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at Colleges and Universities

ABSTRACT

This study examines career planning programs and career services offices at colleges and universities in the United States as viewed by chief student affairs officers. Findings from an earlier study of career services offices (CSOs) in 1979 were compared to the current findings. Additionally, new areas of research were examined in order to provide benchmark data for future studies. Several affirming findings emerge from the study informing higher education, student affairs and career services professionals about the effectiveness and value of college and university career services offices.

When the vocational guidance movement in the United States emerged in the early 1900s, the development of career centers was one of its most tangible and lasting accomplishments. The roots of the movement sprang from the social reform and humanitarian activities in urban areas in the Midwestern and Eastern United States. Career centers were often located in settlement houses, which provided a variety of social services including vocational guidance to immigrants and others. Career counseling and an array of other career interventions now present in colleges and universities developed in the context of these offices. A distinguishing feature was, and remains, the provision of resources and information about occupations, jobs, training, financial resources, employability, and career planning. In this article, we will briefly review some of the characteristics of career centers in the early 1900s, those existing in colleges or universities in the 1970s (Reardon, Zunker, & Dyal, 1979), and the results of a recent survey of current career services offices and programs.

EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF CAREER CENTERS

Frank Parsons is generally regarded as the father of vocational guidance and created one of the first career centers, the Vocations Bureau. This career center was located in the Civic Service House, a Boston settlement house that provided a variety of social and civic services to citizens, especially Italian immigrants. Parsons formulated a technique for providing career counseling in this context, which was described in Choosing a Vocation (Parsons, 1909).

With the passage of time, career centers moved from community settings such as settlement houses and into colleges, universities, and high schools, and less often into business organizations, governmental, and social service agencies. The Vocations Bureau, for example, found a new home at Harvard University (Maverick, 1926). In educational settings, career

centers were typically housed in either a counseling center or a career planning and/or placement center. More recently, career centers are likely to be located in a specialized office (e.g., career services office or CSO) and provide the resources used by staff and clients to solve career problems and make career decisions.

Most contemporary career centers are unique on college campuses because they integrate the academic and the corporate worlds (Herr, Raymond, & Garis, 1993). These centers have moved from narrow job placement offices to those providing comprehensive services reflective of the career development process. The books by Herr et al. and Niles and Harris-Bowlsbey (2005) are two of the most comprehensive sources of information on career centers, in our opinion.

CONTEMPORARY CAREER SERVICES OFFICES (CSOS)

A contemporary career center may be described as a physical facility providing for the location of materials, resources, and personnel delivering an array of career services to individuals and groups. A career center is typically located in a separate office, or a counseling center, human resources office, library, or training and development unit of an organization. It is an administrative unit of an organization, e.g., school, business, agency, that employs staff who deliver a variety of career programs and services. In postsecondary settings, comprehensive career centers provide career counseling and assessments, experiential career opportunities such as internships and cooperative education, educational and career information, job hunting assistance, and employment information (Vernick, Garis, & Reardon, 2000). They may also provide services to employers seeking to fill their hiring needs. Less comprehensive career centers may provide only some of these services. A career center would almost always include a

career library or information room. In this article, we use the term "Career Services Office" (CSO) to designate a generic administrative unit providing career assistance.

The resources in a contemporary career services office can include inventories and tests, card sorts, books, descriptions of occupations or educational and training institutions, CDs and DVDs, pamphlets, clippings, web pages, instructional modules, multimedia resources, training materials, magazines, take-away (free handouts) materials, and procedures for locating information or preparing for a job search campaign, e.g., resume writing and interviewing. Career counseling or advising is another resource that might be available in a career services office, and professional career counselors or career paraprofessionals (sometimes called career development facilitators) could provide the service. The intended outcome of using career resources, including career counseling, is client or customer learning and a change in career-related behavior.

Reardon et al. (1979) surveyed a 20% sample (N = 458) of chief student affairs officers in higher education institutions in the 50 states and territories drawn from The Education Directory, 1975-1976 (1976). They reported responses from 302 responding institutions (66% response rate) with 152 (51%) reporting a separately budgeted office called a career center that had been created in the past three years (N = 67). Respondents indicated existence of a centralized program of services (83%), typically under the placement office (34%) or dean of student affairs (21%), but other reporting lines (45%) included the counseling center, academic deans, or registrar. Career centers in smaller schools were most often under a dean of academic or student affairs and in middle-sized and larger schools it was the placement office or counseling center. Other data revealed the pattern of career programs and services, staffing patterns, and faculty perceptions of career center activities. Regarding the creation of a separately budgeted career

center, 54% of the respondents supported this and 46% did not; 33% indicated some group or committee was presently studying the scope and function of career education at their institution.

