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Knowledge Knows No Boundaries



CAUCE

Canadian Association for
University Continuing Education



Blazing the Trail with Work Integrated Learning (WIL) for CE International Professional Programs

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UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
CONTINUING EDUCATION



Agenda

- International Professional Programs Background
- Conceptualization of WIL
- What we learned
- WIL overview
- Takeaways and themes
- Q & A/discussion

International Professional Programs at UCalgary Background

First cohort in 2022

Full-time, study permit and PGWP eligible programs based on domestic CE offerings

Labour market driven content

Instructors are industry professionals

Program builds on existing certificates



Continuing Education student
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Our learners



Experienced and educated before arriving from different parts of the world



Proficient in English



Driven to succeed



Asking for opportunities to gain important work experience



Continuing Education student
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These programs enhance their skillsets!

Early conceptualization: Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

Intention: provide students with an opportunity to gain Canadian work experience while addressing labour-market needs

- in a career-oriented environment
- relating to their experience and education

Initial assumptions

- We would be able to find them unpaid internships
- Funding would be easily available
- We could easily tack on the WIL component to the end of their program with no immigration-related implications
- UCalgary would engage with employers through job-placement contracts

What we learned...

What we learned...



Co-op Work Permit required before engaging in WIL

WIL must be mandatory component of the acceptance process for IRCC to recognize this
Time to apply should allow for IRCC processing delays



WIL needed to be a course (not a separate experience)

Now a paid course ensuring individual remains a student during work experience
It counts towards PGWP length



Students must earn at least minimum wage

International students must be treated fairly by employers
Internships set up as employer/employee contracts



Not an easy task to find employers who would take international students

Students encouraged to be ultimately responsible for finding their own work opportunities (with our assistance)



Limited job-placement contracts for most programs at the institution



Little to no government funding available for employers/international students

WIL experience

- It is a course, there is a final grade
- There are course facilitators
- Assignments: **reflective** in nature and **goal-setting based**
- Meetings with students (Part of course assessment)
- Meetings with employers
- Dedicated career pathway advisor



Dedicated Career Pathway Advisor

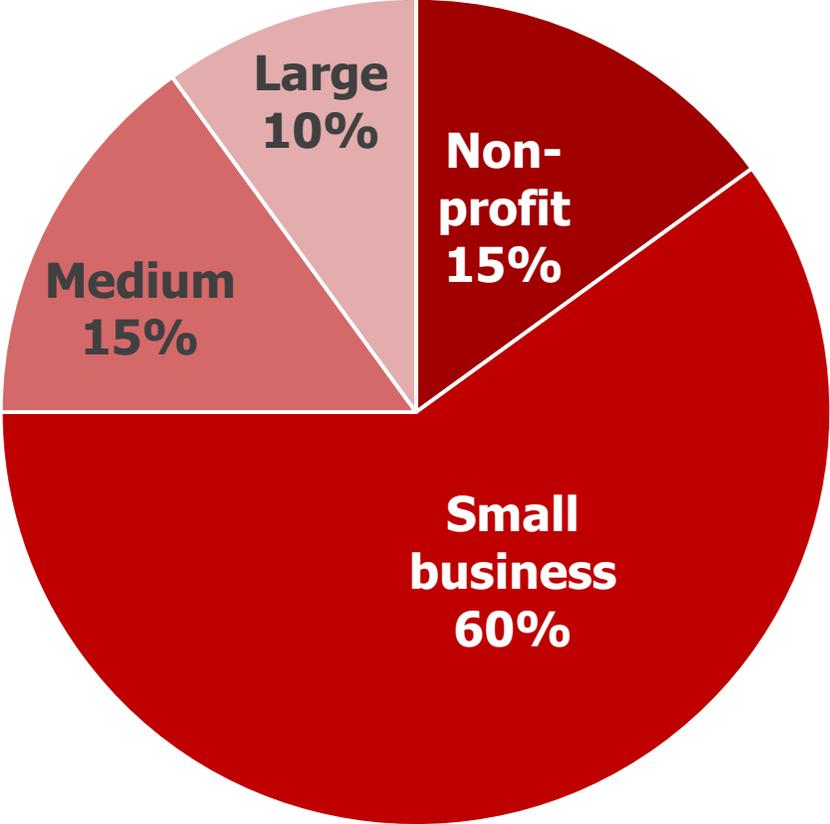
- Works diligently to network with businesses to find potential job placements
 - Works with the IPP Team to verify and approve positions
- Offers sessions on career development
 - Ex. networking, job-hunting skills, resume-building, etc.
- Meets with students one-on-one to address individual career development needs



Julie Kemp, BA, Cert. HRM

Gets to know each of our students and is an advocate for them!

WIL employers' size/type



Our first group of WIL students



- Completed work term April 2025
- Reported the experience as productive and educational
- >80% secured a WIL placement
 - Several have been offered to continue with employer long term

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Takeaways and themes

- Employer Impact
- Value of the students and skills they arrived with
- Value to the students and skills developed
- Student goals
- Nature of the work
- Employer suggestions

Discussion

- Do you have a WIL component to your programs?
 - domestic or international?
- If not, why not?
- Any learnings to share?