




40 Years of the UTM Career Centre

A History Report

University of Toronto Mississauga

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40TH
ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF UTM CAREER CENTRE



The UTM Career Centre wants to thank the former leaders and staff of the Centre for their time and information to help compile this history.

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Introduction

The Career Centre is a crucial part of the many student services available to students, as it aims to prepare students for life beyond their degree. What is now a high-ranking resource centre with a rich and varied range of career resources and services began in 1979 when the UTSG Career Centre satellite office moved from Coleman House to room 3094 in the then South Building, and became the Erindale College Career Counselling and Placement Centre. The tight-knit campus provided the required motivation and support that made the success of the UTM Career Centre possible today.

What is known as the UTM Career Centre today began with only a few binders housed in at Coleman house until it became the official location for the Erindale campus on September 6th, 1979. When doors opened to the approximately 6000 students enrolled, there was only one full-time staff member to bring career education to students, but in the many years since the Centre has undergone considerable growth, in terms of staffing, student population, and funding sources. Major milestones include going from 1 staff member to a cohort of 19 full-time staff to service approximately 15000 students, as well as moving to a student fee funding model introduced in 1995, which made the Centre accountable to the student-led Quality of Service to Students council. Through the many changes the Career Centre has undergone in the last 40 years since becoming an independent centre, one thing has remained constant: the commitment to helping students learn the process of life-long career management. The Centre has always considered students' self-knowledge and personal development to be the key to career development. The Centre contributes to student success by helping students develop their career plans in the context of who they are. This includes considering their academic and non-academic experiences; helping them to understand and articulate the values of these experiences in reaching their goals; and connecting them to the broader world and opportunities.

Career Centre staff do this through a wide variety of initiatives that range from in-person services, career education resources and programming, to events big and small. All of these have evolved through the years in order to adapt to ever-changing economic conditions, technological advancements, labour market fluctuations, the evolving culture and identity of UTM and, ultimately, student needs.

Services

Over the years the Centre developed many different ways of providing career services to students. This has included the one to one services, workshops, programs, networking events and panels, and fairs, each evolving to meet students' needs.

One to One Services

Students have always been able to walk into the Career Centre and receive assistance. Initially professional staff provided the assistance; with budget growth over the years, peer career assistants were hired and trained to assist students with their initial questions. From this initial contact, students can then see a career professional in individual appointments, where they can form their own individual goals and plans. Appointments cover career counselling, further education plans, job search strategies, resumes, cover letters and interviews. With campus growth staff roles have become more specialized in delivering these services. Both peer and professional staff also participate in Pop Ups, where services travel out of the Centre and are offered at other locations on campus.

In the mid-1990s, due to high demand for Resume Critiques, the UTM Career Centre adopted Resume Blitz days from the St. George model. In addition to this, the availability of drop-in resume critiques increased in 2000, which also helped to accommodate the high student demand. Both Resume Critiques and Blitz days have grown to be incredibly popular with students. Critiques have now become available throughout the week with all slots filled almost immediately upon opening in the morning, and Resume Blitzes are offered at peak times during the year.

Programs, Workshops, Fairs and Events

Within the first few years of opening, the Centre already offered the Alumni Network, the Student Volunteer Assistant Program (now the paid student staff program), the Summer Job Fair (now called the Get Hired Fair) and Career Nights (now replaced with the Career Centre Networking Series). Over time, staff responded to student and industry changes, phasing events/programs out over time and introducing new ones. Events no longer offered include the Survey Science Fair, Career Explosion, the Business and Government Fair, and the Career Information Expo. New events include the Get Experience Fair, Networking Nights for Communications and Marketing, Emerging Accounting Professionals and Networking Night for Graduate Students.

One of the first programs to be piloted at this campus in 1985 was the Extern Job Shadowing program. This program gives students the opportunity to explore a career of interest by visiting a workplace and shadowing a professional. The model of the program was adapted from a similar program at an American college, and became a pride of the UTM Career Centre, since it was the first of its kind in Canada. In 2012, the suite of Career Exploration programs underwent further expansion by offering the In the Field program, which is similar to a program offered in 1980s where students could sign-up to visit different workplaces in a group. Both of these career exploration programs are now fully coordinated by UTM staff, in collaboration

with UTSG and UTSC to ensure UTM students can access all three campus programs.

