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Cooperative Education Programs: A Valuable Resource for Employers a Valuable Learning Experience for High School Students

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS:

A VALUABLE RESOURCE FOR EMPLOYERS

A VALUABLE LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF SCIENCE

INSTITUTE OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

BY

ARLENE ANNETTE JACKSON

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

MAY, 1995

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this age of non-stop technological advances many corporate jobs require either specialized training or a bachelor's or advanced college degree. Corporate recruiters and managers are constantly in search of the most qualified candidates to fill such professional level positions. Their search includes reviewing countless resumes, attending numerous career fairs, running very expensive ads in Sunday newspapers and the publications of trade and professional organizations, and visiting college campuses.

Notwithstanding the significance of professional positions, a sizeable portion of jobs in this country remain clerical or entry level. Towards that end, a very important issue facing employers in the United States is finding adequate sources for filling clerical hiring needs. High schools face a somewhat similar situation in attempting to prepare students, particularly those who may not go on to college, for life after graduation. Most non-college bound high school graduates will only have obtained the skills required for entry-level or clerical jobs.

Young people approaching high school graduation have several options to choose from in determining the next big step to take in their lives. The options available to them may appear numerous: military services--army, navy, air force, marines, coast guard--Peace Corps, marriage, or starting a family. However, the list of options for most students can be narrowed down to two choices--work or school, although admittedly some students choose both simultaneously. Many students who possess the interest, ability and

financial resources will go on to college; other graduating seniors will not, at least not immediately after graduation.

In the minds of many adults--parents and educators--and students themselves, college is perceived to be the preferred choice. The implication is that choosing college leads students towards more promising futures, financially and otherwise. While this may be true, in reality, about the same number of students select college as those who do not. A General Accounting Office [GAO], (1991) study reports that nearly 50% of young people in this country do not go on to college, and that only about 20% of them actually obtain a four year degree (GAO, 1991, p. 10). The same study reports that most high schools in the United States guide students towards college, and as a result spend more education and training resources per college-bound youth than those who are not college-bound.

There are some high school students who determine early on that they will not pursue a college degree. Many of these students have a strong desire to work, not only after graduation, but during high school as well. Some students are able to obtain employment during high school through work-study programs, also known as cooperative education programs. Cooperative education programs may be one source for employers to utilize to fill clerical hiring needs. At the same time these programs provide students with on-the-job work experience. Some high school administrators and teachers, perhaps more cognizant than others of the statistics cited in the GAO study, also encourage some students to consider an education track that includes cooperative education.

Significance of Study

Every year in this country classes of high school students approach graduation and the impending choices that will dramatically impact their futures. The investigation of the feasibility of cooperative education programs as one option available to high school students and prospective employers is important primarily because of the potential employment needs of both groups. The study should be helpful to employers seeking creative, cost-efficient ways to fill clerical or entry-level positions.

Definition of Terms

What is a cooperative education or work-study program? Work-study programs began in the United States in the early 1900's. They were designed as a way to give high school students the opportunity to learn business skills on the job, because they were not being taught these skills in school. The programs serve as a way to link classroom training with actual work experience. The first high school work-study program was established in 1909, in Fitchburg, Massachusetts. The participating employer was General Electric (Encyclopedia of Education, 1971, p. 590).

Additional programs began in other parts of the country: 1910 in public schools in Cincinnati, Ohio; 1911 in York, Pennsylvania; 1912 in Boston, Massachusetts; 1914 in Dayton, Ohio--a cooperative education high school totally devoted to work-study programs; and in 1915 in New York City, where work-study programs were established in 10 high schools (Encyclopedia of Education, p. 590). The federal government has long been a supporter of cooperative education and vocational education programs. With the passing of the Smith Hughes Act in 1917, vocational education became a federally

supported high school program. This Act encouraged the establishment of work-study programs in high schools. The Vocational Education Act of 1963 also provided assistance towards establishment of such high school work programs (Encyclopedia of Education, p. 590).

Woolridges' study (as cited in Winer and Kane, 1983) explains that cooperative education programs are a partnership between an educational institution and an employer, defining the basic purpose of such programs as "providing a means whereby a student can combine study at the institution with a work experience which is under the supervision of the employer, in order to fulfill the total requirements of a particular educational program". (Winer & Kane, 1983, p. 36)

A modern definition of a cooperative education program, based solely on the researcher's experience with cooperative education programs and work-study teacher-coordinators is a course of study at a public or private high school, which usually requires students to work for an off-site employer, receiving pay, while attending other classes which are necessary for high school graduation. The GAO (1991) study provides more official definitions and characteristics of cooperative education programs at the high school and community college level. The definitions which follow apply to high school cooperative education programs for juniors and seniors. All definitions and characteristics are generally applicable to the present study:

- Co-op is part of the school curriculum, and students earn credit and receive grades for their co-op experience. Related classroom instruction is required for all high school students and many community college students while enrolled in co-op. Credit and grades are given for both the worksite learning and the related instruction received in the school. Employers

provide schools with a performance evaluation of each coop student.

- Schools establish eligibility requirements for participation in co-op. There are typically grade point average requirements, and high school programs often have attendance requirements. Schools also screen students before referring them to employers for interviews. Community college programs require that students be enrolled in a major field related to their potential co-op placement. Often, students must have completed some minimum amount of coursework, typically a semester, before placement.
- School co-op programs are operated by co-op coordinators, typically teachers in vocational education. High school coordinators are generally responsible for supervising about 15 to 20 students; community college coordinators often supervise 50 to 60 students; Among coordinator responsibilities are recruiting students and employers, and supervising students at the worksite and in related classroom instruction. These responsibilities may be shared with other faculty.
- Most co-op placements are paid positions. Pay scales for co-op jobs are generally up to the employer, subject to federal and state minimum wage laws. Fringe benefits are provided at the employer's discretion. (GAO, 1991, pp. 11-13)

Work-study students typically attend classes half days and work half days during the school year. Many programs only allow seniors to participate. However, more and more high schools are allowing juniors, and even some sophomores to become involved in work-study.

At some high schools participating in a work-study program is mandatory for students. These schools tend to focus more on preparing students for obtaining employment after high school than on gearing the curricula towards a more general program or an academic program preparing students for college. This type of high school

is not the norm, however. At most schools work-study is optional. Students may choose this option in lieu of a strictly academic or college bound course of study.

A great deal of variance may exist between the work-study requirements at different high schools. At some schools, once a work-study program is selected by students, it then becomes a mandatory requirement for graduation. Students usually receive grades and credit hours both for the actual time spent on the job with the employer, and their classroom performance in the accompanying work-study class at school. At other schools cooperative education is an elective, much the same as electives such as college-prep, vocational or technical education, additional foreign language classes beyond the mandatory ones, or honors classes. At still other schools some students, usually seniors who have accumulated enough credit hours towards graduation, are permitted to enroll in cooperative education for extra credit or simply to earn money.

The names of the programs may vary from school to school but the overall intent of the programs is very similar. Some names of cooperative education programs are Office Occupations, Work-Study, Vocational Cooperative Education, and Distributive Education Program. At least one of the classes that students take usually pertains to the cooperative education work experience. In the cooperative education classes students may learn business skills such as typing, word processing, computer information systems, and records management. Classes may also include such business related topics as business etiquette and attire, interviewing, resume writing, and career planning and development.

The work-study teacher is usually referred to as a teacher-coordinator. At most schools teacher-coordinators take on this responsibility in addition to their other duties.

The teacher-coordinator strives to place students in meaningful work situations. Another integral role played by this individual is preparing students for interviews with employers. The teacher-coordinator maintains daily contact with work-study students during the year, providing guidance, counselling and assistance. They usually are required to meet on-site with supervisors between one and four times during the school year. Characteristics of "qualified instructors" of work-study and vocational education programs are outlined by Lynch, Price, and Burrow (1989).

Qualified Instructors. Vocational education teachers must meet all initial professional standards and certification requirements for the particular vocational program area and continue professional development experiences in both education and business/industry. In addition to the necessary pedagogical skills required of all teachers, vocational teacher-coordinators must demonstrate competence in career guidance, management of individualized instruction, and methods of vocational application (for example, supervising on-the-job education, laboratory work, and vocational student organization activities). (Lynch et al., p. 11)

Some possible differences between cooperative education and vocational education programs should be mentioned. In some high schools there is a very definite distinction between cooperative education or work-study programs and vocational educational programs. Vocational education programs can differ from cooperative education and work-study programs in that many of them train high school students for specific vocational careers or prepare them to work in a trade, such as automotive repair or carpentry. Not all vocational education programs require actual placement of students on jobs during high school, the emphasis being on the training received. Some vocational programs, however, do attempt to place students on jobs which directly relate to the vocation or trade being taught in school.

In comparison, most high school cooperative education programs require that students obtain employment, usually at an off-site employer. Cooperative education programs tend to place students in business related jobs in corporate or office settings. While individual cooperative education jobs may not directly relate to skills being taught in school, most jobs require students to use skills such as typing, filing, data entry, and communication skills. Given the fact that there are thousands of public high schools in this country, with hundreds of programs covering vocational and cooperative education programs, there may undoubtedly be vocational education programs that are more closely aligned with the aforementioned definition of cooperative education or work-study programs than the one given for vocational education programs.

In fact, there are cooperative education programs which are part of the vocational education curriculum and as a result it is impossible to categorize cooperative education and vocational education programs neatly under one strict definition. Therefore, for purposes of this study the terms "work-study", "cooperative education", "vocational education", or any combination thereof are used interchangeably, and describe high school work experience programs, which require that students spend time in the classroom and working for an off-site employer. Finally, "coop" is simply an abbreviation for "cooperative education", whether referring to "cooperative education students" or "cooperative education programs".

Overview of Study

In early 1994 when this study began, I was directly involved with cooperative education in my professional career. In addition to having responsibilities as a corporate

recruiter, I managed the Cooperative Education Program at the Northern Trust Bank (Northern) in downtown Chicago. To define the parameters of Northern's Coop Program, the high school students employed by Northern had to meet certain requirements: be enrolled in a cooperative education program; be able to work full-time (forty hours per week) the summer prior to their senior year and twenty hours per week during the school year; and possess a minimum 2.5 grade point average. Prospective student employees at Northern are interviewed during their junior year, and hired as seniors. In addition, students must have already taken and successfully completed at least one year of typing and must have a satisfactory attendance record at school.

Fifteen Chicago public high schools and one suburban public high school were participants in Northern's coop program during the time of the study. Each year teacher-coordinators at all schools are required to meet with supervisors twice during the school year and with the program coordinator once during the school year. They must also be available to meet with the coordinator or the supervisor on an as-needed basis. Teacher-coordinators also provide supervisors with grade cards every quarter.

The supervisors are charged with providing all on-the-job training of students. Supervisors must evaluate students' performance on a regularly scheduled basis and should help students develop and grow on their jobs. "Supervisor" and "manager" are used interchangeably in this study, and refer to the individual with direct supervisory authority over one or more cooperative education students. While a supervisor or manager are in a sense, a student's employer, as used in this study, "employer" generally refers to the organization that hires the coop students. In managing the program, the

Cooperative Education Program coordinator serves as a liaison between the schools, supervisors, and students.

Study Summary

This study will highlight the advantages and disadvantages that employers and students may experience by participating in public high school cooperative education programs. (Some private high schools also have coop programs but they are not examined here.) Several decades ago cooperative education programs were more prevalent in this country than they are today. As many high schools began placing more emphasis on pre-college curriculum, funds and the number of teachers for work-study programs gradually diminished, or such programs were completely eliminated. It is the contention of this study that public high school work-study and cooperative education programs can still be important vehicles for introducing young people to the "real world" of work, in addition to opening the doors to other "real life" experiences, including college. The purpose of this study then, is to examine whether a cooperative education program can be a valuable hiring resource for employers and a valuable learning experience for students.

Chapter I introduced the problem and the focus of the study. The literature review (Chapters II and III) addresses the overall findings of several studies on cooperative education programs. Chapter II begins with a review of advantages and disadvantages of coop programs. Many of the studies, while stressing the benefits, also consider potential barriers to effective coop programs. The chapter is then subdivided into sections which center on the major stakeholders of cooperative education programs--the employers,

students, and schools. Chapter III reviews the literature relevant to cooperative education programs and students' futures. Chapter IV explains the methods used in the study. The results of the data analysis are described in Chapter V and the study is summarized in Chapter VI.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW--ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

In general, most studies cited in this review discussed coop programs favorably, as beneficial to both students and employers, but nearly all studies also made reference to possible disadvantages. Two studies, (Harper, 1983 and D'Amico, 1984), approached the topic of work-study programs from the perspective that, while such programs are generally positive experiences for all concerned, they may have an adverse impact on students' performance in school.

The study by Harper (1983) was concerned with the attendance of students in vocational cooperative education programs in a rural Florida public high school. She stated that such programs should be part of a high school curriculum as long as the students meet all other academic requirements for graduation, including attendance and grade point average. This high school teacher cited the biggest problem with the cooperative education program at her school as being that students were not attending classes in the subjects required for graduation, resulting in lower grades in those classes. She designed a ten week pilot project which closely monitored the absences and academic progress of the juniors and seniors enrolled in the vocational cooperative education program. The goal of the project was to improve the attendance of the coop

students and to have the students maintain a "C" or better average in their English classes. At the conclusion of the project attendance and grade point averages did improve. Harper noted that these areas could continue to improve for students, but only with constant monitoring. The D'Amico (1984) study found mostly benefits to students who participated in cooperative education programs. Benefits for students included an increase in class standing, a lower probability for dropping out of high school, and an increased knowledge of what the working world entailed. Only minor detrimental effects of working were cited, and were linked to participation in extra curricular activities and study time. The results of this study were summarized by contrasting the levels of intensity of high school employment. Students who worked modest hours, less than twenty hours per week, exhibited mostly beneficial effects of working. The detrimental effects of working were more evident in students with more intensive work schedules. However, the overall findings of this study were that working during high school actually taught students skills that increased academic success and that employers viewed as important.

