

Co-op Research Matters is a monthly newsletter showcasing research in work-integrated learning and co-operative education. We profile published research by WatCACE and others, feature practitioner viewpoints on the highlighted articles and share updates on current WatCACE projects.

MAY 2017

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Article #1

A Meta-analysis of the Effect of Industry Engagement on Student Learning in Undergraduate Programs (2017)

Author(s)

Burns, C., & Chopra, S.

Journal

Journal of Technology, Management, and Applied Engineering, 33(1), 1-20

Source

[Agricultural and Biosystems Engineering Publications](#) (PDF)

Purpose: To review the influence of industry engagement in producing positive outcomes for students.

Methodology: A systematic review and meta-analyses were conducted.

Key Findings: Industry engagement is an important part of student learning as a result of the experience and knowledge gained through each interaction with the industry. Results also revealed that industry engagement results in positive outcomes for students and the industry partners themselves.

Student Perspective by Patricia Duong (Chemical Engineering 2019 and VP Academic, EngSoc)

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

A: As a student at Waterloo, I'm glad to be able to say that I have experienced each of the types of experiential learning the authors specified in their paper. That being said, the paper brings up a good point that experiential learning should continually improve as an experience and incorporate participant feedback to make experiences even more relevant and engaging.

Q: Are these findings relevant for other stakeholders (e.g. students, employers, faculty)?

A: Both teachers and student groups should be more aware of the different ways industry engagement can be incorporated on campus. While students in the co-op program benefit from direct industry immersion/experience, there should be more efforts to bridge the experiences between learning in the classroom/on-campus and learning on co-op through industry tours, guest speakers, case studies and projects. A seminar through the CTE on non-co-op industry engagement may be valuable to professors/lecturers as is encouraging program/faculty-based student groups to strengthen industry ties if they haven't already.

Article #2

Depicting the possible self: Work-integrated learning students' narratives on learning to become a professional (2016)

Author(s)

Bowen, T.

Journal

Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education, 17(4), 399-411

Source

[Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education](#) (PDF)

Purpose: To examine how internship students think they learn about becoming a professional and how they develop a professional self.

Methodology: Twelve Canadian and five Swedish internship students completed an interview in which a rich picture technique was used to have students draw what professionalism meant to them.

Key Findings: Participants from both countries highlighted the importance of self-regulation and self-censorship in terms of behaving like a professional. Participants reported that the process of learning to be a professional was an ongoing process that involved learning from a variety of interpersonal sources.

Practitioner's Thoughts by Erin Smith (Associate Director, Program Improvement, WatPD)

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

A: This paper was a good reminder of what it's like to be starting your career and the "struggle" many experience with separating their work persona from their non-work persona. Since the student experience is a focus of my role, it's always helpful to improve my understanding of their experience and this paper sheds some light on how students are navigating the transition to becoming a professional. This improved understanding may help me better connect with students by honouring their experience as described in this paper. I was intrigued by the visioning activity that students completed and the potential benefits of having students actively think about who they want to be in the future and whether this activity impacts the transition into their "hoped-for-possible-professional self." I'd also be interested in how their "hoped-for-possible-professional self" compares to their perception of their present student self.

UPDATES

WatCACE will be attending this year's [WACE Conference](#) (June 5-8) hosted in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

HOW CAN YOU BE INVOLVED?

Contribute

If you have suggestions for articles or would like to contribute to the practitioner viewpoint on future issues, we'd love to hear from you at watcace@uwaterloo.ca.

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