Other early programs that remain popular are the employment programs such as the Permanent Job Registry, and the Recent Graduate Employment Service and Graduate Student Employment Service. These still exist, albeit under different names as job postings for full-time immediate opportunities and full-time for future grads on the online job board hosted on the multifaceted Career and Co-curricular Learning Network (CLNx). Students gain access to these programs by attending the mandatory Now That I'm Graduating, What's Next? Workshop (formerly known as Graduation, then What?), which grants students access to the full-time job board. This incentive-based system has helped keep attendance and participation in the programs at a steady level. Now That I'm Graduating, What's Next has remained as a mandatory attendance workshop to ensure that graduating students achieve a deeper understanding of effective job search principles.

Workshops and seminars have always been a valued method for providing career education to UTM students. Workshops and seminars were initially instructed by the first director Evelyn (Paley) Ennor (due to low staffing), then by Anne Ritchie, Career Counsellor, through the 80s and 90s. By the early 2000s, however, the growth of student staff allowed a shift to the Career Assistants leading the seminars instead. When full-time staff increased further in the mid-2000s, the role of running seminars shifted once again to full-time staff and counsellors, as it is in present day. Initially, the Career Centre offered eight different Job Search workshops. In the 80s, staff found that full day Career Planning sessions and Career Exploration sessions lasting 8-10 hrs were most convenient to students. These were sometimes offered during Reading Week, or on weekends. However, by the 2000s, students wanted shorter workshops due to their time constraints and often preferred more tailored individual appointments that worked with their schedule. The structure and format of the workshops have undergone similar changes, driven by student preference.

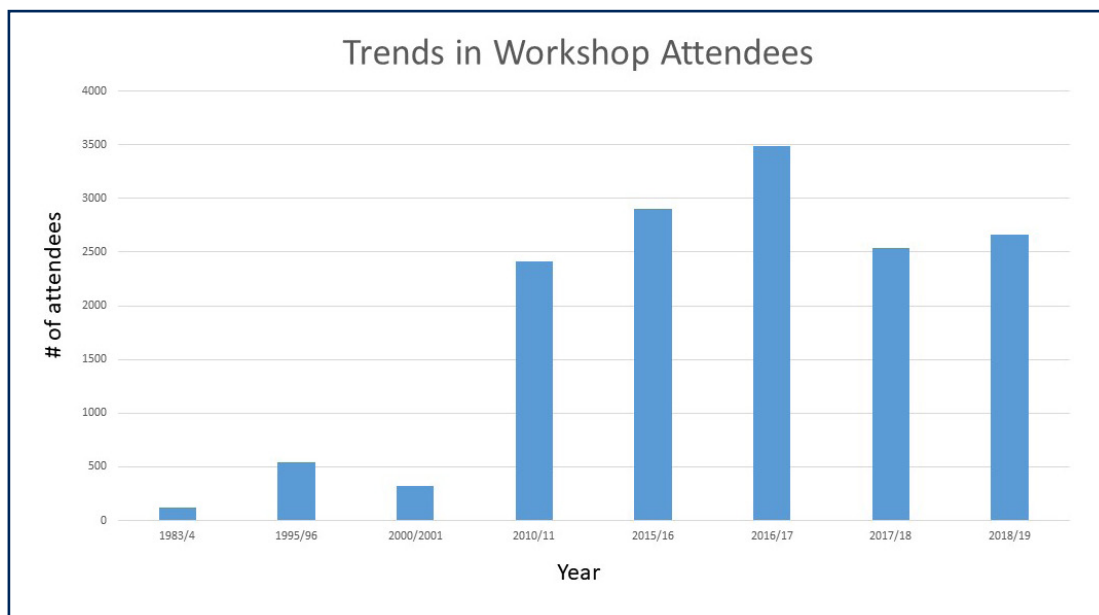
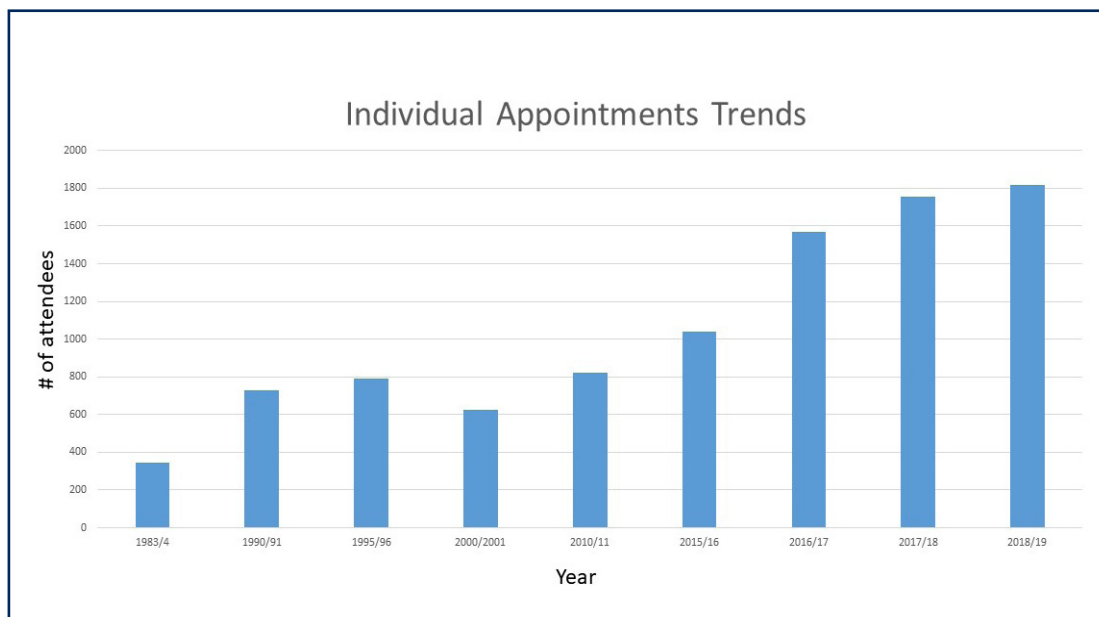
Staff have continued to refine the workshops to maximize the learning of attendees. This has led to more interactive sessions, the integration of technology and the ability to make the materials available to students after the session is over. In addition, online resources – such as the Resume and Cover Letter Toolkit, online databases, and, most recently, e-modules - were developed starting in the late 2000s.

