WORKING IN COLLEGE: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY
OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT EMPLOYMENT
CHARACTERISTICS AND BEHAVIORS

by

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ABSTRACT

The employment of college students is an important issue for higher education since the impact of working during the academic year is not clear. The current literature base shows conflicting findings about the impact of employment on academic success and engagement mainly because research results vary depending on the type of work, the location of employment, number of hours worked, and the time management skills of the individual students. Investigating the characteristics of full-time undergraduate students at The University of Alabama holding paid positions of employment during the fall 2009 semester is the focus of this study.

The survey instrument for this study was designed utilizing variables common with the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) and variables targeted to gather information about the impact of employment on academic engagement, social experiences and overall student well-being. Findings were compared to the national data from the 2008 NPSAS to explore similarities between national trends and The University of Alabama full-time undergraduate students. Additionally, the motivation for working during the academic year and the impact of this work is explored.

A descriptive and comparative analysis of the data was used to answer the eight research questions guiding this study. Findings and conclusions are presented along with recommendations for policy, practice and future research.
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CHAPTER I:
INTRODUCTION

The employment of college students is not a new trend; however, as students continue to allocate a significant portion of their time and energy to employment there may be less available time for academic work, engagement in educational activities, and maintaining a social life during their college career (Pike et al., 2008; Stern & Nakata, 1991). Current trends in student employment should be examined to gain a better understanding of the motivation to work and how working during the academic year impacts academic achievement, student development and employment opportunities after graduation. Several studies have been conducted to research the impact of working during the academic year and the results vary depending on the type of work, the location of employment, number of hours per day and per week worked, and the time management skills of the individual student (Pike et al., 2008; Dundes & Marx, 2006; Kulm & Cramer, 2006; Furr & Elling, 2000; Hood et al., 1992; Van de Water, 1989). In order to gain an understanding of the employment characteristics of the undergraduate student population at The University of Alabama and to compare these characteristics to the national trends, this study employed a survey of full-time undergraduate students who were enrolled during the fall 2009 semester.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the characteristics of full-time undergraduate students at The University of Alabama (UA) who hold positions of paid employment during the
academic year. The results of the study were compared to the findings from the 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) to determine how the employment of UA undergraduate students compares to the national student employment trends. The investigator determined the percentage of undergraduate students that must work to pay for some aspect of their education at UA and how their work obligations impact their academic performance, their involvement on campus, and their overall personal well being.

Research Questions

To facilitate the purpose of this study, the researcher explored the following questions:

1. How does the percentage of UA undergraduate students that hold positions of paid employment during the academic semesters compare with the national trends found in the 2008 NPSAS;
2. How do the characteristics of UA undergraduate students compare to the national data regarding on campus jobs, off campus jobs and number of hours per week worked during the academic year;
3. What are the primary reasons and/or motivations for UA undergraduate students to hold positions of paid employment;
4. How does working for pay during the academic year affect students’ academic engagement and success;
5. How does working for pay during the academic year affect students’ social experiences?
6. How do the demands of school, work, family and personal life affect students’ well being;
7. What differences exist between students who work on campus and off campus in terms of academic engagement; and
8. What differences exist between students who work on campus and off campus in terms of social engagement?

Review of Literature

This section will review the literature that examines student employment from the perspective of student involvement and student engagement. The students’ motivation for working during the academic year will first be reviewed. In addition, the review of literature will discuss research findings in the area of student employment and what impact working during the academic term has on students’ academic success, retention, campus involvement and engagement, and overall well being. Finally, the characteristics of employment options will be explored and general recommendations for employment type, job location and hours worked per week will be discussed.

Understanding Why Students Work

The number of college students who hold paid positions of employment during the academic year has steadily increased over the past few decades (McCartan, 1988; Stern & Nakata, 1991). According to the 2008 National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Condition of Education report, 46.5% of full-time college students were employed in 2006 and approximately half of those students work 20-34 hours a week while maintaining a full-time course load. The motivations to work vary from student to student; however, the employment of college students is becoming more of a norm and this trend has implications for students, colleges and employers alike. Before exploring how work impacts each constituent, we need to gain an understanding of why students work.

The current research shows various reasons for college undergraduate students to hold positions of employment including career preparation, social involvement, and financial gains.
When we consider the current economic climate, the motivation to hold a job while pursuing a college degree may be mostly financial. King and Bannon (2002), in their analysis of the National Postsecondary Student Aid Survey (NPSAS) data from 1999-2000, reported that 63% of students who work more than 25 hours per week could not afford to attend college without working. Affordability continues to be an issue for many students. In the 2003-2004 National Postsecondary Student Aid Survey (NPSAS), 81% of working students confirmed that, if they did not work, they could not afford to attend college. Tuition costs are on the rise. For example, the average cost of in-state tuition and fees at a four year public university will “range from $5,412 in the South and $8,602 in New England” (College Board, 2008, p. 2). Even with financial aid packages, many students must work to fill the gap between the aid they receive and the actual cost of attendance.

Many students from lower income families must work to help cover the estimated family contribution (EFC) amount determined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) because there are families that simply cannot afford to pay this expected amount. Almost half of low-income working students confirm that they would not be able to afford college if they did not work (King & Bannon, 2002). In general, low-income students typically work 25 hours a week or more (King & Bannon, 2002).

Even at some of the relatively lower cost public universities, students must work to pay their education expenses. A student attending Wright State University in Ohio explained that he has to work 30 hours a week at his on campus job to pay his education and living expenses, and although he is working to finance his education, he is unable to allocate sufficient time to his coursework due to his extensive work schedule. Further, most of the students at Wright State
said that their families could only pay a small portion of their tuition costs and they were working long hours to cover the difference (Schmidt, 2004).

One additional factor that may be contributing to student employment is an aversion to borrowing funds for college. The 1996 data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) shows that “80% of undergraduates worked, but only 25% took out a student loan” (King, 1999, p. 19). Additionally, our attention is brought to the fact that many students who are working 15 or more hours per week choose not to borrow funds for college and many of these students do not even apply for financial aid (King, 1999). Although there is a percentage of students who are not borrowing funds for their education, overall, there is a significant population of students taking out loans and receiving financial aid that still need to work to pay for college (King & Bannon, 2002).

The current literature indicates that the majority of students are working during college, but not all of them are working to pay for college. The financial classification of each student, independent of parents or dependent on parents, may offer insight on how some working students spend their earnings. Data from the 2003-2004 NPSAS indicates that independent students generally work to pay their tuition and living expenses, while dependent students are more likely to work for spending money and to build their employment experience (King, 2007). In addition, dependent students from low-income families are more likely to apply their earnings to educational costs than dependent students from wealthy families. Financial classification is one indicator of the type of spending, as is family income level but, regardless of how students are spending their earnings, the fact is that the majority of them are working during the academic year (King & Bannon, 2002).
Without controlling for the financial classification of independent or dependent, Dundes and Marx (2006) studied a population of students at a small private liberal arts college and found that 80% of working students are motivated to work for spending money, 65% work to pay basic living expenses, and only 29% are working to pay for tuition. Generally speaking, based on the results of this study, the majority of traditional-aged college students apply their salary dollars to their personal spending. Having available funds is important because much of the student experience includes activities that involve spending money such as attending cultural and athletic events, weekend dining and entertainment and purchasing the consumer electronics such as laptops and smart phones that allow students to maintain their social networking (Brooks, 2006; Epstein, 2009). Ultimately, students need to have money during their college experience to support their personal, educational and social expenses.

Parental influence is another factor of student employment decisions. The 2003-2004 NPSAS data reported by King (2007) indicates that 63% of the working students classified as dependent confirm that their parents’ expectation is that they work during the academic year. Additionally, this parental expectation does not notably vary by income category, which suggests that parents at low and upper income levels share the employment expectation (King, 2007). This may indicate that, although there may not be a financial need to work, parents are expecting their children to work perhaps for non-financial benefits.

Still, while students may or may not be working for financial benefits such as having spending money or actually paying for their education, they are also developing practical skills that will prepare them for employment opportunities after graduation. This type of career preparation is another reason students choose to work during college; they understand that having work experience is necessary to securing employment post commencement. A 1992
national student employment survey was conducted at 21 institutions with approximately 4400 respondents and addressed various questions about student perceptions of work, their experiences and why they chose to work. Results from the study indicate that some of the top reasons students choose to work include career exploration, gaining job experience and establishing contacts for references (Mulugetta & Chavez, 1994). Most students are actively building their resumes while they are in college to get a jump start on the job market.

The type of during college work experience is an important consideration for career preparation because specific experience will contribute not only to securing a job after graduation but also to determining the initial responsibility level of that job. Employment during college, especially in an area related to the student’s major field of study or future career aspiration, has been found to increase the responsibility level reached early in one’s career (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, 2005). Additionally, the development of career related skills has also been found to be enhanced by employment during college (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Thus, the student is more likely to secure employment after graduation at a level appropriate to one with an earned bachelor’s degree, and if their work during college is related to their career plan or academic major, the post-graduation employment potential is enhanced (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

Employers concur and they are looking for candidates who have developed specific skills and characteristics in their work positions during college (Kincaid, 1996). In 1991, Bob Foreman from the United Parcel Service corporate human resources department, conducted a nationwide survey of 2000 human resource managers. The participants were asked how much consideration they place on part-time work experience and how they weighted applicant grade point average (GPA) as an indicator of success. The majority of respondents indicated that
employers view student employment experience to be as important as grades. In addition, if they are considering candidates with equal academic qualities, they would choose the candidate with part-time work experience (Foreman, 1993).

Although students are deliberately choosing to work for financial or career reasons, they may not realize that they are developing personal skills that will prepare them for life after college. Kuh (1995) reports on a study conducted at 12 institutions where 149 seniors responded to interview questions about their college experience and how they have changed during their tenure. The majority of students indicated that their out of class experiences contributed to developing their leadership skills. Additionally, nearly half of the students reported that their employment, whether on campus or off campus improved their interpersonal skills.

Similar findings were reported by Lewis (2008) in a study of college union student employees at Northwestern University. The students indicated they learned more from work experience where they had informal interaction and discussion with peers, faculty and staff. In addition, job duties that involve team projects and group meetings provided an opportunity to further develop leadership, communication and interpersonal skills. Lewis (2008) also notes that, through their work experience, students build leadership skills, focus their career paths, and learn how to balance the multiple demands of work, school and personal life.

Overall, the results of these two studies by Kuh (1995) and Lewis (2008) indicate that out of class experiences, including employment, allow students to develop skills, interact with peers and apply what they are learning in the classroom to their employment or their role within a campus organization. This type of experience and skill development is expected for career opportunities (Foreman, 1993).
As has been discussed, students choose to work for various reasons including financial need, parental influence, work experience, and career preparation. Understanding the general reasons why students work provides the background information necessary to discuss how employment during the academic term impacts academic success.

Impact of Work on Academic Success

As previously discussed, students work for a variety of reasons including financial need and skill development. Understanding why most students want or need to work will provide insight as we review the impact of working while managing the role of full-time college student. The current literature has mixed conclusions concerning whether working will negatively or positively impact the student and her or his academic success. These conclusions vary based on the characteristics of employment such as full-time work versus part-time work, hours worked per day and per week, and on-campus versus off-campus employment. The impact of work on academic success will be discussed within the theoretical framework of Alexander Astin’s (1999) theory of student involvement and George Kuh’s (2009) construct and assessment of student engagement.

Astin (1999) describes student involvement as a construct of developmental theory that “refers to the quantity and quality of the physical and psychological energy that students invest in the college experience” (p. 528). One postulate of this theory indicates that time and energy allocated in one area diminishes time and energy spent in another area. Specifically, students only have a certain amount of time and energy to devote to their academic pursuits and, as time is allocated to family, friends, activities and work, the time for studying and academic development is reduced. Astin also explains that involvement is considered an action or behavior, and that students are more likely to succeed and learn if they are active participants in
the learning process. Astin (1999) summarizes his theory by stating “the greater the student’s involvement in college, the greater will be the amount of student learning and personal development” (p. 529).

Academic involvement in the college experience can be viewed as a form of student behavior that includes interacting with faculty, spending time preparing for class, and participating in campus organizations or athletic teams. Environmental factors that support involvement include residing on campus in residence halls, utilizing campus facilities and working on campus. In both, there are several benefits associated with student involvement. Astin (1996) discusses his research with the Higher Education Research Institute and their findings suggest that involvement is strongly correlated with enhancing the cognitive development of undergraduate students. He found the most powerful forms of involvement to be “academic involvement, involvement with faculty and involvement with student peer groups” (p. 126). Of these three, Astin finds that involvement with student peers has the most impact on the overall educational experience for students due to the influence students have on each other and how the relationships they build support their mutual academic and co-curricular goals.

George D. Kuh (2009) explains that the engagement principle has been discussed in the literature for more than seven decades, but the concept of student engagement only more recently has been introduced as “an organizing construct for institutional assessment, accountability, and improvement efforts” (p. 5). He clarifies that “Today engagement is the term usually used to represent constructs such as quality of effort and involvement in productive learning activities” (p. 6). Such educationally purposeful activities include faculty and peer interaction, time spent studying and participation in co-curricular activities and employment.
Kuh and his colleagues (2001) designed the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) that “annually assesses the extent to which students at hundreds of four-year colleges and universities are participating in educational practices that are strongly associated with high levels of learning and personal development” (p. 12). The NSSE findings from 2000 through 2003 indicate that students who are engaged in educationally purposeful activities are more likely to have academic success in terms of GPA and are more likely to persist from their first year into their second year (Kuh et al., 2008). Overall, student engagement has been found to support student academic success.

