

Goals and Objectives:

Wright State University's Athletics Department has been bravely shaping new traditions for the past 50 years. Whether in the community, in the classroom, or on the field, the Raiders have truly taken the lead from the pioneers of flight. Wright State athletics strives to become nationally recognized for transforming the lives of our student-athletes. We have a culture of personal development and overachievement. We treat our student-athletes as PEOPLE first, STUDENTS second, and ATHLETES third. We understand that we achieve great things because of the unique culture that our mission creates, we call it PSA.

The Person in our mission is first because nothing is more important than the personal development of our student-athletes. They are committed to their social responsibility of serving their community, they are being recognized on a national level for their leadership, and they are happier than ever. A growth dynamics survey completed by our student-athletes in 2015 showed that 90% of our student-athletes would choose Wright State University again as their destination of higher learning. The Student in our mission is second because of our duty as an institution of higher learning to build a solid foundation for student success through top-notch academic advising, innovative programs, up-to-date technology, and readiness of quality personnel. Our focus on the student has resulted in 45 consecutive terms of a 3.0 cumulative GPA or better. The Athlete in our mission is third because we have found that happy, engaged student-athletes that have the correct priority on personal well-being and academics actually perform better athletically.

Because we take the personal development of our student-athletes so seriously, we put a lot of time and effort into building a successful and effective Life Skills Program. The Wright State Life Skills Program provides our student-athletes with information (weekly newsletters, development tracking, career and community service opportunities) and experiences (workshops and speakers) that will enable them to build the life skills they need to transition from high school to college and then to life after college. The program focuses on three main areas of development: personal development, social responsibility development (community service), and career development.

The Student-Athlete Career Fair was developed and introduced in 2015-2016 as a Life Skills Program event that provides junior and senior student-athletes the opportunity to refine their career development skills and network with potential employers. Student-athletes' schedules are so hectic, so they are often not available to attend campus wide career fairs. Time challenges are very common for student-athletes at all universities and student-athletes often cannot attend university events offered to the general student body because of their schedules. With purposeful Life Skills Programming, athletics departments can make sure that they provide their student-athletes with another time option to take part in necessary career development. At Wright State, the creation of the Student-Athlete Career Fair created an opportunity for student-athletes to further develop their career plans, meet with career counselors one-on-one, experience virtual and in-person interviews, and network with potential employers. This event provided the opportunity for student-athletes to be active and stay up-to-date with their career development and mapping.

Goal #1

Provide an enhanced career development event as a part of the Life Skills Program for junior and senior student-athletes where they can further develop their career goals, skills, and network with potential employers.

Objective 1: Implement an educational component to enhance the Student-Athlete Career Fair.

Desired Results:

- Administer Career Fair Evaluations to student-athletes and employers who attended.
- Provide all participants with the opportunity to have their resume and/or cover letter reviewed and critiqued one-on-one with a Wright State Career Center professional.
- Provide all participants with the opportunity to experience virtual and group interviews.

Responsible Individuals: Maigan Larsen, Special Assistant to the Athletics Director

Objective 2: Build a relationship with the career center, sponsors, and businesses in order to secure sponsorship to enhance the career fair.

Desired Results:

- 100% of sponsors will receive recognition in the Student-Athlete Career Fair Booklet provided to all student-athletes and employers.
- 100% of employers attending the event will receive a gift.
- Include all career center events in the Life Skills Calendar.
- Administer career fair evaluations to employers who attended.
- Invite employers who attended the career fair in 2015 and heavily recruit other organizations

Responsible Individuals: Maigan Larsen, Special Asst. to the A.D.

Objective 3: Recruit companies and organizations to attend that are looking to hire student-athletes who are working on degrees and majors that fit their hiring qualifications.

Desired Results:

- Reviewed and identified the majors of every junior and senior student-athlete in order to bring in one or more companies/organizations looking to hire full-time or provide internship opportunities to student-athletes in corresponding majors.
- Administered career fair evaluations to student-athletes to assess the success of quantity and quality of companies and organizations in attendance.
- Administered career fair evaluations to employers to assess the success of quantity and quality of student-athletes and their majors/experience.
- Recruited companies who are interested in hiring student-athletes because of the skills they acquire from being a Division I student-athlete.

Program Description

In December of 2015, the Special Asst. to the A.D implemented a new career development initiative as a part of the Life Skills Program, the Student-Athlete Career Fair. When student-athletes arrived they checked-in and received a welcome packet which included a Wright State folder that had potential questions to ask employers and space to keep their resumes, a journal as a gift, and a career fair booklet.

The career fair includes three different portions to the night; first is the career panel; second is group networking; finally the last portion is free networking. The first portion of the night is the career panel portion of the night. Representatives from the companies participate in a Q&A in order to provide career advice and tips to student-athletes about applying for jobs and taking part in professional interviews. The panel was facilitated by the Special Asst. to the A.D. the first year, and this past year the Director of the Career Center, Cheryl Stuart, facilitated the Q&A.

