



STUDENT EMPLOYMENT EXPLORATION PROJECT

DOE LEADERSHIP FELLOWS PROGRAM FALL 2024



Prepared by:
Cullen Dean
Darriell Robinson

“The growth and development of people is the highest calling of leadership.”

- Harvey S. Firestone



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The most optimal way to achieve your own success is to be willing to help somebody else achieve theirs first.”

-Darriell Robinson



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our Leadership Fellows Program project focused on the training and professional development of student workers. Under the mentorship of Paul Goebel, we decided to expand the scope of our project to include the full spectrum of the student worker experience, from initial recruitment to professional development for post-graduation employment. We used the University's One Stop as the case study department for our project. The One Stop employs student workers in several roles across the teams, including as the first point of contact for in-person customer service. Our end goal was to research best practices and to present recommendations to the One Stop's Student Employment Workgroup.

Our research began with discussions about our own perspectives of management and leadership and our experiences working alongside students in our departments. We then observed the performance of the One Stop during the Fall Fee Payment period in August 2024. In September, we shadowed behind the counter One Stop's front desk student workers to better understand their interactions with students and parents, while observing how they were supported and managed. At this time, we also began to interview individual Workgroup members to gain insight to their approaches to management and support for their student workers. To gain greater insight into the management and development of student workers across DOE departments, we interviewed student worker managers affiliated with Admissions, Registrar, Financial Aid, and Student Accounting. We also gathered information from the UNT G-Force presentation at the Fall 2024 TACRO Conference. We continued our research by conducting a survey of One Stop student workers to gain greater insights into their experiences.

Using the research findings and feedback gathered over the course of the project, we created a list of recommendations that aligned with the theme of "Encourage the Heart" - a concept covered in our required reading. Our recommendations include best practices for recruitment and hiring, training and on-the-job support, professional development, and preparation for post-graduation employment.

Cullen Dean & Darriell Robinson
Leadership Fellows
December 2, 2024



ACTION PLAN

A project timeline is crucial for ensuring that tasks are completed on time and resources are allocated to maintain focus and avoid delays. A well-structured timeline also helps in managing expectations and aligning the individual efforts of team members towards a common goal. Our timeline provided clear milestones and deadlines, which allowed us to track progress, identify potential issues early, and adjust strategies as needed to ensure a successful conclusion.

JULY 2024 - Introductions | Timeline

Present to Paul how we want to approach our project, identify key deliverable dates, and present our 1:1 and group meeting schedules when we will meet via Teams. Discuss as a group our experience with student workers and our attitudes towards management and leadership

AUGUST - Begin Research

Research One Stops in general, and find examples of successful One Stop student employment best practices. Try to find out the roles student employees play in these offices and if they contribute to its success. Observe the performance of the One Stop team during the Fall semester fee payment peak period.

SEPTEMBER - Best Practices

Shadow One Stop front desk to observe the student workers interacting with students and parents. Interview other student worker managers/supervisors in other Division of Enrollment home offices about their practices and experiences. Identify best practices of student employment from each department to begin making list of recommendations.



OCTOBER - Data Collection

Interview members of One Stop’s Student Employment Workgroup to discuss their approach to student worker training and management. Continue to interview other DOE departments about their student employment practices.

NOVEMBER - Research | Data Collection Analysis | Report

Use all knowledge of student worker employment that has been collected to create a survey for One Stop student workers to better understand their experiences. Compile and analyze survey results to finalize a list of recommendations.

DECEMBER - Client Presentation & Final Presentation

Conduct a client meeting with the Workgroup is to present our findings, conclusions, and recommendations. This meeting will also provide an opportunity to discuss how the research can be applied to the One Stop student employment experience and address questions. In addition, our team will present an overview of our project and recommendations during a final presentation during a Leadership Fellows symposium.

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This program pushed me out of my comfort zone and gave me the opportunity to network across multiple departments.

-Cullen Dean

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FINDINGS

ONE STOP

The One Stop was instrumental to the success of Fall Fee Payment peak period.

Recruitment

The One Stop teams clearly outline the expected professional qualities in job postings for various student positions.

Training

The One-Stop teams have comprehensive training programs for newly hired student employees. The Customer Service team has a 9-week training program that covers aspects of all departments that encompass the department. The Student Money Management Center team has an extensive orientation/onboarding/training program that extends from the first weeks of hire throughout the students' employment with the center. All programs incorporate shadowing, observation, and knowledge reinforcement.

