

can partner with NASA to establish a program revolving around relevant projects such as the Rover project on Mars, this will allow students to play a part in designing the rocket that will be taking the rover to Mars, and will teach students about related areas of engineering. From the mechanical engineers designing the rover to the computer science engineers designing the circuits, students will get a glimpse of how the industry functions and their role in it. After students participate in the program, they will be able to provide feedback that will help guide faculty members and Corporate Partners to edit the programmatic structure for the following year (Amant, 2003).

Getting the faculty members on board will be one of the first necessary steps (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013). Faculty members play a vital part in the success of academic programs, since they will be able to work with Corporate Partners to develop the corporate-backed curriculum for the student. Faculty members who have industry experience will have a good understanding of how to understand Corporate Partners' needs to integrate into the curriculum (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013). Building a good relationship with the faculty will be crucial in the initial phase of creating a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community on a college campus because of their industry network connections (Amant, 2003). Faculty members will need to do the initial outreach to the Corporate Partners since they have that relationship with them (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013). From there, the program will take over and discuss what the program is about and how it will benefit them to join the faculty to develop the curriculum (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013). Along with getting the Faculty members on board, faculty will also need to partner up with campus housing. This will be

important to the program because campus housing has the largest amount of students in one place.

Once the initial outreach and connections has been established between the campus housing and the Corporate Partners, the institution will explain the purpose of the program and how their partnership will be the key to the students' success. Adding the industry standard component into the academic curriculum will teach students what they are expected to know when they graduate from college and enter the professional work environment (Taylor & Hooley, 2014). From a corporate standpoint, they will be able to assess the "employability" of these students that have undergone this program since they had a big part in designing the curriculum that would meet their hiring needs. (Taylor & Hooley, 2014)

Chapter Overview

This chapter introduces the concept of taking the fundamentals of a living-learning community and couples it together with the primary ideas of an internship to create a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community on a college campus. The collaboration consist of students, faculty, and Corporate Partners to create a mutually beneficial eco-system. The study will examine the methods that would create a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community on a college campus.

Chapter 2 of this research project consists of the literature review. The literature review begins with a review of the factors of student success explaining the importance of residential programs and how they help students who participate in these programs. The next section covers the value behind internships discussing how they benefit students

in their career before and after they graduate. Finally, the literature review will elaborate on the benefits of a corporate influenced curriculum.

Chapter 3 will discuss the methodology of this research project. The methodology for this study consists of a quantitative method study. The quantitative method will explore the interest and need for Corporate-backed Living-learning Community among students, faculty, and Corporate Partners. Following data collection and analysis, this data will then be presented in aggregate.

Chapter 4 examines the findings from this research project, while analyzing the themes that were found in the students, faculty, and Corporate Partners survey results. It will also connect back to the literature review on its relevance to the results. These findings will demonstrate a better understanding of the interest level of participation in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community from students, faculty, and Corporate Partners.

Chapter 5 will wrap up with the conclusion and recommendations for further research. The summary will conclude the interest level of students, faculty, and Corporate Partners in participating in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community. Next going over the recommendations section will provide additional insight and related topics to consider for future research. Then ending with the conclusion and final thoughts about the project.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Today in the United States, there are many round table discussions about whether or not higher education institutions are doing their part in empowering students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to be successful after graduation (Araujo, & Murray, 2011). The review will aggregate different literature in the purview of the factors of success, the value behind internships, and the benefits of a corporate-influenced curriculum on the impact of the student, faculty, and Corporate Partner.

The literature review of this project will go over three areas that makes up a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community. The first area is student success, which is comprised of three sub-categories that break down into campus engagement, academic success, and access/resources. These three sub-categories will explain how living-learning communities lead to student success. The next area is the overview of Living-learning Communities. This section will go over what is a living-learning community and what some universities in California offer in their living-learning community. The final area will be elaborating on internships. This section will discuss the values of an internship and benefits it bring to students, faculty, and Corporate Partners.

Student Success

For the purpose of this study, student success will be highlighted by three main areas of focus. The first area explores the benefits of campus engagement among students living on campus. How living on campus contributes to academic success of students.

Finally, how student living on campus have better access and resources available for them to utilize to enhance student success.

Campus Engagement

According to Snyder, Kras, Bressel, Reeve, & Dilworth (2011), there is a correlation between social integration and academic performance. Students that live on campus are exposed to more social environments that promoted both peer-to-peer engagement and academic support (Snyder, Kras, Bressel, Reeve, & Dilworth, 2011). By giving students the opportunities to socialize with their peers, on campus housing gives them the ability to improve their communication skills and build a collaborative study group for school (Tinto, 1999). Students were also more involved in campus clubs and attended campus events (Snyder, Kras, Bressel, Reeve, & Dilworth, 2011). In return, it created a better social environment for them while increasing higher retention and graduation rates during their time in school (Snyder, Kras, Bressel, Reeve, & Dilworth, 2011). Although Snyder, Kras, Bressel, Reeve, & Dilworth (2011) found there was no difference in academic performance for NCAA freshmen athletes who lived on-campus opposed to those freshmen athletes who lived off-campus; they did determine that athletes that lived on-campus had a higher retention rate for the university than those who lived off campus. Athletes were able to build support groups with fellow residents and take advantage of the welcoming residential environment (Snyder, Kras, Bressel, Reeve, & Dilworth, 2011).

Astin (1993) found that it was directly beneficial for residents living in housing to gain leadership skills, interpersonal abilities, job skills, and cultural awareness. As

academic and social engagement programming was integrated into the housing community, residents were then able to better immerse themselves with the campus. (Eck, Hoyt, & Stephenson, 2007). Those living off campus faced challenges such as traffic commuting to campus (Turley & Wodtke, 2010). The majority of student-athletes that lived on campus agreed that they were overall happier with their college experience (Snyder, Kras, Bressel, Reeve, & Dilworth, 2011).

Turley and Wodtke (2010) believes that there is a correlation between students that live on campus and the level of involvement with their institution. The authors stated that students who live on campus are more likely to interact with faculty members, improve on their critical thinking abilities, expand intellectual growth, are more persistent to graduate, and are more satisfied with their overall college experience (Turley & Wodtke, 2010). Garrett and Zabriskie (2003) found that students who lived on campus connected with faculty both in and outside that classroom setting.

The learning communities offer various programs for students to immerse themselves into their own major, certain programs like UC Davis living-learning community Aggie Business Leaders & Entrepreneurs are given the opportunity to visit companies (UC Davis, n.d.). These opportunities to interact with various companies will provide them with valuable experience, knowledge, and insight about that industry, thus allowing the students to make more informed decisions as they venture forward to pursue their ideal career path (UC Davis, n.d.). These students also get their foot in the door because they have intimate interactions with companies and build their network (Lichtenstein, 2005). These additional connections could build a long-standing

relationship to open more doors for prospective internships and potential jobs (Lichtenstein, 2005; Amant, 2003).

Academic Success

Living-learning communities are structured to give students an environment that allows them to socially interact with one another, and solve problems together (Snyder, Kras, Bressel, Reeve, & Dilworth, 2011). This is especially crucial for first year students because they are in a transitional phase from a sheltered academic environment (Turley & Wodtke 2010). Now that they are in college, these first year students must hold themselves accountable because they are responsible as they advance through their academics. Living on campus gives students the opportunity to immerse themselves into the college setting. On top of this, students that take advantage of the opportunity to live on campus and participate in a learning community are more likely to succeed than students who do not participate in these programs (Snyder, Kras, Bressel, Reeve, & Dilworth, 2011; Turley & Wodtke 2010).

From Turley and Wodtke's (2010) results, they were able to conclude that living on campus helped students achieve higher GPAs. The group that benefitted the most from living on campus were minority students experience (Turley & Wodtke, 2010). Out of the group of minorities that stood out were the African American students. They averaged .36 points higher than African American students living off campus with family experience (Turley & Wodtke, 2010). Turley and Wodtke (2010) noticed that themed living communities resonated well with students living on campus and faculty. Themed living communities connected students with faculty members to promote academic

integration (Turley & Wodtke, 2010). According Stassen (2003), students living on campus who participated in a living learning program reported higher GPAs.

Access/Resources

De Araujo and Murray (2011) discuss two variables that they believed contributed to academic success for students living on campus over commuter students. These two variables that contributed to academic success for students living on campus were accessibility to university resources and social integration (Araujo, & Murray, 2011).

If you live on campus, you have every resource at your fingertips (Araujo, & Murray, 2011). You can access the university library, schedule a tutoring session at the learning center, complete a project at the computer lab, and attend study groups in your hall without a problem (Araujo, & Murray, 2011). These university resources are easily accessible to students who live on campus. Araujo & Murray (2011) found that students who live on campus were studying more in the on the university grounds than anywhere else, which leads back to the authors' belief that why students who live on campus perform better than those who do not. The dormitory provides a welcome learning environment for the student to study and collaborate with others (Araujo, & Murray, 2011). National College Athletic Association freshmen students attending University of California at Irvine had a positive result in higher GPAs and retention rate over students living off campus because of the academic programing and resources that students living on campus had easier access to, they had more time and energy to devote to studying rather than spend it commuting (Snyder, Kras, Bressel, Reeve, & Dilworth, 2011). Students that lived on campus were more satisfied with their college experience because

of the support system they had from housing (Snyder, Kras, Bressel, Reeve, & Dilworth, 2011). Forming study groups in their halls proved more convenient than commuting to a meet-up area to accommodate travel distances of others in the group that did not live on campus. (Snyder, Kras, Bressel, Reeve, & Dilworth, 2011).

Living-learning communities also offer similar opportunities to students by working with the faculty members on-campus (Schmitt, et al., 2015). They participate in programs with faculty members beyond the classroom setting and apply the knowledge that they learned in-class to real world situations. Using a general example of this scenario would be in the College of Engineering. Mechanical Engineering majors in the living-learning communities have worked along with a professor in a robotics course to learn the fundamentals in circuitry. The professor partnered up with the living-learning community to hold a program outside of class to work with students and build a robot. In order to successfully fabricate this robot, however, students from the professor's circuitry class must apply the lessons they have learned. Zhao, (2004) found that students are more likely to engage with faculty members because of programs offered in the learning communities. They were able to develop stronger relationships with their instructors and this resulted in higher academics and overall satisfaction in school (Zhao, & Kuh, 2004).

Overview of Living-learning Communities

Living learning communities are defined as learning environments that support an active and collaborative environment for students with similar academic interests (Zhao, & Kuh, 2004). One of the key benefits of participating in a living learning program is that when you get a group of individuals that are looking to achieve the same goal, they

develop a unique synergy that allows them to collaborate and meet a shared outcome (Garrett, & Zabriskie, 2003). As the students are able to achieve the goals that they have set out to accomplish, they are able to do better in their classes (Zhao, & Kuh, 2004).

This section will be looking to six universities located in the state of California that have a living learning community on their campus. These universities will include two Cal State University, two University of California institutions, and two private universities.

California State University

The first university to go over is Cal State University, Chico . Cal State University, Chico calls their program “Living learning and themed communities” (Cal State University, Chico, n.d.).

