Managing Student Employees

Tips & Resources

Amy L. Greenspan, JD
Student Employment Coordinator
Introductions

• Name
• Department
• Role with respect to student employees (e.g., HR, direct supervisor, Graduate Coordinator)
• Undergrads or graduate students?
Agenda

• Preview: Who are Student Employees?

• Tips for managing student employees:
  – Plan before you hire
  – Set expectations
  – Orient and train
  – Motivate
  – Provide feedback
  – Address students’ concerns
  – Know when to separate

• Resources
Before We Begin . . .

Keep in Mind:
You play a dual role: Employer + Educator

• Never forget: Student employees are here to learn!

• Make the job a valuable part of their learning experience at UT Austin

• Ask yourself: “How can I best contribute to this student’s education?”
UT Austin Core Value #1

“Learning – A caring community, all of us students, helping one another grow.”
Who Are Student Employees?

• Students – first and foremost
• Individuals in transition*
  – Learning autonomy and interdependence
  – Discovering identity
  – Exploring new relationships
  – Developing purpose and integrity

• “Real” Employees
  – Same basic employment rights apply (discrimination laws, etc.)
  – Good personnel management practices apply

*Chickering’s Seven Vectors of Student Development
(Chickering, A. 1969; Chickering & Reiser 1993)
Tip #1 – Plan Before You Hire!

- Considerations before hiring
  - What is the department’s student employment philosophy?
  - Learning outcomes? Competencies?
  - Will different positions and pay scales be used for different levels of experience?
  - How will students’ work hours be scheduled?
  - How will we handle absences or schedule changes? (e.g., illness, class-related conflicts)
  - Will student employees be required to work during breaks and finals?
  - How will we communicate assignments?
  - How will we supervise?
Hiring Steps – Job Description

• Define expectations and objectives
  – Accurate description of functions, responsibilities, hours, duration, etc.

• Include required qualifications

• Describe the application process / contact info

• Must meet EEO and university non-discrimination guidelines

• Posting options:
  – Hire a Longhorn Job Bank
  – Departmental websites
  – Coming (relatively) soon: Workday
Hiring Steps – Interview

- Provide a copy of the job description
- Refrain from asking questions related to “protected categories” such as age, religion, national origin, marital status, etc.
- Ask questions related to job functions and responsibilities
  - “What experience do you have with ____?”
- Ask open-ended questions:
  - “What attracted you to this job?”
- Ask behavioral questions:
  - “Tell me about a time when you encountered a challenge. What did you do?”
  - “What project or activity would you consider your greatest accomplishment?”
- Allow for silence: the applicant should do most of the talking
Hiring a Federal Work-Study Employee

• What is Federal Work-Study?
  – Government subsidized program
  – Provides part-time employment to students with financial need
  – Administered by the Office of Financial Aid

• When interviewing, ask to see Work Study Verification form
Hiring Steps – Assignments

• Know student employment parameters:
  – Student Employment website: [http://www.utexas.edu/hr/student/](http://www.utexas.edu/hr/student/)
  – “Important Dates for Student Employment” posted each semester
  – Overview of Enrollment Requirements for Student Job Titles
  – Summary of University Limits on Student Work Hours
  – Office of Financial Aid’s website: Federal Work-Study Policies

• Assign the student in HRMS
  – Use “Assign Work-Study” for Federal Work-Study students
  – HRMS Help: Student Positions
Hiring Steps – Onboarding

- Supervisor’s Checklist for Hiring a New Student Employee: [http://www.utexas.edu/hr/student/sup_chklst.html](http://www.utexas.edu/hr/student/sup_chklst.html)
- All student employees must have a background check: [http://www.utexas.edu/hr/manager/hiring/background_check.html](http://www.utexas.edu/hr/manager/hiring/background_check.html)
- I-9 is required for all student employees
  - Part 1 completed no later than the first day of work
  - I-9 and E-Verify completed no later than the third day of work
    - Exception: International student with no SSN – complete I-9, **SAVE** but don’t submit E-Verify until SSN issued
  - **Tell the student in advance to bring original documents!**
- Questions? Contact Human Resource Service Center, Records & Onboarding team: [hrsc-records@utlists.utexas.edu](mailto:hrsc-records@utlists.utexas.edu) or 512-471-5127
Tip #2 – Set Expectations

The most important step!!!

