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Office of Active Citizenship and Service

Student Driven | Community Centered

I would have added more professional development and active citizenship to the summer, and aligned both towards student interests

I absolutely loved being in the same community with Vandy students while getting to work in one of my favorite cities in the world. I learned so much about so many different topics - politics, service, political thinking, living on my own.

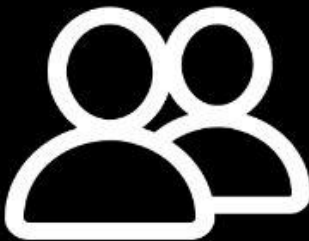
The best aspect of VIEW was my experience at my internship. I was able to communicate with people who came from different backgrounds but with similar goals. The relationships I built in D.C. are really valuable assets for me.



Students Reflected throughout the Experience by means of LI Conversations with Site Leaders, Blogs, Videos, and Group Sessions www.vanderbilt.edu/oacs/service-programs



Student Fees Covered 100% of Program Costs



Every Student was Matched with a VU Alumnus Mentor who Reflected their Professional Interests

www.vanderbilt.edu/oacs

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Executive Summary

The Vanderbilt Internship Experience in Washington (VIEW) provides students with an opportunity to meaningfully experience internships in a living-learning setting in an effort to grow as professionals and active citizens. The experience introduces students to Washington D.C. institutions and personalities, and encourages exploration on how these entities create change in a dynamic and complex environment. Students participate in a living-learning community, dedicate themselves to internships with leading employers and congressional offices, gain networking and mentoring opportunities with Vanderbilt alumni, and partake in a variety of professional, academic, and career-focused activities.

Recommendations Emergent from Assessment

- ***Develop and engage VIEW networks***

Delivery of VIEW requires significant fulltime, physical immersion in Washington, D.C. prior to and during the delivery of the program. This allows the opportunity to discover, nurture, and maintain contacts, ensures presence at events, and facilitates face-to-face conversations with key stakeholders. Developing, nurturing, and sustaining VIEW networks is critical to success; these networks include:

- *Employers, both for current and prospective internships*
- *Alumni for mentorship and enrichment*
- *Non-profit / think tank / NGOs for career development and enrichment activities*

Challenge | OACS exists to support service-learning programs and projects. Any of the staff in OACS have a range of responsibilities central to supporting students and no single staff member has the expertise or the time to deliver VIEW in the way the former Director did.

The Program Coordinator currently responsible for VIEW also supports the Nichols Humanitarian Fund; voter registration efforts; advises 20 student service organizations; facilitates the VIEW course (coordinating guest speakers, curriculum development, teaching, grading, student advisement); and coordinates the OACS student advisory board and the student service organization fair. They also implement the civic engagement strategy in OACS, a central priority for the unity. This leaves limited time for adequate employer relationship development.

Challenge | Vanderbilt alumni provide the mentorship component of the VIEW program. They are also able to provide the “insider tours” that students want VIEW to deliver.

Response | The Career Center manages VIEW and builds relationships with D.C. employers offering summer internships. This is outside the OACS remit and requires significant immersion and consequent staff training and resource reallocation.

Response | Increase budget for OACS (or recruiting staff member) to spend more time in D.C. (two to three months) to plan summer events, advocate for student applicants, and meet with alumni, Office of Federal Relations staff, and potential community

	partners (service opportunities). Reduce service and active citizenship activities to make space for seeking internships, networking, etc.
<i>Response</i>	Increase OACS staff support (e.g., graduate assistant, student worker, staff member) to take on other programs or aspects of other programs, allowing VIEW Program Coordinator (or recruiting staff member) to invest time in year-round employer relations. This will impact negatively on core activities in OACS.
<i>Response</i>	Support from the Vanderbilt Alumni Association to promote the program, recruit alumni, and increase awareness about VIEW.
<i>Response</i>	Increase budget for alumni relations development.
<i>Response</i>	Increase staff time to develop mentor resources, a digital platform for alumni engagement and communications, and new roles for involved alumni.

- ***Facilitate student preparation***

Academic credit is required by law for students to participate in unpaid internships. This means faculty involvement to facilitate this.

<i>Challenge</i>	Program Coordinators are not required to have a master's degree. Most PCs who have a masters are proficient in student affairs or social justice education rather than politics. Staff without PhD's cannot teach classes. Currently Dr. Mentzel serves as faculty of record, but this program lies outside his area of expertise.
<i>Challenge</i>	OACS Program Coordinators are not recruited for proficiency in career advice, internship advice, interviewing, or the use of social media to advance career prospects, and therefore cannot provide the level of excellence in this key area that students at an institution such as Vanderbilt expect and deserve.
<i>Response</i>	Academic preparation needs to be done by faculty proficient in American politics, history, or American civic life.
<i>Response</i>	Internship preparation needs to be done by the Center for Student Professional Development. This preparation should include instruction in preparing a cover letter and resume, interviewing technique, etiquette surrounding dress and communication in the workplace, creating a LinkedIn profile, etc.

