Preliminary Investigation Report

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Introduction

Our group has been contracted by Mr. Kelly to review the process of gathering student information from the CCRI student databases and linking them up with opportunities from employers. Bria Johnston of Opportunity at Work was also interviewed for an employer's view of the system and what needs to be provided. The purpose of this investigation is to establish a baseline of the current system utilized, and to identify any improvements of workflow that can be implemented. Upon completion of this investigation a design will be presented for an improved system and workflow to identify and contact students.

Systems Request Summary

The systems in place at CCRI are currently capable of identifying and contacting students for employment opportunities, but the process is neither efficient nor easy to utilize. Several internal databases including the Banner system of CCRI must be manually queried and filtered. A unified system needs to be in place to allow non-technical faculty the ability to identify and contact students about opportunities quickly and easily. This system also needs to be exposed to potential employers and organizations such as Opportunity at Work who can request information about eligible students. A streamlined method of generating reports for external regulators has also been requested to work with this system.

Preliminary Investigation Findings

The following issues were found during the investigation:

1. Student data must be gathered from multiple sources with potential overlapping data, leading to redundancy or missing information. Gathering this information requires intimate understanding of the system and student data, limiting the use of the current system.

2. Contacting students relies on manually initiated email contact with potential matches. This limits teacher and employer ability to contact all targeted students in a timely manner.

3. Producing reports requires a similar process and suffers from identical issues of potential missing data and redundancy caused by multiple separate databases. As comprehensive, accurate reports are required by government regulators, data integrity is paramount.

Recommendations

The problems identified in this preliminary investigation will continue as CCRI grows. A centralized, automated system would allow the process of identifying students to be streamlined and accessible to all approved users. This system will encompass all existing student and alumni data for a limited period. A central database of student data will be constructed. The system will include a web-based UI to allow for self-reporting of student data such as certificates earned outside of school, prior work experience, and any un-listed credentials. An easy-to-use web interface will allow for easy production of reports for internal statistics or feedback to regulators.

Expected Benefits

At the end of the systems analysis phase, solutions for collecting student data and targeting students will be presented and detailed. A centralized database to store student records alongside relevant credentials and outside courses will be implemented to allow fast, simple queries. This will enable consistent records retrieval for users and accurate reporting for regulators. A web-based user interface will allow students and faculty an easier process of self-reporting information. Overall the entire process of identifying students based on credentials and courses will be made easier for all interested parties, and the process of generating reports for outside agencies will be streamlined and accurate.