

**Career Services
Benchmarking Report
8/4/03**

We chose a Competitive Benchmarking process; which measures the performance of the organization against its peers. Our goal was to identify the Career Center's present programs against others at selected offices across the country.

Several universities were selected for this process:

Ball State, Career Center, Muncie, IN
Bowling Green, Career Center, Bowling Green, OH
Clemson University, Michelin Career Center, Clemson, South Carolina
Miami of Ohio, Career Services, Oxford, OH
Northern Illinois University, Career Planning and Placement, DeKalb, IL
University of California, Riverside, CA
University of California, Santa Cruz, CA
University of North Carolina, Career Services Center, Greensboro, NC

The data was gathered in several different ways.

1. E-mail & telephone surveys, which asked for answers to the following:

Staffing/Organizational Structure

Student Counseling

Student Programming & Marketing

Employer Services/Relations

2. Review of web pages

We identified the factors most important for improving quality and initiating/sustaining changes in certain programs.

The result of our review identified programs and practices in which we are performing at a level consistent with our mission and those that ought to be examined for improvement.

The following is a compilation of the findings of this Bench marking process. In reviewing the information it became apparent that the Career Center at ISU has much to offer other institutions as well as our learning from them.

Areas of Strength

- a. One of our strengths has been our Career Fairs. While a few universities may offer more, most offered fewer Fairs and few that were specialized in nature. We have had good attendance (even in a “down” economy”) and positive reactions from both students and employers. This has been shown in our assessment surveys of both students and employers.
- b. Our Etiquette Dinner offered the night before our Spring Employment Fair has been very successful, with employers supporting the dinner with their attendance and sponsorship of tables.
- c. The Redbird Career Zone is one of the most successful avenues we have employed to get employers and students together. From its inception 2 years ago, the number and quality of presentations has steadily increased. This is a unique and highly valued program.
- d. The creation of the Employer Advisory Board is to be applauded. Meeting two times a year, we provide an opportunity for substantive interactions between our better employers, selected others from on campus and office staff. This past year we have included students as well as department academic advisors in the meetings.

Areas Requiring Improvement

Our review of benchmarked institutions revealed several areas in need of improvement.

- a. Web site -- ours appears difficult to navigate and unappealing compared to those of others. We lack certain basic information that included in those of other centers.
- b. Our marketing to students needs to be re-evaluated and developed along lines that are much better received by students, particularly by underrepresented groups.
- c. Publications need to be developed.
- d. Our interview facilities need to be improved...qualitatively.
- e. Assessment must become a higher priority.
- f. Staff Development activities need to be focused and regularized.
- g. Staffing plan should be reviewed...particularly in terms of an appropriate mix and utilization of professional, support staff, graduate assistants and student employees is concerned.