The purpose of a study by Dick (1993) was to determine the effect of high school students' participation in work-study programs, based on the following outcomes: high school graduation, pursuit of college education, and post high school employment. This study compared responses of three groups of high school students: (1) general-track students--students enrolled in general studies, a non-work-study track, (2) students with one year of work-study classroom only training, and (3) students with two years of work-study training--classroom and on-the-job work experience. Students were contacted by

telephone between one and four years after completing high school. The telephone surveys found that the work-study students showed positive results in all three areas: higher high school graduation rates, higher levels of full-time employment, and more than 50 percent of the students had begun college.

A study by Lewis (1983) was similar to the Dick (1993) study in that it compared groups of work-study and non-work-study students. Lewis surveyed four groups--students who held: school-sponsored jobs only, non-school-sponsored jobs only, both school and non-school sponsored jobs, and no regular jobs. The results showed that student participation in work-study programs had a positive effect on their ability to make the transition to regular employment after high school.

Another advantage cited in the Lewis (1983) study was that work experience during high school had either no effect or a slightly positive effect on grades for all students. Interestingly, results of the study also showed that for women only, working had a negative impact on grade point average but a positive impact on class rank. Lewis also reported other negative findings: students who worked experienced more problems at school, such as cutting class, suspensions, or delinquent behavior, including shoplifting. However, the students who exhibited this type of behavior were the group that simultaneously held both school-sponsored and non-school-sponsored jobs; no explanation was given as to the reasons why.

The purpose of a study undertaken by Stern, McMillon, Hopkins and Stone (1990) was to show that besides good academic skills acquired during school, student employees needed to develop good interpersonal skills, increase their problem solving skills, and their

ability to work as part of a team, and to have a positive work ethic. The study determined that working during high school, as part of a properly designed coop program, combined with classroom training, provided a very practical way for students to develop these skills. Some potential negative effects were reported as well: students who worked longer hours spent slightly less time on homework and received slightly lower grades, and paid employment did interfere with school work unless a meaningful connection between the two could be shown--the connection being that the work assigned to students needed to directly relate to the training they received in school.

Greenberger and Steinberg (1986) are totally opposed to teenagers working in any capacity while in high school because they feel it hinders students' development and keeps them away from extra curricula activities that are an important part of the high school experience. Their study primarily focused on any type of jobs held by high school students, but also evaluated structured work experience programs in high schools and came to the same conclusion. The study found that such programs were of very little educational value to students because the jobs were menial and non-stimulating and as such, did not prepare students for future employment beyond high school (Greenberger and Steinberg, chap. 5).

A study by Risk (cited in Stern, 1984) strongly supports work experience programs for high school students, regardless of the type of work performed. He feels that to not allow students to participate in work-study programs simply because some adults consider the type of duties performed to be menial, limits students' future opportunities. He argues that even the concern expressed by some, about the quality of work, does students an

injustice:

Much of the prevailing concern with the 'quality of the work experience' provided to the young is misplaced and irrelevant. The argument is frequently made that unless the work experience is meaningful, supportive, allowing of reflection, etc., youth are better off uninvolved. This concern with the developmental needs of the young is touching, but fundamentally unjust. To delay the opportunity to work because it does not meet the presumptions held by adults of what is worthy, is to cut off young people from both present experience and future opportunity. For the young to claim that they have a job is no small claim in the light of what their future is likely to be without employment experience....The message that 'some work is worse than no work' both misleads the young adult about their actual opportunities and degrades those who work at jobs thought not meaningful by those in positions to say so. (Risk's study as cited in Stern, p. 405)

Unlike Greenberger & Sternberg (1986), Parsons (1988) in a report for the William T. Grant Foundation, is highly in favor of work-study programs. In this study she goes so far as to say that all high school students in public high schools should be required to participate in coop programs because these programs provide such a vital link or "bridge" to the student's future, whether the future includes full-time employment or attending college. She views cooperative education as being a vital bridge between school and post-graduation employment, presenting extensive examination of the reasons why. She argues that traditional vocational or technical curricula cannot instill good work habits because they provide only an introduction to a chosen career path, instead of actual placement on a job, as does cooperative education. She cites the following advantages of cooperative education:

1. Learning occupational skills is aided by real experience.
2. The school and employer must work together, identifying weaknesses and remedying them before graduation.

3. Joining work-study programs provide a job connection after graduation.
4. The market test is applied all the time; employers will not participate in imparting skills for which there is no demand.
5. Cooperative style education reduces the problem of keeping up-to-date equipment in the classroom.
6. In general, such arrangements force school and employers to talk to each. (Parsons, p. vi)

In addition, some difficulties of cooperative education were noted:

1. Few skill-training teachers know how to integrate their training with academics.
2. Few academic teachers know how to integrate their coursework with the needs of students who must apply their academic knowledge to occupational skills and job requirements.
3. Depending on how much time is given to "on the job" training, accumulation of credits for graduation may take more than the usual four years. Also, students' work schedules may interfere with co-curricular activities limiting coop ed students from a full and rich secondary school experience. (Parsons, p. vii)

Parsons' overall finding is that the benefits of cooperative education far outweigh the disadvantages.

Similar to Parsons, Stern (1984) viewed coop programs as a way for all students, including those planning to go on to college, to learn about the real world and to also take on more adult responsibilities on the job.

The schools involved in the General Accounting Office (1991) study were selected because various state directors of cooperative education identified them as being "high quality"; various aspects of these programs were examined. The study found such programs to be very beneficial to students, but also discussed the following potential

barriers to employers: a lack of awareness about which schools offered programs, the employer's regular staff lacking the time to adequately train and supervise students, and the negative impression that many people have of coop programs. The negative impression being that coop programs, rather than providing opportunities for students to gain valuable work experience, are dumping grounds for students who are not strong academically.

The benefits in the GAO (1991) study were numerous and were listed for students, schools, and employers. For students, as in the Parsons (1988) study, coop programs were viewed as being helpful in assisting them in making the transition from school to work. Some schools reported that all coops students received offers of permanent employment from their employers. Students also developed an increased level of self confidence. Some teacher-coordinators reported that coop students' academic performance, in the form of higher grade point averages, was enhanced by participating in cooperative education programs. Schools benefitted because high school retention rates for coop students were improved. Teachers also reported that students were able to use more modern equipment on the job--equipment unavailable to them at school. Employers surveyed in the study felt that they were getting pre-screened, highly-motivated entry-level workers, because teachers took the time to screen students before sending them to employers. Employers also reported that students were more strongly motivated than other entry-level employees because teacher-coordinators were continually monitoring students' progress, and because students received a grade for their performance. Finally, employers viewed coop students as a source for recruiting permanent employees (GAO, 1991). Canna (1982) presents

positive and negative effects of cooperative education programs as they impact on students' career development, personal growth, maturity and retention of jobs obtained through such programs. This study also presented summaries of the results of several other studies which provided evidence that students who participated in cooperative education programs while in high school were better prepared to enter the work force than students who did not participate in such programs. Some negative effects cited were that not all students developed positive work habits and work attitudes. Also mentioned was the fact that in one instance no evidence could be found which showed that students were more knowledgeable about career options or increasing skills required to pursue various careers. One study indicated that cooperative education students appeared "to be a superior group of students" when compared to non-cooperative education students (Canna, 1982, p. 3).

A study by Doty (1991) compared the post high school whereabouts of the 1990 graduates of all high schools in a particular county in the State of New Jersey. The seniors had pursued varied courses of study, including cooperative education, vocational-technical education, and general education--among the non-college bound curricula; students who did plan to pursue college immediately after graduation typically were enrolled in college-prep. A major reason for the study was that some school officials were concerned about the future of the students who had opted for a general education track, as opposed to cooperative or vocational education, or college-prep. The concern was that general track students were inadequately prepared for the future, whether they planned on college or a career upon graduation. Indeed, the findings showed that of all

the courses of study available to students during high school, cooperative education proved to be the most beneficial in terms of employment after high school.

Employer's Views on Cooperative Education Programs

Winer and Kane (1983) addressed the question of how employers view high school coop programs. They note that employers must play a pivotal role in cooperative education programs. This study found that employers viewed coop programs as a good orientation to the workplace and an excellent recruitment tool for full-time employees because the students had developed positive attitudes toward work. In addition, employers were willing to train the students to become the type of workers they needed--workers with good work habits, motivation and basic skills.

A study by Winer (1983) noted that cooperative education programs helped meet the needs of the business community by obtaining already trained employees. Employers also viewed them as important recruitment tools.

The Dick (1983) study placed great emphasis on the partnership between businesses and local schools involved with work-study programs. In fact, the study recommends that partnerships be forged only with businesses that value education for the part it plays in the work place.

One aspect of the Owens (1983) study dealt with the notion that many employers involved with cooperative work experience programs feel that young people today lack any sense of responsibility. Employer perceptions of the deficiencies in the job performance of students is presented. The employers listed three primary areas of concern

related to responsibility: being on time for work, demonstrating initiative, and showing loyalty to the organization. The employers felt that once students are hired, they and other cooperative education employers, should play a major role in helping students develop an increased sense of responsibility, and offered several suggestions on how this could be accomplished. Suggestions included taking a personal interest in students and working closely with them, providing clear performance expectations, providing formal performance reviews, giving regular daily feedback, and informing students of their importance to the organization. In addition, the employers felt that students should be given challenges on the job and gradually, as they prove themselves, given more difficult tasks that require increased levels of responsibility.

Employers play a pivotal role in the effectiveness of cooperative education programs, for without their sponsorship most programs could not exist. As such, their views on coop programs are extremely important. Most employers, at least initially, hire high school students enrolled in coop programs because they feel that students can perform the jobs well and because they want to show their support for the schools within the communities they serve. An additional reason for supporting such programs is that some employers hire students who, depending on job performance, they intend to train well enough to retain as regular staff members after graduation. Employers' continued support of such programs in most instances depends on satisfactory job performance by students.

Student's Views on Cooperative Education Programs

A study by Woloszyk (1991) focused on the factors that influenced the decision

by high school students to enroll in cooperative education programs--"people" factors and others. Friends, cooperative education program teacher-coordinator, and parents were the people, in order of importance, who influenced students' decisions. Educational and personal reasons were cited as the other primary factors that led students to decide to participate in cooperative education. Valli (1984) also sought to determine the reasons that students selected participation in a cooperative office occupations program over other programs offered at the high school in this study. This office education program was limited to senior girls only. The results of this study dispelled some false notions held at the school about why students selected office occupations: that the students were academic failures, capable only of non-intellectual work; that the students disliked school, so chose a course that would remove them from school; and that the students had office career aspirations (Valli, p. 5). Some of the evidence that dispelled these inaccurate characterizations were given by the teacher-coordinator: often the valedictorian or salutatorian of a graduation class had participated in the program; many students took academic classes and even excelled academically--becoming members of the National Honor Society or maintaining grade point averages above 3.0; many students scored in the top quartile of national standardized tests; and the students had plans to attend college. (Valli, p.3)

These factors were clear indicators that students did not choose cooperative education because they were not strong academically. The girls in this study indicated that they enrolled in the coop program not necessarily because they wanted to pursue office careers after graduation, but rather to "try out" office work, then determine if it was

indeed a viable career choice. Some of the girls also used the coop jobs as possible stepping stones to other careers.

A study of students who were enrolled in work-study during high school was conducted to determine what the students were doing five years after graduation and to obtain their thoughts about their participation in the program. The study also sought to determine whether the program had helped them beyond high school (Cherry Creek School District 5, Englewood, CO, 1984). The results showed that the majority of students held full-time jobs. Of the remaining students, only 3 percent were unemployed or seeking employment; the others were either going to school full-time or going to school while working full or part-time. An overwhelming majority of the students who were working felt that the coop program helped them develop knowledge and skills that they used on their jobs daily.

A study by McNelly (1990) compared the opinions of two groups of high school seniors--cooperative education and non-cooperative education students. The students cited mostly advantages to working during high school. Both groups felt that having part-time work experience helped them improve the skills that employers sought, gain valuable work experience, and make realistic career choices. Neither group felt that working helped them improve their grades or attendance in school. However, the coop students felt that working part-time during high school did enhance their high school educational experience by improving their attitude toward high school, by remaining in school, and by gaining a greater appreciation of their courses (McNelly, pp. 9-10). Cooperative education students also responded affirmatively to the following items:

(1) high school students should have the benefit of holding a paying job before graduating, (2) vocational subjects help high school students relate to the world of work, (3) paid work experience is the best way for high school students to learn what employers expect, and (4) working for pay is as valuable as high school course work (McNelly, p. 10).

Most high school students are given the option of participating in a work-study program. Students may enter into such programs with preconceived notions and expectations. Students with expectations of a glamorous, high-profile, high-paying-job are usually disappointed. However, those who enter into a cooperative education program with expectations to obtain work experience and learn firsthand about the working world, have a more realistic outlook. Having made the decision to pursue cooperative education, students usually remain in the program through graduation.

Quality of Training Received at School and the Role of The School and Teacher-Coordinator

A handbook containing detailed explanations of every aspect of the General Cooperative Education program is used as a guide for teachers, students, supervisors, and employers involved with this program in Arkansas (General Cooperative Education Clubs of Arkansas [GCE], 1987). The handbook starts out with a section titled "Basic Beliefs Concerning GCE"--General Cooperative Education. Heading the list of beliefs is "...That preparation for gainful employment and for advancement in a specific occupation is the PRIMARY goal of the GCE Program" (GCE Clubs of AK, p. 5).

All participants, including parents, enter into a formal agreement once students are accepted into the coop program. The student contract states that participating in the program is a privilege and that along with the privilege comes a good deal of responsibility on the part of the students. Some of their responsibilities concerning school are: to be in school every day unless physically unable to do so; to be on time for all school activities, especially classes--they are instructed to invest in an alarm clock and a watch to ensure prompt arrival to work and school; to abide by all school rules and regulations; to do their very best when completing classwork assignments; and to never use working as an excuse for not completing school assignments.

The cooperative education program described in the handbook is important, but not, according to school officials, more important than the overall quality of education students are entitled to receive at school. This fact is summed up in the final Basic Belief concerning GCE, "...That the GCE Program is only a part of the total education curriculum and that the goals and objectives of GCE are in every way consistent with the philosophy and objectives of education at our school" (GCE Clubs of AK, p. 5).

