

# CEWIL Research Matters

CEWIL Research Matters is a monthly newsletter showcasing research in co-operative education and work-integrated learning. The newsletter is a joint initiative of the CEWIL Canada Research Committee and WatCACE (University of Waterloo). We profile published research that we believe will be of interest to the CEWIL Canada community and feature practitioner and researcher viewpoints on the articles.

January 2019

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## Article #1

Telling your story of work-integrated learning: A holistic approach to program evaluation (2018)

## Author(s)

Rowe, A. D., Nay, C., Lloyd, K., Myton, N., & Kraushaar, N.

## Journal

International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning, 19(3), 273-285

## Source

[WIL Research Portal](#)

**Purpose:** To outline existing approaches to program evaluation in work-integrated learning (WIL) and present a more holistic approach.

**Methodology:** A case study of an Australian university that implemented a university-wide work-integrated learning initiative.

**Key Findings:** WIL program evaluation should extend beyond the measurement of student outcomes to include processes and other areas of impact, as well as involve all stakeholders, including partners and community.

**Practitioner's Thoughts by David Fenton** (*Entrepreneurship and Work Integrated Learning Program Coordinator, Management, University of Toronto Scarborough*)

**Q: In what ways do these findings have the potential to change practice at your institution?**

**A:** Throughout the paper, the importance of mutual benefit, the creation of relationships and engagement with external stakeholders are highlighted as points of emphasis for WIL. This is indeed an important focal point and one that suggests a need for both qualitative and quantitative evaluation for WIL program creation and process development. Given this, a consideration for an institutional approach would be to conduct surveys not only after a WIL experience has occurred, but also at the onset of curricular planning. This would facilitate the identification of the desired outcomes for all stakeholders up front, while assessing whether or not these were achieved in execution after the experience has occurred. It would also allow for the academic alignment of the industry and student expectations to ensure that the planned engagement reinforces academic outcomes versus quotas. Everyone would be able to clearly articulate what their expectations are up front, whether or not they are successful in achieving their goals, and opportunities for improvement would be identified for future iterations. This collaborative and multi-dimensional approach to program development and assessment would assist in solidifying WIL as an academic endeavour, as well as improve our understanding of best practices in how to create impactful programming.

## Article #2

From employability to employment: A professional skills development course in a three-year bachelor program (2018)

## Author(s)

Bates, L., Hayes, H., Walker, S., & Marchesi, K.

## Journal

International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning, 19(4), 413-423

## Source

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## News and Updates

- **2019 ACE-WIL Conference**

Register today for the Association for Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning BC/Yukon (ACE-WIL) Conference held in Victoria, BC.

**When:** May 12-15, 2019

**Where:** Hotel Grand Pacific, Victoria, BC

Visit the [ACE-WIL Conference website](#) for more event and registration details.

**Purpose:** To determine the employment and continuing education outcomes of criminology graduates who participated in work-integrated learning (WIL) and professional skills development courses during their undergraduate program.

**Methodology:** Data was analyzed from the Australian Graduate Survey for the years 2012 to 2015.

**Key Findings:** Graduates who completed the work-integrated learning and professional skills courses were twice as likely to be employed in industry relevant positions or engaged in further study and were more likely to use a wider range of employment search techniques.

**Practitioner's Thoughts by Arjuna Thaskaran (Student Development Coordinator, Management Co-op, University of Toronto Scarborough)**

**Q: What insights did you gain from reading this article that were useful to you?**

**A:** As practitioners, we tend to concentrate on how successful students are in securing employment after graduation in order to assess the effectiveness of a co-op program. Therefore, it was interesting to read that the study results found a greater range of job-search strategies utilized in addition to greater employment rates by participants who undertook the professional development course as opposed to those who did not. It is also re-affirmation of the success of a classroom-based professional skills course, a format we offer at our institution, as against other methods (i.e. online).

**Q: Does this study raise questions for you that require further research/investigation?**

**A:** I would have liked to have read about the breakdown of the course content/core competencies in the professional development courses in order to infer what content areas or aspects of a course have the most impact on employment secure rates. The study also makes note that the course was taught in their final year, which begs the question, would the results have been any different if the students took the course earlier in their studies.

## Contribute

Suggest articles or contribute to future issues by emailing us at [watcace@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:watcace@uwaterloo.ca).

## Learn more

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WatCACE: [uwaterloo.ca/watcace](http://uwaterloo.ca/watcace)

WIL Research Portal: [wilresearch.uwaterloo.ca](http://wilresearch.uwaterloo.ca)



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