

## AMP Business/Industry Focus Group Feedback

9 attendees

Themes:

### **Soft Skills Students Lack**

gap in fundamental skills that we used to take for granted

people can't communicate verbally and in writing

business writing course, letters

is grading still as tough?

personal skills like eye contact, handshake, research on company initiative, "fire in the belly"

team skills

how do you deal with the fact that young people text rather than deal directly with each other?

MBI learning community soft skills--handshakes, how to eat; but not being scaled, just for honors students

they don't know what they don't know (students)

futurelink curriculum could benefit even the most privileged students

eye contact, interpersonal skills, lack of confidence with public speaking, team skills, conflict management skills, negotiation, compromise

aural/listening skills

business etiquette separate from soft skills

can't find people with management skills, human resources issues

posture and appropriate dress

set students up for success by giving them the soft skills

sense of responsibility, punctuality

being able to demonstrate initiative and work ethic

presentation communication skills including putting the right amount of info on a slide

DP idea: bi-generational communication skills, multi-generational

need a bridge, so it's not an either/or (either in person or by text—both)

## **Technical Skills Students Need**

increase in need to be tech savvy  
especially for doing research  
paralegals and clerks who can use technology westlaw and legal databases, other databases such as accounting

explosion of technology, need to be able to sort information quickly and inexpensively

different operating systems (technology)

DP note: instead of teaching new versions of software, can we teach how to learn new software, how to self teach

understanding different industry organizations that regulate various industries

## **Partnerships to Benefit Students and/or Businesses**

scientific and clinical partnerships with other universities partnering with UMD on engineering, esp mechanical

SG question: are businesses willing to mentor or interact with students

law clerks, interns, mentoring

advice to contact companies and make presentation about what the college can offer in terms of interns, student help

DP question: should every college degree require an internships?

RG comment: some of our students have trouble taking unpaid internships

many companies offer paid internships

clinics--take a class in which you also work in your field (law school, but can be adapted to other disciplines); students don't have to leave campus

medimune/MIT program--they bring twelve students and medimune gives them problems to solve (project based learning)

would like to work with the college to create paid internship such as pre-apprentice, summer helper

forcing internships dilutes the value of internships

internships ought to be paid and valuable

## **Areas of Concern in Skilled Trades:**

shortage of construction workers

shortage of hvac techs

shortage of assistant project managers

having to offer retention bonuses to keep hvac

must know equipment and have analytic and trouble shooting skills and customer service skills

using six different headhunters to find the people needed

no one in MCPS championing the trades fields, trying to send everyone to college

Gudelsky institute not advertised in high schools; and why hasn't college expanded it?

people who do apprenticeships start at \$60K a year

need to start at public schools or with parents to let people know about trades; no pipeline

complaints about accuplacer exam; get into high schools earlier; find an exam that tests for trade skills

people are dropping out of school because of math requirements that are not really needed in workplace

8000 disconnected youth not in workforce and not in school in Montgomery College

trades not mentioned when recruiters come to high school

reputation of construction is that students think it's beneath them; wave of retirements in trades about to make things worse

stress pathways that do not lead to debt

how do we get public schools to talk about the trades

try to get principals to identify 40 students at a time who would benefit from trades and work with them

entrepreneurship with trade skills

grades don't seem to reflect actual skills; social promotion, getting students out the door; leads to entitlement

not everyone wants to move up, but there is always a customer service component in every industry

discussion about career path even for transfer students

administrative assistant as a vocational skill

steer unsuccessful development students to trade programs

more outreach to principles

### **ESL Education Needs**

mastery of verbal and written skills in English is the bottom line

we expect people to speak English but we aren't helping them or giving them enough support

also appropriate esl instruction for different levels and different skill sets

offer to support esl instruction that is somewhat customized for people who speak but can't write English

i need crew leaders who are bilingual

even if we accept students with various immigrant documentation, that doesn't mean we can transition them to the workforce without additional paperwork (work permits)

### **General Suggestions for Student Success**

RG question--what do we do with adult esp adult immigrant students?

importance of networks to achieve the american dream

community colleges could and should be cultivating networks

math skills should be word problems, problem solving

presentation at end of internship to professors about what they learned

alloy--go through an experience and come out a different person

capstone course, presentations with teams and industry leaders are also good--should have internships in all degrees

storefront of student run businesses

raptor tank business pitch contest

informational interview in field they are interested in, with prep and coaching

offer of workshop on interviews

investigate the possibility of Single Stop services, [singlestop.org](http://singlestop.org) (food assistance, housing subsidies, etc.)