The research on the amount of student involvement in college and student engagement in educationally purposeful activities has concluded that both support academic success. There are various ways students can be involved and engaged in their academic work and co-curricular experience. On campus employment has been found to support student involvement and engagement at their institution for several reasons. Students physically spend more time on campus, and thus they build relationships with their co-workers and the knowledge gained about the institution through their employment supports campus affinity and belongingness in the campus community (Astin, 1999; Lingrosso, 2007; Cermak & Filkins, 2007; Noel, 1996). In addition, students who work on campus together are able to build relationships and participate in other involvement opportunities that positively contribute to identification with their institution, which also positively impacts persistence (Astin, 1975).

Not only does on campus employment support student involvement and engagement, in itself it is a form of involvement and engagement (Wilkie & Jones, 1996; Cheng & Alcántara, 2007). Students who have an opportunity to work for their institution, perhaps in an academic department or in a student affairs department, are likely to be achieving learning outcomes in
their work responsibilities, even if the outcomes are not officially defined. For example, students working in a student union are often involved in planning and executing campus events and programs. Through their work responsibilities, students are learning about their institution, becoming involved in the campus community and are developing and practicing communication and leadership skills (Perozzi, 2009; Lewis, 2008).

Under the involvement and engagement frameworks, two main considerations are the amount of available time and how an individual student allocates their time. Since students have a limited amount of time during the academic experience, when they are committing a significant portion of their time to a job, there may be less opportunity to be academically engaged. Pike et al. (2008) describe how available time impacts grades and suggest that working more hours may decrease the available time students have to engage in educational activities. Kuh (2003) questions whether students are expending enough effort on academics when some NSSE data shows that other commitments, such as work, limit the study time of respondents. Additionally, Pascarella et al. (1994) found that working off campus negatively impacts the amount of time spent studying. In general, the concern about student employment is whether students have enough time to devote to their academic college experience if they are allocating too much time to work commitments.

The employment of college students presents concerns about how their work commitments impact their academic performance. Astin (1993) found that students who work full-time while enrolled experience a negative impact on their academic achievement in terms of student GPA, receiving honors at graduation, and enrollment in graduate school. Conversely, research by Van De Water indicates that there is no relationship between working and academic success (Van De Water, 1989). Hood et al. (1992) researched the effect of athletics, employment
and activities on academic achievement and found that students working in moderation performed better than those students who do not work at all and those working a substantial number of hours. Their results also show that a moderate work schedule does not negatively impact GPA.

Kulm and Cramer (2006) conducted a web-based survey at a mid-western university and found that, as students work more hours, work interferes with their study time and consequently, their GPA declines. King (2007) confirms that at most institutions, working more than a part-time schedule negatively impacts student grades. In contrast, Canabal (2008) performed an analysis of the data collected from the spring 1990 Illinois Undergraduate Student Survey and the findings confirm a positive correlation between student employment and GPA. In fact, the more hours the students worked in the labor force, the greater their GPA.

Holding employment during the college years also has an impact on student persistence and retention. Astin (1975) concludes that holding a part-time job working under 25 hours per week, either on-campus or off-campus, generally increases the persistence rate and likelihood of degree completion. In a study of first year students, it was determined that engagement in educationally purposeful activities, including employment, has a significant, positive effect on persistence to the second year of college and on grades (Kuh et.al. 2008). A study at Indiana University Bloomington found that less engaged students are more likely to not return for their sophomore year (Hayek & Kuh, 2004).

More specifically, an on-campus part-time job has a positive effect on retention and completion of a bachelor’s degree (Astin, 1993; Cermak & Filkins, 2007; Wilkie & Jones, 1996). This is likely due to the fact that on-campus employment can be considered a form of student involvement and engagement because of the employment characteristics and physical location of
the job. In general, researchers of student employment conclude that off-campus employment negatively impacts persistence and degree completion while part-time, on-campus employment has a positive impact on these factors (Pascarella and Terenzini, 1991).

The indicators of academic success previously discussed include student grade point average, student persistence and student retention. How student employment impacts these indicators depends on the type of employment, location of employment and hours spent working. Although the literature reviewed represents mixed conclusions about the impact of work on academic success, the findings reach a consensus that working part-time (20 or fewer hours per week), on campus has a positive effect on student involvement, engagement and academic success in general. While these findings indicate positive results from working during the academic year, working students must be able to balance all of the demands on their time and energy in order to succeed academically.

Impact of Work on Personal Development

Student employment opportunities often contribute to the personal development of students by providing situations for exploring career goals and developing skills. Chickering et al. (1996) suggest that, through their work experience, students move through the developmental stages of ego. For example, a student’s first job typically is for financial gain and may not be related to their career goals, however, as he or she moves through different positions of employment, a development of ego occurs and the student targets jobs that are related to future plans and begins to understand how he or she is an important part of an overall organization. In this way, student employment supports student development.

Employment during the academic year has also been found to support the cognitive development of students. Astin (1993) concludes that holding a part-time job on campus has a
positive effect on “self-reported cognitive and affective growth” (p. 388). Pascarella et al. (1994) studied the impact of on-campus and off-campus work on students’ first year cognitive development in math, reading and critical thinking skills and whether the number of hours worked impacts this development. The results of this study indicated that when compared to non-working students, students working either on campus or off campus have the same level of achievement in cognitive development areas.

Employment opportunities, specifically on-campus employment, also provide an opportunity for student learning. Kuh (1995) discusses the importance of what he calls the other curriculum, out-of-class experiences that support student learning and development. One of the components of this other curriculum is part-time employment, and Kuh reported on one student who was able to determine future career plans based on his employment with the university newspaper. Although the student decided not to pursue a career in newspaper journalism, his job with the university newspaper allowed him a true to life opportunity to work in the field and determine if this was what he wanted to pursue after graduation. By providing a place for students to test their career intentions before graduation, on-campus employers support the personal development of students as they come to understand their identity and their life passions.

Another benefit of on-campus employment is the development of the relationship between employee and supervisor. A positive student/supervisor relationship encourages the development of skills and an understanding of a workplace environment. In a study of first year students at Loyola Marymount University, the majority of students reported that they were “very satisfied with the working relationship they had with their supervisor” (Lingrosso, 2007, p. 5). The study also determined that, with appropriate supervisor support, students develop skills that
improve their opportunities for subsequent employment, internships and academic opportunities (Lingrosso, 2007). Working students also benefit by establishing a network of referral contacts for future educational and employment opportunities (Mulugetta & Chavez, 1994).

The development of transferrable skills is another benefit of student employment. Working students often indicate that, through their work experience, they have developed time management skills that have helped them manage the multiple demands of academics and employment (Lingrosso, 2007). The improvement of organizational skills and greater efficiency are also reported as benefits attributed to working students (Dundes & Marx, 2006). Additionally, working students report they are able to develop and exercise leadership and communication skills in their out-of-class and work experiences (Kuh, 1995). All of these skills and attributes are important and likely essential to securing employment after graduation.

Although students are learning and developing personal skills and attributes through their academic work, their out-of-class experiences, including employment, offer students a place to put their knowledge and abilities into action. Employment opportunities enhance and often demand that students use their leadership, organization, communication and teamwork skills to accomplish their job responsibilities. Working students are able to experience a workplace environment while they are still enrolled in college and this experience often shapes their personal development and guides them through the career selection process (Kuh, 1995). This type of real world experience supports student development through the identity defining stages of personal awareness. Student employment, in addition to the overall college experience, creates an opportunity for personal development, identity development and an awareness of individual worth in the scope of an organization, a community, and a global culture (Chickering et al., 1996).
Characteristics of Student Employment Opportunities

Employment opportunities for students exist in a variety of settings, either on campus or off campus, and both locations provide different opportunities for student development. However, as previously discussed, on campus work opportunities support student involvement and engagement in educationally purposeful activities (Astin, 1999; Kuh et al., 1991). In addition to job location, the number of hours worked is another characteristic of employment that has been linked to impacting academic engagement and student involvement (Astin, 1975; Dundes & Marx, 2006). The type of work students are performing is another characteristic to review since the specific job functions will develop specific skills. With these various characteristics considered, best practices for student employment opportunities derived from literature findings will be reviewed.

There are many benefits associated with student employment and the occurrence of student development and identity shaping is an important benefit as students are moving toward developing life passions and a sense of belonging within an organization (Chickering et al., 1996). Additionally, the attainment of job experience is often essential to a successful employment offer upon graduation because employers are looking for candidates who have developed career skills and had the opportunity to apply them in a practical setting (Kincaid, 1996; Foreman, 1993). Student employment experience in an area related to individual major and degree also increases the responsibility level reached early in ones career (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, 2005). Ultimately, working students have an advantage over non-working students when they are seeking employment upon graduation.

While student employment supports development and experience attainment, the physical location of the job is an important consideration as it impacts the overall academic success of the
student. Generally, researchers of student employment conclude that off-campus employment negatively impacts persistence and degree completion while part-time, on-campus employment positively impacts these factors (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). As discussed previously, students who work on campus are more likely to be involved and engaged in their academic work due to the physical location of their job and the opportunities they are exposed to through their work experience (Astin, 1996; Kuh, 2009).

The physical location of the students’ job has been found also to impact campus involvement. Furr and Elling (2000) have been able to show that the more time students are spending in off-campus employment the less involved they are on campus. This decrease in campus involvement negatively affects students’ participation in activities, interaction with faculty and classmates, and opportunities for learning experiences. Students who must work off campus often are not able to participate in student involvement opportunities because they must work instead. Given these findings, on-campus employment opportunities are preferred since they not only provide necessary job experience; they are also supporting academic success and campus involvement.

On campus employment programs are expensive to support, but many institutions do receive federal funding for campus employment programs. The Federal Work-Study Program is beneficial to the students who qualify for this financial aid source because they are often assisted by the Student Employment Office in finding an on-campus job and hiring departments are more likely to select work-study students since their salaries are funded by financial aid. In addition, “income from a regular job may diminish a student’s future aid eligibility: None of a student’s earnings from a work-study job factor into the federal financial-aid formula’s estimated family contribution, but in certain cases, 50 percent of earnings from a regular part-time job are
expected to go toward college costs” (Lipka, 2007, p. A40). Not only do students benefit from this federal funding; for institutions, this funding allows for the existence or expansion of on campus employment opportunities.

The location of work is important to working students and Cheng and Alcàntara (2007) found that most of the students in their study preferred to work on campus rather than off campus because it was more convenient. Students also indicate that, with their work place being centrally located on campus, they are able to work a few hours during the day in between their classes. On campus student workers report that many of their jobs allow them time for homework and reading when other job responsibilities have been completed (Lipka, 2007).

Given that many students prefer to work on campus and understanding that on-campus employment supports academic success and student involvement, higher education institutions have an opportunity to support students in their holistic development. Institutions that are able to provide on-campus employment programs, especially for urban settings, help to improve opportunities for student involvement (Kuh et al., 1991). Given these findings, universities like the University of Maine at Farmington are creating and investing in on-campus student employment initiatives that connect students to the campus and provide a true to life work experience that prepares them for employment after graduation (Kuh et al., 2005).

There are opportunities to work in various campus divisions and departments but, at the University of California, Davis, the majority of student employment is housed within the 30 departments under Student Affairs (Sturgean, 2006). Students are responsible for many things including running buildings, driving campus vehicles and providing clerical support. The student employment responsibility level is increased at California State University, Chico where the student body owns and manages the Union which includes a retail bookstore and marketplace
These types of on-campus jobs require a high level of responsibility from the student employees, but they are providing an opportunity for students to develop skills essential to securing a higher level of employment upon graduation.

Many students are also working in academic affairs areas, commonly as office support or directly working with faculty in laboratory work or on other research projects. Some students indicate that the most meaningful work is the work conducted with faculty members in the laboratory or on research projects. This type of work allows students to apply what they are learning in the classroom and it also strengthens their decisions about career plans or further graduate study. Students working with faculty may also have an opportunity for professional development as they are enhancing their research skills (Cheng & Alcàntara, 2007).

Another benefit of on-campus employment is that students have the ability to utilize the services of a career center and a student employment office as they begin their job search. Student employment professionals may serve as employment advisors and work with students to find jobs that match their skills and interests. Student employment professionals can also help the student transition to the workplace by acting as a liaison between the student and the employer. Additionally, Student employment professionals may also assist employing departments in developing training programs for student staff (Noel, 1996).

On-campus employment options, whether housed in academic affairs or student affairs or elsewhere, allow students an opportunity to apply their coursework in a practical setting which reinforces student learning. Campus jobs also provide a flexible work environment because faculty and staff supervisors understand that their student employees are students first and their academic schedule holds a priority. Additionally, campus employers benefit from providing job opportunities to the best and brightest students since they bring cutting edge knowledge from
their classrooms to the work place (Sturgean, 2006). Since the faculty and staff within student affairs interact with students where they spend the majority of their time, it is important for academic affairs and student affairs to collaborate and improve the overall educational experience for students (Banta & Kuh, 1998).

Whether students are working on campus or off campus, the time allocated to work is not available to allocate to academic demands. While most students do work part-time hours under 20 hours per week, there are exceptions, some students work in multiple positions or they may work more than 20 hours a week at their job (King, 2006). The decision to work more than part-time hours varies from financial need to job satisfaction (Cheng & Alcàntara, 2007). The students’ place of residence has shown to be a factor in the number of hours worked. Furr and Elling (2000) found that students who reside off campus work more hours per week than residential students.

