EVALUATION OF THE COLLEGE STUDENT PERSONNEL GRADUATE PROGRAM: STUDENT AND EMPLOYER PERSPECTIVES

A THESIS

Presented to

the Graduate Faculty

University of Wisconsin - La Crosse

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

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by

Merlin J. Bauer

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UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN
La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601

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Candidate: Merlin J. Bauer

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Thesis Committee Member	April 27, 1978 Date

This thesis is approved for the College of Education.

Howard C Rose Dean, College of Education	May 11 1978 Date

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ABSTRACT

The College Student Personnel graduate program at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse was evaluated. The objective was to sample student opinion regarding viability of course content, personal growth achieved in the program and application of courses to employment. Responses were also solicited from employers regarding their perception of student skills and adequacy of job preparation. Two self report questionnaires were sent to obtain the desired information. The findings indicated that employers were well satisfied with graduate preparation. The majority indicated no additional competencies were desired. The largest percentage of student responses rated the program in the moderate to very effective range on the Likert scale. There was much greater concensus regarding program strengths than weaknesses.

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CHAPTER I

Evaluative studies play a major role in determining the effectiveness of higher education. It is through studies of this kind that institutions of higher learning can assess purpose, course content, philosophy and teaching effectiveness. If real differences are discovered between faculty course objectives and the capabilities expected by employer and student, some realignment would be indicated.

With the advent of consumerism in higher education and its apparent legitimacy, the evaluative process becomes crucial. Evaluations must necessarily involve perceptions of students, faculty alumni and employers. In view of the above, the purposes of this study were to:

1. Evaluate attitudes of students regarding personal growth achieved in the College Student Personnel Program at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.
2. To determine the applicability of course offerings to on the job situations.
3. To determine strengths and weaknesses of the College Student Personnel Program as viewed by the employer and employee as well as currently enrolled students.

The present evaluation is concerned with the perception of students currently enrolled in the College Student Personnel program at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, persons

employed within an area of student personnel, and employers of the former. It was reasoned that this would be an effective way to determine a three way perspective of the College Student Personnel graduate program.

Statement of the Problem

A multiple frame of reference, attempting to answer the following questions, was used in this study:

A. How do former students evaluate the College Student Personnel program?

B. How do current students evaluate the College Student Personnel program?

C. How do former students evaluate the courses in their curriculum in College Student Personnel?

D. How do former students evaluate their current job performance?

E. How is job performance of College Student Personnel graduates evaluated by their supervisors?

Related Literature

Student evaluations appear to be one valuable source for determining the effectiveness of educational programs. The concept of student evaluations is not new. The University of Washington has conducted course valuations since 1925. The Universities of Texas and Purdue were also using student evaluations on a limited scale at about the same time. Bennington, Georgia Institute of Technology, Michigan State and the University of Missouri have also conducted such studies for many years (Kent 1967).

Tyler (1959) has stated, "Of course not all things students learn in college are desirable so that the evaluation of college teaching is not simply to find out whether students have learned but whether they have learned the things which the instructors are trying to teach" (p. 5).

Evaluation research is a rational enterprise. Weis (1975) points out that, "It examines the effects of policies and programs on their targets (individuals, groups, institutions, communities) in terms of goals they are meant to achieve. By objective and systematic methods, evaluation research assesses the extent to which goals are realized and looks at the factors associated with successful or unsuccessful outcomes. The assumption is that by providing 'the facts', evaluation assists decision makers in making wise choices among future courses of action" (p. 13).

An important point made by Wolfe (1974) is that "most consumers of evaluative reports know little, if anything, about standard errors, F and t ratio, significance level and the like. Even standard deviations are above the ken of many. The responsibility of the evaluator to communicate results fully and accurately with minimum misunderstanding is enormous" (p. 234).

The above philosophy was adopted in the present study. The mystic statistic has largely been avoided in favor of forthright presentation of results.

Evaluations of the College Student Personnel Graduate Program U.W.-La Crosse

The first evaluation of the C.S.P. program was performed by a faculty committee in the period of 1968-1970 when the program was in its infancy at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. Only three students had graduated by May 1970. The data used in the study were based on information derived from the 32 students active in the program during the spring semester of 1970. Additional information was derived from faculty supervising internships and practicum. The evaluation was divided into eight basic areas: student statistics, objectives, admission curriculum, internships, practicum, advising and staffing and miscellaneous. The evaluation sought to provide information and attitudes which were felt to be useful in evaluating the C.S.P. graduate program. It was concluded on the basis of results that, "the program is sound, strong and popular; faculty and students are interested in its welfare and have worked hard to make it successful" (p. 8).