Learning Outcomes

As a result of participating in the Vanderbilt Internship Experience in Washington (VIEW) program, students will be able to:

Identify and reflect on personal identities and how those identities influence their understanding and practice of civic engagement

Describe the primary objectives and interactions of government branches, media outlets, non-profit organizations, diplomatic entities, and other offices/departments

Analyze differences in power and access to resources among communities, and how those differences affect policy, strategy, and justice on a global scale

Engage in informed dialogue and effective conflict resolution to achieve a desired civic aim

Identify and meet professional expectations for the workplace (e.g., resume and cover letters, interview skills, organization research, professional appearance and communication)

Demonstrate key professional skills, including critical and creative thinking; adaptability and flexibility; collaboration and teamwork; and appropriate use of professional networking and communication technology

Examine the roles of complexity, change, constructiveness and chance in career development

Articulate a clear and compelling vision for and commitment to active citizenship

Program Cohort Breakdown			
Program	# of Program Participants	# of Pre Survey Respondents	# of Post Survey Respondents
VIEW	23	23	14

Methodology

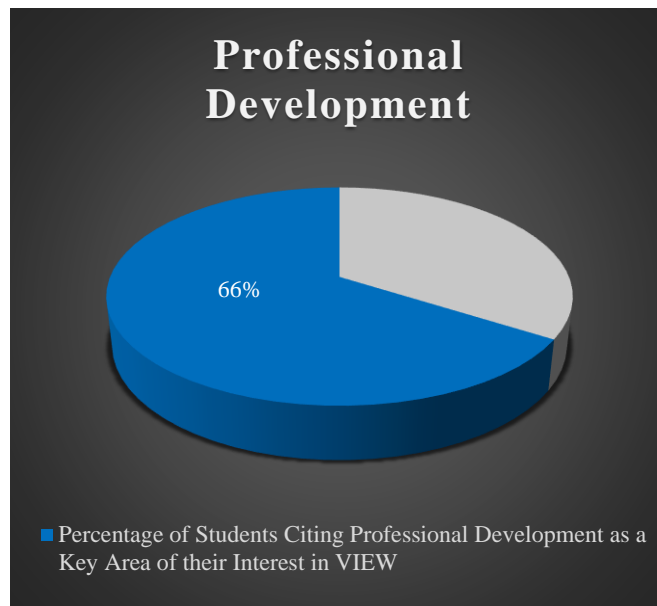
To properly assess learning outcomes, pre and post experience assessment instruments were created through Baseline to efficiently gather qualitative and quantitative data. OACS staff designed these instruments, composed of Likert scale and free response questions, and distributed them in January, 2016 and August, 2016. Students responded to the pre survey before they attended a seminar and to the post survey after VIEW concluded. The pre survey was distributed to all 23

student participants and all 23 responded. The post survey was distributed to the same 23 students, and 14 responded.

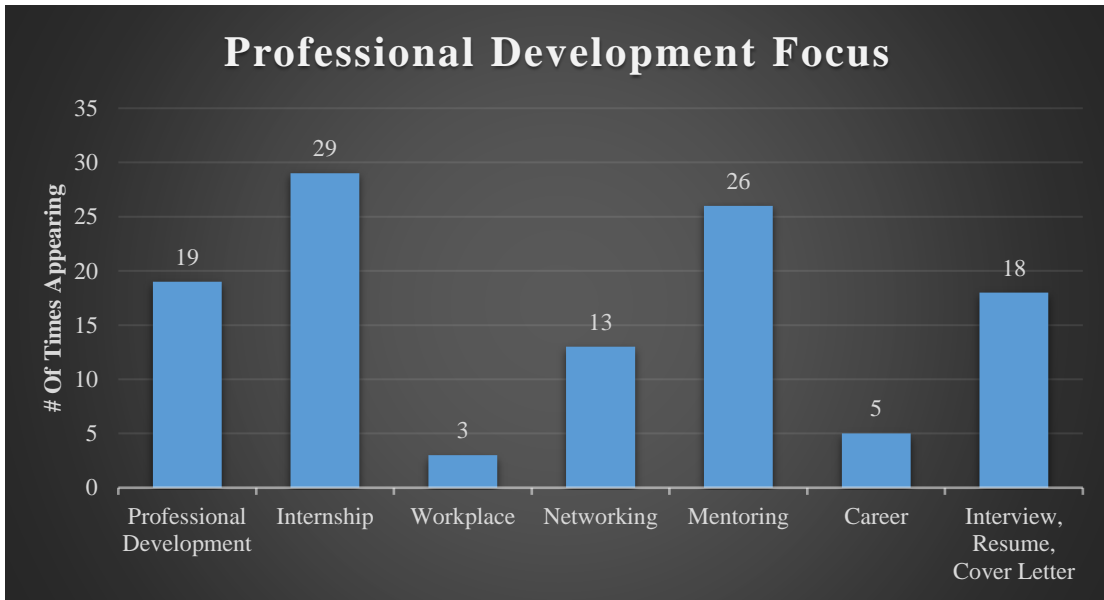
Students completed the pre survey *en masse* at the start of the initial spring seminar after being emailed the survey by Baseline. Students completed the post survey beginning one week after VIEW concluded. They were sent the survey via email three times over the course of one month. Students were instructed as to the importance of these surveys and asked to respond as accurately as possible, in a timely fashion. From a methodological perspective, web-based surveys were utilized rather than paper surveys in order to maximize the response rate and facilitate the means by which students could answer. This also eliminated the need for manual input of assessment data. The surveys took approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Professional Development