Since we understand that large populations of college students work during the academic semesters and the overall impact of these hours spent working is questionable, some researchers have studied the relationships between the number of hours worked per week and academic success to determine if there is range of hours worked per week that support student success. Astin (1975) concludes that working 25 or more hours per week negatively impacts persistence. Pike et al. (2008) confirm that working more than 20 hours per week negatively impacts student grades. Dundes and Marx (2006) surveyed a population of students at a private liberal arts college to study the employment characteristics of this group. The results of their study indicate the students who work between 10 and 19 hours per week are the most successful academically. Their grades are higher than non-working students and students working less than 10 hours and
more than 19 hours. Kulm and Cramer (2006) found that, as students work more hours, their employment interferes with their study time and as more hours are worked, the GPA declines.

However, other researchers have found there to be no relationship between hours worked per week and GPA (Van de Water, 1989). Findings also indicate that students limit their personal, social and sleep time to accommodate the demands of work and academics (Cheng & Alcàntara, 2007). Additionally, many students report that working has improved their time management skills and that a work schedule has provided structure for their overall daily schedule (Cheng & Alcàntara, 2007; Kulm & Cramer, 2006). Students who are working during the academic year are finding ways to accomplish their tasks and balance the multiple demands of work and school.

The ability to balance multiple demands is reviewed from the perspective of recent university graduates and they reflected on how combining work and school impacted their degree progress and plans for future learning. These graduates felt their college employment helped them integrate with other students and into the university lifestyle, motivated them to persist with academic work, and helped them balance different activities (Brooks, 2006). Additionally, this study finds that students who have combined work and learning during college have continued this pattern to their lives post-graduation, which suggests that combining work and school may lead to a pattern of lifelong learning.

Conclusion

Since the majority of students work during their college careers, it is important develop an understanding of why they work, how their work impacts academic success and social engagement, and the job characteristics that best support student success. As has been discussed, there are mixed conclusions about how student employment impacts academic success, campus
involvement and overall well being, due to the variables found in different work environments (Pike et al., 2008; Dundes & Marx, 2006; Kulm & Cramer, 2006; Furr & Elling, 2000; Hood et al., 1992; Van de Water, 1989). However, general conclusions indicate that part-time on-campus employment, with a schedule between 10 and 20 hours per week is ideal (King, 2006). Employment under these conditions supports academic success, student involvement and engagement, and a balanced schedule of academics, work and personal life. Additionally, on-campus positions that support future career goals and provide a true to life work experience contribute to student development and successful career preparation (Perozzi, 2009; Kuh, 1995).
CHAPTER II:

METHODOLOGY

As discussed in the previous section, there are conflicting findings about the impact of student employment on academic success and the overall college experience. Given the current economic climate and importance of a well-rounded college experience for career preparation, it is important to hear how undergraduate students at The University of Alabama are managing the pressures of academic success, co-curricular commitments, personal life and a position of paid employment. By surveying a sample of UA undergraduate students who are currently facing these multiple demands, a more precise understanding of the issues employment may cause may be achieved. The feedback from a sample of full-time undergraduate students attending The University of Alabama will address the research questions proposed in this study.

Research Questions

To facilitate the purpose of this study, the researcher explored the following questions:

9. How does the percentage of UA undergraduate students that hold positions of paid employment during the academic semesters compare with the national trends found in the 2008 NPSAS;

10. How do the characteristics of UA undergraduate students compare to the national data regarding on campus jobs, off campus jobs and number of hours per week worked during the academic year;
11. What are the primary reasons and/or motivations for UA undergraduate students to hold positions of paid employment;

12. How does working for pay during the academic year affect students’ academic engagement and success;

13. How does working for pay during the academic year affect students’ social experiences?

14. How do the demands of school, work, family and personal life affect students’ well-being;

15. What differences exist between students who work on campus and off campus in terms of academic engagement; and

16. What differences exist between students who work on campus and off campus in terms of social engagement?

Survey Population and Sample

The University of Alabama Factbook reports that during the fall 2009 semester, 21,738 full-time undergraduate on-campus students were enrolled (University of Alabama, 2009). From this total count of enrolled students, 10% were invited to participate in this study. Participants were recruited from the general undergraduate student population of the University of Alabama who met specific qualifications for this study. A request was made to the University Registrar for a list of CrimsonMail email addresses for all students age 19 or older classified as full-time undergraduate students for the fall 2009 semester and enrolled during the spring 2010 semester. These parameters returned a total count of 14,612 potential participants and a random selection of 2100 participants representing 10% of the total UA full-time undergraduate on-campus population was utilized for the survey participant population.
Materials and Data Collection

The study used a survey methodology to collect demographic and descriptive data related to the research questions. The survey was created and administered using the Survey Monkey® online survey tool. The survey contained a total of 37 questions, of which there were nine demographic questions, six student information questions, fifteen employment questions, and five Likert scale questions designed to allow participants to share their perspectives on the impact of their employment. In addition, the use of one open-ended question was incorporated to gather feedback on overall student well-being and the ability to balance multiple demands. A copy of the survey instrument is included as Appendix D.

Using the email addresses supplied by the University Registrar, an invitation email was sent to the 2100 subjects with a hyperlink to the online survey tool. After the initial invitation email was sent, two follow-up emails were sent to the individuals that had not yet responded to the survey. At that point a final email reminder was sent in an attempt to collect responses from the remaining population. Data was collected during January, 2010. Copies of the initial email invitation and subsequent follow-up emails are included here as Appendix C.

Data Analysis

Once the data collection period had ended, the researcher utilized the data analysis tools on the Survey Monkey® website for a base line review of the data, and exported the survey response data from Survey Monkey® to an Excel spreadsheet file for further analysis. Using the tools available in Survey Monkey® and Excel, the researcher created cross-tabulations and conducted a descriptive and comparative analysis of the data in order to answer the research questions guiding this study.
CHAPTER III:
SURVEY RESULTS AND PRESENTATION OF PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION

In this section the results from the survey data will be reviewed. First, the characteristics of the participant sample will be compared to the underlying University of Alabama undergraduate population characteristics to determine the representativeness of the sample population. In addition, the demographic characteristics of the survey participants will be reviewed. Next, the survey participant characteristics will be compared to the national trends found in the 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS). The employment status of the participants will be utilized to discuss motivations for working, comparative data between working and non-working students, and a discussion of the comparative data between students working on campus and off campus will be presented. Finally, the impact of working during the academic year will be discussed in terms of overall well-being and balancing the multiple demands of work and academics.

Response Rate and Representativeness of Sample

As previously discussed, the researcher obtained a report of the CrimsonMail email addresses for a population of students who were 19 years of age and older, classified as full-time undergraduate students for the fall 2009 semester, and enrolled during the spring 2010 semester. Although the total undergraduate enrollment count for fall 2009 was 21,738, these parameters returned a total count of 14,612 potential participants. A random selection of 2100 participants representing 10% of the total UA full-time undergraduate on-campus population was utilized for
the survey participant population. The participant recruitment resulted in 239 beginning the survey, 237 accepting and agreeing to the informed consent statement, and 207 participants completing the survey. Based on the 2100 invited, the response rate was 11.38% with an acceptance rate of 11.29% and a completion rate of 9.86%.

Being that the survey participants were selected randomly from a report of all eligible students, it is important to discuss how the survey participants compare to the underlying undergraduate population at The University of Alabama. As shown in Table 1, the demographics of the survey participants are fairly representative of the UA undergraduate population. However, ages 20 and 21 show a difference of approximately 17% which may be attributed to more than half of the survey participants being aged 20 - 21.

When comparing the participants to the UA undergraduate population in terms of gender, the difference is only 8.7%. Slight differences, under 5%, appear in the racial comparisons as well with the highest difference in the other minority category. This discrepancy is likely due to the multiple racial categories from the survey respondents being consolidated into the other minority category. Classification of the survey participants also shows a large difference in the Freshman category and this is likely a result of the minimum participation age of 19. The University of Alabama data includes students in the freshman classification who are under age 19. Although there are differences in the sophomore, junior and senior classifications, they are under 10%. Overall, the participants of this study seem to be a fair representation of the overall underlying University of Alabama undergraduate population.
Table 1

Representativeness of Participant Population Compared to University of Alabama Full-Time Undergraduate Students Fall 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>UA Full-Time Undergraduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 and 21</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 to 24</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 and older</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>UA Full-Time Undergraduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>61.1%</td>
<td>52.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
<td>47.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>UA Full-Time Undergraduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>87.2%</td>
<td>82.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Minority</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>UA Full-Time Undergraduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freshmen</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclassified</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source for UA FT Undergrads: The University of Alabama 2009-2010 Factbook

Note. UA UG percentage of age 19 provided by the UA Office of Institutional Research & Assessment per information request 6/21/2010.

Note. Participants who responded as Asian American/Pacific Islander, Hispanic or Latino/a, Native American or Alaskan Native, and Other are included in the Other Minority category.

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

The employment status of the participants has been utilized to determine the differences that may be present in the demographic data of the participants. The majority of the participants in this study are working students representing 77.2% of the participants and the remaining 22.8% are non-working students. More than half of the participants are aged 19 to 21 with percentages decreasing with ages above 21. Additionally, at 60.3% the majority of the participants are female. Race and ethnicity categories show the survey participants are
predominately White (non-Hispanic) at 86.9% and this is representative of the University of Alabama underlying population.

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of Participants and Employment Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Non-Working</th>
<th>Working</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 or older</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Non-Working</th>
<th>Working</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>60.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>39.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Non-Working</th>
<th>Working</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American or Islander</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American/ Pacific Islander</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino/a</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American or Alaskan Native</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>86.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The educational attainment of the participants’ parents was another demographic category explored in this study as seen in Table 3. The majority of the participants are non-first generation students with 34.4% of students indicating their mother attained a bachelor’s degree and 20.0% citing their mother had completed some college courses. Additionally, 27.9% cited that their father attained a bachelor’s degree and 27.4% report their father completed graduate study. Thus, a relatively small portion of the survey participants would be considered first generation college students.
Table 3

*Educational Attainment of Participants’ Parents and Employment Status*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment of Mother</th>
<th>Non-Working</th>
<th>Working</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School or less</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some High School</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate’s Degree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Graduate School</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Degree</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Attainment of Father</th>
<th>Non-Working</th>
<th>Working</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School or less</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some High School</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate’s Degree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Graduate School</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Degree</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants were also asked to report the types of financial aid they had received for the fall 2009 semester. As shown in Table 4, more than half (53.8%) of the participants have taken out student loans and the majority of these participants are working students. However, only 3.5% of the participants have a need-based UA Scholarship. Additionally, the next largest financial aid category, at 46.8%, is participants who received a Merit-based UA Scholarship, followed by 25.7% receiving a Pell Grant. Although the majority of the survey participants are working students, only 7.6% reported having a Work Study award for the fall 2009 semester.
The financial classification of dependent on parents or independent of parents provided information about the participants who were working to put themselves through college. The majority of participants, 92.34%, are classified as dependent on parents and the remaining 7.66% are classified as independent students. Income levels are reported in Table 5 and the majority of parents earn $80,000 or more annually while the majority of working students earn less than $20,000 annually.
Comparison to National Trends

With the representativeness of the survey population being established and the basic demographic characteristics of the participants being discussed, the data will now be discussed in terms of comparison to national trends found in the 2007-08 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS). As shown in Table 6, the percentage distribution of University of Alabama non-working and working students is comparable to the national population with a percentage distribution differing by only 6.9%.

Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Non-Working Number</th>
<th>Non-Working Percent</th>
<th>Working Number</th>
<th>Working Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Population (NPSAS)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>70.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Alabama</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>77.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source for National data: U.S Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2007-08 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:08)
Note. Dashes indicate that NPSAS actual numbers were undeterminable based on weighted sample scheme.

The participant population of working students has been compared to the national population of working students, and Table 7 shows the comparison based on gender classification. Female working students show a percentage distribution difference of 8.6% between the UA population and the national population while the difference for male working students is only 2.08%. Thus, the working student percentage distribution by gender is very comparable to national trends. Additionally, the working students are compared to national data in racial classification. As shown in Table 8, the majority of working students both nationally and at The University of Alabama are identified as White (non-Hispanic). While the national population is more diverse than the survey participant population, both show the same top three
racial categories: White (non-Hispanic), African American or Black and Hispanic or Latino/a. In
general, the racial classification of working students is fairly comparable to national trends.

Table 7

Comparison of National Population and University of Alabama Undergraduate Working
Students by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Population (NPSAS)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>38.8%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>31.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Alabama</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>47.66%</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>29.44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source for National data: U.S Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2007-08
National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:08)
Note. Dashes indicate that NPSAS actual numbers were undeterminable based on weighted sample scheme.

Table 8

Comparison of National Population and University of Alabama Undergraduate Working
Students by Race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>National (NPSAS)</th>
<th>University of Alabama</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>48.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American or Black</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino/a</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American or Alaskan</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than One</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.89%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source for National data: U.S Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2007-08
National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:08)
Note. Dashes indicate that NPSAS actual numbers were undeterminable based on weighted sample scheme.

Student motivation to work during the academic semester is another variable that was
compared to the national population of working students. As shown in Table 9, the population of
University of Alabama working students is comparable to the national population. Both
populations indicate that their main reason for working is to earn spending money followed by
working to pay living expenses. Although the national population gives working to pay for educational expenses as their third reason for working while the UA population indicates gaining job experience as their third reason, both populations show the same top four motivations for working during the academic year. In this case, the motivations to work are rather comparable.

