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## Student Success: Lessons from the Center for Student Enterprise

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Student Success: Lessons from the Center for Student Enterprise

HONORS THESIS

Presented to the Pforzheimer Honors College at Pace University  
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for University Honors

By  
Harshini Rajkumar  
Business Management  
Psychology  
Thesis undertaken in the Department of Management

December 2019

Approved by:

Harshini Rajkumar, Student  
Patrick J. McGuigan, Faculty Advisor  
Len Mitchell, Pforzheimer Honors College Director

TO THE PACE UNIVERSITY PFORZHEIMER HONORS COLLEGE:

As thesis advisor to Harshini Rajkumar

I have read this paper and find it satisfactory.



Thesis Advisor

Lubin / MANAGEMENT

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2/24/2020

Date

Pforzheimer Honors College  
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### **Abstract**

Student success is critically important to students, universities, and society. Measuring outcomes of programs is essential in determining what works and what doesn't. Programs that improve outcomes should be analyzed and adopted by educational institutions at large. Research suggests that business schools prioritize case analysis over practical application leading to 'low-integrative thinking' (McCord and Michaelson, 2015), a lack of practical knowledge, and effective communication. Experiential learning opportunities have been shown to overcome these challenges faced by business school students as it engages students intellectually and emotionally. Furthermore, experiential learning opportunities develop students holistically and effectively, preparing them for the competitive business world outside. This research aims to examine the post-graduate employment opportunities and graduate program acceptance rates of students who have participated in experiential learning. The experiential learning is set at Pace University's Center for Student Enterprise.

After evaluating the preference of professionals and students, the results showed that an undeniable majority of the participants prefer candidates with experiential learning experience on their resumes for a given job. This suggests a high correlation between employment with the Center for Student Enterprise and selection as the preferred candidate for hire. However, with regard to graduate program acceptance, noteworthy conclusions cannot be derived due to a low response rate. These results suggest that colleges and universities can contribute to engaging in more experiential learning opportunities for the success of their students. The current research provides an understanding of the relationship between experiential learning and student success. This relationship could be further explored by adopting a longitudinal study to identify the career paths of students who have been a part of experiential learning experiences.

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## **Literature Review**

### *Understanding career success*

Career success has been defined as “the positive psychological or work-related outcomes or achievements one has accumulated as a result of one’s work experiences.” (LECROM, et al., 2016, p. 516). This can be classified into two specific components, including objective and subjective career success. Whereas, objective success can be interpreted using measurable and verifiable accomplishments such as, ‘pay, promotions, occupational status, or rank’; subjective success can be defined by less tangible criteria, including job and career satisfaction and fulfillment that is experienced only by the person involved (Peter, 2005).

Drawing from the literature, there are various factors that dictate objective and subjective career success. Subjective career success is specifically determined by an individual’s reaction to their personal career experiences. Job satisfaction, sense of identity, purpose, work-life balance, and realization of goals are some salient features of subjective success. However, it is important to note that Heslin in his article “Conceptualizing and Evaluating Career Success” asserts that evaluation of this type of success is only valid to the extent researchers can capture the “phenomenological meaning of career success” from various research participants (Peter, 2005, p. 114). On the other hand, objective career success is a more statistically reliable evaluation method. The primary and noteworthy determinants of objective success include salary growth and promotions. Furthermore, for recent graduates, there are various additional factors that ascertain employability and objective success. These components comprise of grade point average (GPA), experiential learning (Fede, et al., 2018) (or) work-integrated learning (WIL) (Jackson and Wilton, 2016) (or) work-based learning (WBL) (Rodriguez, et al., 2016) (or)

cooperative education (Jackson and Wilton, 2016); internships; service learning; and project-based learning (Fede, et al., 2018).

When focusing on a variety of objective success factors such as pay growth or advancements in organizations, individuals generally get instantly gratified. Further, Clay Christensen in his viral TED talk determines that careers provide an “immediate evidence of achievement.” Therefore, individuals inevitably will dedicate any additional energy towards their careers, towards those activities that determine objective proof of career success. The focus should rather be on long-term achievement. People should decide on a measurement by which they will subjectively determine success. This choice of measurement is consequential to the way individuals live their lives (Christensen, 2012). For instance, Steve Jobs once said, “Being the richest man in the cemetery doesn't matter to me ... going to bed at night saying we've done something wonderful... that's what matters to me” (APPLE LOSES CORE BEST OF STEVE JOBS, 2011). Successful entrepreneurs like Steve Jobs focus on changing the world in meaningful ways. This attention to long-term achievement and careful choice of measurement of success has made him a legend. Similarly, Pabst in her article “Blissful Blundering” determines that “recognizing and confronting inability and challenging oneself is... a significant step towards becoming better at living well” (Pabst, 2011, p. 94). Long-term success comes from identifying and knowing one's weaknesses and finding ways to convert them into strengths. Recognizing what people really want to do in their lives and choosing the right measurement for success can holistically develop an individual. Experiential learning programs in colleges have the potential to teach students these real-life lessons, contributing to their eventual success in life.

Researchers Fede, Gorman, and Cimini suggest that experiential learning programs not only “promote the development of a range of transferable skills, including communication,

responsibility, initiative, teamwork, work ethic, and social skills,” but also have been linked to enriched academic outcomes (Fede, et al., 2018, p. 108). They define experiential learning to include a structured experience where students are ‘intellectually and emotionally engaged.’ Furthermore, students take the initiative to make vital decisions, learn from the consequences of those decisions, receive guidance, and support from supervisors, colleagues, or educators (Fede, et al., 2018). They exist in many forms, including “practicums, fieldwork, placements, internships, and client-based projects” (Jackson and Wilton, 2016, p. 267).

### *Millennial students*

Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) believes that experiential learning involves much more than students merely working with external clients. Furthermore, the experience gained by students may not by itself lead to learning. Therefore, AACSB describes experiential learning as the ‘reflective enquiry’ on the students’ ‘learning by doing’ experience. The association believes that the ‘learning by doing’ phenomenon is exceptionally more effective than the customary classroom ‘learning by listening.’ This teaches the students the ability to learn continuously in various academic and professional pursuits (Pereira, 2019). Research suggests that millennial students, who are a big part of the world population particularly value the ‘learning by doing’ experiential-learning experiences. Millennials were born between 1982 and 2005 into a world with ubiquitous technology. Their core qualities include “special, sheltered, confident, team-oriented, conventional, pressured, and achieving” (Phillips and Trainor, 2014, p. 103). Millennials, inspired by entrepreneurs like Mark Zuckerberg believe in endless entrepreneurial possibilities (Benson, 2016). Phillips and Trainor assert that “Grades and good performance are very important to millennials and they expect to have what they need, when they need it to succeed academically.” Universities should cater to

millennials' need for experiential and engaging learning environments in order to provide effective and competitive education (Phillips and Trainor, 2014, p. 103).

Furthermore, the process of experiential learning provides students various opportunities to even learn from failure (AACSB Industry Brief, 2018). As a result, firms increasingly look for candidates who are coachable rather than candidates who possess mere theoretical knowledge (Pereira, 2019). Additionally, in various experiential learning programs, students take responsibility for their actions and for the actions of others while also facing the consequences. This fuels creativity, increased attention to detail, and effort contributing to entrepreneurial/intrapreneurial thinking. Students are able to achieve mastery of the subject-matter, 'overcome intellectual challenges' that promote cognitive growth and development. Eyler asserts when students confront cognitively dissonant information, they naturally make use of 'advanced formal reasoning processes' to decrypt the alternative perspectives (Eyler, 2009). Experiential learning opportunities have increasingly become a priority for many universities in order to provide students access to 'career exploration and job-driven training' and enabling them to graduate as "socially responsible and civically engaged citizens capable of appreciating a diverse society" (Fede, et al., 2018, p. 119). Experiential learning offers more diversity to the learning process. Given its growth and importance in business schools, educators should think about restructuring the school curriculum to incorporate 'learning by doing' avenues and pay close attention to its outcomes.

#### *Work-Integrated Learning (WIL)*

Jackson and Wilton assert that work-integrated learning (WIL) is considered to be an "alternative, or complementary, platform for the successful development of career management competencies." It integrates theoretical framework from academic learning into practical, real-

world experience and connects students to the industry (Jackson and Wilton, 2016, p. 267).

Work-based learning (WBL) (Rodriguez., et al., 2016) or co-operative education(co-op)

(Drysedale, et al., 2015) programs provide students with technical, academic, and employability skills. As a result, students are usually awarded college credit, wages, and/or various ‘industry-valued credentials’ that are useful to work in their preferred industries (Rodriguez, et al., 2016).

For instance, Pickford and Jocelyn recommend health science majors work in campus laboratory or clinic; computer science majors work for information technology services; math and finance majors work in financial aid and program administration offices, etc. in order to gain practical experience (Pickford, 2018). Students can, therefore, gain awareness of the labor markets, various career opportunities so they can receive the necessary exposure to make informed decisions about their careers for their post-graduate employment (Jackson and Wilton, 2016).

Fede, Gorman, and Cimini through various studies identified that undergraduate students are increasingly working for pay over the past few decades. They further discuss the results of ‘The National Center for Education Statistics (2013)’ research. It suggests that nearly 71% of all undergraduate students in the United States are employed both on- and off-campus. A significant portion of these students’ earnings is spent on their education. Additionally, they suggest that on-campus jobs provide a greater benefit to students by limiting work-hours, improving connections with faculty and staff, greater student engagement on campus, academic success, degree completion, etc. Students can focus their energy on self-efficacy and self-development (Fede, et al., 2018).

Another recent study conducted by the AACSB informs that over 90% of MBA programs offer at least ‘one project-based experiential learning course.’ This new change in curriculum to incorporate experiential learning projects is widely accepted among educators and is here to stay.

It is important to note that experiential education is not necessarily new to education. However, it was only present in the form of ‘computer simulations, case analysis, and client-based projects’ (Seitz, 2002). Work-integrated learning programs provide students the opportunity to learn and portray their experience in various industries. The Asia School of Business has a curriculum that “carries 30 percent experiential learning, or action learning, with immersive work experiences, multiple required projects, and sequenced residencies” leveraging the value obtained from experiential learning (Pereira, 2019). Researcher Eyler conducted a study with students pursuing legislative politics. This study comprised of two groups, including student-learning in classes and student-learning in internships at a state legislature. She found that both groups of students performed equally well on a traditional classroom test. However, when students had to strategize for enacting a policy, “the interns incorporated the need to engage powerful and well-placed legislators and to organize support.” While, the students who did not intern merely provided the theoretical steps involved in modeling a bill into law (Eyler, 2009). Experiential education inevitably leads to increased acumen and a nuanced understanding of a particular subject. Therefore, analyzing whether jobs based on campus provide a worthwhile learning experience and benefits contributing to career success is an important avenue to be studied.

#### *Soft and hard skills acquired through experiential education*

Students participating in campus experiential learning programs actively participate in career planning and focus on acquiring different soft and hard skills. The various transferable workplace skills that could be acquired by students include

“problem-solving and critical thinking abilities; learn to efficiently allocate resources, time management; and improve their communication with supervisors, colleagues, and clients,...attention to detail, dedication and consistent attendance, the ability to learn from knowledgeable colleagues, and the processes involved in developing mastery of complex material” (Rodriguez, et al., 2016, p. 4).