CSU Chico defines their living learning communities as a, “University Housing Living Learning and Theme communities bridge academics and campus living as integral parts of the Chico Experience. We ensure your connection to the campus community is deep and immediate by providing you with a sense of belonging from the moment you step on campus through an exceptional and intentional living atmosphere.” (Cal State University, Chico, n.d.).

Cal State University, Chico offers ten different program in their living learning community. CSU Chico offers many common living learning programs like an honors community, a Math and Science community, and a Transfer community. One program that stands out from their community is their CleanCats! Program. This program

supports their residents who are in recovery from and who have family members struggling with substance use and related disorders.

San Francisco State University has adopted living learning communities for their institution. San Francisco State University suggests, “The primary objective of our communities is to provide an environment where students can explore the interconnected relationship between what is learned and what is lived.” (San Francisco State University, n.d.). San Francisco State University has a total of 12 living learning communities. These living learning communities range from Let’s Play!, which is a community for anyone who loves games and has an interest in their design and development. They also have a Rainbow community that brings students together who identify as LGBTQ into a safe, supportive, and empowering environment (San Francisco State University, n.d.).

University of California

The University of California, Davis participates in Living Learning Communities for their on campus-housing program. University of California, Davis defines their living learning communities as, “special interest communities within the residence halls. LLCs provide an opportunity for students with similar interests to live in the same hall or on the same floor, creating an educational community that supports its residents (University of California, Davis, n.d.). The communities allow students to enjoy both unique activities related to a theme as well as create more traditional, social, and recreational opportunities.” (University of California, Davis, n.d.). University of California, Davis’ program has sixteen different communities, and they focus on academic and ethnic concerns. They provide communities that focus on engineering to business leaders &

entrepreneurs, but their ethnic program is what really stands out. The program is comprised of the Native American community, Middle Eastern/South Asian community, Casa Cuauhtémoc (Chicano-Latino Theme House), Asian Pacific American, African American & African, and a Multi-Ethnic Program to enlighten students about all the cultures around the world (University of California, Davis, n.d.).

University of California, Los Angeles and their housing services have adopted living learning communities for their residents.

University of California, Los Angeles describes their program as an “initiative sponsored by Residential Life, it is a living learning environment where students with similar interests live together and participate in programs that cater to their academic, social, and personal needs. Students living in these communities have the opportunity to partake in academic experiences with their peers and interact with faculty, enjoying the benefits of being part of a diverse community that shares scholarly interests.” (University of California, Los Angeles, n.d.).

University of California, Los Angeles currently has ten learning communities on their campus that focus on academic and ethnic culture communities. Their academic communities hone in on medicine and innovation (University of California, Los Angeles, n.d.).

Private University

University of Southern California offers Special Interest Communities for their on-campus housing program. University of Southern California defines Special Interest Communities as “housing diversity of communities that bring students and faculty

together to share living and learning experiences. These communities feature activities and programs, both formal and informal, that enhance and expand your university life.” (University of Southern California, n.d.) University of Southern California offers a total of 16 living learning communities in their program. They have academic floors like Annenberg Communications that caters to students majoring in communications, journalism, and public relations. University of Southern California also has an Asian, Pacific Islander, Desi American Leadership Community that offers students to immerse themselves into the culture and learn more about the Asian, Pacific Islander, Desi American Leadership Community (University of Southern California, n.d.).

Stanford University has five major categories in their themed house program which is comprised of an Academic House, an Ethnic house, Language and Culture Theme Houses, a Pre-assignment house, and Co-op house for their residents (Stanford University, n.d.).

Stanford University claims that “Residential Education's essential conviction is that formal teaching, informal learning, and personal support are integral to a Stanford education. ResEd programs extend the classroom into the residences and complement the academic curriculum with activities and experiences supporting students' preparation for a life of leadership, intellectual engagement, citizenship, and service.” (Stanford University, n.d.)

Stanford University has the largest program out of the six institutions. The five major houses have a combined total of 26 communities. From the five houses, the house that stands out the most is the Language and Culture House. The four communities have their

residence truly immersed into the themed culture. They learn to speak the language and experience the culture through its history (Stanford University, n.d.).

While the research of each institution made evident the primary focus for themed communities consisted of academics, social, and cultural programs. The professional development aspect appears to be under emphasized in these institutions. By connecting with Corporate Partners, living learning programs would be able to develop students for life both inside and outside of school.

Internships

This section will begin with discussing the value of internships and the purpose they serve to students and Corporate Partners. The section will furthermore, elaborate on the benefits of internships to students, faculty, and Corporate Partners in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community. Finally, the section goes over the values and benefits of internships in relation to students, faculty, and Corporate Partners.

Value of Internships

Internships for students are extremely valuable in their academic career (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013). This gives them the opportunity to put their knowledge to the test in real world applications, allowing them to gain hands-on experience they need to work in their field study and obtain a good understanding of the work dynamics in that particular industry (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013). It is also a great way to see if this is a career they wish to pursue after graduating. Another benefit is that this may get their foot in the door with the company and work for them after graduating based on how well they do during the internship (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013). Their participation also

gives them a network of people that they would be able to contact later after they graduate (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013).

Employers measure the employability of the applicant based upon applicable experiences that relate to the job description that the applicant is trying to applying for in the company (Taylor & Hooley, 2014). However, internships allow the candidate to get hands-on experience with the company and potentially allow this candidate to be hired by the company later on (Taylor & Hooley, 2014). In the job application process, interns have had a better chance of being hired on after the conclusion of their program, as opposed to a random applicant who did not obtain the same experience but is applying for the same position as the intern (Taylor & Hooley, 2014). Whether or not the intern gets the position, these individuals still gain valuable “work world” experience that can be utilized and may not be obtained by individuals who do not participate in internship programs at all (Amant, 2003).

Benefits of Internships

This section will explore the benefits of internships for students, faculty, and Corporate Partners. The scholarly research regarding internships show how each group mutually benefits from one another. Lastly, the conclusion drawn from how these benefits lead students to career preparedness and student success.

Housing

A residential housing unit on a college campus would serve as the nexus for a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community with the integration of an internship on its campus. Its centrality affords students easy access to staff, the support of their faculty,

and acts as the conduit towards Corporate Partners (Schmitt, et al., 2015). Students have the opportunity to be introduced to their industry and career while the department has a point of reference for the future Corporate-backed Living-learning Community program (Cal Poly Pomona, n.d.).

Students

Blevins (2016) found it to be very beneficial for newly graduating nurses to be part of a residency (internship) program as they transitioned into the field. Nurses that were a part of a Nursing Residency (internship) Program had a higher confidence rate when transition is to full time in comparison to nurses that did not participate in a residency program (Blevins, 2016). The nurses were able to acquire the critical thinking and prioritization skills needed to work in this fast paced and detail oriented environment after completion of the program. This is a positive outcome for internships because it definitely shows that it helps the student transition into a very demanding job in a seamless way (Blevins, 2016). They were able to work through these experiences with preceptors in the nurse residency program and learn the proper way to handle certain situations (Blevins, 2016).

Internship benefits offer a higher employability rate, but there are also other benefits that contribute to career preparedness (Wallace, 2016). The intern can gain a vast network of professionals that they have interacted with during the program, which they can use as references if they decide to seek employment elsewhere (Wallace, 2016). By successfully completing an internship term with a company, the candidate can fulfill the education to practice gap (Wallace, 2016).

“I got an incredible boost in my confidence out of it, it’s like about what I can deliver. I think the main thing is how to act and interact in a business. How to write business e-mails and approach people in a business environment, how to approach meetings, exposure to senior management is really good because that again boosted my confidence that I could speak to them and they actually take on board like what I said. It’s quite scary sometimes. That was the main thing I can think of; also I was given such a high level responsibility there that I was more confident in my deliverables and in my work.” (Little & Harvey, 2006, p.32).

As Little and Harvey (2006) found in their study, students who participate in an internship are able to apply what they learned in the classroom to practice. Upon completion of the internship, the student displayed higher level of confidence in working in their area of study (Little & Harvey, 2006)

Students that participate in learning communities and internships are more likely to be successful in obtaining jobs after graduation (Taylor & Hooley, 2014). They have a higher rate of employability among companies (Taylor & Hooley, 2014). According to Taylor and Hooley (2014), based off students in the University Business graduate program, they state that students can be measured on an employability scale. Students are assessed by determining the correlation between students that participate in the program and have found internships, students that are in the program but have not found internships, and students who are not in the program at all (Taylor & Hooley, 2014). Out of the three groups, students that are in the program and have found internships show the highest rate of employability because they were able to utilize the fundamentals that they learned in class and apply it to a real-world setting in their internships (Taylor & Hooley,

2014). However, even students who participate in the program but did not find an internship did show a higher employability. There is a 79% employment rate with students who participated the program and obtained an internship as opposed to 70% of students who were a part of the program but did not find internships at all (Taylor & Hooley, 2014).

In addition, students who did not participate in the program at all show an employment rate of 38.04% (Taylor & Hooley, 2014). This is significantly lower compared to the two groups of students that participated in the program (Taylor & Hooley, 2014). At the end of the program, the students were surveyed with a Likert scale on the usefulness of the program from a one through five scale. One indicates a strong disagreement to the usefulness of the program and five indicates a strong agreement on the usefulness of the program. The assessment showed that the participants in the program felt that they strongly agreed that this program contributed to their success and higher rate of employability. This study shows that intervention with participation is a major factor to student success (Taylor & Hooley, 2014).

Faculty

Expanding on the benefits of internships that relate to creating a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community on a college, the scope of perception of the outsider's point of view is broadened (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013). Maertz, Stoeberl, and Marks (2013) mentioned the favorable statistics the faculty get when they have a well-developed relationship with these corporate organizations. These relationships between faculty and corporate organizations begin to flourish with more

students entering as interns and coming out as full-time employee after graduating from college. (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013).

Building a great relationship between the faculty of an institution and corporate industry partners is an essential relationship that needs to be built and nurtured on every college campus as it brings many mutual benefits for everyone (Amant, 2003). As faculty members plan for their institution's academic curriculum, they need take the relevance of the material in consideration (Amant, 2003). As the industry paradigm shifts to meet the mass market, so should the material that is taught in schools (Amant, 2003). Lecturing on dated materials that were once part of the industry standards twenty years ago may not give students the knowledge they need to meet today's employer demands (Amant, 2003). According to Amant (2003), faculty members that work with the Corporate Partners throughout the student internship gain a lot from that process. The relationship that is built needs to be nourished as it will provide long-term benefits for all parties. The faculty member would be able to work with the Corporate Partners to gear their curriculum with more industry-focused material (Amant, 2003). By understanding what type of candidates employers are looking for their company, students will be learning relevant job skills and the standard practices they need to work in that particular industry, making these students enticing for employers to hire after they graduate from college (Amant, 2003). As the faculty member works with the Corporate Partner over the years, more internship and career opportunities will arise from this relationship, making it very beneficial for the institution (Amant, 2003).