The Dick (1983) study called for teachers to place work-study students with businesses that would form a partnership with the school. The study recommended that the schools and businesses join forces to ensure that the education received by students in schools was a contributing factor in the development of students on the job. The study also found that teachers provided a disservice to students when students are not placed with employers who have clearly defined opportunities for career advancement. This was true also for students with plans to continue their education.

McNelly (1990) compared high school students who did and did not participate in cooperative education and found that working part-time helped all students learn job skills, but did not improve their grades or attendance. The purpose of the Lynch (1989) study was to investigate the feasibility of restructuring public vocational education programs to increase the amount of time allotted for student participation in the programs, on the job and in school. Two major recommendations emerged from the study. The first recommendation was that the vocational education programs should be restructured to include only school-sponsored work experience jobs for students most likely to begin full-time employment immediately after high school. A further finding was that working schedules for students had to be limited to 20 hours per week during the school year because students who worked more hours spent less time on homework and leaned towards lower educational aspirations. The second major recommendation was to restructure the work schedules of students in the different programs so that the schedule mutually benefitted students and employers. Of primary concern was the fact that previously, students could be scheduled to work varying hours during the day, causing them to miss important school activities, including classes. To resolve this problem part of this recommendation was for work-study students, regardless of their program, to work half days only, and attend classes half days.

Corbin (1982) described the first module of a series of sixteen individual instruction modules designed for use by cooperative education teacher-coordinators and instructors in the State of Iowa. The first module outlines the general concept of cooperative vocational education and explains the various components of such programs.

Teacher-coordinators are highlighted as playing important roles in the coop programs. Some aspects of the role were that teacher-coordinators: provided classroom instruction with assistance from employers and other educators; worked with the employers to develop a training plan to help students develop the skills and attitudes to successfully perform their job responsibilities; and coordinated all activities with respect to the cooperative vocational education program (Corbin, p. 10).

Parsons (1988), who advocated that all students in public high schools should be required to participate in cooperative education programs, commented on some aspects of the role of the school and the teacher. In calling for this radical change, she notes that schools should be willing to accept responsibility in the following areas--preparing students for jobs, providing them with guidance, and supervising on-the-job training. She proposes that most of the work done by students be correlated with what they are learning in school. Parsons' study also found that teacher-coordinators must be knowledgeable about the job market in order to place coop students in appropriate jobs, and they should also present workshops that stress the need for developing good work habits (Parsons, p. vii).

Teacher-coordinators normally make the final decision on which students to accept into a cooperative education program. Likewise, they determine which prospective employers will participate in the programs. These employers agree to hire the most promising students. Teachers can usually increase a student's chance for actually getting a job by carefully screening them to ensure their preparation for the interview and any pre-employment tests. After students are hired teachers continue to remain very active

participants in their students' cooperative education experience at school and on the job. They usually maintain close contact with the employers and immediate supervisors as well. Teacher-coordinators usually serve as the work-study teacher for the accompanying work experience class, and may also act as an advisor or counselor to their students. The role played by teacher-coordinators and the type and quality of educational training received at school contribute heavily towards the success or failure of cooperative education programs.

As noted from the literature, there are still mixed views, some even contradictory, on the advantages and disadvantages of cooperative education programs. Each section summarized the literature from a somewhat different perspective. Similar to the overall perceptions of cooperative education programs presented in the literature review, employers and students viewed the programs with a mixture of positive and negative opinions.

CHAPTER III

LITERATURE REVIEW--HOW COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMS MAY EFFECT STUDENTS' FUTURES

The purpose of a pamphlet, in the form of a research paper, published by the U.S. Department of Education (1992) is to help communities across the country develop ways to assist high school students successfully make the transition from school to work, particularly students who will not go on to college. Every high school should have a "School-to-Work" system, according to the pamphlet. The goal of such a system should be to reduce high school dropout rates, produce more qualified workers and assist students in planning for their futures.

The Department of Education (1992) report discusses several high school work programs, including cooperative education and vocational-technical education, and how they can be used as School-to-Work systems. School-to-Work systems are highly encouraged primarily because of the impact they can have on students' future careers. However, as important as part-time work experience during high school may be, this report strongly makes the point that the emphasis in all work experience programs and School-to-Work systems, should be on learning and not on working.

Lesh (1985) reports on findings from a study by the National Child Labor Committee (NCLC), which focused on improving and extending high school Cooperative

Work Experience (CWE) programs. The NCLC strongly advocates CWE programs because of the increasing numbers of entry-level jobs that need to be filled in the United States every year. The NCLC's study found that it was possible to prepare students for future employment while attending high school through vocational and CWE programs. Lesh reported that in the ten years preceding the NCLC study, a concerted effort had been underway to reduce or eliminate vocational and cooperative education from high schools because such programs were viewed as being ineffective due to the fact that many of the students lacked basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills, and that vocational education did not help students obtain jobs after high school. Because of these concerns, according to the NCLC, many schools eliminated vocational and cooperative education work programs so that students could spend more time in the basic subjects, and thereby improve their prospects for employment after high school.

Lesh (1985) found, however, that effective vocational education programs, especially CWE programs, should be expanded, not eliminated. Specific reasons supporting this finding were:

- (1) It has not been their experience that students who are not highly motivated will actually spend more time on learning the basics. However, they could show that exposure to work requirements and the need for competence in the basics at work are strong motivators for learning.
- (2) People seem to feel that because employers declare that good work habits and positive attitudes are crucial for on-the-job success, skills are not necessary. Work habits and attitudes are important, but not all inclusive with respect to what makes a successful employee.
- (3) Employers would much rather hire a cooperative education student who has proven their work ability than to take a chance and hire an unemployed ex-participant in the program. (Lesh, p. 5)

Findings from the Meyer and Wise (1982) study were gathered from data taken from the National Longitudinal Study of 1972 Seniors, which surveyed the attitudes, opinions and career or college plans of students who graduated from high school in 1972, and followed their transition from school to work. The aspect of the study that focused on youth employment during high school was concerned with any type of jobs students were able to find, not just work-study jobs. Meyer and Wise used data collected on male students only. The researchers found that vocational training received in high school did not increase student's chances of gaining an early entry into the labor force after graduation. However, they did show that such training had a significant effect on wage rates after entering the labor force (Meyer & Wise, chap. 9).

Obtaining employment after high school may not be an actual requirement of most cooperative education programs. However, it can be a reasonable expectation on the part of teacher-coordinators, employers, and perhaps most importantly, the students who would obtain the jobs. Besides the possibility of obtaining regular employment, participating in coop programs may also have a positive effect on the future of students who decide to pursue college. As in the chapter II, studies in this chapter provided both positive and negative responses to the question "Does participation in a coop program have an impact on students' future?" The following research study will examine the various alternative perspectives based on respondents' answers to questions pertaining to the Cooperative Education Program at the Northern Trust Bank in Chicago.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH METHODS

The main purpose of this study is to examine whether cooperative education programs in public high schools are valuable to the students involved and to the employers who hire them. The literature review examined historical data that shows mixed support for these programs. The present research aimed to evaluate the twenty-five year old Cooperative Education Program at Chicago's Northern Trust Bank, the researcher's employer. In addition to having responsibilities as a recruiter, I managed Northern's Cooperative Education Program during the time of this study in 1994. Northern Trust is a leading Chicago-based financial institution, whose primary products--trust services--positions it as a nation-wide leader in the financial services industry. High school seniors enrolled in school-sponsored work-study programs have been hired each year since 1968. In recent years, particularly the past 5-6 years, more than half of the students in the program are subsequently hired for one of Northern's trust departments.

Research Questions

This chapter begins by examining the research questions. It then presents the research design of the study, including the population and sample size, procedures, instrumentation, validity, historical effects and data analysis.

The following research questions were used as a basis for guiding this research:

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages to employers and students who participate in public high school cooperative education programs?
2. Does having clear definitions of the roles of students and their managers have an impact on the effectiveness of a cooperative education program?
3. Does participation in a coop program have a positive impact on students' futures?
4. If coop programs do have a positive impact, does the impact vary if students plan to continue working or if they plan to go to college?
5. Does the quality of the educational training received at school have a positive impact on the students' cooperative education experience?

All five questions will be answered based on the results of the surveys described in this chapter.

These questions can be restated in the form of hypotheses:

- #1 Cooperative education programs have a positive impact on the students involved and the employers who hire them.
- #2 Cooperative education programs are more effective if the roles of the student and the manager are clearly defined.
- #3 Participation in a cooperative education program has a positive impact on a students' future, whether the student plans to work or attend college after graduation.
- #4 The quality of the educational training received by students has an impact on the students' cooperative education experience--the higher the quality, the more positive the coop experience.

Population and Sample Size

The Cooperative Education Program at Northern Trust begins the summer preceding the fall start of each academic school year. Because of a strike by Chicago

public school teachers, the Chicago students in this study began the 1993-1994 school year in October instead of September, when school usually starts. (Suburban schools opened on schedule in August.) The Coop Program officially ended in June 1994, although many students were able to remain on their jobs for several weeks or months after this date. The population for this study included each of the three participant groups (students, supervisors, and teacher-coordinators), which, along with the program coordinator, together comprise the Cooperative Education Program at Northern Trust. All fifty-seven students, forty-six supervisors and twenty-six teacher-coordinators were surveyed, and received their respective questionnaires by mail.

Procedures

Data for this study were collected through the administration of three researcher-designed, group-specific questionnaires mailed to the entire population of students, supervisors, and teachers. Student and supervisor questionnaires were sent via inter-office mail; teacher-coordinator questionnaires were sent to teachers at their school. A cover memorandum accompanying each questionnaire explained the purpose of the study and also assured participants of complete confidentiality. Copies of the cover memos are presented in Appendices A-C. Copies of the questionnaires are in Appendices D-F. As all participants were aware of the researcher's role as program coordinator, a second safeguard to confidentiality was that respondents were instructed to return questionnaires to someone unknown to them, my manager. Only his name and bank location were supplied on the questionnaire. His official title and the fact that he was my manager, were omitted. All questionnaires were mailed in February, 1994. February was selected

because at this point, students will have passed the half way point towards completion of their year in the program. After seven months of participation in a twelve month program students should be able to honestly and competently respond to questions about their cooperative education experience in school and on the job.

High response rates were achieved for all three participant groups. Fifty-seven students were surveyed and forty-one returned completed surveys, for a response rate of 71.9%. The other response rates were: supervisors 76.1% (46 surveys mailed/35 returned) and teacher-coordinators 65.4% (26 surveys mailed/17 returned). In addition 21.5% of the total ninety-three respondents who returned surveys, made additional comments on the questionnaires (see Appendix G).

Instrumentation

Three survey questionnaires were designed, one for each participant group. Three types of questions were on each survey. In the first section respondents were instructed to answer questions using a Strongly Agree - Somewhat Disagree scale. The ratings along with the point value assigned to each follows: Strongly Agree (2); Somewhat Agree (1); Neutral (0); Strongly Disagree (-2); Somewhat Disagree (-1). The other two sections on each questionnaire were multiple choice or open-ended questions, and demographics questions.

The questions in all three surveys can be grouped into five major categories: (1) questions related to the students' coop jobs at Northern Trust--including the job responsibilities and expectations, and the training students received on the job (2) the role of the supervisor (3) whether or not participation in the Coop Program has an effect on

the student's future--whether the future includes further education or employment (4) the role of the school and the teacher-coordinator, and (5) overall perceptions of Northern's Coop Program.

While all questions were designed to ultimately determine the effectiveness of the Coop Program, the questions within each category of the three questionnaires sought to obtain the perspective of that particular group. Many of the questions within each of the five categories mentioned above were very similar to the questions asked in the corresponding category on each set of questionnaires. Some sample questions within two of the categories follow:

Sample Questions Pertaining to Students On-the-Job Performance

Student Questionnaire:

- I know the expectations of my job.
- I have been trained well enough to perform my job responsibilities.

Supervisor Questionnaire:

- I know the overall expectations of coop students.
- My students have been trained well enough to perform their job responsibilities.

Teacher-Coordinator Questionnaire:

- I am aware of Northern's overall expectations of coop students.
- My students are trained on-the-job well enough to perform their job responsibilities.

Sample Questions Related to the Supervisor's Role

Student Questionnaire:

- My supervisor is interested in my development.

Manager Questionnaire:

- Part of my role is on-the-job development of my

students.

Teacher-Coordinator
Questionnaire:

- Part of a supervisor's role should be on-the-job development of students.

Validity

Sample. This study aims to show the value of cooperative education programs. The research was conducted using Northern's Coop Program as the target population. A potential sample bias immediately faces the researcher, that of generalizing that Northern's Coop Program is a fair and accurate representation of all, or most coop programs in general and in Chicago, in particular. I think it is fair to make this assumption for the following reasons: As a major Chicago corporation which employed fifty-seven cooperative education students from sixteen public high schools, Northern appears, on balance, to represent a fair sampling of the population of coop programs. Findings from this study should be generalizable to a much larger population beyond Northern Trust.

Historical Effects

Northern's Trust Operations business unit employed forty-five of the fifty-seven coop students during 1993-1994. There are over twenty departments within Trust Operations; several departments experienced reorganizations between July 1993, when most students began work, and the time the survey was mailed in February 1994. The reorganizations caused several students to experience two to three changes in supervisors.

Also in 1993, as previously mentioned, Chicago public schools opened two weeks later than scheduled because of conflicts between the Chicago Teacher's Union and the

Chicago Board of Education. Chicago public school teachers refused to sign the proposed contract which would have averted the school shutdown. When the schools were finally opened it was only because of the issuance of a judge's restraining order, forbidding the continued shutdown of schools. Only the issuance of two extensions of the restraining order kept the school doors open to students before a contract settlement was finally reached in mid-October.

Since Northern's coop program begins in the summer, the strike had no impact on the start date of the program. Normally, the day school starts is the same day that students switch from a full-time, forty-hour work week to a part-time, twenty-hour work week. Because of the strike no one knew when schools would start, or therefore, when students would begin their part-time schedule. Students and managers looked to the coordinator for guidance and the coordinator relied on daily television news coverage and featured newspaper reports for information concerning the strike or the potential opening date for schools. This information was communicated, usually through electronic mail, to supervisors and students.

