university's Bold Futures Workshops. In 2013-14, NIU President Doug Baker launched the Bold Futures Workshops to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to put forward ideas to help the university realize its mission and contribute to the goal of student career success.

During the Bold Futures Workshops, Glover utilized innovation research to identify ways to supplement and enhance the experiences students were having in college with a focus on access and affordability. Jobs PLUS emerged from this work and is designed to integrate NIU into the portion of student's life that contains their work experience and create a new type of partnership with the employer community; including the part of that community important to students but often isolated from higher education.

The first Jobs PLUS professional development events were hosted in the Fall of 2015. Jobs PLUS events initially recruited on-campus interns who were part of the On-Campus Internship Program and students completing the Passport requirement in the College of Business. As the program was developing and maturing, the director observed a clear need and immediate opportunity to solicit involvement from additional university programs, on-campus, and offcampus employers. Program participation has continually expanded since that first semester.

In the spring of 2016 the decision was made to connect Jobs PLUS to the NIU PLUS initiative. Jobs PLUS joined Academics PLUS and Engage PLUS to become one of the three components composing NIU PLUS. Professional development events are the mechanism to accomplish the integration envisioned in the design of Jobs PLUS. Hosted throughout the semester, these events are open and free for any NIU student to attend. If a student's employer partners with Jobs PLUS, the student is eligible to attend Jobs PLUS events on their paid work time. Jobs PLUS events are facilitated by a mix of faculty, staff, alumni, and employer partners who have expertise in a given area.

The focus of Jobs PLUS events is to build core, transferrable skills that are important across disciplines and careers like leadership, workplace communication, teamwork, interpersonal skills, and ethical decision making. An empirically-based competency model is currently under development that will guide the selection of Jobs PLUS events in future semesters. The program as it stands today is a result of the initial design and development coupled with the input and contributions of many NIU faculty, staff, alumni, employers, and interested parties. To this point JobsPLUS has relied upon graduate assistant support for assessment. While this has helped build a solid base, the regular turnover that comes with graduate assistants moving on has presented some challenges.

Since the last Assessment Plan was submitted, the Office of Undergraduate Studies (OUS) was formalized and launched. Jobs PLUS was organized within this new Office. Then in the winter through summer of 2019, OUS units updated and refined goals, and identified priority tactics that aligned with the NIU SEM Plan; this essentially re-set our Assessment Plans. Results are provided for those activities that continued despite the changes, but you will notice several results have no data reported. Data for these will be collected and reported in the next UAP cycle when Jobs PLUS is up once again.

2. Mission, Goals and Objectives – (Revised and updated since 2017 UAP plan was submitted).

Mission Statement

Many college students have to work while they go to school. Because they have to work, they sometimes miss out on opportunities to attend programs and events that would be valuable to their career development. Meanwhile, employers are increasingly saying both field-specific knowledge and a broad range of knowledge and skills are important for college graduates to achieve long-term career success. Jobs PLUS seeks to provide a solution by targeting this broad range of knowledge and skills. The Jobs PLUS model is designed to expand access to learning outside the classroom while addressing one of the primary reasons students frequently miss out on these hands-on learning experiences. That solution is Jobs + Professional Development Series = Jobs PLUS.

Unit Goals and Objectives

Goal 1. Manage and coordinate professional development events that develop undergraduate students' transferable (i.e., soft) employment skills [*Professional-development Workshops*]

Objective 1.1. Jobs PLUS will collaborate with various university departments to design, implement, and continuously evaluate an empirically-developed competency model that will guide the selection of topics for Jobs PLUS events.

Assessment Method: Data Tracking: Excel system to capture employer organizations

Target: Establish a baseline to set future years' targets for increasing partnerships; assessing the industries represented

Assessment Method: Assessment of the industries represented by partner employers and identify where new partnerships could be established.

Target: Identify at least one new partner from each of the non- or under-represented industries

Objective 1.2. Jobs PLUS will collaborate with various parties on and off campus to host professional development events each semester.