McGregor (1973) conducted a study to evaluate the different courses offered by the C.S.P. graduate program. That study was "directed toward the perceptions of students who either have graduated or are currently enrolled" (p. 2). Four questions were asked in the McGregor study:

A. Are there significant differences between the program evaluations of graduates and of students currently enrolled in the C.S.P. graduate program?

B. Do Educational Foundations, Core Requirements, and Electives provide academic growth, personal growth, and professional growth for students?

C. Do Internships provide academic growth, personal growth, and professional growth for students?

McGregor found that graduates evaluated the courses they had taken more favorably than students currently enrolled when considering the criterion of academic growth. There were no significant differences between the groups when considering the criteria of personal and professional growth.

Students rated academic growth more favorably than personal and professional growth with reference to Educational Foundations, Core requirements and Electives.

They rated professional growth more favorably than personal growth in internships. There were no significant differences in the criteria of professional and academic growth. It was concluded that students felt they had experienced as much professional growth as personal, but less academic growth in Practicum (McGregor 1973).

Also with reference to specific courses within the program, two evaluations have been done on Counseling Practicum. Gutheil (1971) attempted to determine evidence of student growth in self awareness and skill in interpersonal relationships. Artero (1972) evaluated student growth by investigating the degree to which students gained the counseling skills of warmth, empathy, genuiness and the ability to interact well with their clients.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Sample

The subjects used in this study were graduates, currently enrolled students and employers of graduates. There was no limitation on the minimum number of hours completed in the C.S.P. program. Of the 62 questionnaires returned, 41 of the students had completed at least 30 hours in the program; of the remainder, 11 had completed over 20 hours.

Instrumentation

The student questionnaire consisted of 31 variables which were rated on a Likert scale. Three open-ended items were included at the end for students' comments regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the program as well as additional competencies desired. On the scaled items a value of "1" represented "not effective" while a value of "5" indicated "very effective". The questions related to course objectives, personal growth achieved in the program and adequacy of job preparation.

The employer's evaluation consisted of four response areas. Three items were rated on the Likert scale and one item asked for open ended response regarding additional competencies. A value of "5" indicated excellent preparation while a value of "1" indicated inadequate preparation.

The questionnaires were designed by a College Student Personnel curriculum review committee. Questions were submitted by C.S.P. faculty and/or gleaned from course syllabi.

Definition of terms

Graduated - this term was used for any student having completed 30 hours or more in the C.S.P. program at U.W.-La Crosse.

Currently enrolled - a student currently enrolled in the C.S.P. program regardless of how many hours carried.

Procedure

The data were compiled from information recorded on the questionnaire sent to each student or graduate. The employed graduates were asked to give an employers copy to their respective supervisor. This separate questionnaire was included with the return envelope. Graduate and employer questionnaires were numerically coded to enable matching at a later date.

Names of present students and alumni were obtained from the Student Affairs Office. In this exploratory study 186 questionnaires were mailed. Of the total, 62 were returned by students and graduates, and 17 by employers.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purposes of this study were to obtain student evaluation of the courses, personal achievement attained in the program, and to assess the applicability of both to the employment situation. Through the use of affective and cognitive variables, responses were elicited from employers as well as students in order to give a multidimensional evaluation of the College Student Personnel program.

The value of the multidimensional approach is obvious. The faculty and students may perceive objectives or needs in the program very differently than do the employers. Therefore, including an employer's evaluation serves as a check and represents valuable input.

Course Objectives

The results of the course evaluation indicate that in most instances attainment of course objectives is rated high (Table 1). Most students in the present survey (52 of 62) had completed 20 or more hours in the College Student Personnel program and should have had a fair sampling of coursework. There are seven areas in which 11 to 20 per cent of the students rated objective attained a "2". This suggests a need for reevaluation of objectives and possibly course content in those areas.

Table 1

Evaluation of Course Objective Attainment

by Graduates and Currently Enrolled

Students in the C.S.P. Program

Course Objective	Effectiveness of Objective Attainment (Not at all to very effective)											
	1		2		3		4		5		NR	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Historical Perspective	0	.00	2	3.23	14	22.58	27	43.55	16	25.81	3	4.84
Trends in Higher Education	0	.00	2	3.23	17	27.42	29	46.77	11	17.74	3	4.84
Contemporary Issues	0	.00	1	1.61	17	27.42	28	45.16	13	20.97	3	4.84
Philosophical Concepts	0	.00	3	4.84	20	32.46	25	40.32	11	17.74	3	4.84
Law Relevant to College Student Personnel	3	4.84	8	12.90	19	30.65	21	33.87	8	12.90	3	4.84
Organization and Administration	0	.00	4	6.45	10	16.13	27	43.55	18	29.03	3	4.84
Characteristics of College Students	0	.00	5	8.06	17	27.42	25	40.32	12	19.35	3	4.84

Table 1 cont.