Furthermore, a study by LeBruto and Murray (1994), identified various transferable skills recruiters actively look for in hiring graduates. These skills include:

- (1) Problem-solving,
- (2) Technical, conceptual and interpersonal skills
- (3) Verbal and written communication skills,
- (4) Understanding and application of management principles,
- (5) Relationship building,
- (6) Cost management,
- (7) Conscientiousness, and
- (8) Regulation of emotions (Jack, et al., 2017).

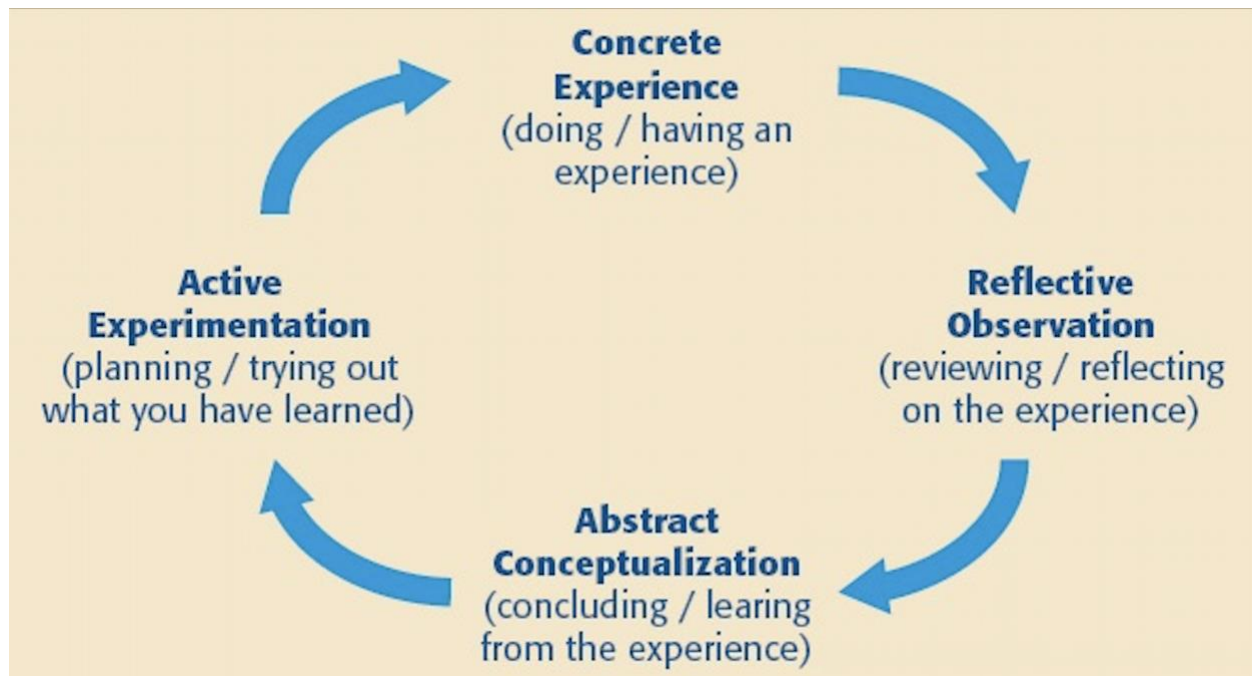
Jones, et al. in another article specified that having a positive attitude, being respectful and trustworthy provides people the mental resilience to overcome obstacles while working on long-term, complex projects with other members (Jones, et al., 2016). Rodrigues, Fox, and McCambly through research suggest that about 80% of employers prefer graduates who have had experiences in applying academics to practical situations. Employers also value skills such as ‘written and oral communications, teamwork, ethical decision-making, and critical thinking’ while making hiring decisions. They endorsed prior “service learning, internships, undergraduate research, capstone projects, and experiences with diversity as prominent contributors to career success” (Rodriguez, et al., 2016, p. 5). Students participating in these activities are known to complete their academic programs and graduate on track. As a result, graduates who participated in these programs can ‘gain postsecondary credentials’ and increase their labor-market value.

*The Experiential Learning Model:*

The concept of experiential education was first brought to light by David A. Kolb. Then, the experiential learning model was developed by Kolb and Fry in 1974. This model describes experiential learning as a cycle with four stages that begins with “(1) Concrete Experience, (2) Reflective Observation, (3) Abstract Conceptualization, and finally (4) Active Experimentation” (Angel Johann Solorzano and Cecilia, 2019). An individual displays the quality of effective learning when they have gone through all stages of the cycle. It is possible to enter at any stage and follow the cycle through to its logical sequence. However, no single stage provides an effective learning procedure on its own. According to the theory, experiential learning programs in various educational arenas integrate classroom learning and ‘real-world’ scenarios by providing students with ‘hands-on experience’ (Tiessen, et al., 2018).

- (1) Concrete Experience (Doing)- A student encounters a new experience, carries out a particular action, or reinterprets an existing experience.
- (2) Reflective Observation (Observing)- The student then reflects on the experience as an impartial observer. They identify “any inconsistencies between experience and understanding.”
- (3) Abstract Conceptualization (Thinking)- The student’s reflection may give them a new idea or provide “modification of an existing abstract concept” leading them to draw a conclusion.
- (4) Active Experimentation (Planning)- The student finally applies the derived ideas and conclusions to the real-world to identify the results (Angel Johann Solorzano and Cecilia, 2019; Tiessen, et al., 2018).





(Angel Johann Solorzano and Cecilia, 2019).

*Experiential learning on campus:*

Experiential learning opportunities on campus through enterprises managed by students is “a replication of a specific industry or business at the college” (Rodriguez, et al., 2016, p. 3).

These opportunities differ from internship, apprenticeship, and community engagement experiences. Students learn to work and manage a business on campus. The most common examples of this type of experiential learning opportunity include campus restaurants, cafés, bookstore, video production studio, campus call-centers, etc. University faculty and staff who possess “subject-matter expertise” often serve as mentors and directors of these enterprises. Students can connect their academic curriculum learned in class and industry practices while working for these enterprises. With the opportunities for reflection and adjustment, as well as opportunities opened by technological advancements, these enterprises provide valuable experience for students to gain a wide variety of complex skills. “Examples of skills students

gain through school-based enterprises include entrepreneurship, accounting, budgeting, cash-flow management, marketing, inventory control, critical thinking, communication, and interpersonal skills” (Rodriguez, et al., 2016, p. 3). Students will be motivated to participate in these work-based learning opportunities in an effort to differentiate themselves in a competitive market with high industry expectations (Jackson, 2018).

Public Agenda, a nonpartisan, nonprofit research and public engagement organization conducted focus groups to identify goals, expectations, and experiences of current and past college students. They highlight the following five themes:

*Public Agenda’s five identified themes of student needs*

Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Theme 5
“Students wanted more exposure to career possibilities so that they could make better-informed decisions about the goals they set out to achieve and the steps necessary for success.”	“While former and current community college students consistently reported that they lacked readiness for college, most believed that the student success and developmental education courses intended to bring them up to speed were not offered in a way that helped them succeed.”	“Participants believed that having clear goals, and being in programs with well-defined pathways, gave them a greater chance of persisting, completing, or transferring.”	“Advisors, counselors, and faculty members who offer support and guidance that is accurate, accessible, and tailored to students’ educational and career goals are in high demand and can be hard to come by.”	“Students are aware that colleges offer a wide range of services, but they report that finding the specific information or services they need often requires going on a “wild goose chase” and navigating silos.”

(Public Agenda, 2012, p. 2).

Students in business schools strongly advocate for work-integrated learning placements to improve their readiness for professional work (Rayner and Papakonstantinou, 2015). Internships are defined as “any carefully monitored work or service experience in which a student has intentional learning goals and reflects actively on what is being learned throughout the experience” (McNamara, 2013, p. 184). Jack et al. in their review identify a web survey of the top 50 business schools in the USA that was conducted in 2008. The results indicated only a few universities included an internship requirement in their curriculum. Among those universities, most of them were not adequately integrating internship experience and classroom learning. This fact is especially concerning because more than 58% of students in the study who completed their internship received full-time job offers from the companies they interned at (Jack, et al., 2017). Additionally, McCord, et al. believe that business schools today lack the necessary ability to provide students “specialized knowledge,... critical and integrative thinking skills” (McCord, et al., 2015, p. 412) needed to see the big picture in any job or industry. They also attribute monumental debacles such as Enron and the recent recession to the failure of business schools to develop analytically thinking candidates (McCord, et al., 2015; Mintzberg and Gosling, 2002). There are four main areas where business school students are lacking:

*Four areas of deficiencies of business school students as published in the Journal of Innovative Education*

“Students lack practice and experience in the field, or knowledge that is grounded in practice.”	“The analysis of cases and facts is prioritized over synthesis in most business schools; thus, most students cannot deal with interactive and messy real-life problems.”	“The narrow content focus of business courses leads to low-integrative thinking and creates a lack of understanding in students of the wider consequences of actions. This results in low ethical or moral development as illustrated by recent corporate scandals such as the home lending crisis, and low interest in corporate social responsibility.”	“Traditional pedagogy does not give students the opportunity to develop intra- and interpersonal skills such as reflective, collaborative, and analytic thinking skills, or the team skills required to effectively work and communicate cross-functionally with others.”
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(McCord, et al., 2015, p. 412).

The primary role of universities is to find ways to bridge the gap between knowledge and practice. Therefore, quality work-based learning (WBL) education may very well be the answer to make-up for these lacking areas in business schools provided it is carefully designed to maximize influence on student outcomes. Rodriguez et al. recommend educators should develop WBL curricula in collaboration with students. This would enable faculty to incorporate career aspirations and personal interests of students into the learning objectives (Rodriguez, et al., 2016). WBL platforms should provide students the “opportunities to... serve and observe in a variety of organizations beyond the academic environment” (David Powell and Agnew, 2007, p. 11) leading to improved students’ “career awareness, career exploration, career preparation, and career training” (Rodriguez, et al., 2016, p. 6). Ultimately, to achieve the desired results and

enhance the learning experience, WBL implementation should be carefully observed and assessed and educators should change the course of action, if required.

### *Business Schools with Experiential Learning Programs*

Various business schools already have a competitive advantage in providing students an edge in the industry through their experiential learning programs. Some examples include:

(1) Washington State University, Carson College of Business - *Business Growth Mentor and Analysis Program (MAP)*

This is a consultancy program, a part of the undergraduate senior capstone course, that offers experiential learning education where students provide practical growth plans for small businesses in the area. This has, in turn, led to regional economic growth. Students receive opportunities to work with real businesses, analyze complex situations, understand industry growth and build professional skills that make them market-ready. More than 970 students have participated in this program and they have helped over 172 organizations grow. The importance of this program is portrayed in the fact that economic development in the region is now sustained by the community's partnership with the university (AACSB, 2017).