In order to reinforce the key messages students receive from staff at workshops and seminars, the Career Centre has always strived to provide opportunities for students to interact with professionals from various industries. A variety of Career Panels and Networking Nights has, therefore, been offered over the years. From the mid-1990s to the late 2000s, student staff coordinated the panels but the work of supervising 8 student staff panels was challenging, so this task shifted to the Employer Relations and Marketing Unit, in collaboration with the Career Outreach Coordinator. Large scale networking events were very popular during the early 2000s, including the Accounting Networking Breakfast and the Careers in Human Resources event but by 2010 students' preferences shifted to smaller networking events and panels. An example of these types of events include the Career Centre Networking Series, which focus on academic disciplines instead of remaining general.

Fairs have always been the Career Centre's largest point of contact since they attract the largest number and variety of students. Fair names and goals have changed over time to address changes in the job market and student needs. For example, the Get Hired Fair replaced the Internship and Summer Job Fair, the Graduate and Professional Schools Fair began as the Professional Schools Fair, and the Get Experience Fair was once the Volunteer Fair. The first annual Summer Job Fair was organized in 1985 with 100-250 attendees. This fair has since grown to have over 1500 in student attendance. The first Graduate and Professional Schools Fair took place in 1991 and had 26 participating schools; in recent years this has

grown to over 90 participating institutions. The Career Centre has organized the Get Experience Fair since the 1994, where it showcased 50 organizations and saw 716 students attend. As the number of attendees to each of the fairs increased, the locations moved from the Meeting Place, to the Pub and finally to Gym A/B in the Recreation, Athletics and Wellness Centre (RAWC) where it has stayed since 2006.

Participation Trends



Note: the values represent those reported at the end of the academic year in April. The years chosen are meant to approximately represent the numbers for that decade or the five years before the date shown.

A general trend in student participation over the years is that students tend to focus more on employment rather than career planning at times of economic malaise. These increases were seen during the recessions of '83, '91-'92 and again in '08-'09. When the market recovered, students were more interested in career planning. At these times, it often took more marketing and outreach to arouse interest, and increase student attendance at employer related events.

Student participation in Career Centre activities is also influenced by the size of the student population. This can be seen by the immense growth of the student population in recent years and the early to mid-2000s.