The other beneficial outcome for the educator in the institution is that they are able to revamp their curriculum based on the feedback they get from both the corporation

and the student (Amant, 2003). In order for educators to create a more dynamic and relevant courses for their students, they should take the opportunity to reach out to industry leaders and see what has changed in the market while also learning about new trends in their industry (Amant, 2003). Educators working with Corporate Partners further deepens their relationship, allowing them to insight on the industry direction and employment opportunities for students (Amant, 2003).

Examining the steps in creating an innovative academic program on a college campus focused on student success and career development backed by a corporate sponsor is a challenging task (Schmitt, et al., 2015). The first step to move forward is assessing institutional goals to determine the needs of the institution (Schmitt, et al., 2015). Once a thoroughly assessment is completed, a strategic plan must be drafted to address issues. After you have this plan in place, you would be able to execute and adjust accordingly to make sure your issue is addressed (Schmitt, et al., 2015). Schmitt, Hughes, and Herndon-Sobalvarro (2015) came across a dilemma at Duquesne University where the doctoral program for the school of Psychology was in drastic need of internships for their doctoral students. After assessing the issue that Schmitt, Hughes, and Herndon-Sobalvarro was having at Duquesne University, Schmitt, Hughes, and Herndon-Sobalvarro addressed the issue head on by creating an internship program with his local community and working with the American Psychological Association through its accreditation process. By collaborating with them, Schmitt, Hughes, and Herndon-Sobalvarro was able to acquire grant funding for his internship program (Schmitt, et al., 2015).

Schmitt, Hughes, and Herndon-Sobalvarro (2015) plan yielded multiple benefits. Schmitt, Hughes, and Herndon-Sobalvarro was able to build a great relationship with the community. Now moving forward as Schmitt, Hughes, and Herndon-Sobalvarro internship program expands, so will his community as these interns graduate and move on to their career path (Schmitt, et al., 2015). These graduate interns are able to return as professional participants to aid the program. The other crucial benefit that is gained from the result of this program is the relationship with the American Psychological Association (Schmitt, et al., 2015). Now that this relationship has been established, further program expansion means more interns can be accommodated (Schmitt, et al., 2015). This opens more doors for additional funding as the American Psychological Association would also benefit from additional practitioners in the field to be a part of their network (Schmitt, et al., 2015).

Corporate Partners

Students are not the only ones the benefit from the internship experience (Amant, 2003). Amant (2003), claims that all three parties (Students, Faculty, and Corporate Partners) benefit from the internship. Amant's "Stakeholder Education." (p. 232) method explains how the institution and corporation benefit from the student taking the internship program (Amant, 2003). The corporation would be able to have an ongoing internship with additional students throughout the academic school year and in the future. The university can build a relationship that could be cultivated and strengthened over the years. (Amant, 2003).

An additional benefit that corporate organizations is able to gain from these internships are the relationship with the institution (Amant, 2003). Building relationships directly benefit the company's long-term strategies. This would allow for a continual flow of high caliber interns for their employee workforce (Amant, 2003). Another key benefit is working with educators to get them to teach certain things in their curriculum that companies are looking for in a candidate to hire (Amant, 2003). Once these students graduate from college, they would have a general knowledge of this area (Amant, 2003).

The Corporate Partners have a lot to gain from building these relationships with institutions (Amant, 2003). Once a great relationship has been established with a particular institution, they are able to influence the faculty member in changing the academic curriculum to suit their corporate interests. This in turn develops the student into viable candidates for their company (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013). Maertz, Stoeberl, and Marks (2014) found that these student interns were given entry-level tasks that would normally burden full time employees from working on higher priority projects at a fraction of the cost. Student interns were not only seen as viable candidates to hire later down the line but they were also seen as a great source for low-cost labor (Amant, 2003). The best thing about the student internship for the Corporate Partner is that the student intern is already gaining real work experience and getting trained at the same time (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013). Therefore, if they are chosen to work for the company after they graduate, it would be minimal training needed in comparison to a candidate that was chosen from the regular hiring system (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013).

Amant (2003) found that corporate organizations benefit from internships through reducing cost with lower pay or even no pay for some interns while keeping the productivity high. Interns are eager to learn, so managers are able to off load various time consuming tasks that require little to no supervision while they work on higher priority projects (Amant, 2003). As some of these managers get stronger and more capable interns that are able to handle more difficult tasks, they would be able to delegate those tasks to them accordingly (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013). When they do come across a strong candidate in their internship program, they would be able to offer the intern a position upon completing their degree (Amant, 2003). Thus, the employer would not need to train the intern when they return because the intern understands the work dynamics and expectations of the company (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013). In this way, the company is able to recoup their investment and save money (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013). In contrast, if the company hired someone new, it could take between three to six months for them to get used to the dynamics of company. (Amant, 2003).

Learning communities and internships promote career preparedness for students (Amant, 2003). According to Wallace (2016), nursing student work-study internship programs allow newly graduated nursing students the opportunity to work in a clinical practice under the guidance of clinical preceptors to provide them hands-on experience in the medical field. Wallace (2016) found, from a poll of 400 academic nursing leaders, that more than 90% of these participants were more prepared and effective in their job as a result of the program. In another study conducted by Blevins (2016), she found that nurses in residency (internship) programs were more self-confident in their skills, were better communicators, and were more efficient in prioritization and time-management.

This lead to a higher job satisfaction among these nurses and a higher retention rate for hospitals that offered these programs. This even reduced costs for health facilities and reduced the turnover rate by 36% (Wallace, 2016). Seeing how these internships are benefitting the students by giving them the hands-on experience that they need in order to be successful in college after graduation (Wallace, 2016). The results from Wallace (2016) and Blevins (2016) shows that these types of programs are effective and beneficial for all constituents. Programs like the work-study internship and nurse in residency (internships) are preparing these students with the essential skills and knowledge in order to be successful as a career professional (Blevins, 2016; Wallace J., 2016).

Chapter Summary

This chapter delves into student success, overviews living-learning communities, and examines the benefit of internships (Turley & Wodtke, 2010). Living on campus generated several factors that contributed to student success for residents (Zhao, & Kuh, 2004). Campus engagement contributed to student involvement and social integration with the campus. Academic success highlighted students who were a part of the community and achieved higher GPAs (Snyder, Kras, Bressel, Reeve, & Dilworth, 2011). While, students living on campus gained full access to faculty member and campus resources (Snyder, Kras, Bressel, Reeve, & Dilworth, 2011). The overview of living-learning communities was explored through six California institutions. Finally, chapter 2 went over the value and benefits of an internship for students, faculty, and Corporate Partners.

Chapter 3 will discuss the methodology used in this project. The chapter will go over the approach to the research design, go over the selection process of the participants before explaining the data collection method, and review the questions used in the survey. The chapter concludes by disclosing the inform consent form, potential risks, and limitations of this project.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter will explain the methodology used in the project, beginning with the research design and the selection of the participants in this study. It then explains the data collection instrument that administered the surveys to the participants. In this section, the informed consent and potential risk of this study will be divulged. Finally, the chapter ends with the limitations of recorded thesis.

Research Design

This study is designed using a quantitative method and a survey with extreme consideration for the research setting and demographic. A quantitative method allows for data collection through a survey (as opposed to a qualitative method). The survey was conducted in an active first-year student residential community that houses approximately 420 residents. The survey was the best instrument to gather unbiased data for the project.

The electronic survey allows the researcher to utilize a portable device (iPad) to survey 383 student participants, 42 faculty, and 6 Corporate Partners. A 5-question survey (for students and faculty) and a 4-question survey (for Corporate Partners) was presented to participants. Considering most participants may not have had in-depth expose to the topic of Corporate-backed Living-learning Communities, and since the idea of one is purely hypothetical to Cal Poly Pomona, the researcher intentionally provided a survey with dichotomous choices to ensure that each question was presented in a clear and direct manner. As a result, the answers were also clear and distinct. While both surveys asked closed-ended questions, participants were given the opportunity to

elaborate on their decision during a “why? Or why not?” follow-up question. The combination of closed-ended questions and the explanation allowed for two benefits: the survey was an efficient instrument, and it gave insight to the respondents’ opinion about a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community.

Participants

The first group that was chosen to take part of the study were first-year freshmen housing residents who participate in a college themed community. The 383 first-year freshmen housing residents input would be invaluable information to this study because their feedback will give the study a good gauge on how well students believe participating in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would benefit them. The housing residents were approached during a programming event in their building and were told the following by the researcher: "The purpose of this project to assess the need of Corporate-backed Living-learning Community on a college campus. The intent of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community is to help students transition from college to career. This study investigates whether a need is seen at Cal Poly Pomona for such transition and support." When the housing residents agreed to participate, the survey was administered through a secure online survey tool via Google Forms. A password-protected iPad was provided during the time of surveying.

The second group that was chosen to take part of the study were randomly selected faculty members on campus that were in the office during their office hours in various building across campus. These 42 random faculty members would provide insightful feedback on how they believe participating in a Corporate-backed Living-

learning Community would benefit students and their department. After elaborating about purpose of the survey, the randomly selected faculty gave their informed consent to proceed on with the research. When the randomly selected faculty members agreed to participate, the survey was administered through a secure online survey tool via Google Forms. A password-protected iPad was provided during the time of surveying.

The third group that was chosen to take part of the study were Corporate Partners that were on campus during career fair. The six Corporate Partners that participated in the survey belonged to the organization in the private, education, and non-profit fields. These Corporate Partners would provide valuable information on whether they believe their company would be interested to participate in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community. After describing in detail the purpose of the survey, the Corporate Partners gave their informed consent to participate in the Corporate-backed Living Learning Community program survey. When the Corporate Partners agreed to participate, the survey was administered through a secure online survey tool via Google Forms. A password-protected iPad was provided during the time of surveying.

Data Collection

The survey instruments used to measure the College-Themed Community Residents and Faculty members involve 5 agree or disagree questions with an optional fill-in section to explain, and Corporate Partners are measured through four agree or disagree questions with an optional fill-in section to explain via secured online form.

The process was to randomly select 383 College-Themed Community Residents, 42 Faculty Members from Cal Poly Pomona, and 6 Corporate Partners that currently

employs students to participate in this study. Participants of this study were all 18 or older and did not require parental consent to participate.

Surveys

The survey to the student explores how they feel about a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community. This include the usefulness of the program for their professional development, their area of study, academic achievement, and career readiness.

| |
|---|
| Table 1 |
| Student Questions |
| Do you believe a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful for your professional development? Why or why not? |
| Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you learn more about your area of study? Why or why not? |
| Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you achieve higher grades? Why or why not? |
| Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you find a job after you graduate? Why or why not? |
| Do you believe Cal Poly Pomona should create a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community? Why or why not? |

The survey to Faculty members includes questions that explore the benefits of offering a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community to students. Questions also assess the needs for outreach and the needs to collaborate with corporate backers to create a more industry focused academic curriculum.

| |
|--|
| Table 2 |
| Faculty Questions |
| Do you believe a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful for students in the context of professional development? Why or why not? |
| Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you create more focused curriculum in your area of study? Why or why not? |
| Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you attract more students to your program? Why or why not? |
| Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help grow your department? Why or why not? |
| Do you believe Cal Poly Pomona should create a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community? Why or why not? |

The survey to Corporate Partners includes questions that explores the benefits of offering a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community to students. Questions also assess the needs for what Corporate Partners are looking for in candidates to hire for their company and the needs to collaborate with universities to create a more industry focused academic curriculum.

| |
|---|
| Table 3 |
| Corporate Partner Questions |
| Do you believe a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful for recruitment efforts in your company? Why or why not? |
| Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you screen for quality candidates? Why or why not? |
| Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you bridge that gap between academics and work related skills needed for students to become ideal hiring candidates? Why or why not? |
| Do you think your company would be interested in partnering up with Cal Poly Pomona to help create a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community? Why or why not? |

Inform Consent

In terms of informed consent, the researcher formulated a document stating that participants are invited to participate in a study that has been approved by the Cal Poly Pomona Institutional Review Board. The consent form elaborated on the following key points:

- Project Title
- IRB Protocol Number
- Primary Investigator
- Faculty Advisor
- Purpose of the Study
- Procedures
- Possible Risks and Benefits
- Consent

All volunteers were provided consent by signing the consent form via Google Doc.

