



**Career Services Task Force**

**Summary Report and Recommendations**

**July 2006**

## Executive Summary

The task force recommends that, over the course of the next two to three years, Dominican allocate additional resources to Career and Internship Services in order to:

- Increase Career and Internship Services staffing level.
- Implement caseload management based on assigning counselors to handle specific schools, tasks, or populations.
- Provide permanent, central location for the Career Center to include private and confidential space for staff offices, career resource library, and interview/seminar room.
- Provide appropriate electronic equipment and software to enhance career- and internship-related services.
- Increase operating budget in order to support marketing, alumni support, and employer/internship outreach capacity. For purposes of this report, the term “operating budget” is used for those operational expenses other than salaries, benefits, or work study.

## Task Force Membership

The task force included members who could represent the concerns of various areas that are significantly impacted by the availability and quality of career and internship services: campus and community leadership/relationships, academic advising, enrollment, retention, student employment, alumni relations, and faculty. The members of the task force were:

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## Scope of the Task Force

The task force was convened specifically to identify immediate and three-year time frame resource needs for Career and Internship Services, and to develop and recommend a three-year resource plan, in light of the inclusion of internships and career services as one of the Board-defined strategic priorities of the institution, and emphasis on developing internships as included in the WASC interim report. The task force met monthly over several months.

## Mission Relatedness

Overarching the task force's work was the relatedness of Career and Internship Services to Dominican's mission, values, and vision. In the context of Dominican as Marin's University, the development and enhancement of Career and Internship Services was seen as critical by the task force. In particular, the task force recognizes the following interrelations with Dominican's mission, vision, and values:

Known and Respected: Career and Internship Services plays in integral role in enhancing Dominican's reputation and presence through student, alumni and employer networks, and through the development of community and global internship opportunities. In particular, through the development of local opportunities, Career and Internship Services can directly support the growing reputation/positioning of Dominican as Marin's University.

*Liaison with Community:* Career and Internship services is responsive to community needs and building community relations through work with the Chamber of Commerce, North Bay Business Council, School to Work Partnership, and others, and posts jobs and internships for community businesses and individuals.

Learner-Centered: Career and Internship Services is uniquely student focused. In particular:

*Recruitment:* Students and parents are career-oriented coming into the college experience and expect value-added services such as those the Career and Internship Services Office currently offers or has the potential to offer.

*Student Experience:* The experience that students have in dealing with the Career and Internship Services Office is an integral part of their overall student service experience and supports the mission of student-centered learning, as well as Dominican's reputation and potential to influence positive attitudes towards student services.

*Retention:* The four-year career development model enhances retention efforts by assisting students with steady career-related goal setting. The relationship between career development and academic advising for non-declared majors assists students to define career and major goals and can enhance the likelihood of student persistence.

*Academic Quality/Scholarship:* The development of appropriate internship opportunities directly enhances student scholarship in their majors and directly supports Dominican's strategic emphasis on faculty/student scholarship activities.

*Alumni Relations and Development:* In addition to current students, alumni also want and need Career Counseling Services in their immediate years upon graduation, in mid-career, and as potential career changers. Unlike other student service offices, Career and Internship Services is uniquely placed in its ability to directly support and foster positive alumni experiences.

Life Skills and Knowledge: Career and Internship Services plays an integral role in students' development of skills and knowledge needed in an interdependent world. Particularly:

*Career Development:* working with all students, alumni, and community to identify and develop relevant career options and skills.

*Transition:* working with students to develop necessary skills for their transition from school into work.

## Task Force Findings

The task force reviewed current trends relating to best practices, budget and space allocations, and staffing models for Career and Internship services.

### Best Practices

Dominican currently uses a career development model, which the task force agrees is a sound model for Dominican. However, the task force agrees that a case load management approach would complement the career development model and emphasize the specialized needs of particular subsets of Dominican's population, while also providing high-touch, personal services that are a hallmark of the Dominican student experience.

### Staffing

The task force recognized that benchmarking career services locally is particularly difficult because of differences in institutional strengths and population focus. For instance, among Bay Area colleges, St. Mary's College, Menlo College, and Santa Clara have proportionally more extensive staffing of Career Services; St. Mary's and Mills Colleges both have significantly different fiscal resources than Dominican and Menlo has a significantly smaller student population than Dominican. Nonetheless, the task force recognized that based on optimal proportion of students to career counselor staff, Dominican's emphasis on developing internships, and career counseling needs, Dominican's Career Services office is currently understaffed.

College	Total Fall 2005 Enrollment	Full-time, permanent Career Staff	Student/Staff Ratio	Comments
Menlo College	700	1	700/1	
Mills	1,372	2	686/1	
Dominican	1,973	2*	987/1	
St. Mary's College	4,795	6	799/1	Separate positions for graduate and internship development
Santa Clara	8,397	11	763/1	Separate Career Staff for MBA and Law
USF	8,447	10	844/1	Separate Career Staff for Law

\*As of June 12, 2006.