Student Resources

Since the opening of the Centre, staff have sought out different ways of making information available to students. The Centre has always strived to be a place where students can find information about the career questions that concern them, and in a medium that is easy to understand and convenient to access. To adapt to trends in teaching and learning methods, the Career Centre expanded the range of different physical and virtual resources offered.

Upon opening, the Career Resource Library consisted of only books and binders. The original binders were modelled after binders that existed at the UTSG Career Centre and books were donated from the St. George collection. Students came in to study and borrow career resources regularly. The borrowing service was later phased out due to logistical challenges but students still visit the Centre to review the resources every day. Of all of the resources at the Centre, students found the library and binders to be the most valuable resource offered. The popularity of the library was reflected in the regular donations and financial contributions received by organizations (e.g. the Alumni Association) and the Dean to acquire more library resources. Using this additional money, some resources were obtained from external sources but oftentimes additional resources were sourced from the Erindale library or from other campuses. The physical library has been regularly updated and expanded since its inception. In 2015, the Career Centre further increased its resources to include both an online E-book Library as well as an online library catalogue via LibraryThing.

By 1991, the library grew to include Career Resource Sheets (similar to the current Tip Sheets), which were used to provide information about Resumes, Cover Letters and, the most popular, "What to Do With My Degree in ____". These were initially meant to be used by Erindale students, but as popularity grew, the Career Centre sold the resource sheets to other Career Centres at institutions across the country. By 1993, tens of thousands of resource sheets had been picked up by students visiting the Centre and the sale of "What to Do With My Degree In ____" booklets and photocopy rights generated \$10,200 in revenue. By 2000, these resource sheets were updated and expanded by student staff to include more program specific tipsheets. In more recent years, Tipsheets have returned to containing general career information, while program-specific guidance sheets can be found via the Careers by Major on the Career Centre website and the Program Plans (as of 2017), which can be found on www.utm.utoronto.ca/program-plans.

Over the years, resources broadened to include videos and web pages. In the late 1980s, informative VHS tapes were produced in-house for viewing by students who were unable to attend workshops. This was possible thanks to a donation made to the Centre by the graduating class of 1987. The produced videos were beneficial for use in both seminars and individual appointments, and students could view the videos in the Career Centre. Oftentimes, students preferred videos to attending seminars. These videos, like the

resources sheets, were also sold across Canada and the United States and generated in \$2000 in sales by 1993. This idea motivated the creation of new videos, which have been posted on the Career Centre website, as well as the UTM Career Centre YouTube channel. This has helped the Centre achieve the goal of making career resources easily available to all students.

As the general culture moved more towards the use of the internet and online resources, the Career Centre acquired its first computer in 1992. In the few years that followed, more computers were acquired and one of the offices in the Centre was converted to a computer re-search room. The computers provided to access various career information databases and, later, to internet resources. The computers have moved to various different areas of the office since, but have become integral to the Centre's methods of assisting students.

By the late 1990s, the Career Centre developed its own website, which housed information on upcoming events and career resources. In 1999 the university launched the Career Centre Information System (CCIS), a tri-campus initiative developed by the St. George Career Centre. This was the Centre's first online job posting and registration service. The aggressive marketing of the availability of online resources initially led to a 17% decrease in visitors into the Career Centre, however, the marketing was successful in increasing website traffic; in 2006 the Career Centre website was ranked the 10th most popular website at UTM. Since its launch, the website was regularly updated and redesigned to ensure ease of access to information. Staff developed strategies to encourage students to come in to the Centre, by providing information on the website that encouraged further discussion in person. Staff also developed webpages to explain the value of in person services and expanded work with other departments to increase face-to-face interactions. By December of 2013, the Centre's web presence grew to include the Career Learning Network (CLN), which sought to combine the CCIS and Imanager (a system for appointments, and sign up for events and workshops). This system also included curated career resources which could be accessed by all UT students and recent graduates. In 2018 the CLN became the CLNx, as the system merged with the Co-Curricular Record and was rebranded.

Marketing

Advancements in technology affected more than the Career Centre's resources and services: it also impacted advertising and marketing strategies. In response partially to new technology, and partially to changes in the culture of the campus, some marketing and advertisement methods have changed over the years, while others have not changed at all.