(2) University of Central Missouri- *The Integrative Business Experience (IBE) Practicum*

In this program, students organize a 20-30-member student company that designs and operates a start-up based on an actual bank loan. Students then organize and execute a community service project using academic work to solve complex "real-world" problems while engaging in critical and integrative thinking. This holistic experience enables students' professional growth (McCord, et al., 2015).

(3) *International development studies (IDS)* at various Canadian universities

Business school students enrolled in the IDS program in any Canadian university have a plethora of experiential learning opportunities to choose from including “internships, co-operative education (co-op), practicum placements, community service learning, study abroad, volunteer abroad, and field schools, to name a few” (Tiessen, et al., 2018, p. 24).

(4) Pace University - *Center for Student Enterprise (CSE)*

The CSE coordinates five student-run businesses at Pace University’s Pleasantville campus. Students with an entrepreneurial inclination can work with faculty to start a business on campus. The Lubin School of Business claims that students gain crucial ‘real-world’ skills and managerial experience while engaging in these businesses. The CSE provides an avenue for students to apply their theoretical education to practical situations. Each of these businesses is led by a team of five managers and employs over 80 business school students (Pace University).

These are noteworthy examples of experiential education offered by various universities, some of which are published in AACSB (AACSB, 2017), Journal of Continuous Education (McCord, et al., 2015), and Canadian Journal of Higher Education (Tiessen, et al., 2018). The stated opportunities help in the holistic development of business school students by empowering them with the knowledge and skills required to provide consultancy services, operate a community service start-up, and participate in internship opportunities and co-operative education. However, Pace University’s Center for Student Enterprise is much more than an internship or a capstone course. Here students get a fundamental experience on how to truly start and operate a business. This experience is particularly meaningful because it provides a competitive advantage for undergraduate students by possessing three specific qualities;

- (1) Structure: These businesses are structured in ways where students experience all stages of the business lifecycle from launch to sometimes decline.
- (2) Expectations: Students enter these businesses with certain expectations to rise up to managerial positions. There are possibilities for movement in the hierarchy within a year of being hired.
- (3) Consequential: Students gain innumerable experiences in various positions. These experiences include negotiating with outside clients and vendors and having difficult and meaningful conversations with employees including talks about hiring and firing.

These experiences enable students to be distinct in order to be chosen for employment opportunities and graduate programs.

### **The Center for Student Enterprise:**

The Center for Student Enterprise (CSE) is a division within the Lubin School of Business at Pace University's Pleasantville campus. The CSE is one of many experiential learning opportunities offered by Lubin including but not limited to Brand Management Team, Student Managed Investment Portfolio class and various academic competitions. There are currently five student-run businesses on campus;

- (1) *The Pace Perk Café*- A late-night café for students located in one of the student residential halls operating from 9 pm -1 am on all days.
- (2) *Pace Connect*- A research business that helps various Pace departments and external organizations in the Westchester area to conduct different kinds of research and analyze results.

- (3) *Pace Mart*- A campus convenience store for student needs operating at different times during the day. It is located in the library.
- (4) *Pace Delivers*- A food delivery service. This business delivers food to campus from selected restaurants in the area between 10:30 pm and midnight.
- (5) *Pace Fit*- A smoothie café located in the gym operating at various times during the day, providing students with healthy options after a workout.

The CSE organizes a shark tank style business pitch contest every year. Pace students who are interested in displaying their entrepreneurial talents and starting their own business on campus take part in this contest. The winner works with the director of the CSE, a Pace faculty member to incorporate the said business on campus. Sometimes students learn important lessons on entrepreneurial failures as many businesses fail to come into existence due to various operational difficulties. The CSE employs upwards of 80 students in all the businesses combined, many of whom work in management positions. Year after year the center brings in a combined revenue of \$400,000 some of which is donated towards starting up new businesses on campus, making this a self-sustaining model of experiential learning. It has been operational for over 6 years and it continues to grow. The CSE has a board of directors comprised of the Dean, various Pace department heads, faculty, staff, and advisors. Quarterly board meetings are held where student managers provide updates on operations and financial statements to the board and discuss major decisions. In addition, an annual report and separate procedure manuals are produced for each business.

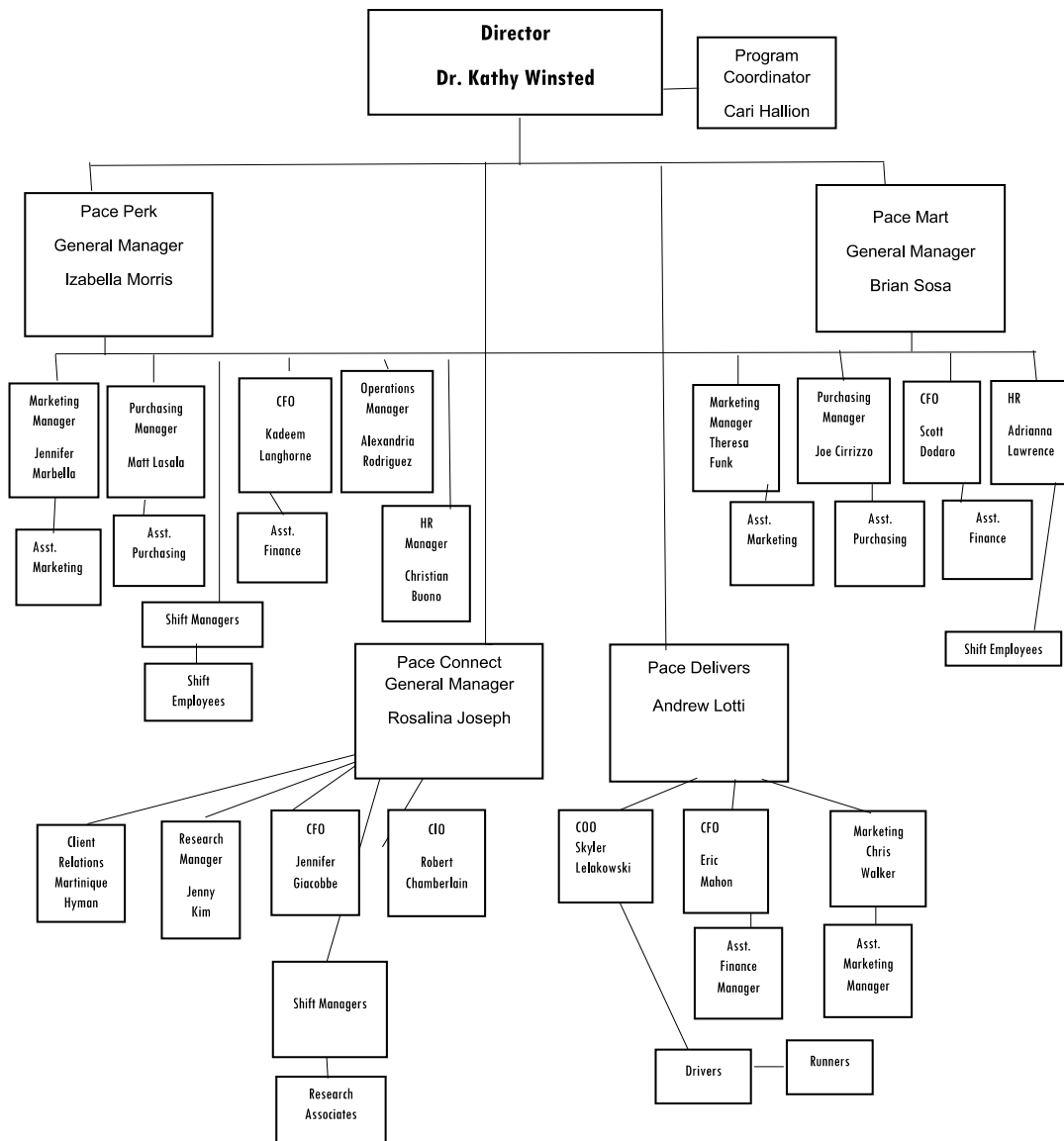


*Organizational structure:*

Each of these businesses has a staff ranging from 12-25 students. Some of these students take managerial roles including;

- (1) General Manager- Oversees the entire business operation, works with clients, and makes hiring and firing decisions.
- (2) Chief Financial Officer- Responsible for creating and updating financial statements and overseeing budgets.
- (3) Chief Operating Officer- Responsible for creating policies and procedures and ensuring smooth operations of the business.
- (4) Marketing Manager – Responsibilities include business promotions using various social, digital and print media.
- (5) Purchasing Manager- Responsible for weekly business purchases and inventory analysis
- (6) Human Resources Manager- Responsible for hiring, firing, and training employees.
- (7) Various assistant managers- Assist senior managers in their duties.
- (8) Shift employees- Students in non-managerial positions who work in these businesses.

A sample organizational hierarchy:

*CSE Organization Chart – Spring 2018**CSE Organization Chart – Spring 2018*

The students who are engaged with the CSE also participate in various community service activities such as relay for life in support of Colleges Against Cancer and Pace Makes a Difference Day. These students are also extremely engaged on campus by cosponsoring events and serving on the panel for “many different groups, including the Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunity freshman interest group, Lubin Business Association, Dean’s meeting with first-year students, Lubin Community Day and many others who request presentations from the Center for Student Enterprise” (Pace University). Ultimately the center facilitates a hands-on approach to learning through student entrepreneurship and management. The entire Pleasantville campus and the community benefit from the services offered by these businesses. They have, in fact, become an integral part of the campus identity.

These programs are examples of students’ interest in work-integrated learning education since they make students extremely attractive to potential employers. Jack et al. identify the definition of management competency as “a combination of observable and applied knowledge, skill and behavior that create a competitive advantage for an organization, focusing on how an employee creates value and what is actually accomplished.” Individuals possessing management competencies display superior performance paving the way for promotions (Jack, et al., 2017, p. 21). It is important for students to familiarize themselves with workplace norms and culture, cultivate a professional identity and career resiliency during their college years to facilitate an easy transition to a professional environment (Tiessen, et al., 2018). In recent times, considerable importance is given to a multi-faceted concept called graduate employability. Higher education identifies a student who is ideal to be employed as “an individual who is technically proficient and has the non-technical skills to successfully apply their knowledge and skills across a range of different work and social contexts” (Jackson, 2017, pp. 833-834). These students also possess a

deep insight into their strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, ideal graduates are entrepreneurial, creative, adaptable, manage change, value lifelong learning and possess interdisciplinary expertise (Jackson, 2017; Jackson and Wilton, 2016). Experiential learning platforms are the key to developing business acumen, the ability to work with a variety of personality types, to manage issues on the ‘human side of the business,’ determining long-term career success, while also cultivating the various skills and competencies discussed above (Jack, et al., 2017).