Course Objectives	Effectiveness of Objective Attainment (Not at all to very effective) 1		2		3		4		5		NR	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Problems and Concerns of College Students	1	1.61	3	4.84	18	29.03	24	38.71	13	20.97	3	4.84
Characteristics of College Environment	0	.00	7	11.29	17	27.42	23	37.10	12	19.35	3	4.84
Interaction Between Students and Environment	0	.00	2	3.23	23	27.10	23	38.71	10	16.13	3	4.84
Dynamics of Career Choice	2	3.23	6	9.68	21	33.87	15	24.19	14	22.58	4	6.45
Theories of Career Choice	2	3.23	11	17.74	18	29.03	12	19.35	13	20.97	6	9.68
Value of Research	3	4.84	7	11.29	17	27.42	18	29.03	13	20.97	4	6.45
Systematic Problem Solving	4	6.45	14	22.58	16	25.81	20	32.26	5	8.06	3	4.89
Basic Research Skills	4	6.45	6	9.68	18	29.03	21	33.87	8	12.90	5	8.06
Basic Program Evaluation Skills	3	4.84	9	14.52	21	33.87	22	35.48	3	4.84	4	6.45
Data Based Decision Making	1	1.61	13	20.97	18	29.03	20	32.36	6	9.68	4	6.45

Table 1 Cont.

Course Objectives	Effectiveness of Objective Attainment (Not at all to very effective)											
	1		2		3		4		5		NR	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Self Awareness	1	1.61	13	3.23	18	4.84	20	30.65	6	53.23	4	6.45
Self Understanding	1	1.61	2	3.23	3	4.84	25	40.32	27	43.55	4	6.45
Interpersonal Skills	0	.00	0	.00	13	20.97	22	35.48	23	37.10	4	6.45
Counseling Skills	1	1.61	0	.00	8	12.90	26	41.94	21	33.87	6	9.68
Initiative	2	3.23	2	3.23	19	30.65	19	30.65	16	25.81	4	6.45
Translate Motivation Into Productive Action	3	4.84	4	6.45	27	43.55	16	25.81	7	11.29	5	8.06
Greater Self Acceptance	0	.00	4	6.45	13	20.97	25	40.32	117	27.42	3	4.84
Greater Acceptance of Others	0	.00	2	3.23	10	16.13	25	40.32	22	35.48	3	4.84
Accepting Responsibility for Self	3	4.84	1	1.61	8	12.90	24	38.71	23	37.10	3	4.84

Table 1 Cont.

Course Objectives	Effectiveness of Objective Attainment (Not At All to Very Effective											
	1		2		3		4		5		NR	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Practical Experience as a Generalist	0	.00	4	6.45	11	17.74	20	32.26	20	33.87	6	9.6
Practical Experience as a Specialist	1	1.61	9	14.52	11	17.74	19	30.65	16	25.81	6	9.68
Competence at the Entry Level	1	1.61	2	3.23	7	11.29	24	38.71	21	33.87	7	11.29
Development of Professional Identity	0	.00	2	3.23	10	16.13	27	43.55	17	27.42	6	9.68
Ability to Perform Completely	2	3.23	6	9.68	9	14.52	23	37.10	12	19.35	10	16.13

Currently Enrolled-Graduates

Of the total student response, 15 were currently enrolled in the C.S.P. program (Table 1A). The readers attention is called to the higher rate of no response (13 to 60%). Due to questionnaire design, currently enrolled students would not be expected to rate certain aspects of the program dealing specifically with employment preparation. The graduates tended to rate the program higher in almost every objective than did the currently enrolled student (Table 1B). There is no valid basis for comparing the last four variables on Tables 1A and 1B because they deal specifically with the employment situation. Practicum, Internships and Student-Faculty relationships were rated much higher by graduates than currently enrolled students. Apparently the value of these experiences increase when applied to the employment situation.

Student Response

The overwhelming response of the students to the scaled items was in the moderately effective to very effective range. The great dissimilarity in perceived weaknesses may indicate that they are primarily individual preferences rather than serious deficiencies in the program (Table 2). This conclusion is reinforced by the heavy concentration of response in the perceived strengths (Table 3).