Physical advertising methods have changed little since the beginning. Brochures, posters, handouts, half pagers and staffed displays have been effective marketing methods since the early 80s. The Centre also regularly sought to acquire bulletin boards in busy areas on campus such as those outside DV3094, in residences, in the Meeting Place (after 1988) and later the acquisition of the rolling events calendar in the Davis stairwell, in order to capitalize on prime display spaces.

One factor that has significantly impacted the marketing methods of the Centre is the creation of the mascot Jimmi C in 2005. This changed the marketing approach from using general clipart in all ad material to using Jimmi and custom graphics. Jimmi's presence has become integral to the office, events, and digital material, which has also become prevalent in recent years.

With the rise of online and digital mediums, digital marketing became a higher priority, and led to the establishment of a social media presence. The Career Centre joined Facebook (as of 2007), Twitter (as of 2009), Instagram (as of 2015) and Snapchat (as of 2016). The first Facebook account was Jimmi's account. This changed, however, when the Career Centre decided to convert to a UTM Career Centre page account in 2015. Regular event ads on the Career Centre website, as well as distribution of the E-newsletter, have proven to be an effective means of communicating with students, alumni, faculty and employers. In conjunction with social media, the website has always served as both an informative tool and an advertising medium for services and upcoming events. The CLNx system now also allows the Centre staff to advertise and promote services and events via calendars and dashboards.

The Career Centre also advertised events and services through informal methods, such as cultivating strong intra-campus relationships that led to department referrals, communication with Residence Dons and referrals from other student services organizations and student groups. Through the 80s the Centre worked to develop a strong relationship with Faculty in all disciplines to make them aware of services and promote programs. This also extended to the student newspaper, The Medium, which was always a strong supporter. Other means of advertising include a Career Centre presence and handouts at on-campus events - such as the first year academic orientation that has taken place since the early 80s. The Centre has also targeted prospective students through presentations held at high schools for students intending to attend the University, and participates in open houses for prospective students. Most recently, the creation and launch of the UTM Program Plans have created new opportunities to develop stronger ties with new and existing campus partners.

Staff

The Career Centre's success would not be possible without the staff that works so hard to provide, maintain, and improve services. The Career Centre strives to provide a pleasant and supportive environment in which to work, for both full-time, part-time and student staff/volunteers. Staff value the welcoming, creative and team-working atmosphere of the Centre .

The Centre has experienced significant growth in staff since 1979; - it grew from only a full time director to a 2.3 full-time staff complement through the 80s and early 90s, to one of 19 in present day. The 2.3 full-time staff complement in place by 1984 included one full-time Director (Evelyn Paley Ennor), one part-time Careers Advisor (Anne Ritchie) and one part-time Placement Assistant (Geri McCullough). As the student population grew, so did the need for additional staff. To respond to this, student staff and clerical assistants were hired on temporary contracts. When more funding became available to the Career Centre in 2003, additional full-time staff were added in both the Career Development Unit (a Science Career Counsellor) and the Employment Relations and Marketing Team (a Webmaster) and, in 2004, an Events Coordinator joined the team. The Centre received further financial backing from Quality of Service to Students Council* during this decade, resulting in the hiring of additional Career Counsellors and Employment Advisors, Employer and Events staff and Resource Centre staff. Finally, by 2008, the Centre achieved sufficient staffing levels, to allow a shift in focus to proactive development and refinement of services and resources, rather than purely reactive and immediate need-based priorities.

In the first 10 years of the Career Centre's history, due to budgetary constraints, many student staff positions were volunteer, but additional student staff were hired on 4 month contracts with external funding thanks to the Government. By 1983, the Career Centre began the Student Volunteer Assistant program, through which 5 student volunteers were recruited: two were trained as Career Planning Volunteer Assistants (modelled after the position at UTSG) and the other three assisted with the expansion of the Network file (a file of networking contacts for students to use), advertising, and library research projects. The program provided volunteers training to teach participants lifelong career skills. In their first semester, volunteers trained and participated in various programs offered by the Centre to familiarize themselves with the services and process. In the second semester of their volunteer placement, they participated in a practicum project of their choosing. In 1997 the student staff consisted of two Work-Study student positions. By 2000, a new Director, Joan McCurdy-Myers, implemented today's student staff model by hiring 5 Career Assistants and 3 Marketing Staff. These student staff positions continued to grow, and eventually included the Research Assistants and Library Assistant. All the student staff roles have changed to adapt to different needs and priorities. The Career Assistant role evolved to being the key contact for students, staff and faculty entering the Centre, assisting with questions and resources. The Marketing and Events Assistant role developed into a creative team responsible for creating print and digital material, and promoting Career Centre events across campus. The Research Assistant role became key to evaluation and assessment efforts by conducting regular analyses of quantitative and qualitative data regarding workshops, events, and programs. The Library Assistant role is essential to maintaining the Career Resource Library and being responsive to students' information needs.