#### *Post Graduate Education:*

Undergraduate students while focusing on employability may choose to pursue graduate school for business administration to further their knowledge of various industry norms and practices. Students who undertake to complete a graduate degree have often decided to exemplify their chosen career path in their skills as “thinkers and knowers.” Their hard work often leads to monumental accomplishments in all walks of life. However, pursuing a graduate degree presents students with prodigious demands and unrealistic expectations. Pabst, in her article “Blissful Blundering,” proposes that in an academic environment, many graduate students can become “inhospitable to their own incompetence.” When individuals come across inadequacies, including individual limitations, new people, new skills, new environment, new ideas, etc., even extremely skilled academics fail at an important skill “being good at being not good” i.e. being comfortable with uncertainty, with the unknown and positively gaining from newly encountered experiences (Pabst, 2011, p 94). On the contrary, sometimes, poor performers, i.e., people with sizable deficits in their knowledge, fail to recognize their deficits while also overestimate their abilities in a wide range of cognitive and social tasks (McIntosh, et al., 2019). Referred to as ‘The Dunning-Kruger effect’ (DKE), psychologists David Dunning and

Justin Kruger argued that "When people are incompetent, ... not only do they reach erroneous conclusions and make unfortunate choices, but their incompetence robs them of the ability to realize it." In other words, the more confidence an individual possesses in their abilities, the more ignorant they are. On the flip side, the most competent individuals sometimes "lack conviction... and underrate their abilities" (Dunning-Kruger Effect, 2014, p. 15). Therefore, experiential learning leads to a competitive advantage in pursuing a graduate degree by helping students assess their true capacities and provide a realistic measure of their strengths.

Traditionally, MBA and other business graduate programs utilize the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT) scores, Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) scores, undergraduate transcripts, GPA, resume, personal essays and letters of recommendation to assess the strength and the potential of each candidate. A strong letter of recommendation can often provide an edge emanating specific information about the 'qualitative aspects of a student's abilities' (Scepansky and Bjornsen, 2003). Work-integrated learning opportunities will connect students with faculty and businesspersons awarding students the opportunity to receive stronger letters of recommendation from various individuals they may have worked with.

Some studies suggest that GMAT may not be a consistent predictor of student success in MBA programs because it does not analyze the interpersonal qualities of candidates such as 'creativity, practical application of knowledge, and research abilities' (Ahmadi, et al., 1997; LECROM, et al., 2016; Pratt, 2015). Graduate schools, however, can assess these attributes by means of various oral interviews. Other studies have suggested that key personality traits students qualifying for graduate programs possess include conscientiousness and openness (Scepansky and Bjornsen, 2003). Yale's business school's admissions director in an interview

discussed various qualities they look for in potential candidates. These qualities include a “record success in all areas,.. demonstrated leadership,... and teamwork.” They always look for all-around development in order to enroll the strongest group of students (A Chat with Yale’s B-School Admissions Director, 2002). Experiential learning experiences in college can develop these qualifications in students and help improve acceptance to their first-choice graduate program.

The work-integrated learning model in a business school curriculum is inevitably going to diversify primarily due to the demands of the students and also due to the fact that we reside in a world of ‘democratized information and ubiquitous knowledge’ (Pereira, 2019). Work-based learning programs can improve the quality of business education provided to undergraduate students and equip them with skills, knowledge, and competencies that they will be able to use throughout their lives. Additionally, students participating in these programs can attain a smooth transition from university life to professional life. Educators should keep in mind to integrate experiential learning platforms into their courses and carefully monitor the results to help students attain career success. Eyler in her article specifies that without careful attention to the ‘structure and faculty leadership’ the true prospects of experiential education will not be realized, and it will inevitably remain at the periphery (Eyler, 2009). Ultimately, bringing concrete experiences into the learning model is a successful educational tool.

### **Hypotheses**

The current research will examine the following hypotheses:

- (1) Students in leadership position in CSE will be the preferred candidates to secure post-graduate employment.

- (2) Students in leadership position in CSE will be the preferred candidates for graduate program acceptance.

## **Methodology**

### **Design and Procedure:**

For recent graduates, student success can be identified using two primary criteria, including gainful employment and acceptance into master's degree programs. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to identify whether working in a student-run business, i.e., Pace Perk Café at Pace University's Pleasantville campus led students to be the first-choice candidates for entry-level jobs or admission into MBA programs. We further wanted to identify whether holding a leadership position in the student-run business provided a competitive advantage to students over those who worked in employee positions. To achieve these goals, we created three student-resumes with the help of a Lubin School of Business Career Counselor and Assistant Director, James Davis, a human resource professional with over 30 years of experience. We used activities and experiences from five Pace University student-resumes to create these three hypothetical resumes to represent Lubin business students. Business Management major is popular among students who are working for the Center for Student Enterprise and that is why we used this major in all three resumes. Furthermore, Pace University, New York was substituted with a hypothetical university in Oberlin, Ohio called Apple Valley University and Pace Perk Café was substituted with Central Campus Café. We made these changes to remove any potential biases of the reviewers of these resumes with regard to the university or the state. To sum up, we created these resumes to reflect a typical college student's resume while also ensuring their neutrality. Through this process, we were able to control the variables in this study.

This study included two Test Conditions:

- (1) Evaluating candidate characteristics that will result in the first-choice selection for an entry-level job.
- (2) Evaluating candidate characteristics that will result in the first-choice selection for an MBA program.

In both Test Conditions, we expect candidates working in a student-run business to have a higher rate of acceptance. In our study, the three candidates would apply to both a hypothetical job in a real-estate company and an MBA program in a hypothetical university. Participants will be informed that this is a study to identify the attractiveness of candidates for a job (Test 1) and an MBA program (Test 2).

### **Test Condition 1 – Job application:**

#### *Job Description:*

Initially, we created a hypothetical job description utilizing LinkedIn service for an entry-level position in a real-estate company. Specifically, Berkshire Hathaway Home Services posted a job on LinkedIn that was suitable to be used for this study. We used this description as a base and made alterations to qualifications and job responsibilities in order to fit the parameters of this study. See Appendix C for this job description.

#### *Resume sections:*

In various cycles of review with the career counselor James Davis, we created three student-resumes. Refer Appendices D, E, and F for these resumes.

- (1) Education: All candidates have similar educational backgrounds. We gave them a randomized minor and similar coursework. We also honored each candidate with the



Dean's list and provided GPA scores with negligible differences to ensure that this was not a point of consideration for reviewers.

- (2) Experience: We gave each candidate three internship/job experience. In the real estate and finance internships, all three candidates had similar job responsibilities and accomplishments in three different companies. Furthermore, we identified Pace University students who had completed these internships and tailored their job responsibilities to be included in this study. A third internship/job opportunity included the main point of difference in these resumes.
- i. Candidate C was given a managerial/leadership position in Pace Perk Café, one of the student-run businesses on campus. The job responsibilities and accomplishments were taken directly from the resume of the general manager of this business as of November 2019.
  - ii. Candidate B held an employee position in the Pace Perk Café. Similarly, the job responsibilities and accomplishments were taken directly from the resume of an employee working for this business as of November 2019.
  - iii. Candidate A did not work for the student-run business. We furnished this candidate resume with an equivalent job/internship experience outside of campus. This candidate held a warehouse manager position at a local consumer packaged goods warehouse. The job responsibilities and accomplishments for this candidate were taken directly from the resume of a Pace University business student working for the said warehouse as of November 2019.

Note: Initially, we wanted to give these candidates only two work experiences. However, we decided to include a third, the finance internship, for the sole purpose to prevent empty space in the resumes. This procedure will enhance all three candidates' attractiveness in general.

(3) Relevant Coursework / Leadership / Activities and Volunteer Work: We equipped all candidate-resumes with similar information in these sections.

(4) Skills: Although all candidates have similar technical skills, candidates B and C who worked for the Pace Perk Café were ServSafe\* certified as a requirement of employment.

\* ServSafe is a food and beverage safety training program for managers. The exam for this program is accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and Conference for Food Protection (CFP) (ServSafe).

### **Test Condition 2 – MBA application:**

*Master of Business Administration (MBA) Program admission requirements:*

We identified 5-7 colleges in the New York metropolitan area that offered MBA programs. We used the description and average admission requirements from these universities to compile the requirements for an MBA program in a hypothetical university. See Appendix I for these admissions criteria.

*Resume sections:*

In repeated cycles of review with the career counselor James Davis, we altered the three student-resumes created for the job application and tailored it to suit an MBA application. Refer Appendices J, K, and L for these resumes.

(1) Education: All candidates have similar educational backgrounds. We gave them a randomized minor and an undergraduate thesis. We also honored each candidate with the Dean's list and provided GPA and GMAT scores with negligible differences to ensure

that this was not a point of consideration for reviewers. The relevant coursework section was removed from the three resumes because we assumed, all graduate schools will require undergraduate academic transcripts with all relevant coursework present.

- (2) Experience / Leadership / Activities and Volunteer work: No changes were made to these sections on any of the three candidate-resumes. They are identical to the sections in the resumes created for the job application.

**Participants:**

- (1) The three student-resumes that were tailored for a job application, along with the job description would be sent to various professionals working in the field of business including Human Resources. These professionals live in the United States, India, and London.
- (2) The three student-resumes that were tailored for an MBA application along with the program requirements would be sent to individuals working with or have worked with undergraduate and graduate admissions.
- (3) Some Pace University students will also participate in this study in order to obtain students' perspectives on the impact Center for Student Enterprise has on hiring and admissions.

We will send an email to the above-mentioned individuals requesting their participation in the study. The email will include two attachments, i.e., a PDF file with job description/admission requirements and the three respective candidate-resumes and a word document with a response form that the participants will be asked to fill out and send it back. Participants will also be informed that their responses will remain anonymous. Please see Appendices B and H for the email.

**Response form** (Appendices G and M):

This form will ask the participants to rank-order their preferred candidates for the job/the MBA program. It will also aim to collect demographic information such as age, gender, the highest level of education, and position title.

**Sample size results:**

The sample for Test Condition 1 included 100 professionals from USA, India, and England and 25 business strategy students from Pace University. 54% of the professionals responded to the survey, while 84% of the students responded.

The sample for the Test Condition 2 included 250 admissions counselors and advisors from USA and 40 organizational behavior students from Pace University. 3.2% of the admissions counselors responded to the survey, while 40% of the students responded.

**Results****Test Condition 1 – Job application:**

Participants rank-ordered the candidates from 1 to 3 for the hypothetical job, with 1 being the highest rank i.e., the preferred candidate and 3 being the lowest rank (Appendix G). Figure 1 shows that 62% (n=46) preferred candidate C making this candidate a clear winner. Candidate A was the second choice with 41% (n=30) of the respondents giving this candidate a rank of 2. Finally, it was interesting to identify that there was a tie between candidates A and B for rank 3. Therefore, as expected these results prove the primary hypothesis which suggests that students in leadership positions in CSE will be the preferred candidates to secure post-graduate employment.