Support

One Stop supervisors are readily accessible to provide ongoing support to student workers at all times.

Escalations

There are clear paths for escalation of cases when the incident exceeds a student worker's level of knowledge or comfort. Once a case escalates, a professional staff member takes ownership of the case until its closure.



DEPARTMENTS WITHIN THE DIVISION OF ENROLLMENT

We found DOE departments have varying levels of utilization of student workers. Admissions and Financial Aid use student workers as supplemental office support, while Registrar, Student Accounting, and G-Force use student workers in customer-facing roles. Admissions and Financial Aid train students for the tasks they are responsible for fulfilling. The other departments do not have standardized trainings. G-Force uses on-campus resources for student worker professional development. Student Accounting and Registrar offer resume and interview coaching for student workers preparing to graduate.

ONE STOP STUDENT WORKER SURVEY

Our research included a survey of One Stop student workers. One significant finding of the survey was that many students expressed high levels of job satisfaction, particularly due to the welcoming office culture, supportive teams, and the opportunity to contribute in a meaningful way. Some students raised concerns about the fairness of scheduling, particularly when work-study students are sent home despite being scheduled. These concerns may indicate a need for more thoughtful planning or communication around scheduling decisions. A few students mentioned feeling like they were being monitored too closely, especially after a recent move to the new office space. This suggests a potential area for leadership to evaluate the balance between supervision and building trust with student workers. Leadership should do all within their powers to ensure that the suite's team culture is preserved. Several respondents expressed a desire to continue learning and gaining new skills. This presents an opportunity to leadership to provide additional learning resources or training.



RECOMMENDATIONS

We have grouped our recommendations into 6 categories.

RECRUITMENT AND HIRING

- Have clearly stated detailed description of positions and desired professional qualities in job postings.
- Invite current student workers to participate in the hiring process of new applicants to foster a sense of inclusion in the team's success and provide valuable skills students will experience in their careers. (Source: SMMC)

RATIONALE: Clearly stated job descriptions and professional qualities in job postings ensure that both students and employers have aligned expectations. This helps attract candidates who are well-suited to the position, minimizing confusion or dissatisfaction later. Involving current student workers in the hiring process promotes a sense of ownership and inclusion, helping them feel more connected to the team's success. It also offers valuable leadership and decision-making experience, enhancing their professional skills and helping their resumes stand out.

TRAINING AND RECRUITMENT

- Implement a standardized training program for all student workers. The training should cover the team's functions, general functions of other teams, position responsibilities, and include knowledge reinforcement, shadowing, and scheduled observations. (Source: One Stop)
- Hold weekly student worker huddles for discussion, questions, and refresher training opportunities. (Source: One Stop/SA)
- Conduct regular one-on-one check-ins with student workers to assess their progress in their roles. Start with frequent meetings and gradually reduce the frequency as they gain competency. (Source: SMMC)



- Arrange for campus speakers to present to student workers on academic and professional development several times each semester or academic year. (Source: G-Force)
- Discuss how the student worker's duties and responsibilities can be translated into resume skills and effectively described during an interview. (Source: SA)
- Allow student workers to observe leadership meetings to learn meeting conduct, and give them the opportunity to lead meetings for their teams. (Source: SMMC/G-Force)

RATIONALE: Clearly stated job descriptions and professional qualities in job postings ensure that both students and employers have aligned expectations. This helps attract candidates who are well-suited to the position, minimizing confusion or dissatisfaction later. Involving current student workers in the hiring process promotes a sense of ownership and inclusion, helping them feel more connected to the team's success. It also offers valuable leadership and decision-making experience, enhancing their professional skills and helping their resumes stand out.

SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

- Provide easily accessible resources and knowledge bases to support student workers in their daily tasks. (Source: Registrar/FA)
- Offer flexibility in student workers' schedules, prioritizing their roles as students. Ensure backup coverage for any unexpected schedule changes. (Source: SMMC)
- Foster a collaborative environment at the department's front desk with full- and part-time personnel working together, leveraging each other's knowledge and skills to provide exceptional service.



RATIONALE: These recommendations are crucial for providing student workers with the support and resources they need to perform their tasks effectively. Offering flexible schedules prioritizes students' academic commitments while maintaining operational efficiency through backup coverage for unexpected scheduling changes. Additionally, fostering a collaborative work environment helps enhance teamwork, knowledge sharing, and the overall quality of service, benefiting both the student workers, teams, and the department.

