Transitioning from Academia to the Workplace: Information Literacy Experiences of Business Students

Heather A. Howard  
*Purdue University*, howar198@purdue.edu

Margaret L. Phillips  
*Purdue University*, phill201@purdue.edu

Garrett R. Brewster  
*Purdue University*, gbrewst@pnw.edu

Follow this and additional works at: [https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/lib_fspres](https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/lib_fspres)  
Part of the Information Literacy Commons

**Recommended Citation**  
[https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/lib_fspres/180](https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/lib_fspres/180)

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.
Transitioning from Academia to the Workplace: Information Literacy Experiences of Business Students

Heather Howard, Associate Professor & Business Information Specialist
Margaret Phillips, Associate Professor & Engineering Information Specialist
Garrett Brewster, Undergraduate Business Student & Office of Undergraduate Research (OUR) Scholar

LILAC April 11-12, 2022 Manchester, UK
About Purdue

27 Astronauts

Purdue University
- West Lafayette, IN
- Public research university, founded 1869
- ~50,000 students
- ~200 undergraduate programs; >80 graduate programs
Kranne rt School of Management

Enrollment: 4,040 (2,809 undergraduate, 1,231 graduate)

#30 US News & World Report Overall Best Undergraduate Program 2021

7 undergraduate programs

9 specialized master’s programs

5 MBA program options

3 Ph.D. Programs (Economics, Management, & Organizational Behavior - with multiple options to specialize)
Research Team

Margaret Phillips
Associate Professor
Engineering Librarian

Heather Howard
Associate Professor
Business Librarian

Garrett Brewster
Undergraduate Business Student
OUR Scholar
Scope of Research

◎ Investigate past and present Krannert School of Management students' experiences with information in the workplace
◎ Acquire insight into their information experiences during internships & co-ops
◎ Designed after similar research conducted with engineering co-op students at University of Minnesota in 2010 (Jeffryes & Lafferty, 2012)

Theoretical Framing


Research Questions

RQ1: What types of information tasks do undergraduate business students complete during co-ops and internships?

RQ2: What types of information sources do undergraduate business students use during co-ops and internships? How did they first learn about these sources and what is their perceived difficulty in finding these sources?
Methods

Survey Krannert undergraduate and graduate students that have completed an internship(s) and/or co-op(s) via several mediums:
- Targeted emails
- In-person recruiting in the business library
- LinkedIn

Survey included questions regarding:
- Types of business information searched
- Types of information tasks
- Where students learned search methods

Purdue IRB #2021-1361
Preliminary Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Classification</th>
<th># of Students</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Year</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Student</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumni</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>39</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undergraduate Major</th>
<th># of Students *</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IB and Engineering</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply Chain</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*n > 39 due to students with multiple majors
Preliminary Results

100% of respondents reported having to complete at least one information task in their internship/co-op.
Preliminary Results

Types of Information Sources Required to Find

- Company Information: 77%
- Industry standards: 38%
- Articles: 36%
- Market and industry research reports: 33%
- Laws and regulations: 33%
- Technical reports/white papers: 26%
- Other: 13%
- Books/ebooks: 5%
- None: 3%
- Patents: 3%
- Court Cases or law reviews: 0%
Preliminary Results

Types of Information Tasks Completed
n = 39

- Look up information on business news or trends: 67%
- Research competitors: 38%
- Other: 36%
- Find and use secondary market research: 31%
- Research information about a specific city/country or other locality: 26%
- Write a literature review as part of a report: 8%
Preliminary Results

Students by Major who used Industry Standards

Limitations

- Pilot study
- One institution
- Small sample, not generalizable
Initial Insights

- Implications for librarians and IL practice
  - High use of company information & industry standards
  - Developed and integrated an industry standards module into MGMT 110 - a first year IL related management course taught by the Libraries
  - More research needed on student employment information experiences & learning and business employer expectations
Next Steps

- Complete full analysis and publish results in a journal article

- 2022-23 OUR Project: Using Head’s (2012) IL workplace protocol as a guide, interview employers of business students in internships/co-ops or new graduates

Heather Howard  
Associate Professor  
Business Librarian  
Purdue University  

Email: howar198@purdue.edu  
Twitter: @hidingheather

Margaret Phillips  
Associate Professor  
Engineering Librarian  
Purdue University  

Email: phill201@purdue.edu