Figure 1: Comprehensive Job Candidate Ranking (Percentage)

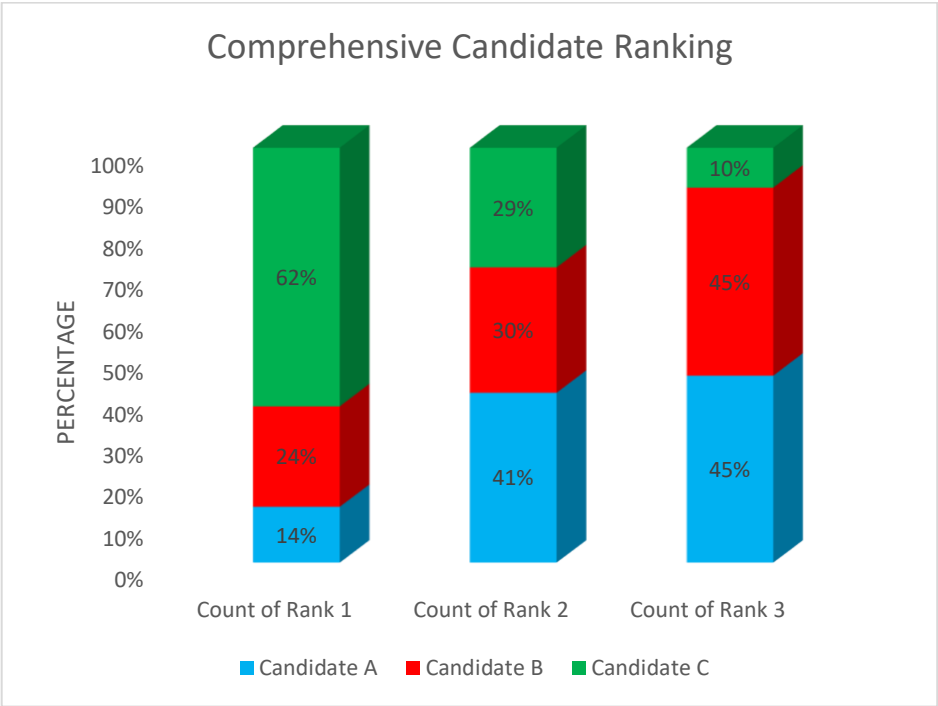
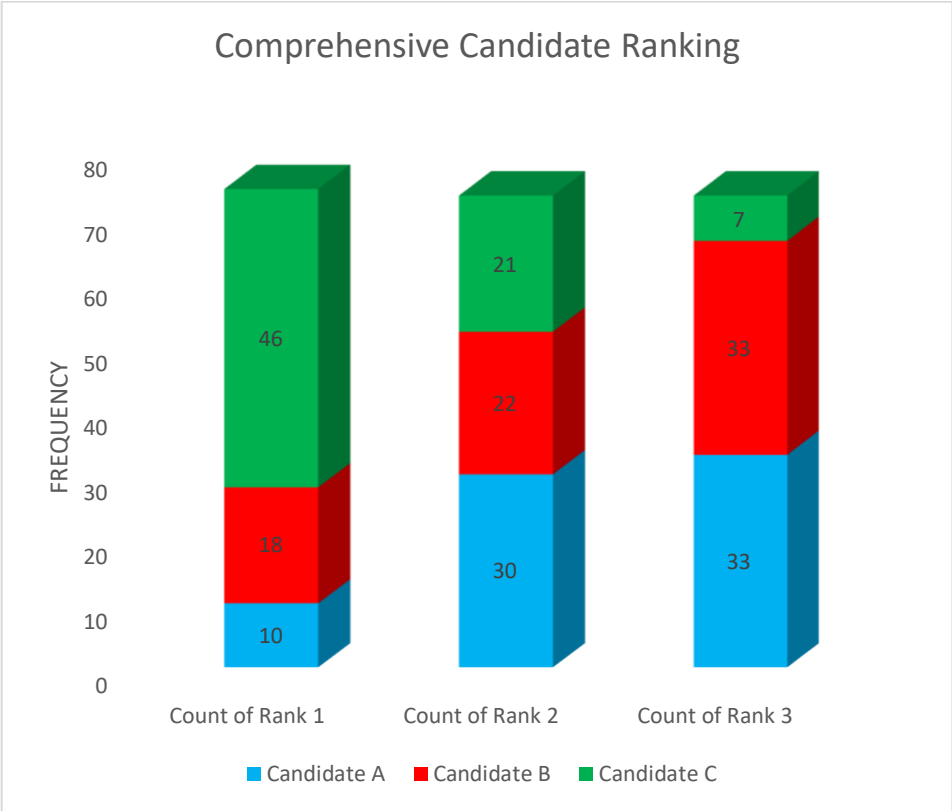
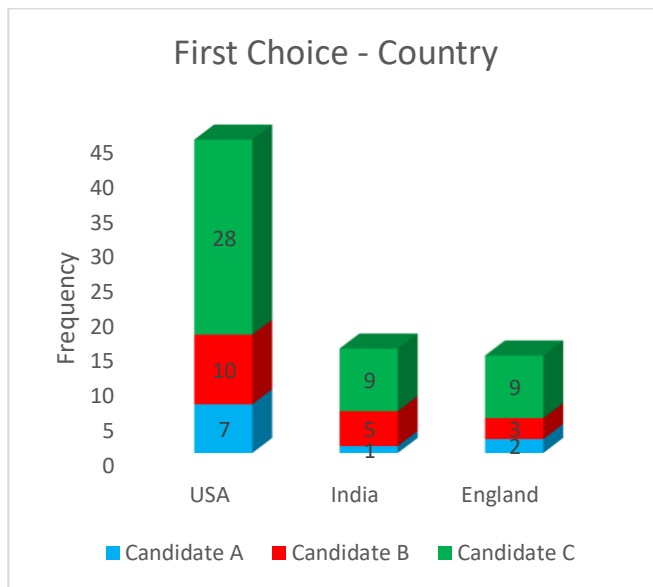
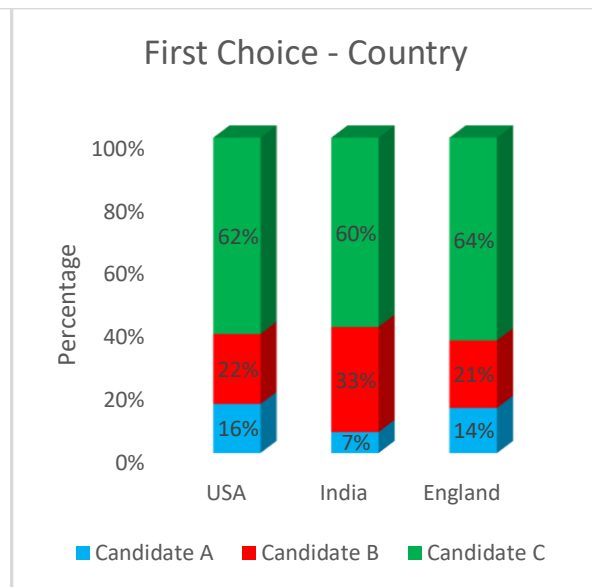


Figure 2: Comprehensive Job Candidate Ranking (Frequency)



*Demographic analysis of the respondents:*

(1) *Country:* A country-wise analysis suggests that a clear majority of nearly 60% of the respondents prefer Candidate C for the job.

**Figure 3: Country-wise (Frequency)****Figure 4: Country-wise (Percentage)**

(2) *Age:* - An analysis by age shows a similar conclusion and a preference for candidate C as follows;

- 67% of the respondents between ages 18-24 and 55-65,
- 100% of the respondents between ages 36-45,
- 44% of the respondents between the ages 46-55, and
- 69% of the respondents who chose not to disclose their ages

The age category of 65-75 showed slightly different results;

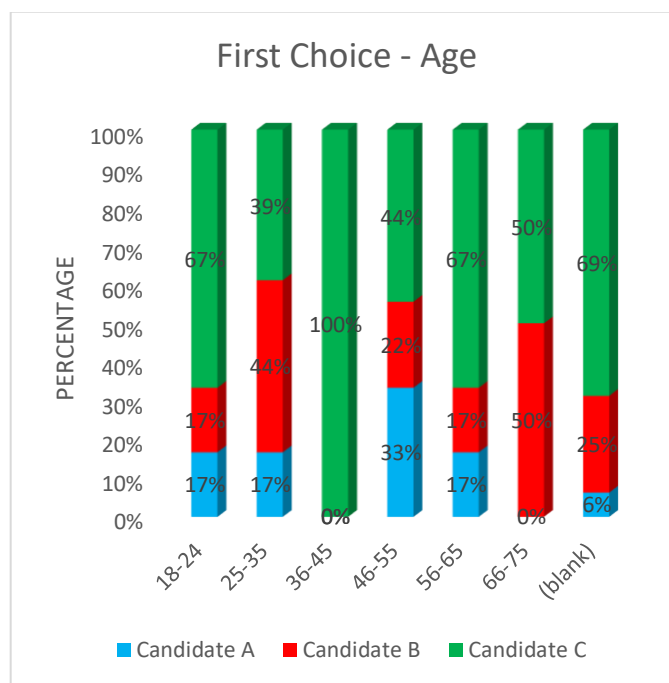
- 50% of the respondents preferred Candidate C, and
- 50% preferred Candidate B.

Here, it is important to note that Candidate B also held a position in the Center for Student Enterprise.

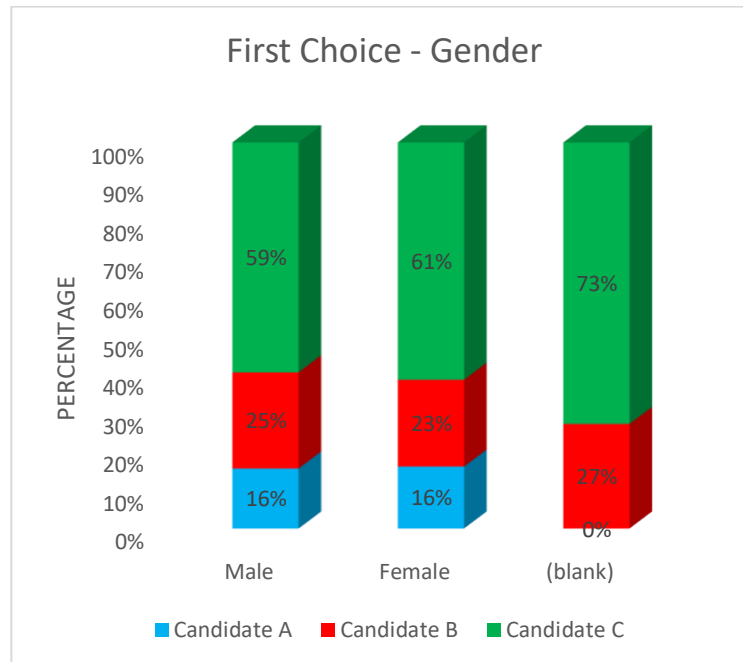
Finally, contrary to the expectations in the hypothesis, a majority of the respondents between the ages of 25-35 preferred Candidate B over Candidate C.

- 44% of the individuals who took the survey preferred Candidate B
- Only 39% of the respondents preferred Candidate C.