It is interesting to note that in the 1970 report, concern was expressed for lack of communication between faculty

Table 1A

Evaluation of Course Objective Attainment

by Currently Enrolled Students in the C.S.P. Program

	Effectiveness of Objective Attainment (Not at all too very effective)											
	1		2		3		4		5		NR	
Course Objective	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Historical Perspective	0	.00	1	6.67	5	33.33	5	33.33	2	13.33	2	13.33
Trends in Higher Education	0	.00	1	6.67	2	13.33	7	46.67	3	20.00	2	13.33
Contemporary Issues	0	.00	1	6.67	3	20.00	7	46.67	2	13.33	2	13.33
Philosophicle Concepts	0	.00	2	13.33	4	26.67	6	40.00	1	6.67	2	13.33
Law Relevant to College Student Personnel	1	6.67	5	33.33	3	20.00	3	20.00	1	6.67	2	13.33
Organization and Administration	0	.00	2	13.33	3	20.00	4	26.67	4	26.67	2	13.33
Characteristics of College Students	0	.00	4	26.67	3	20.00	4	26.67	2	13.33	2	13.33
Problems and Concerns of College Students	0	.00	2	13.33	4	26.67	5	33.33	2	13.33	2	13.33

Table 1A (Cont)

Course Objective	Effectiveness of Objective Attainment (Not at all too very effective) 1		2		3		4		5		NR	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Characteristics of College Environment	0	.00	2	13.33	4	26.67	4	26.67	3	20.00	2	13.33
Interaction Between Students and Environment	0	.00	1	6.67	4	26.67	6	40.00	2	13.33	2	13.33
Dynamics of Career Choice	2	13.33	0	.00	6	40.00	3	20.00	2	13.33	2	13.33
Theories of Career Choice	1	6.67	3	20.00	5	33.33	1	6.67	2	13.33	3	20.00
Value of Research	0	.00	2	13.33	5	33.33	2	13.33	3	20.00	3	20.00
Systematic Problem Solving	0	.00	6	40.00	4	26.67	3	20.00	0	.00	2	13.33
Basic Research Skills	1	6.67	3	20.00	2	13.33	4	26.67	1	6.67	4	26.67
Basic Program Evaluation Skills	1	6.67	2	13.33	4	26.67	4	26.67	1	6.67	3	20.00
Data Based Decision Making	0	.00	3	20.00	5	33.33	3	20.00	1	6.67	3	20.00
Self Awareness	1	6.67	0	.00	2	13.33	3	20.00	6	40.00	3	20.00

Table 1A (Cont)

	Effectiveness of Objective Attainment (Not at all too very effective)											
	1		2		3		4		5		NR	
Course Objective	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Self Understanding	1	6.67	0	.00	2	13.33	5	33.33	4	26.67	3	20.00
Interpersonal Skills	0	.00	0	.00	4	26.67	6	40.00	2	13.33	3	20.00
Counselings Skills	1	6.67	0	.00	3	20.00	4	26.67	2	13.33	5	33.33
Initiative	0	.00	0	.00	6	40.00	1	6.67	5	33.33	3	20.00
Translate Motivation into Productive Action	1	6.67	1	6.67	6	40.00	1	6.67	2	13.33	4	26.67
Greater Self Acceptance	0	.00	3	20.00	1	6.67	4	26.67	5	33.33	2	13.33
Greater Acceptance of Others	0	.00	1	6.67	3	20.00	4	26.67	5	33.33	2	13.33
Accepting Responsibility for Self	1	6.67	1	6.67	3	20.00	4	26.67	4	26.67	2	13.33
Practical Experience as a Generalist	0	.00	1	6.67	4	26.67	2	13.33	3	20.00	5	33.33

Table 1A (Cont)

	Effectiveness of Objective Attainment (Not at all too very effective)											
	1		2		3		4		5		NR	
Course Objective	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Practical Experience as a Specialist	0	.00	3	20.00	3	20.00	0	.00	4	26.67	5	33.33
Competence at the Entry Level	0	.00	0	.00	4	26.67	1	6.67	4	26.67	6	40.00
Development of Professional Identity	0	.00	0	.00	2	13.33	6	40.00	2	13.33	5	33.33
Ability to Perform Completely	1	6.67	0	.00	3	20.00	2	13.33	0	.00	9	60.00