Assessment Method: Data tracking of type of event and industries represented to determine which topics or industry-specific events have higher attendance – Maximize exposure for participants. Year 1: Identify a baseline attendance rate across all programs

Target: Years 2-5 increase attendance by 10% each term (if this increase rate is reasonable based on assessment)

Assessment Method: Year 1: Review satisfaction-survey results and identify which programs have highest satisfaction

Target: Increase satisfaction among the three low-performing programs; or among the low-performing aspects of the event(s).

Goal 2. Engage NIU students in Jobs PLUS events to help them develop work-based/career skills [*Student Engagement*]

Objective 2.1. Jobs PLUS will maintain databases to record student event registration and attendance.

Assessment Method: Tracking and matching of student involvement in Jobs PLUS events with part-time employment acquisition or internship reporting. (Assumption: Exposure and attendance can lead to engagement in career-based learning).

Target: 25%-30% of Jobs PLUS participants will work in a part-time job participating in Jobs PLUS.

Target: 25%-30% of Jobs PLUS participants will report an internship with NIU Career Services.

Assessment Method: Data analysis of the retention rate of Jobs PLUS participants (fall to fall) compared with those who do not participate

Target: Identify the retention rate for the group of students that participate in Jobs PLUS.

Objective 2.2. Jobs PLUS will assess student satisfaction with Jobs PLUS programs.

Assessment Method: Review of prior satisfaction survey results of the current Jobs PLUS 1.0 format.

Target: Specific improvements identified (3 to 5) from the satisfaction results of Jobs PLUS 1.0

Target: Implement improvements as Jobs PLUS 2.0

Assessment Method: Satisfaction Survey of participants (Qualtrics) participating in Jobs PLUS 2.0.

Target: More than 80% of respondents will have satisfied or highly satisfied ratings; or ratings will exceed satisfaction metrics established under the Jobs PLUS 1.0 format

Goal 3. Integrate the program into the work experiences of students by developing and tracking employer relationships on and off campus¹ [*Employer Engagement*]

Objective 3.1. Jobs PLUS will develop on- and off-campus partnerships and strategies to recruit and maximize the number of employers in the program.

Assessment Method: Literature Review: Resources that identify work-place competencies and their connection to academics at NIU (e.g., AAC&U) in order to determine partners to recruit that can address the competencies that will be the focus of Jobs PLUS

Target: 100% of the Jobs PLUS partners will be aligned with one or more job/career-related competencies (This target addresses the categorizing of each employer partner via career competencies they represent to inform students of how employers have opportunities across multiple competencies).

Assessment Method: Data analysis: Identify competencies that are under-represented as a guide to recruiting new partners that can address those

¹An employer relationship is defined as an employer that allows students who work for them to attend Jobs PLUS events on their paid work time.

Target: Range of 90%-100% of the job/career competencies will have at least one employer partner represented (This differs from the first target; this speaks to ensuring that all of the competencies are covered).

Objective 3.2. Jobs PLUS will maintain databases to track employer involvement in and satisfaction with the program.

Assessment Method: Administer partner surveys to determine student application of training content

Target: 90% of partners will be able to describe how their employees (NIU students) applied career competencies on the job.

Assessment Method: Satisfaction Survey

Target: 90% of the partners will rate their participation as a Jobs PLUS partners as “valuable” or “Extremely valuable.”