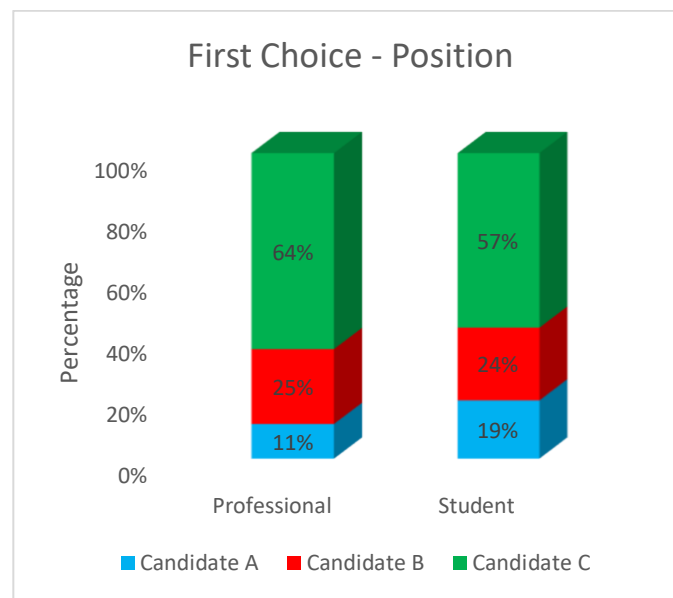
**Figure 5: First choice – Age distribution (Percentage)**



(3) *Gender*: Similar to other demographic categories, a majority of 59% male respondents, 61% of female respondents, and 73% of the respondents who chose not to disclose their gender preferred Candidate C over Candidate A and Candidate B as their first-choice candidate for the job.

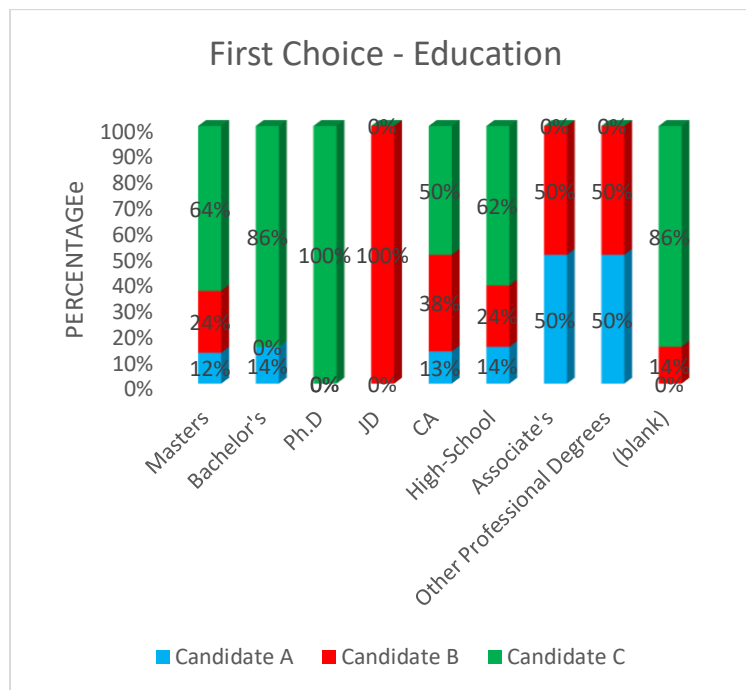
**Figure 6: First Choice – Gender (Percentage)**

(4) *Position*: This survey was taken by both students and professionals belonging to various fields who have hired and managed other individuals. Results have identified that a majority of 64% of the professionals and 57% of the students favor Candidate C.

**Figure 7: First choice – Position (Percentage)**



## (5) Education:

**Figure 8: First choice – Educational Background (Percentage)**

From these results, a high correlation between employment with CSE and selection as the preferred candidate for hire can be inferred.

**Test Condition 2 – MBA application:**

Participants rank-ordered the candidates from 1 to 3 for the hypothetical MBA program, with 1 being the highest rank i.e., the preferred candidate and 3 being the lowest rank (Appendix M). Figure 9 provides mixed readings since 42% (n=10) of the respondents preferred Candidate A as their first choice for acceptance into the MBA program, 38% (n=9) preferred Candidate B, while 21% (n=5) preferred Candidate C. However, considering the number of individuals who responded to the survey in this category, no significant conclusions can be derived.

Figure 9: Comprehensive MBA Candidate Ranking (Percentage)

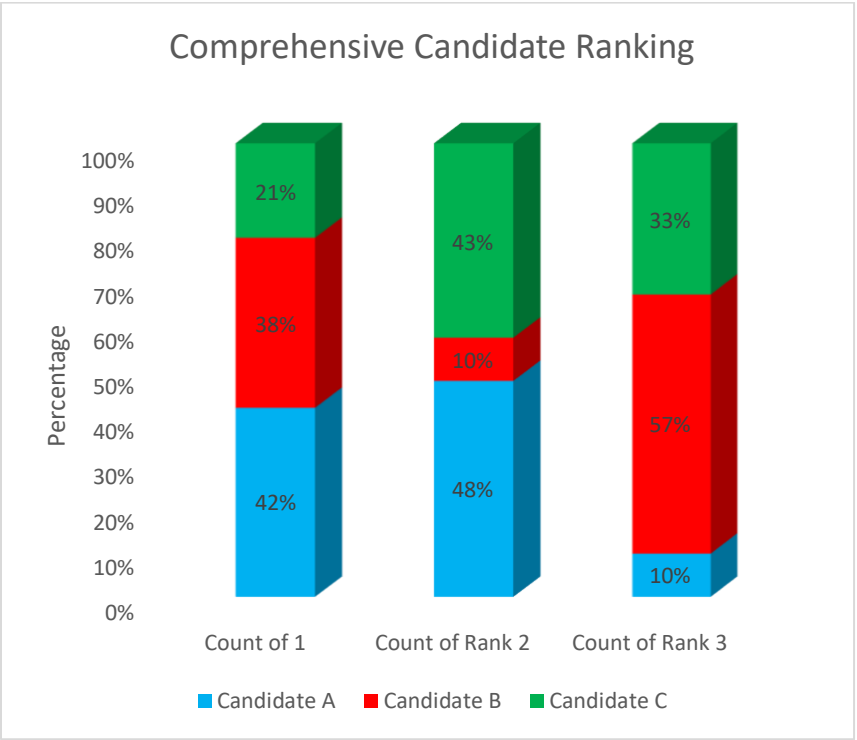
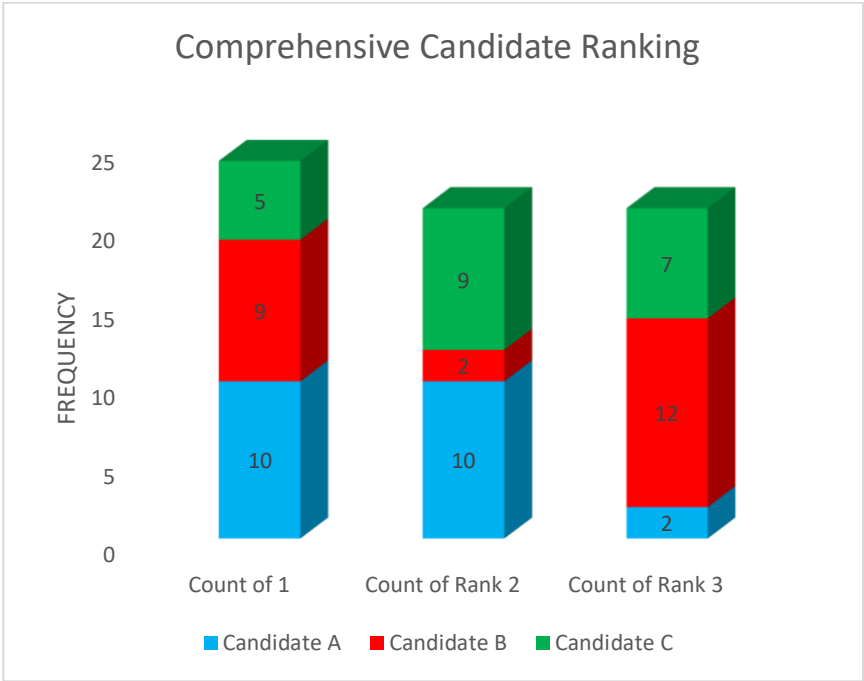


Figure 10: Comprehensive MBA Candidate Ranking (Frequency)



### **Discussion**

This study aimed to identify whether students in managerial roles in the center for student enterprise will have more measurable success. For recent graduates, the primary criteria for measuring success would include gainful employment and acceptance into a master's degree such as an MBA program. Drawing from the literature, experiential learning programs in colleges have the potential to teach students skills and real-life lessons, contributing to their career success. Through this study on experiential education, the preferences of the participants favored the hypothesis. An overwhelming majority of professionals and students felt that the candidate who possessed experiential learning experience i.e., a manager in the student-run businesses (Candidate C) would be the ideal candidate for the hypothetical job.

This finding further reiterates various facts from the review of the literature pertaining to experiential learning. More than 80% of employers prefer candidates who possess the knowledge to apply theoretical information to practical situations. This is ideally the description of candidates who have acquired various skills by participating in experiential learning opportunities. These candidates are also coachable (Rodriguez, et al., 2016). Furthermore, a majority of graduates who previously possessed various forms of internships were the ones to receive full-time job offers. Additionally, researcher Eyler, through her study with students pursuing legislative politics identified that students who held various internships performed profoundly well when asked to strategize for enacting a policy (Eyler, 2009). These assertions coupled with the findings of the current study indicate that Candidate C, the candidate with the managerial position in the student-run business, would be preferred not only for this hypothetical job but also for various other entry-level positions.

The Journal of Innovative Education identified that business school students lacked experience and they prioritized analysis over synthesis. Furthermore, business schools teach narrow course content leading to low-integrative thinking, an inability for students to see the big picture, and their traditional pedagogy does not allow students to develop inter- and intrapersonal skills (McCord, et al., 2015). The experiential learning model developed by Kolb, which includes “(1) Concrete Experience, (2) Reflective Observation, (3) Abstract Conceptualization, and (4) Active Experimentation” (Angel Johann Solorzano and Cecilia, 2019) can make students aware of these inadequacies and work towards bridging the gap between classroom and the real-world. The Center for Student Enterprise Model, adhering to Kolb’s experiential learning framework, has the potential to make up for these areas of deficiencies. Therefore, the findings from this study should prompt various business schools to discuss incorporating such a model into their curricula and further develop it in order to award students with the best possible education.

### **Limitations**

This research was subjected to various limitations, such as the sample size results for Test Condition 2 (MBA). We reached out to nearly 250 admissions counselors in New York, USA and only 8 individuals responded. Participation required significant time commitment and perhaps, an incentive of some type may have helped obtain more responses. Unfortunately, no incentives were available. Furthermore, many admissions counselors from various universities suggested they were busy with recruitment and will be unable to participate, while others did not respond. Perhaps, the surveys could have been distributed during such a season when admissions counselors were not as preoccupied.

Additionally, all the resumes, the job description, and the admissions requirements were curated in order to control the variables in this study. Although the resumes included experiences

from real Pace University students, no one student possessed the specific combination of experience provided in the resumes that participants used to rank-order the candidates.