As a general rule, managers and students were informed that students should continue working full-time until notified differently. Still this was a difficult and confusing time for everyone involved with cooperative education because of the uncertainty. Even after the strike ended and schools opened, the confusion continued for several weeks. As a result of the strike many high school classes were increased from forty-minute periods to fifty-minutes, resulting in a longer school day. This change in the length of classes also resulted in some students having to add or drop classes. Many

work-study students were negatively impacted because the longer school day made it impossible to arrive on time for work. If their counselors were in the process of adding or dropping classes, some students' schedules changed almost daily, resulting in irregular work hours. Students arrived to work anywhere from thirty minutes to two hours late because of the change.

Most supervisors were sympathetic to the fact that these problems were in no way the fault of their students. However, their dilemma was that they still needed students to work four hours every day. Students were anxious and upset at the prospect of losing their jobs over a situation totally beyond their control. Only one student was actually terminated, because her school schedule only allowed her to work one and one-half hours each day. The coordinator was able to negotiate a change in schedule for the other students whose schedules were most dramatically impacted, although some managers agreed to the change reluctantly. Their reluctance was understandable because when they agreed to hire a coop student they did so with the understanding that the student would be able to work five days per week, four hours each day--not three hours or two and a half hours.

These historical effects--reorganizations in trust departments which resulted in supervisory changes, and the school strike, could have an effect on each participant group, and therefore, on the validity of this study of Northern's 1993-1994 Cooperative Education Program.

Data Analysis

Data from the questionnaires were tallied on a computer using Lotus 1-2-3. Mean

scores will be the form of frequency distribution tabulated to answer the research questions and test whether the hypotheses have been supported. I will consider that my hypotheses have been supported if after tabulation of the results, at least sixty percent of all responses are favorable towards the effectiveness of Northern's Cooperative Education Program. This figure was chosen because it is greater than half.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS

Overview

The results presented in this study are based on responses to the survey questionnaires sent to the students, managers, and teacher-coordinators who participated in the 1993-1994 Cooperative Education Program at Northern Trust Bank.

Findings from each participant group are presented in separate tables, distinguished by one or more of the following subgroups: the participant groups' perceptions about students' work-study jobs, the role of the manager, the role of the teacher-coordinator, how the cooperative education experience may have an impact on students' futures, and the overall effectiveness of the Coop Program at The Northern Trust Bank.

Student responses are presented in Tables 1-7; manager responses in Tables 8-17; and results from teacher-coordinators are in Tables 18-21. These tables are followed by combined tables, which compare the participants' responses to the same or very similar questions. Comparison results are presented in Tables 22 and 23. Finally, all participants were asked demographics questions. Demographic tables (Tables 24-25) are presented last in this section. Each question (or item) in the questionnaires is listed in numerical order. Questions in the tables also appear in numerical order and are taken from the corresponding student, manager, or teacher-coordinator questionnaire. "Item"

number in the remainder of this chapter refers to the question number from the appropriate questionnaire. Question number and item number are used interchangeably.

Student Questionnaire Responses

Items 1-19 were rated using the Strongly Agree-Somewhat Disagree scale. Items 20 and 21 were multiple choice questions and items 22-25 covered demographics.

Table 1 presents findings about students' understanding of their jobs. The results show that students are clearly aware of their roles and know what is expected of them while at work. For example, students scored 1.8 on question 1, "Knowledge of job expectations" and 1.4, question 2, on "Job responsibilities clearly explained". Students also indicated by the 1.7 score assigned to item #3, that they were appropriately trained to perform their job duties. This question, along with item #8--"Clear understanding of role of student"--received the second highest mean rating for this category of student responses.

These ratings are important because students indicate not only an understanding of their role, but also they state that they have received appropriate training to perform well in their roles. Overall responses in this category appear to lay the ground work for a successful year in the program. "Successful" in the sense that if students are properly trained, know their job expectations, and understand their roles as students, there would appear to be no reason for them not to perform well.

TABLE 1
STUDENT RESPONSES
JOB RESPONSIBILITIES, EXPECTATIONS, TRAINING RECEIVED

Item #		Mean Scores Students' Jobs At TNT
1.	Knowledge of job expectations.	1.8
2.	Job responsibilities clearly explained.	1.4
3.	Trained well enough to perform job responsibilities.	1.7
4.	Knowledge of how job relates to departmental goals.	1.6
8.	Clear understanding of role of a coop student.	1.7
16.	Northern's has realistic expectations of coop students.	1.2

N=41

Table 2, students' perceptions of supervisor's role, shows that student responses approach "Somewhat Agree" to the question concerning supervisors' interest in their on-the-job development (item #5). The same mean rating (1.2) of item 11 "Supervisor is usually available to answer questions", suggests that students perceive their supervisors as being concerned about them, but that the supervisor could demonstrate an even higher level of concern. Responses to the three questions in Table 2 could be interpreted to mean that supervisors are demonstrating concern for students' well-being verbally, by being available to answer questions about the job. However, when it comes to documenting students' performance in writing, supervisors could do a better job. The lower rating of item #13 (.5), concerning written performance feedback from supervisors,

provides stronger support that students' perceive their supervisors lack of interest in them.

TABLE 2
STUDENT RESPONSES
SUPERVISOR'S ROLE

Item #		Mean Scores Supervisor's Role
5.	Supervisor interested in students' development.	1.2
11.	Supervisor usually available to answer questions.	1.2
13.	Supervisor provides regular written feedback about performance.	.5

N=41

Table 3 relates the Coop Program to students' futures. It indicates that students value the cooperative education experience gained thus far at Northern and at school, with a mean rating for the two questions (6 and 12) falling between "Strongly" and "Somewhat Agree". Many students expect an increase in future opportunities as a result of participation in the program. The findings presented in this table lend credence to this notion. Students note in item #6 that the skills they are learning on the job will be valuable in obtaining employment after high school graduation. This response indicates that most students find a direct link between their job skills and their potential for obtaining jobs after graduation. The 1.4 rating given to item #12 is also important because it affirmatively answers the research question "Does participation in a coop program have an impact on students' future?" Students responded favorably to the

question whether or not they were planning to go to college.

TABLE 3
STUDENT RESPONSES
STUDENTS' FUTURES

Item #		Mean Scores Coop Program and Students' Future
6.	Skills learned on-the-job will be valuable in obtaining employment after high school graduation.	1.5
12.	Cooperative education experience is teaching valuable skills that can be used in the future, whether or not student goes to college.	1.4

N=41

Item #7 (.41) in Table 4 presents a fairly low rating of the question concerning whether the coop job helps students perform better in classes at school. Identical 1.1 scores were given to the questions concerning whether the junior year and senior year classes taken were beneficial to students on-the-job. The responses indicate a level of agreement that the classes help students at work. In fact, perhaps the most interesting finding presented in this table is that students appear to imply that the job does not, in any large measure, help them perform better in classes, based on the near neutral rating of Item #7. Yet the reverse seems to be true--classes taken during junior and senior years do help them at work. This could be true because during the junior and senior years, students are normally enrolled in more advanced classes. Some of these classes, may include Accounting III or IV, Advanced Typing or Keyboarding, Word Processing, and

advanced computer applications or programs.

The final item in Table 4, item #18 (1.6 mean rating) affirms that students have the favorable impression that their teacher-coordinators are interested in their progress at work. This finding could be important in the minds of students for several reasons. Teachers represent authority figures, who have the ability to pass or fail students. However, teacher-coordinators involved with work-study programs play a greater role than simply the person who dispenses grades. This individual is largely responsible for initially obtaining the jobs for students. Once students are placed with an employer, the teacher-coordinator usually becomes the students' coach, counselor, mentor, and advisor, in addition to being their teacher. He or she should make regular on-site visits to observe students at work and to meet with their supervisors. In short, a good work-study teacher-coordinator has a vested interest in how well students perform at work. That interest goes beyond the ultimate letter grade (A, B, C, D, F) that teachers will assign for the work-study class.

When students responded with a 1.6 (between "Strongly" and "Somewhat Agree") rating of the question "My cooperative education teacher is concerned about my progress on-the-job", the implication is that students are responding, in effect, "Yes, my teacher-coordinator is concerned about me and my development, and not just about my grade for the course".

TABLE 4
STUDENT RESPONSES
TEACHER-COORDINATOR/SCHOOL

Item #		Mean Score Role of Teacher- Coordinator
7.	Job is helping student perform better in classes at school.	.41
9.	Courses taken in junior year were beneficial to student on-the-job.	1.1
10.	Courses taken in senior year were beneficial to student on-the-job.	1.1
18.	Teacher-coordinator is concerned about on-the-job progress.	1.6

N=41

Items in Table 5 show responses slightly higher than "Somewhat Agree" to questions about the overall effectiveness of Northern's Coop Program. In particular, item #14, "Understand the role of the Coop Program Coordinator" received a 1.2 score. The orientation that students received from the program coordinator, while viewed positively, could have it appears, gone farther towards helping students make the sometimes difficult transition from student to employee, as indicated by the 1.1 score in item #15.

TABLE 5
STUDENT RESPONSES
NORTHERN'S COOP PROGRAM

Item #		Mean Scores TNT's Coop Program
14.	Understand the role of the Coop Program Coordinator.	1.2
15.	Orientation received about the Coop Program helped ease the transition of working at TNT.	1.1
17.	Program Coordinator responded to questions in a timely manner.	1.2
19.	Workshops presented at Northern were beneficial.	1.4

N=41

Tables 6 and 7 provide important findings because they summarize (1) students' reasons for initially choosing a course of study that included work-study (Table 6) and (2) student's plans after high school graduation (Table 7). Fifty-five percent of students who responded to the question asked in Table 6--the primary reason for participating in cooperative education--selected "to learn skills which I can use in the future, whether I attend college, work, or do both". This response appears to offer solid evidence that students perceive potential benefits of pursuing a course of study which includes work-study.

Again, referring to Table 6, the majority of students selected cooperative education with an eye towards the future. Whether the future included working or college, they indicated that working at Northern would assist them in future plans. In only two

responses did students appear to have selected work-study for reasons that had nothing to do with the future. Those responses were: "because it is required of all seniors", with a 15% response rate, and "because it is paid employment", with a response rate of 7.5%. Approximately one-third of Northern's coop students attend a school which requires completion of a work-study program as a prerequisite for graduation. In spite of this fact, on the survey, a large number of these students still selected work-study because of potential future benefits.

TABLE 6

STUDENT RESPONSES
PRIMARY REASON FOR PARTICIPATING IN COOP PROGRAM AT SCHOOL

	N	Percent
To learn skills which can be used in the future, whether I attend college, work, or do both.	22	55%
To gain work experience during high school.	6	15%
Because it is required of all seniors.	6	15%
To increase chances of obtaining employment after high school.	3	7.5%
Because it is paid employment.	3	7.5%

N=40

The results shown in Table 7 complement the results in Table 6. The question asks "What are your plans after graduation?" The top two responses were "to obtain employment at Northern (34%) and to go away to college (27%). The table further shows that all students who responded have plans to work, go to college, or to pursue both simultaneously. These results complement those presented in Table 6 because they add

strength to the notion that coop programs are beneficial to students, even those who will be going on to college.

TABLE 7

STUDENT RESPONSES
PLANS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

Item #21	N	Percent
Obtain employment at TNT.	14	34%
Go away to college.	11	27%
Work at TNT and attend college in the Chicago area.	7	17%
Attend 4 year college in Chicago area.	5	12%
Attend junior college in Chicago area.	3	.07%
Obtain employment outside TNT.	1	.03%

N=41

Manager Questionnaire Responses

Items 1-15 were answered using the Strongly Agree-Somewhat Disagree scale. Items 16-22 are multiple choice or open-ended questions; demographics are covered in items 23-29.

Table 8 presents findings of the managers' perceptions of their students' jobs. The mean scores from items 1-3 (1.4, 1.6, and 1.5 respectively) indicate that managers have a firm understanding of the students' job. Managers further indicate that they have trained students well enough for students to perform their job responsibilities. Responses to items 14 and 15 are important because they imply some level of satisfaction with students' performance. Since these responses do approach the "Somewhat Agree" range,

there is some indication that supervisors would lean towards a positive hire recommendation, albeit if not enthusiastically. Questions 14 and 15 asked whether or not the manager would hire their current student or recommend the student for hire to another area within the bank, based on the students' performance. Mean scores were .7 and .9 respectively. These responses are valuable because recommendations from managers are many times the deciding factor in hire decisions about coop students. These two scores indicate that some of the students who want regular jobs at Northern after graduation may not receive them if, indeed, a recommendation from their manager is critical to the hire decision.

TABLE 8

MANAGER RESPONSES
STUDENT'S EXPECTATIONS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND TRAINING

Item #		Mean Scores Supervisor's Role
1.	Manager's knowledge of the overall expectations of coop students.	1.4
2.	Job responsibilities were clearly explained to student.	1.6
3.	Student has been trained well enough to perform job responsibilities.	1.5
14.	If supervisor had a position open for hire when student graduates in June 1994, would you hire your student?	.7

Table 8--Continued

Item #		Mean Scores Supervisor's Role
15.	Assuming the same situation as in question 14, if supervisor knew of an opening in another area, would the student be recommended?	.9

N=35

Table 9 indicates that managers gave themselves high marks for their roles as supervisors of coop students. Results show that managers do consider part of their role to be on-the-job development of students. The highest mean ranking in the category (1.7) was in response to whether the supervisor had provided students with written feedback about their performance. The managers suggest that not only are they actively involved in developing students on the job, they are providing students with written performance feedback of the progress being made. This response appears to contradict student responses to their question concerning supervisors providing them with written performance feedback. In Table 2, item #13, the student response to this question was .5, directly between neutral and somewhat agree. A possible explanation for the contradiction could be that either the students or supervisors falsely or inaccurately answered the question, or the question was misinterpreted.

