

How **Students** and **Employers** Benefit

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# Guided Reflection on Work (GROW)

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# Mission

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“To educate students for success and personal fulfillment in a diverse world.”

[excerpt]

# Defining Student Success

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- University of Iowa students succeed when they achieve personal and institutional educational goals.
- Successful students **develop skills and knowledge**, become **more mature in their thinking**, assume **greater responsibility** for their own lives and learning, develop **understanding of diversity and multiculturalism**, and become **effective leaders**.
- Student success at Iowa is a **shared enterprise**.
- Students succeed by **active engagement** in educationally purposeful activities. Faculty, staff, and students create learning opportunities [and] policies, programs, and practices that **foster student engagement**.

# Where Do Students...

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- Develop **skills and knowledge**?
- Become more **mature in their thinking**?
- Assume **greater responsibility**?
- Develop **understanding of diversity**?
- Become more **effective leaders**?

## Pain Onset

- | Acute                        | Subacute             |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| perforation                  |                      |
| obstruction of viscera       | Inflammatory process |
| interruption of blood supply | Infectious process   |
| intraabdominal bleeding      |                      |

# FOR THE KIDS

CREATING TOMORROW

BY DANCING TODAY



UOFL

University of Iowa Children's Hospital

University of Iowa

UOFL

UOFL

UOFL

UOFL

UOFL COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION

CANNING

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MCA



# Why Focus On Learning?

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→ Students are most successful in “seamless environments” where they can make connections between classroom and out of classroom experiences.

George Kuh



# High-impact Activities

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→ High-impact activities are those that allow students to apply learning to real life, to make connections, reflect, and integrate learning.

# Teach Students To...

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- **Reflect:** think about experiences inside and outside the classroom
- **Integrate:** connect what they are learning from different courses, out of class experiences and life beyond the institution
- **Apply:** transfer and use what one has learned in different settings presenting novel challenges and opportunities (develop “adaptive expertise”)
- **Connect:** skills they develop to what employers want and need

# Specialists in Student Employment

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- Typically, student affairs, academic student services, and support services are the largest employers of students. We can be leaders in high-impact student employment.
- To do this, we must reframe student employment from **transactional to transformational**, from **supervision to mentoring**, from **cost to investment**.

# University of Iowa Strategic Plan

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- **Improve equitable access to distinctive, high-impact educational opportunities for students.**
- Create an infrastructure to promote shared high-impact practices such as research, scholarship, and creative activities; internships; study abroad and other international experiences; civic and community engagement; and **mentored student employment.**

# Student Employment

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- Most students work at some point
- Employment can be related positively to engagement with the institution, not a distraction from academic pursuits
- Work can be high impact with some additional structure from supervisors

# High-Impact Employment

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- Identified outcomes (what we want them to know or be able to do)
- Deliberate reflection
- “Scaffolding” – using prompts that encourage students to connect previous knowledge and experience to new experiences and knowledge

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# **Guided Reflection on Work**

# Guided Reflection On Work

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Iowa GROW<sup>®</sup> uses brief, structured conversations between student employees and their supervisors to make the learning that is occurring through student employment more “visible” to students.

1. How is this job fitting with your academics?
2. What are you learning here at work that’s helping you in school?
3. What are you learning in class that you can apply here at work?
4. Can you give me a couple of examples of what you’ve learned here that you think you’ll use in your chosen profession?



# Priorities

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- Supporting integration across contexts (work, academics, future career)
- Providing scaffolded practice with reflection
- Cultivating adaptive expertise – ability to use learning flexibly in various contexts
- Metacognition – helping students view themselves as learners no matter the setting

# Process

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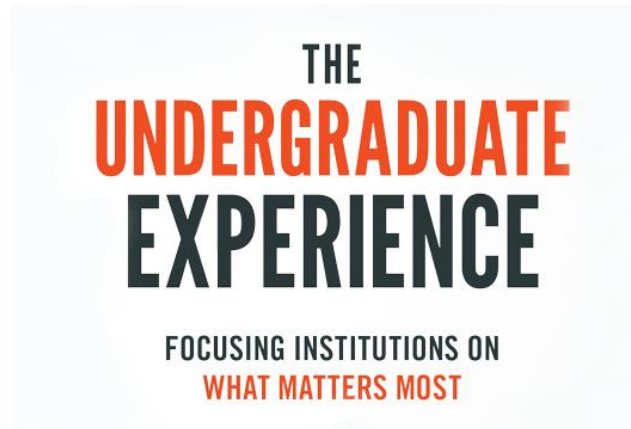
- Supervisors have two, brief structured conversations with each of their student employees each semester
- Small group or 1:1 conversations
- Additional questions may be asked, but the 4 core questions are an expectation
- An average conversation takes 5 minutes