Table 9

Comparison of National Population and University of Alabama Undergraduate Working Students by Motivation to Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation to Work</th>
<th>National (NPSAS)</th>
<th>University of Alabama</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To earn spending money</td>
<td>85.99%</td>
<td>59.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To pay living expenses</td>
<td>74.60%</td>
<td>48.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To pay education expenses</td>
<td>65.21%</td>
<td>25.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To gain job experience</td>
<td>55.79%</td>
<td>44.37%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source for National data: U.S Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2007-08 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:08)

The University of Alabama population is also compared to the national population in terms of job location and number of hours worked per week. As shown in Table 10 below, the majority of the working students in the national population work in off-campus jobs, while the survey participants at UA work equally in off-campus and on-campus jobs with a small percentage of students working both on and off campus. The job location variable is not as comparable with the national trends as the other variables discussed previously. Number of hours worked per week is another characteristic utilized for comparison purposes and the data is shown below in Table 11. The percentage distribution difference between the national population and the UA population is within ten percentage points with the exception of working 30 or more hours per week at a 10.37% difference. Additionally, working 1-10 hours per week has the closest comparative percentage distribution with the national population at 21.0% and the
UA population at 21.34%. Overall, the number of hours worked per week by both populations is fairly comparable.

Table 10

Comparison of National Population and University of Alabama Undergraduate Working Students by Job Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>National (NPSAS)</th>
<th>University of Alabama</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working On Campus</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>14.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Off Campus</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>79.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Both On and Off Campus</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5.70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source for National data: U.S Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2007-08 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:08)

Note. Dashes indicate that NPSAS actual numbers were undeterminable based on weighted sample scheme.

Table 11

Comparison of National Population and University of Alabama Undergraduate Working Students by Hours Worked per Week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>National (NPSAS)</th>
<th>University of Alabama</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-10 hours</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 hours</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20 hours</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>21.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30 hours</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>23.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 or more hours</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source for National data: U.S Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2007-08 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:08)

Note. Dashes indicate that NPSAS actual numbers were undeterminable based on weighted sample scheme.

A cross-tabulation comparison of hours worked per week by grade point average is summarized below in Table 12. The national population shows the majority of students are within the 3.5 to 3.0 grade point average regardless of the number of hours worked per week. The data is slightly different in the UA population where the majority of students working 15 or
less hours per week are within the 4.0 to 3.6 grade point average and as the hours per week increases to 16 to 30, the majority of students earn a grade point average of 3.5 to 3.0. In addition, the small percentage of UA students working 30 or more hours per week is within the 4.0 to 3.6 grade point average. In general, the majority of students in both populations are attaining at or above a 3.0 grade point average regardless of the number of hours worked per week.

Table 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Point Average</th>
<th>4.0 – 3.6</th>
<th>3.5 – 3.0</th>
<th>2.9 – 2.6</th>
<th>2.5 – 2.0</th>
<th>1.9 – 0.0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Population (NPSAS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-10 hours</td>
<td>25.70%</td>
<td>36.20%</td>
<td>18.80%</td>
<td>14.20%</td>
<td>5.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 hours</td>
<td>18.80%</td>
<td>38.20%</td>
<td>20.10%</td>
<td>17.70%</td>
<td>5.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20 hours</td>
<td>19.20%</td>
<td>35.60%</td>
<td>21.60%</td>
<td>18.30%</td>
<td>5.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30 hours</td>
<td>15.50%</td>
<td>35.40%</td>
<td>20.90%</td>
<td>21.60%</td>
<td>6.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 or more hours</td>
<td>14.50%</td>
<td>32.40%</td>
<td>22.20%</td>
<td>24.40%</td>
<td>6.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Alabama</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-10 hours</td>
<td>71.43%</td>
<td>17.14%</td>
<td>5.71%</td>
<td>5.71%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 hours</td>
<td>57.14%</td>
<td>25.71%</td>
<td>14.29%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>2.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20 hours</td>
<td>24.00%</td>
<td>46.00%</td>
<td>18.00%</td>
<td>10.00%</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-30 hours</td>
<td>41.94%</td>
<td>48.39%</td>
<td>3.23%</td>
<td>6.45%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 or more hours</td>
<td>54.55%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>27.27%</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source for National data: U.S Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2007-08 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:08)

Motivation to Work and Impact of Work

As the survey participants were responding to questions about working during the academic year, it was important to find out what why they were motivated to work. Table 13 shows the percentage distribution of the Likert scale question asking why the students chose to work during the fall 2009 semester, and this question allowed the participants to select multiple reasons for working. The majority of participants indicate that they are working to earn spending...
money with 95.33% that agree or strongly agree. Almost 80% agree or strongly agree that they are working to pay living expenses followed by 72.85% who agree or strongly agree that they are working to gain job experience.

Table 13

*Participant Motivation to Work During the Academic Year*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation to Work</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Earn Spending Money</td>
<td>59.33%</td>
<td>36.00%</td>
<td>4.67%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay Education Expenses</td>
<td>25.34%</td>
<td>21.23%</td>
<td>34.25%</td>
<td>19.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay Living Expenses</td>
<td>48.03%</td>
<td>31.58%</td>
<td>11.84%</td>
<td>8.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain Job Experience</td>
<td>44.37%</td>
<td>28.48%</td>
<td>16.56%</td>
<td>10.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep Busy</td>
<td>16.55%</td>
<td>26.21%</td>
<td>28.97%</td>
<td>28.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>13.13%</td>
<td>27.27%</td>
<td>33.33%</td>
<td>26.26%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants were also asked if they could afford school without working and 64.05% reported that they could, while 35.95% reported that they could not afford school without working. As a motivation for working, a slight majority of 53.43% indicate that they are not working to pay educational expenses. Parental expectation is another factor in the reasons students work during the academic year. When asked if their parents expected them to work a majority of 60.53% responded yes and the remaining 39.46% responded no. While parental expectation is one factor influencing working students, generally speaking, the students at The University of Alabama are working mainly for spending money.

Although career preparation is not the first reason the participants are motivated to work, it is one of the top three reasons for working. As shown in Table 14, a majority of the respondents indicate that their job helped with career preparation. Additionally, 72.85% agree or strongly agree that their job has provided an opportunity to gain experience for future positions and 86.18% agree or strongly agree that their job has afforded them a good reference for future
employment opportunities. The majority of participants also agree that their job will provide a good reference for educational opportunities in the future.

Table 14

_Career Preparation Resulting from Job Held_

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The job held…</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helped with career preparation</td>
<td>31.58%</td>
<td>26.97%</td>
<td>23.03%</td>
<td>18.42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was related to my career/education plans after graduation</td>
<td>21.19%</td>
<td>18.54%</td>
<td>37.09%</td>
<td>23.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed me to gain experience for future positions</td>
<td>27.15%</td>
<td>45.70%</td>
<td>17.88%</td>
<td>9.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided a good reference for future employment opportunities</td>
<td>37.50%</td>
<td>48.68%</td>
<td>10.53%</td>
<td>3.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided a good reference for future educational opportunities</td>
<td>26.85%</td>
<td>40.27%</td>
<td>22.82%</td>
<td>10.07%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the majority of students indicated that they are working during the academic year, it is important to consider the impact of work on academic success and engagement. The data shown in Table 15 is a summary of the Likert scale questions that address the specific job impact and the general impact of work on academic success and engagement. While most of the respondents reported that their job did not help with coursework or understanding course content, a majority of the respondents indicate that their jobs were not related to their coursework or major. Additionally, more than three quarters of the participants indicate that their jobs did not restrict or limit their choice of classes, number of classes, or their academic schedule. For most of the students, working also did not appear to negatively impact academic engagement.
### Table 15

*Impact of Working on Academic Success and Engagement*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The job held…</th>
<th>Strongly Agree/Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree/Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helped with coursework</td>
<td>33.11%</td>
<td>66.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved understanding of course content</td>
<td>29.33%</td>
<td>70.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted class choice</td>
<td>19.21%</td>
<td>80.79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited class schedule</td>
<td>25.00%</td>
<td>75.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited number of classes</td>
<td>17.88%</td>
<td>82.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related to coursework</td>
<td>32.67%</td>
<td>67.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related to major</td>
<td>36.67%</td>
<td>63.33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Working limited ability to…    |                       |                             |
| Interact with other students   | 38.16%                | 61.84%                      |
| Prepare for classes            | 39.87%                | 60.13%                      |
| Communicate with Professors    | 22.88%                | 77.12%                      |

The participants who were working during the fall 2009 academic semester also responded to questions about the impact of working on their social experiences. A summary of the Likert scale questions addressing how working may have limited certain social experiences is displayed in Table 16. The percentage difference between the agree and disagree responses is relatively small with the largest difference shown at 36.84 percentage points in the ability to utilize campus facilities. Although a majority of 59.87% agrees that working limits their participation in student organizations, the remaining majority of the participants do not find that working limits their other social experiences identified in this question.
Table 16

**Impact of Working on Social Experiences**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Working limited ability to...</th>
<th>Strongly Agree/Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree/Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participate in Student</td>
<td>59.87%</td>
<td>40.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>organizations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join an athletic team</td>
<td>41.33%</td>
<td>58.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interact with other students</td>
<td>38.16%</td>
<td>61.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend fine arts events</td>
<td>41.72%</td>
<td>58.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend athletic events</td>
<td>37.50%</td>
<td>62.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilize campus facilities</td>
<td>31.58%</td>
<td>68.42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the participants in this study are full-time students and the majority of them indicate that they were working during the fall 2009 academic semester, the impact of these multiple demands were addressed in a Likert scale question on the survey. Two of the statements specifically concentrate on time limitations, and in Table 17, a majority of the respondents indicate that both academic and work demands limit their time spent with family and friends. On the other hand, a majority of students report that they have developed friendships and have emotional support from their co-workers and supervisors at their workplace. Most participants agree that their job is not stressful and that they are able to study and prepare for classes at their job. Although combining work and school does limit the participants available time for family, friends, and some academic and social experiences, 70.39% report that combining work and school has made them more organized.

Participants also explained how they are able to balance the demands of school, work and personal life in an open ended response. The major themes include time management, organizational skills, setting school as their priority, studying during work time and limiting activities outside of work and school. Full individual response statements are shown in Appendix E.
Table 17

**Impact of Working on Participant Life Balance and Well Being**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree/Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree/Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic demands limit my time with family and friends</td>
<td>67.33%</td>
<td>32.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work demands limit my time with family and friends</td>
<td>61.59%</td>
<td>38.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work provides a means of emotional support and friendships with co-workers and supervisors</td>
<td>60.93%</td>
<td>39.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My job is stressful</td>
<td>35.10%</td>
<td>64.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My job allows time for me to study and prepare for my classes</td>
<td>61.33%</td>
<td>38.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combining work and school has made me more organized</td>
<td>70.39%</td>
<td>29.60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Job Location: On-Campus and Off-Campus**

The survey participants answered a variety of questions about working during the academic semester and how their work impacted their academic success, engagement and their social experiences. Once the participants indicated that they held at least one job while enrolled during the academic semester, they progressed through the survey to report whether they worked on-campus, off-campus or both. If they held more than one job during the academic semester, the participants were asked to indicate whether the job where they worked the most hours was located on or off campus. The respondents answered the remaining questions in the survey based on the job location where they worked the most hours.

Job location data was utilized to determine if there were any trends in the comparison of on-campus jobs and off-campus jobs. As previously shown in Table 10, the respondents that work on-campus and off-campus are equally distributed at 45.12% each and the remaining 9.76% indicated they work both on and off campus. After the respondents reported the location
of the job where the most hours were worked, the on-campus and off-campus distribution resulted in an even division of 50.0% each.

The initial comparison of job location and academic success was analyzed in terms of the number of hours per week the participants spent studying or preparing for classes. As shown in Table 18, the percentage distribution is fairly comparable for those participants studying 1-15 hours per week with the largest percentage distribution difference of 4.52 percentage points in the 1-5 hour studying category. As the participants reported study time 16 hours per week or more, the off-campus workers held a slight majority.

Table 18

| Number of Hours per Week Spent Studying or Preparing for Classes by Job Location |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Study Hours per Week | On Campus | Off Campus |
| 1 - 5 | 34.15% | 29.63% |
| 6 - 10 | 34.15% | 34.57% |
| 11 - 15 | 18.29% | 18.52% |
| 16 - 20 | 9.76% | 12.35% |
| More than 20 | 3.66% | 4.94% |

As discussed previously, participants were asked to respond to Likert scale questions that addressed the impact work on academic success and engagement. Some of the initial responses to these questions were shown previously in Table 15; however, these variables are presented with a cross-tabulation by job location in Table 19. The majority of participants, regardless of job location report that they do not have to modify or reduce their academic schedule in order to combine work and school. While more on-campus workers report that their job helped with their coursework than off-campus workers, in contrast, more off-campus workers than on-campus workers indicate that their job improved their understanding of course content and their job was related to their coursework and major. More than half of the off-campus workers report that
working limited class preparation compared to only 27.03% of on-campus workers, but the majority of both on-campus and off-campus workers report that work does not limit their communication with professors. Most notably, 76.71% of on-campus workers compared to 46.75% of off-campus workers are allowed to study and prepare for classes during work time.

Table 19

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact of Work on Academic Success and Engagement by Job Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>On Campus</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To combine work and school I modified/reduced my academic schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job helped with coursework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job improved understanding of course content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job was related to coursework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job was related to major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working limited class preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working limited communication with Professors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job allows study and class preparation time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Job location has also been utilized to determine whether or not there are trends in the social experiences of the survey participants. Participation in student organizations is the first variable reviewed for comparison between on-campus and off-campus workers. As shown in Table 20 below, more students working off campus than students working on campus do not participate in any student organization. Additionally, more on-campus students than off-campus students participate in at least one student organization. However, the percentage distribution between on-campus and off-campus students is the same at 24.39% each for those participating in 2 student organizations. More on-campus workers participate in three student organizations, but more off-campus workers participate in more than three student organizations.
Table 20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Student Organizations Participated in by Job Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>On Campus</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than three</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Job location was also used as a comparison of the social engagement of working students.