Table 1B

Evaluation of Course Objective Attainment

by Employed Graduates of the C.S.P. Program

	Effectiveness of Objective Attainment (Not at all too very effective)											
	1		2		3		4		5		NR	
Course Objective	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Historical Perspective	0	.00	1	2.13	9	19.15	22	46.81	14	29.79	1	2.13
Trends in Higher Education	0	.00	1	2.13	15	31.91	22	46.81	8	17.02	1	2.13
Contemporary Issues	0	.00	0	.00	14	29.79	21	44.68	11	23.40	1	2.13
Philosophical Concepts	0	.00	1	2.13	16	34.04	19	40.43	10	21.28	1	2.13
Law Relevant to College Student Personnel	2	4.26	3	6.38	16	34.04	18	38.30	7	14.89	1	2.13
Organization and Administration	0	.00	2	4.26	7	14.89	23	48.94	14	28.79	1	2.13
Characteristics of College Students	0	.00	1	2.13	14	29.79	21	44.68	10	21.28	1	2.13
Problems and Concerns of College Students	1	2.13	1	2.13	14	29.79	19	40.43	11	23.40	1	2.13

Table 1B (Cont)

	Effectiveness of Objective Attainment (Not at all too very effective)											
	1		2		3		4		5		NR	
Course Objective	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Characteristics of College Environment	0	.00	5	10.64	13	27.66	19	40.43	9	19.15	1	2.13
Interaction Between Students and Environment	0	.00	1	2.13	19	40.43	18	38.30	8	17.02	1	2.13
Dynamics of Career Choice	0	.00	6	12.77	15	31.91	12	25.53	12	25.53	2	4.26
Theories of Career Choice	1	2.13	8	17.02	13	27.66	11	23.40	11	23.40	3	6.38
Value of Research	3	6.38	5	10.64	12	25.53	16	34.04	10	21.28	1	2.13
Systematic Problem Solving	4	8.51	8	17.02	12	25.53	17	36.17	5	10.64	1	2.13
Basic Research Skills	3	6.38	3	6.38	16	34.04	17	36.17	7	14.89	1	2.13
Basic Program Evaluation Skills	2	4.26	7	14.89	17	36.17	18	38.30	2	4.26	1	2.13
Data Based Decision Making	1	2.13	10	21.28	13	27.66	17	36.17	5	10.64	1	2.13
Self Awareness	0	.00	2	4.26	1	2.13	16	34.04	27	57.45	1	2.13

Table 1B (Cont)

	Effectiveness of Objective Attainment (Not at all too very effective)											
	1		2		3		4		5		NR	
Course Objective	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Self Understanding	0	.00	2	4.26	1	2.13	20	42.55	23	48.94	1	2.13
Interpersonal Skills	0	.00	0	.00	9	19.15	16	34.04	21	44.68	1	2.13
Counseling Skills	0	.00	0	.00	5	10.64	22	46.81	19	40.43	1	2.13
Initiative	2	4.26	2	4.26	13	27.66	18	38.30	11	23.40	1	2.13
Translate Motivation into Productive Action	2	4.26	3	6.38	21	44.68	15	31.91	5	10.64	1	2.13
Greater Self Acceptance	0	.00	1	2.13	12	25.53	21	44.68	12	25.53	1	2.13
Greater Acceptance of Others	0	.00	1	2.13	7	14.89	21	44.68	17	16.17	1	2.13
Accepting Responsibility for Self	2	4.26	0	.00	5	10.64	20	42.55	19	40.43	1	2.13
Practical Experience as a Generalist	0	.00	3	6.38	7	14.89	18	38.30	18	38.30	1	2.13

Table 1B (Cont)

	Effectiveness of Objective Attainment (Not at all too very effective)											
	1		2		3		4		5		NR	
Course Objective	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Practical Experience as a Specialist	1	2.13	6	12.77	8	17.02	19	40.43	12	25.53	1	2.13
Competence at the Entry Level	1	2.13	2	4.26	3	6.38	23	48.94	17	36.17	1	2.13
Development of Professional Identity	0	.00	2	4.26	8	17.02	21	44.68	15	31.91	1	2.13
Ability to Perform Completely	1	2.13	6	12.77	6	12.77	21	44.68	12	25.53	1	2.13

and students (5). This relationship is now ranked third highest as one of the strengths of the program (Table 3).

Employer Response

The employers response indicates that the majority rated students above average to excellent. The high number responding, "no additional competencies desired", indicates that they are well satisfied with the quality of graduates (Tables 4 & 5). The response to that question would probably be even higher had we eliminated items dealing with personality factors, such as lack of motivation or disorganization, which are personal attributes not likely to be improved by any program. It is unfortunate that the employer response rate was so low that we could not get a broader picture.

Budgeting

The greatest weakness in the program as indicated by students and graduates was the lack of budgeting experience (Table 2). The same deficiency was mentioned in the 1970 report but was declared a weakness by only one employer (Table 5). Since budgeting is an administrative task, performed primarily by department heads, perhaps it is not a serious deficiency in entry level jobs. Perhaps expertise in budgeting can be acquired more thoroughly in a post-graduate status while one is preparing to assume greater responsibilities.

Practicum-Internships

The two greatest strengths, practicum and internships, indicate the value placed on the practical aspects of the

Table 2

Perceived Weaknesses of the Program by Current Students and Graduates of the College Student Personnel Program

Weakness	Currently Enrolled	Graduate
Lack of Budgeting Experience	4	3
Not Enough Law	5	2
Lack of Administrative Skills	2	4
Lack of Screening Applicants	0	5
Lack of Guidance in Internships	2	3
Lack of Counseling Experience	1	2
Not Enough Internships	1	2
Practicum Hours Too Excessive	1	2
Overlap of Course Content	0	2
Poor Seminar	1	1
No Development of Group Skills	1	1
Not Enough Credit for Practicum	1	0
Lack of Program Coordinator	1	0
Assistantships Poor	0	1
Lack of Student Input to Program	0	1
No Place for C.S.P. Students to Meet	0	1
Insufficient Course Choice	0	1
No Speech Course	0	1
Insufficient Disciplinary Skills	0	1
Placement Aid Weak	0	1
Too Theory Oriented	0	1

Table 2 (Cont)

Weakness	Currently Enrolled	Graduate
Not Enough Emphasis on Two Year Colleges	0	1
Recruitment and Placement Regionally Oriented	0	1
Curriculum Lacks Depth	0	1
Internships are Busy Work	0	1
Standards Too High for Thesis	0	1
Psychology Overemphasized	0	1
Seminar on Resumes Needed	0	1
More Needed on Current Legislation	0	1
Communication Skill Course Needed	0	1
Non-Productive Counseling Sessions	0	1
Inadequately Prepared for Employment	0	1
Weak in Research	0	1

Table 3

Perceived Strengths of the Program by Current Students and Graduates of the College Student Personnel Program

Strengths	Currently Enrolled	Graduates
Practicum	4	19
Internships	4	14
Student-Faculty Relationships	2	9
Excellence of Staff	6	2
Developing an Understanding of Field	0	4
Flexibility of Program	1	2
Program Content Well Rounded	1	1
Faculty Holding Full Time C.S.P. Jobs	1	1
Program Organization	1	1
Size of Program	0	2
Research	1	0
Motivation to Function as an Administrator	0	1
Developing an Understanding of Students	1	0

Table 4

Employers Evaluation of Selected Employee and Program Characteristics

Characteristics	Quality of Performance											
	Inadequate 1		Below Average 2		Average 3		Above Average 4		Excellent 5		NR	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Employee's Ability to Perform Duties of Current Position	0	.00	0	.00	1	5.88	7	41.18	7	41.18	2	11.6
Adequacy of Employee's Actual Job Performance in Current Position	0	.00	0	.00	1	5.88	5	29.41	9	52.94	2	11.6
Adequacy of Employee's Graduate School Preparation for Performance in Current Position	0	.00	0	.00	4	23.53	6	35.29	4	23.53	3	17.65

Table 5

Additional Competencies Desired by Employers of College Student Personnel Graduates

Desired Skills	Total Response
None	15
More Administrative Skills Needed	4
More Counseling Skills Needed	3
Weak in Organizing Skills	3
Clearer Understanding of Student Personnel Philosophy	1
Course Work not Geared to Career too General	1
Course Long on Theory and Short on Practice	1
More Written Communication Needed	1
Weak on Budgeting	1
Needs to Question Things More	1

program by students (Table 3). This suggests that additional emphasis should be placed on these areas. This can be accomplished by improving internships in some departments that presently lack clearly defined duties for interns. The addition of two internships making a total of four in lieu of a thesis and the non-credited seminar should be considered. This would produce a more competitive generalist approaching the job market by giving the student more experience in different areas of C.S.P.

Student-Employer

The nine most frequently listed weaknesses listed by students and graduates (desired competencies by employer), were compared in Table 6. It is interesting to note that all five of the responses complaining about poor screening of applicants were by previous graduates. This suggests that screening techniques have been improved over the past ten years. Only one employer and one employee agreed that lack of budgeting expertise was a problem. In the area of administrative skills, two employer-employees agreed that they had insufficient skill. The only other area in which there was consensus was regarding lack of counseling experience (Table 5). This may reflect the difficulty of obtaining an adequate number of role playing clients for some semesters. However, note that this response was very minimal and is offset by the high regard for practicum in general.

Table 6

A Comparison of the Most Frequently Occurring Student-Employer Responses

Weaknesses	Currently Enrolled	Graduates	Employer
Lack of Budgeting Skills	4	3	1*
Not Enough Law	5	2	0
Lack of Administrative Skills	2	4	4**
Poor Screening of Applicants for Program	0	5	0
Lack of Guidance in Internships	2	3	0
Lack of Counseling Experience	1	2	3*
Weak in Organizing Skills	0	0	3
Too Much Theory	0	1	1
Communication Skill Course Needed	0	1	1

* Denotes number of graduates and employers making the same comment. Each asterisk represents 1.

Limitations

One limitation of this exploratory study is certainly the low rate of returned questionnaires and the consequent impact on internal and external validity. Possibly, this could be improved in future designs by sending questionnaires to those students who have completed at least 15 hours in the program. Many of the non-respondents indicated that they have not spent enough time in the program to reasonably evaluate it.

The low rate of response from employers could probably be improved by compiling a list of College Student Personnel employers and mail questionnaires directly to them. This study relied on the employee to forward the questionnaire to his/her respective employer. Perhaps some of the insecure were reluctant to do so.

It should also be kept in mind that this study derives information from people spanning a seven year period, and that many faculty and program changes have been made in the evolution of the College Student Personnel program.

Recommendations

Overall, the program appears quite healthy and is moving in a positive direction. The institution is committed to routine evaluation of its graduate programs. This researcher recommends compilation of a list of employers of College Student Personnel graduates that can be updated each semester. The multidimensional approach provides much valuable information if the response rate is adequate.

Perhaps in future studies it would not be as important to match employer-employee returns, thereby giving greater latitude to employer response.

Thought should also be given to expanding the practical aspects of internships. Students and graduates appear to regard these experiences favorably. Providing only two of them may limit the students employment possibilities upon graduation.

Considered as a matter of career preparation, the two greatest weaknesses, budgeting and law, do not appear to be serious defects in the program. Only 6% of the graduates considered lack of budgeting a weakness whereas 27% of the currently enrolled regarded it as such. In regard to legal information only 4% of the graduates viewed it as a deficiency while 33% of the currently enrolled considered it so. Strengthening either of these areas through seminar or coursework does not appear feasible due to the minimal impact it apparently has on employee performance. This position is further strengthened by the fact that only one employer mentioned lack of budgeting as a deficiency and none mentioned law.

In future evaluations of the C.S.P. program, it is suggested that questionnaires be sent only to students who have completed at least 15 hours in the program. This would result in a more valid study by increasing response rate.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY

The purpose of this exploratory study was to sample opinions from currently enrolled students, graduates and employers of graduates regarding the College Student Personnel program at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. Opinions regarding viability of course content, personal growth achieved in the program and application of course work to employment were solicited. Employers were asked for their perception of graduates' skills and adequacy of job preparation.

Of the 181 questionnaires mailed, 47 were returned by graduates, 15 by currently enrolled students and 17 by employers. Because of this low response rate the reader is cautioned that the internal and external validity of this study may be affected.

The majority of employers rated graduates above average to excellent. A large number (15 of 17) responded that no additional competencies were desired.

The overwhelming response of currently enrolled students and graduates to the scaled items was in the moderately effective to very effective range. Practicum and internships were indicated as the two greatest strengths in the program, while lack of budgeting expertise was cited as the greatest weakness by currently enrolled students. However, lack of

budgeting skills was mentioned by only one employer. Graduates rated the program consistently higher than currently enrolled students. There was much greater consensus regarding program strengths than weaknesses.

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APPENDIX

May 6, 1977

To: Employers of Former College Student Personnel Graduate Students

From: College Student Personnel Curriculum Review Committee
Andris Ziemelis, Chairperson
Tom L. Hood
Reid Horle
Norene Smith

The College Student Personnel Program at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse is currently conducting a program evaluation and follow-up of its graduates. Since you employ one of our graduates, you can provide particularly valuable feedback regarding his/her work performance, strengths, weaknesses, and adequacy of educational background and preparation for performance as a professional in the field of College Student Personnel. Therefore, we ask that you take the time to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us as soon as possible. Your participation in this evaluation effort is greatly appreciated.

You may rest assured that your individual responses will remain confidential. The numerical code at the top of your questionnaire merely allows pairing of employer-employee, but in no way allows either employer or employee to be identified.