Finally, another area of limitation in this study involved the basis on which some participants ranked the candidates. The resumes were created to be identical in every aspect except the experiential learning experience on campus versus an equivalent job/internship experience outside of campus. The participants should have rank-ordered the candidates solely based on this point of difference. However, in the response form (Appendices G & M), we provided a section for additional comments. Here, some participants stated that they ranked the candidates based on other work experience such as the identical real estate experience.

### **Future Research**

This study addressed topics that warrant further examination. The primary and evident route would include performing the same study with real resumes of CSE managers. Another area of examination includes studying the difference, if any, that exists in working for the five student-run businesses under CSE contributing to students' future career opportunities. Furthermore, to develop a deeper understanding of the experiential education at Pace University, primarily the Center for Student Enterprise, a longitudinal study could possibly explore the career path and success of graduated CSE managers.

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**Appendix A****Pace University, New York  
CONSENT TO ACT AS A HUMAN RESEARCH SUBJECT*****Evaluating Career Outcomes Associated with Experiential Learning.*****RESEARCH TEAM****Lead Researcher**

Harshini Rajkumar, Undergraduate Student  
Department of Management  
732-666-2665  
Harshini.rajkumar@pace.edu

**Faculty Sponsor**

Dr. Patrick McGuigan  
Department of Management

You are invited to participate in a research study to evaluate the attractiveness of candidates for a hypothetical job/MBA program. Participation is completely voluntary.

**Procedures**

If you agree to participate in my research, I will ask you to complete the response form attached. The study will involve ask you to read the job description/MBA program description and evaluate three candidate who applied. You will be asked to rank order your choice in order of preference from one to three. Participation should take a very modest amount of time to complete.

**Benefits/Risks/Discomforts**

There is no direct benefit or any known or anticipated risk or discomfort to you from taking part in this study.

**Confidentiality**

Your study data will be handled as confidentially as possible. All responses will be anonymous.

**Rights**

***Participation in research is completely voluntary.*** You may refuse to answer any question or discontinue your involvement at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled.

**ELECTRONIC CONSENT:**

**If you agree to take part in the research, please return the completed response form to the provided email address.** Returning the response form to the sender indicates that

- You have read the above information
- You voluntarily agree to participate

## **Appendix B**

### **Email Draft – Job**

Hello,

Thank you for participating in this study to evaluate job applicants. My name is Harshini Rajkumar, a student at Pace University working on my honors research project. I am studying characteristics that make a candidate a more attractive job applicant. Participation will require a very modest time investment and allow you to contribute your accumulated knowledge and wisdom to the study.

To participate simply read the job description and evaluate the three candidates who applied for the job. You are asked to rank your choice in order of preference from one to three. To be included, please complete and return the evaluation form attached.

Your privacy is of paramount importance to me and your response will be kept confidential and in a secure place.

Sincerely,

**Harshini Rajkumar**

Pforzheimers Honors College

**Lubin School of Business - Class of 2020**

Tel: 732-666-2665

## Appendix C

### Job Description

#### **Job Description: Entry Level Real Estate Associate**

Real estate is an exciting industry that is constantly evolving. We are looking for a candidate who is creative, enthusiastic, and willing to think outside the box to give their clients the best real estate experience possible. As a Real Estate Associate, you will advocate for your clients by understanding their preference and assist them with every detail of their home purchase and sale. This industry offers a lot of independence, so if you are a self-starter and enjoy flexibility, this position could be a good fit for you. Prior experience in the real estate industry is not required. We will provide you with training and resources to prepare you to become a successful agent.

#### **Job Responsibilities**

- Stay updated on your local real estate market so you can offer clients an accurate comparison of home sales in their area
- Advertise your real estate services to the local community
- Represent your clients' best interest during contract negotiations
- Communicate with clients regularly and check in on their interest
- Create marketing strategies so clients can sell their home quickly and profitably
- Develop strategies to obtain referrals and build your client portfolio
- Accommodate a flexible work life schedule to help you establish a healthy work/life balance
- Accommodate a weekend schedule and have the ability to adapt to new settings

#### **Exemplary candidates will possess:**

- 4-year college degree
- An interest in real estate
- Strong values and high ethics
- A winning "can do" attitude
- Excellent organizational and problem-solving skills
- Strong communication skills
- Responsiveness – this is a fast-paced industry
- A warm & friendly demeanor

#### **Regulatory Notice:**

- Real estate license will be required to work as a real estate agent.
- A valid driver's license and access to a car will be required to work as an agent.

## Appendix D

### Candidate A Resume – Job

#### Candidate A

Oberlin, OH 44074 | [candidateA@applevalley.edu](mailto:candidateA@applevalley.edu) | xxx-xxx-xxxx

#### EDUCATION

**Apple Valley University, School of Business** **Oberlin, OH**  
 Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) – Business Management  
 Minor: Photography May 2020  
**GPA:** 3.52 | **Honors:** Dean's List

#### RELEVANT COURSEWORK

Business Strategy | Managerial Negotiations | Leadership Principles and Practice | Managerial and Organizational Concepts | Business Analytics | Contemporary Business Practice | International Management

#### EXPERIENCE

##### Legends Oberlin, OH

Consumer packaged goods warehouse company handling over \$300k in products annually.  
 Warehouse Manager December 2018 - Present

- Handled inventory for all food & beverages that came to the warehouse to ensure adequate stock on hand.
- Ensured all food and beverage deliveries were on time and properly accounted for to avoid overcharging by vendors.
- Coordinated/performed the distribution of beverages throughout the concourse.
- Made certain product was stored according to warehouse's health and safety guidelines.
- Oversaw 15 employees' daily workload operations.

##### Weston Properties, Inc. Amherst, OH

Intern September 2018- December 2018

- Digitized loan information for upwards of 50 commercial and residential properties to produce accurate charting.
- Accompanied partners on client calls and meetings to assist with the presentation of Weston services.
- Accommodated property management needs such as drafting and serving notices, common area inspections, and the addition of appropriate signage
- Evaluated term sheets for properties and conducted site visits for future investments.

##### Hudson Financial Services Avon, OH

Internship January 2018 - August 2018

- Analyzed client financial information to determine strategies to achieve their financial goals.
- Created charts and illustrations used to display different types of financial plans to clients.
- Presented and implemented various financial plans that can help clients achieve their financial goals.

#### LEADERSHIP

**Apple Valley University Business Association**, Vice President of Communication April 2017 - Present  
**Apple Valley University Resident Hall Association**, Section Representative September 2016 – Present  
**Apple Valley Photography Club – Fashion Club**, Secretary September 2017 – May 2019

#### ACTIVITIES / VOLUNTEER WORK

Apple Valley Drama Alliance, Member | Outdoor Adventure Club, Member | Pancreatic and Breast Cancer Walk

#### SKILLS

**Technical:** MS Office: (Word, PowerPoint, Excel) | Excel Certification | Beginner Level in Adobe Photoshop and Flash

## Appendix E

### Candidate B Resume – Job

#### Candidate B

Oberlin, OH 44074 | [candidateB@applevalley.edu](mailto:candidateB@applevalley.edu) | xxx-xxx-xxxx

#### EDUCATION

**Apple Valley University, School of Business** **Oberlin, OH**  
 Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) – Business Management  
 Minor: Psychology May 2020  
 GPA: 3.49 | Honors: Dean's List

#### RELEVANT COURSEWORK

Business Strategy | Managerial and Organizational Concepts | Leadership Principles and Practice | Business Analytics |  
 Managerial Negotiations | Small Business Management | International Management

#### EXPERIENCE

**Central Campus Cafe, Apple Valley University** **Oberlin, OH**  
 A late-night café on campus serving snacks, beverages and selective cooked foods generating over \$300k annually.  
 Shift Manager December 2018 - Present

- Work with a team of 4-6 per shift to effectively give out orders to customers and positively impact their day
- Open and close café each shift in a timely fashion.
- Clean all work areas according to Ohio State Board of Health standards.
- Reconcile cash draw with sales receipts to ensure accurate accounting of sales.
- Attend quarterly board meetings to update management on results.

**Ogden CAP Properties** **Avon, OH**  
 Intern September 2018- December 2018

- Assisted in the management of a 1700, 34-story Manhattan apartment complex ensuring high levels of customer service for tenants.
- Re-organized and operated the bicycle storage facility using a digital platform to create a smooth operation.
- Scheduled all move-ins and move-outs and maintained a database of mover insurance forms to comply with state laws.
- Utilized Building Link to manage repairs, tenant for sale items, maintenance, and move-ins for the facility.

**Barnum** **Amherst, OH**  
 Internship January 2018 - August 2018

- Collaborated with lead analysts in the bond rating process including providing detailed financial workbooks used during the ratings evaluation process.
- Conducted research to produce a thought piece for partners to use as promotional material.
- Collaborated with a team of financial advisors on a series of projects including a financial planning case study, a portfolio challenge, and a marketing campaign.

#### LEADERSHIP

**Apple Valley University Business Association**, Vice President April 2017 - Present  
**Apple Valley University Resident Hall Association**, Section Representative Sept 2016 – Present  
**Apple Valley University Cooks and Bakes**, Secretary September 2017 – May 2019

#### ACTIVITIES / VOLUNTEER WORK

Apple Valley Photography Club, Member | Psychology Club, Member | Relay for Life Volunteer

#### SKILLS

**Technical:** MS Office: (Word, PowerPoint, Excel) | Beginner Level in HTML | ServSafe Certified

## Appendix F

### Candidate C Resume – Job

#### Candidate C

Oberlin, OH 44074 | [candidateC@applevalley.edu](mailto:candidateC@applevalley.edu) | xxx-xxx-xxxx

#### EDUCATION

<b>Apple Valley University, School of Business</b>	<b>Oberlin, OH</b>
Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) – Business Management	
Minor: Fashion Marketing	May 2020
<b>GPA: 3.50   Honors: Dean's List</b>	

#### RELEVANT COURSEWORK

Business Analytics | Business Strategy | Managerial Negotiations | Contemporary Business Practice | Managerial and Organizational Concepts | Leadership Principles and Practice | International Management

#### EXPERIENCE

<b>Central Campus Cafe, Apple Valley University</b>	<b>Oberlin, OH</b>
A late-night campus café serving snacks, beverages and selective cooked foods generating over \$300k annually.	
General Manager	December 2018 - Present

- Lead an entirely student-run business of fifteen employees.
- Manage the staffing and scheduling of workforce to ensure smooth cafe operations.
- Orchestrate the payroll process to provide compensation to all employees.
- Responsible for all employment processes, including hiring and firing of employees.
- Assist CFO in overview of all financial transactions.

<b>Laffey Real Estate</b>	<b>Amherst, OH</b>
CRM Campaign Intern	September 2018- December 2018

- Registered open houses on Zillow and Trulia on a weekly basis and updated the firm's backend client database.
- Assisted agents at Open Houses and showings each week and showed properties directly to potential buyers.
- Performed daily clerical duties including scheduling appointments and organizing confidential files creating easy information access for partners.
- Promoted sales of properties through advertisements, and multiple listing services.