Participants answered Likert scale questions that addressed various statements about how working during the fall 2009 semester impacted their social experiences. As shown in Table 21, work limits the ability to participate in student organizations mostly for off-campus students. Additionally, more off-campus workers than on-campus workers report that work limits their ability to join an athletic team, interact with other students, and attend fine arts and athletic events. A slight majority of off-campus workers indicate that work limits the time they spend with family and friends while the majority of on-campus workers report that work provides a means of emotional support and friendships with co-workers and supervisors.

Table 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact of Work on Social Engagement by Job Location</th>
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<td><strong>On Campus</strong></td>
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<td>Working limited ability to…</td>
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<td>Participate in student organizations</td>
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<td>Join an athletic team</td>
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<td>Interact with other students</td>
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<td>Attend fine arts events</td>
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<td>Attend athletic events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spend time with family and friends</td>
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<td>Work as emotional support/ friendships with co-workers/supervisors</td>
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CHAPTER IV:
FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the characteristics of full-time undergraduate students at The University of Alabama who hold positions of paid employment during the academic year. The results of this study have been compared to the findings from the 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) to determine how the student employee population at The University of Alabama compares to national trends. Additionally, the study intended to determine what motivated the students to hold employment during the academic semester and how the demands of working affected the academic success and engagement, the social engagement and the overall life balance and well being of these undergraduate student employees. Finally, the study reviewed job location, on campus or off campus, to determine how the academic success and social engagement of the participants may be different in relation to the physical location of their work place.

The participants in the student employment study were randomly selected from a report from The University of Alabama, Office of the Registrar. This report was a listing of the Crimson Mail email addresses for full-time undergraduate students that were at least 19 years of age or older, enrolled during the fall 2009 semester and confirmed for enrollment in the spring 2010 semester. These parameters returned a total count of 14,612 potential participants from the
21,738 total undergraduate count for fall 2009, and 2100 were invited to participate in the study. The recruitment resulted in 239 beginning the survey, 237 agreeing to participate and 207 who completed the survey. Based on the 2100 invited, the response rate was 11.38% with an acceptance rate of 11.29% and a completion rate of 9.86%. The survey participation rate was not ideal, but the information gleaned from these participants is important and will add to the current literature regarding student employment.

Findings

In order to determine the representativeness of the sample, the participant demographic characteristics were compared to The University of Alabama undergraduate student demographics as reported in The University of Alabama 2009-2010 Factbook. When compared to the overall underlying undergraduate student population at UA, the survey participants are fairly representative. Slight variations are seen in age, gender and racial categories. In terms of age, the percentage distribution difference between the UA population and the participants is fairly moderate with the exception of the 20 and 21 age category. Those aged 20 and 21 show a percentage difference of approximately 17% which may be attributed to more than half of the survey participants being aged 20-21. Age categories 19, 22 to 24 and 25 and over are more comparable than the 20-21 age group.

Representativeness of the sample is very close in terms of gender. The University of Alabama undergraduate population is 52.4% female and 47.6% male, while the participants are 61.1% female and 38.9% male. The percentage difference overall is 8.7% with more female students responding to the study than male students. Racial classification is very comparable between the participants and the UA population with all percentage distribution differences under 5%. The highest discrepancy is seen in the “other” minority category and this is likely due
to the multiple racial categories within the survey participants being consolidated into the other minority category for comparison to the UA population. Student classification is the final category used to determine representativeness of the sample and, in general, the classifications are fairly representative. The largest difference is in the freshman category and this is likely resulting from the minimum study participation age of 19, as where the UA population of Freshman students would typically include those who are 18 years of age. Overall, the participants of this study seem to be a fair representation of the overall underlying University of Alabama undergraduate population.

The demographic characteristics of the participants were also compared based on their employment status and this comparison was completed based on a cross-tabulation of the responses to survey question number 17, which asks the respondent to select the number of jobs held during the fall 2009 semester. Those that responded none were listed as non-working and those responding that they held at least 1 job were listed as working. The findings show that 77.2% of the respondents are working students and 22.8% are non-working students. Overall, the majority of the study participants are White (non-Hispanic), female, working students.

Participants were also asked to report on the educational attainment of their parents and this data was reviewed to determine whether the respondents are first generation college students or not. The majority of the participants are non-first generation students with 34.4% of the students indicating their mother attained a bachelor’s degree. In addition, 27.9% of the students reported that their father attained a bachelor’s degree and 27.4% of fathers completed graduate study. Only 21.13% percent of the participants are considered first generation college students whose parents that did not enroll in post-secondary education.
Financial characteristics were the final demographic categories reported by the participants. The types of financial aid and/or scholarships received during the fall 2009 semester were reported and the results were cross-tabulated by employment status. More than half of the participants indicated they have taken out a student loan, followed by 46.8% who report receiving a merit-based UA scholarship. The financial classification of the students as independent of parents or dependent on parents was derived from the questions about income levels for parents and individual students. The majority of the participants (92.34%) are considered dependent. Additionally, the majority of the respondents’ parents earn $80,000 or more annually and the majority of the working students have individual incomes of less than $20,000 annually.

The findings of this study suggest that The University of Alabama undergraduate student population is comparable to the overall national population of undergraduate students in terms of their employment status. Nationally, 70.3% of undergraduate students at four-year public universities work during the academic year while 77.2% of the UA study participants are working. In terms of gender comparison, the national population of working students is 38.8% female and 31.52% male, and respectively, the participants are 47.66% female and 29.44% male. This is likely due to the study participants being 61% female, where there is a closer gender distribution in the national data. Racial classifications are also comparable with the majority of the national population and the UA study participants being White (non-Hispanic), followed by African American or Black and then Hispanic or Latino/a. Although the national population represents a more diverse population, both the national and the UA population share the same top three racial categories. Motivation to work during the academic year was also compared to the
national trends and both populations cite working for spending money as their first reason, followed by working to paying living expenses.

The study participants were asked to answer questions that related to the impact of working during the academic semester on their academic success and engagement. Most of the respondents indicated that their job did not help with coursework or their understanding of course content, a majority also reported that their job was not related to their coursework or major. Further, more than three quarters of the participants indicated that their job did not limit their choice of classes, number of classes or their academic schedule. Overall, for most of the students, working did not impact their academic success and engagement in a negative way.

The impact of working during the academic semester on social engagement was examined in this study and the general findings indicate that, for the majority of the respondents, work has not impacted their social experience aside from the ability to participate in student organizations with 59.87% reporting work did limit this outlet. Although the majority of students would agree that working does not limit their social experiences, the largest percentage difference between those who agree and disagree about the limitations is 36.84 percentage points, and this indicates that there is a significant population of students who feel that work does limit their social experiences.

For students who are attempting to balance the multiple demands of school, work and personal life, available time is a factor. The majority of the participants indicate that both academic and work demands limit their time spent with family and friends. However, many of the participants agree that work provides valuable friendships and emotional support. Overall, combining work and school limits the participants available time for family, friends and some
academic and social experiences. However, 70.39% report that balancing these multiple demands has made them more organized.

To further analyze the survey data, employment questions were compared based on the job location reported by the participant. The percentage of students working on campus and off campus is equally distributed at 50% in each location. For the most part, job location did not influence the number of study hours per week reported by the participants. Job location also did not impact academic scheduling. However, differences are found in comparing class preparation and study time. More than half of the off campus workers report that working limited their preparation for classes while 76.71% of the on campus workers are allowed to study and prepare for classes during work time. In terms of social experiences, most of the participants working off campus report that work limits their ability to participate in student organizations, with a slight majority indicating that work limits their ability join athletic teams, interact with other students and attend athletic and fine arts events.

Conclusions from Research Questions

As discussed previously, the purpose of this study was to glean a basic understanding of the undergraduate students at The University of Alabama in terms of their status as working or non-working students. In general, the study focused on determining the percentage of undergraduate students that work during the academic year, uncovering the motivation to work while enrolled full-time, and discovering how working during the academic year impacts academic success, social engagement and overall student well being. These results are discussed below as each of the eight research questions guiding this study are answered.
Research Question One

How does the percentage of UA undergraduate students that hold positions of paid employment during the academic semesters compare with the national trends found in the 2008 NPSAS?

To determine the national population for comparison purposes, the researcher utilized the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) to review the 2008 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) data. Utilizing the data tools available on the NCES website, the data from the 2008 NPSAS was filtered to return only responses from full-time undergraduate students at four year public universities. Based on these parameters, the data indicates that 70.3% of students work during the academic year. The University of Alabama percentage of undergraduate student workers found is this study is 77.2%. In terms of gender, the national data shows 38.8% female and 31.52% male, while the UA population is 47.66% female and 29.44% male. In the total percentage of working students and the gender comparison scenarios, the percentage difference between the national data and the study participants is less than 10%.

Additionally, both the national population and the UA population hold the same top three racial categories, with the majority of the respondents being White (non-Hispanic). The comparison of racial characteristics shows a larger percentage distribution difference in the White (non-Hispanic) category, 48.29% nationally and 67.76% in the study population. This difference is likely a result of the national population being more diverse than the UA population. Although the sample size for this study was less than ideal, overall, the percentage of UA students holding positions of paid employment during the academic year and their demographic characteristics are comparable to national trends.
Research Question Two

How do the characteristics of UA undergraduate students compare to the national data regarding on campus jobs, off campus jobs and number of hours per week worked during the academic year?

When the UA population is compared to the national population in terms of job location, the results are not as comparable. The majority of the respondents to the national study work off campus at 79.80%. This study finds that the job location of the UA respondents is evenly distributed with on campus workers and off campus workers being 50% each. Although job location is not comparable with the national trends, the literature indicates that on-campus work supports student involvement and engagement (Astin, 1999; Kuh et al., 1991) and it is a positive finding that half of the UA students do work on campus. The number of hours worked per week by the national population and the UA population are fairly comparable with the largest percentage distribution difference being with students working 30 or more hours per week, 18.3% nationally and 7.93% at UA. Again, although this category in not as comparable, it is an encouraging finding since the literature indicates that as students work more hours, their academic success and social engagement decreases (Astin, 1993; Kulm & Cramer, 2006; King, 2007)

Research Question Three

What are the primary reasons and/or motivations for UA undergraduate students to hold positions of paid employment?

The study participants were directly asked to indicate their primary motivation to work during the academic year and they were allowed to respond to multiple reasons. Overall, the vast majority of the respondents (95.33%) report they are working primarily for spending money,
followed by 80% who are working to pay their living expenses, and 72.85% who indicate they are working to gain job experience. When asked specifically about their job, the majority of the respondents indicate their job allowed them to gain experience for future positions and provided a good reference for employment opportunities in the future. Additionally, 60.53% of the participants agree that their parents expect them to work during the academic year, but the reason for this expectation was not captured. Also, 35.95% of the population reports that they could not afford school if they did not work.

**Research Question Four**

*How does working for pay during the academic year affect students’ academic engagement and success?*

The effect of working for pay during the academic year was determined by a series of Likert scale items addressing how working limited various academically engaging behaviors. The majority of the participants indicate that their job did not restrict or limit their choice of classes, number of classes or their academic schedule. Additionally, for most of the respondents, their job did not limit interaction with other students, communication with professors or class preparation. Although many of the respondents indicate that their job did not help with coursework or their understanding of course content, most also indicate that their jobs were not related to their coursework or major. Participants also self reported their grade point average and 80% of the working students have a GPA of 3.0 or above. For the population of students at The University of Alabama, working during the academic year does not appear to have impacted academic engagement in a negative way.
Research Question Five

How does working for pay during the academic year affect students’ social experiences?

The impact of working during the academic year on students’ social experiences was also determined through a series of Likert scale questions addressing what behaviors working has limited. For 60% of the students, work limits their ability to participate in student organizations. Although most students indicate that work does not limit their participation in athletics or their attendance of fine arts and athletic events, around 40% of the participants indicated that it did.

Research Question Six

How do the demands of school, work, family and personal life affect students’ well being?

The effect of combining school and work was addressed through a series of Likert scale questions addressing various statements about academic demands, work demands, and personal life. The majority of the participants indicate that both academic demands and work demands limit the time they spend with family and friends. However, most of the participants report that work provides them with friendships and emotional support. Although time may be limited for family and friends outside of work, many of the participants are developing relationships with co-workers and supervisors. Additionally, 70.39% report that combining work and school has made them more organized.

Participants were also asked to describe how they have been able to balance the demands of school, work and personal life through an open ended response. The most common responses include time management, organizational skills, and setting their academic work as their first priority. Additionally, some participants, more often those who work on campus, indicate that they are allowed to complete academic assignments during their work hours. Limiting time for
activities outside of school and work is another way students are balancing these multiple
demands. Appendix E provides the full statements from the participants.

Research Question Seven

What differences exist between students who work on campus and off campus in terms of
academic engagement?

Utilizing the responses to questions that address academic engagement, a cross-tabulation
by job location was performed to determine if differences appear for students who work on
campus compared to those who work off campus. A comparison of the number of hours spent
studying or preparing for classes shows little difference based on job location, however, 76.71%
of on campus workers compared to 46.75% of off campus workers are allowed to study and
prepare for classes during work time. Job location seems to impact items addressing courses and
major with more on-campus workers reporting their job helped with coursework. Conversely,
more off-campus workers indicate that their jobs improved their understanding of course content
and that their job was related to their major. The most significant difference is seen in class
preparation. While the majority of on-campus workers can study during work time, workers
with off-campus jobs report that these jobs limit class preparation time. This difference may
result from the perspective of supervisors and the nature of work, with on-campus supervisors
understanding that students should make their academic work a priority.