Why?
How To Clarify Expectations

- **Desired Results**
  Identify what is to be done and when

- **Guidelines**
  Explain the relevant policies and practices

- **Resources**
  Identify the human, financial, technical, or organizational support available to help accomplish the results

- **Accountability**
  Set up the standards of performance

- **Consequences**
  Specify what will happen as a result of non-performance

(Prentice Hall 2012)
Performance Standards

- **Written performance guidelines**
  - Define what is considered poor performance
  - Include failure to follow departmental and university policies and procedures
  - Sample available on HR website: http://www.utexas.edu/hr/documents/PerformanceGuidelinesforStudentEmployees-final.pdf

- **Departmental standards: examples of topics to address:**
  - Communicating absences – how, when, to whom
  - Personal use of office equipment
  - Use of personal electronic devices on the job
  - Submitting accurate timesheets
  - Dress code
Expectations Exercise

1. Write down 5 – 10 expectations for student employees in your department
2. Put a check by those that are communicated at the beginning of employment
3. Put a check by those that are communicated in writing
4. Share and discuss your list and communication approach with others at your table
5. Identify any common trends among your group
Tip #3 – Orient and Train

• At Beginning of Employment:
  – Go over New Student Employee Checklist
  – Review job description, duties, expectations
  – Explain the department’s mission and chain of command
  – Give a tour (including break rooms, safety measures, etc.)
  – Introduce student to others in the department
  – Provide student with written policies and/or Student Employee Handbook / Desk Manual

• UT Austin Compliance and Safety Training
  http://www.utexas.edu/hr/student/orientation.html
Job-Specific Training

• Determine what skills the student employee has
• Determine what skills / tasks need to be taught
• Teach / demonstrate skills and tasks
• Explain protocols (e.g., customer service, safety, communication)
• Explain equipment / software use
• Recommended: Provide mentors
  – May be staff or more senior student employee
  – Designate someone to answer questions, help navigate the job
Professional Development: SEED Program

Student Employee Excellence Development (SEED) Program: *Professional Growth for Student Employees*

- Goal: To help students get the most out of their employment experience
- 1-hour workshops on 16 topics related to employment and work/life balance
- Expert presenters from units across campus
- Free! No fee for students or departments
SEED Program Benefits

For the student employee:

• Professional, personal, and leadership development
• Improved skills, including communication, time management, stress management, cultural competency
• Student Employee Excellence Certification
  – Level 1 – attend 6 workshops (from each Module), write a 2-page reflection
  – Advanced– attend 4 more workshops and complete project that furthers student employee training
  – 240 hours of employment in student title

For the employer:

• Better trained, better motivated student workforce
SEED Program Resources

• SEED website:  [http://sites.utexas.edu/seed/](http://sites.utexas.edu/seed/)
• TX Class: “Employee Training – Student Employees” (900 series)
• SEED Google Calendar
• Questions?  [seed@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:seed@austin.utexas.edu)
Tip #4 – Motivate!

- Provide opportunities for advancement and growth
  - Recommended: Title or wage step-up plan
- Set and track attainable goals or targets
- Allow for student input and decision-making
- Build trust and respect:
  - Honor your commitments
  - Model desired behaviors and work ethic
  - Communicate openly and honestly (verbal and non-verbal)
- Individualize rewards
- Match people to jobs
- Food!
- Provide recognition opportunities
Recognition Opportunities

National Student Employee Appreciation Week

– 2nd full week of April
– Resources available on HRS “Celebrating Student Employees” webpage: http://www.utexas.edu/hr/student/celebrate.html
  • Tips for Recognizing Student Employees
  • Certificate of Appreciation template
Student Employee of the Year

• Nominations open during January each year
• Campus winner:
  – Receives a $500 award
  – Advances to regional competition – maybe national!
  – Honored at President’s Staff Awards event
  – All nominees honored at luncheon in April
• Online nomination form and more information at:
  http://www.utexas.edu/hr/awards/student/
Tip # 5 – Provide Feedback

- Employees (especially Millennials) thrive on feedback!!
  - Real-time
  - Frequent
  - Positive as well as negative
  - Interactive – make it a two-way conversation

- Suggestions:
  - Regular meetings / check-ins
  - Prompt acknowledgment and direction
  - Written evaluations – mid-semester, end of semester
  - Recommended: Try a coaching approach
  - View feedback as a development opportunity
If you want people to do a good job, tell them what success looks like to you — and that you’ve noticed when they’ve achieved it.

