

Public Abstract

First Name:Edna

Middle Name:May

Last Name:Grover-Bisker

Adviser's First Name:Bradley

Adviser's Last Name:Curs

Co-Adviser's First Name:

Co-Adviser's Last Name:

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Title:TEXTBOOK PAGES TO SALARY WAGES:  
AN EXAMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN  
COOPERATIVE EDUCATION AND EARLY CAREER OUTCOMES

This study examined the relationship between cooperative education and the early career outcomes of post-secondary graduates at Missouri University of Science and Technology, a science and technological research university in the Midwest. The study's primary purpose was to provide administrators and university leadership with a quantitative evaluation of the university's co-op program to determine the program's effectiveness regarding position attainment and starting salary of its students upon graduation. The study used pre-existing data of graduates from 2008 to 2010 including a student's major, class level, degree, graduation date, GPA, citizenship, gender, and ethnicity/race, as well as job attainment and full-time annual starting salary at graduation. In addition to descriptive statistics, analysis of variance (ANOVA), logistic regression, and multiple regression analysis were used to investigate the relationships between cooperative education and early career outcomes.

Results from the investigation showed significant differences in the demographics, personal characteristics, job attainment, and initial earnings between co-op and non-co-op participants. Following the study, the researcher provided university administrators with the results which are being used to provide a measurable methodological approach to program review and base line evaluation.