Research Question Eight

What differences exist between students who work on campus and off campus in terms of social
engagement?

Again, the responses to questions addressing social engagement were cross-tabulated by
job location to determine if differences are seen between students who work on campus
compared to those who work off campus. Participation in student organizations was one indicator of social engagement, and more off campus workers than on campus workers do not participate at all. However, as participants reported the number of student organizations, the results change and the same percentage of off campus and on campus workers participate in two organizations. Surprisingly more off campus workers than on campus workers participate in more than three organizations. The caveat is the term *participate*, and this potentially has different meaning for the respondents. For some, they may just be members, where others may be more active members or perhaps organization officers.

Likert scale responses to statements about the effect of work on social experiences were analyzed and, for more off campus workers than on campus workers, their job limited their ability to join an athletic team, interact with other students and attend fine arts and athletic events. These findings are consistent with the literature regarding student involvement and engagement since on campus employment has been found to better support student involvement and engagement (Astin, 1999; Kuh et al., 1991). Additionally, more on campus workers report that work provides a means of emotional support and friendships with co-workers and supervisors. This could be a result of a shared perspective between individuals within the academic community. The findings also show that work limits time spent with friends and family for both on campus and off campus workers.

Recommendations

Although the literature about student employment has mixed conclusions regarding the impact of working during the academic year, general best practices have been identified. In terms of the number of hours worked, recommendations suggest limiting the number of hours worked per week to 20 (Pike et al., 2008; Dundes & Marx, 2006). Additionally, it is
recommended that students work on campus rather than off campus because on campus employment supports academic success and engagement while off campus work tends to limit student opportunities for academic engagement. Students who are physically spending more time on campus are more likely to be involved and participate in campus life experiences (Astin, 1999; Lingrosso, 2007; Cermak & Filkins, 2007; Noel, 1996).

Institutions of higher education have a unique opportunity to expand student learning through practical application of coursework in an on campus employment opportunity. Additionally, on campus student employment opportunities would benefit from the development of learning outcomes that match the overall mission of the institution, each division and the individual operating departments. As more institutions are advertising student employee positions within their human resources department, there is a need for detailed job descriptions and expectations. Student employment programs provide an opportunity for faculty and staff collaboration since both parties are focused on student success and the attainment of knowledge.

Another opportunity for collaboration exists between human resources and the departments that have students in their employ. As a partner with employing departments, human resources could develop training and professional development programs specifically for student employees. In addition to training targeted toward professional development, workshops that address stress management would also be beneficial to working students as they cope with the pressures of balancing their academic work and their job demands. Since the majority of students are working during the academic year, it is important to address the issues of life balance and stress management.

Given that on campus employment opportunities can be utilized to further student learning and development, further research should specifically investigate on campus student
employment programs. At many institutions, the Division of Student Affairs is a leader in providing work experience for students (Perozzi, 2009; Sturgean, 2006). Areas such as student union management, student recreation and student housing and residential communities are beginning to develop specific job descriptions and learning objectives. Some institutions are also beginning to develop student employment programs at the divisional level where students are developing leadership and communication skills within a broader scope. A comparison study of the student employment programs at various institutions may result in determining how consistent learning objectives can be developed and best practices for these programs.

A limitation to this study is the minimum participation age of 19. Although there are full-time undergraduate students attending The University of Alabama who are under the age of 19, the legal age of majority in the state of Alabama is 19 years of age. If participants under age 19 were recruited, they would need parental consent to participate in this study.

Although the survey instrument for this study provided a basic level of knowledge about the student employment trends at The University of Alabama, adjustments to the instrument and the overall study design are recommended if the study were to be replicated in the future. Addressing the response rate, potential participants may have decided the study did not apply to them since the study title was Student Employment Study. If the recruited students are not employed, they may dismiss participation so it is important that the invitation email address the need for all students to respond whether they are working or not. Additionally, the survey was designed with logic that automatically moves the participants along based on responses to previous questions. In this study, the skip question logic did not work as expected, and participants who should have exited the survey based on their response to the first employment
question remained in the survey. This required additional manual organization of the data prior to analysis.

It is also recommended that some of the survey questions be worded more precisely to limit possible interpretation from both participant and researcher. For example, in question number 16 the respondents were asked to indicate the number of student organizations they participated in, but the term participate does not indicate the level of activity with these organizations. Students may have counted organizations that they simply joined but did not actively participate in. Another example of imprecise question wording is shown in question number 35. One of the variables asks if their job allows time for me to study and prepare for my classes and this could be interpreted as allowing studying during work hours or that the job held allows for available time outside of work to study.

Additionally, the instrument addresses characteristics such as first generation college student status and dependent or independent student status by deriving information from other related questions. It is recommended that these specific characteristics be directly addressed. Employment status and job location were determined through a series of three questions, which was cumbersome. Although by reporting the number of jobs held, the participants were confirming whether they worked or not, employment status would be better determined from a yes or no question. In the analysis of the data, the number of jobs was not considered since the participants were asked to answer the employment questions based on the job where they worked the most hours.

When collecting the income levels of parents, the highest annual combined income category available to select was $80,000 or more. It is recommended to add additional income
levels up to $150,000 to this variable because this data may provide new information about working students from high income families.

In this study, only the data that determined representativeness of the sample population and data that answered the eight research questions were analyzed. There are opportunities for further analysis of the collected data that include comparisons of employment status by first generation college students, comparisons of students who cannot afford school without working by financial aid received, comparisons of job location by type of work performed and cross-tabulating the data by class rank. Other variables such as place of residence, number of credit hours completed in the semester, and skills developed through job experience could provide additional findings outside of the research questions addressed in this study.

Additionally, an in-depth qualitative analysis of the responses to question number 37 is recommended since there seem to be trends in the way students describe their ability to balance the demands of school, work and personal life. Several respondents mention utilizing organization and time management skills to balance multiple demands. Respondents also indicate they have to limit sleeping hours to complete all of their tasks, while others state they are allowed to study and read on the job. A qualitative analysis of this data could provide additional findings about life balance and well being of student employees.

The findings in this study can provide insight on the characteristics of full-time undergraduate working students at The University of Alabama. However, as the data is reviewed, it is important to consider the interpretation of the data within the context of this university specifically. There are various stakeholders in the issue of student employment at The University of Alabama including students, faculty, staff and administrators, and it is important to consider their perspective when analyzing and interpreting the findings from this study.
Concluding Observations

The employment of college students is not a new trend, and with the majority of the undergraduates reporting that they are working during the academic semester, it is an important issue in higher education. Although there are mixed conclusions about whether working supports or undermines academic success and engagement in the campus community, many studies suggest best practices for work conditions. Students are working for a variety of reasons from financial need to career preparation and it is important to support them as they balance the multiple demands on their time. As a working student myself, I have continued to develop my time management and organizational skills as I have implemented them in my academic life, professional life and personal life. Overall, the concern with student employment is the allocation of time and, as time is allocated toward work commitments, less time is available for academic work and campus life opportunities. As we continue to progress as a multi-tasking culture, it will be critical to educate students about the importance of stress management, life balance and their overall personal well being.
REFERENCES


Appendix A

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval Letter

December 3, 2009

Tynan Kozak
Department of Higher Ed. Admin.
College of Education
Box 870292

Re: IRB#: 09-OR-338 “University of Alabama Student Employment Survey”

Dear Ms. Kozak:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your proposed research.

Your application has been given expedited approval according to 45 CFR part 46. Approval has been given under expedited review category 7 as outlined below:

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies

Your application will expire on December 2, 2010. If your research will continue beyond this date, complete the relevant portions of Continuing Review and Closure Form. If you wish to modify the application, complete the Modification of an Approved Protocol. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants. When the study closes, complete the appropriate portions of the Continuing Review and Closure Form.

Please use reproductions of the IRB approved stamped consent forms to obtain consent from your participants.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the above application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Carpanente T. Myles, MSM, CIM
Director & Research Compliance Officer
Office of Research Compliance
The University of Alabama
Appendix B

Informed Consent Form

1. Informed Consent

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

Informed Consent Statement for Student Employment Survey

You are being asked to take part in the Student Employment Survey. The study is being conducted by Tyran M. Kozak, a master’s student in the Higher Education Administration program and is being supervised by David E. Hardy, Ph.D. who is an associate professor in the Higher Education Administration program within the College of Education at the University.

STUDY PURPOSE: The purpose of the proposed study is to discover more about the experiences of undergraduate students who are enrolled full time at UA while holding a position of paid employment.

IMPORTANCE OF STUDY: The information gained from this study will provide a better understanding of the trends and experiences of undergraduate students who are balancing work and academics. The results of this study will be used to determine whether UA students are reflective of the national trends for working students. Results will also inform decisions about on-campus student employment options.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE STUDY: You have been asked to participate in this survey because you are classified as a full-time undergraduate student. Approximately 3,100 students at UA have been invited to participate in this study. Students must be 19 years of age or older to participate in this study.

PROCEDURE FOR THE STUDY: If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to complete the web-based Student Employment Survey. If you agree to participate, you will be provided with information instructing you how to complete the web survey and the instrument should take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Participants will be asked to respond to statements such as, “How many hours per week do you work” and “Do you work on-campus, off-campus or both.” If you require special accommodations, please notify the principal investigator and every effort will be made to meet those requests. If you agree to participate in the survey, there will be no cost to you except for your time in completing the survey.

BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY: The benefits to participation are helping the researchers better understand the undergraduate student population at The University of Alabama, leading to improved programs and services that focus on working students.

RISKS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY: While completing the study, it is possible that you will be uncomfortable responding to the survey items. In order to minimize risks, no unnecessary questions will be asked. It is possible that some people may find some of the questions/terminology offensive. Please be aware that you are free to decline to answer particular items on the survey. Although the survey does ask for some personal information, all responses are confidential and there will be no potential legal or disciplinary consequences for you. Collected data will be kept in a secure location accessible only to the researcher administering the survey.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Findings will be summarized across participants in reports that will not identify individual students.

VOLUNTARY NATURE OF STUDY: Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part, you may choose to skip questions, or may leave the study at any time. Leaving the study will not result in any consequence.

CONTACTS FOR QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS: For questions about the study, please contact the principal investigator, Tyran Kozak, at (205) 348-7277 or kozak@crimson.ua.edu or David Hardy, at (205) 348-6874 or dhardy@uhmeet.ua.edu. For questions about your rights as a research participant or to discuss problems, complaints or concerns about a research study, or to obtain information, or offer input, you may call Tanta Myles, the Research Compliance Officer at UA at (205)-348-8461 or toll free at (877)-820-3666.

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA IRB
CONSENT FORM APPROVED: 12/3/09
EXPIRATION DATE: 12/31/2010
1. *I have read the informed consent form. I understand what I will be asked to do. I freely agree to take part in this research study and understand that completion of the survey constitutes my consent to take part in the research. I may print a copy of this consent form to keep.

☐ I agree to participate.
☐ I decline to participate.

Thank you for your willingness to complete this survey. Please answer the following questions based on your experience as a working student at the University of Alabama. All information you provide will be kept completely confidential and will be used in summary to assist UA administrators, faculty members, and student affairs professionals in developing resources and programs that will benefit employed students. Your name will not be associated with your responses in any part of the reporting process.
Appendix C

Email Invitation and Follow-up Emails

SurveyMonkey - MyCollector: Message Preview

Message Preview

Below is a preview of your message based on the first recipient in your list [Email].

To: [Email]
From: [Email]@university.edu

Subject: MA Thesis - Research Participation Request

Body:
Dear [Name],

I am a master’s candidate at the University of Alabama. I am conducting research to investigate the experiences of UA undergraduate students who hold part-time employment positions. You have been invited to participate in the Student Employment Study and the survey link is attached.

This survey will ask questions about your employment during the 2019 Fall semester. This brief survey will take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete.

[Survey Link]

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

<Name>

Master's Candidate

The University of Alabama

College of Education, Higher Education Administration

[Email]@university.edu

Please note, if you do not wish to receive further emails from us, please click the link below, and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list.

[Unsubscribe Link]

Language: English

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71
Subject: UA Student's thesis research participation request

Dear UA Students,

As a student candidate at the University of Alabama, I am conducting a research study to investigate the experience of undergraduate students who hold part-time employment positions. You have been invited to participate in the Student Employment Study and the survey link is attached.

The survey will ask questions about your employment during the academic semester. This brief survey will take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Please respond by Friday, January 20, 2010.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ask.asp

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Yuan Zhao
Master's Candidate
College of Education, Higher Education Administration
yu@crimson.ua.edu

Please note: If you do not wish to receive future emails from us, please click the link below and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/unsubscribe.asp

Message Preview
Below is a preview of your message based on the first recipient in your list (Email).

To: [Email]
From: yzhang@crimson.ua.edu
Subject: UA Student's thesis research participation request...

Dear UA Students,

As a student candidate at the University of Alabama, I am conducting a research study to investigate the experience of undergraduate students who hold part-time employment positions. You have been invited to participate in the Student Employment Study and the survey link is attached.

The survey will ask questions about your employment during the academic semester. This brief survey will take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Please respond by Friday, January 20, 2010.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ask.asp

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Yuan Zhao
Master's Candidate
College of Education, Higher Education Administration
yu@crimson.ua.edu

Please note: If you do not wish to receive future emails from us, please click the link below and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/unsubscribe.asp
Message Summary

Message Delivery Schedule
Delivery completed on January 24, 2010 8:14 PM

Message Recipients
The message mailed to 1029 recipient(s).