National surveys of career center programs and activities have been infrequently reported in the literature. The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), an association of postsecondary institutions and the recruiting and human resource offices of organizations, has reported periodic benchmarking surveys of the state-of-the-art in colleges and universities which are highlighted below.Some findings from these surveys are relevant to the study reported by Reardon et al. (1979) and the current study.

In 1998, a survey was mailed to all NACE (1999) college members and 578 (34%) useable responses were obtained. Respondents were equally representative of public and private institutions and 58% were from schools with 2,500 or fewer students. On average, career services offices (CSOs) received 90% of their budget from the institution, and 59% reported receiving 100%. The survey provided additional details on staffing patterns and the range of student services provided. For example, NACE reported staffing numbers for 12 full- and part-time positions in the CSO, e.g., associate director and assistant directors; career counselor; career librarian; information technologist; coordinators for internship/cooperative education, job development, placement, and recruitment; graduate assistant; student worker; and secretary or clerical.

Nagel and Bohovich (2000) examined CSO office structure, range of services, and technology applications in a survey of 1,747 NACE members and obtained 927 (53%) useable responses. Most respondents (90%) reported a centralized service, i.e., they were the sole provider of career services at their institution, and 10 % were in decentralized offices. They indicated that 65% were in student affairs, 14% in academic affairs, 5% under the president's

office, and 3% under enrollment management. The largest percentage of respondents (39%) indicated that their office was known as "career services," while "career development" was the second most common name. Nagel and Bohovich (2000) summarized survey results from 1975, 1981, 1987, 1991, 1993, 1997, and 2000 regarding 20 of the most common career center services offered.

A later NACE survey (Nagle, 2001) examined facilities, financing, and staffing in a mailed survey to 1,734 members which produced 654 (38%) usable responses. As in earlier surveys, 44% rated their location as "very accessible," and 90% of the operating budget was provided by their institution. Respondents indicated that the biggest challenges included engaging students before their senior year and dealing with dwindling resources.

The most recent survey, 2009-10 Career Services Benchmarking Survey for Four-Year Colleges and Universities (NACE, 2010), was sent to 1,389 member schools and 557 (40%) useable responses were obtained. Almost 88% had primarily centralized offices with little difference according to institution size. About 63% were in student affairs while 22% were in academic affairs and 15% were in other administrative arrangements. About 45% had the name "career services," slightly more than in 2000, while 17% used "career center" and 13% used "career development."

The NACE respondents indicated that career counseling by appointment had declined in the past year, but drop-in services had increased by 25%. Smaller schools were more likely to provide academic counseling through career services than larger schools, but larger schools were more likely to provide a for-credit career course. Results showed that 55% of schools with 20,000+ students offered such courses, but schools with fewer than 10,000 rarely did. Overall, 32% of respondents offered a credit career course. In summary, the benchmarking survey of

NACE schools revealed an increased demand for services to students and alumni, but this work was accomplished with fewer resources. The largest decreases in resources occurred in large public sector schools such as state land grant colleges.

The purpose of the present study was to replicate the earlier survey by Reardon et al. (1979) in order to learn more about changes in career services in colleges and universities in the past 30 years as viewed by chief student affairs officers (CSAOs). We anticipated that our findings would reveal changes in the delivery of career services over time and we wanted to explore several new topics not examined in the 1979 study or the NACE surveys.

METHODS

In this section we describe the sample used in this study, the operational definitions, the survey instrument, and the procedures for data collection and analysis.

Sample

We used Choices$^®$ Planner (Bridges Transitions, 2005), a computer-based career information delivery system (CIDS), to identify higher education institutions in the U.S. because the Education Directory used earlier by Reardon et al. (1979) is no longer published. The schools databases in Choices$^®$ Planner contain information on over 7,000 post-secondary institutions in the United States. This information comes from the college and university database of Peterson's, a Nelnet company (http://www.petersons.com/). Choices$^®$ school reports feature a variety of contact information, including links to websites, phone numbers, and mailing addresses that persons can use to obtain more information about postsecondary institutions.

