

Showcasing your Work+ Collective Goals & Accomplishments

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DATE	May 2024
RESOURCE	Guide

As you continue to put time, energy, and dedication towards improving your student employee and working learner experience in your institution's specific and unique ways, it may be challenging to best showcase this hard work for others to understand and support. When considering how showcasing your work acts as a catalyst for gaining buy in, funding, support, and awareness of your efforts, it can feel stressful to find the perfect way to do so. As you have learned throughout your involvement in the Work+ Collective, the value of storytelling is vast and you can be innovative and intentional without recreating an entire process. Try aligning your showcasing and storytelling with efforts already occurring within your institution!

This article will highlight a few of those potential opportunities such as: poster presentations, articles or write ups from news outlets or newsletters, end of year reporting or presenting (division or campus-wide), and leveraging your websites and social media platforms.

Poster Presentations

Many institutions provide platforms for poster presentations. This may include a campus-wide poster fair or research symposium. Though this is often carried out for students specifically, it is also a wonderful way for faculty and staff to cross share their accomplishments and active projects. If this isn't something your institution already does, introduce it as an idea! A showcase of student success efforts can be beneficial for all involved and highlight the value of diverse and wide ranging research driving our work.

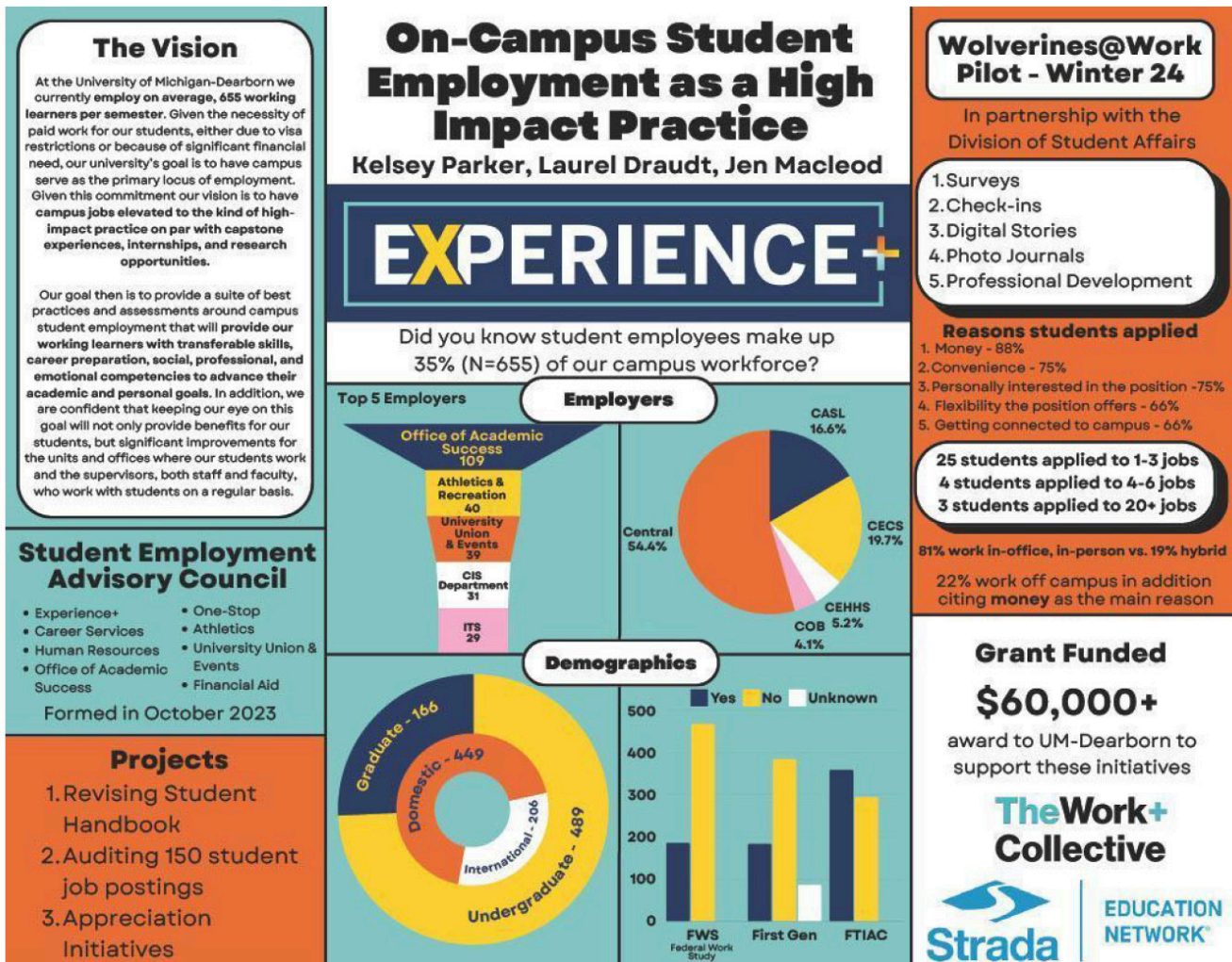
When creating a poster presentation about your Work+ involvement, goals, or accomplishments, consider the following:

- **Choose your story wisely:** though your Work+ efforts are complex and multifaceted, your poster will be highlighting a main focus with tangible deliverables and objectives. Don't be afraid to break up your bigger picture and include only a smaller piece for the sake of your poster.
- **Think about your audience:** who will be viewing your poster and what information may they find interesting, beneficial, or insightful?
- **Keep it concise:** limit your poster to a few main ideas and avoid too many words or intense blocks of text.
- **Use a format with flow:** a poster presentation typically includes an introduction, methods, results, conclusion, and recommendation. How you carry this out can be unique and interesting but always consider your flow and don't be afraid to think outside of the typical scientific poster style.

- **Make it readable:** use a large and descriptive title that can be read from a distance and ensure that all text, images, and graphics are readable from at least 5-8 feet away. It is helpful to use headings, bullets, and numbering techniques to break up your text and be sure to have important points stand out with frames, arrows, colors, lines, or boxes.
- **Use visuals:** include high-resolution photos, graphs, and charts to break up large sections of text and make your poster more interesting. Place images near or below the related text for best user understanding.
- **Use color and fonts effectively and intentionally:** choose a relevant or branded color scheme that benefits the eye and flow while ensuring your fonts create a hierarchy of information. That being your largest font is your title, and your next largest fonts are header titles with your body of text being smaller and captions being smallest.
- **Keep it organized:** arrange your poster components to read from left to right and from top to bottom, avoiding clutter and unnecessary filler.

Here are examples of poster presentations created and showcased by two Work+ Collective members, University of Michigan – Dearborn and Northern Arizona University:

University of Michigan – Dearborn



From Feedback to Action: Reimagining the NAU Working Learner Experience



Karlee Moxley & Daisy Perez
NAU Career Development - Student Employment



Overview

Student Employment partnered with ASU Work+ in 2022, emphasizing campus employment's impact on students. This collaboration bridges the skill articulation gap for graduates (NACE, 2023) by establishing best practices for skill development and articulation. Through the implementation of design thinking, expanding collaborations, and using data to drive decision making, NAU Work+ focuses on training NAU's working learners and supervisors to enhance their career readiness competencies. This reimagining of the working learner experience equips students to intentionally reflect on and articulate skills developed during their student employment.

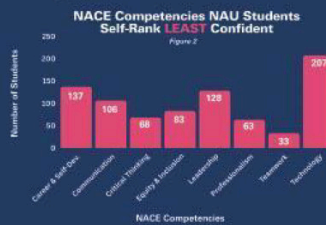
Objectives & Approach

The cornerstone objective was to *understand the NAU working learner experience*, with consideration to both the the working learner *and* the supervisor. This influenced the approach and emphasized the importance of quantitative *and* qualitative measures gathered through:

- **Design Thinking:** fostering innovative problem solving through disruptive brainstorming and idea generation within a Design Sprint
- **Emotional Interviewing:** storytelling through a human-centered lens to understand user's concerns, motivations, and experiences
- **Surveys:** career specific and localized assessment (in addition to current NAU-wide surveys)



Key Findings



Survey
Student Employment used NACE's top eight career competencies (NACE Job Outlook Report, 2023) and with use of SLO and the Sophomore Survey data, Student Employment captured additional NAU-specific student data in a survey available to all AY24 career fair attendees. Students report they are *least* confident in **Technology**, **Career & Self-Development**, and **Leadership** (Figure 2).

Design Sprint
Top 3 barriers to success for working learners uncovered utilizing emotional interviewing:
1. Insufficient articulation of the value of skills learned
2. Inadequate training and development
3. Ineffective hiring process/experience

Conclusion

The value of career competency development *and* skill articulation gained through experiential opportunities is a qualitative and quantitative data-backed priority of Student Employment.