TABLE 9

MANAGER RESPONSES
SUPERVISOR'S ROLE

Item #		Mean Scores Supervisor's Role
4.	Clear understanding of role as a supervisor of a coop student.	1.5
5.	Part of supervisor's role is on-the-job development of my student.	1.5
7.	Student has received written feedback about their job performance from supervisor.	1.7

N=35

In Table 10 managers responded with a high 1.7 score in answering the question concerning the impact that the cooperative education experience may have on students' future. These results are interesting when compared to the responses of item #14 in Table 8. Interesting because here in Table 10 supervisors acknowledge the importance of the cooperative education experience to students' future, yet in item #14 they did not fully agree that they would either hire their current student, nor refer that student to another manager for hire. The supervisor's rationale could be that in general, cooperative education is beneficial in preparing students for the future, but specifically, their own student does not possess the skills needed to keep them on the job after graduation.

TABLE 10
MANAGER RESPONSES
STUDENT'S FUTURE

Item #		Mean Scores Students' Futures
6.	Cooperative education experience will teach students valuable skills that can be used in the future, whether or not student goes to college.	1.7

N=35

In Table 11 managers generally agreed that Northern's Coop Program was effective. However, responses to items 12 and 13 (.8 and .9 respectively) indicate that workshops presented by the Human Resources Department and receiving regular communication from the coordinator may not be as important as other aspects of the program. Several developmental workshops are presented for students during the course of their year at the bank. Workshop topics include "Job Readiness", "On-the-job Security Awareness", "Career Development" and "Interviewing Skills". The coordinator regularly communicates with students to keep them apprised of procedural aspects of the program and to remind them of upcoming events, among other things. The somewhat low ratings given to these two aspects of the program suggest that managers do not place a high value on them. Two possible reasons could exist. Some supervisors may feel that workshops are not beneficial to students because the time a student spends attending workshops could be better utilized by actually performing their job duties. Also, many managers are long time supervisors of coop students and as such, may not require frequent communication from the coordinator.

TABLE 11
MANAGER RESPONSES
NORTHERN'S COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Item #		Mean Scores TNT'S Coop Program
8.	Understand the role of the Cooperative Education Program Coordinator.	1.1
9.	Students received an adequate orientation to the Coop Program.	1.2
10.	Senior management of my department has a strong commitment to the Program.	.91
11.	Coop Program Coordinator is responsive to my needs as a supervisor.	1.2
12.	Workshops presented by Human Resources are beneficial to my student.	.8
13.	Regular communication from the Program Coordinator is a priority for me.	.9

N=35

In question 17 managers were asked to rank order five choices in order of importance, as they related to their coop students. Table 12 presents the results. The most important reason cited was a student's ability to follow directions, followed by ability to meet expectations, and attendance. The least important items were motivation and ability to work scheduled hours. The managers top three choices show that they place a premium on students being at work everyday and once there, doing what is

expected of them.

The fourth and fifth ranked items, motivation and ability to work scheduled hours, could initially appear to be puzzling because they were not ranked higher. I would expect for motivation to be one of the most important areas, because a student who lacks motivation would appear to be a student who lacks any reason to strive to perform well. Seemingly of equal importance, a student unable to work scheduled hours, would appear to be one who is useless to any department or supervisor. A possible explanation could be that supervisors actually included the other four choices as behaviors that measure motivation. In other words, perhaps supervisors did not select "motivation" as a top choice because they consider a highly motivated student to be one who follows directions (ranked #1), meets job expectations (#2), and has a good attendance record (#3). Likewise, the #5 choice, ability to work scheduled hours, could have been an implied factor in the motivation selection (#4).

TABLE 12

MANAGER RESPONSES
MOST IMPORTANT AREAS AS THEY RELATE TO YOUR COOP STUDENTS

Item #17	
<u>In Rank Order of Importance</u>	
1.	Ability to follow directions
2.	Ability to meet job expectations
3.	Attendance
4.	Motivation
5.	Ability to work scheduled hours

N=35

Table 13 shows how managers rated items of importance as they related to Northern's Coop Program in general. This is question 18 from the manager survey. The items, in rank order were: (1) quality of students assigned to you compared with the job description submitted (2) guidance from Program coordinator on procedural issues (3) communication received from coordinator and inability to interview students before hire decision is made, and (4) students' performance reviews. Not surprisingly managers selected as the most important item, the quality of the student assigned to them. If they received a "high quality" student, the implication appears to be that the other factors, while important, are secondary in nature. Worthy of note are the two items which tied for the number three choice--communication and interviewing students. Managers seem to indicate a desire to continue receiving regular communication from the coordinator.

This response appears to be consistent with a question previously mentioned on the manager survey--item #13, in Table 11--regular communication with the program coordinator is a priority with me. This question received a .9, nearly Somewhat Agree, score. Similarly, in order of importance with respect to the Coop Program, this item ranked tied for third in a field of five choices. It also appears that managers would prefer to be more involved in the interviewing and hiring process.

A brief explanation of Northern's process for hiring coop students follows. Students are initially interviewed by the coordinator or one of the other recruiters on staff, however, final hire decisions are made by the coordinator alone. The guidelines established by the Northern Trust Bank, and followed by the coordinator when making hire decisions are: results of written interview evaluations supplied by recruiters, academic and attendance records supplied by teacher-coordinators, and the results of typing scores administered at Northern prior to the interview. Managers who request a coop student must provide the coordinator with a written description of the job prior to the start of the interview process. When making hiring decisions the coordinator selects students who appear best able to perform the job duties, based on Northern's guidelines as described above.

A comparison can be made between item #7, written performance feedback, in Table 9, and the least important area listed in Table 13, students' performance reviews. In Table 9 supervisors gave themselves high scores for providing students with written feedback about their job performance, and in Table 13 the performance reviews are presented as the least important area, with respect to the Coop Program. This is not

necessarily a contradiction, but rather an observation. Managers appear to be saying that even though they don't view students' performance reviews as being very important, they still conduct the reviews and give students written copies of the performance feedback.

TABLE 13

MANAGER RESPONSES
MOST IMPORTANT AREAS AS THEY RELATE TO NORTHERN'S
COOP PROGRAM

Item #18	
<u>In Rank Order of Importance</u>	
1.	Quality of students assigned to you compared with the job description submitted
2.	Guidance from program coordinator on procedural issues
3.	Communication received from coordinator
3.	Inability to interview students
4.	Students' performance reviews

N-34

The responses to questions 19 and 20, presented in Tables 14 and 15 respectively, contrasted students' problem areas with areas in which students excelled. Managers were not instructed to list them in any particular order--only to list up to three items for both questions. These were both open-ended questions, although managers could select responses from the choices listed in question 17 (Table 12)--areas of importance as they relate to your coop student.

The problem areas selected most often (Table 14) and the number of managers

who selected each item are as follows: motivation (11); ability to follow directions (9); and attendance (5). These choices did appear in question 17. An additional problem area, selected by four managers, was excessive or inappropriate use of the telephone. More than half of all managers (18/35 or 51.4%) indicated that they experienced no problems with their students. This is an important statement because managers were given the opportunity to identify problem areas and yet more than half of them indicated a seemingly high level of satisfaction because no problem areas were cited. The only other problem areas cited with multiple responses were "working scheduled hours" and "ability to meet job expectations", with three and two responses, respectively. The low response rates imply that the majority of managers are experiencing satisfactory performance from their students in both areas. Twelve different problem areas received single responses from managers. A few of these sporadic problem situations were: paying attention, producing poor quality work, attire, doing homework at desk, and lacks a sense of responsibility.

TABLE 14

MANAGER RESPONSES
MOST FREQUENT PROBLEMS WITH COOP STUDENTS

Item #19		N
1.	Motivation	11
2.	Ability to follow directions	9
3.	Attendance	5
4.	Excessive or inappropriate use of telephone	4
5.	No problems with coop students	18

N=35

In question 20, (Table 15) two of the problem areas from Table 14--following directions and motivation--also appear as top areas in which students excelled. The top areas selected and the number of managers who selected each response follows: following directions (11), motivation (9), and meeting expectations (7). Attendance (5) also selected as a problem area, was an additional area where students excelled. This fact strongly makes the point that supervisors highly value these items. Two final areas, teamwork and working hard, with four managers selecting each one, were additional areas where students excelled. These two responses indicate that students are valued members of teams and that their supervisors recognize the fact that they can be hard workers. While not cited by the researcher as areas of importance with respect to coop students, the fact that several supervisors wrote in these two responses indicates their importance.

TABLE 15
MANAGER RESPONSES
AREAS IN WHICH STUDENTS EXCEL

Item #20		N
1.	Ability to follow directions	11
2.	Motivation	9
3.	Ability to Meet Job Expectations	7
4.	Attendance	5
5.	Teamwork/hard workers	4
6.	No areas in which students excel	7

N=35

In Table 16 the overwhelming response to Question 21, problems with the Coop Program in general, was that most supervisors (23) did not have any problems. The implication is that supervisors generally are satisfied with all aspects of the program. This implication is strengthened when the top two problem areas are taken into consideration. The top two problem areas listed were communication received from coordinator and a supervisor's inability to interview students, with only three supervisors selecting each response. Results show that a relatively small number of supervisors would prefer to receive additional communication from the coordinator. The fact that supervisors are not involved in the selection process appears to be a minor problem area, as indicated by the low response rate. While these two areas may appear to be minor problems, they are nonetheless important, as indicated in Table 13, where these items ranked third in order of importance. This was an open-ended question. Five different managers identified single sources as problem areas, among them: students spend too much time socializing, students should have more workshops, and more communication is needed between teachers and supervisors.

TABLE 16
MANAGER RESPONSES
PROBLEMS WITH COOP PROGRAM IN GENERAL

Item #21		N
1.	No problems with Coop Program	23
2.	Communication received from Coordinator	3
3.	Inability to interview students	3

N=35

Question 22 asks the primary reason for hiring coop students. The results, in Table 17, indicate that students are hired because they fill clerical hiring needs (selected by 13 managers), followed closely by the fact that students possess the skills to do the work required by those jobs (selected by 12 managers). In addition to hiring students because they are capable of doing the jobs, supervisors indicated that they hire students to support cooperative education (selected by 3 managers). Other primary reasons cited for hiring students included: my manager made me do it, to support the Chicago public school system, and to fill in when we were short an administrative position.

TABLE 17

MANAGER RESPONSES
REASONS FOR HIRING COOP STUDENTS

Item #22		N
1.	To fill entry-level clerical positions	13
2.	Students possess skills which are a good match with the needs of my work area	12
3.	To support cooperative education	3

N=35

Teacher Questionnaire Responses

Items 1-18 were answered using the Strongly Agree-Somewhat Disagree scale. Items 19-23 were multiple choice questions; and items 24-28 covered demographics.

Teacher-coordinators were not specifically asked about their roles as teachers because this question might appear to be too obvious. Instead, attention was focused on

the level of interaction between teachers and students, initially--when teachers selected students to be considered for the program--and after students were hired.

Table 18 indicates that teachers feel they have a strong understanding of their students' jobs at Northern Trust. In fact, all 17 teachers responded "Strongly Agree" to the question (item #1) concerning their knowledge of Northern's expectations of students. Also important in this category are the high ratings given to questions (items 11 and 18) concerning whether teachers regularly discuss students' job performance with them and whether students receive proper on-the-job training to perform their job responsibilities. The ratings for items #11 and #18 were 1.8 and 1.6, respectively. By holding regular discussions about job performance with their students, teacher-coordinators appear to make an important connection--classroom teacher and coordinator, interested in on-the-job performance and development.

TABLE 18
TEACHER RESPONSES
STUDENTS' JOB RESPONSIBILITIES, EXPECTATIONS,
TRAINING RECEIVED

Item #		Mean Scores Students Jobs At TNT
1.	Knowledge of Northern's expectations of students	2.0
10.	Expectations of students are realistic	1.4
11.	Regularly discuss students' on-the-job performance with them	1.8

Table 18--Continued

Item #		Mean Scores Students Jobs At TNT
18.	Students are trained well enough on the job to perform their job responsibilities.	1.6

N=17

Table 19 presents the results of the teacher-coordinators' perceptions of the role of the work-study program in their schools and Northern's process for selecting students. Most teachers (item #4, 1.5 mean score) indicate that students who enroll in their work-study program do so because they need it as a graduation requirement, as opposed to having selected work-study as an elective. The same 1.5 mean score was given to the question concerning the effectiveness of Northern's process for selecting students for its Coop Program. A slightly lower rating (1.2) was given to item #16, "The Chicago Board of Education supports cooperative education programs." This rating suggests that many teacher-coordinators have the impression that the Chicago Board of Education places greater emphasis on other aspects of students' high school experience. This perceived lack of support of coop programs could be exhibited in the form of limited funds and resources for such programs, limited supplies and equipment, such as computers, or simply a lack of emphasis placed on work-study programs by officials of the Board.

TABLE 19
TEACHER RESPONSES
COOP PROGRAM AND INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL

Item #		Mean Scores Coop Program & School
4.	My students who participate in the Cooperative Education Program must pass this course as a requirement for graduation.	1.5
8.	Northern's process of selecting students for the Coop Program is effective.	1.5
16.	The Chicago Board of Education supports cooperative education programs.	1.2

N=17

Table 20 presents the findings on teacher perceptions of Northern's overall Coop Program. Item #2 indicates that teachers have a thorough understanding of the role of the Coop Program coordinator, with a 2.0 mean rating. Other scores range from 1.1 to 1.7, and cover such items as "I would rather place my students in Northern's Coop Program than any other program in Chicago" (item #9, 1.3); "Students are learning skills in school which are directly transferable to their jobs at Northern" (item #7, 1.4); and "Hourly salary is comparable to the salary offered to coop students at other companies" (item# 12, 1.7). The lowest rating in this category (1.1) was given to item #6, "Northern's procedure for scheduling teacher visits is effective", suggesting a level of effectiveness, but also possibly indicating a need for improvement of the process.