<b>Northwestern Mutual</b>	<b>Avon, OH</b>
Internship	January 2018 - August 2018

- Aided financial representatives with daily tasks throughout the workweek.
- Drafted Referral Letters to be used in prospecting potential clients.
- Delivered excellent and efficient customer service to the company's financial clients.

#### LEADERSHIP

<b>Apple Valley University Business Association</b> , Secretary	April 2017 - Present
<b>Apple Valley University Resident Hall Association</b> , Section Representative	September 2016 – Present
<b>Apple Valley University POSE – Fashion Club</b> , Vice President	September 2017 –May 2019

#### ACTIVITIES / VOLUNTEER WORK

Apple Valley Book Club, Member | Nature Club, Member | ASPIRE Volunteer | Cancer Walk

#### SKILLS

**Technical:** MS Office: (Word, PowerPoint, Excel) | Beginner Level in Photoshop and InDesign | ServSafe Certified



**Appendix G****Response Form – Job****Job Applicant Evaluation Study**

Please read the job description and evaluate the three candidates for the job. Please rank order your preferred candidates on the table below.

**Reviewer's Demographic Information (Optional):**

Age:	
Gender:	
Highest level of education:	
Position title:	

**Candidate rating:**

<b>1.</b>	
<b>2.</b>	
<b>3.</b>	

Additional comments (Optional):

## **Appendix H**

### **Email Draft – MBA**

Hello,

Thank you for participating in this study to evaluate MBA applicants. My name is Harshini Rajkumar, a student at Pace University working on my honors research project. I am studying characteristics that make a candidate a more attractive MBA applicant. Participation will require a very modest time investment and allow you to contribute your accumulated knowledge and wisdom to the study.

To participate simply read the application criteria and evaluate the three candidates who applied to the MBA program. You are asked to rank your choice in order of preference from one to three. To be included, please complete and return the evaluation form attached.

Your privacy is of paramount importance to me and your response will be kept confidential and in a secure place.

Sincerely,

**Harshini Rajkumar**

Pforzheimers Honors College

**Lubin School of Business - Class of 2020**

Tel: 732-666-2665

## Appendix I

### MBA Program Description

**ABC University, School of Business and Management***Master of Business Administration (MBA) Program*

ABC School of Business and Management gives you the opportunity to shape your career in business. Our advantageous location gives you access to industry leaders. We teach you to take on challenges and respond dynamically. You will also gain skills to succeed in fast-paced, competitive environments and evolve as effective leaders. Students learn to connect the dots; to look at business challenges from across disciplines, with an integrated perspective. Our MBA program multiplies your career prospects exponentially to help you realize success. Our 2-year comprehensive program builds the foundation necessary for success in any field. ABC's integrated curriculum will help you grasp challenges in all their complexity and see how the pieces fit together to form the big picture.

**Admissions requirements:**

Individuals with a strong academic profile, meaningful work experience, leadership and teamwork skills, motivation and maturity, and professional aspirations.

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or institution
- GPA average of 3.3 on a 4.0 scale.
- GMAT scores of at least 570 is preferred.
- Prior work/internship experience in the relevant field.

## Appendix J

### Candidate A Resume – MBA

#### Candidate A

Oberlin, OH 44074 | [candidateA@applevalley.edu](mailto:candidateA@applevalley.edu) | xxx-xxx-xxxx

#### EDUCATION

<b>Apple Valley University, School of Business</b>	<b>Oberlin, OH</b>
Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) – Business Management	
Minor: Photography	May 2020
<b>GPA: 3.52   Honors: Dean's List</b>	
<b>GMAT: 632</b>	

#### UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

The Effect of Video Games and Media Usage on Students' Studying Habits: A Case of Two Countries	December 2019
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation of the impact of Chinese and Japanese Anime on Study Habits of Western Students</li> </ul>	

#### EXPERIENCE

<b>Legends</b>	<b>Oberlin, OH</b>
Consumer packaged goods warehouse company handling over \$300k in products annually.	
Warehouse Manager	December 2018 - Present

- Handled inventory for all food & beverages that came to the warehouse to ensure adequate stock on hand.
- Ensured all food and beverage deliveries were on time and properly accounted for to avoid overcharging by vendors.
- Coordinated/performed the distribution of beverages throughout the concourse.
- Made certain product was stored according to warehouse's health and safety guidelines.
- Oversaw 15 employees' daily workload operations.

<b>Weston, Inc.</b>	<b>Amherst, OH</b>
Intern	September 2018- December 2018

- Digitized loan information for upwards of 50 commercial and residential properties to produce accurate charting.
- Accompanied partners on client calls and meetings to assist with the presentation of Weston services.
- Accommodated property management needs such as drafting and serving notices, common area inspections, and the addition of appropriate signage
- Evaluated term sheets for properties and conducted site visits for future investments.

<b>Hudson Financial Services</b>	<b>Avon, OH</b>
Internship	January 2018 - August 2018

- Analyzed client financial information to determine strategies to achieve their financial goals.
- Created charts and illustrations used to display different types of financial plans to clients.
- Presented and implemented various financial plans that can help clients achieve their financial goals.

#### LEADERSHIP

<b>Apple Valley University Business Association</b> , Vice President of Communication	April 2017 - Present
<b>Apple Valley University Resident Hall Association</b> , Section Representative	September 2016 – Present
<b>Apple Valley Photography Club – Fashion Club</b> , Secretary	September 2017 – May 2019

#### ACTIVITIES / VOLUNTEER WORK

Apple Valley Drama Alliance, Member | Outdoor Adventure Club, Member | Pancreatic and Breast Cancer Walk

#### SKILLS

**Technical:** MS Office: (Word, PowerPoint, Excel) | Excel Certification | Beginner Level in Adobe Photoshop and Flash

## Appendix K

### Candidate B Resume – MBA

#### Candidate B

Oberlin, OH 44074 | [candidateB@applevalley.edu](mailto:candidateB@applevalley.edu) | xxx-xxx-xxxx

#### EDUCATION

**Apple Valley University, School of Business** **Oberlin, OH**  
 Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) – Business Management  
 Minor: Psychology May 2020  
**GPA: 3.49 | Honors: Dean's List**  
**GMAT: 630**

#### UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

The Dominance of Japanese Anime: A Western Perspective December 2019  
 • Study of the Adoption of Anime as in Western Gaming Culture

#### EXPERIENCE

**Central Campus Cafe, Apple Valley University** **Oberlin, OH**  
 A late-night café on campus serving snacks, beverages and selective cooked foods generating over \$300k annually.  
 Shift Manager December 2018 - Present  
 • Work with a team of 4-6 per shift to effectively give out orders to customers and positively impact their day  
 • Open and close café each shift in a timely fashion.  
 • Clean all work areas according to Ohio State Board of Health standards.  
 • Reconcile cash draw with sales receipts to ensure accurate accounting of sales.  
 • Attend quarterly board meetings to update management on results.

**Ogden CAP Properties** **Avon, OH**  
 Intern September 2018- December 2018  
 • Assisted in the management of a 1700, 34-story Manhattan apartment complex ensuring high levels of customer service for tenants.  
 • Re-organized and operated the bicycle storage facility using a digital platform to create a smooth operation.  
 • Scheduled all move-ins and move-outs and maintained a database of mover insurance forms to comply with state laws.  
 • Utilized Building Link to manage repairs, tenant for sale items, maintenance, and move-ins for the facility.

**Barnum** **Amherst, OH**  
 Internship January 2018 - August 2018  
 • Collaborated with lead analysts in the bond rating process including providing detailed financial workbooks used during the ratings evaluation process.  
 • Conducted research to produce a thought piece for partners to use as promotional material.  
 • Collaborated with a team of financial advisors on a series of projects including a financial planning case study, a portfolio challenge, and a marketing campaign.

#### LEADERSHIP

**Apple Valley University Business Association**, Vice President April 2017 - Present  
**Apple Valley University Resident Hall Association**, Section Representative Sept 2016 – Present  
**Apple Valley University Cooks and Bakes**, Secretary September 2017 –May 2019

#### ACTIVITIES / VOLUNTEER WORK

Apple Valley Photography Club, Member | Psychology Club, Member | Relay for Life Volunteer

#### SKILLS

**Technical:** MS Office: (Word, PowerPoint, Excel) | Beginner Level in HTML | ServSafe Certified

## Appendix L

### Candidate C Resume – MBA

#### Candidate C

Oberlin, OH 44074 | [candidateC@applevalley.edu](mailto:candidateC@applevalley.edu) | xxx-xxx-xxxx

#### EDUCATION

**Apple Valley University, School of Business** **Oberlin, OH**  
 Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) – Business Management  
 Minor: Fashion Marketing May 2020  
**GPA: 3.50 | Honors: Dean's List**  
**GMAT: 628**

#### UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

Chinese Anime in Simulation Games: A Study December 2018  
 • Examination of the diffusion of Chinese Anime in Western Gaming

#### EXPERIENCE

**Central Campus Cafe, Apple Valley University** **Oberlin, OH**  
 A late-night campus café serving snacks, beverages and selective cooked foods generating over \$300k annually.  
 General Manager December 2018 - Present  
 • Lead an entirely student-run business of fifteen employees.  
 • Manage the staffing and scheduling of workforce to ensure smooth cafe operations.  
 • Orchestrate the payroll process to provide compensation to all employees.  
 • Responsible for all employment processes, including hiring and firing of employees.  
 • Assist CFO in overview of all financial transactions.

#### Laffey Real Estate

**Amherst, OH**  
 CRM Campaign Intern September 2018- December 2018  
 • Registered open houses on Zillow on a weekly basis and updated the firm's backend client database.  
 • Assisted agents at Open Houses and showings each week and showed properties directly to potential buyers.  
 • Performed daily clerical duties including scheduling appointments and organizing confidential files creating easy information access for partners.  
 • Promoted sales of properties through advertisements, and multiple listing services.

#### Northwestern Mutual

**Avon, OH**  
 Internship January 2018 - August 2018  
 • Aided financial representatives with daily tasks throughout the workweek.  
 • Drafted Referral Letters to be used in prospecting potential clients.  
 • Delivered excellent and efficient customer service to the company's financial clients.

#### LEADERSHIP

**Apple Valley University Business Association**, Secretary April 2017 - Present  
**Apple Valley University Resident Hall Association**, Section Representative September 2016 – Present  
**Apple Valley University POSE – Fashion Club**, Vice President September 2017 – May 2019

#### ACTIVITIES / VOLUNTEER WORK

Apple Valley Book Club, Member | Nature Club, Member | ASPIRE Volunteer | Cancer Walk

#### SKILLS

**Technical:** MS Office: (Word, PowerPoint, Excel) | Beginner Level in Photoshop and InDesign | ServSafe Certified

**Appendix M****Response Form – MBA****MBA Applicant Evaluation Study**

Please read the admissions criteria and evaluate the three candidates for the MBA program.  
Please rank order your preferred candidates on the table below.

**Reviewer's Demographic Information (Optional):**

Age:	
Gender:	
Highest level of education:	
Position title:	

**Candidate rating:**

<b>1.</b>	
<b>2.</b>	
<b>3.</b>	

Additional comments (Optional):