VALUES AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

- Define UNT's values and division's goals and explain how those values and goals align with the student's responsibilities. Encourage teams to help student workers define their professional values. (Source: Registrar)
- Create Team Lead positions or promotional opportunities for student workers to enhance their professional skills and resumes. (Source: SMMC/G-Force)
- Dedicate funding to allow student workers to attend conferences with professional staff to expand professional skills and enrich networking opportunities. (Source: SMMC)

RATIONALE: These recommendations foster alignment between student workers' roles and the broader mission of the University - helping students understand how their work contributes to UNT's values and goals. Encouraging students to define their professional values empowers them to build a strong foundation for their

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I am satisfied with the knowledge I have gained but I know there is so much more that I can still learn.

-One Stop Student Worker



careers. Creating Team Lead positions and promotional opportunities motivates students by offering career advancement prospects, enhancing their skills, and boosting their resumes. Additionally, dedicating funding for students to attend conferences broadens their professional networks and provides valuable industry insights, enriching their overall employment experience and career readiness.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND ESCALATION

- Establish a tiered framework that outlines specific knowledge levels student workers must attain in order to effectively engage with students and parents on a wide range of topics. Achieving higher levels of knowledge and advancing to higher tiers will lead to pay increases. (Source: SMMC)
- Clearly define escalation pathways. Once a case is escalated, the person handling it should see it through to resolution. (Source: One Stop)

RATIONALE: These recommendations enhance the student worker program by ensuring that student workers gain the necessary expertise to address a wide range of student and parent inquiries effectively. The tiered framework promotes skill development and rewards progress with pay increases, while the clear escalation pathways ensure accountability and consistent resolution of more complex issues, improving overall efficiency and service quality.

RECOGNITION AND IMPACT

- Highlight student workers' contributions with measurable metrics to demonstrate the impact of their efforts. (Source: FA)
- **Encourage the Heart** - Encourage student workers to feel integral to the team and department, fostering a sense of belonging and encouraging continued association.



RATIONALE: These recommendations aim to recognize and validate student workers' contributions by using measurable metrics, which helps highlight their impact and boosts motivation. Additionally, fostering a sense of belonging within the team by encouraging student workers creates a positive work environment, enhances their engagement and encourages long-term commitment to the department.

“

Leadership is not a person or a position. It is a complex moral relationship between people, based on trust, obligation, commitment, emotion, and a shared vision of the good.

-Piyushi Dhir | Author

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APPENDIX



EXPERIENCE REFLECTIONS

Cullen

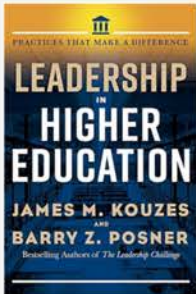
I personally got so much out of this program. This program pushed me out of my comfort zone and gave me the opportunity to network across multiple departments. I gained insight into how various parts of the division and university are run. The professional development workshops were both informative and thought-provoking and guided me to reflect on my own thoughts and values about leadership. Both Paul and Darriell shared with me their years of experience working in higher education and I consider both to be mentors from this program. I fully believe that this program has aided my professional development in higher education administration.

Darriell

The DOE Leadership Fellows Program provided me with a more refined and deepened understanding of team collaboration. Throughout, this program and mentorship it was extraordinary to experience the amount of enthusiasm from others both from our internal institution as well as neighboring members within the higher education community. I methodically enjoyed the professional development workshops, the guest lectures, and small group projects. This reinforcement contributed significantly by augmenting my professional growth and development. Paul did an impeccable job by serving as our mentor! I was equally excited about the prospect of working with Cullen who is phenomenal and a joy to work with! Overall, the culmination of this project truly was instrumental in maximizing my aptitude on how to best serve both our student workers and staff.



ASSIGNED READING REFLECTION



Drawing on the same pioneering research that formed the foundation of their classic bestseller *The Leadership Challenge*, the authors explore the behaviors that leaders, regardless of their positions, use to transform values into actions, visions into realities, obstacles into innovations, segments into solidarity, and risks into rewards.

Cullen

The concepts introduced in this book are very useful and can be applied not only to being a leader, but to working under leadership. The concepts that stood out most to me were “Challenge the Process” and “Encourage the Heart”. Challenge the Process led me to believe that all process should be challenged from time to time to encourage innovation and efficiency. Encourage the Heart became the central theme of my group’s process. Time, effort, and resources are invested in employees, and the best way to see returns on those investments are to keep those employees motivated to continue to want to grow with the department.

