IOWA COLLEGE STUDENT AID COMMISSION

Comments on Work-Study as an Academic Tool

A Selection from
Resource Materials
Provided to the
Joint Committee on Education Appropriations
of the Iowa General Assembly

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Iowa College Student Aid Commission
Work-Study as an Academic Tool

Studies of work-study outcomes suggest that there is a strong positive relationship between part-time, on-campus work, and academic success. Like most topics, there are studies that suggest only a small relationship between work and academic success. However, the studies that indicate a strong positive relationship are consistent with anecdotal comments that are frequently made by past and present recipients of work-study assistance. Following are highlights of the findings that suggest positive outcomes.

- Part-time on-campus employment has been found to be related to:
  - Higher grade-point average,
  - Faster degree completion,
  - Self-reported cognitive and affective growth.

- Grades improved for:
  - On-campus work up to 20 hours per week (4 hours per day),
  - Grades declined for those working more than 20 hours per week.

- Full-time (approximately 40 hours per week) employment was negatively associated with high GPA, preparation for graduate school, and graduation with honors.

- The positive relationship between work and college success depends on whether the work is on-campus and whether it is full-time or part-time.

- On-campus research work likely increases a student's interest in further academic programs.

- On-campus work improves future job prospects.

- On-campus work supplants non-productive activities like watching television.
Resources for this summary include the following:

On-Campus Employment as a Factor of Student Retention and Graduation
http://oipr.depaul.edu/open/gradereten/SOCE.asp

Answers in the Tool Box

A Review of the Effects of Student Employment
http://www.acui.org/Acui/resfiles/effectsreview.cfm

Learning and Earning
http://www.brockport.edu/career01/upromise.htm

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