Students overwhelmingly cited professional development as a key area of interest, both in their rationale for joining VIEW and in their expectations of what the program would deliver. The post survey generated 76 free response answers, taken from eight questions. Of these free responses, 50 directly mention professional development. This should be taken into strong consideration when planning future iterations of VIEW.



The following chart displays the number of times certain words and phrases were used in students' free responses in the post survey. Note the strong focus on professional development.



Results - Program Satisfaction

Students responded during the post-experience survey to questions measuring their satisfaction with their overall experiences and specific program components. These questions employed either a 1-5 Likert scale or yes/no responses.

Please indicate your overall level of satisfaction with your experience in the VIEW Program



Student Recommendations

The following are student responses from the post survey question “*Is there anything that could have made your summer experience better? Is there anything you would change?*”

- I would have liked to have had concrete job skills training either in the spring course or in the D.C. This could include skills with Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, as well as proper email etiquette, professional dress, and networking techniques
- The program should be more focused on professional development and led by someone from the Center for Student Professional Development
- We got these internships on our own...my supervisor/organization never mentioned VIEW. I know some people used the VIEW connection to get their internship, but I did not. I would have liked more help in this process
- I would have added more professional development and active citizenship to the summer, and aligned both towards student interests

Do you feel the spring course prepared you for the summer experience?



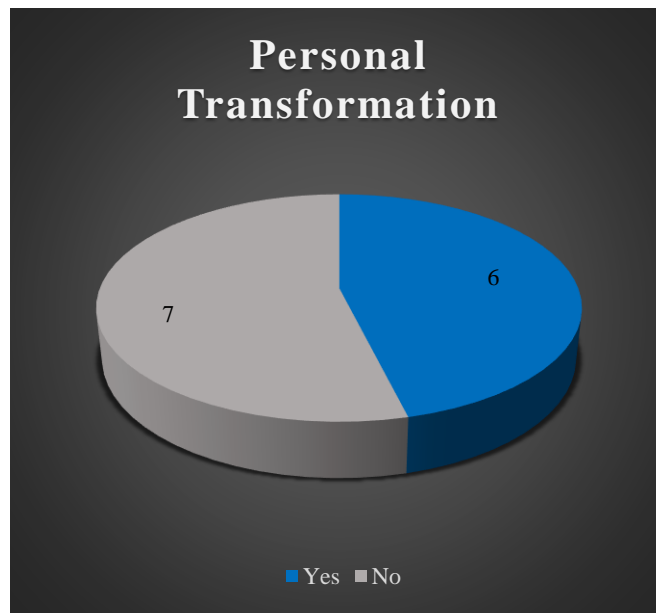
Student Recommendations

The following are student responses from the post survey questions “*Why did you feel unprepared (for the summer experience)?*” and “*what would you add, change, or adjust in the spring course seminar to make it more helpful to future students?*”

- I feel that what we covered did not really reflect what I did in the work place. I think having more students from past years come in to share the real truth of the good and the bad would have been more informative
- Greater focus on professional development at the get go
- More networking practice will be very helpful

- I was not sure about the appropriate dress code for a professional setting
- We never got any tips on networking. The guest speakers were fine, but we didn't even get to make any connections with them, which could have been helpful in our internship search.
- The course should have spent more time early in the semester on resumes and cover letters and interviewing and finding places to apply. I felt like the course taught that too late.
- While the class did prepare me professionally, it didn't give any context as to what DC is like
- I would involve Cynthia/ the Center far more, as I thought the program was in partnership with the Center and would've loved more professional preparation.