Peterson's conducts an annual survey to ensure that the information about undergraduate colleges and universities is current and accurate. The survey findings are published annually as *Peterson's Four Year Colleges, 2008* (Oram, 2007). These data are also used in Choices$^®$

Planner. In addition, state versions of Choices® contain educational data obtained directly from state agencies. This information is processed, analyzed and reorganized by the Bridges staff and included in Choices®.

The population for this study was determined by selecting all U.S. institutions offering bachelor's degrees using the Choices® Planner database, www.bridges.com. A total of 2,482 colleges and universities were listed, and a sample size of approximately 14% (N = 353) was identified using a generated table of random numbers from the website www.graphpad.com/quickcalcs. Every other number in the listing was used to generate a random sample of 353 institutions for the study. Duplicates were eliminated and replaced using more numbers from the table. As in the earlier study (Reardon et al., 1979), schools based outside the United States and seminaries were removed from the list, reducing the sample to 315. Once the final sample was determined, the names and e-mail addresses of the chief of student affairs officers (CSAOs) for each institution were obtained.

Operational Definitions

We created the following operational definitions regarding institutional size: (a) very small institutions, 1-2,500 students; (b) small institutions, 2,501-5,000 students; (c) medium institutions, 5,001-10,000 students; (d) large institutions, 10,001-20,000 students; and (e) very large institutions, more than 20,000 students.

Survey Instrument

The questionnaire used in the current study was a modified version of the 1979 survey mailed by Reardon et al. (1979). We discussed the changes in campus career services over the past 30 years, amended the survey questions as needed, and then sent the survey instrument to 10 career services professionals for their comments about the clarity of the items. The final survey

consisted of 22 questions including items addressing the size of the career services office (CSO), centralized versus decentralized office, SWOT analyses of the CSO, and services provided by the CSO. Except for six questions with open-ended responses, all questions were in the format of categorical responses.

Procedure

In early 2008, surveys were administered to the 315 sample participants using the online survey system, Survey Monkey© (http://www.surveymonkey.com/). Participants received an e-mail including a brief cover letter describing the study and a hyper link to the online survey. Readers were informed in the cover letter that by entering the survey they were consenting to participate in the study. There were no responses from 238 recipients. A variety of problems were encountered in this phase of the study, including staff changes at institutions, incorrect e-mail addresses, and instruments that were screened out by e-mail security systems. Furthermore, eight opted out of the survey, and 41 e-mails bounced back. Three follow-up e-mails were sent to participants, but after six months we had received only 77 responses (10 partial and 67 complete) from survey recipients. Follow-up messages were sent to the 10 respondents submitting partial responses to complete the survey.

Given these disappointing returns with the electronic survey, and in order to increase the number of respondents, we mailed a paper survey in the fall of 2008 with a self-addressed return envelope to 223 chief student affairs officers who had not responded electronically. As a result, we obtained 21 mail-in surveys which were manually entered into the Survey Monkey© system. The results are based on this final total of 98 completed survey responses, a response rate of 31%.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Size of Institution

Institutional size varied among the respondents to the survey. Nearly half (49%) of respondents described their institutional student population as up to 2,500 (very small). Another 19% reported 2,501 to 5,000 students (small) at their campus. Notably, most respondents to the 1998 NACE survey (58%) were also from very small institutions. The number of respondents from institutions with 5,001 to 10,000 students (medium) and 10,001 to 20,000 students (large) were equal at 10% each. Finally, 12% of respondents were from institutions larger than 20,000 students (very large).

The current study and the 1998 NACE study differed from the original 1979 study with respect to institutional size in that a different scale for the size of institutions was used. However, the greatest percentages (about 50%) of respondents were from institutions considered to be the smallest across the three studies.

Separately Budgeted Office

When CSAO respondents were asked whether their campus had a career services office (CSO) that could be described as a separately budgeted office within the university structure, the overwhelming responses (84%) were in the affirmative. In comparison, Reardon et al. (1979) reported only 51% of institutions operated such a CSO and NACE (1998) reported 59%. These data suggest that over the course of 30 years, institutions have become even more aware of the value of the CSO and the percentage with fiscal oversight has increased by 35% in the past twenty years. Additional data from the current study revealed respondents from very small institutions compared to other institutions were 2 to 3 times more likely to report the existence of a budgeted CSO; however, respondents reporting no separately budgeted CSO were also most likely to be from very small institutions.