# Process

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*“Not only does GROW illustrate the power of simple reflective practices, but it also underscores how small interventions can have significant outcomes for the undergraduate experience.”*

-Felten, et al (2016)



# Findings

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Iowa GROW® participants are significantly more likely to report the following 10 outcomes of student employment:

- 1** My supervisor helps me make connections between my work and my life as a student.
- 2** My job has helped prepare me for the world of full-time employment.
- 3** I can see connections between my job and major/coursework.
- 4** My job has helped me learn about career options.
- 5** My job has helped me develop more effective time management skills.
- 6** My job has helped me improve my written communication skills.
- 7** My job has helped me improve my verbal communication skills.
- 8** My job has helped me develop conflict negotiation skills.
- 9** My job has helped me use critical thinking skills to form opinions and solve problems.
- 10** Because of my job, I am able to work effectively with individuals with a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and cultures.

# What Employers Want

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- Problem-solving skills
- Ability to work in a team
- Strong work ethic
- Analytic/quantitative skills
- Written communication skills

Students gain these skills from campus employment. BUT, unless we support them in making learning more visible, they will not be able to effectively articulate this to future employers.

# Findings

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Iowa GROW® participants are more likely to...

- Mention positive outcomes of employment other than money.
- Note they felt as though they were making a positive contribution to the University of Iowa.
- Be able to state at least one thing they've learned on the job.

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“My job with the university has helped me learn the importance of effective communication and time management.”



**IOWA**

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“It has taught me the responsibility of time management and to apply the knowledge I get from classes to my work. It has also improved my communication as well as personal skills.”



**IOWA**



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“I have met wonderful people in my office and established connections that will last beyond my time as a college student.”



**IOWA**

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“My job provided me with a sense of belonging. It gave me a place where I was needed, a place where I was accepted, and a place I was expected to be.”



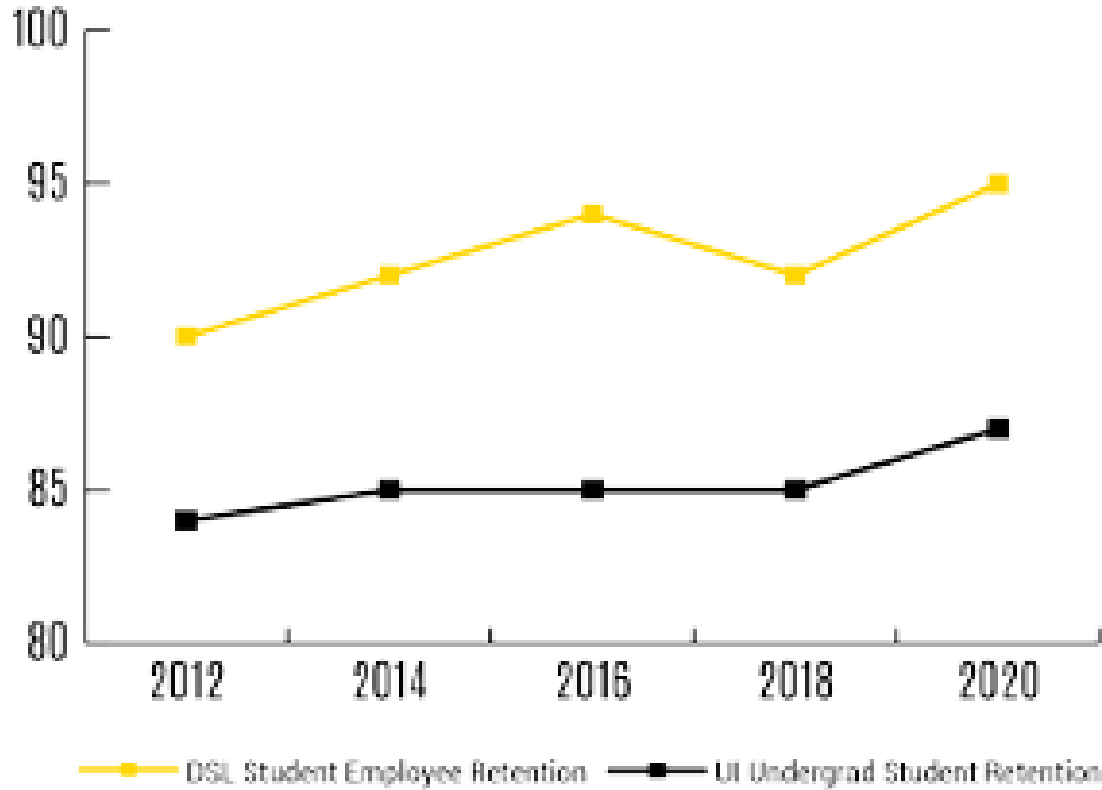
**IOWA**

# Retention & Employment

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- Ultimately, retention is relational work. It's about our relationship with students, their relationships with each other, and their relationship with the institution.
- **Retention:** Students employed on campus are retained higher rates.
- **Graduation** (4-year & 6-year): Students employed on campus graduate at higher rates.
- In the Division of Student Life, participants in Iowa GROW® are retained as UI students at higher rates than those who did not receive the conversations.