Potential Risk

There were only minimal risks associated with participating in this research. This study collected responses from students, faculty, and Corporate Partners. The identities of all participating subjects were kept anonymous. No personal information, name, or Identification Number was collected in the survey. The program was self-paced, and there were no psychological or physical risks anticipated. I worked closely with the students, faculty, and Corporate Partners to ensure they felt comfortable with the program

to avoid psychological risk. Students, faculty, and Corporate Partners were told that they may cease their participation at any time if they no longer felt comfortable doing so. The study was conducted in differing environments. The students were surveyed in their community building, the faculty were surveyed in their department office during office hours, and the Corporate Partners were surveyed during the campus career fair.

Research Limitations

The primary limitation to this project is that the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community program that it is all theoretical. There is not currently a program in practice that the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community could measure against. Periodic metric data would need to be gathered in order to assess the effectiveness of the program. As each incoming cohort is setup to enter every two years (which represents a student's commitment to their upper division courses), there would need to be at least three to five full cycles of data in order to evaluate the long term metric for the overall program.

The secondary limitations to this project were the lack of qualitative responses to the "why or why not?" portion of the questions on the survey. This data would have helped provide additional insight to why the participant is interested in being a part of the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community. Qualitative responses would have been greatly beneficial as they would have added additional depth of understanding into the study. The original intention for this study was to utilize a mixed method of surveying subjects, (which is asking the participating subjects a series of 'Agree/Disagree' questions, followed by "why or why not?" to gathering in-depth responses to their rationale). As a result, a quantitative approach is used to analyze the data collected.

The third limitation to creating a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community is the students who live off campus. Designed to accommodate students who live on campus, a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community is not a feasible option for students that do not live in the residential halls. While some students are unable to afford on-campus housing, others are not assigned, as there is a wait list. For this reason, educational leaders must investigate options for off-campus students, as they deserve the same access to success.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, a scientific method was taken to obtain quantitative data. The online four to five question survey that was given to the students, faculty, and Corporate Partners was administered via mobile device (iPad). Full disclosure and potential risks were explained to all participants. The theoretical nature of this program and the lack of response to the “why/why not” portion of the survey proved to be the two of the study’s limitations. Chapter 4 will be going over the results from the research findings in the surveys taken by the students, faculty, and Corporate Partners. The results will present a better understanding of interest level from students, faculty, and Corporate Partners in participating in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community. The results will give an overall understanding of how beneficially each demographic perceives the program.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter will go over the research findings from the surveys taken from the students, faculty, and Corporate Partners. These results will go over each group's level of interest in participating in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community. The results will disclose the extent to which each group believes that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would benefit their area.

Student

A total of 383 randomly selected College-Themed Community Residents completed a 5-question survey. The survey focused on the creation of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community on a college campus. The results show that students had a definite interest in being a part of the program if it was created on campus (see Table 4).

| Table 4 | | | | | |
|--|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Student Question 1 Results | | | | | |
| Do you believe a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful for your professional development? | | | | | |
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | yes | 382 | 99.7 | 99.7 | 99.7 |
| | no | 1 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 383 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The first question of the survey asked residents “Do you believe a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful for your professional development? Why or why not?” Of the 383 responses collected from the sample, 382 believed that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful in their professional development (see Table 4). The 99.7% (382 of 383 participants) results show that residents believe that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful in their professional development (see Table 4). The benefits of participating include hands-on professional experience in areas that are not taught in the classroom such as: composing resumes and cover letters, understanding application processes, as well as developing interviewing skills.

The perception of the 382 respondents is consistent with Taylor and Hooley’s (2014) study where students believe participating in the program would be beneficial to their professional development. After receiving constructive feedback in the following five areas (i) resumes/Curriculum Vitae and cover letter, (ii) an application, (iii) psychometric testing, (iv) ‘mock’ interviews, and (v) ‘mock’ assessment exercises, participants of the Taylor and Hooley’s (2014) Career Management Skill (CMS) module were asked to rate the usefulness of the program. The participants agreed that the CMS was useful in contributing to the recruitment process because participants would then have a better “understanding [of] how the job application process works, from applications/CVs through to interviews and assessment[s]” (Taylor & Hooley, 2014, p.8). The CMS not only provided a deeper understanding of the recruitment process, it also increased the likelihood of obtaining graduate level employment. Of the students that did not participate in the CMS, only 30% obtained graduate level employment after

graduating, while 57% of students who participated in the CMS (but did not accept placement) obtained graduate level employment (Taylor & Hooley, 2014). Ultimately, the highest rate of graduate level employment was found in those students that participated in the module with a placement. Ninety-one percent of these students obtained graduate level employment after graduating (Taylor & Hooley, 2014).

| Table 5 | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Student Question 2 Results | | | | | |
| Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you learn more about your area of study? | | | | | |
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | yes | 381 | 99.5 | 99.5 | 99.5 |
| | no | 2 | 0.5 | 0.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 383 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The second question asked College-Themed Community Residents was “Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you learn more about your area of study? Why or why not?” The results showed that 381 of the 383 believed that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful in their area of study (see Table 5). The results show that 99.5% of residents agreed that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help them learn more about the area of their study (see Table 5). This suggests that the program would help in encouraging students to dive-in and discover more about their area of study through internships.

Included in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community is a developed relationship with a Corporate Partner. These partners would be instrumental in providing input for the academic curriculum as well as encouraging students to volunteer and accept internships (Taylor & Hooley, 2014). Internships provide a safe learning space where a student is able to become acclimated to the profession by focusing on a specific area of study and experience everything first hand. The environment where a student learns is a factor of how receptive they are in processing information and putting knowledge to real world application (Taylor & Hooley, 2014). Graduating students that take on internships are exposed to a professional setting earlier on in their career, making for a smoother “transition to practice” (Blevins, 2016, p.367). Studies have found that other benefits of internships include an increase in ability to (a) initiate the decision-making process, (b) report significant data, (c) communicate effectively, and (d) use technology and equipment (Blevins, 2016). Collectively, these abilities sharpen students’ critical thinking skills, increase the students’ self-confidence, makes the process of coping with new employee stress easier, and leads to an overall job satisfaction (Blevins, 2016).

| Table 6 | | | | | |
|---|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Student Question 3 Results | | | | | |
| Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you achieve higher grades? | | | | | |
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | yes | 356 | 93.0 | 93.0 | 93.0 |
| | no | 27 | 7.0 | 7.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 383 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The third question that we asked College-Themed Community Residents was “Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you achieve higher grades? Why or why not?” The results showed that 356 of the 383 believed that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful in achieving higher grades (see Table 6). The 93% of residents agreed that participating in a corporate-backed living learning community will provide them with an environment to thrive academically (see Table 6).

Participating in a community and working with others in the same discipline creates an environment for those around you to thrive, thus, enabling students to learn more about what they are interested in and strive to achieve more (Turley and Wodtke, 2010). Turley and Wodtke (2010) found in their study on college residence and academic performance that students who were a part of the housing community were able to achieve higher GPA than those who were not a part of the housing community. An example of how students achieve higher GPAs when participating in a housing community in Turley and Wodtke study were African Americans housing residents.

Considering that African American students are “more likely...to live in isolated, disadvantaged residential areas which may inhibit success in college” (Turley & Wodtke, 2010, p. 510), participating in a College-Themed Community and a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community affords this student population the opportunity to attend “academic workshops” with students within the same major (Turley & Wodtke, 2010, p.507). In addition, the African American student living in the on-campus themed community is more likely to “interact with faculty” in both formal and informal settings (Turley & Wodtke, 2010, p.508). Combined with other positive scholarly experiences, African American students living on campus are “significantly more advantaged than” (p. 518) than their off campus counterparts. Turley and Wodtke (2010) confirmed this in their study that found higher GPAs were produced by the African American students that live on campus. The GPA for those students who were part of that community averaged 2.35 in comparison to the students in the same institution who did not participate in the community averaged around 1.99 GPA.

Academic success and high GPAs can be obtained by all ethnic groups that participate in the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community. As previously discussed, the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community encourages students to participate in an internship. Knouse, Tanner, and Harris (1999) found that students with internships within their area of study attained higher GPAs in comparison to those students who did not participate in an internship of that graduating class. More impressive, the students with internships and higher GPAs were more likely to graduate at a younger age than those students that had lower GPAs and no internship (Knouse, Tanner, & Harris, 1999).

| Table 7 | | | | | |
|---|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Student Question 4 Results | | | | | |
| Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you find a job after you graduate? Why or why not? | | | | | |
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | yes | 374 | 97.7 | 97.7 | 97.7 |
| | no | 9 | 2.3 | 2.3 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 383 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The fourth question that we asked College-Themed Community Residents was “Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you find a job after you graduate? Why or why not?” The results showed that 374 of the 383 believed that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful in their area of study (see Table 7). A 97.7% rate of residents believe that participating in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help them find a job after they graduate through hands-on experience, exposure to job-related integration, as well as fostering the skills necessary in the field to be successful (see Table 7).

Two integral components of the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community are internships and networking opportunities. Early exposure to the industry and key personnel, along with job-related integration, allows students of the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community to discover their professional skills (Hall, Higson, & Bullivant, 2010). Employers found that students who participated in a work placement program were employable solely because they developed their “soft competences” (Hall, Higson, & Bullivant, 2010, p. 2). Communication skills, collaborative ability, time management skills, and the ability to establish relationships were among the dozen soft

competences that were developed “through a partnership between universities and industry” (p. 2). The Corporate-backed Living-learning Community student is then more-developed, has transferable skills, and therefore is more-employable (Taylor & Hooley, 2014).

Hall, Higson, and Bullivant’s (1999) study along with the evidence of Taylor and Hooley (2014), found that solid evidence shows a strong correlation between students who participated in the program and the higher rate of employment upon graduation. The highly statistical significance of Taylor and Hooley’s (2014) results revealed in their study was that 72.6% of graduates who participated in the CMS program were able to find a job within six months or less upon graduating (Taylor and Hooley, 2014). Students who participated in an internship prior to graduating were able to reap the benefits of finding a job placement sooner than six months after graduating. Those students were more confidence and better acclimated to work in a business environment (Knouse, Tanner, and Harris, 1999).