Centralized vs. Decentralized CSO

Survey respondents were asked about the organizational structure for the operation of the CSO at their institution. Respondents could rate their institution as a centralized (main center on campus), decentralized (more than one location), or both centralized and decentralized (a combination of the two) operations. The overwhelming majority of respondents (86%) reported one centralized CSO. None of the respondents reported decentralization of CSO services and 14% reported a combination of CSO services offered at their campuses. Aggregated by student population, the results were generally consistent across groups except that very large institutions reported similar percentages in both centralized CSO (56%) and combination of CSO services (44%). Two written comments by respondents from large institutions indicated one CSO reported to student affairs and the other reported to the college of business.

Insert Table 1 CSO management structure about here

Table 1 shows a comparison of the reported management structure of CSOs by study year. In 1979, most (83%) of respondents reported their campus having a centralized CSO operation. Similarly, in 2000, a slight increase was noted (90%) and slight decreases by 2010 (87% and 86%). Overall, studies over the 30 year span indicate nearly the same number of institutions described their CSO operation as centralized. From 1979 to 2010, the percentage of respondents reporting a decentralized CSO declined sharply from 12% in 1979 to zero by 2010.

Insert Table 2 CSO admin. control by year about here

Administrative oversight of CSOs has changed over time as the role and function of college and university departments and divisions has changed. This may have also been affected by the perceptions of host institutions and stakeholders' role of CSOs. Table 2 shows a comparison of administrative control of CSOs by study year. The 1979 study revealed 34% of respondents' CSOs reported to the placement office. Interestingly, no data for this administrative unit was captured in the NACE 2000 or 2010 studies, but one percent of respondents in the current study reported oversight by a placement office. A steady increase—now more than two-thirds—in respondents (21% in 1979, 65% in 2000, 63% and 71%, respectively in 2010) reported administrative control by student affairs. While 13% of respondent CSOs reported to the counseling center in 1979, no respondents in the current study indicated this; and, the 2000 and 2010 NACE studies did not report this information. The 1979 study did not indicate that CSOs reported to an academic dean; however, the 2000 and 2010 NACE studies, as well as the current study, reported administrative control of CSOs by an academic dean (14% in 2000; 22% and 11% in 2010 respectively). Table 2 shows that a number of respondents indicated a variety of reporting lines for CSOs that did not fit into the categories provided. It should be noted that 15% of respondents to the 2010 NACE study did not indicate any particular administrative control.

Staffing Patterns

Table 3 provides an analysis of CSO staffing patterns as reported by CSAO survey respondents. Shown in the table are types or categories of staffing which may be found in any college or university administrative unit. For the purpose of this study, we deemed it necessary to separate full- and part-time staff as well as professional, support, paraprofessional, students, faculty, and other types of staff. Respondents were asked to note the number of staff for each category found in their CSO, and the average number of responses by institutional type was

obtained for each category. In order to simplify the analysis, very small and small institutions were averaged together as were large and very large institutions. Medium-sized institutions were not combined with any other institutional type.

The data in Table 3 showed increases in staffing at larger institutions among full-time professional and support staff, as well as among graduate and undergraduate students. These increases were expected. In fact, we expected minimal increases in all staffing categories, but that did not occur. No schools reported faculty as staff.

Data by Reardon et al. (1979) on staffing patterns was reported differently than in Table 3. Reardon et al. simply identified the percentage of institutions reporting staff in the following categories: full-time professional staff (78%), part-time professional staff (25%), paraprofessional staff (18%), graduate students (28%), undergraduate students (29%), faculty (15%), and volunteers (13%). Differences in data collection and analysis between the two studies make comparisons difficult. However, Reardon et al. indicated that a large percentage (78%) of institutions employed full-time professional staff which is similar to the current study insomuch as the larger institutions employed the highest average number of staff (14) from this category. Reardon et al. also reported that large schools made extensive use of paraprofessionals and graduate students, but data from the current study suggest CSOs no longer use these categories of staff "extensively" as in 1979.

