Editor’s Notes

Dr. Jack Rayman published the most recent *New Directions for Student Services* sourcebook on career services, *The Changing Role of Career Services*, over two decades ago. Our hope for this sourcebook is to provide a more current perspective reflective of a new context. While many of the imperatives presented in Rayman’s (1993) publication are still relevant today, much has changed and the role of career services within higher education is not exactly the same. In fact, it is a fascinating time within our field. An expectation for transformation by campus leadership—often without the commitment of new resources—is the primary underlying theme when our career services colleagues gather. That was the case before the President’s College Scorecard focus on college outcomes developed, and expectations have only heightened since then. More than ever before, university career centers play a key role in higher education. It is therefore critical for those within the profession and those making policy related to career services to understand its central importance. Part of the need for this particular volume is to help educate university decision makers on the current context and importance of career services.

This volume provides an overview of emerging trends for career services and identifies strategic directions for the profession, coupled with practical advice. It is written at a time when challenges for career centers are greater than ever before considering the changed landscape in higher education and the world of work. Throughout the country, the merging of—and in some cases elimination of—career services reflects how the profession is at a crossroads. Yet the importance of career services is, perhaps, greater than ever, and career services professionals are not necessarily equipped with training to “tell their story” and make the case for its critical role and future imperatives. Additionally, it is important for professionals within the field to remain current with strategic directions, learn from best practices, and have an opportunity to be the ones to “tell our story.”

The chapters in this volume blend research, case studies, and personal experiences of the authors and are intended to stimulate a productive dialogue about career services. I selected the topics for this volume based on conversations with colleagues and readings over the past several years. While less than systematic, these topics seemed to be of interest to practitioners and those in university leadership roles. The authors offer an expertise in their respective topics, either through research, prior publications, or having heard them in well-received conference presentations. I am confident that they have a great deal to contribute to the ongoing discussion about career services and am forever grateful to them for their contributions to this volume.
In Chapter 1, Farouk Dey and Christine Y. Cruzvergara frame the volume with the chapter “Evolution of Career Services in Higher Education,” in which historical and emerging trends in university career services are described.

In Chapter 2, Jeff Garis discusses how career centers can offer value-added services to their institutions in forging partnerships; how they should be leaders in creating university-wide, innovative career programs and systems; and the central role career centers play in that mission. This chapter is titled “Value-Added Career Services: Creating College/University-Wide Systems.”

In Chapter 3, Keri Carter Pipkins, Gail S. Rooney, and Imants Jaunarajs focus on the core value career counseling still plays in today’s context, the need for ongoing counselor professional development, and practical “best practices” for us to use for such development in the “Back to the Basics: Career Counseling” chapter.

In Chapter 4, Katherine E. Ledwith provides an excellent overview of a topic much discussed within our field: collaboration between career services and academic advising. In the “Academic Advising and Career Services: A Collaborative Approach” chapter, Ledwith offers suggestions on how the two entities can better partner to serve college students.

In Chapter 5, Julia Panke Makela and Gail S. Rooney explore the ever-growing focus on assessment within career services. In “Framing Assessment in Career Services: Telling Our Story,” readers are offered a strong case on why assessment in its various forms is crucial to helping us “tell our story” to demonstrate value and for continuous improvement. In addition, the authors share strategies and resources.

In Chapter 6, “Career Services in University External Relations,” Seth C. W. Hayden and Katherine E. Ledwith outline the growing role career services plays in university external relations.

In Chapter 7, Mark A. Kenyon and Heather T. Rowan-Kenyon write on the forward-thinking topic of how career services can play a key role in the internationalization of higher education in “The Globalization of Career Services.”

A wonderful benefit of the current context is that significant attention is finally being brought to our field that I expect will spur innovation and change. I am convinced that preparation of our students to enter the world of work will improve, and in the end, that is why those of us in this profession chose the work we do every day. We are ready for the expectations for change. My hope is that universities, public and private, put resources behind their desire for transformation, and that this point is not lost in attention-grabbing headlines. It would not be fair to our students of today or tomorrow. I argue our field does not need to “die” but rather needs attention and authentic support to become a university priority.

Doing so may require a mandate at the highest level of university leadership to garner support for the understanding that career success of
our students matters and is everyone’s business. In addition to motivating colleges and universities to become more transparent with employment outcomes, hopefully the College Scorecard will also aid with the latter requirement.

I want to take the opportunity to thank two individuals who helped make this sourcebook a reality. One is my life partner, Chad Smith, for taking on more than his share in our relationship and care for our girls so that I could dedicate time to editing in the midst of a career and cross-country family move. The other is John Schuh; it has been an honor to work with such an esteemed colleague in our field, and I will be forever grateful for his wisdom and patience throughout this process.

I trust that this volume will help stimulate ongoing conversations about the roles, models, and best practices of career services in higher education. Best wishes to all involved with this field as you continue working to impact the career success of your respective students and alumni.

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Editor

Reference

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