The second portion of the night is the group networking rotation. Small groups of student-athletes spend six to seven minutes with employers learning about the companies. Employers have a set table in the room and student-athletes move from table to table in a rotation. This setup provides student-athletes with the experience of interviewing in a group setting, and the experience of delivering their elevator speech since they have limited time with each company. The first year (2015-2016) there were nine companies. This past year (2016-2017) there were 13 companies, one of which was Google, and conducted virtual interviews via Google Hangout. In 2016-2017 another aspect to the group networking portion of the night was added, tables for one-on-one counseling for student-athletes from Wright State's Career Center staff. The Director of the Career Center, Cheryl Stuart, also facilitated the Q&A during the first portion of the night, and oversaw her employees as they provided one-on-one counseling to student-athletes during the group networking portion.

The third and final portion of the night is the free networking time. Student-athletes and employers are encouraged to continue networking and carrying on conversations that began during the Group Networking Rotation portion. This free networking time allows student-athletes to speak one-on-one with employers and go more in-depth into their career aspirations and goals.

The Special Asst. to the A.D. is in charge of the Life Skills Programming and therefore all aspects of the development and execution of the career fair. Because the budget was limited the Special Asst. to the A.D. had to collaborate with departments and businesses on campus, and with businesses off campus. The Special Asst. to the A.D. collaborated with the Career Center on campus to enhance the career fair by adding an additional educational component with one-on-one counseling during the group networking rotation. The Career Center volunteered their time to come and meet with the student-athletes for the career fair. The Director of the Career Center, Cheryl Stuart also volunteered her time by facilitating the career panel.

In addition to the Career Center collaborating with athletics for the career fair, three additional businesses accepted the opportunity to be a sponsor for the career fair. The university bookstore provided folders for student-athletes to store their resumes, the university hospitality service, Chartwells, provided refreshments, and Shumsky's, a promotional products supplier, provided a career fair gift for all student-athletes and employers. With the generous help from sponsors, we only paid for the venue and the career fair booklets which in all totaled \$150.

Companies attended in 2015-2016 School Year: Reynolds & Reynolds, Hyland, Wright-Patt Credit Union, Total Quality Logistics, Aerotek, Universal Technologies Corporation, Northwestern Mutual, Peerless Technologies, LexisNexis

Companies attended in 2016-17 School Year: ABC Pediatric Therapy Network, Northwestern Mutual, Optimus Prosthetics, Peerless Technologies, Reynolds & Reynolds, Teradata, LexisNexis, Google, Dayton Freight, Hyland, Clark Schaefer Hackett, Miami Valley Steel, Speedway

Program Evaluation

The Special Assistant to the A.D. measured the success of the Student-Athlete Career Fair through quantitative and qualitative methods by administering a survey. A Job Fair Evaluation was administered to both student-athletes and employers, and both tailored to their specific role in the event. The survey was administered via email to all student-athletes and employers. Please see Appendix A and B for a copy of each of the surveys that were administered.

Program Outcomes

The Student-Athlete Career Fair was created to provide an enhanced career development event as a part of the Life Skills Program for junior and senior student-athletes where they can further develop their career goals, skills, and network with potential employers. The career fair provides student-athletes with another option to the Wright State career fair that is held once a year from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The career fair offered another place and time where student-athletes could find time to focus on their career development and networking. The event is mandatory so it also challenges student-athletes to create or update their resumes prior to their arrival at the career fair.

The Student-Athlete Career Fair has had a positive impact on the enhancement of our Life Skills Program and the career development education that we provide. Objective number one was to implement an educational component to the career fair and we feel strongly that this was achieved. We achieved objective number one by taking a general career fair layout and offering educational components such as:

- Providing the opportunity to all student-athletes to schedule a meeting with the Special Asst. to the A.D. in order to create or update their resumes prior to the career fair.
- Providing the student-athletes with education on appropriate career fair attire.
- A career panel with Q&A in the beginning of the night to allow student-athletes the opportunity to learn from and ask questions from employers from the different companies.
- A group networking rotation which challenged the student-athletes to stand out from the crowd in a short time period. This also gave them practice in group interviewing.
- In 2016-17, added the Career Center First Impression Table where career center professionals reviewed student-athletes' resumes, cover letters, and provided advice on interviewing.
- In 2016-17, added the Google Hangout room to allow student-athletes the opportunity to experience a virtual interview and learn from Google employees what it takes to land positions in large organizations such as Google, Twitter, Facebook, etc.

Objective number two focused on the importance of building relationships with departments and businesses on campus, as well as businesses off campus, in order to secure sponsorship for the event. We believe that we successfully achieved objective number two because we achieved 100% participation from our first year sponsors in year two. We also believe that the success of the first year career fair in school year 2015-2016 resulted in the increase in companies in year two from nine to thirteen.

The sponsorships helped the athletics department save money on the event. The only cost for the event was the venue and the printing of the career fair booklets. In all the cost came out to \$150.00 to carry out the event with the help of the sponsors. Relationships between campus sponsors have also improved. The relationship between the Career Center and the Athletics Department has strengthened because of the partnership with this event and the Career Center has expressed interest in helping again in 2017-2018. The relationship between the campus bookstore has also improved and they are helping us with the planning of our year end awards banquet for student-athletes in April, 2017.

