

Work-Based Learning - Breakout Group Discussions

August 19, 2026

Please click on the link for the Zoom breakout group you're in.

[Group 1](#)

[Group 2](#)

[Group 3](#)

[Group 4](#) (if needed)

BREAKOUT GROUP 1 - Discussion

Who's here with us today? (Name, title, college)	
Michele Haggar	Director of Career and Transfer Connections, Southwestern College
Stacey Mathis	Department Chair, Faculty Coordinator of Career Studies & Services, MiraCosta College
Genaro Ayala, JPCM	Imperial Valley College
Karen Sevilla, Student Success Specialist	Imperial Valley College
Noah Lacsina, Administrative Technician	San Diego Community College District
Shawn Fawcett, WBL / Work Experience Coordinator, MIP Co-Lead	San Diego Mesa College / SDCCD
Cait Canby, Employer Relations Liaison	MiraCosta College
	Phyllis Pistorino- WestEd

Instructions:

1. Take a few minutes to look at the [WBL Glossary](#) and preview the five discussion questions below. (5 min)
2. In your role, you play an important part in guiding students along their educational and career journeys to help them find their own purpose or "why." Consider your professional experiences, along with the WBL Glossary, and note your responses to the discussion questions below. (5 min)
3. Group discussion: Elevate responses that stand out to you. Feel free to "+1," type in the relevant boxes, or use comments. (25 min)
4. Designate someone to report out 1–2 highlights to the larger group.

Discussion Questions	Breakout Group 1
1. Where in your professional experiences have you seen WBL guide students to think about or uncover their career interests?	• Having industry present in the classroom often offers insight that not all students might have had. • At our annual SDCCD WBL summit, we had a student panel for students to answer questions about their experience in our internship programs. During the panel, some students expressed that they had no idea it was possible to have a career in certain fields, and that their internship gave them the opportunity to find a career they are passionate about. • I have found that students get the most out of panels and direct engagement with employers, especially if those employers “look like them”, and break down myths. The Q&A sessions at the end of these types of engagement are sometimes the most telling and productive parts of the event.
2. At your college, what opportunities exist for staff and faculty to learn about the breadth of WBL experiences available? What efforts are made for students to know about the breadth of WBL experiences available?	• At MiraCosta, faculty have access to a Canvas course that serves as a central hub for all WBL materials, resources, and information. • Miracosta also has an employer luncheon during Flex Week to encourage our faculty to meet with employers in their • Staff at our SDCCD colleges are encouraged to take the regional WBL course. We have recently created Faculty focused WBL events, centered around showing why WBL is important, how they can Incorporate WBL in their classroom, and how to record/report WBL. For students, our colleges focus on outreach for the different internship programs available at each college, and districtwide we focus on highlighting all potential career awareness & Exploration opportunities on our Job Board, Handshake. • Flex day activities, PD trainings, newsletters from our office to the campus
3. What barriers might exist for students?	• Lack of knowledge of particular industries or not being able to see themselves in particular industries, for example, education or public safety.

Discussion Questions	Breakout Group 1
	• Faculty members may not always understand the positive impact WBL may have on their students. • Not being able to attend events or opportunities off campus due to lack of transportation. • Lack of childcare +1 • Work/Schedule of classes • Lack of information to students, registering for PD 290 courses too late • Students not being aware of commitment to said opportunities
4. During future CoPs, which of the WBL activities on the continuum would you like to dig deeper into and learn more about from others in the region?	• Informational interviews with industry professionals (Cait) • Employers visits and job interviews
5. What's working at your college to engage students in WBL activities?	• Tours of industry seem to be popular with our students. • Classroom presentations in the various disciplines to introduce our services, hosting panels, inviting employers back to explore how we can work together to support and create WBL activities •

Sonia BREAKOUT GROUP 2 - Discussion - August 19, 2026

Who's here with us today? (Name, title, college)	
Sonia Yaddgo Job Placement Case Management Grossmont College	Ben Gamboa, Associate Dean, MiraCosta College
Genesis Lastrella-Quicho Experiential Learning Coordinator Southwestern College	Karen Overklift, Employer Relations Liaison, SDCC
Annie Ngo, Dean of Business & Technology, MiraCosta College	
Céline Ahearn Acting Supervisor, Mesa College	
	Pamela Fong, WestEd

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2. In your role, you play an important part in guiding students along their educational and career journeys to help them find their own purpose or "why." Consider your professional experiences, along with the WBL Glossary, and note your responses to the discussion questions below. (5 min)
3. Group discussion: Elevate responses that stand out to you. Feel free to "+1," type in the relevant boxes, or use comments. (25 min)
4. Designate someone to report out 1–2 highlights to the larger group.

Discussion Questions	Breakout Group 2
1. Where in your professional experiences have you seen WBL guide students to think about or uncover their career interests?	Sometimes students are unsure of what they want to do, and things like employer panels, career fairs, internships or even talking with someone in the field can open their eyes to careers they didn't consider.