“How to Fuel a Rewarding Culture,”
Tim Harford; *Financial Times*, June 17, 2016
Performance Feedback Tips

• Know the purpose of your feedback:
  – Reinforce effective performance
  – Improve / correct poor performance
  – Ensure goals are achieved

• Positive in public, negative in private

• Focus on job performance
  – Focus on specific behaviors
  – Description rather than judgment
  – Observations rather than inferences
  – Describe the impact
    • On the department
    • On their future
  – Agree on a resolution
Feedback Examples

Which is Better? Why?

• Positive Feedback:
  – “You’re doing a good job.”
  – “Terri, I was pleased with the way you handled that customer complaint. You gave the customer the attention she wanted. She said she looks forward to working with us again.”

• Negative Feedback:
  – “Lately you’ve become a real slacker.”
  – “John, I want to talk to you about timeliness. You’ve been coming to work at least 15 minutes late every day and are a week behind on your data entry assignment. We need the data for a report that’s due tomorrow. We’ll meet again in two weeks to discuss whether your timeliness has improved.”
Coaching

• What is the purpose of coaching?
  – Develop employees
  – Help employees realize potential
  – Guide employees toward success through self-assessment and self-motivation

• Basics of coaching
  – Relationship, not an event
  – Create a positive conversation
  – Ask open-ended questions
  – Encourage self-reflection and learning
  – Goal is to help students discover answers themselves
Coaching Examples

• Positive performance:
  – “Thanks for filling in for me and taking notes at the meeting. I’ll use your notes to write up the minutes.”
  – “I appreciate you filling in for me and taking notes at the meeting. Your writing style is very clear and concise. Would you like to try writing up the minutes yourself? Are there other ways you’d like to use your writing skills in this job?”

• Negative performance:
  – “This report isn’t what I asked for. You didn’t follow my instructions. You’ll need to redo this project by Thursday.”
  – “This isn’t what I was expecting. Tell me how you interpreted the assignment. Can you walk me through the steps you took? Are there other ways of doing this? What would that look like?”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O_vlekGlI_t_M
Develop Your Student Employees – Other Ideas

• Self-assessments – at the beginning and end of the semester

• Some “C’s” to think about:
  – Character – reinforce desirable character traits (e.g., initiative, creativity, diligence, compassion)
  – Competencies – focus on both soft and hard skills
  – Consistency - stress its importance, practice it yourself
Tip # 6 – Address Students’ Concerns

If a student comes to you with a concern . . .

• Use “active listening” skills:
  – Pay attention
  – Withhold your reaction until the student finishes
  – Paraphrase or ask questions
  – Ask if you got it right
  – Then respond

• Where appropriate, refer to campus resources

• In some situations, you may need to report
Title IX Reporting Obligations

• Title IX of Education Amendments Act of 1972
  – Prohibits sex discrimination in federally-funded education programs
  – Current focus on preventing sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, and stalking
  – Covers members of campus community (on or off campus)
  – Prohibits retaliation for complaints or participation in investigation

• If you are a supervisor, you are a “Responsible Employee” under Title IX
  – Your awareness of covered incident may = legal awareness by the university
  – When in doubt, contact the Title IX Office
    • 512-232-3992; TitleIX@austin.utexas.edu
Title IX Reporting Process

• Your role:
  – Listen; express compassion; offer assistance
  – Provide resources:
    • “C.A.R.E.S.” Quick Reference Guide
    • “Here to Help” handout of resources and contacts
  – Inform individual of the need to report the incident – but just to Title IX Coordinator
  – Contact Title IX Coordinator with:
    • name of complainant
    • name of respondent if provided by complainant

• What happens next?
  – Appropriate unit will reach out to complainant
  – Complainant does not have to respond to the unit if he/she does not wish to respond
Resources for Behavioral Concerns

• **Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL):** 512-232-5050

• **UT Counseling & Mental Health Center:** 512-471-3515 / SSB 5th Floor
  – 24/7 Crisis Line: 512-471-2255 (UT students only)
  – Individual and group counseling
  – **MindBody Lab**

• **UT Police Department:** 512-471-4441

• 911 – for any immediate threat
Tip # 7 – Know When to Separate

• General rule: try to improve performance so student can stay on through semester
  – Early termination may affect Federal Work-Study funding, insurance, tuition reduction benefit, resident tuition entitlement