TABLE 20
TEACHER RESPONSES
NORTHERN'S OVERALL COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Item #		Mean Scores TNT's Coop Program
2.	Understand the role of the Coop Program Coordinator.	2.0
3.	Program Coordinator responds to requests for assistance in a timely manner.	1.7
6.	Northern's procedure for scheduling teacher visits is effective.	1.1
7.	Students are learning skills in school which are directly transferable to their jobs at Northern.	1.4
9.	I would rather place my students in Northern's Coop Program than any other program in Chicago.	1.3
12.	Hourly salary is comparable to the salary offered to coop students at other companies.	1.7
13.	Requirement of two mandatory teacher visits with supervisors is adequate for obtaining feedback about my students.	1.5
14.	Regular communication with the Program Coordinator is a priority.	1.5
15.	Requirement of one mandatory visit with the Program Coordinator is adequate.	1.4
17.	Process for obtaining report card grades is effective.	1.5

N=17

Teachers felt strongly that a supervisor's role should include spending time developing students on the job, as shown in Table 21, from item #5. These results (1.8

rating) are important, especially when compared to the teachers response to a similar question (item #18, Table 18). There, teachers also responded with a fairly high rating (1.6) to the question concerning supervisors providing sufficient training to their students.

TABLE 21

TEACHER RESPONSES
SUPERVISOR'S ROLE

Item #		Mean Score Supervisor's Role
5.	Part of supervisor's role should be on-the-job development of students.	1.8

N=17

Comparison Responses

Two categories were selected to compare some of the responses from each group of participants. All survey questions used for the first two comparison tables were taken from the first section of each questionnaire--the section which required responses of Strongly Agree (2.0) - Somewhat Disagree (-1). The two categories--students' job-related variables (job expectations, job responsibilities, on-the-job training received) and the overall effectiveness of Northern's Cooperative Education Program--were selected because they capture the essence of the Program.

Table 22 covers the job related variables. Students rated themselves highest for understanding job expectations. Interestingly, the supervisors--the very persons charged with explaining the expectations to students--received the lowest mean score for

knowledge of overall expectations of coop students. As previously mentioned in the teacher response section, 100% of the teacher-coordinators responded "Strongly Agree" when asked about their awareness of Northern's expectations of their students. Mean scores across all three groups were very close in response to the question concerning whether or not students received appropriate training to perform their jobs. The mean scores for this question were: students, 1.7; managers, 1.5; and teacher-coordinators, 1.6.

TABLE 22
COMPARISON TABLE
STUDENT, MANAGER, TEACHER MEAN SCORES FOR JOB-RELATED
VARIABLES

Variables	Mean Percentages		
	Student	Manager	Teacher
Expectations	1.8 Item #1	1.4 Item #1	2.0 Item #1
Responsibilities explained	1.4 Item #2	1.6 Item #2	--
Appropriate training received	1.7 Item #3	1.5 Item #3	1.6 Item #18

N=41/Students; 35/Managers; 17/Teachers

The second comparison table, Table 23, presents results of several similar questions asked of the three groups concerning the overall effectiveness of Northern's Cooperative Education Program. Students and managers scored nearly identical ratings to the question concerning their knowledge of the role of the Program coordinator (1.2

and 1.1 respectively), while again, all teachers scored a mean rating of 2.0 for this question.

Students and managers again responded similarly to the question pertaining to the orientation of the Coop Program received by students--1.1 rating for students and 1.2 rating for their managers. A Human Resources Department staff member presents students, as new employees, with an overview of the Northern Trust Corporation. This orientation includes a history of the organization, discussions of the subsidiary and Chicago-area locations, and a video-taped welcome from Northern's CEO, including a discussion of the bank's mission statement. The orientation is similar to the new employee orientation received by all new bank employees. The coordinator presents the Cooperative Education Program orientation to students, which includes discussions on the students' role, their job expectations, and procedural aspects of the program. In addition, students are informed of the roles of the coordinator and the supervisor. The formal presentation is followed by an open question and answer period. The "Somewhat Agree" 1.1 and 1.2 ratings indicate that both groups may be implying that the Coop Program orientation could have been more effective. The nearly identical scores can be interpreted to mean that both students and managers, to a similar degree, feel a need for improvement. Since students and supervisors work so closely together, responses from one group, perhaps, validates the legitimacy of the others' implication of a need for improvement in this area.

Two additional items in Table 23 showed noticeable differences between the three groups in two areas--workshops and communication received from Program coordinator.

Students felt that the workshops presented by the Human Resources Department were beneficial to them, as indicated by a 1.4 mean score, while their managers rating of .8 indicated that the workshops were not as meaningful from their vantage point. Teachers appeared to have a stronger preference for receiving communication from the coordinator, with a mean score of 1.5, as compared to managers, who rated this item slightly lower than "Somewhat Agree", with a .9 mean rating. The implication could be that teacher-coordinators, who are off-site and whose regular, daily connection with the Coop Program, comes from students, prefer more frequent communication from the Coordinator to remain knowledgeable about the program. On the otherhand, supervisors may require less regular communication from the coordinator because the coordinator is easily accessible on an as-needed basis. This could be supported by responses to the question in Table 23 concerning the coordinators' responsiveness to needs of the three groups. The response from students and managers was 1.2, and teachers responded with a score of 1.7.

TABLE 23
COMPARISON TABLE
NORTHERN'S COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Variables	Mean Percentages		
	Student	Manager	Teacher
Knowledge of role of Program Coordinator.	1.2 Item #14	1.1 Item #8	2.0 Item #2
Coop Program orientation received by students was adequate.	1.1 Item 15	1.2 Item #9	--
Program Coordinator responsive to needs.	1.2 Item #17	1.2 Item #11	1.7 Item #3
Workshops beneficial to students.	1.4 Item #19	.8 Item #12	--
Regular communication from Program Coordinator is a priority.	--	.9 Item #13	1.5 Item #14

N=41/Students; 35/Managers; 17/Teachers

Demographics

Table 24 compares basic demographics of the three participant groups, including age, gender, and sex. Most students are between fifteen and seventeen years old. The average age for teachers is forty-eight and for supervisors, thirty-two years old. Females outnumber males in all groups. Eighty-eight percent of students who responded to the questionnaire were female; 76.5% of teachers and 77% of the supervisors were female.

TABLE 24

DEMOGRAPHICS COMPARISONS
STUDENTS, TEACHERS SUPERVISORS

Demographics Comparison Table Students, Teachers, Supervisors			
	Students	Teachers	Supervisors
Age:	N=41	N=16	N=35
15-17	N % 29 71%	Average age = 48.3 years	Average age = 32 years
18-19	12 29%	---	---
Gender:	N=41	N=17	N=35
	N %	N %	N %
Male	5 12%	4 23.5%	8 23%
Female	36 88%	13 76.5%	27 77%
Type of school:		Students	Teachers
		N=41	N=16
Chicago public school		40 97.6%	16 100%
Suburban public school		1 2.4%	--
Students' year in school:	All students were seniors.		

The second demographics table, Table 25 shows that teacher-coordinators are long time educators. Fourteen of the seventeen respondents have been teaching for twenty-one years or more. Eleven of them have been teacher-coordinators of their current school's work-study program between one and ten years, and six have been with their school's program eleven years or more. Supervisors are fairly long-term bank employees. Thirteen supervisors have been Northern Trust employees between four and six years.

Of the remaining supervisors, only seven have been bank employees three years or less. The other fourteen have been employed by Northern between seven and ten years or more. Seventeen of the managers have been supervisors of coop students between one and three years. A final noteworthy fact is that twelve managers are very recent supervisors of coop students. They have supervised coop students for less than one year. This inexperience could be the reason that some students perceived their supervisors lacked interest in them, as explained in the student response section of this chapter.

TABLE 25
DEMOGRAPHICS--TEACHERS/SUPERVISORS
LENGTH OF SERVICE

Teachers N=17		
How long a teacher	N	%
11-15 years	1	5.8
16-20 years	2	11.8
21+ years	14	82.4
How long work-study teacher-coordinator at current school		
	N	%
< 1 year	2	11.8
1-5 years	5	29.5
6-10 years	4	23.5
11-15 years	2	11.8
16-20 years	3	17.6
21+ years	1	5.9

Table 25--Continued

Supervisors N=34	
How long Northern Trust employee	N
1-3 years	7
4-6 years	13
7-9 years	7
10+ years	7
How long supervisor of coop students	
< 1 year	12
1-3 years	17
4-6 years	4
7-9 years	1

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter is fourfold: (1) to summarize the results of each questionnaire while answering the five research questions, (2) to discuss the implications of the study to Northern Trust, to students, and to potential cooperative education employers, (3) to test the hypotheses, and (4) to offer suggestions on replicating this study in future studies.

Resolution of Research Questions

Research Question One. What are the advantages and disadvantages to employers and students of participating in public high school cooperative education programs?

Results of the present study indicate many more advantages than disadvantages. One indication that this is an accurate statement is that no item in any questionnaire received a negative score. The lowest ranked items were both from the student questionnaires. The questions were about supervisors' providing students with regular written feedback and whether the job helped them perform better in classes at school. The students' responses to these questions were slightly above neutral, but still not negative, although certainly allowing for improvements.

Some advantages to participating in coop programs can be summarized from manager and student comments to the questionnaires. (See respondents' comments in

Appendix G.) Some student responses: "I really think this program is very successful in every way. It teaches responsibility and most of all shows how much trust Northern has in teen-agers". Another states, "I appreciate the fact that I had the opportunity to participate in such an educational program". A final example, "This program has been very helpful in my decisions for the future. It has helped me to better understand the business world". Other advantages, based on student responses include the following: Most students, in addition to participating in the work-study program by gaining work experience on the job, are also enrolled in a course directly related to the work experience. This class normally covers topics such as interviewing, developing a resume, appropriate business attire, appropriate business attitudes and behaviors, and any other issues that may arise on the job. This class, coupled with the work experience offers students the opportunity to experience the direct link between school and work mentioned so frequently in the literature review (Dick, 1983; GA0, 1991; GCE, 1987; McNelly, 1990, NCLC, 1984; Parsons, 1988; Stern, et. al, 1990; U.S. Dept. of Education, 1992).

Some disadvantages indicated by students are that they do not always feel like an important part of the team. They may sense that some of their co-workers and even their immediate manager, treat them with a lack of respect. As one student noted, many times employees refer to students as "the coop", without using their actual name. Another phrase often used is "just a coop". I view this as a negative phrase because it can imply that expectations are automatically lowered for coop students, or that it is perfectly fine to treat students differently, i.e., with less respect than what is shown to regular employees.

Results of the study identify advantages to employers and managers. Employers can use the coop employees as a source for filling entry-level clerical jobs. If employers decide to hire students they will usually get a better trained employee than if they hired someone from outside the organization for the same position. Both teachers and students feel that courses taken in school help students on the job. These courses could include word processing, computer applications or programming, or typing or keyboarding.

A potential disadvantage of the program is related to the fact that, for many students, a position in a coop program is a first job. Besides receiving the necessary training to perform the job, some students may also need coaching on how to successfully make the transition from teenage student to a new, young employee with adult responsibilities such as coming to work every day, on time, and following directions once there. This additional coaching may take more time than a manager is willing or able to provide. If supervisors do not spend an appropriate amount of time helping students adjust to the job and their work environment, the results could be detrimental to students and to their employers. One way the coordinator could assist supervisors is by holding orientation sessions with supervisors prior to the student's start date. The coordinator would review the coop program policy manual for students and supervisors, and emphasize the importance of training, developing and coaching students, especially in the early days and weeks of the program. The fact that supervisors did not fully agree to hire their student or recommend the student for hire after graduation if a position was approved for hire, indicates that supervisors would need their students to perform at a higher level before recommending hire. Supervisors' written comments on the

questionnaires coincide with their responses to the two questions about hiring students after graduation. One supervisor comments: "In my experience, some students look upon the program as solely a way to make money, not as a serious job with future potential".

Research Question Two. Does having clear definitions of the roles of students and their managers have an impact on the effectiveness of a cooperative education program? The results indicate that each group has a clear understanding of their own role as well as the other roles. In addition, each group thinks that Northern's Coop Program is effective overall. However, there is no evidence to support the statement that having a clear definition of roles has any impact on the effectiveness of the program.

Research Question Three. Does participation in a coop program have a positive impact on students' future? There is evidence from each respondent group that the coop experience has a direct, positive impact on students' futures. Student responses indicate the main reason they elected to participate in the work-study program was to learn skills which they could use in the future, whether they were planning to go to college or continue working. The findings also show that this expectation was achieved because the students did, in fact obtain such skills on the job. Managers and teacher-coordinators also saw a positive link between participating in the program and increasing students' future college or career aspirations. For at least fourteen students, the coop program had an immediate impact on their future; fourteen students were hired for regular full or part-time jobs after graduation in 1994. A few former cooperative education jobs were converted into regular jobs, but in most cases, students applied for, then successfully interviewed for and obtained jobs listed in the bank's internal job posting system.

Research Question Four. If coop programs do have a positive impact, does the impact vary if students plan to continue working or if they plan to go to college? There was no indication of an appreciable difference between the impact on the future whether the future involved immediate plans for work or college. In both instances, students, teacher-coordinators, and managers felt that skills obtained on the job would benefit students in the future.

Research Question Five. Does the quality of the educational training received at school have a positive impact on the students' cooperative education experience? There is support from the findings that the quality of educational training received by students at school positively impacts the cooperative education experience. The fact that students responded affirmatively that classes taken during their junior and senior years were beneficial to them at work provides a direct link between educational training and their jobs. Teacher-coordinators also felt that students were learning skills which are directly transferrable to their jobs.

Test of Hypotheses

- H1 Cooperative education programs have a positive impact on the students involved and the employers who hire them.
- H2 Cooperative education programs are more effective if the roles of the student and manager are clearly defined.
- H3 Participation in a cooperative education program has a positive impact on a students' future, whether the student plans to work or go to college after

graduation.

- H4 The quality of educational training received by students has an impact on the students' cooperative education experience--the higher the quality, the more positive the coop experience.

Hypotheses one, three and four are supported by the research; hypotheses two is not.

Implications of the Study

Respondents were asked questions concerning the overall effectiveness of Northern's Cooperative Education Program. A discussion on the implications the study may have on the bank, on students, and on other potential employers should begin here. Again, it is important to note that there was not a single negative response on the questionnaire, a good indication that students, managers, and teacher-coordinators are in agreement that Northern's Coop Program is an effective one.

