

Evaluation of Fall 2012 Practicum- Career Services, BGSU Firelands

I have thoroughly enjoyed my fall practicum experience in Career Services at BGSU Firelands. In fact, I hate to see it come to an end. My practicum supervisor was John Clark, Coordinator of Career Services at BGSU Firelands. John and I met last summer when I asked if he would be willing to share his background and experiences as a career counselor with me. After our first meeting, we began to meet regularly for lunch. John has been a great colleague, friend, and mentor and I was fortunate that it worked out that I could do a practicum experience with him this semester.

The intent of my practicum experience was to gain experience with choosing a curriculum for the job search class, teach the job search class, and meet one-on-one with students about career exploration and job search preparation. I evaluated approximately ten different textbooks for use in teaching the UNIV 1300- Job Search. In addition, I developed a course syllabus, rubrics for grading assignments, and lesson plans. As an instructor, each week my goal was to make the course highly interactive by utilizing active teaching strategies. John Clark observed each of my class sessions and provided constructive feedback. I also shared resources I created with John that I prepared and gathered for each class (i.e. lesson plans, PowerPoint presentations, hand-outs, additional readings, video clips, group activities, etc.).

I worked together with John to brainstorm ways to market evening career counseling hours to current and potential new students and met with the marketing department to implement our ideas. In addition, I had the opportunity to take an active role in career advising and job search coaching with students. I gained experience in working with student on the Strong Interest Inventory and had the chance to meet one-on-one with students to go over their Strong Interest Profiles.

I also participated in Taking the Next Step and spoke on behalf of Career Services to a group of non-traditional students who attended this session to learn more about how to get started as a student at BGSU Firelands. John and I also met regularly for mentoring discussion and we both seemed to benefit greatly from our time together. He and I discussed ways that he could enhance his UNIV 1290- Career Exploration curriculum to make it more interactive and engaging for students.

One of the things I appreciated most about my practicum supervisor was the way that he insisted on treating me as a colleague and professional and not a practicum student. In addition, he was very transparent with me about what he enjoys most and what he finds challenging in his role as the coordinator of Career Services at a regional campus.

In addition, it is obvious to me that John is so gifted in his role. His work seems more like his ministry than his job. He seems fully present with each student he meets and he has a unique way of personally connecting with students and quickly establishing rapport. John sees Career Services as a community resource. With all of the talk about student retention that I tend to hear in my internship experience, it was refreshing to know that his primary focus is to be a resource to anyone who visits his office.

This semester John has gone out of his way to invest in me and some day, I hope to return the favor by investing in another student with a desire to pursue a career in student affairs. I have enjoyed my experiences in this functional area so much that next semester I will be volunteering in the Career Center at BGSU to gain experience at a 4-year public university and Lourdes University to gain experience at a 4-year liberal arts institution.

I believe that BGSU Firelands would benefit from having a practicum student continue to work in Career Services. The practicum student could gain experience in career advising, job

search assistance, and resume and interview preparation. In addition, there may be an opportunity for a practicum student to work on establishing relationships with area employers for co-ops and internships.