Insert Table 3 staffing patterns about here

Endowed/Named CSO

The current study revealed a very limited existence of endowed or named CSOs with only five chief student affairs officers (6%) reporting such an arrangement. Three of the five reported their CSO was privately endowed, while one reported a corporately endowed CSO, and one additional respondent reported a CSO that was jointly endowed with at least one other office or service on campus. Respondents were asked if they, as chief student affairs officers, favored the creation of an endowed or named CSO at their institution. Reardon et al. (1979) reported that 54% of respondents approved of this while 46% did not favor the idea of an endowed or named CSO. Comparatively, 56% of respondents in the current study indicated they would approve of such a CSO, while 44% of respondents indicated they would not be in favor of such a CSO. Respondents from larger institutions were more likely to favor funding designated for a named CSO while respondents from the smallest institutions did not. Specifically, respondents from very large institutions were in favor (78%) while those from very small institutions were not (38%). In fact, respondents from very small institutions were the only group who were overwhelmingly not in favor of the creation of endowed or named CSO operation at their institution. Respondents from the other categories of institutional groups were overwhelmingly in favor of the creation of an endowed or named CSO at their institution.

Study of Need/Scope/Function of CSO

We asked CSAOs if a group or committee at their institution was currently studying the need, scope, or function of career services. We found the majority of respondents (64%) were not aware of a group or committee at their institutions studying this matter. These findings were consistent across institutions of all sizes. In 1979, Reardon et al. reported 66% of respondents were not aware of a group or committee studying the need, scope, or function of their CSO, which is consistent with the current findings.

Respondents at institutions where such a group existed were given the opportunity to share the "name" of the group. While there was no consistency in the titles of the groups, terms such as "committee," "assessment," "career services," "team," "student success," and "student development" were reported most often in the 33 written responses. Nearly one-half (45%) of the usable written responses were provided by respondents from very small institutions, with an additional 24% of the usable written responses provided by respondents from small institutions.

In addition, respondents were invited to share the purpose or charge of the group studying career services. While there was no consistent statement about this, terms such as "review," "assist," "develop," "advise," and "recommend," were used most often in the 23 written responses. As before, most (61%) of the usable written responses were provided by respondents from very small institutions, and 34% were provided by respondents from small institutions.

Perceived Level of Faculty Acceptance

Respondents were asked their perception of the level of faculty acceptance of the CSO on their campuses. Table 4 shows that 80% reported faculty acceptance was very positive or positive, whereas only 63% reported this in 1979. Further inspection of this table shows other differences in levels of faculty support from 1979 to the current study. Table 4 revealed significant differences over time in the perceived level of faculty acceptance of CSOs by chief student affairs officers (CSAO). The significant shift of perceived faculty acceptance of CSOs from adequate to very positive could indicate more positive faculty interaction with the functions of CSOs over time and/or increased CSAO awareness of such interaction over the 30 year period.

Insert Table 4 differences in levels of acceptance about here

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Perception of CSO Effectiveness

CSAO respondents were asked to rate their CSO with respect to services it provided

students. Overall, respondents rated their CSO services to students as very satisfactory (50%),

satisfactory (36%), adequate (9%), not satisfactory (4%). Differences in these ratings varied with

respect to institutional size. Respondents from medium and very large institutions fully agreed

(100%) that their respective CSO services to students were satisfactory or very satisfactory. In

contrast, only about 70% of very small and small institutions gave their respective CSOs ratings

of satisfactory and very satisfactory. The previous studies did not report this information.

SWOT Analysis of CSO Services by Respondents

Survey respondents were asked their opinion of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities,

and threats (SWOTs) of their CSO. Narrative responses were gathered and naturalistic inquiry

methods of data analyses were employed to determine if themes emerged from the data.

Current survey respondents were united in their observations of CSO staff and several

themes emerged. The strongest theme in the responses to CSO "strengths" suggested CSO staff

were dedicated, showed a high degree of professionalism and care for students, and that

emphasis in their work was focused on student development and needs. While strong, dedicated

staff was considered a CSO strength, one major "weakness" emerged from the data—lack of

adequate staff to meet student needs. Staffing, needs along with dwindling resources to

administer an effective CSO, emerged as the two greatest weaknesses by respondents.

Respondents suggested "opportunities" for CSOs to increase collaboration and outreach

with a variety of constituents, especially faculty, campus staff, and students, and employers.

Finally, aligned with themes that emerged in response to "weaknesses," respondents identified

several "threats" to successful administration of CSOs including university budget cuts, national

economic conditions, disengaged students, and lack of faculty support.

Emerging themes in the SWOT analysis suggest CSOs would operate at their fullest

potential with outstanding, dedicated personnel if resources were at the optimal level. Maximum

fiscal and human resources would, in turn, allow for increased outreach, collaboration, and

service to students, faculty, staff, and employers.