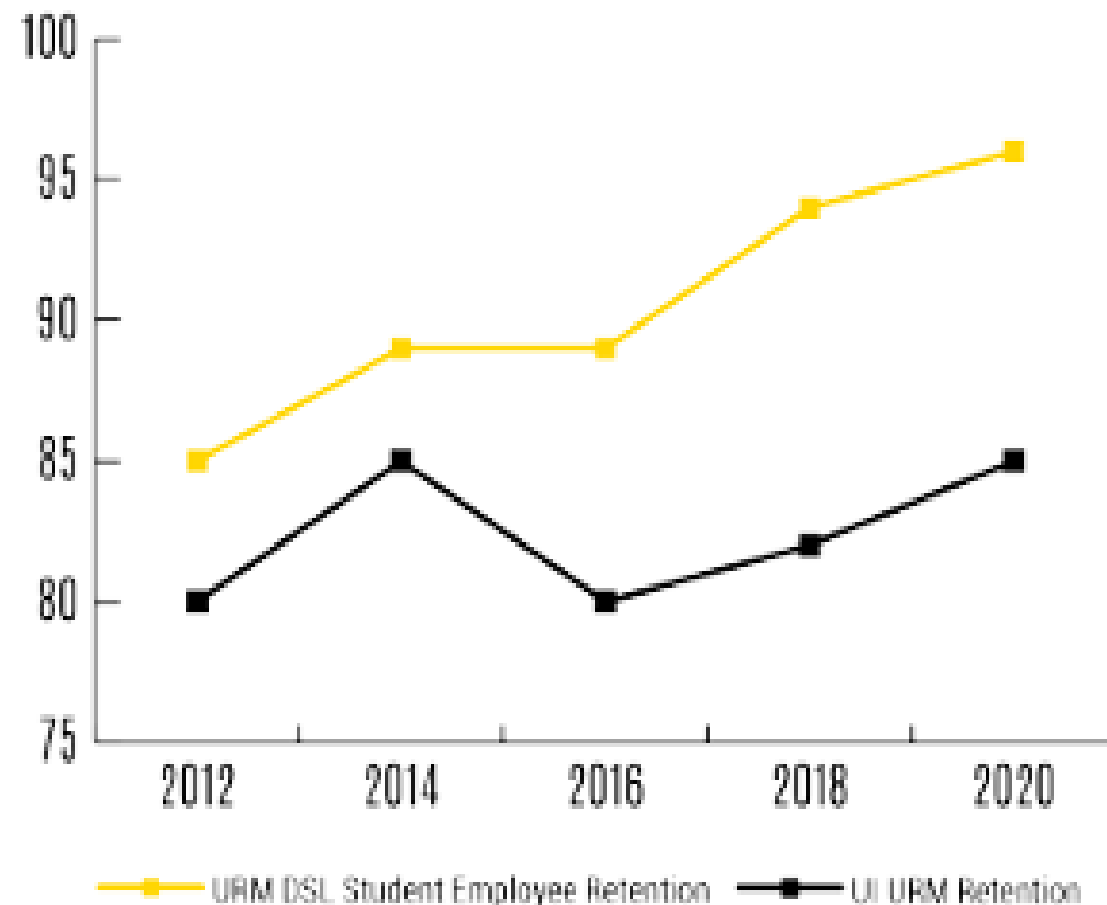
## CAMPUS JOBS ARE A RETENTION TOOL



« Students who work in Student Life are retained from first to second year at an average of 93% since 2012 versus 86% for the all-student average retention rate.

**Underrepresented racial/ethnic minority (URM) students are even more positively affected by campus employment. URM student students who worked in the Division of Student Life were retained at an average of 7 percentage points higher than the average retention rate for URM undergraduate students.**

### CAMPUS JOBS ARE AN EQUITY TOOL



## CAMPUS JOBS ARE A MOBILITY TOOL



« About one in five Hawkeyes are the first in their families to attend college. First generation students who work in Student Life are more likely to be retained compared to first generation students who do not work. First gen students who work in Student Life are also more likely to be retained compared to those that work elsewhere on campus.

# GROW correlates with students having more...

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- Humanitarian and civic engagement (Halper, 2020)
- Critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Halper, 2020)
- Practical competence (Halper, 2020)
- Self-efficacy (Hansen, 2019)
- Desire to do a good job (Hansen, 2019)

# Beyond Campus

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- Iowa GROW® has been recognized in numerous books and articles for its accomplishments in helping students foster learning, build connections, and encourage reflection.
- We have connected with over 200 institutions about implementing Iowa GROW®