### Space

National benchmarking data with respect to operating budgets and space for career centers also provided insights into Dominican's relative position.

Best practices indicate that career center spaces are most effective when they are centrally located on the campus, highly visible, and easily accessible for all campus constituents. Career centers typically encompass staff offices, seminar or interview room(s), a reception area, computer lab or workstations, and career resources library. Career center space has been a challenge for Dominican; the career center has moved three times in the past three years, most recently to the former Garden School, a temporary move until approximately 2008 when the temporary structure (trailer) is slated to be removed.

Budgets

NACE indicates the average operating budget (excluding salaries and benefits) for a career center for a private-four year institution was roughly \$41,000 for the 2001-02 year. Dominican’s operating budget for career services (excluding salaries, benefits, and work study), is significantly lower, less than one-third that. The operating budget for Career and Internship Services is managed very frugally, and expenditures are focused on providing learner-centered services.

The following table compares Dominican to the national average for resource allocation within career services. In order to accomplish and maintain the level of student services currently available, Dominican spends significantly more of our budget on providing workshops, seminars, and written materials/publications for students than schools included in the NACE survey. Budget and staffing constraints necessitate a relatively low-tech response to students’ needs, as reflected in the proportion of resources allocated to publications/print compared to technology.

Area of Expenditure	National Average	Dominican
Workshops/Seminar	11.7%	14.6%
Publications/Print	13.4%	27%
Technology	14%	10.9%
Career Library Resources	7.5%	2.4%
Professional Development	9.9%	3.3%

## **Identification of Opportunities**

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis was conducted with respect to Dominican's Career and Internship services. The SWOT items were then placed into one of five categories, depending on whether the item related to a staffing resource, a budget resource, a space resource, program development, or assessment. Items in these categories were then prioritized as either high priority or lower priority. This prioritization of SWOT items provides the basis for the Task Force's recommendations. A summary of the prioritized items is attached.

## **Resource Progress Report**

At the inception of the task force, the Career and Internship Services Office was located in Bertrand Hall and staffed by one full-time regular employee. Several immediate needs that were initially identified by the task force were addressed by Dominican during the course of spring 2006: the Career and Internship Services Office was temporarily relocated to the Campus and Community Resource Center (formerly the Garden School), and a full-time entry-level Career/Internship Counselor position was approved.

## Task Force Recommendations

The Task Force makes the following recommendations within the context of Dominican's current enrollment. The addition of professional staff will permit the office to increase counseling and internship development that is needed, as well as to provide specialized support for particular academic programs or student/alumni populations.

**Recommendation 1:** Increase Career and Internship Services Staffing to a total of 5 staff: 1 director, 3 career/internship counselors, and 1 support staff. Not including the career/internship counselor position already approved and hired in 2005-06, additional staffing represents the most significant need. The staffing recommendation represents the most fiscally challenging of the recommendations, but addresses the most significant long-term needs.

For **2005-06** one professional staff position (Career and Internship Counselor) was added. This position will relieve the Director of some counseling and internship functions.

For **2006-07**, allocate resources to add a second full-time Career and Internship Counselor.

For **2007-08**, allocate resources to add a third full-time Career and Internship Counselor. Upon hire, permit the two Career and Internship Counselors to specialize in particular programs, for instance, one counselor assigned to Schools of Business and Education, and one assigned to School of Art and Sciences.

For **2008-09**, allocate resources to add a full-time support staff person. Upon hire, to relieve professional staff from routine office tasks, such as posting jobs online or in job binders, and providing administrative support to the Director.

*Rationale: This plan supports those items that the task force identified as highest priority needs for Dominican, by building staffing resources available to address those needs.. These priorities include the need for shorter wait time for counseling appointments and expanded drop in hours, the ability to conduct more career and internship related workshops, the ability to support on-campus recruiting and build employer relations, the ability to conduct effective outreach to campus constituents, and the ability to conduct ongoing evaluation and assessment of services.*

*Resources needed:* permanent budget allocations for hiring, salary and benefits, and appropriate work needs (office furniture, computer, etc).

**Recommendation 2:** Implement case load management model to permit specialized services as needed for particular programs, majors, or populations served. This recommendation is dependent on additional hiring.

For **2007-08**, with the addition of a second career and internship counselor, allocate work loads so that the needs of special populations and specialized programs can be addressed with high touch, personalized service.

*Rationale: a caseload management model enables career and internship counselors to support the development of internships, employer outreach, and customer services for campus constituents with high touch, personal services. Career and internship counselors can be cross-trained but will be able to address the particular needs of specific programs, such as career services oriented towards students seeking teaching credentials.*

*Resources needed:* Some additional training and professional development budget may be needed, to be addressed by adjustment to the departmental operating budget.