Continuing Efforts & Next Steps:

- Introduction of Work+ at NAU
- Work+ Collective affiliation offering resource sharing and benchmarking to address barriers uncovered in the Discovery Sprint
- A 'redesign' of Student Employment incorporating **training, learning, and development** for working learners and their supervisors
 - Tailored trainings and design thinking influenced workshops (Figure 1)
 - Summer 2024 supervisor training pilot with HR Learning and Development
 - Ongoing Student Employment consultation model for localized support

Contact Info
StudentEmployment@nau.edu



Articles or Write Ups from News Outlets or Letters

In true storytelling form, another great way to share your work is through articles or write ups with your institutional, local, or regional news outlets or even a newsletter your department or university puts out. This provides a wonderful opportunity to highlight your entire story arc, from your introduction and initial involvement with the Work+ Collective, through your own discovery sprints, your ongoing connection to and relationship building with the other Collective institutions, and what you are doing specifically for *your* students and working learners. This is also an avenue for you to put a callout for support! Do you need student employee supervisors for a pilot program? Tailor your article to them or even have it sent through a listserv. Want student feedback on their experience as a working learner? Share the article in a student facing, institutional newsletter or eMagazine! Need financial support? Consider sharing your story and showcasing your work through an alumni-facing magazine or newsletter. This can be a powerful and all around lower energy required opportunity to reach wide-spread audiences that are as unique as you'd like or as specific as you need.

Check out how Virginia Commonwealth University leveraged a write up all about their involvement in the Work+ Collective written in the VCU News: [VCU joining national Work+ Collective to enhance on-campus student employment](#)

End of Year Reporting and Presenting

Working in higher education, we know our field utilizes a cyclical calendar that is kicked off each year with intentional goal setting, carried out by assessment and hard work, and culminates in sharing a report at the end of the academic or fiscal year. With this pattern in mind, highlighting the work you are doing for your working learners, supervisors, and community through qualitative and quantitative measures is an easy (enough) win! The added benefit to end of year reporting and presenting is it typically is sent up and out, meaning leadership would have direct eyes on the wonderful work being done to reimagine, reinvigorate, and reenergize job-based experiential learning through your efforts. Since this particular suggestion will likely include first effectively showcasing to your manager or supervisor to then be showcased in your departmental report, here are some tips on how to ensure you are confident in marketing your work, which may be things you are already doing and considering as active members of the Work+ Collective or some new tactics you can adopt:

- Align your work with the goals of your role, department, division, and institution.
- Document your work, process, progress, outcomes, setbacks, and accomplishments throughout the entire year.
- Share your work regularly and proactively – don't wait for the end of year report to be the very first time you share about your efforts, but rather, the time you highlight the work.
- Showcase your impact and the value of the work being done as data driven by sharing a variety of qualitative and quantitative measures.
- Use this opportunity to seek feedback and improvement for the next year from both your manager or supervisor and those who will see this report.
 - This is particularly helpful if the end of year report is in a presentation format with audience members and a fruitful chance for real time feedback.
- Use the end of year report as a way to ask for what you want in the new year by sharing what you want or need in order to continue, alter, pivot, or completely change the direction of your current work moving forward.

Leveraging Your Websites and Social Media

In the day and age we live in, websites are crucial for transparency in goals and information and access to resources (hence, the benefits of our [Work+ Collective website](#)). Consider leveraging your current website to introduce your strategies and continually showcase your work. This could include embedding a video all about Work+ like [this one](#) or linking to a resource about design thinking like [this one](#) to share how you are reimagining the student employee experience using that method and framework. Sharing your goals publicly to audiences that may include students you are serving, faculty and staff you are working with, families who are supporting their student's educational journey and see it as a pathway to career opportunities and economic mobility, and those with decision making power at your institution provides you accountability as well as a wide net of interest, buy in, and support.

Depending on the audience you are specifically looking to showcase your involvement and accomplishments to, social media can be a great way to get the word out! Consider resharing the various articles and videos written about the Work+ Collective (like this one directly from Strada all about [Student Work Reimagined](#)) on your department's or your own LinkedIn profiles. Incorporate a "Working Learner Wednesday" post, story, or reel weekly to TikTok or Instagram where you share about career competencies, highlight a working learner, or share about the value of working on campus. Maybe it's a "Find a Job Friday" or "Make Money Monday" that catches their attention and provides you an opportunity to share about the opportunities available, the resources offered, and the added benefit to working while attending college. Take advantage of the National Student Employment Association's (NSEA) annual Student Employee Appreciation Week by dovetailing working learner awards, recognition, or launching extra resources or introducing a new initiative during that time.

Whatever you choose to do, know that showcasing your work can be as simple as leveraging energies already spent and simply introducing intentionality around incorporating Work+ in your everyday conversations, goals, and tasks. The more you talk about it, the more people will begin to ask!