• Reasons to end assignments early include:
  – Student consistently fails to meet established expectations (e.g., no-shows, late, insubordinate)
  – Violation of UT Austin Institutional Rules, safety rules, information technology policies
  – Student loses eligibility for student position
Separation Process

• Discipline and termination process is determined by department

• Recommended: At least one level above student employee’s supervisor should be consulted before termination

• Consult Work-Study Office for Federal Work-Study employees

• If violation of UT Austin Institutional Rules is an underlying issue, also consult Dean of Students’ Office – Student Conduct and Academic Integrity (formerly Student Judicial Services)

• See the Overview of Student Employee Separation Process
  – Only “Reference Check Required” comes to HR
Exercise - Scenarios

• Read your scenario
• Discuss with others at your table:
  – How to handle the situation – consider various approaches
  – What could have been done to reduce the likelihood of this situation taking place?
• Designate someone to share with the group
Student Employment Resources

• Student Employment website: http://www.utexas.edu/hr/student/
  – Managing Student Employees webpage: http://www.utexas.edu/hr/student/managing.html

• HR Student Employment Coordinator
  – amy.greenspan@austin.utexas.edu
  – 512-475-8015

• Strategic Workforce Solutions (SWS) HR Partners:
  • 512-475-7200
  • “Find HR Reps” lookup tool: http://hr.utexas.edu/hrpro/lookup/

• Student Employment Forum
  – Listserve
  – SharePoint site

• Office of Financial Aid Work-Study Office
  – work.study@austin.utexas.edu
  – 512-475-6247
HR Training Resources

- **CareerSmart**
  - Management Essentials
  - Managing Beyond the Basics
  - Essentials for Developmental Excellence

- **Employee Assistance Program**
  - Trainings on topics like Distress & Disruption,
    Dealing with Difficult People, Work/Life Balance

- **Lynda.com**
  - Management Fundamentals
  - Coaching & Developing Employees
  - Managing Multiple Generations
  - Many more!
Other HR Resources

• HR Service Center
  – hrsc@austin.utexas.edu or 512-471-4772
  – All questions related to employee group insurance
  – All questions related to employee records (I-9s, background checks, assignments)
  – Look up your HR representative: http://www.utexas.edu/hr/hrpro/lookup/

• New Graduate Student Employee Insurance Orientation: UT Learn (log in; search PN 200)

• HealthPoint Occupational Health Program
  – Work injury treatment (non-emergency)
  – Medical clearance, fit testing, and more
  – NOA 3.302; 512-471-4OHP (4647)
Other Benefit-Related Resources

• Wage payment and taxes:
  – Administered by Payroll Services

• Resident Tuition Entitlement
  – Administered by Student Accounts Receivable

• Tuition Reduction Benefit
  – Administered by the Graduate School and Student Accounts Receivable

• Student Health Insurance
  – Academic Health Plans / BCBS plan
  – Available to all students, regardless of employment
  – Campus representative: Ivan Kopecky, ivan.kopecky@ahpcare.com; 512-221-6663
Graduate School Resources

• Graduate School Student Employment website
  – https://gradschool.utexas.edu/finances/student-employment

• Contacts:
  – 512-471-4511 (Graduate School main line)
  – Dr. Dean Neikirk, Associate Dean for Graduate Student Services
    • Karen Sacratini: sacratini@austin.utexas.edu; 512-232-3610
Resources for Students with Disabilities

• **Services for Students with Disabilities:**
  512-471-6259
  Videophone 512-410-6644
  [ssd@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:ssd@austin.utexas.edu)
  SSB 4.206

• **Other Disabilities Resources:**
  – [ADAAA Points of Contact](#)
  – [The University ADAAA/Section 504/EIR Coordinator](#)
  – [Office for Inclusion and Equity](#)
Resources for Student Veterans

• **Student Veteran Services** – Office of the Dean of Students
  – 512-232-2835; SSB 4.104
  – Student Veterans Center – SSB 4.472

• **SVS “For Faculty and Staff” webpage:**
  – “Understanding Veterans” links
  – CMHC’s [“From Soldier to Student: Making the Transition to UT”](#)
  – [“Be That One” Suicide Prevention Program](#)
Wrap-Up

• Remember your role as an educator
• Use employee management best practices
• Enjoy and learn from your student employees!

Questions?