

## A research on case study and policy plans of universities' career experience semester systems

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### 1. Introduction

The purpose of this study was to present the direction of policy support and the management plan for the introduction of university career experience semester system through case study of career semester system and similar system operated by four-year colleges and junior colleges in Korea. In order to do so, first we reviewed the university career education policy. Second, we analyzed the cases of university career experience semesters in Korea. Third, we conducted the needs analysis for introduction of university career experience semester system. Finally we proposed policy suggestions for introduction of university career experience semester system. In addition, literature review, case study, in-depth interview, FGI, and questionnaire were used as research methods.

### 2. The case study of university career experience semester system

Starting with 2015 Ewha Womans University's challenging semester system and Handong University's free semester system, 2016 Ajou University's blue semester system, 2017 Konkuk University's dream semester system and Sejong university's creative semester system are gradually expanding.

Currently, the five universities that run career experience semesters differed slightly in terms of the name, introduction purpose, subject, school affairs, and operating procedure of the career semester system by university. The purpose of introduction was to focus on career search, self-confidence or self-initiative capacity enhancement. The students were mainly students for more than 3 semesters, but they could be divided into universities that can only apply for individual applicants, and universities where individuals and teams can apply.

Regarding the school affairs, most universities set up separate course experience courses and operated a range of credits ranging from 1 to 18 credits. There were universities that

operated regular class concurrently and one semester's immersion together, and there were also some universities that operated only in the form of regular classes and one-term immersion. There were both universities that paid subsidies and universities that did not pay, and the level of subsidy was varied by university.

After the application form is submitted and reviewed and the progress of the course is determined, the student will be given self-directed learning through submission of reports and individual guidance during the semester, and grades on the subject will be given at the end of the semester. There is a slight difference between the evaluation, the method of operation, and the evaluation method, but most universities evaluate it as an absolute evaluation method. This kind of career experience semester system is operated by the administrative office, the liberal arts college, and the educational innovation institute that are responsible for the school affairs and the curriculum.

In the case of the career experience semester in the junior college, the support for career experience (Busan Women's University, and Buchon University), career roadmap setting and support (Gumi University, and Youngjin College), support for strengthening career competency (Busan Hagi University, Yeongnam University of Technology, Bucheon University, and Seojeong University) were analyzed. Career experience semesters in junior college were supported by programs or curriculum units. The establishment and support of the career road-map was supported by the junior college in order to set up the level of career maturity that must be accomplished by the grade level.

### **3. The results of recognition and needs related to university of career experience semester system**

Through the interviews with the operation staff of the university career experience semester system and the participating students, the background, operation and participation process, operation and participation performance of the career experience semester system, and opinion about policy making were analyzed. The following is a summary. First, the career experience semester system was based on the necessity of change of existing curriculum and school affairs. Second, discussions on various issues such as reorganization of baccalaureate system related to the operation of career experience semester system and participation of academic advisor were continuing. Third, despite the difficulty of operating the semester system, both the manager and the participating students evaluated the achievements of the career experience semester system very positively. Fourth, they needed support at the national level in order for career experience semester to spread to other universities.

The results of the questionnaire survey for students who participated in the career

experience semesters were as follows. First, students took part in the career experience semester to explore their career paths and aptitudes, to help them decide on future career paths, and to challenge new fields by using their major and cultural knowledge they have learned in university. Second, the students recognized that there was room for improvement in the scope and management of the advisors. Third, students are expected to participate in the semester that they want for four years, not to limit the period of participation in the career experience semester to a certain period, and the curriculum is not a form of one semester commitment, and that they would like to participate in concurrent courses. Fourth, after participating in the career experience semester system, it was shown that they wanted support related to the career experience semesters such as industry-university linkage or domestic and international internship reflecting the demand of students. Fifth, students perceived that it is necessary to soften the grading criteria such as grades in curriculum, course of study, and major in career experience.

The results of the FGI for staffs of university career experience semester and those of non-operating universities could be summarized as follows. First, the need for operating the career semester system was positively reflected in both groups. Second, in the subject of the career experience semester system operation, the university officials of the unoperated university considered the division of the support according to the purpose, and the lower grade students. Third, the issues related to the grant were discussed by the staffs of the operational universities. Although they agreed on the necessity of the grant, they showed differences in the size of the grant, the payment method, and the post-processing method. Fourth, in the support for the introduction of the career experience semester system, various opinions were expressed by the groups. In order to introduce the career experience semester system, sufficient consensus among the members and reorganization of the school affairs should be prioritized, and suggested the need for manpower to take charge of it.

#### **4. Suggestions for the introduction of university career experience semester system**

We proposed the basic directions of policy for introduction of university career experience semester system as follows. First, the career experience semester system should be introduced from an integrated viewpoint of university curriculum design. Second, in order to introduce the career experience semester system, it is necessary to establish the role of the professors in the career experience semester system. Third, in the reorganization of the school affairs for the career semester system, the rigidity of the school affairs management should be balanced with the flexibility of school affairs administration. Fourth, there should be a virtuous circle that monitors the course of the career experience

semester system and reflects students' needs in the university curriculum.

As a step-by-step task for the introduction of university career experience semester system, firstly, we set goal according to type of career experience semester, second, establishment of operating system for university career experience semester, third, establishment of educational system for university career experience semester, and fourth, support for university career experience semester system.

Specifically, the goal of the career experience semester should be distinguished according to 1) Do you seek various experiences? 2) Do we need to improve our working capacity? In order to set up the semester system for university career experience, we proposed 1) to prepare regulations for the semester system of career experience, 2) to strengthen the linkage between related organizations and operating universities, 3) to organize the committee for career experience semester system, 4) to prepare information on career course experience semester and information on grades, and 5) to provide incentives to encourage the admission of advisor to participate in the career semester. For the establishment of an education system for university career experience semester system, we suggested 1) strengthening pre-education for participating students, 2) developing a follow-up program for students participating in career experience semester. Lastly, for the support for university career experience semesters, we showed 1) diversification of field of study for participating in the career experience semester, 2) providing guidance for mentor, and education for advisors to understand the system, 3) providing a pool of advisors, and supporting for matching of advisors and students, and 4) the sharing of results between participating universities in the course of career experience.