Leading Lives of Meaning and Purpose
QUICK FACTS

• Location: Conveniently located between NYC & LA
• Enrollment: 1,650
• Characteristics:
  • 45% men; 55% women
  • 18% International
  • 26% U.S. students of color
  • 10% Iowa; 90% non-Iowa
• Careers, Life, and Service: 22 FTE
• Reporting Line: Office of the President
WHY THE CENTER FOR CAREERS, LIFE, AND SERVICE?

• Developing an integrated center originated from the 2012 College’s strategic plan
• Multiple problems to address:
  • How might we shift post-college planning from an “opt in” to an “opt out” model?
  • How might we engage students early, and sustain support during their time at Grinnell?
  • How might we ensure our approach to advising is more holistic in scope, and more specialized in response to student need?
  • How can we strengthen relationships with employers?
  • What must happen to maximize student participation in high-impact experiences?
WHAT DO WE MEAN BY “CAREER?”

“the blend of one’s personal, professional, and civic aspirations.”
THE “CLS”

Advising & Exploration

Employer Engagement

Career Communities

Global Fellowships & Awards

Service & Social Innovation
KEY QUESTIONS

• What are the institutional priorities?
• What is your capacity for change? How patient are you (others)?
• What are you willing to sunset?
• How will you engage key stakeholders (when visioning, planning, and implementing)?
• Do you have the right people “on the bus” and “in the right seats?”
Presented by:
Lisa Hinkley, Associate Vice President for Career and Professional Development
Fast Facts: Lake Forest College

• Small, private college just outside of Chicago; city is our extended classroom
• 1528 undergraduates
• Diverse student body
  – 39% ethnic minority or international students
  – From nearly every state and 73 countries
  – Greater diversity than most liberal arts colleges
• 9.7 FTE Career Advancement Center staff members – more than twice the national median
• Reporting line: President’s Office
Not your average networking events –
from nearly 2000 meetings in 2 hours at Speed Networking to collage-making
Key Strategies

1. Engage students in career preparation during their **first days on campus**

2. Help all students gain **internships** and/or other productive experiential learning opportunities

3. Mobilize campus community participation in vibrant **Career Pathways Program** in which students develop 4-year preparation plans and receive expert, individualized mentoring and employment connections
Career Pathways

• Specialized communities students join to match interests with career preparation – alumni, trustees, employers, and students are all involved

• Organized by occupational specialties

• Find inspiration stories, related majors, and immediate next steps on Career Pathways website

*Career Pathways include:*

Business & Finance ~ Law & Public Service

Creative Arts ~ Science & Health Care

Build Your Own
Accomplishments

• Faculty and trustees voted unanimously to update the College Mission Statement: “….We prepare our students for, and help them attain, productive and rewarding careers.”

• Integrated Experiential Learning Requirement and 3 skills-based courses added to General Education Curriculum

• Collaborative new career course integrates resilience and entrepreneurial skills
Lessons

• Real change takes time and resilience.

• Money helps – great colleagues matter even more.

• 10 years in – we’re part start-up and part mature career center.

• Never forget how high the stakes have gotten for students – we might never do enough, but we must always do more. Our students deserve to have an army of people fighting for their success!
Lisa Kastor
Director of Career Planning
The College of Wooster
Wooster Facts

• Private Liberal Arts College in the middle of Ohio
• Enrollment: 2,000
• Student Body
  • 54% women, 46% men
  • 20% U.S. students of color
  • 13% international
  • 37% Ohio, 63% non-Ohio
  • 43 states and 54 countries represented
• Career Planning FTE: 4.6
• APEX FTE: 19.6
• Reporting Line: Academic Affairs, Provost
APEX: Primary Mission

We are a staff of 26 advisors who collaborate to encourage students to become passionately engaged in their education and to empower them to make informed, intentional choices about academic, professional and personal goals.
Why APEX?

In 2008-09 there was a perfect storm:

• National conversation about the value of the liberal arts
• New president conducting dozens of focus groups with alumni
• Identified student needs produced from collecting data that informed
• Wooster’s Strategic Plan
Charge from Wooster’s Strategic Plan

To create a comprehensive advising system that incorporates the best of Career Planning, Academic Advising, and Experiential Learning.
APEX: Opened Fall 2012

**Integrated Offices**
- Academic Advising
- Career Planning
- Entrepreneurship
- Experiential Learning
- Learning Center
- Off-Campus Studies
- Registrar

**Guiding Principles**
- Comprehensive Advising
- Mentored Undergraduate Academic Management & Professional Development
- Student-Centered Approach & Space
APEX: How We Guide Students to Find Purpose & Integrate Their Goals

- Develop academic/professional skills
- Identify, explore, and test interests, skills, and values
- Provide opportunities for experiences beyond the classroom
- Guide students in reflective exercises
- Translate their liberal arts education and experiences into unique narratives
APEX: Signature Programs

- APEX Fellowships
- Academic Focus Programs
- Wooster 101’s for First Years
- City & Country Treks
- Community Care Network
Assessment: Quantitative & Qualitative

- Student Engagement Data
- Appointment & Program Evaluations
- Course Objectives & Evaluations
- Learning Outcomes Assessments
- First Destination Data
Lessons Learned

• A leadership team takes **time to integrate**. Have a **clear vision and specific goals**.

• Selection of staff is extremely important, **collaborative spirits** are necessary for success.

• Gaining “buy-in” from various constituencies requires **planning and patience**.

• Working with donors requires creating a **trusted relationship with Advancement team**.

• **Managing** trustees and alumni **expectations** takes the ability to articulate current goals.

• **Partnering** with key players **beyond our office** helps promote success for all student groups.

• **Faculty engagement** is key to helping students develop educational and professional plans.

• Student needs and the way we deliver resources have a life. **Sometimes you need to let go**.

• There are many ways to assess outcomes. **Work with your institutional researchers**.
THANK YOU