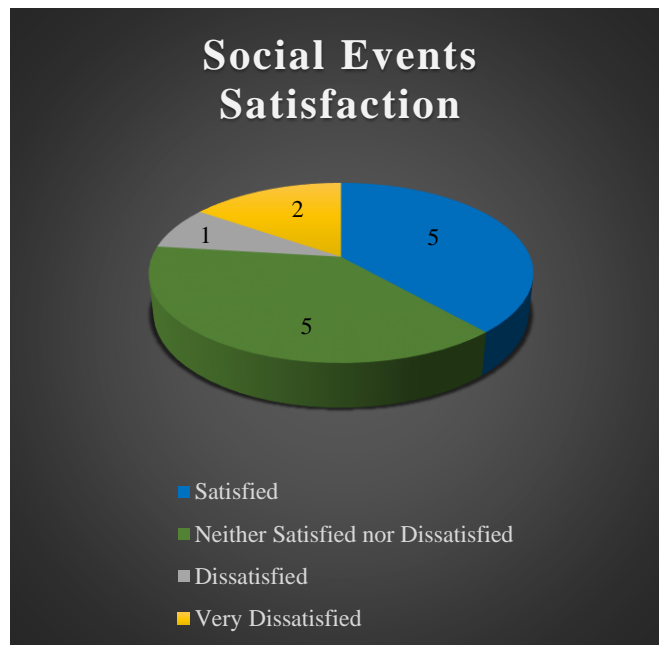
Do you feel that you were personally transformed by the impact VIEW made on your life?



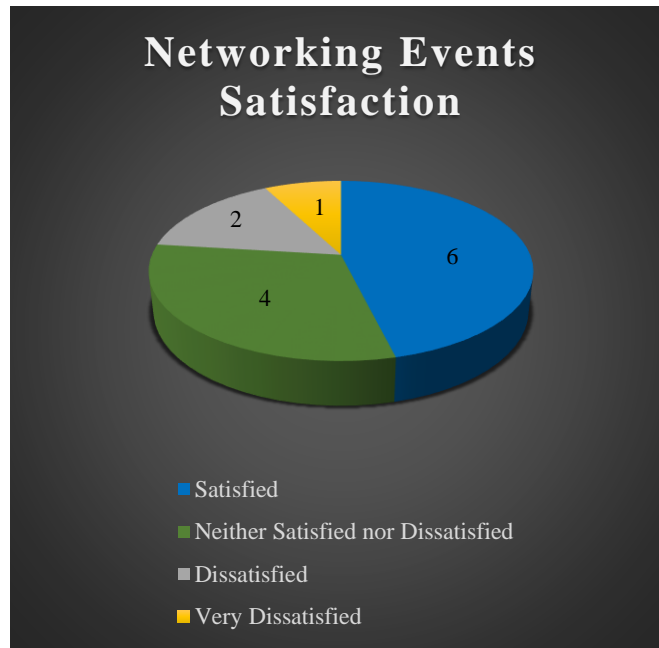
Please indicate your level of satisfaction with your internship placement



Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the social events (kayaking, baseball game, etc.)



Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the networking events (D.C. alumni chapter events)



Results – Learning Outcomes

Student responses are taken from questions utilizing a 1-5 Likert scale. For every response, a 1 correlates to the lowest agreement/experience/ability/etc. and a 5 correlates to the highest level. Student responses are then averaged to show how they progressed as a cohort, per question. Thus, a movement of “.5” would indicate that the group averaged one half step of positive growth. Each learning outcome is measured by 2-7 questions and separated into the following charts.

As a result of participating in the Vanderbilt Internship Experience in Washington (VIEW) program, students will be able to:

1. *Identify and reflect on personal identities and how those identities influence their understanding and practice of civic engagement*

Question	Average Pre-Assessment Result	Average Post-Assessment Result	Movement
<i>Read the following statements and rate your level of agreement</i>			
I am able to identify the multiple facets that construct my personal identity	3.93	4.07	.14
I am able to understand how my personal identity influences my role as a citizen	3.64	4	.36
I am able to understand how my personal identity influences how I interact within my community	3.79	4.14	.35

2. Describe the primary objectives and interactions of government branches, media outlets, non-profit organization, diplomatic entities, and other offices/departments