3. Assessment Methods

ASSESSMENT METHODS TABLE

Assessment Method	Explanation			
	Description	Assessment-Level Target ^a	When Data Will be Collected	Person Responsible
Data Tracking	Excel system to capture employer organizations	Establish a baseline to set future years' targets for increasing partnerships; assessing the industries represented	Summer 2020	Director
Comparison of partner list with industries not represented	Assessment of the industries represented by partner employers and identify where new partnerships could be established.	Identify at least one new partner from each of the non- or under-represented industries	Fall 2019-Spring 2020	Director
Data review from satisfaction surveys	Year 1: Review satisfaction-survey results and identify which programs have highest satisfaction	Increase satisfaction among the three low-performing programs; or among the low-performing aspects of the event(s).	Spring 2020	Graduate Assistant
Data Tracking	Data tracking of type of event and industries represented to determine which topics or industry-specific events have higher attendance – Maximize exposure for participants. Year 1: Identify a baseline attendance rate across all programs	Years 2-5 increase attendance by 10% each term (if this increase rate is reasonable based on assessment)	Fall 2019-Summer 2020	Graduate Assistant (GA)
Data Tracking & Matching	Tracking and matching of student involvement in Jobs PLUS events with part-time employment acquisition or internship reporting. (Assumption: Exposure and attendance can lead to engagement in career-based learning).	25%-30% of Jobs PLUS participants will work in a part-time job participating in Jobs PLUS. 25%-30% of Jobs PLUS participants will report an internship with NIU Career Services.	Fall 2020	Director/GA
Analyzing Data	Data analysis of the retention rate of Jobs PLUS participants (fall to fall) compared with those who do not participate. Partner with OIE for retention data- post 10-day count	Identify the retention rate for the group of students that participate in Jobs PLUS.	Fall 2020	Director
Analysis of Satisfaction Survey Results	Review of prior satisfaction survey results of the current Jobs PLUS 1.0 format.	Three-to-five specific improvements identified from the satisfaction results of Jobs PLUS 1.0 Implement improvements as Jobs PLUS	Spring 2021	Director

Assessment Method	Explanation			
	Description	Assessment-Level Target ^a	When Data Will be Collected	Person Responsible
Survey (Satisfaction)	Satisfaction Survey of participants (Qualtrics) participating in Jobs PLUS 2.0.	More than 80% of respondents will have satisfied or highly satisfied ratings; or ratings will exceed satisfaction metrics established under the Jobs PLUS 1.0 format	Spring 2021	Director
Literature Review (Update)	Update work-place competencies and their connection to academics at NIU (e.g., AAU&C) in order to determine partners to recruit that can address the competencies that will be the focus of Jobs PLUS	100% of the Jobs PLUS partners will be aligned with one or more job/career-related competencies (This target addresses the categorizing of each employer partner via career competencies they represent to inform students of how employers have opportunities across multiple competencies).	Spring 2020	Director / GA
Comparison Analysis	Data analysis: Identify competencies that are under-represented as a guide to recruiting new partners that can address those	Range of 90%-100% of the job/career competencies will have at least one employer partner represented (This differs from the first target; this speaks to ensuring that all of the competencies are covered).	Summer 2021	Director
Survey – Direct Observations from Partners	Administer partner surveys to determine student application of training content	90% of partners will be able to describe how their employees (NIU students) applied career competencies on the job.	Summer 2020	Director
Satisfaction Survey	Survey of employer partners via Qualtrics form emailed to partners to gather satisfaction data about their participation and the students working for their companies.	90% of the partners will rate their participation as a Jobs PLUS partners as “valuable” or “Extremely valuable.”	Summer / Fall 2020	Director

ASSESSMENT METHODS-BY-OUTCOMES MATRIX

Assessment Method	Goal		
	G1: Professional development: UGs transferable, employment skills	G2: Engage NIU students in Jobs PLUS events to help them develop work-based/career skills	G3: Integrate program into student work experiences of students
Data Tracking / Matching	S, I	S, I	
Comparison of partner list with industries not represented	F/S, I		
Data review from satisfaction surveys	S, D		
Analyzing Data		S, I	
Analysis of Satisfaction Survey Results		S, I	
Survey (Satisfaction)		S, D	
Literature Review (Update)			S, I
Comparison Analysis			S, I
Survey – Direct Observations from Partners			S, D
Satisfaction Survey			S, I
<i>Note.</i> F=formative assessment, S=summative assessment, D=direct assessment, and I=indirect assessment			