Darriell

The framework for Leadership in Higher Education was based on comprehensive and extensive research. Throughout the book various anecdotes from leaders were illustrated. Each chapter was designed to tie in one of the five practices by bridging a personal experience followed with reflection questions. I marveled at the theories and concepts explored in this book. These practices can be implemented to inspire you during your journey to become an emerging leader. The practices that aligned with me most were, “Inspire a Shared Vision” and “Encourage the Heart”. “Inspire a Shared Vision” can be instrumental by assuring all team members are equally working towards a shared vision. While “Encourage the Heart” serves to ensure both my personal and professional goals are aligned.



STUDENT EMPLOYMENT SURVEY

One of the assessment methodologies that we utilized during this project was a student employment survey. The survey was disbursed to graduate assistants and student workers employed in the One Stop.

The purpose of the survey on student employment was to gather valuable feedback from student workers within the One Stop regarding their work experiences, job satisfaction, and recommendations for areas for improvement. By collecting this data, we aimed to better understand the challenges and needs of student employees to improve their work environment and support their professional growth.

The results were compiled, analyzed, and formatted into a separate, comprehensive report to identify trends, highlight key insights, and inform future decisions related to student employment policies and practices within the department. This process ensures that the One Stop can continue to foster a supportive and effective work environment for all student employees.

The comprehensive report is a separate attachment.



ENVIROMENTAL SCAN

Researching similar programs and departments at other institutions can be beneficial in identifying best practices. Unfortunately, our efforts to reach out to other One Stops across Texas were not successful. Primarily due to a lack of knowledge of the personnel we spoke with regarding their department's hiring practices and uncertainty as to the line of supervision of their student employees. We are providing the list of One Stop program models below as a resource for the One Stop management team:

- onestop.utexas.edu
- onestop.txstate.edu
- aggieonestop.tamu.edu
- cn.edu/admissions-and-aid/student-accounts
- ttyler.edu/current-students/enroll
- umdearborn.edu/one-stop
- success.rutgers.edu/resource/one-stop-student-services-center-new-brunswick
- onestop.umn.edu
- onestop.utsa.edu
- jacketconnect.bw.edu/onestop/home
- uwa.edu/information-for-current-students/one-stop
- calendar.sf.edu/department/student_one_stop
- umb.edu/onestop
- pacific.edu/onestop



SPECIAL THANKS

We want to sincerely thank the following colleagues and students for their support and collaboration on this project. We truly appreciate all.

Jenna Ash-Dean

La Christa Glenn

Jasmine Ibanez

Nino Kokiashvili

Nedesda Lobo

Ashley Mason

Andres Montoya

Gwendolyn Moore

Taylor Moore

Kamrin Penny

Michelle Pham

Vesta Stacey



“The domain of leaders is the future...The most significant contribution leaders make is to the long-term development of people and institutions so that they can adapt, prosper, and grow.”

-James Kouzes & Barry Posner

DATA- DRIVEN INSIGHTS



ONE STOP STUDENT EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE
SURVEY

An Analysis of Survey Responses

Dr. Nino Kokiashvili
SMMC Graduate Assistant

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the second week of November, a survey was launched among student employees affiliated with the University's One Stop teams. The survey was part of a Division of Enrollment Leadership Fellows Program's semester-long project on student employment, which was sponsored by One Stop leadership this Fall. With an impressive 54% response rate, the survey gathered meaningful insights from student employees and offered valuable perspectives on their experiences and roles.

The quantitative data revealed that, overall, student employees feel confident, supported, and valued in their roles. They reported receiving adequate training and feedback, and most feel comfortable approaching their supervisors. Additionally, many see their work as meaningful and aligned with their career aspirations. While the feedback is largely positive, an opportunity exists to enhance the experience by offering extra training for those students who sometimes feel unprepared, and by ensuring more consistent, constructive feedback. Furthermore, although most student employees feel they maintain a healthy work-life balance, there is a chance to better support those who feel neutral about this balance to help them to achieve a more fulfilling equilibrium.

The qualitative data strongly suggests that student employees feel well-prepared for the workforce due to the skills they are developing in their roles. Especially in the skills of customer service, teamwork, communication, and job-specific tasks like marketing and content creation. Many respondents recognized that the experience gained from working in a professional, customer-facing, and team-oriented environment will be highly transferable and valuable for their future careers. There is a clear consensus that these roles are equipping them with both practical and interpersonal skills that will help them navigate and succeed in the workforce after graduation.