Objective number three focused on the recruitment of companies and organizations to attend the career fair that would match well with the intended majors of our student-athletes. We believe we

were successful in achieving objective number two. The overall satisfaction from student-athletes that responded in the surveys was 85% in regard to the quantity/quality of businesses in attendance, their own preparedness for the career fair, the setup of the event, and the time allotted for the fair. In addition we received additional feedback in the comments section of our surveys. Below are some excerpts from these notes:

- What did you like best about the career fair?
 - “Experiencing all of the different and possible opportunities not only for myself but for other athletes.”
 - “The career fair table because they gave me another opinion on my resume.”
 - “I loved getting to know different companies to get a chance to see what was out there for opportunities. I also liked having professional conversations with the company people to ask them questions about what they are looking for as an employee for a possible internship of some sort.”
 - “I liked how interested in us each company seemed.”
 - “I liked the rotation and how it was set up.”
 - “That is was specially set up for athletes to get the chances at jobs and internships.”
 - “The rotation & being able to talk to every business.”
 - “I liked hearing the recommendations and advice from the different representatives. Many were recruiters for their companies, so they knew what employers were looking for in a job applicant. They gave helpful tips to sell resumes and make our commitment as student-athletes stand out.”
 - “Format, Time, and that the career center was there.”
 - “Talking to people in the interview style gave me more confidence.”

The overall satisfaction from employers that responded in the surveys was 83% in regard to the quantity/quality of student-athletes in attendance, the preparedness of student-athletes for the career fair, the setup of the event, and the time allotted for the fair. In addition we received additional feedback in the comments section of our surveys. Below are some excerpts from these notes:

- What did you like best about the career fair?
 - “I love interacting with students and being able to help them in their career search.”
 - “Facility and organization was great!”
 - “Good organization, with great student candidates.”
 - “I enjoy the fact that you are making time for this segment of the student population, and that some coaches are very receptive to being lenient with practice schedules to allow their athletes to attend.”
 - “Students got to learn about our opportunities that they may have been unfamiliar with.”

Potential for adaption by other institutions

The Student-Athlete Career Fair can be implemented at institutions of different sizes, budgets, and divisions. The program can be used “as is” or can be scaled up or down depending on different factors. Institutions should really evaluate their specific needs in regard to career development for their student-athletes. Institutions should understand what their Career Center offers, what their Life Skills Program is offering for career development, and the specific needs of their student-athletes population. In order to be effective at another institution the organization of an event must be clearly outlined and communicated to all parties involved. Each individual will be expecting their own needs to be met in regard to career development so an in-depth understanding of expectations from both student-athletes and employers is essential. Planning and research for the event is important. In regard to the educational component for the event, other institutions should plan to provide education on a wide variety of areas associated with career development such as resume/cover letter creation, interviewing skills, networking, and many others.

Challenges/Obstacles

The first challenge that I came across was the limited budget for hosting a career fair. This was overcome however by partnering with departments and businesses both on campus and off campus. The second challenge was coordinating the attendance for the student-athletes. This is the first time that an event like this has been created and implemented for student-athletes as a part of the Life Skills Program. I had to get buy-in from coaches and administrators to ensure that student-athletes were in attendance as promised to employers. Because of our mission and the focus on the personal development of our student-athletes, the administration was helpful in making sure the attendance was met. The third and final challenge has been satisfying all student-athletes and employers with the breadth and depth of majors and opportunities. There are many different majors and it's difficult to satisfy all student-athletes and employers with the quantity and quality of applicants and organizations because every person is looking to satisfy their own career development goals. The focus on the educational aspect of the event makes sure that each stakeholder group can walk away with a positive experience and the opportunity to develop. In the future I would like to collaborate with Deans from the different departments on campus in order to enhance the event for each specific major.

Appendix A.

Job Fair Evaluation for Student-Athletes

Thank you for participating in our Job Fair. Your comments are very much appreciated and will help us plan for future job fairs. Please complete this evaluation by checking the response that most accurately reflects your opinion.

Name: _____

Sport: _____

	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
1. The quantity of businesses					
2. Your preparedness for the interviews/career center table					
3. Setting of the room					
4. Time allotted for the job fair					

5. What did you like best about this career fair?

6. What did you like least about this career fair?

7. Suggestions for improving future career fairs for student-athletes?

8. What companies would you have liked to see at the career fair?

Month _____ Day of the week _____ Length of Time _____ Hours _____

9. Suggestions/Comments:

Appendix B.

Job Fair Evaluation for Employers

Thank you for participating in our Job Fair. Your comments are very much appreciated and will help us plan for future job fairs. Please complete this evaluation by checking the response that most accurately reflects your opinion.

Name: _____ Title: _____

Company: _____ Phone: _____

	Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
1. The quantity of applicants					
2. Applicants preparedness for interviews					
3. Setting of the room					
4. Time allotted for the job fair					

5. What did you like best about this job fair?

6. What did you like least about this job fair?

7. Suggestions for improving future job fairs?

8. Please fill in your preference for a future job fair:

Month _____ Day of the week _____ Length of Time _____ Hours _____

9. Suggestions/Comments:
