
CAREER AND WELLBEING INITIATIVE

EMPLOYABLE AND DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY



INTRODUCTIONS

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JFCS EMPLOYABLE PROGRAM

TOPIC I



OVERVIEW OF EMPLOYABLE

- Began as a small program with funding from United Way in 2007
- 2014-increased scope of program to include young adults on the Autism Spectrum
- 2017-expanded to universities
- Funders
 - United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania
 - Trees Charitable Trust
 - Fine Foundation
 - Private Family Foundation
- 60% of people with mental health concerns are unemployed
- EmployAble has a 65-75% placement rate
- 300+ clients served

EMPLOYABLE ASKS...

How can we shape our career counseling to recognize the connection between mental health and success during the job search?

OUR MODEL

- Individualized services
- Staff with professional licensure and/or mental health/autism spectrum experience
- Knowledge of the current job market and local employers
- Successful clients are:
 - motivated to work
 - some post-secondary education
 - willing and able to commit to the process
- Retention services
- In 2017 asked: How to we offer this support to clients *before* they graduate?



DISABILITY SERVICES AT DUQUESNE

TOPIC 2



OVERVIEW OF DISABILITY SERVICES

- Procure reasonable academic and environmental accommodations for students with a diagnosed disability
 - Collect and review relevant and supporting medical and/or psychological documentation
 - Conduct intake appointment with student to agree upon and discuss reasonable accommodations in the classroom/residence halls and proper implementation of any granted accommodation
 - Draft Letters Of Accommodation and disseminate to a student's respective professors/academic advisor

OVERVIEW OF DISABILITY SERVICES

Duquesne University's Office of Disability Services currently has 628 actively registered students

The Americans with Disabilities Act cites a broad definition of disability, and at Duquesne, we feel proud to accommodate so many students with varying diagnoses. Below is a breakdown of our current diagnostic domain populations:

ADD/ADHD – 139

Psychological/Invisible Mental Health – 161

Learning Disability – 74

Medical/Physical – 240

ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) – 14

CONNECTION WITH STUDENT LIFE

- At Duquesne, the Office of Disability Services is housed under Student Life and because of that, we are afforded the opportunity to take a holistic perspective when considering our students' college experience
 - Students have access to a myriad of services including access to career services through Duquesne's Center for Career Development
 - As both a mental health professional and member of a university administration, it is important to consider the continuum of care and services for our students
 - Helping students to learn that accommodations in the workplace, too, may be accessible

VALUE OF COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

- Connecting students with community partners, and perspective employers, who value their unique contributions and skillsets
- Tremendously valuable to meet with perspective students and their families and be able to inform them of the collaboration that exists between JF&CS's EmployAble and Duquesne University



PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN JFCS CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER AND DUQUESNE

TOPIC 3



CAREER AND WELLBEING AT DUQUESNE

- Key stakeholders:
 - JFCS Career Development Center
 - Center for Career Development at Duquesne University
 - Disability Services at Duquesne University
 - Center for Student Wellbeing at Duquesne University
 - Office for Military and Veteran Students at Duquesne University
 - Students, faculty, and staff at Duquesne University
- Goals:
 - Onsite career/wellbeing counseling and case consultation to ensure all student needs are being met
 - Promoting self-advocacy for the students
 - Faculty and staff trainings
 - Student workshops
 - Partnership and Invitation to events

OVERVIEW OF DUQUESNE EVENTS

FALL SEMESTER

Fall Semester

- Weekly On-site Appts. - Center for Career Development/Office of Military and Veteran Students
- Presentation: Introduction to Career Development and Disabilities - Disability Services
- Resume Workshop – Office of Military and Veteran Students
- Motivation Presentations - Strategies for Academic Success Classes – Center for Student Wellbeing
- Career Transitions Career Fair @ JFCS (Disabilities Focus) – Open to All
- Presentation: Disclosure and Accommodation - Disability Services
- Study Skills Workshop – Office of Military and Veteran Students
- Presentation at the President's Luncheon
- Featured in Student Newspaper



INITIAL OUTCOMES AND FUTURE GOALS

TOPIC 4



POPULATION

- Total current students served individually: 12
 - 30 total individual sessions (1-5 sessions per student)
- Duquesne alumni from EmployAble who were reintroduced to Duquesne's Alumni Career Services: 3
- Total students served through at Duquesne workshops: 180
- No additional charge to students courtesy of funding through the United Way of Western PA

- Since launching the program at both Duquesne University and Point Park, we have seen about 50 students and conducted trainings for over 100 professors and staff members.
- We continue to work with around 70 EmployAble clients through our office in Squirrel Hill.

REASONS FOR PARTICIPATION

- Discussion of wellbeing and summer internships
- Exploration of appropriate future career choices based on strengths and challenges related to disability/life circumstances
- Finding part-time work while in school
- Self-advocacy within both academic and employment settings
- Possibility of continuing services through JFCS Career Development Center after graduation

CHALLENGES

- Individual counseling numbers low
- Counselor only on-campus on Wednesday afternoons,
 - More interest than counselor availability
- Interest does not necessarily lead to follow up
 - Continue to strategize ways to improve soft hand off

Meetings were held with key stakeholders to strategize ways to address these initial challenges in the coming semesters.

FUTURE GOALS

- Additional promotion of the program
- Planning more structured events, particularly if they can be incorporated into existing classes
- Extending hours to the full day on Wednesday, to improve availability
 - Potential office time in the commuter center, which was described as a “popular site” for students to work.
- Presenting to additional staff and professors, who may also provide valuable referrals
- Incorporating “Veteran-friendly” and “Disability-friendly” labels into the Handshake system
- Building additional collaborative events into the schedule, where the four student services utilizing this program can be introduced to students.

QUESTIONS?

Contact us:

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