Dr. Nino Kokiashvili
SMMC Graduate Assistant
November 13, 2024

SURVEY RESULTS

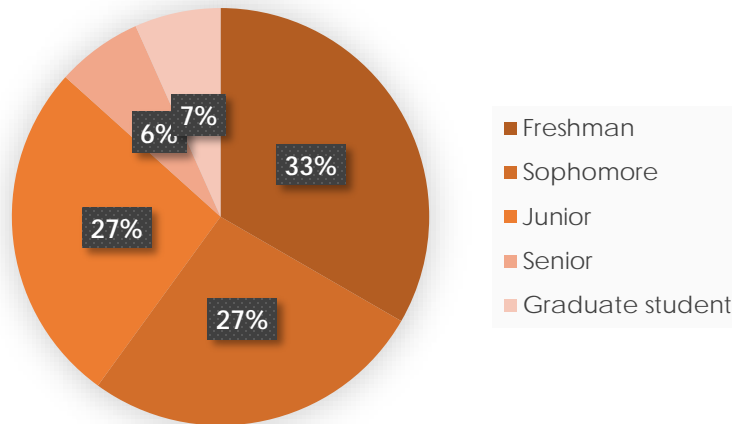


Table 1

What is your current academic year?

	N	%
Freshman	5	33.3%
Sophomore	4	26.7%
Junior	4	26.7%
Senior	1	6.7%
Graduate student	1	6.7%

Most student employees are underclassmen, with freshmen (33.3%) being the largest group. There are also sophomores (26.7%) and juniors (26.7%), with a small representation of seniors (6.7%) and graduate students (6.7%) (**Table 1**).

I AM ENJOYING MY POSITION. IT HAS BEEN A WONDERFUL LEARNING EXPERIENCE, AND WORKING WITH SUCH A SUPPORTIVE TEAM HAS BEEN REWARDING. THANK YOU.

-ONE STOP STUDENT EMPLOYEE

Chart 2.

Length of Employment in Current Position

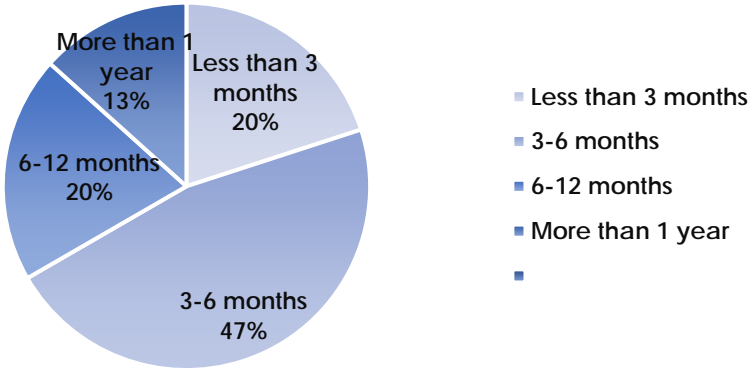


Table 2

How long have you been employed in your current position?

	N	%
Less than 3 months	3	20.0%
3-6 months	7	46.7%
6-12 months	3	20.0%
More than 1 year	2	13.3%

Nearly half (46.7%) have been in their role for 3-6 months, with smaller groups employed for less than 3 months (20%), 6-12 months (20%), and over a year (13.3%).

Table 3

Is this your first job as a student worker at UNT?

	N	%
No	5	33.3%
Yes	10	66.7%

Most students (66.7%) are in their first student-worker position at UNT, while 33.3% have held previous roles.

Table 4

How would you characterize the length of the training for your position?

	N	%
Adequate Length	15	100.0%

All student employees (100%) believe the training length for their position is adequate.

Table 5

Are there any specific training exercises or activities you feel could have better prepared you for your position?

	N	%
No	12	80.0%
Yes	3	20.0%

A majority (80%) feel no additional training is needed, but 20% think additional exercises could better prepare them.

Table 6

While working in your position, how often do you encounter interactions or situations in which you feel that you were not sufficiently prepared or trained?

	N	%
Never	1	6.7%
Rarely	7	46.7%
Sometimes	7	46.7%

Only 6.7% never feel unprepared; 46.7% rarely feel unprepared, while another 46.7% sometimes encounter situations where they lack sufficient preparation.