Message Preview
Below is a preview of your message based on the first recipient in your list (email):

To: [Email]
From: tkozik@crimson.ua.edu
Subject: UA Master's thesis research participation request...
Body: Dear UA Student,
As a master's candidate at The University of Alabama, I am conducting thesis research to investigate the experience of UA undergraduates students who held paid employment positions. You have been invited to participate in the study.

This survey will ask questions about your employment during the 2010 fall semester. This brief survey will take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Please respond by Friday, January 29, 2010.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/mts.aspx

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,
Tysan Koziak
Master's Candidate
The University of Alabama
College of Education, Higher Education Administration
koziak@crimson.ua.edu

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http://www.surveymonkey.com/mts.aspx

# Back to Messages List
Student Employment Survey

Message Summary

Message Delivery Schedule
Delivered on January 29, 2010 10:05 AM.

Message Recipients
The message mailed to 1,862 recipient(s).

Message Preview
Below is a preview of your message based on the first recipient in your list ([Email]).

To: [Email]
From: 9kzak@crimson.ua.edu
Subject: UA Mentor's thesis-research participation request...
Body: Dear UA Student,
As a master's candidate at The University of Alabama, I am conducting thesis research to investigate the experience of UA undergraduate students who held employment positions. You have been invited to participate in the Student Employment Survey and the survey link is attached.

The survey will ask questions about your employment during the 2009 fall semester. This brief survey will take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Please respond today before midnight.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ [Survey Link]

Thank you in advance for your assistance!

Sincerely,

Tyana Kozak
Mentor's Candidate
The University of Alabama
College of Education, Higher Education Administration
tozak@crimson.ua.edu

Please note: If you do not wish to receive further emails from us, please click the link below, and you will be automatically removed from our mailing list.

http://www.surveymonkey.com/optout.aspx

= Back to Messages List
# Appendix D

## Survey Instrument

### 1. Informed Consent

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

Informed Consent Statement for Student Employment Survey

You are being asked to take part in the Student Employment Survey. The study is being conducted by Tyran M. Kozak, a master’s student in the Higher Education Administration program and is being supervised by David R. Hardy, Ph.D. who is an associate professor in the Higher Education Administration program within the College of Education at the University.

STUDY PURPOSE: The purpose of the proposed study is to discover more about the experiences of undergraduate students who are enrolled full time at UA while holding a position of paid employment.

IMPORTANCE OF STUDY: The information gained from this study will provide a better understanding of the trends and experiences of undergraduate students who are balancing work and academics. The results of this study will be used to determine whether UA students are reflective of the national trends for working students. Results will also inform decisions about on-campus student employment options.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE STUDY: You have been asked to participate in this survey because you are classified as a full-time undergraduate student. Approximately 2,100 students at UA have been invited to participate in this study. Students must be 19 years of age or older to participate in this study.

PROCEDURE FOR THE STUDY: If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to complete the web-based Student Employment Survey. If you agree to participate, you will be provided with information instructing you how to complete the web survey and the instrument should take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Participants will be asked to respond to statements such as, “How many hours per week do you work” and “Do you work on-campus, off-campus or both?” If you require special accommodations, please notify the principal investigator and every effort will be made to meet those requests. If you agree to participate in the survey, there will be no cost to you except for your time in completing the survey.

BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY: The benefits to participation are helping the researchers better understand the undergraduate student population at The University of Alabama, leading to improved programs and services that focus on working students.

RISKS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY: While completing the study, it is possible that you will be uncomfortable responding to the survey items. In order to minimize risks, no unnecessary questions will be asked. It is possible that some people may find some of the questions/terminology offensive. Please be aware that you are free to decline to answer particular items on the survey. Although the survey does ask for some personal information, all responses are confidential and there will be no potential legal or disciplinary consequences for you. Collected data will be kept in a secure location accessible only to the researcher administering the survey.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Findings will be summarized across participants in reports that will not identify individual students.

VOLUNTARY NATURE OF STUDY: Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to take part; you may choose to skip questions, or may leave the study at any time. Leaving the study will not result in any consequence.

CONTACTS FOR QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS: For questions about the study, please contact the principal investigator, Tyran Kozak, at (205) 348-7277 or tkozak@crimson.ua.edu or David Hardy, at (205) 348-6874 or dhardy@bamaed.ua.edu. For questions about your rights as a research participant or to discuss problems, complaints or concerns about a research study, or to obtain information, or offer input, you may call Tanta Myles, the Research Compliance Officer at UA at (205)-348-0461 or toll free at (877)-920-3666.
1. *I have read the informed consent form. I understand what I will be asked to do. I freely agree to take part in this research study and understand that completion of the survey constitutes my consent to take part in the research. I may print a copy of this consent form to keep.

☐ I agree to participate.
☐ I decline to participate.

Thank you for your willingness to complete this survey. Please answer the following questions based on your experience as a working student at the University of Alabama. All information you provide will be kept completely confidential and will be used in summary to assist UA administrators, faculty members, and student affairs professionals in developing resources and programs that will benefit employed students. Your name will not be associated with your responses in any part of the reporting process.
2. Background Information

* 2. Age
   - 19
   - 20
   - 21
   - 22
   - 23
   - 24
   - 25 or older

3. Gender
   - Female
   - Male

4. What is your ethnic background? (You may select more than one answer.)
   - African American or Black
   - Asian American/Pacific Islander
   - Hispanic or Latino/a
   - Native American or Alaskan Native
   - White (non-Hispanic)
   - Other (please specify)

5. Place of residence during the fall 2009 semester
   - Residence hall or other university housing
   - Fraternity or sorority house
   - Private apartment or room within walking distance of the university
   - House, apartment, etc. away from campus
   - With parents or relative
6. What is the highest level of education completed by your mother?

- [ ] Elementary school or less
- [ ] Some high school
- [ ] High school graduate
- [ ] Some college
- [ ] Associate’s degree from two year
- [ ] Bachelor’s degree
- [ ] Some graduate school
- [ ] Graduate degree
- [ ] Don’t know

7. What is the highest level of education completed by your father?

- [ ] Elementary school or less
- [ ] Some high school
- [ ] High school graduate
- [ ] Some college
- [ ] Associate’s degree from two year
- [ ] Bachelor’s degree
- [ ] Some graduate school
- [ ] Graduate degree
- [ ] Don’t know

8. What types of financial aid and/or scholarships did you receive for the fall 2009 semester? (Check all that apply)

- [ ] Pell Grant
- [ ] Work-Study
- [ ] Other Federal Grant Aid (i.e. SEOG, Perkins, etc.)
- [ ] Alabama State Grant
- [ ] Merit-based UA scholarship
- [ ] Need-based UA scholarship
- [ ] Student Loan(s)
9. What is your best estimate of your parents’ total household income last year?

- If you are financially independent from your parents, please check here, then click Next.
- Less than $20,000
- $20,000-$39,999
- $40,000-$59,999
- $60,000-$79,999
- $80,000 or more
3. Independent Income

10. What is your best estimate of your own total household income last year?
   - Less than $20,000
   - $20,000–$39,999
   - $40,000–$59,999
   - $60,000–$79,999
   - $80,000 or more
4. Student Information

11. What classification were you during the fall 2009 semester?
   - Freshman
   - Sophomore
   - Junior
   - Senior

12. Number of credit hours completed during fall 2009

13. What was your GPA for the courses completed during the fall 2009 semester?
   - 4.0 – 3.6
   - 3.5 – 3.0
   - 2.9 – 2.6
   - 2.5 – 2.0
   - 1.9 – 0.0

14. How many hours a week did you usually spend studying or preparing for your classes in fall 2009?
   - 1 to 5 hours
   - 6 to 10 hours
   - 11 to 15 hours
   - 16 to 20 hours
   - More than 20 hours

15. How many hours a week do you usually spend on campus, not counting time attending classes or working at an on-campus job?
   - None
   - 1 to 3 hours
   - 4 to 6 hours
   - 7 to 9 hours
   - 10 to 12 hours
   - More than 12 hours
16. How many student organizations did you participate in during fall 2009?

- None
- One
- Two
- Three
- More than three
5. Employment Information

17. How many jobs for pay did you have while you were enrolled during the fall 2009? (include work-study)
   - None
   - One
   - Two
   - Three
   - More than three

18. Was your job(s) located on campus or off campus during fall 2009?
   - On campus
   - Off campus
   - Both on and off campus

19. If you had more than one job during fall 2009, where did you work the most hours per week?
   - On campus
   - Off campus
   - One job (location was identified in question #18)

   If you have more than one job, please refer to the job where you work the most hours (selected in question #19) when answering the following questions.

20. In your job held during fall 2009, did you work for...
   - No job
   - The University of Alabama
   - The University of Alabama Auxiliary Service (e.g., Bama Dining, Supply Store, etc.)
   - A for-profit company
   - A nonprofit organization
   - A local, state, or federal government
   - The military
   - Self-employed
21. In your job held during fall 2009, what kind of work did you do?
☐ Office/Clerical Support
☐ Customer Service
☐ Facilities Operations
☐ Food Service
☐ Retail Sales
☐ Other

22. Did you have this job before you enrolled at The University of Alabama?
☐ Yes
☐ No

23. During the fall 2009 semester, how many hours per week did you usually spend working on a job for pay?
☐ 1 to 10 hours
☐ 11 to 15 hours
☐ 16 to 20 hours
☐ 21 to 30 hours
☐ More than 30 hours

24. Did your job involve evening and/or weekend hours during fall 2009?
☐ Yes
☐ No

25. On average, how many hours per day did you work at your job during fall 2009?
☐ Less than one
☐ One
☐ Two
☐ Three
☐ Four
☐ Five
☐ More than five
26. Would you say you worked during all the weeks you were enrolled, most of them, half of them, or less than half in fall 2009?

- All
- Most
- Half
- Less than half
6. Impact of Employment

27. Would you say that working while you were going to school during the fall 2009 semester had a positive effect, a negative effect, or no effect on the grades you earned?
   - Positive effect
   - Negative effect
   - No effect

*28. In order to combine school and work during fall 2009, I...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Took classes outside of work time</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Took distance education courses</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modified my work schedule</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modified/reduced my academic schedule</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

29. The job I held during the fall 2009 semester...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helped with my career preparation</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helped with my coursework</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed me to better understand what I learned in class</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restricted my class choices</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited my class schedule</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited the number of classes I could take</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was related to my coursework</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was related to my major field of study</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was related to my career/education plans after graduation</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowed me to gain experience for future positions</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided a good reference for future employment opportunities</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided a good reference for future educational opportunities</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
30. Working while going to school in fall 2009 limited my ability to...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participate in student organizations</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join an athletic team</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interact with other students</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend fine arts events</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend athletic events</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make use of campus facilities</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare for my classes</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicate with my professors</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31. Why did you choose to work during the fall 2009 semester?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Earn spending money</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay tuition and academic expenses</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay living expenses</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gain job experience</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep Busy</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

32. Do you intend to continue working with the same employer after graduation?

☐ Yes
☐ No

33. Do your parents/guardians expect you to have a job for pay while you are enrolled?

☐ Yes
☐ No

34. Could you have afforded to attend school if you had not worked?

☐ Yes
☐ No
35. Life Balance and Well Being

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic demands limit my time with family and friends.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work demands limit my time with family and friends.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work provides a means of emotional support and friendships with co-workers and supervisors.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My job is stressful.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My job allows time for me to study and prepare for my classes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combining work and school has made me more organized.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*36. Please indicate the skills and personal characteristics you have developed while working at your job (check all that apply).*

- [ ] Communication
- [ ] Leadership
- [ ] Teamwork
- [ ] Organization
- [ ] Project Management
- [ ] Responsibility
- [ ] Accountability
- [ ] Critical thinking/reasoning
- [ ] Innovation/Creativity

*37. Please describe how you have been able to balance the demands of school, work and personal life.*
Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this Student Employment Survey.
Appendix E

Participant Responses to Survey Question # 37

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question #37</th>
<th>Please describe how you have been able to balance the demands of school, work and personal life.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TIME MANAGEMENT!!!!</td>
<td>I have always been busy and been able to handle a lot on my plate. So I just worked hard when I worked and relaxed otherwise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I only work a number of hours that do not meddle with my college work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I give my personal life too much of a priority over work and school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with lots of time management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By evaluating priorities and allocating proper time to each priority.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I get a kit done while I am at work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It is very difficult to balance school, work, and a social life. It takes a lot of time management skills and a lot of hard work. It also demands a lot of stress and a lot of time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I work as a tutor (for an agency) and spent the fall semester working one-on-one with local girls 7th-10th grade. Balancing school, work, and a social life hasn't been too difficult because my tutoring hours are usually in the evening. Extracurricular activities have been the only real causality of my work schedule because after-school tutoring hours clash with student organization meeting times.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School comes first for me, even though it shouldn't. I love my job and I know that working hard now will pay off in the long run even if school takes longer to complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I work out of state so I only work when at home, when I do have studying to do I am able to work around it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I work later in the evening or use the weekend to work. If I do not work on the weekends, I splurge and use it as time to do things around my apartment as well as get homework done. I also live with my girlfriend so I am able to see her much more often than most which helps balance time with her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It's simple, my job knows that school comes first, they work around my schedule!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If I could afford to pay my bills without having to work I would because balancing school and work is difficult.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I am currently a Marine Corps Reservist, so one weekend a month (Fri, Sat and Sun) I have to travel 150 miles to Huntsville, AL, to train. I get a little money from this, but not much.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My tuition has already been paid for through the PACT program up until this semester (Spring 2010), so I took out a loan for the tuition so I could graduate. My parents business did absolutely horrible last year and they are basically broke so I took a job last semester to earn some of my own money in order to help my parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The job sucked and had nothing to do with my career field. If anything, I learned that I will never have a job in sales or customer service.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
because my job is a student job, I am a student first and foremost and it allows me to work on
bettering my education while at work.