Frequency of Career Planning and Services in Relation to School Size

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Insert Table 5 frequency of service programs about here

A listing of 40 programs and services that might be offered in a CSO was compiled by

the researchers. Respondents were asked to note any and all programs and services their CSO

offered from the list provided. Table 5 shows the list of selected programs and services provided

by CSOs. Of the 40 programs and services, just over half (N = 22) were offered by at least 25%

but no more than 75% of CSOs. One asterisk (*) in the table designates the eight programs and

services which are provided by fewer than 25% of the institutions. Academic advising,

assertiveness training, faculty training, high school visitation, job simulation, mini career course,

and study skills are programs that could have either moved to another office in the school, been

removed from the CSO, or (3) never provided.

Two asterisks (**) in Table 5 designate 10 programs and services provided by CSOs at

most (75% or more) institutions. Programs and services such as career counseling/advising,

career testing/assessment, classroom presentations, individual career information, interview

preparation, job fairs, mock interviews, online job bank, on-campus recruiting, and resume

preparation were reported as offered by CSOs. Notably, we expected this grouping of programs and services to be provided by CSOs at 100% of institutions. It is possible that the CSAO respondents were unaware of all of the programs and services provided by their institution's CSO.

Graduate Follow-Up

When CSAO respondents in the current study were asked if they conducted graduating student or exit surveys, 82% responded affirmatively. Of the respondents who collected graduating student data, 39% were from very small institutions, 25% were from small institutions, 15% were from medium institutions, 11% were from large institutions, and 10% from very large institutions. These data indicate that larger institutions are less likely to collect graduating student data than smaller institutions. It could also be that respondents from larger institutions were not aware of these data being collected by other offices on the campus, e.g., follow-up studies of graduates by academic departments. Open-ended responses varied and indicated that the question on the current study survey form may have been unclear given the variety of responses obtained. Responses indicated that institutions used a variety of survey methods including online, paper/mail, in-person, video, and telephone to collect follow-up data. In addition, administrative oversight for collecting the data involved several different areas, e.g., institutional research, career services, registrar/records office, and university system office.

Data from graduating student surveys were used by respondents' institutions in various ways. The most popular use was for evaluation and/or improvement of services and for future planning of academic and student services programs. Marketing and publications/reports to a wider community of constituents were less frequent uses.

Peer Reviewed Activity

CSAO respondents were asked if CSO staff had participated in peer reviewed research and/or workshop presentations in the past three years, and 80% reported that the staff had not. These findings may indicate that CSO personnel are not required or funded to participate in professional research or workshop activity, but it may also reveal that such activity should be increased for professional and/or paraprofessional positions in order to enhance the development and reputation of CSO staff and their activities.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This study examined some of the changes in CSO delivery systems as reported by chief student affairs officers (CSAOs) and compared them to findings benchmarked in other studies, especially a study by Reardon et al. (1979). The current study also identified several new areas of CSO administration that had not been researched previously.

Limitations to the present study included the low response rate and the time extended process of data collection. Difficulties in the use of Survey Monkey$^{©}$ were unexpected. However, there is some indication that the average online response rate of 30% is consistent with our rate of 31% (Division of Instructional Innovation & Assessment, March 8, 2010). Moreover, the NACE studies of CSO directors reported relatively low response rates of 40% (NACE, 2010); 38% (Nagle, 2001); 53% (Nagel & Bohovich, 2000); and 34% (NACE, 1999).

Twelve categories of data were surveyed, analyzed, and reported in this study. Size of institution was a variable used throughout the data analysis. The institutional representation of the current study was very similar to the 1979 study in that most respondents represented smaller institutions. Survey results in 1979, 1998, and the present study reveal that separately budgeted career services offices have increased from 51% to 59% to 84%.

With respect to the management structure of college and university CSOs, the number of institutions offering a centralized operation has remained about the same since 1979, but those offering decentralized CSOs has dropped to zero and those offering both centralized/decentralized operations are now 14% (no previous comparison is available for the combined category). The most notable changes in CSO administrative control involved a shift away from reporting to a placement office (34% in 1979 to 1% in the current study). Similarly, there has been an increase in "student affairs" administrative control from 21% in 1979 to 71% in the current study.