A student that participates in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community can receive a dual benefit that his/her counterpart does not (Knouse, Tanner, and Harris, 1999). Considering that participating in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community leads to early employment, a student’s first advantage is the securing of a professional position in the workforce (Knouse, Tanner, and Harris, 1999). Obtaining employment, at a rate faster than a student not in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community, has a financial benefit as well (Knouse, Tanner, and Harris, 1999). In 2016, the Bureau of Labor Statistics recorded the median earned annual salary of a Mechanical Engineer Technician as \$54,480 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018) This for example, give

students in the program an edge over students whom are not as experienced because that are more employable due to the professional experience they have obtained from their internships. With higher employability and work-centric knowledge, students from the program who start work earlier have the potential to earn \$27,000 more than a traditional student still seeking employment after graduation.

| Table 8 | | | | | |
|--|-----|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Student Question 5 Results | | | | | |
| Do you believe Cal Poly Pomona should create a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community? | | | | | |
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | yes | 381 | 99.5 | 99.5 | 99.5 |
| | no | 2 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 100.0 |
| Total | | 383 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The fifth question that we asked College-Themed Community Residents was “Do you believe Cal Poly Pomona should create a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community? Why or why not?” The results showed that 381 of the 383 believed that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful in their area of study (see Table 8). The 99.5% of residents agree that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community should be created because they believe it will help them acquire the relevant knowledge and hands-on experience needed to become the next leader in their industry of interest (see Table 8).

To groom the 21st century student into an industry leader, three main events must occur. Providing students with knowledge relevant to their ever-changing industry is the

primary and most important requirement (Blevins, 2016). Subsequently, the knowledge of standard processes and workplace dynamics must be further explored in proper work environment. The work environment, which serves as a learning space, must then allow students time to complete the third requirement: application of classroom theory to real-life situations (Blevins, 2016). Nursing students that participated in a residency program at Greenville Campus-University of South Carolina were a great example of how students use theory for application (Blevins, 2016). The nursing students who underwent the program were guided by a preceptor and found a “source of support” (Blevins, 2016, p. 367). The unique supervision and support system gave the students, not only more confidence, but yielded in a high rate of job satisfaction (Blevins, 2016). In turn, these students experience little employment turnover and remained successful in their career after graduation (Blevins, 2016).

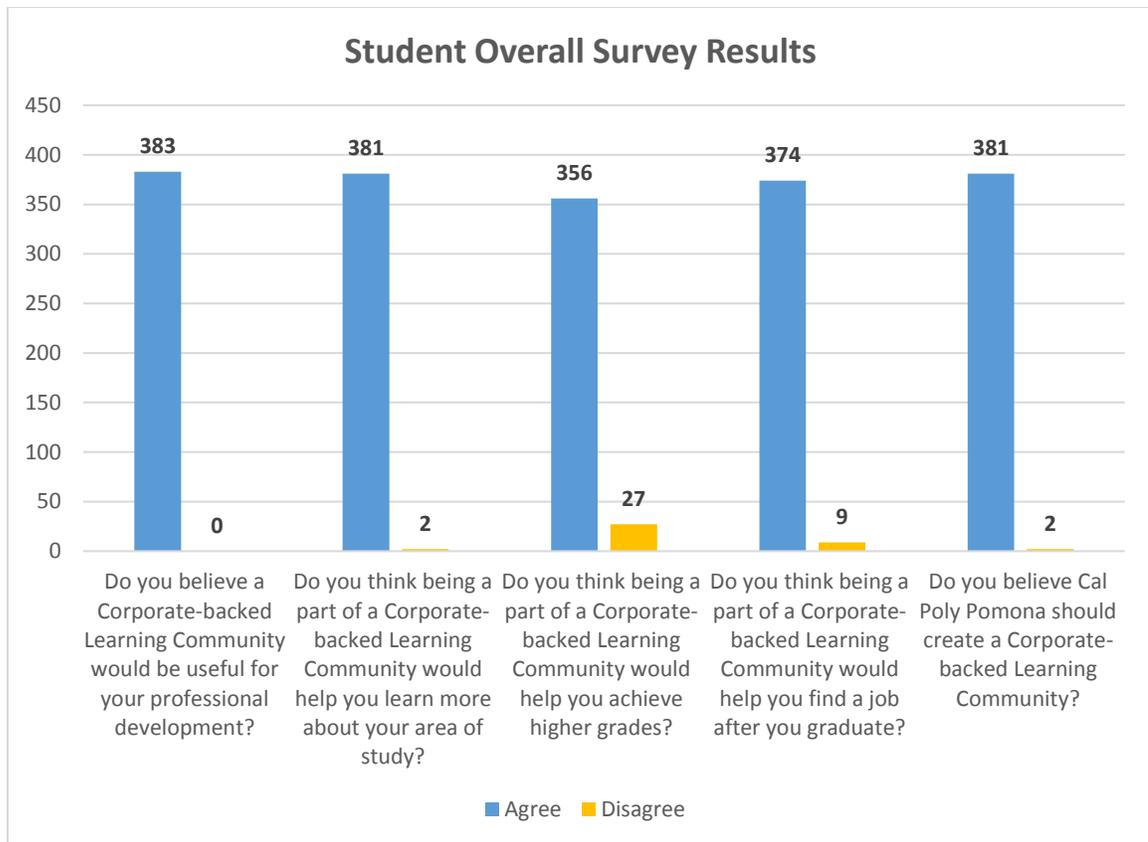


Figure 1. Summary of Student Overall Survey Results

The overall results for the student survey shows that students believe a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be helpful in their learning process, development, academic achievement, and job placement after graduation. Respondents in question number one agreed unanimously that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful in their professional development (See Figure 1). In question number 2, only two students stated that they believe a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would not increase their learning in their area of study (See Figure 1). Of the 383 students that answered question number three, only 27 students “disagreed” that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help them achieve higher grades (See Figure 1). The disagreeing respondents in question number

three accounted for 7% of the total participants. In question number four, only 9 out of 383 students believe that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would not help them in their search for full-time employment after graduation (See Figure 1). Similarly to question number two, only 2 students (in question number five) stated that Cal Poly Pomona should not create a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community (See Figure 1).

Faculty

A total of 42 randomly selected Faculty members whom were available during their office hours in various buildings across campus were asked to take the five question survey regarding creating a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community on a college campus. These five question survey with a “why or why not” follow up question were designed to gauge the interest of Faculty members on how they believe a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community could benefit their department and intuition. The results show that Faculty members had a strong interest in being a part of the program if it was created on campus because it would be beneficial for the students and the institution.

| Table 9 | | | | | |
|--|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Faculty Question 1 Results | | | | | |
| Do you believe a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful for students in the context of professional development? Why or why not? | | | | | |
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | yes | 42 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| | no | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 42 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The first question that was asked to Faculty members was “Do you believe a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful for students in the context of professional development? Why or why not?”. (see Table 9) The results showed that all 42 of the 42 Faculty members surveyed believed that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful for students in the context of professional development through internships and industry experience.

Faculty members, Deans, and educators support Corporate-backed Living-learning Community and internships for the obvious benefits of students’ professional development (Blevins, 2016; Stephens, 2011). Stephens (2011) at College of Education at Wayne State University in Detroit Michigan, expressed the importance of professional development for students (Wayne State, n.d.). In her 2011 article, Stephens declared that professional development is no longer “activities comprised of 1-day or short term workshops or conferences” but instead is found in the “valuable experiences related to the skills required for the career pathway” (p.68-69). She continues to state that professional development must enhance “work skills that are required in” a professional role (p. 69). Ultimately, exposure to professional development will help students with

discipline, initiative and “allow [them] to...hone their work values” (Knouse, Tanner & Harris, 1999, p.36).

An internship completed in the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community supports Stephens’ conceptual framework of professional development and the expectation of Knouse, Tanner and Harris (1999) because it paves the way for students in the education-to-practice gap. The internship is a safe and controlled learning environment where students can both learn techniques and freely explore viable solutions with minimal consequences that impact their careers (Knouse, Tanner, and Harris, 1999). In addition, faculty with the assistance of Corporate Partners can integrate professional development into the coursework. The emphasis on rigorous coursework directly relates to professional development as it provides students the hands-on experience needed to think critically in problem solving as required for the “future of work” (Cal Poly Pomona, 2017). As faculty and leaders in post-secondary education recognize the need for skill development in students, the trend and usefulness of professional development continues to emerge.

| Table 10 | | | | | |
|--|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Faculty Question 2 Results | | | | | |
| Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you create more focused curriculum in your area of study? | | | | | |
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | yes | 34 | 81 | 81 | 81 |
| | no | 8 | 19 | 19 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 42 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The second question that we asked Faculty members was “Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you create more focused curriculum in your area of study? Why or why not?” The results showed that 34 of the 42 believed that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful in their area of study (see Table 10). The results from Table 10 illustrated that 81% of faculty members agree that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be beneficial in helping them create a more focused curriculum that is relevant to what students will be encountering in their industry of interest (see Table 10).

The stakeholder education approach is a 3-part relationship between (1) the student, (2) a faculty member, and (3) the Corporate Partner. This relationship can be best modeled visually by an equilateral triangle that represents three mutually beneficial relationships. This relationship, more comprehensive than the traditional two-part student-faculty relationship, resembles a “Networked Improvement Community” (Bryk, Gomez, Grunow, & Lemahieu, 2015, p. 142) because all parties share “common interest coupled with social affinity” (Bryk, Gomez, Grunow, & Lemahieu, 2015, p. 150) and are

“working together toward a common goal” (Amant, 2003, p.234). Faculty members that work with Corporate Partners are able to receive industry insight regarding the future trend of the market. These “two stakeholder groups” analyze the future trends (Amant, 2003, p. 233). In the analysis, the faculty members and Corporate Partners “engage in compelling discussions...and share reflections” (Bryk, Gomez, Grunow, & Lemahieu, 2015, p. 150). The discussions and reflections allow for a deep understanding of the trajectory of the industry and subsequently can identify the technical skills needed by 21st century students to successfully fulfill future job expectations. The trends of the market and the required skills are then translated into a well-developed and more focused course curriculum.

In addition, faculty that collaborate with Corporate Partners are able to create curriculum that relates to a specific job. The focus on one specific technical job creates a better program for students that is designed to promote “individualized learning” (Amant, 2003; Gogoulou, Gouli, Grigoriadou, Samarakou, & Chinou, 2007, p. 242). When there is a need or a demand for a particular skill or talent and few graduates are able to meet the need, educators must create opportunities for students to learn how to address those needs. Having an individualized learning curriculum that caters to one specific job is a “powerful learning method...[that] immerse[s] students in challenging tasks or questions” (Gogoulou et al., 2007, p. 242). These tasks and discussions “enable them to become immediate practitioners and develop higher order reasoning and problem solving skills” (Gogoulou et al., 2007, p. 242).