Table 7

How would you rate your level of comfort approaching your supervisor for support or for questions?

	N	%
Somewhat Comfortable	3	20.0%
Very Comfortable	12	80.0%

Most student employees (80%) feel very comfortable approaching their supervisor for support, while 20% feel somewhat comfortable.

Table 8

Do you feel that your experience working in your position will prepare you for the workforce after graduation?

	N	%
Yes	15	100.0%

All students (100%) believe their position will help prepare them for the workforce after graduation.

Additional Comments:

- *Learning how to work in an office environment and working with a team despite having individual cases.*
- *Working within a team and collaborating with others are important aspects to my current position.*
- *Yes. even though I am not doing design work all the time, I do a lot of social media/content creation, marketing, and video editing in my role.*
- *I believe that this job will help me prepare for the workforce after graduation as it has taught me a lot of customer service skills and valuable federal information.*
- *This is a very customer service-oriented position, and many jobs are. Therefore, I do believe that working here will help prepare me for the workforce.*
- *Work has prepared me for a more experienced job in the field of marketing.*
- *This job has taught me what a professional and productive environment looks like. I'm getting experience that most sophomore do not.*

- *Working on a team with different perspectives and backgrounds to achieve a common goal, structured multitasking, and the ability to communicate with teammates and supervisors give me a solid foundation for the workforce after graduation.*
- *Working at the SMMC in a dynamic, diverse environment with great professionals has been invaluable, is enhancing my skills and preparing me well for the workforce.*
- *One Stop does a great job of not only training you for your job but for future skills needed for a vast majority of jobs.*
- *By the skills gained in this job that include working with strangers, explaining processes and procedures, customer service, and delivering bad news, and knowing how to deal with difficult people.*
- *Through working this position, I have learned how to properly communicate with customers, my coworkers, and my supervisors, which I know will help me be comfortable with communicating.*
- *I can practice all of my skills to provide me support in the workforce.*

Based on the responses to the question, the analysis reveals a clear consensus that the student employees believe their roles are providing valuable skills and experiences that will benefit them in future careers. Key themes that emerged from the responses include:

1. Development of Key Professional Skills:

- Many respondents emphasized the importance of customer service skills, communication, and teamwork in preparing them for the workforce. Several noted that their roles have taught them how to effectively interact with customers, coworkers, and supervisors—skills that are crucial in most professional environments.
- Specific examples of transferable skills included *handling difficult situations, delivering bad news, and working with diverse teams*, which are commonly required in various industries.

2. Exposure to Professional Environments:

- Several respondents mentioned gaining valuable exposure to a professional, office-like environment, which has provided them with insights into what a productive and organized workplace looks like. This exposure to workplace norms and expectations is helping them understand the dynamics of professional settings, from structured multitasking to collaborating on shared goals.

- One response highlighted the benefit of working in a dynamic and diverse environment with professionals, underscoring the importance of learning from experienced colleagues in preparing for post-graduation employment.
3. **Specialized Experience:**
- Some students noted that their roles allowed them to develop more specialized skills, such as *marketing*, *social media/content creation*, and *video editing*. These experiences are perceived as directly transferable to specific career fields, especially in marketing and media-related roles.
 - There was also a recognition that, even if their roles weren't directly aligned with their ultimate career goals, the skills gained—such as *multitasking*, *problem-solving*, and *adapting to different perspectives*—would serve them well in a variety of professional contexts.
4. **Job Preparation for Diverse Career Paths:**
- The responses also indicate that the skills learned in the student roles are versatile and applicable across different industries. For example, customer service, teamwork, communication, and the ability to work with people from different backgrounds were cited as universal skills that would benefit graduates no matter what field they enter.
5. **Confidence in Transitioning to the Workforce:**
- Overall, respondents expressed confidence that their roles are providing them with a strong foundation for the workforce. The combination of practical experience, skill development, and exposure to professional work environments appears to be preparing them well for the challenges and expectations of post-graduation employment.

Table 9

Do you feel that the responsibilities of your position align with the career path for the major in which you are currently studying?

	N	%
No	4	26.7%
Yes	11	73.3%

Most students (73.3%) feel that their responsibilities align with their career path, while 26.7% do not see a direct connection.