Question	Average Pre-Assessment Result	Average Post-Assessment Result	Movement
<i>Read the following statements and rate your level of agreement</i>			
I understand the roles and functionality of the branches of the federal government	4.07	4.29	.22
I understand the ways in which media outlets impact the political processes of Washington, D.C.	3.71	4.5	.79
I understand the roles and functionality of non-profit organizations in advocating for social change in Washington, D.C.	3.36	4	.64
I understand the roles and functionality of diplomatic entities.	3	3.93	.93

3. Analyze differences in power and access to resources among communities, and how those differences affect policy, strategy, and justice on a global scale

Question	Average Pre-Assessment Result	Average Post-Assessment Result	Movement
<i>Read the following statements and rate your level of agreement</i>			
I am able to analyze differences in power and privilege within a community	3.86	4	.14
I am able to analyze differences in resource allocation within a community	3.57	3.79	.22
I am able to understand how differences in power, privilege, and resource allocation affect policy on a global scale	3.86	3.93	.07
I am able to understand how differences in power, privilege, and resource allocation affect justice on a global scale	4.07	4.07	0

4. Engage in informed dialogue and effective conflict resolution to achieve a desired civic aim

Question	Average Pre-Assessment Result	Average Post-Assessment Result	Movement
<i>Read the following statements and rate your level of agreement</i>			
I am able to research and gather information about issues affecting my community	4.07	4.5	.43
I am able to engage in informed dialogue	4.29	4.64	.35
I am able to respectfully engage others whose perspectives differ from my own	4.38	4.43	.05

I am able to effectively engage others in resolving conflicts	4.14	4.21	.07
I am able to collaboratively identify shared goals within my community	4.07	4.07	0

5. *Identify and meet professional expectations for the workplace (e.g., resume and cover letters, interview skills, organization research, professional appearance and communication)*

Question	Average Pre-Assessment Result	Average Post-Assessment Result	Movement
<i>I possess strong professional ability in the following areas (1=strongly disagree, 5=strong agree)</i>			
Writing a resume	3.93	4.64	.71
Writing a cover letter	3.14	4.14	1
Interviewing for a position	3.14	4	.86
Conducting preparatory research on/about an organization	3.5	4.21	.71
Appropriate workplace appearance	4.29	4.86	.57
Written Communication	4.43	4.71	.28
Oral Communication	4.07	4.64	.57
LinkedIn	3.07	4.57	1.5

6. *Demonstrate key professional skills, including critical and creative thinking; adaptability and flexibility; collaboration and teamwork; and appropriate use of professional networking and communication technology*

Question	Average Pre-Assessment Result	Average Post-Assessment Result	Movement
<i>I am able to demonstrate the following professional skills (1=strongly disagree, 5=strong agree)</i>			
Critical thinking	4.21	4.57	.36
Creative thinking	3.64	4.21	.57
Adaptability	4.07	4.5	.43
Flexibility	4.07	4.29	.22
Collaboration	4	4.43	.43
Teamwork	3.79	4.43	.64
Networking	3.07	3.93	.86
Digital/Electronic Communication	4.29	4.57	.28

7. Examine the roles of complexity, change, constructiveness and chance in career development

Question	Average Pre-Assessment Result	Average Post-Assessment Result	Movement
<i>When considering my career development, I am able to examine the roles of the following (1=strongly disagree, 5= strongly agree)</i>			
Complexity	3.86	3.93	.07
Change	3.93	3.93	0
Constructiveness	3.5	3.77	.27
Chance	3.57	3.92	.35

8. Articulate a clear and compelling vision for and commitment to active citizenship

Question	Average Pre-Assessment Result	Average Post-Assessment Result	Movement
<i>Read the following statements and rate your level of agreement</i>			
I am able to articulate a vision for active citizenship	3.93	4	.07
I am able to articulate a commitment to active citizenship	3.71	4	.29

Learning Outcome Analysis

- **Strengths**

The VIEW cohort showed strongest growth in learning outcomes 2 and 5, where they averaged movement of .65 and .78 across questions, respectively. The question showing largest growth (movement of 1.5) was *I possess strong professional ability in the following areas: LinkedIn*. When considering the high percentage of VIEW participants citing professional development as a key reason behind their decision to join the program, it is especially encouraging to see learning outcome 5 display such robust growth.

- **Areas for Improvement**

The VIEW cohort was weakest in learning outcomes 3 and 7, where they averaged movement of .1 and .17 across questions, respectively. There are three questions showing growth of 0. They are 1) *I am able to understand how differences in power, privilege, and resource allocation affect justice on a global scale*, 2) *I am able to collaboratively identify shared goals within my community*, and 3) *When considering my career development, I am able to examine the roles of the following: change*.