

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.

OCTOBER 2017

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Article #1

Challenges implementing work-integrated learning in human resource management university courses (2017)

Author(s)

Rook, L.

Journal

Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education, 18(3), 199-212

Source

[WIL Research Portal](#)

Purpose: To uncover challenges of implementing work-integrated learning (WIL) into the Human Resource Management (HRM) undergraduate curriculum.

Methodology: Qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted to 38 career advisors, professionals and students from nine Australian universities.

Key findings: Six challenges were identified, including lack of resources, legal and ethical issues, clash of agendas, expectations, lack of relevant HRM placements and possible threats to the role of higher education.

Practitioner's Thoughts by Trish Owens (Instructional Support Coordinator, WatPD)

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

A: The topic of work-integrated learning (WIL) in Human Resource Management (HRM) has peaked my interest as a student pursuing a post graduate diploma in HRM. From my experience and understanding, the HRM Diploma program at the University of Waterloo (UW) does not offer the opportunity for formal WIL experiences. Unlike the universities in the article, I do not believe that the lack of institutional support or the lack of recognition of the value of WIL has impacted the absence of WIL within HRM. The notion that "WIL threatens the role of higher education" is not held at UW. Rather, UW recognizes all the benefits that WIL provides students and employers. I believe the lack of WIL experiences in the HRM program stems from the article's idea that securing placements and other resources is difficult.

Q: In what ways do these findings have the potential to change practice for us at Waterloo?

A: The findings in this article have the potential to change the way WIL is experienced both within and outside the curriculum at the University of Waterloo in the HRM program as well as other disciplines. As mentioned in the article, I believe raising awareness and support for instructors on ways various WIL models can be incorporated into their courses across a wide range of disciplines is critical.

Article #2

Developing graduate employability skills and attributes: Curriculum enhancement through work-integrated learning (2017)

Author(s)

Anna D. Rowe,
Karsten E. Zegwaard

Journal

Asia-Pacific Journal of Cooperative Education, 18(2), 87-99

Source

[WIL Research Portal](#)

Purpose: To discuss the conceptions of employability and the impact of work-integrated learning (WIL) on employability.

Methodology: Various interviews, surveys and case studies from recent publications are discussed.

Key findings: WIL experiences enhance student employability when integrated into academic curriculum to help students develop important skills and attributes while also supported by quality assessments.

Practitioner's Thoughts by Jessica Lang (EDGE Manager, WatPD)

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

A: The article discusses the importance of employability in the context of the ever-changing labour market. Whereas historically, training for a specific role was an effective means of gaining and sustaining a viable career, the authors highlight how future labour market trends will push individuals to approach their careers differently. No longer can we think of career as a ladder to climb but rather, a never-ending set of trajectories that have yet to be discovered. This is an incredibly important context as we coach students in designing a program pathway through [EDGE](#) that suits their goals and interests. We want to remind students that strengthening their employability skills is a great way to set themselves up for success in the long run.

Upcoming seminars

Diversity recruitment practices and workplace realities: A study of co-op students

Speaker: Edward Yeung

Date: Wednesday, November 8, 2017

Time: 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM EST

Location: TC 2218

Registration: [Register online today](#)

Bridging the articulation of skills gap through WatCV: Career and competency ePortfolios

Speakers:

- › Jill Tomasson Goodwin
- › Katherine Lithgow

Date: Wednesday, November 29, 2017

Time: 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM EST

Location: TC 2218

Registration: [Register online today](#)

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