Additional Comments:

- *I'll probably work in an office and deal with high stress environments.*
- *Outreach has become something I'm interested in pursuing, and I believe my experience here working on social media has helped with that.*
- *I believe my job requires me to communicate with clients and one of the biggest foundations for my career is to be able to communicate with efficiency.*
- *I currently am working a front desk position but am studying elementary education. The responsibilities include checking students financial accounts, which is not very relevant to my studies. Although, this position is customer service oriented, so it may be useful if I encounter angry parents.*
- *I'll probably work in an office, and deal with high stress environments Outreach has become something I'm interested in pursuing, and I believe my experience here working on social media has helped with that.*
- *I believe my job requires me to communicate with clients and one of the biggest foundations for my career is to be able to communicate with efficiency.*
- *I do a lot of digital marketing which is my major.*
- *I want to work in the aviation industry, so higher education is not my focus. There are skills learned within this job are helpful.*
- *I work with data, visualize, and communicate my insights. As a Business Computer Information Systems major, it aligns well with my career path.*
- *My responsibilities in assessment and data analysis align well with my educational psychology studies, supporting my career goals in research, data analysis and education.*
- *Although I won't be doing anything with financial aid, I have greatly learned many things about customer service.*
- *In soft skills and people skills, not because my career will be in business computer analytics.*
- *The field I'm hoping to go into is centered around communicating and helping patients which is very similar to what I'm doing in this position.*
- *I am majoring in Women and Gender studies, Sociology, and Teacher Education, so I will be able to use my knowledge in helping in higher education or in my business.*

Summary and Key Insights:

- **Strong Alignment:** Students in fields like marketing, data analysis, educational psychology, and business computer information systems felt their jobs were closely aligned with their academic studies and career goals. These students often reported that their work tasks directly reinforced the skills and knowledge they were acquiring in their majors.
- **Moderate or Minimal Alignment:** Some students, particularly those in service-oriented positions (e.g., customer service, front desk) or studying fields that didn't overlap with their current job duties (e.g., elementary education or aviation), felt that while their roles didn't match their career paths perfectly, they were gaining valuable transferable skills (e.g., communication, problem-solving, conflict resolution) that could still benefit them in the future.
- **Exploration and Transferable Skills:** Several students were open to exploring career paths through their current roles, even if those roles were not directly related to their major. Many respondents saw the opportunity to develop general skills—such as teamwork, professional communication, and customer interaction—that would be beneficial no matter their future career direction.

Overall, while not all the students felt their current roles perfectly aligned with their major or career goals, a sizable portion found that their positions provided valuable skills that would be transferable to a wide range of careers. Additionally, some students were able to explore new career interests through their jobs, indicating the broader benefits of gaining work experience in diverse fields

Table 10

Do you feel like your work contributes to your department's overall success?

	N	%
Yes	15	100.0%

All student employees (100%) feel that their work contributes to the department's overall success.

Additional Comments

- *Front desk is important!*

- *My work on social media and marketing outreach helps get the team's services and events out into the public sphere.*
- *As part of the SMMC team, I feel like I contributed a lot to the success of the team with social media, marketing, and outreach efforts.*
- *The front desk is the face of the One Stop, therefore we represent the different departments by aiding students with questions.*
- *Working the front desk, I do believe that my work and helping students helps the departments overall success. If I mess up on my end, then the student will not be very happy with the department, so I have to make sure I know what I am talking about.*
- *I am a very passionate worker who tries to not students, but also help my peers. I am very active in my role and feel like I bring good qualities to my team.*
- *Yes because I can see the results of the work I do and its impacts and given recognition as deserved.*
- *I am contributing to a better understanding of the services we provide for students, helping us enhance our support and impact.*
- *As a student front end worker i feel that our job is vital to the department's success and reputation.*
- *Yes, because we are the first people students talk to when they have doubts or questions.*
- *I like to think that I deliver good customer service which is essential in building trust with customers and helps with the departments' credibility.*
- *I have worked here for over two years, and I am open to working in any area that I am needed.*

Summary and Key Insights:

- **Clear Understanding of Impact:** Students clearly understand the importance of their roles in contributing to their department's success, whether they are working at the front desk, handling customer inquiries, or running marketing and outreach campaigns. Many feel that their contributions, whether big or small, are vital to the functioning and reputation of their department.
- **Customer Service and Public Interaction:** Many responses highlighted the significance of customer-facing roles in shaping student experiences and ensuring the department's success. Students working in roles like front desk

positions understand that their performance directly influences students' perceptions of the department.