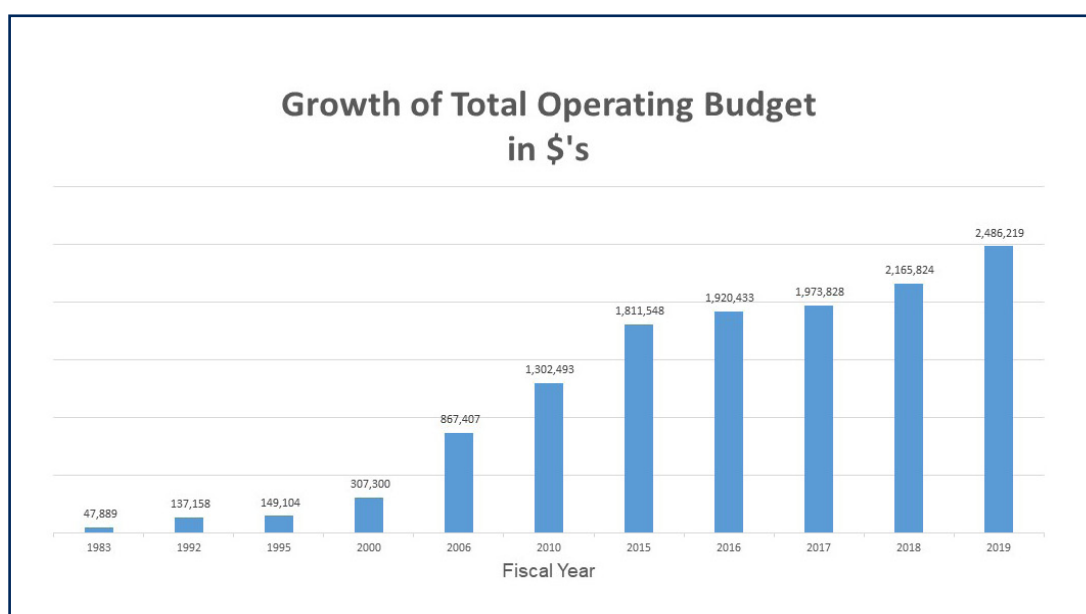
Professional development has always been important to staff, whether this meant the further education of single staff members, or sharing and learning from other organizations across U of T. Over the years, staff attended association meetings and conferences across North America to further their knowledge of the counselling field. Conferences and conventions such as the National Association of Colleges and Employers Conference, CANNEUXS, CACEE, the UofT TechKnowFile conference and Tri-campus Career Centre

Meetings have always been popular modes of learning about new developments in the field, and gaining additional practical knowledge. In recent years, professional development has also grown to include training via webinars.

Budgeting

Sources of funding for the Centre have evolved over the years. In earlier years, much of the funds came from the university budget and the generosity of supportive deans. Sources of funding from within the university have included the St. George Campus Career Counselling and Placement Centre in the early 80s, as well as donations from various other student groups and departments such as the Erindale Campus Student Union (now the UTMSU), the Commerce Department and the Alumni Association. The Centre utilized federal student job creation funding during the 1980s for supplementary student staff roles crucial to developing and maintaining resources. In the 90s, funding for some student positions also came from the provincial Ontario Work/Study Program which employed students part-time for many years at the Centre.

By 1995, the University adopted a model of funding student services directly from a specific student service fee. Most of the Career Centre funding came from this student fee and thus the Centre became accountable to the Quality of Services to Students Council. This body is comprised of student governments and student service administrators who discuss UTM students' needs and recommend service changes and improvements. Within this process, Student Advisory groups provide a detailed and comprehensive discussion of Career Centre programs and services. Fairs evolved to be self-funded events by instituting a participation fee for organizational representatives.



Note: The operating budget stated for 1983 is approximate.