An effective example of educators and stakeholders creating opportunities for student learning can be found at Duquense University’s (DU) School of Psychology. The

PsyD and PhD programs at this institution were in need of internships for their doctoral students. The program experienced an overwhelming demand so educational leaders decided to solicit themselves to create a learning opportunity (Schmitt, et al., 2015). The department assessed the program needs prior to seeking buy-in from the university. The department was able to navigate through the hurdles of getting the local community members in the field to join the program (Schmitt, et al., 2015). Ultimately, DU built community alliances to create an internship program from the ground up. Start-up tasks included (1) finding, acquiring, and securing funding, (2) creating of the bi-laws of the program, and (3) determining student eligibility to ensure that state psychology licensing board regulations were adhered to (Schmitt, et al., 2015). The strength of the community alliances stood on the knowledge and willingness of professionals that were in close proximity to the university (Schmitt, et al., 2015). The alliance between (1) the students, (2) the university and the School of Psychology, and (3) the community allowed for a more streamlined program that offered structured internships for doctoral students. Through these internships, the curriculum became more aligned with the lessons learned in the workplace (Schmitt, et al., 2015).

| Table 11 | | | | | |
|---|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Faculty Question 3 Results | | | | | |
| Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you attract more students to your program? | | | | | |
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | yes | 40 | 95.2 | 95.2 | 95.2 |
| | no | 2 | 4.8 | 4.8 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 42 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The third question that we asked Faculty members was “Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you attract more students to your program? Why or why not?” The results showed that 40 of the 42 Faculty members believed that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful in their area of study (see Table 11). The 95.2% of Faculty members surveyed believe that being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community will entice more students into joining the program because it will give students an opportunity to not only meet other students with similar disciplines, but also work with educators and industry leaders in their field of interest (see Table 11).

Schmitt, Hughes, and Herndon-Sobalvarro (2015) acknowledges that “Given the continued internship crisis and mounting pressure for students of APA-accredited training programs to attend quality (e.g., accredited) internships, it is time for university faculty to lead the charge of creating school psychology internships eligible for accreditation” (Schmitt, et al., 2015, p.1049). The university-community alliance internship program that Duquense University created for their doctoral psychology program was a tremendous accomplishment for the university and the psychology community (Schmitt,

et al., 2015). The doctoral students’ troubles are addressed with the APA-accredited internship that allowed them to finish their program and graduate as certified psychologist. The much needed and highly desired internship program paved way for the university to be more relevant and renowned for its ingenuity in the field of psychology, thus staging the university to be a more appealing institution for future students seeking this area of study (Schmitt, et al., 2015).

| Table 12 | | | | | |
|--|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Faculty Question 4 Results | | | | | |
| Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help grow your department? | | | | | |
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | yes | 30 | 71.4 | 71.4 | 71.4 |
| | no | 12 | 28.6 | 28.6 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 42 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The fourth question that we asked Faculty members was “Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help grow your department? Why or why not?” The results showed that 30 of the 42 believed that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help grow your department (see Table 12). Faculty members are able to grow interest in their department by community outreach, as well as working closely with students potentially interested in the area of study.

Duquense University’s decision to establish the university-community alliance program was because the faculty members of the psychology doctoral department voiced

“the need to stimulate the creation of suitable pre-doctoral internships to not only serve our students but also the greater school psychology community” (Schmitt, et al., 2015, p.1044). The university was able to accomplish two aspects with this program. The first aspect would be providing internships through the university-community alliance program for current students. As the program progresses, DU has the growth potential to service additional prospective doctoral students looking to attending their institution. The second aspect would be instituting a completely new direction for the psychology department. As their student portfolio increases, the growth of DU’s disciplines could expand when working with clinics across the United States (i.e. Counseling Psychology, Clinical Health Psychology, Psychoanalysis in Psychology, Clinical Psychology, Clinical Child Psychology, etc.).

| Table 13 | | | | | |
|--|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Faculty Question 5 Results | | | | | |
| Do you believe Cal Poly Pomona should create Corporate-backed Living-learning Community? | | | | | |
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | yes | 41 | 97.6 | 97.6 | 97.6 |
| | no | 1 | 2.4 | 2.4 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 42 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The fifth question that we asked Faculty members was “Do you believe Cal Poly Pomona should create a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community? Why or why not?” The results showed that 41 of the 42 Faculty members believed that Cal Poly Pomona should create a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community (see Table 13).

Faculty see value in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community because they are able to create a more focused curriculum for students as well as gain insight into what current industry leaders are looking for in order to foster those skills with their students.

There are many benefits for Faculty members to get involved in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community. As Kirk Amant (2003) mentions in his article “Expanding Internships to Enhance Academic-industry Relations: A Perspective in Stakeholder Education,” faculty members not only benefit in working with Corporate Partners but would also develop a more focused curriculum for students through the input of industry leaders. They also gain network ties to these companies that will provide them with the opportunity to expand their program; that will intern entice students to participate (Amant, 2003).

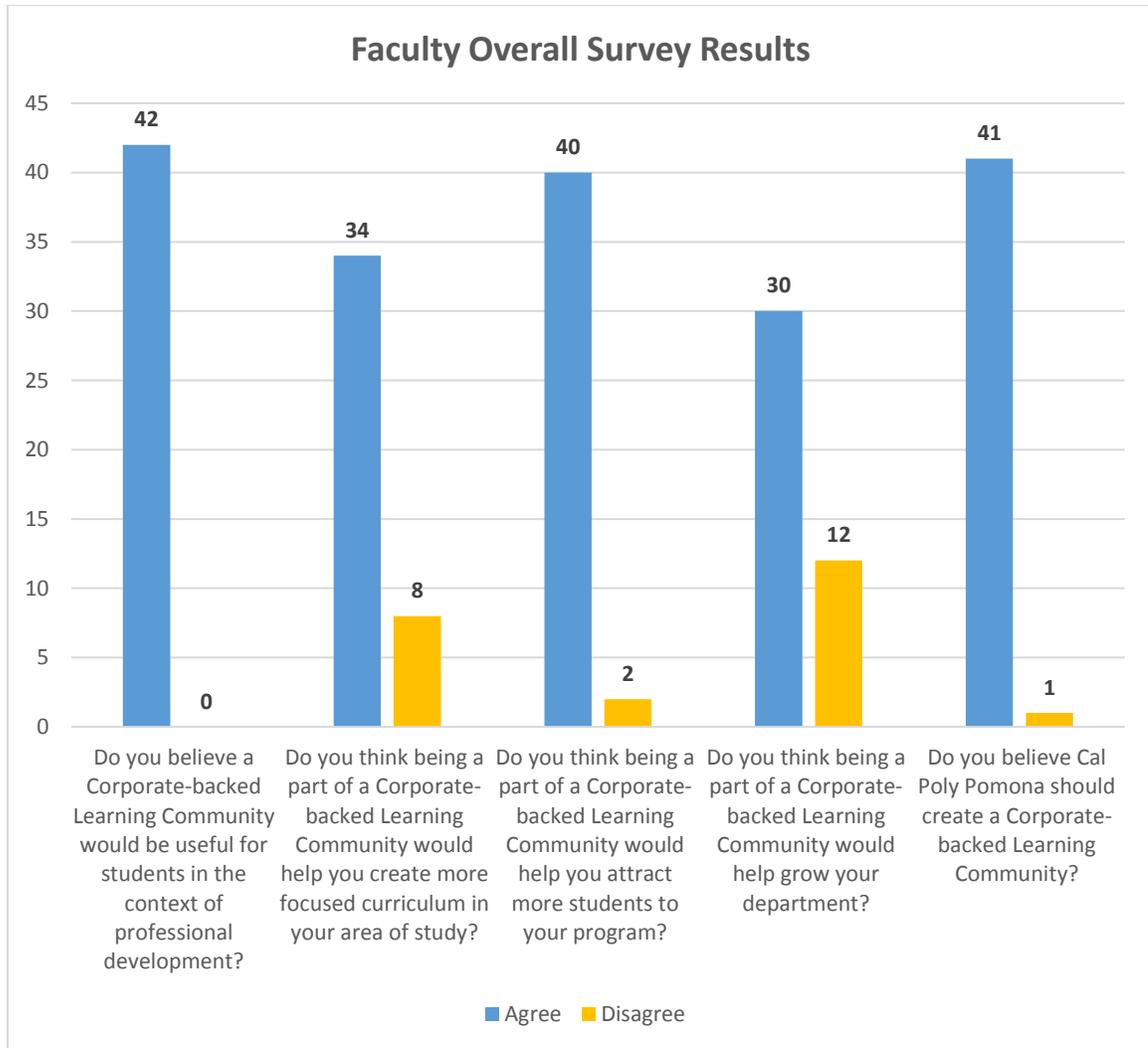


Figure 2. Summary of Faculty overall survey results

All 42 faculty members agreed in the context of professional development that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be beneficial to students (See Figure 2). Only 8 of the 42 faculty members disagreed that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help them create a more focused curriculum in their area of study, while 34 of the 42 faculty members believed it would help them create a more focus curriculum in their area of study (See Figure 2). Within the faculty, the largest dissention was found in question number four, which relates to a Corporate-backed

Living-learning Community helping grow the size of the student population in their department. While 30 faculty members believe that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would in fact help grow the department 12 faculty members or 28% disagreed (See Figure 2).

Corporate Partners

A total of six randomly selected Corporate Partner were asked to take the four question survey regarding creating a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community on a college campus. The results show that Corporate Partners had a definite interest in being a part of the program if it were created on campus.

| Table 14 | | | | | |
|---|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Corporate Partner Question 1 Results | | | | | |
| Do you believe a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful for recruitment efforts in your company | | | | | |
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | yes | 6 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100 |
| | no | | | | |
| | Total | 6 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The first question that we asked Corporate Partners was “Do you believe a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful for recruitment efforts in your company? Why or why not?” The results showed that 6 of the 6 Corporate Partners believed that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful for recruitment efforts in your company (see Table 14). Corporate Partner believe that a

Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be beneficial with recruiting efforts in their company because students are able to develop skills that are potentially able to translate into a position at their company.

Several authors found that the benefits of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community include an improved recruitment process. Knouse, Tanner, and Harris (1999) stated that, “internships allow students to directly access job sources, to impress potential employers, to build confidence in their job search, to hone their work values, and to build social skills that are beneficial in the employment interview” (p.36). Using Knouse, Tanner, and Harris’ approach, corporations are able to pre-screen potential employees. In this pretrial stage, the corporation can assess an intern’s knowledge and determine if the intern will be a good fit in the company. Blevins (2016) supports this claim as she found that nurses who successfully completed a residency program were more confident in their skills. Blevins continues to report that these nurses experience a high rate of job satisfaction. The job satisfaction, directly related to the creation of a positive environment, led to the retention of 85.1-97.2% of the graduating nurses. Of the nurses that were retained after graduation, 50% of them remained working in the same area because they reported a low intent to leave their current employer (Blevins, 2016). Maertz, Stoeberl, and Marks (2014) contribute to the conversation of internship benefits by adding a new perspective.

Maertz, Stoeberl, and Marks (2014) pointed out that internships allow a corporation to assign “busy work” task that would otherwise bog down employers. Corporations can see “long-term cost savings” on the budget item of salaries because tasks are delegated to interns (Blevins, 2016). In addition, hiring an intern leads to

“savings in the areas of recruitment and selection” as “former interns...do not need the same degree of socialization, training, and adjustment” as a new hire (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013, p.130-131). Collectively, these authors identified seven major benefits of an internship that is a result of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community.