- **Marketing and Outreach Efforts:** For students working in marketing and social media, their efforts in promoting services and events are seen as integral to the department's outreach success. These roles are seen as key to connecting with the broader student body and increasing engagement with department services.
- **Personal Responsibility and Engagement:** Passion, personal responsibility, and a proactive attitude were strong themes, with many students expressing pride in their work and recognizing their role in helping the department achieve its goals. Recognition and seeing the impact of their work contributed to their sense of value and motivation.

The responses demonstrate that student workers feel deeply connected to the success of their departments, whether through customer service, marketing, or internal support. A keen sense of personal responsibility, coupled with visible results and recognition, contributes to an overall feeling of purpose and pride in their roles. This elevated level of engagement and understanding of their contributions is a key driver of their motivation and commitment to the success of their departments.

Table 11

Do you receive constructive feedback from your manager?

	N	%
Rarely	1	6.7%
Sometimes	3	20.0%
Often	7	46.7%
Very Often	4	26.7%

The majority receive feedback often (46.7%) or very often (26.7%). However, 26.7% only receive feedback rarely or sometimes.

Table 12

How would you rate your balance of work/school/personal life?

	N	%
Neutral	2	13.3%
Balances for the most part	11	73.3%
Very balanced	2	13.3%

Most students (73.3%) feel balanced for the most part, with 13.3% feeling very balanced and 13.3% feeling neutral.

Finally, respondents were provided the opportunity to share comments with the One Stop leadership:

- *I love it here!*
- *I am working under work study. Therefore, my paychecks are coming from the government and not the department or college. However, if it is slow and there are excessive people working, I will be told to go home. I do not understand why I am being told to leave when they know they have scheduled excessive people, and my money is not coming from them? I was scheduled and my class schedule is a bit difficult to align with my working hours, therefore I should not be told to leave when I am scheduled.*
- *It would be great to not be felt like I am being watched and making sure I'm doing my work. Personally, did not feel like this until we moved to the One Stop suite.*
- *I enjoy this job for a lot of reasons, the main one being the culture of the office. This office is very welcoming to input and genuinely listens even if the idea isn't put into action. My only concern is that other workers will ruin this environment if they are not checked. One word could ruin a culture everyone works so hard to keep and that scares me.*
- *I am enjoying my position. It has been a wonderful learning experience, and working with such a supportive team has been rewarding. Thank you.*
- *Love the One Stop!!*
- *I am satisfied with the knowledge I have gained but I know there is so much more that I can still learn.*

Summary of Key Themes:

- **Positive Work Environment:** Many students expressed elevated levels of job satisfaction, particularly due to the welcoming office culture, supportive teams, and the opportunity to contribute in a meaningful way.

- **Concerns about Scheduling and Fairness:** Some students raised concerns about the fairness of scheduling, particularly when work-study students are sent home despite being scheduled. These concerns may indicate a need for more thoughtful planning or communication around staffing decisions.
- **Feeling of Micromanagement:** A few students mentioned feeling like they were being monitored too closely, especially after a recent move to a new office space. This suggests a potential area for leadership to evaluate the balance between supervision and trust in student employees.
- **Maintaining a Positive Office Culture:** One respondent emphasized the importance of maintaining the positive culture within the office, with concerns that certain behaviors could disrupt the team's dynamics. Leadership should be aware of this and ensure that team culture is preserved.
- **Desire for Continued Learning:** Several students expressed a desire to continue learning and gaining new skills, signaling that there is an appetite for growth and development. This could be an opportunity for leadership to provide additional learning resources or training.

CONCLUSION

Incorporating the following suggestions could help enhance student employees' satisfaction, improve productivity, and maintain a positive and supportive work environment.

- **Address Scheduling Concerns:** Leadership should review scheduling practices to ensure fairness and transparency, particularly for work-study students who may be relying on their paychecks. Clearer communication around scheduling and staffing decisions might help alleviate confusion or frustration.
- **Balance Supervision with Autonomy:** If concerns about micromanagement persist, leadership may want to assess the level of oversight and find ways to empower student employees with more autonomy and trust, particularly as they demonstrate responsibility and competence.
- **Maintain and Strengthen Office Culture:** The leadership team should continue fostering an inclusive and supportive work environment, taking steps to address any disruptive behaviors promptly to preserve the positive culture that students value.
- **Provide Opportunities for Growth:** Given the strong desire for continued learning, leadership could consider offering additional training, cross-training opportunities, or ways for students to take on more responsibility to further develop their skills and keep them engaged.

"I start with the premise that the function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers."

Ralph Nader