**Recommendation 3:** Provide permanent, central location for the Career Center to include space for private and confidential staff offices, career resource library, and interview/seminar room. Fiscal impact of this recommendation depends on the space identified, and any renovations needed.

In March of the **2005-06** academic year, Career Services relocated to the Campus and Community Resource Center (formerly the Garden School) and gained a significant amount of space that enables the development of a career library/resource room, and one additional office space. However, this move has been designated as temporary space for a 2 to 3 year window of time, and still lacks adequate private/confidential space for counseling.

For **2006-07**, in conjunction with other campus utilization plans, identify potential spaces that could be used for Career Services that includes sufficient square footage for 3 to 4 private/confidential permanent offices, career resource library, and interview room(s).

*For 2007-08*, in conjunction with other campus utilization plans, establish a specific transition plan for Career and Internship Services, including anticipating costs for relocation, renovations, and any additional furniture needs.

For **2008-09**, in conjunction with other campus utilization, move Career and Internship Services to its permanent home.

*Rationale: the current space in which the Career Center is located is meant to be temporary and scheduled to be vacated within the next two to three years. The space is not centrally located and although provides additional office and resource space in the short term, would not be adequate, in the long run, to support the staffing resource plan outlined in this report.*

*Resources needed:* Fiscal resources to be determined in conjunction with other overall campus utilization plans.

**Recommendation 4:** Over three years, purchase equipment and technology that supports student career development. This includes video equipment for video interviewing, student computer workstations, and a printer/copier for student use in career-related research conducted in the Career Resource Center.

For **2006-07**, one computer station is current planned for student use in the Career Resource Center. A printer/copier is a critical need for 2006-07.

For **2007-08**, add one additional computer station for student use, and purchase video equipment for student use.

For **2008-09**, add one or more additional computer stations for student use.

*Rationale: the capability for students to practice interviewing skills using video equipment is a common feature of Career Resource Centers and assists in the preparation of students to enter the workforce. Computer stations permit students, alumni, and others to be able to access computerized career-related testing and conduct career-related research.*

*Resources needed:* budgeted resources for the purchase and maintenance of video equipment, additional computer workstations budgeted through IT capital/equipment purchase.

**Recommendation 5:** On an annual basis, provide for increases in the Career and Internship Services operating budget that permit support of institutional priorities including student needs and professional staff development, and that serve to bring it more in line with national norms. Over the course of three years, bring the operating budget for Career and Internship Services in line with national averages. At minimum, provide annual increases that are consistent with the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increase. For purposes of this report, the term “operating budget” is used for those operational expenses other than salaries, benefits, or work study.

For **2006-07**, increase operating budget modestly to include additional funds for professional development opportunities for the staff person hired in 2005-06, as well as to support the development of internship opportunities within the community through off-campus outreach.

For **2007-08**, increase operating budget to include professional development for staff, including person hired in 2007-08, and to include a marketing budget for external and internal outreach and employer/intern development, expanded internship development, and increases in career library and resource materials.

For **2008-09**, increase operating budget to include professional development for staff, including person hired in 2008-09, and to support continued marketing, outreach, employer/internship development, career library and resource center materials, and alumni career support services.

*Rationale: Career and Internship Services needs adequate operating budget resources in order to support the development and maintenance of services that have been identified by the task force as having priority: development of external employer relations/internship opportunities, internship site visits, targeted career fairs, increasing the number of workshops offered, development of electronic services and acquisition of appropriate equipment, development of career library resources, and marketing/outreach for the campus community.*

*Resources needed:* Planned annual operating budget increases, at minimum matching the annual COLA increase.

**Appendix  
SWOT-Identified Priority Items**

Higher Priority Items	Lower Priority Items
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops: more and more often</li> <li>• Shorter wait for counseling appt. (currently 4 weeks)</li> <li>• Transform job/internship listings to electronic format</li> <li>• Strengthen website content</li> <li>• Appropriate electronic equipment</li> <li>• Increase campus recruiting</li> <li>• Outreach to students and clubs</li> <li>• Expand drop-in hours</li> <li>• Target smaller employers</li> <li>• Career resource library</li> <li>• Cubicles for interns</li> <li>• Internal, on campus outreach to faculty, staff and students</li> <li>• Assessment</li> <li>• Establish career advisory board</li> <li>• Video interviewing equipment</li> <li>• 2 or more staff counselors</li> <li>• More employer development and outreach</li> <li>• PR and marketing operations</li> <li>• Increased work study hours</li> <li>• Administrative assistant</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internship site visits</li> <li>• Hot jobs, internships newsletter</li> <li>• Community outreach</li> <li>• Targeted career fairs</li> <li>• Create career development class</li> <li>• Create confidential, soundproof offices</li> <li>• Create interview spaces</li> <li>• Collaborating with other institutions to attract national employers</li> </ul>