Highlighting (1) a stage of pre-employment that allows for assessment, (2) the ability to build confidence, (3) job satisfaction, (4) a high employee retention rate, (5) a minimal desire to leave the organization, (6) an increase in competency of basic skills, and (7) the long term cost savings from recruitment and training is crucial in the decision-making process for corporations to participate in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013).

With a pool of skilled and confident interns ready for the workplace, the recruitment process would be drastically streamlined and more effective because the corporation will be familiar with their new full-time employee.

| Table 15 | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Corporate Partner Question 2 Results | | | | | |
| Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you screen for quality candidates? | | | | | |
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | yes | 6 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100 |
| | no | | | | |
| Total | | 6 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The second question that we asked Corporate Partners was “Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you screen for quality candidates? Why or why not?” The results showed that all six Corporate Partners believed that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful in screening for quality candidates (see Table 15). Corporate partners believe that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be beneficial in screening for quality candidates at their company because it gives partners an opportunity to pre-screen potential recruits through the internships, as well as monitor growth and progress in thriving candidates.

A Corporate-backed Living-learning Community can help a Corporate Partner screen for quality candidates. By way of a required student internship, Corporate Partners are able to utilize this stage of pre-employment to evaluate competency of interns. In a “readiness for practice” survey, Wallace (2016) found that nursing students that completed an internship reported a high level of confidence in four domains: (1) problem solving, (2) learning techniques, (3) professional identity, and (4) trials and

tribulations. Within these domains students reported a high level of comfort in their preparedness based on simulations and trainings, taking action, delegating tasks when needed, and most importantly continuing the pursuit of nursing as a career. The high level of comfort found in Wallace's (2016) survey may be associated with the unique training and relationships with stakeholders. Having stakeholders that contribute to the internship process follows the "stakeholder education approach" (Amant, 2003, p. 232). In this approach, both expectations and mutual goals are established for the duration of the internship. The expectations and goals assist in bridging the "education-to-practice gap" that is prevalent in the student experience (Amant, 2003). The internship narrows the gap because it is specifically focused on developing a more competent worker (Amant, 2003).

As corporations seek to employ experienced staff members, the hiring managers can trust that the competent interns have already completed a pre-screening. The pre-screening can be considered "an extended tryout" that provides opportunities to demonstrate the competencies that were developed throughout the internship (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013, p.130). A consistent demonstration of competencies during the internship and "tryout" transforms the intern from a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community student to a high-quality candidate ready to be hired (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013). If, by chance, a student intern does not demonstrate competency and is of low-quality, the employer is under no obligation to offer employment after the internship (Maertz, Stoeberl, & Marks, 2013).

| Table 16 | | | | | |
|---|-----|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Corporate Partner Question 3 Results | | | | | |
| Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you bridge that gap between academics and work related skills needed for students to become ideal hiring candidates? | | | | | |
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | yes | 6 | 100 | 100.0 | 100 |
| | no | | | | |
| Total | | 6 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The third question that we asked College-Themed Community Residents was “Do you think being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would help you bridge that gap between academics and work related skills needed for students to become ideal hiring candidates? Why or why not?” The results showed that all six Corporate Partners believed that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be useful in their area of study (see Table 16). Corporate Partners believe that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community will help bridge the gap between academics and work related skills because it will help students develop the hard and soft skills needed to become a prime candidate for hire.

Ideal hiring candidates possess knowledge that was acquired in the classroom with experienced professionals and academics. These faculty members introduce theory and research skills that are utilized during the internship as a strategy to problem solving.

Executing a strategy as it relates to the job and the industry reinforces the learning moment and creates a point of reference for the future (Wallace, 2016).

Wallace (2016) noticed, through Dr. Patricia Benner's (1984) "Stages of Clinical Competence", that internships start "the transition from student...to member of the professional workforce" (p. 19). In the Novice Stage (Level 1), students are able to start to bridge the gap between academics and work related skills. While navigating through the Advanced Beginner Stage (Level 2) and the Competent Stage (Level 3), more connections between academics and work related skills are made. Coming out of the Proficient Stage (Level 4) and entering the Expert Stage (Level 5), the intern starts to understand the bigger picture and has developed confidence through experiences and deep reflection (p.19).

While the internship provides the opportunity for the hands-on experience, it is also "very useful in developing the 'soft competencies' necessary for working in an organization" (Taylor & Hooley, 2014, p. 2). Having practical para-professional experience complemented with the "the ability to work with people in an office environment" makes an intern within the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community an ideal hiring candidate (Taylor & Hooley, 2014, p. 2).

| Table 17 | | | | | |
|--|-------|-----------|---------|---------------|--------------------|
| Corporate Partner Question 4 Results | | | | | |
| Do you think your company would be interested in partnering up with Cal Poly Pomona to help create a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community? | | | | | |
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | yes | 6 | 100 | 100.0 | 100 |
| | no | | | | |
| | Total | 6 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

The fourth question that we asked Corporate Partners was “Do you think your company would be interested in partnering up with Cal Poly Pomona to help create a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community? Why or why not?” The results showed that all six Corporate Partners would be interested in partnering up with Cal Poly Pomona to help create a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community (see Table 17). Corporate Partners believe that a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be mutually beneficial, as they will have access to thriving candidates in the field of study as well as the students having the opportunity to develop skills relevant in the field.

There are many benefits for Corporate Partners to participate in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community. As corporations go through the process of hiring a well-qualified entry-level employee, it may seem like swimming through a vast ocean of unexperienced green resumes (Taylor and Hooley, 2014). The Corporate-backed Living-learning Community program integrates an internship based on the industry influence and academic curriculum allowing participants to gain hands-on experience that sets them apart from other candidates (Taylor and Hooley, 2014). Taylor and Hooley (2014) found

that students who participate in an internship have a higher employability rate than those who do not participate in an internship prior to graduating.

Kirk Amant (2003) clarifies how his study on the stakeholder methodology allows all parties to mutually benefit from an internship. From the Corporate Partners point of view, corporations are able to bring on extra help without incurring high costs and minimal risks. They give the student intern the work experience that they need to be competitive in the job market. The faculty receive an opportunity to network with the Corporate Partner that could provide feedback to help improve their curriculum and/or growth of the program, thus showing how participating in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community benefits the corporation's bottom line and also helps the greater good of the entire industry. The hands-on experience received through the internship, paired with student feedback, allows faculty to develop a more focused, industry-influenced academic curriculum (Amant, 2003).

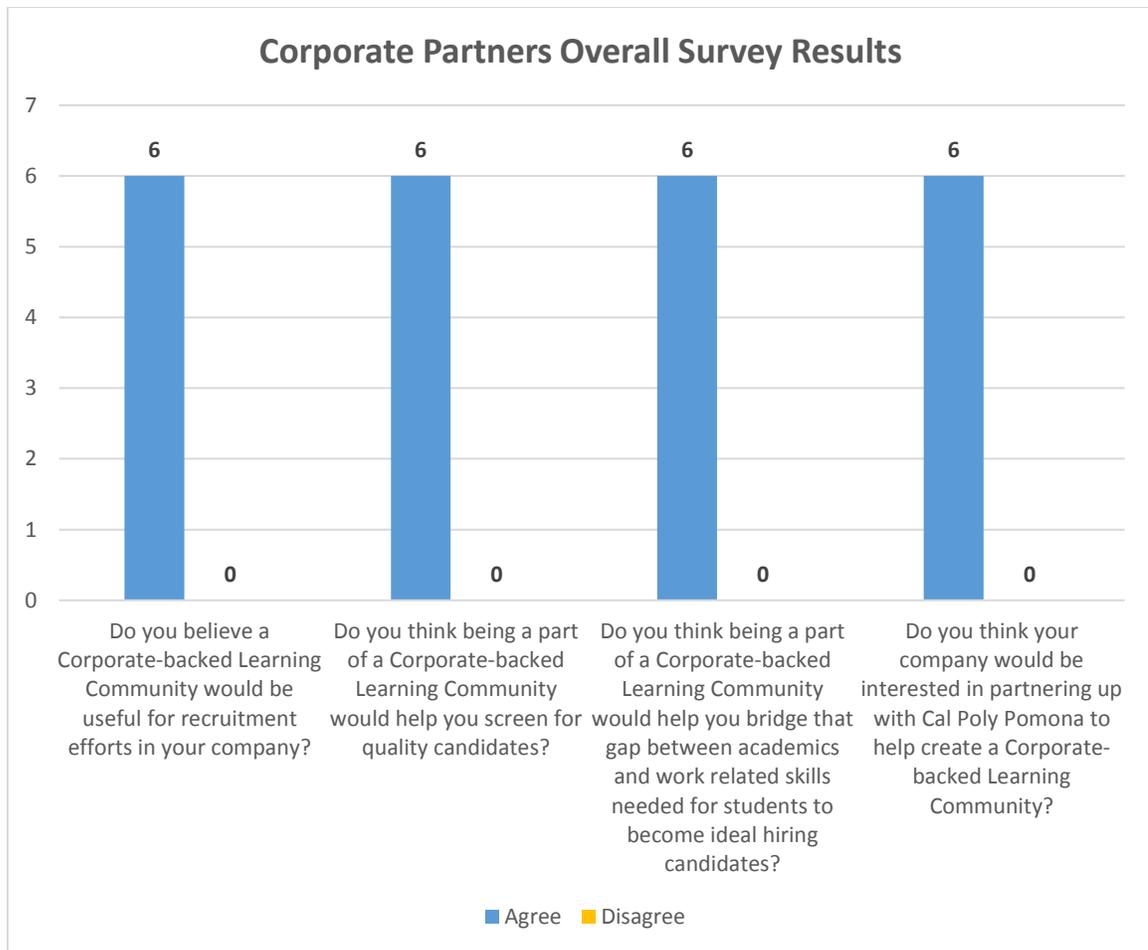


Figure 3. Summary of Corporate Partners Overall Survey Results

The overall survey results for the Corporate Partners show that there is a definite interest in participating in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community. Six Corporate Partners completed a four questions survey. All of the Corporate Partners in all four questions agreed with the benefits of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community shown in Figure 3. The results from this survey is a good indicator as to the level of interest of Corporate Partners as it relates to the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the results demonstrated that students, faculty, and Corporate Partners revealed a high interest in participating in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community if it were to be created at Cal Poly Pomona. The scholarly articles in each question also reinforced those findings. Chapter 5 will go over the conclusion of the study and propose recommendations for potential professionals who may want to implement a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community in their institution. Recommendations include launching a pilot program, securing a facility to house the program, future research opportunities, and a possible commuter track program.

CHAPTER 5

RECOMMENDATIONS

American universities are having to determine whether or not they are effectively empowering students with the knowledge and skills necessary for success after graduation. As more and more institutions of higher education shift their focus to improve student success, the goals of each division are better prioritized for student success. Universities become more reliant on academic programs that help cultivate the knowledge and skills students need post-graduation (Turley & Wodtke, 2010). However, the success of any academic program depends heavily on the type of material and components included in the program. For the purpose of student success, several aspects should be included in an academic program to ensure that students are well-prepared for their post-graduate, professional career.