Similar to student participation statistics, this increasing trend can be partially attributed to in-creases in student population that in turn resulted in increases in funding from student tuition.

Partner Relations

On-Campus Relations

The importance of on-campus relations with other student services departments, student governments, societies and clubs, and academic departments is reflected in the regular time and resourcing allocated for events, workshops, and services tailored to specific academic programs or student concerns. To develop these relationships, the initial and most beneficial method of connecting with different academic departments was Centre's coordination and promotion of the Federal Government Job Creation Funding. The Centre began this role in 1983 and continued for over 10 years. This allowed the director to work with members of different departments and increased the Centre's popularity among faculty. The Centre also provided support for the UT Work Study program, which provides University support for employing students on campus in skill building positions while they complete their degree.

With the creation of the Career Outreach Consultant position and, later, a Career Outreach Assistant, the Centre has been able to strengthen existing partnerships and develop new ones, using both formal and informal methods of connecting. These relationships set the groundwork for specific events and workshops in partnerships with other departments, such as: the Commerce Networking Breakfasts; tailored workshops for courses in Biology, French, Visual Arts, Economics and more; special office hours for Chemical and Physical Sciences students; special office hours for Accessibility students; and Alternatives to Medicine Panel, to name a few. Campus wide projects such as the Program Plans have also facilitated more outreach and collaboration.

The Centre continued to build on-campus relations by conducting opinion surveys, focus groups and hosting lunch'n'learns for faculty and staff. These methods gather feedback, increase understanding of student needs, build relationships and increase knowledge of the Career Centre services. They attracted the attention of some interested faculty and staff who were enthusiastic about the services, and potential opportunities offered for their students. More recently as institutional interest in experiential learning has grown, the Centre has increased communications to faculty, staff and students regarding the supports offered for many aspects of experiential learning.

Intercampus Relations

Since the UTM Career Centre began as a satellite office for the St. George campus Career Centre, a strong and productive relationship between the two campuses has been integral to the successful functioning of the Centre. For the first few years since opening, the St. George Centre provided almost all job postings. To better cater to the UTM student population, however, this decreased to 28% within 10 years, and the percentage of local job listings increased. Currently, UTM staff liaise regularly with local employers for both job postings and career education opportunities. In addition to sharing information regarding job postings, staff at the two campuses regularly communicated about fairs, programs and program development via daily mailed memos, phone calls, physical meetings and a monthly report. These daily memos have since been replaced with regular email communications, but phone calls and physical meetings still take place. These meetings have taken place as full tri-campus Career Centre conferences and seminars that occurred more frequently before the staff numbers grew. Upon growth of the Centre, meetings between specific Career

Centre departments such as the Counselling Department, and ERM Department Meetings became more common.

Many of the programs introduced on the UTM campus first existed at the St. George campus, such as the all the employment services programs, as well as the organization of fairs. Results, success, participant numbers and level of interest in relation to programs have always been regularly communicated between all three campuses via exchange of annual reports and the aforementioned means of communication. This has been crucial to gauge the success of different programs, as well as to compare the overall student mood at the university. This seemed especially telling during times of economic hardship. Regular communication regarding student programs and interests have helped to tailor information and delivery methods in convenient and efficient ways. This communication takes place over email and through regular physical tri-campus meetings.

Students have always been encouraged to take part in events held at other campuses such as fairs and networking nights, by advertising UTSG and UTSC events on campus. The other campuses reciprocated these efforts by allowing for UTM/Erindale events to be advertised in career and university-wide publications. UTM has advertised different events in publications of different academic departments, student services departments (e.g., Office of the Registrar Newsletter) and student publications (e.g., The Varsity and the Medium). These efforts were further supported by the launch of electronic tri-campus portals - such as the CCIS and, more recently, CLNx.

Another important feature of the UTM Career Centre's intercampus relations is that all former directors have spent some time working at the other two campuses prior to coming to UTM. This allowed for ideas and strengths of other Career Centres to be adopted well. Currently the UTM Career Centre operates independently as a full service career centre, collaborating with tri-campus colleagues regularly in the management of the CLNx, and discussing common issues and concerns.