It is somewhat hard to work 30 hours per week, and attend 15 hours of classes. It was really
exhausting, but I pretty much had to eliminate all other activities besides work and school.

My job simply requires me to sit at a desk and sign visitors to the dorm in. This time forces me
to work on my homework since there is nothing else to do. I also work early mornings which
allows me to work on homework before I go to class that day. I procrastinate a lot so this gives
me time to cram before class. It also forces me to do things in advance because I have time
allocated to just do homework.

The busier you are, the more adept you become at time management. I feel like I'm doing what
I'm supposed to be doing and don't feel like I waste much time at all. My work hours are
flexible so that really helps for things like doing job interviews, going to the games on
Saturdays, and generally having weekends off. I'd rather push hard during the week and not
have to think about it on the weekend, although this past semester my only true day off was
Saturday...on Sundays, I almost always did school work to stay caught up.

I am just an organized person, that doesn't have much free time.

stay organized and keep a planner of scheduled events and use to-do lists

Although I wish I could have worked more to earn more money, I put school first on my
priorities list. No matter what decisions I made, school was always first. The shift I worked
during the fall ended at 8pm so I had plenty of time for my personal life. I quit the job in
December due to student teaching starting in January.

I work during the afternoon and never at nights or weekends. This allows for me to have time
for school after eating supper but before doing anything for the night.

I have worked out my schedule to allow enough time for school, work, and study time.
The only way I can make my schedule work is to give my employer my academic schedule and
let them prepare my work schedule from that information. I try to study when I can and
sometimes I am able to study at work. But because of work and class, either my study time or
personal/social time really takes a hit.

use a calendar to organize everything going on a day, a week, or even a month in advance
Just to try to fit everything into a schedule. If something doesn't fit right, there really isn't a
whole lot you can do about it.

I like to keep busy so working 30 hours and being enrolled full time was not that difficult. At
times it was stressful because of exams and such, but my employer was always understanding
and allowed me to put school first.

Well, it definitely has not been easy. The only way I can honestly say that I made it through
this past semester was by the grace of God.

I have learned how to balance all of them. But with God all things is possible.

It's simple, prioritize. Before bills life went something like school, personal life, and lastly
work. With a slow economy that order is now work, work, and school. Its hard being a student
worker who slips between the guidelines for federal aid and winds up getting the shaft.

It's all about time management. Having a job forces me to make better use of my time. I've
always felt that the busier I am the more likely I am to be more organized. Having little or
nothing to do usually results in me procrastinating.
just by keeping my priorities straight

Although it was hard for me in the beginning to keep a healthy balance between my work and my schooling, it is much easier now. To find that healthy balance, you need to be sure that you allow periods of time that would be used strictly for homework, studying, etc. Having a job while enrolled in school literally forces you to become organized so you will be able to find that time for academics. One might have to cancel an outing with friends or turn off the tv occasionally to be sure they get that study time in, but that is the price you pay when you have a job.

It has been hard, but I needed the money. I just had a set schedule every week and treated it like another class I had to attend. I would have been nice to have more time to study, but the money was important to me.

to do lists

Honestly, it's very hard to balance two jobs and try to go to school. But, seeing as to how I don't have financial support from my family, I have to take out loans and work as hard as I can to stay in school. Having these jobs helps me remember why I have them. I WILL finish college, and I WILL have a career.

Working while attending the University has helped me to become more organized since I am forced to study in a shorter period of time. Working with children brings joy to my life and helps to stimulate my mind, so that I can perform better in school.

Most of my friends work with me, and my work is at school, so I can multitask between the three easily.

I took classes early in the day, went home and did homework/studying in the afternoon. Then at night I was free to do things with my friends.

Just get it all done.

After I would get home from work I would work on homework or study for a test the next day, I would always be exhausted and many times I did not do as well on many things because of my job.

it was incredibly hard and i often didn't balance but had to disregard one. school and work usually won out. sleep and friends lost.

I just make sure I always have a good schedule to follow

little sleep and time management crash course

It helped me schedule times to study knowing when i had to go to work and what kind of tests i had.

Staying busy makes me more efficient; when I don't have a lot to do I procrastinate and I don't do as well. So having a job and going to classes keeps me focused, and I always manage to have time for friends because I make that a top priority (college can't be all work and no play).

I have to put school work first then work abd then the little time that is left is for my personal life.

In order for me to pay rent, i must have a job. So some things are sacrificed so I can continue to live here and go to school.

I work as long as I'm not in school. I have an 8-5 job everyday except for the weekends. I don't have to work at night or on the weekends which gives me plenty of time to study.

I tried to schedule my classes around the hours that the restaurant I work at is open, but my school is always first priority. I would also check my syllabi regularly so that nothing would sneak up on me.

Scheduling is key. And organization is crucial
Through time management, I have been able to balance the demands of school, work, and personal life.

It's been very difficult and I have definitely let school work slack the most. I have a very strong tie to my family so trying to work, do school, and keep up good grades has been a big struggle.

Don't sleep

A lot of patience and work

buck up and get it done... that's it... nothing else matters. There's no excuses. Just get done what you need to get done.

go to class, take notes, work a few days a week and see friends when I'm not doing either of those

Using calendar.

I haven't been able to

I just go to school then straight to work and home to study personal life gets cancelled a lot.

always had a planner

I had to drop some classes in order to make enough money to pay for school. I did not have much of a social/personal life during the semester.

I focus on one day at a time, on one thing at a time.

I attended the University previously and have a degree. I am currently working on a second one. I have to work so you just make it work. I try to schedule my classes that I have time to work as well as time to study. I usually will schedule classes with a break between them and study during that time. You just have to be really organized and plan ahead.

I make sure that my work schedule does not interfere with my class schedule and I don't work after five.

I just do what I have to do to get by. Usually I sacrifice sleep to get things for school taken care of.

Time management is the only good answer I could give!

i get off work at 5 so i have plenty of time to do school work and i have no friends

Constantly on the move. Staying ahead of the game and being mentally, physically, and emotionally prepared on a daily basis.

By not doing the best I could at my job. Engineering students who are dedicated to their grades should NOT be RA's.

I have had to start putting daily events down in a calendar to keep a clear schedule of all I had to do.

Having both school and job responsibilities helps you learn how to be responsible. It teaches you time management and help you become a better person.

WORKING AND GOING TO SCHOOL IS HARD SOMETIMES BECAUSE I CANT CALL OUT OF WORK BECAUSE I HAVE A PAPER OR A PROJECT DUE YET I AM STILL REQUIRED TO GET IT DONE BY THE SAME DEADLINE AS EVERYONE ELSE AS WOULD BE EXPECTED. SO IT HAS MADE ME START ON THINGS EARLIER TO BE ABLE TO FINISH THEM BEFORE WORK AND BY THE DEADLINE. HANGING OUT WITH FRIENDS IS HARD SOMETIMES TO BECAUSE EVERYONES SCHEDULES DON'T MESH TOGETHER AND THE BUSIER SOMEONE IS THE HARDER IT IS TO PLAN THINGS. ALSO WHEN FRIENDS GO OUT LATE AT NIGHT I CAN'T ALWAYS GO BECAUSE I HAVE TO BE AT WORK EARLY THE NEXT MORNING.
Neither my coursework nor work was overly demanding during this particular semester, so balancing the three was not difficult at all.

Keeping a detailed planner so I can plan ahead each day.

I love my job. Thus, it's not difficult to do it. Plus, it is part-time.

I've learned how to balance my time. You can't make it to every party and hangout everything. Sometimes you just have to work and study!!

Balancing school, work, and personal life is not a skill I obtained while in college. I have always had to work, starting with babysitting fulltime when I was 13, working throughout high school, and now college. I have never minded working. Coming from a low-income family its something I had to do if I wanted the basics necessities such as clothes and shoes, and I had to work to help out my family. When its something you have to due for the basic necessities of life, food, rent, clothes, etc, you make the demands of school, work, and personal life balance.

Little sleep!

I am able to balance because I put my personal life on the back burner, sort of. I rest on the notion that I can party and have fun respectfully after I graduate.

Hard work

I have an amazing planner that I always have with me.

By planning out schedules ahead of time to ensure that I could be able to complete all the work was required.

Pretty well

I always put classes and studying first. I prioritize in this way and then fill in the rest of my schedule with how much I think I can work and still have some down time to socialize and hang out with my friends.

By setting a higher priority on studies in the time I have left after class and work I have made better grades. I work with many friends so my social life is not hurt really.

Prioritizing and asking for time off when I need it to study.

I really do not have a personal life. I attend class and go to work.

It's hard at times but the way I work it out is to mainly spend a few nights a week studying and then a few nights out with my friends.

I plan for weeks ahead of time so I know when school things are due, when I have to work, and the time left over is spent with friends.

I have been using a daily planner to plan out class time, study time, and work time

I try my best to balance school and work. I attend classes in the morning, go to work most of the afternoon, and then try to get my homework done at night. It leaves little room for anything else. A social and or personal life is almost nonexistent.

Easily

Organization and prioritization

I worked few hours and scheduled activities and school before or after work.

I make sure to dedicated enough time to each aspect of my life.

Have to work to continue attending UA, no other choice. ROLL TIDE

School and work come first, then personal life.

It is not easy!!!

Through my job, I have learned how to manage my time more efficiently. It has not been a burden to my life, whether it be academic, social, or involvement on campus. I have had the opportunity to get to know the professors in the department in which I work better than I had
prior to my job. I would recommend working to any student if they have the time in their
schedules.

Gotta do what I gotta do. Gotta work to pay for this ridiculous tuition, that’s going up every
year. If they keep going, they are going to have another student revolution on their hands.

My employer is reasonable and understands that school comes first. I usually will sign up for
classes in a manner that will allow for a decent work schedule. Last semester, however, I felt
that I did not have a personal life because I had difficult classes, work, and was the social chair
for my sorority. My friends got to relax and have their "me" time while I was working, so it
was hard for them to understand why I might not want to go out afterwards. All the hours I
work is essentially time I could have been using towards school work.

I have made a schedule that balances work and class successfully. Since my place of work is in
the middle of campus, I am able to work for a few hours in between my classes.

You just need to figure out what your priorities are and balance them out to the importance to
yourself.

I allot time slots for everything, it has basically taught me organization

I hated having to balance the demands of school work and my personal life. I take school very
seriously and work interfered with my ability to be organized and prepared for classes. That is
why I ended up quitting my job is because I decided putting school first was more important
than being paid minimum wage.

I have a planner. Hype it. I also just got a Droid. Hype that.

It's been tough, but my job was usually fun, therefore I was not too stressed out there!

I haven't balanced them. I chose one or the other and almost always neglected something else.
My time management skills are terrible.

Pick which is more important to get accomplished, when.

I just had to make a schedule for myself and stick to it.

Scheduling time for each event. Keeping a to do list.

Proper organization. I know my priorities and I give myself adequate time to rest while
restoring and recalibrating my focus so that I do not work myself too much.

You just do it. You have no choice sometimes when your parents are extremely rich but refuse
to help you emotionally or financially.

I have become better at time management with my studies

You always have to be organized and you must be able to think on your feet. Tasks can be
thrown at you from any direction, but you have to stay calm to survive. This is how I stay
balanced with school, work, personal life

I take it one day at a time but majority of the time I break down and cry because I have to
support myself. It's hard.

Whatever I have time for that's what I do.

It was all about time management. I was determined to master my time management skills
prior to taking on this job.

Stay up late and work smarter

I was pregnant while I worked at the Rec and took a full load of classes. Balance of life was a
necessity.

I keep a schedule.

I make daily to do lists so that I know exactly what needs to be done on a given day. I have
since quit my second job, but I still work as a designer at the Crimson White newspaper. Having one job has given me more time for a social life and when there is nothing to do at the CW one day, I can work on homework or organize my personal life.

Time management and keeping your goals and priorities in check.

In order to balance these demands, I plan out time each day for school and work and whatever leftover time I have left I use for personal life.

I developed insomnia.

Keep going.

I work at the Northport DCH hospital and am a nursing major so I have found that my co-workers are a great source of information in relation to my school work. The hospital is very flexible with my work and school schedule and they allow me to work when I want and have never stressed me to choose work over school. I feel better prepared for my classes because I learn so much at work.

It takes a lot of organization skills. As well as patience

I know what I have to do when it comes to having a job and working. I know that sacrifices have to made and that is just a part of life.

Self discipline and not always being able to do the 'fun' things that I would possibly otherwise have done. You have to be more selective in what extra activities you are going to participate in and still be able to keep up with course work and be at work on time and be alert and productive while there.

By not sleeping enough

Set priorities.

being organized

I worked late at night. It did not interfere with anything.

I have had to become more organized which has had a positive effect on my life as a whole.

A lot of late nights and studying on weekends.

It was simple have a schedule.

I scheduled my school classes and then applied for a job and told them which hours I was willing to work around my school. Personal time was usually in the evenings after classes and work.

I'm allowed to do my homework at my job. As long as I pay attention to people seeking my assistance, I can use my work time to study. Also 2 of my closest friends are employed by the same people in an office in the same building. Therefore, I have time to see them before/after/during work. Also my shift only requires me to work every other weekend so I can see my friends on the weekends.

Luckily, I have always been a great student and therefore do not have to study a lot. The other people I work with struggle to balance school and work.

I worked in part of the co-op program so there was no pressure of school work

I plan ahead, knowing how much time I have and how much of that time needs to be devoted to academics

I have a job that is willing to work with my school schedule.