Several new topics were examined in the current study. First, an overwhelming majority (86%) of CSOs are seen as very satisfactory or satisfactory in providing services to students. Second, the current study conducted a SWOT analysis which revealed inadequate fiscal and human resources as major hurdles to CSO effectiveness. An analysis of 40 programs and services that could be provided by CSOs revealed that more than half were provided by the majority of CSOs and that most CSOs are in alignment with each other in terms of offerings. This suggests that a core cluster of services exists for CSOs. The vast majority of institutions reported that CSO staff was not participating in professional or peer reviewed activity.

Several findings emerged from this study. Some of the findings were anticipated while others were not. The most important findings include the following:

- Career services have become established functions in the student affairs division of the institution and the percentages of them is increasing,

- Centralized CSO operations increased while decentralized operations decreased,

- CSO reporting lines directly to student affairs divisions has increased,

- The larger the institution, the more likely upper management is to favor endowed CSOs,

- Agreement seemed to emerge on the number and nature of core services that characterize a college or university career services office,

- Faculty are increasingly supportive of career services on the campus,

- Institutional size is likely to dictate, to some degree, the level and kind of services CSOs offer, and

- Resource allocation, or the lack thereof, effects CSO service operation and delivery.

A century of development in career services offices at colleges and universities across the United States has seen the move from a vocations bureau and job placement center to a more comprehensive career center offering varied programs and staffed by professionals. In order for career services offices and universities to continue to provide effective and efficient career resources and services, colleges and universities must continue to see CSOs as valuable administrative units to students and the institution as a whole. Future research is needed to further investigate the effectiveness and efficiency of CSOs across the nation so that CSO usefulness and value to institutions of higher education can be maintained or increased.

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Table 1

Comparison of CSO Management Structure by Study Year (Nearest Percent)

Management of CSO	1979 Study	2000 NACE Study	2010 NACE Study	2010 Current Study
Centralized	83	90	87	86
Decentralized	12	10	n/a[***]	0
Other/Both	5[*]	n/a[***]	n/a[***]	14[**]

[*]Percentage of respondents who did not respond to the item; a category of "both" was not offered in this study

[**]Percentage of respondents with both centralized and decentralized

[***]No data reported

Table 2

Comparison of Administrative Control of CSO by Study Year (Nearest Percent)

CSO Administrative Location	1979 Study	2000 NACE Study	2010 NACE Study	2010 Current Study
Under placement office	34	n/a	n/a	1
Under student affairs	21	65	63	71
Under counseling center	13	n/a	n/a	0
Under academic dean	n/a	14	22	11
Under other	32[*]	8[**]	15[***]	25[****]

[*]Academic, activities, alumni, and advising
[**]Academic, president, enrollment
[***]No designation of administrative office
[****]Development, 1%; advancement, 1%; activities, 1%; other, 22%

Table 3

Staffing Patterns

Staffing Type	Average Responses by Institutional Type		
	Very Small & Small	Medium	Large & Very Large
FT professional staff	2	11	14
FT support staff	>1	3	6
PT professional staff	>1	2	1
PT support staff	>1	1	0
Paraprofessionals	>1	4	1
Graduate students	>1	2	2
Undergrad. Students	2	5	8
Faculty	0	0	0
Other	>1	0	0

Table 4

Chi Square Table of Significant Differences in Perceived Level of Faculty Acceptance by Chief
Student Affairs Officers

Rating	1979 study data in % (expected)	2010 study data in % (observed)	% Change	$(O-E)^2/E$
Very Positive	21	35	+14	9.3*
Positive	42	45	+3	.21
Adequate	22	12	-10	4.5*
Unsatisfactory	7	4	-3	1.3
Could not rate	8	4	-4	2
Total Chi-square = 20.4*	100	100		

*Significant at the $\alpha = .05$ level

Table 5

Frequency of Career Service Office Programs and Services

Programs and Services	Mean
Least Often Provided	
Assertiveness training*	9.5%
Job simulation*	10.8%
Academic advising*	10.8%
H.S. visitation programs*	13.5%
Study skills*	14.9%
Other*	14.9%
Faculty training*	18.9%
Mini career courses*	20.3%
Most Often Provided	
Online job bank**	75.7%
On-campus recruiting**	77.0%
Career Testing/Assessment**	77.0%
Resume preparation**	86.5%
Classroom presentations**	86.5%
Individual career information**	87.8%
Mock Interviews**	87.8%
Interview preparation**	89.2%
Job Fairs**	90.5%
Career counseling/advising**	91.9%