Implications to Northern Trust Bank

The highest possible rating on the questionnaires is 2.0/Strongly Agree and the second highest one is 1.0/Somewhat Agree. Since any score less than 2.0 allows for room for improvement, a more realistic approach to take, in determining how to make the program more effective, is to view items with the highest scores, those between 1.5 and 2.0, as being areas that, since they approach a "perfect" 2.0, require the least amount of attention. Efforts would be well spent making improvements in areas which received

ratings between 1.4 and 0/Neutral. Since a list of areas requiring improvement may be lengthy, such a list can be prioritized based on the level of agreement about the need for improvement between the three groups. In order to improve the overall effectiveness of the program, Northern should concentrate on areas that two or more groups viewed as needing improvements. Once these areas are addressed attention can be focused on making improvements in the areas where individual groups expressed a need for improvement.

Comparison tables compare the responses of the groups to similar questions. Results from the comparison tables identify several areas where improvements could be made to increase the program's effectiveness. One table (Table 22) compared responses to job related variables. The findings show that students feel that their responsibilities could be better explained, indicating a need for supervisors to spend more time doing so. Also, managers indicate that their knowledge of Northern's expectations of coop students could be improved, indicating the need for the coordinator to more fully explain this area to them. The other comparison table (Table 23) compared the three groups' responses on the overall effectiveness of the program. Students and managers indicate that the initial orientation that students receive about the Coop Program could be improved to help ease students' transition from school to the corporate working environment. A possible way to accomplish this is to have one or two former coop students from the previous years program participate in the orientation. These students should be individuals who are currently working at the bank in regular full or part-time positions. These employees could provide the newly hired students with a very recent, firsthand view of how they

were able to make the transition, and how they may have overcome any difficulties.

Students and their managers indicate that their knowledge of the role of the program coordinator could be strengthened and that the coordinator could be more responsive to their needs.

Implications to Students

From the students' perspective, supervisors could take a more active role in their on-the-job progress and development. Their responses indicate a need for more written, ongoing feedback from supervisors about their job performance. They are generally satisfied with the cooperative education experience, but feel that they don't command the same respect that other employees have. The coordinator and every supervisor could make a concerted effort to ensure that coop employees are treated the same as other employees. In fact, since the Coop Program is a developmental program for students, supervisors should also take any extra time that is needed to embrace the student as a vital part of the work team as soon as the student begins work. Students also feel that the coordinator could respond to their questions on a more timely basis. Since the coordinator has other full-time duties, a way to be more responsive could be to set aside a block of time to meet with students individually or in small groups to address their concerns. These meetings could occur once or twice a month.

Implications to Other Employers

Current or potential cooperative education employers should find the results of this

study beneficial. Current employers may wish to view some of the areas in light of their own program and determine if their program is functioning at optimum effectiveness. Employers who are contemplating participating in cooperative education programs may gain more valuable data from this study. With appropriate training, at school and on the job, high school students enrolled in work-study programs can contribute in many ways to the clerical and administrative needs that employers have. As indicated in chapter II there are pros and cons on the value of hiring such young employees. Studies that advocate hiring cooperative education students are Parsons, 1988; Winer & Kane, 1983; and Winer, 1983. Greenberger & Steinberg (1986) are totally against students working during high school, whether or not they are in work-study programs. The researchers viewed the types of work performed by students as menial, routine, and non-challenging, and as such, not worthwhile for students. In some instances, this may be an accurate description of work-study jobs. The employer or immediate supervisor must be actively involved in their students' jobs. Even if jobs are routine or seemingly not important, supervisors can spend time explaining the value of the job and how the successful completion of each task adds to the overall goals of the department. Many times, if students can make the connection between the job and the goals of the department, they are able to appreciate the job more, and perform it more successfully.

Some researchers question the claim that cooperative education programs provide a direct link between work and school. They feel that such programs hinder students' ability to succeed in the classroom and as such are detrimental to them (Greenberger and Steinberg, 1986). Others, such as Parsons (1988) feel strongly that coop programs are a

necessary part of a young person's development and entry into the work world. Their belief is that cooperative education programs add value to a young person's life. This researcher views coop programs as being the best of both worlds in terms of preparing students for the future and adding value to the overall high school educational experience.

Implications for Future Studies

Future studies should replicate the current study and cover all aspects of a particular cooperative education program. Everyone who plays an active role in the operation of the program should be surveyed, including the students, their immediate managers or supervisors, and their teacher-coordinators. As in the present study, the questionnaire method can be used effectively.

Suggested changes for future studies include: (1) Ask teachers the number of students in their cooperative education class because it may have an impact on the amount of time they are able to devote to the concerns of each student. (2) The present study asked managers the number of coop students they supervised, but future studies should also ask how many other employees, not just coop employees, report to the supervisor. This may also have an impact on their ability to spend quality time training and developing their students. (3) Ask more detailed questions about any coop student terminations during the school year to determine if the dismissals were related to job performance, school or outside influences. (4) Ask whether or not the supervisor will hire another coop student the following school year.

While one hypothesis was not supported by the research from this study, the topic is an important one and should not be overlooked. Clearly defined roles of cooperative education students and supervisors did not have an impact on the effectiveness of Northern's coop program, yet everyone must know their role well in order to perform successfully in them. A question could be designed to determine whether differences in perceptions between the students' and supervisors' perceptions of the others' role, as opposed to their own role, would have an impact on the effectiveness of the program.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
COVER MEMORANDUM TO STUDENTS

**TO: 1993-1994 COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM STUDENTS
NORTHERN TRUST BANK**

The Human Resources Department is taking a look at the Cooperative Education Program with an eye towards implementing changes or program enhancements to make the program more effective in helping the bank accomplish its strategic mission statement and to meet the needs of the students in the Program. This questionnaire is being sent to all current cooperative education students to obtain your feedback about the Cooperative Education Program.

We value your opinions; your honest responses to the questions asked will be greatly appreciated. Your supervisor nor your teacher will see your comments, and your responses will in no way have any effect upon your current status as a student in the Cooperative Education Program at Northern.

**Thank you for your cooperation. PLEASE RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE BY
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 1994.**

THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
FEBRUARY 1994

(The questionnaire should be returned by interoffice bank mail. An envelope is not needed--the return address is on the back of the final page. You should simply fold the questionnaire in half, then staple it and place with interoffice bank mail.)

APPENDIX B
COVER MEMORANDUM TO SUPERVISORS

**TO: 1993-1994 SUPERVISORS OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM
STUDENTS AT NORTHERN TRUST BANK**

The Human Resources Department is taking a look at the Cooperative Education Program with an eye towards implementing changes or program enhancements to make the Program more effective in helping the Bank accomplish its strategic mission statement. This questionnaire is being sent to all current supervisors of cooperative education students to obtain your feedback about the Cooperative Education Program.

We value your opinions; your honest responses to the questions asked will be greatly appreciated. All responses will be strictly confidential. Only aggregate level data will be used in analysis.

**Thank you for your cooperation. PLEASE RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE BY
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 1994.**

THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
FEBRUARY 1994

(The questionnaire should be returned by interoffice mail. An envelope is not needed--the return address is on the back of the final page. You should simply fold and staple the questionnaire, then place it with interoffice bank mail.)

APPENDIX C
COVER MEMORANDUM TO TEACHERS

**TO: TEACHERS OF COOPERATIVE EDUCATION STUDENTS AT
NORTHERN TRUST BANK FOR THE 1993-1994 SCHOOL YEAR**

The Human Resources Department is taking a look at the Cooperative Education Program with an eye towards implementing changes or program enhancements to make the program more effective in helping the Bank accomplish its strategic mission statement and to meet the needs of the students in the Program.

This questionnaire is being sent to all current teachers involved with Northern's Cooperative Education Program. We value your opinions; your honest responses to the questions asked will be greatly appreciated. All responses will remain strictly confidential. Only aggregate level data will be used in analysis.

Your responses to this questionnaire will have absolutely no effect upon Northern's selection or retention of schools, teachers, or students in the current Cooperative Education Program nor in upcoming school years.

Thank you for your cooperation.

(PLEASE RETURN THE QUESTIONNAIRE BY WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 1994.)

THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
FEBRUARY 1994

(Please return the questionnaire in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope.)

APPENDIX D
QUESTIONNAIRE TO STUDENTS

NORTHERN TRUST BANK
 COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM **STUDENT** QUESTIONNAIRE
 1993-1994 SCHOOL YEAR

For **each** question below, **please circle the one response** which best expresses how you feel about your cooperative education experience -- your job at Northern and the program at your high school.

**1=Strongly Agree; 2=Somewhat Agree; 3=Neutral;
 4=Strongly Disagree; 5=Somewhat Disagree**

- | | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I know the expectations of my job | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. | My job responsibilities were clearly explained to me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. | I have been trained well enough to perform my job responsibilities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. | I know how my job fits in with the overall goals of my department | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. | My supervisor is interested in my development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. | The skills I am learning on the job will be valuable in obtaining a full or part-time job after graduation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. | My job is helping me perform better in the classes I am currently taking in school | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. | I have a clear understanding of my role as a cooperative education student at Northern | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. | Courses which I took in my junior year were beneficial to me in my job | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

10. Courses which I have taken during my senior year are beneficial to me in my job 1 2 3 4 5
11. My supervisor is usually available if I have questions 1 2 3 4 5
12. My cooperative education experience is teaching me valuable skills that I can use in the future, whether or not I go to college 1 2 3 4 5
13. I regularly receive written feedback about my performance from my supervisor 1 2 3 4 5
14. I understand the role of the Cooperative Education Program Coordinator 1 2 3 4 5
15. The orientation I received about the Coop Program from the Program Coordinator helped ease the transition of working at Northern 1 2 3 4 5
16. Northern's expectations of coop students are realistic 1 2 3 4 5
17. The Program Coordinator has responded to my questions in a timely manner 1 2 3 4 5
18. My cooperative education teacher is concerned about my progress on the job 1 2 3 4 5
19. The workshops which were presented at Northern have been beneficial to me 1 2 3 4 5

Please circle the ONE response which best applies to you:

20. The **PRIMARY** reason I decided to participate in cooperative education at my school is:

- a. because it is required of all seniors
 - b. to gain work experience during high school
 - c. to increase my chances of obtaining employment after high school
 - d. to learn skills which I can use in the future, whether I attend college, work, or do both
 - e. it is paid employment
 - f. other (please explain) _____
-
-
-

21. What are your plans after graduation?

- a. to obtain employment at Northern
 - b. to obtain employment outside Northern
 - c. to attend a junior college in Chicago
 - d. to attend a four year college or university in Chicago
 - e. to attend college outside of the immediate Chicago area
 - f. other (please explain) _____
-
-
-

Your responses to the following questions will be used for statistical purposes only:

22. Please check the appropriate response.

- a. _____ I attend a Chicago public school.
- b. _____ I attend a suburban public school.

What is your:

23. Age _____
24. Sex: (Check one)
- a. _____ Male
- b. _____ Female
25. Business Unit: (Circle only **ONE** response)
- a. CIS (Corporate Information Services)
- b. CMS (Corporate Management Services)
- c. CFS (Corporate Financial Services)
- d. PFS (Personal Financial Services)
- e. Trust Operations
- f. Corporate Properties

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY.

If you would like to make any additional comments on the Cooperative Education Program at Northern Trust please feel free to use the space below. Again, all responses will remain confidential.

(Please fold questionnaire in half, staple, and place with interoffice mail. You do not need an envelope--the return address is on the back of the final page.)

APPENDIX E
QUESTIONNAIRE TO SUPERVISORS

NORTHERN TRUST BANK
 COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM SUPERVISOR QUESTIONNAIRE
 1993-1994 SCHOOL YEAR

For **each** question below, **please circle the one response** which best expresses how you feel about The Cooperative Education Program (Coop Program) here at Northern -- including the Program in general, and your coop student(s) specifically.

**1=Strongly Agree; 2=Somewhat Agree; 3=Neutral;
 4=Strongly Disagree; 5=Somewhat Disagree**

- | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I know the overall expectations of
coop students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. | The job responsibilities were clearly
explained to my students by me or
someone else in my area | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. | My students have been trained well
enough to perform their job
responsibilities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. | I have a clear understanding of my role
as a supervisor of coop students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. | Part of my role is on-the-job development
of my students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. | The cooperative education experience will
teach students valuable skills that can
be used in the future, whether or not
students go to college | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. | My students have received written
feedback about their job performance
from me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. | I understand the role of the Cooperative
Education Program Coordinator | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. | My students appear to have received an | | | | | |

- adequate orientation to Northern's Coop Program 1 2 3 4 5
10. Senior management of my department has a strong commitment to the Coop Program 1 2 3 4 5
11. The Coop Program Coordinator is responsive to my needs as a supervisor 1 2 3 4 5
12. The workshops presented by Human Resources are beneficial to my students 1 2 3 4 5
13. Regular communication from the Program Coordinator is a priority for me 1 2 3 4 5
14. If I had an actual post on hire in June, 1994, based on my students' performance thus far, I would hire them for a **regular full or part-time post in my area?** (Please answer this question whether or not you are aware of your students' post-graduation plans) 1 2 3 4 5
15. Assuming the same situation as listed in question 14, if I knew of another supervisor who needed to fill an open post I would recommend my students 1 2 3 4 5

Please answer the following questions by circling your responses:

16. I have met with my student's teacher at least once.
- a. YES
b. NO

16a. If you answered **NO** to **Question 16**, have you been contacted by the Coordinator or the Coordinator's assistant about scheduling a teacher visit?

- a. YES
b. NO

17. Please rank the following 5 items in order of importance, as they relate to your **COOP STUDENTS**. (In the space provided, number items 1-5; **1=most important, 5=least important**)

_____ motivation level on the job
 _____ attendance
 _____ working scheduled hours
 _____ ability to meet job expectations
 _____ ability to follow directions

18. Please rank the following 5 items in order of importance as they relate to **NORTHERN'S COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM IN GENERAL**.