Among these aspects are learning relevant industry knowledge, social integration, and hands-on experience in their professional field. To help bridge the gap between students and faculty and academics, many higher education institutions have adopted a living-learning community. The living-learning community works well when it is presented as a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community. By implementing a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community, it provides the forward momentum that institutions need to achieve student success. This is because this unique program fills the void of inexperience with students through hands-on experience from internships, as well as providing them exposure to the industry.

In this chapter we will be going over the recommendations in the process of creating and implementing a Corporate-backed Living-Learning Community. When implementing a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community on a college campus, educational leaders should consider several factors, such as:

- The Pilot Program Launch
- Securing a facility to house the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community
- Future Research Opportunities
- Limitations to address
 - Re-administer the survey using open-ended questions
 - Student Financial Barriers

These recommendations are discussed and expanded in an attempt to add insight to future implementation.

I. The Pilot Program Launch

The initial process in creating a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community is going to be a multifaceted program that will require strenuous levels of planning and sharing between three key partners to execute this academic program. Considering the size of the great task of launching a new program, the process is presented as four tiers.

The four tiers are:

- The selection of an ideal department to manage the academic program;
- The method of student selection for the pilot program;
- The outlining task of outreach and programming for key partners;
- The sustainability of Corporate-backed Living-learning Community

Standing by Cal Poly Pomona's core philosophy in the "learn by doing" process, the University should adopt a pilot program in creating the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community within its campus. The ideal department that could take on this task would be University Housing Services. A department that provides on-campus student housing to 2,800 residents, UHS is a fully functional unit with 40 professional staff members serving alongside 200 student leaders. Providing student housing to nearly 10% of the incoming first-year students/of the entire student population, the department has the potential to make a significant impact on the college experience of its residents. By placing select residents in a pilot program, students have the opportunity to be introduced to their industry and career while the department has a point of reference for the future Corporate-backed Living-learning Community program.

The next step is evaluating how to cultivate the prime subjects to participate in the program. University Housing Services currently has an academic program called College Theme Community. The College-Themed Community is an optional program for residents that strategically builds a community of residents that share a similar interest. University Housing Services has a Residence Life Team that coordinate this program by creating focused programming for its residents living in their building who share the

same major, common interest, and goals. The selection process for the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community Pilot Program starts with students who have opted in to participate in the College-Themed Community. A well-diversified student population is required to start the pilot program on the right foot. Since the program is still in its infant stage and has limited resources, the most effective approach to selecting the initial group of students is to identify one college. On the campus of Cal Poly Pomona, there are currently eight colleges.

Understanding that certain colleges can be more dominant with certain demographics, the selection of a college will need to have a well balance of gender, race/ethnicity, and student experience for the initial program. Of the eight colleges on the Cal Poly campus, two colleges have the most diversified student population: the College of Business and the College of Science. These two colleges would be ideal candidates to pilot the program because of the diverse student body representation. It is important for the pilot program to have a diverse student body because it will help us collect inclusive data that will allow us to better serve the student population. The initial pilot program will recruit between 200 to 250 residents to be participants. These 200 to 250 residents represent roughly 10% of the housing portfolio. Currently the College-Themed Communities for both the College of Business and the College of Science each have a resident count that is approaching the targeted 200 to 250 participants.

The task of outreach and programming strategy begins by getting all three partners together to discuss their roles and expectation for the program. University Housing Services will serve as the nexus in working closely with faculty members and Corporate Partners to enhance the academic programming for the Corporate-backed

Living-learning Community. Feedback from residents, faculty/staff, and Corporate Partners regarding the program will be promptly forwarded to the liaison representing the particular group. The liaison serves as a facilitator that addresses the issue. Once in the hands of the liaison, the information should be reviewed and address the feedback accordingly in order to streamline the process. As faculty will be collaborating with Corporate Partners to develop more industry-focused curriculum, University Housing Services will work with staff members who are campus partners to gather student oriented resources and make them more accessible for residents as they progress through the program.

One of the first campus partners to assist in the program would be the Career Center. Through collaboration with the Career Center, residents will attend workshops and programs that focus on resume building, interviewing skills, and time management. University Housing Services will also collaborate with Corporate Partners to host meet & greets and other programming for residents revolving around professional development. Creating these opportunities for residents will give them a better sense of the requirements and expectations found in the workplace in this particular industry and understand how the job market works from the perspective of a professional. A perfect industry leader to collaborate with the College of Business community would be the General Manager of the Iconic Disneyland Hotel Pilar Hamil. She is an alumna of Cal Poly Pomona that graduated from the College of Business majoring in Hospitality and Restaurant Management. Students living in housing could also help in this effort in program strategy for a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community.

A peer-mentoring program will be implemented for the next incoming class.

Each incoming class entering the program will do so every two years (which represents a student’s commitment to their upper division courses), which helps balance the integrity of the program and not overstretch any of the three key partners of the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community. The peer-mentors will be able to help the new incoming class with the acclimation process and share their personal experience in how to navigate through college. The following is an example of how the peer-mentoring class chart would look like as each class enters into the program (see Table 18).

| Table 18 | | |
|----------------------------|--------|------------------------------------|
| Peer-mentoring Class Chart | | |
| Fall | Spring | Group Crossover for Peer-mentoring |
| 2018 | 2019 | C1Y1 |
| 2019 | 2020 | C1Y2 |
| 2020 | 2021 | C1Y3 + C2Y1 |
| 2021 | 2022 | C1Y4 + C2Y2 |
| 2022 | 2023 | C2Y3 + C3Y1 + C1Y5? (If needed) |
| 2023 | 2024 | C2Y4 + C3Y2 |
| 2024 | 2025 | C3Y3 + C4Y1 + C2Y5? (If needed) |
| 2025 | 2026 | C3Y4 + C4Y2 |
| 2026 | 2027 | C4Y3 + C5Y1 + C3Y5? (If needed) |
| 2027 | 2028 | C4Y4 + C5Y2 |

The final step will be working out the synergies between the partners to maintain the sustainability of the program. Startup funds for the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community will begin with grants from the university, requesting these various funds through the grant writing process where the center focus will be student success. As the program progresses, donations from the Corporate Partners will be key to further develop and maintain the program. Furthermore, a two year cycle will give enough opportunity for student residents to understand the dynamics of the program and then help mentor the next class entering the program.

II. Securing a Facility to House the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community

As the academic curriculum process for the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community is scaled out between the partners, acquiring a proper facility to house this program is just as crucial. Cal Poly Pomona, being the second largest campus by acreage in the California State University system was recently granted the property rights to the 302-acre Lanterman Development Center in Pomona (aka. Campus South – Cal Poly Pomona) by the state of California in 2016. Just as it was a big deal for Cal Poly Pomona to acquire this property to expand their growth efforts of the campus, securing the Lanterman property as the home base location to house the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be the a vital move to ensure the potential for expansion of this multifaceted program. As Campus South will provide classroom-building space for Corporate Partners to run their program that has been co-developed with faculty members

Campus South – Cal Poly Pomona is about a ten-minute drive from the main campus and a 45-minute walk from the residence halls. As it would not be ideal for residences to have to find their own way to Campus South – Cal Poly Pomona,

collaborating with Parking and Transportation Services to provide shuttle services to residence would be a great student service. If funding is necessary in order to help support the shuttle service to Campus South – Cal Poly Pomona, then it may be a possibility to request funding from the Student Success fees to help pay for the service.

Campus South – Cal Poly Pomona also has residential buildings on the property. Therefore, it would be possible to provide housing for both students and staff on the premises. However, these building may need to renovated and brought up to code before they are habitable. The team taking on this project will need to consider this and further investigate if this would be a viable option.

III. Future Research Opportunities

The program is still in its infant stage and there are going to be many opportunities to improve the program. As each class finishes each academic year, participants will take a survey to provide feedback on how they feel about the program and areas that they believe need improvements. The discovery of those missing components will be assessed by the committee and will be implemented into the program if deemed necessary for it.

Another possibility to look into is an integrated internship program for the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community. By integrating the internship into the curriculum, it will fulfill one of the most crucial elements that many students do not get the opportunity to participate in during their college career. Through this internship, residents will truly be able to experience a taste of their professional career before they graduate. However, before all of this can happen, it will need to be planned out between

all the partners (Students, Faculty, and Corporate Partners) to see how it can be made possible.

Finally, for the committee who will be taking on this project, they may want to start looking into expansion possibilities after the program has gone through its first class. As the program was designed to have a new incoming class every two years, having all eight colleges participating in the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community will be considerable task for the committee. Although the purview of these recommendations were only applied to the College of Business and College of Science, the other colleges on this campus will benefit from similar considerations, modifications, and unifications.

IV. Limitations to address

The following section will address the two limitations that should be considered when examining further research on a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community. The first limitation to address is to re-administer the survey using open-ended questions. Next limitation to address is to remove student financial barriers that may prohibit a student from participating in a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community.

1. Re-administer the Survey Using Open-ended Questions

In the previous survey, participants were asked to answer a series of “Agree/Disagree” with a follow-up question of “Why/Why Not,” from the results, there was a limited amount of responses to the opened-ended “Why/Why Not” portion of the survey. This portion of the survey is important because it would further elaborate on why the participants would be

interested in being a part of a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community. By re-administering the survey utilizing open-ended questions, it would encourage the facilitation of conversation and give a better understanding from the participants reasoning behind the “Why/Why Not” portion of the previous survey. The goal of re-administering the survey is to truly gain an in-depth understanding of the student reasoning, as well as identify how a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community would be beneficial to the participants.

2. Student Financial Barriers

This program may not be accessible to every student due to financial barriers that may be associated with on-campus living. As the Corporate-backed Living-learning Community is intended for students who live on-campus, other students not living in on-campus housing due to financial hardships may feel excluded. It is recommended for the institution participating in this program to find supplemental aid for students experiencing such financial hardships. With this understanding, I would suggest the institution conducting this program to assist students experiencing such barriers by looking into subsidized housing, scholarships, additional financial aid offered in partnership with the university, as well as Corporate Partner sponsored scholarships.

Conclusion

Creating a Corporate-backed Living-learning Community adds value to a student’s education by equipping students with the skills corporations are looking for in

their future recruits. This project demonstrated that have an interest in developing skills to help them become competitive candidates in the workforce. Living on campus provides several advantages socially and academically since it creates an ideal environment to help students succeed. Engaging in such a program provides students the opportunity to interact and work with fellow peers with similar interests and fields of study. My experiences working in the institution gave me an opportunity to interact and understand the opportunities that lie ahead. Such opportunities include investigating career readiness in students and their interests in engaging in internships that will give them real world experience, develop skills, and acquainted with competencies that will put them in the best position to become prime candidates for hire. My research found that the students, faculty, and Corporate Partners were all interested in creating a mutually beneficial Corporate-backed Living-learning Community. The prospects of implementing such a program is a step toward taking living-learning communities and student success to the next level.

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