Employer and Alumni Relations

Since the 1980s, the Career Centre has worked to maintain a wide array of relations with external employers, ranging from local employers to larger organizations such as the government and global companies, in an effort to expand students' options. Initially, the first director Evelyn (Paley) Ennor joined the Mississauga Board of Trade and as a committee member introduced the idea of a job shadowing program to local businesses, which was instituted and modelled after the Toronto Board of Trade Program. The Centre has also found ways to expand the opportunities advertised and available based on the types of students seeking employment, and attracting employers for those students in in-demand programs. For example, there was a job fair dedicated to students in the Survey Science Specialist program, which ran from 1985 to 1992. A more recent example is the Recent Graduate Opportunity Program, which aims to help students land work placements shortly after graduating.

The Career Centre's relationship with UTM Alumni has always been positive, as they are frequently invited to continue to be a part of the UTM community as speakers for events, panelists, or as potential employers for current students. This is due, in part, to the Centre's regular contact with alumni due to both the relationship with the UTM Alumni Relations department, and the fact that our service is available to students two years after graduation. With a robust website that is publicly accessible, alumni past the two year window can still benefit from the Centre's work.

External Recognitions

Staff at the Centre have presented at a number of conferences, including CANNEXUS and Inter-U. In 2013 the Centre was a NACE (National Association of Colleges and Employers, based in the United States) Member's Choice Award Finalist for the Pop Up Shops, recognizing the innovative ways used to connect with students. In 2017, as a part of a consortium of universities and colleges, the Centre was named a winner in excellence, innovation and student engagement by CACEE (Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers) for the "It All Adds Up" campaign. Also, in 2017 the Centre was recognized in a CERIC (Canadian Education and Research in Counselling) study as an impressive model of a Canadian post-secondary career centre, ranked 4th in the country.

Future Steps/Vision

For this report, the former leaders of the UTM Career Centre were interviewed and asked for their recollections of the key goals of the Centre. Here are some abbreviated quotes:

"To offer the full range of career and employment services offered on the St. George Campus and tailored programs and services to suit the local campus population. Emphasis was on assessing student needs, developing relationships with student groups as well as faculty, staff and the business community."

- Evelyn Ennor 1979-1994



"Increased visibility and recognition that the Centre contributes something to the students' life, not just for the present but also the future"

- Yvonne Rodney 1994-1999



"Career development function spreading beyond the Career Centre but incorporating Career Centre staff expertise and the range of services and experiences for stage of career development"

- Joan McCurdy-Myers 1999-2012



"UTM Career Centre is seen as a primary ally by students, staff, faculty and external partners for the development and execution of student career education activities within the holistic vision of the student's life...Our students value the variety of services and understand that small actions can have a big impact in terms of determining their next steps"

- Felicity Morgan 2012-present

This series of quotes shows the evolution of leaders' future visions for the Career Centre. Over time, the future vision has become more and more specific and refined to be increasingly holistic in its goals. All directors recognized the career development process as one of self-development and have each sought to find ways to help students to approach career planning with this in mind. The Centre's current goals are to help students develop their career management skills by actively assessing themselves, understanding the world of work and gaining the opportunities to develop their career options.

A constant goal of the Career Centre has been to increase the visibility and knowledge of the Centre to the student body, and the campus as a whole. The Centre worked harder toward this goal upon reaching full employment capacity, since prior to this there were concerns of being unable to manage the volume. As the number of employees increased, the Centre's footprint on campus has grown and the Centre has attempted to find more visible and spacious locations to maximize student contact. Cultivating strong campus partnerships has also been the key to engaging students; this has been a priority since 1979 and will continue to be in the future.

Since the Career Centre established itself and its values, the vision of directors has always been to move toward a more seamless integration of career learning and development into the students' university experience. Many staff members have noticed that students tend to focus on the academic aspect of their university experience and may not fully engage in the self-knowledge and career planning aspects until their upper years. By incorporating career knowledge and learning more explicitly into students' university experience, students will be more confident when navigating through their career. Future directions include increasing involvement in the campus experiential learning initiatives, increased emphasis on assisting students with specific needs (e.g. students with disabilities), students at academic risk, undecided students, and graduate students. By adding the career lens to the programming and support offered to these students, the Centre aims to increase their chances of success.

The UTM Career Centre has grown to be a successful, self-sufficient and innovative service to UTM students. While the values and goals of today are similar to those when the Centre started, the real strength of the Centre is the interest and ability of staff to engage with students, innovate and respond to changing student needs and economic factors. These attributes have made the Centre the successful student service it is today.