(In the space provided, number items 1-5; 1=most important, 5=least important)

_____ communication received from Coordinator
 _____ a supervisors inability to interview coop students before hire decisions are made
 _____ guidance from the Coordinator on procedural issues (i.e., report cards, teacher visits, etc.)
 _____ quality of students assigned to you compared with the job description submitted
 _____ Coop PIP (Partners in Performance) reviews

19. If you experienced any **problems** with your **COOP STUDENTS** during this school year, please rank the top 3. (You may choose from the list of items in Question 17 above, or use others not listed.)

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

20. Please list 3 areas in which your **students excel**. (You may choose from the list of items in Question 17 above, or use others not listed.) Choose up to 3 items; you may choose less than 3 items).

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____

21. If you experienced any **problems** with the **COOP PROGRAM IN GENERAL**, please rank the top 3. (You may choose from the list of items in Question 18 above, or use others not listed.) Choose up to 3 items; you may choose less than 3 items.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

22. My **PRIMARY** reason for hiring coop students is: (**Choose only one**)

- a. to fill entry-level clerical posts
- b. they do not receive benefits
- c. the low salary level
- d. to support cooperative education
- e. to support the Chicago public school system
- f. to train students for future regular posts in my area
- g. they possess skills which are a good match with the needs of my work area
- h. other (please explain) _____

23. Were you a coop student during high school **in Chicago**?

- a. YES
- b. NO

If you answered YES to Question 23, please also answer Question 23a.

- 23a. Were you a coop student at Northern Trust?

- a. YES
- b. NO

Your responses to the following questions will be used for statistical purposes only:

What is your:

24. Age _____
25. Sex: (Check one)
- a. _____ Male
- b. _____ Female
26. Business Unit: (Circle one)
- a. CIS (Corporate Information Services)
- b. CMS (Corporate Management Services)
- c. CFS (Corporate Financial Services)
- d. PFS (Personal Financial Services)
- e. Trust Operations
- f. Corporate Properties
27. How many students do you currently supervise?
- a. 1
- b. 2-3
- c. 4-5
- d. 6-7
- e. 8 or more
28. How long have you been employed by Northern?
- a. less than 1 year
- b. 1-3 years
- c. 4-6 years
- d. 7-9 years
- e. 10 years or more

29. How long have you been a supervisor of coop students at Northern?
- a. less than 1 year
 - b. 1-3 years
 - c. 4-6 years
 - d. 7-9 years
 - e. 10 years or more

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY.

If you would like to make any additional comments on the Cooperative Education Program at Northern Trust, please feel free to use the bottom of this page. Again, all responses will remain confidential.

(Please fold questionnaire in half, staple, and place with interoffice bank mail. An envelope is not needed--the return address is on the back of the final page.)

APPENDIX F
QUESTIONNAIRE TO TEACHERS

NORTHERN TRUST BANK
 COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM **TEACHER** QUESTIONNAIRE
 1993-1994 SCHOOL YEAR

For **each** question below, **please circle the one response** which best expresses how you feel about The Cooperative Education Program (Coop Program) at The Northern Trust Bank -- including the Program in general, and the Coop Program Coordinator and your coop student(s) specifically.

**1=Strongly Agree; 2=Somewhat Agree; 3=Neutral;
 4=Strongly Disagree; 5=Somewhat Disagree**

- | | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I am aware of Northern's expectations of my students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. | I understand the role of the Cooperative Education Program Coordinator | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. | The Coop Program Coordinator responds to my requests for assistance in a timely manner | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. | My students who participate in the Cooperative Education Program must pass this course as a requirement for graduation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. | Part of a supervisor's role should be on-the-job development of my students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. | Northern's procedure for scheduling teacher visits is effective | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. | My students are learning skills which are directly transferrable to their jobs at Northern | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. | Northern's process of selecting students for the Coop Program is effective | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

- 9. I would rather place my students in Northern’s Coop Program than any other program in Chicago 1 2 3 4 5

- 10. The expectations of my students are realistic 1 2 3 4 5

- 11. I regularly discuss my students’ on-the-job progress with them 1 2 3 4 5

- 12. Students in Northern’s Coop Program receive an hourly salary comparable to the hourly salary received by cooperative education students at other companies in Chicago 1 2 3 4 5

- 13. Northern’s requirement of two mandatory teacher visits with supervisors during a school year is adequate for obtaining feedback about my students 1 2 3 4 5

- 14. Regular communication with the Program Coordinator is a priority for me 1 2 3 4 5

- 15. Northern’s requirement of one mandatory visit with the Program Coordinator is adequate 1 2 3 4 5

- 16. The Chicago Board of Education supports cooperative education programs 1 2 3 4 5

- 17. Northern’s process for obtaining report card grades is effective 1 2 3 4 5

- 18. My students are trained well enough to perform their job responsibilities 1 2 3 4 5

Please answer the following questions by circling your responses:

19. Students who elect to participate in cooperative education programs do so **PRIMARYLY:**
(Choose only one response.)
- a. because it is required of all seniors
 - b. to obtain work experience during high school
 - c. to obtain work experience which can be useful in obtaining employment after graduation
 - d. to learn skills which can be used in the future, whether or not they plan to attend college
 - e. because it is paid employment
20. I have met with my students' supervisor at least once.
- a. YES
 - b. NO
- 20a. If you answered NO to Question 20, have you been contacted by the Program Coordinator or the Coordinator's Assistant about scheduling a visit.
- a. YES
 - b. NO
21. I have met with the Coop Program Coordinator at least once.
- a. YES
 - b. NO
- 21a. If you answered **NO to Question 21,** have you been contacted by the Program Coordinator or the Coordinator's assistant about scheduling a visit?
- a. YES
 - b. NO

22. Have any of your students been terminated from Northern during the current school year?
- a. YES
 - b. NO

If you answered **YES to Question 22**, please also answer **Questions 22a and 22b**. If you answered **NO** to question 22, please skip to **Question 23**.

22a. Do you understand the reason(s) for the termination?

- a. YES
- b. NO

22b. Do you think the termination was handled in an appropriate manner by Northern?

- a. YES
- b. NO

23. How would you rate the overall quality of Northern's Cooperative Education Program as compared with other coop programs in the City of Chicago where you have placed students this year or in past years?
- a. superior
 - b. above-average
 - c. average
 - d. fair
 - e. poor

Your responses to the following questions will be used for statistical purposes only:

What is your:

24. Age _____
25. Sex: (Check one)
- a. _____ Male
 - b. _____ Female

26. Where do you currently teach: (Check one)
- a. _____ at a Chicago public high school
 - b. _____ at a suburban public high school
27. How long have you been a teacher?
- a. less than 1 year
 - b. 1-5 years
 - c. 6-10 years
 - d. 11-15 years
 - e. 16-20 years
 - f. 21 years or more
28. How long have you been actively involved as a teacher with your current school's cooperative education program?
- a. less than 1 year
 - b. 1-5 years
 - c. 6-10 years
 - d. 11-15 years
 - e. 16-20 years
 - f. 21 years or more

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY.

If you would like to make any additional comments on the Cooperative Education Program at Northern Trust, please feel free to use the space below. Again, all responses will remain confidential.

(Please return questionnaire in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided.)

APPENDIX G
RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS

RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS

Overview

At the end of each questionnaire all students, managers, and teacher-coordinators were provided space to write comments concerning any item from the questionnaire or any aspect of the Cooperative Education Program. Their responses follow. These are the exact comments, taken verbatim from the questionnaires.

Student Comments

Respondent #1. The Cooperative Education Program is a very good program the bank has to offer. One thing I would change about the program that I'm sure many others would agree with is to treat us with a little respect. My area is generally fine, but I think that others take great advantage over us and use us as gophers for their personal use within the bank. I don't regret coming here this is a great place, but I would feel a lot better if others in the bank treated us as they would treat their own friends. I don't feel that I should be giving work to others, but keeping my own work above what I should is hard enough without running around for others.

Respondent #2. I really like being a "coop", but it's really not realistic or fair for us not to receive even partial benefits. Even full time workers need to take a day off here

or there, it seems as though we're penalized for being absent. Also, since all of us are seniors, we have many activities that we need to attend. We're only allowed to attend the last graduation practice, we have luncheons, class trips, and PROM! I know you're gonna say we should've considered this before taking the job, but I personally thought there'd be a little understanding and I didn't know before starting that we didn't have benefits or days off. We at least need holiday pay! Finally, I think that the pay is a little low.

Respondent #3. I feel that the cooperative education program provides many benefits. It has taught me new skills, and I have met many new people. In my opinion, the coordinator of the program is not very reliable. At times, you can't never catch up with her, if you have any important questions, or any other situations. Overall, the program is a good opportunity to be involved with, and it helps you later in life, if you don't stay at Northern.

Respondent #4. Since Cooperative Education students are an asset to the production of Northern Trust, I feel that we should be given more respect than usually given to us by some managers and employees.

Some Northern employees do not take us or our work seriously. Even though we are high school students, we work just as hard as the next regular Northern employee and our work should not be taken lightly. If we did not have the skill or qualifications needed to work for Northern, we would not be hired at all.

Also, some have a habit of calling us "the Co-op" instead of by our real names. Though we are a part of the Cooperative Education Program, I feel that the name "Co-op" is used by fellow employees and managers as their way of insulting our abilities. We do

have names and would gladly appreciate if we were called by them.

The Cooperative Education Program is beneficial to business students, but I feel that it should be stressed to managers and staff that we do play a very important role in the production of the company and for that reason, we should be treated with due respect as the next Northern employee.

Respondent #5. I think that I have learned a lot here at Northern. At first my role as a CO-OP was not fully explained and that caused some serious work problems. I think that I should receive more written feedback about my performance so that I can improve on my faults. Communication is also necessary for a good job environment.

Respondent #6. In my department I am treated as if I'm incompetent of doing anything besides minor clerical tasks. I feel coops are capable of doing more challenging assignments and should be given the opportunity.

Respondent #7. This program has been very helpful in my decisions for the future. It has helped me to better understand the business world. But if I may make one comment, it would be to have more classes for the co-op students in the future, to help them familiarize themselves with the other students they work with or others in another department.

Respondent #8. I really think this program is very successful in every way. It teaches responsibility and most of all shows how much trust Northern has in teen-agers. "I think I explained myself really well." My boss is just great. He takes time out to help me if I am having problems. It's like a dream come true to work for my supervisor. I think he deserves a lot of NRU's*. Are there any higher awards? If so, he deserves them.

*NRU=Northern Recognition Units--Individual awards which carry a dollar value and can be given by any employee to another employee. The receiving employee can accumulate the awards and redeem them for things such as purchases in the Employee Cafeteria and parking fees in the Employee Parking Lot.

Respondent #9. I appreciate the fact that I had the opportunity to participate in such an educational program.

Respondent #10. I feel that because co-op's work just as hard as other employees at Northern, we should be entitled to the same fringe benefits regular part-time workers receive (i.e., free checking accounts).

Manager Comments

Respondent #1. I think that it is important for students to realize the importance of their role in the team that they are assigned to. In my experience, some students look upon the program as solely a way to make money, not as a serious job with future potential.

Respondent #2. Since the issue of longer class periods has arisen this year due to the school strikes, a lunch policy needs to be initiated. My student stated that she does not have a lunch period in the morning, so we have given her 15 minutes to eat lunch and start work. This has been a problem--she states it is not enough time, but we have given her 15 minutes, which did not have to be done. They can't go without eating either.

Respondent #3. The WAYS* students I have worked with were much more reliable.

*WAYS=Work As You Study Program--a work program for college students at Northern Trust.

Teacher Comments

Respondent #1. This year the only difficulty I have encountered is in obtaining the student's grade cards. I allowed myself enough time between dropping off the cards and the return time to meet the deadline for entering grades here at school. However, the first quarter, I did not receive the grade card to meet the deadline and had to give the student a grade and I was incorrect. Second quarter, I did not receive one grade card and had to call the supervisor to get the correct grade. Other than that, the program is excellent.

Respondent #2. (1) It would be helpful if supervisors would include comments in addition to the numeric evaluations required on the grade cards. (2) If possible, copies of the students periodic evaluations by supervisors could be available to teachers for grading purposes and for effective cooperative guidance and remediations of the students.

Respondent #3. Northern Trust Bank has an excellent reputation among our students. Many of our coop students have been kept on as part-timers as they attend colleges in the Chicago area.

I have also noticed some of our students who are now working full-time. I believe some of our students who have 2.0 averages, good attendance with typing skills would

be successful at your bank.

Respondent #4. I am satisfied with the relationship that allows us the opportunity to work with your bank on a regular basis. I wish that this program could be expanded to allow for further development of our relationship. This would permit the opportunity to increase the number as well as the quality of student that might be part of a work-study program.

Respondent #5. I have always found the coordinators to be pleasant, cooperative, and helpful. Thank you.

Respondent #6. The Coop Coordinator should be given more time to work with the coop students. With her present schedule, she has to divide herself into too many activities and cannot do justice to all of them.

Respondent #7. An excellent opportunity for students to use their skills and improve them in a job situation.

Summary

Respondents' comments about Northern's Coop Program are generally positive. Managers appear to be the least satisfied of the three groups, when based solely on the written comments. However, since only three managers wrote comments, the responses may not actually reflect the opinions of most managers. Areas of concern for those three managers are: students do not take jobs seriously, a change in schedules due to the school strike, and previous students enrolled in Northern's college work program were more reliable.

Students generally viewed the program as being beneficial by teaching them about the working world and preparing them for the future. Student comments however, also indicate two areas which could be improved to make their jobs even more meaningful: being treated with more respect and being given more challenging assignments. Ten students wrote additional comments on the questionnaire, more than the number of managers or teacher-coordinators who did so.

Teachers were also pleased with Northern's program and found it to be a positive experience for their students. They noted some concerns about certain procedural aspects such as scheduling teacher visits and grading report cards.

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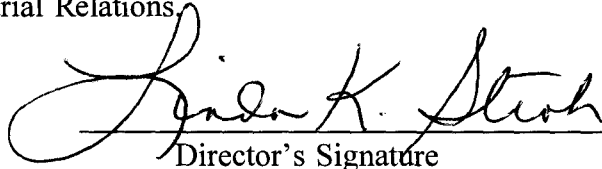
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The thesis is, therefore, accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Industrial Relations.

3/29/95
Date



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