AZ:kl

May 6, 1977

To: Former and Current College Student Personnel Students

From: College Student Personnel Curriculum Review Committee
Andris Ziemelis, Chairperson
Tom L. Hood
Reid Horle
Norene Smith

The College Student Personnel Program (formerly known as Student Personnel Services) is currently conducting a program evaluation and follow-up of its students. Since you have been/are enrolled in the program, you can provide particularly valuable feedback regarding the adequacy of the program. Therefore, we ask that you take the time to complete this questionnaire and return it to us as soon as possible. Also, we would appreciate your forwarding the enclosed Employer's Evaluation form to your immediate supervisor. Your participation in this evaluation effort is greatly appreciated.

You may rest assured that your individual responses will remain strictly confidential. The numerical code at the top of your questionnaire merely allows pairing of employee-employer returns, but in no way allows either employee or employer to be identified.

AZ:kl

EMPLOYER'S EVALUATION OF EMPLOYEE

Follow-up of Former College Student
Personnel Students from the University
of Wisconsin-La Crosse

1. Your job title _____

2. Employee's job title _____

3. Length of employee's service in current position _____

Please respond to the following items regarding your employee by encircling the number for each item that corresponds with your evaluation of employee and/or by providing written commentary. Please attempt to evaluate employee only relative to others with similar educational background and preparation.

4. Employee's ability to perform the duties of current position

Excellent	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Inadequate
5	4	3	2	1

Specific strengths, weaknesses, additional comments:

_____

_____

5. Adequacy of employee's actual job performance in current position

Excellent	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Inadequate
5	4	3	2	1

Specific strengths, weaknesses, additional comments:

_____

_____

6. Adequacy of employee's graduate school preparation for performance in current position

Excellent	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Inadequate
5	4	3	2	1

Specific strengths, weaknesses, additional comments:

_____

_____

7. Any additional competencies you would have desired employee to possess at the time of initial employment

_____

_____

_____

COLLEGE STUDENT PERSONNEL

GRADUATE PROGRAM SURVEY

1. Date you entered the College Student Personnel Program _____.

2. Date you completed all program requirements except seminar paper or thesis _____.

3. Date degree granted _____ If no degree, number of credits earned to date _____.

4. Your current job title _____.

Based on your experiences with the College Student Personnel Program, please indicate the extent to which the program was effective in achieving each of the objectives listed below.

The program was	Not at all effective		Moderately effective		Very effective	in:
	1	2	3	4	5	

_____5. facilitating development of an historical perspective of student personnel work in higher education.

_____6. increasing awareness of developments and trends in higher education.

_____7. increasing awareness of significant contemporary issues and concerns in higher education.

_____8. introducing and explaining key philosophical concepts of student personnel services in higher education.

_____9. introducing and explaining the law and key cases of specific relevance to college student personnel.

____10. facilitating understanding of the organization and administration of college student personnel services.

____11. facilitating understanding of the characteristics of college students.

____12. facilitating understanding of the problems and concerns of college students.

____13. facilitating understanding of the characteristics of college and university environments.

____14. facilitating understanding of the interaction between students and the college environment.

____15. increasing understanding of the dynamics of career choice.

____16. increasing understanding of various theories of career choice and career development.

____17. increasing appreciation of the value of research in the field of college student personnel.

____18. facilitating development of systematic problem solving ability.

____19. facilitating development of basic research skills.

____20. facilitating development of basic program evaluation skills.

____21. increasing inclination to make data-based decisions.

____22. facilitating self-awareness.

____23. facilitating self-understanding.

____24. facilitating development of inter-personal skills.

____25. developing basic counseling skills.

____26. development of greater initiative.

____27. improving ability to translate motivation into productive action.

____28. facilitating greater self-acceptance.

____29. facilitating greater acceptance of others.

____30. facilitating acceptance of responsibility for self.

____31. providing practical experiences that prepared me to perform competently as a generalist within the field of college student personnel.

____32. providing practical experiences that prepared me to perform competently as a specialist within the field of college student personnel.

____33. providing the preparation necessary for competent performance at an entry level position within the field of college student personnel.

____34. facilitating development of a professional identity as a college student personnel worker.

____35. providing the preparation necessary for me to perform competently in my present position.

Please elaborate freely regarding any specific strengths and/or weaknesses of the College Student Personnel Program.

36. Strengths _____

_____

37. Weaknesses _____

_____

38. What competencies not acquired in the program do you wish you had at the time of your employment in your present position?

_____

_____

39. Additional Comments _____

_____

_____