Discussion Questions	Breakout Group 2
	• Yes, Mentorship, Career Panels, internships are so helpful to sharing the various career fields available to them • Paid internship experiences can show students what they do or do not want to do.
2. At your college, what opportunities exist for staff and faculty to learn about the breadth of WBL experiences available? What efforts are made for students to know about the breadth of WBL experiences available?	• For faculty: Flex week presentations, WBL liaisons visiting department meetings, WBL monthly newsletter • Presentations by WBL Coordinator on everything from how to incorporate WBL into course syllabus, how to record WBL, and what WBL is • School Meeting presentations, 5-week certification course • Not currently doing anything to make efforts in sharing the WBL Continuum and breadth of experiences (just one-off promotions) • What if the WBL continuum were a part of introductory or 100 level courses? Inside and outside of career education • Embed WBL reminders at certain unit attainment points in the student journey (part of guided pathways efforts)
3. What barriers might exist for students?	• Time and financial burden • Transportation • Sufficient partnerships with employers to create opportunities across all majors and programs • Awareness of its importance (seen as a low priority) - I think awareness is a big one! ◦ Knowledge on the benefits of WBL • Family or work responsibilities • Lack of opportunities in certain career fields

Discussion Questions	Breakout Group 2
	• Connection of educational goals to career - when students first enroll in college especially from high school they may not know how to connect their major to an industry
4. During future CoPs, which of the WBL activities on the continuum would you like to dig deeper into and learn more about from others in the region?	• Love to see more examples of Simulated Work experiences, projects with industry • Not a specific activity per se, but maybe examples and discussion of what various WBL activities look like when employers are present and active versus not involved. How does it impact the student learning experience? • In a format like this, pick one WBL activity and ask how each of us are making that happen in the colleges.
5. What's working at your college to engage students in WBL activities?	• Collaborative events, such as career fairs done in partnership with SDWP, San Diego Airport Authority, Port of San Diego • Partnerships with employers, collaborations across campus, embedded activities in courses • Embedded activities within the course outlines of record • Using WBL participation data to inform where we can increase WBL opportunities • Collaborations between departments • Bringing opportunities directly to students is working like career fairs, employer panels, classroom connections, Handshake, and 1:1 support. For me, the follow-up is really important too. Helping them figure out the next steps.

BREAKOUT GROUP 3 - Discussion - August 19, 2026

Who's here with us today? (Name, title, college)	
Grace Calisi, WestEd	Lena Heckbert, Cuyamaca College
Arni Neff, Career Education Supervisor, Miramar College	Lynn Bigsby, Regional Consortium
Pavel Consuegra (WBL Faculty): Mesa College, Cuyamaca College	Mariah
Miguel Gutierrez ERL IVC	
Maricela Moreno, Career Services Coordinator, Imperial Valley College	

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2. In your role, you play an important part in guiding students along their educational and career journeys to help them find their own purpose or "why." Consider your professional experiences, along with the WBL Glossary, and note your responses to the discussion questions below. (5 min)
3. Group discussion: Elevate responses that stand out to you. Feel free to "+1," type in the relevant boxes, or use comments. (25 min)
4. Designate someone to report out 1–2 highlights to the larger group.

Discussion Questions	Breakout Group 3
1. Where in your professional experiences have you seen WBL guide students to think about or uncover their career interests?	In my experience, WBL helps students explore their career interests by giving them real-world experiences. Through internships, industry tours, career fairs and other activities students get to see what different careers are actually like. Sometimes it confirms that they are on the right path, and other times they realize they may want to explore something different.

Discussion Questions	Breakout Group 3
	WBL/Internships can offer students an opportunity to experience real workplace experiences beyond what they imagine, allowing them to really decide if a career is truly what they want for themselves.
2. At your college, what opportunities exist for staff and faculty to learn about the breadth of WBL experiences available? What efforts are made for students to know about the breadth of WBL experiences available?	• Career Counselor shares opportunities with General Counseling staff and continually encourages the use of WBL continuum language • Students know about some (more basic activities). Need faculty to grow those opportunities - need to incorporate into their programs.+1 Not asking anyone to take on additional burden. Faculty needs to see where these opportunities already exist. • Plug and play WBL •
3. What barriers might exist for students?	• Examples that work well usually require a collaboration between multiple service areas, sometimes if a specific area or instructional program is understaffed its students going through that academic program that lose out • Not knowing what opportunities are available, transportation, work and family responsibilities, and not having time in their schedules.
4. During future CoPs, which of the WBL activities on the continuum would you like to dig deeper into and learn more about from others in the region?	• I believe the capstone project WBL opportunity can be leveraged much more than they are currently. I would really like to be a part of offering these types of opportunities for students.

Discussion Questions	Breakout Group 3
5. What's working at your college to engage students in WBL activities?	• Working with faculty to better showcase the skillsets being taught in the classroom and how they connect to the workplace. Such as mock interviews, employer panels, career fairs, etc.

BREAKOUT GROUP 4 - Discussion - August 19, 2026

Who's here with us today? (Name, title, college)	
Jeanette Meliska-Romero, Job Developer, Palomar College	
Sarah Cervantes - Program Manager, Academic & Career Pathways, MiraCosta College	
Erica Olmos, Employer Relations Liaison, Mesa College	
Katlin Choi, Work-Based Learning Coordinator, Mesa College	
Vanessa Baron, Employer Relations Liaison, Southwestern College	
Angela Tilley-Ruiz, ERL, Palomar College	Kevin

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Discussion Questions	Breakout Group 4
1. Where in your professional experiences have you seen WBL guide students to think about or uncover their career interests?	• During guest speaker and panel events/activities • MC hosts at least one Career Expl. activity per semester, Coffee and Convos, field trips w/ faculty. Goal to highlight the less obvious. • •

Discussion Questions	Breakout Group 4
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2. At your college, what opportunities exist for staff and faculty to learn about the breadth of WBL experiences available? What efforts are made for students to know about the breadth of WBL experiences available?	• Mesa- Approach faculty and try to identify what will help them accomplish their learning outcomes instead of going to them and saying, “Hey, let’s plan a career panel.” • B-level experiences can be a great bridge between C to A to bridge the level of engagement. • Look at • •
3. What barriers might exist for students?	• • • • •
4. During future CoPs, which of the WBL activities on the continuum would you like to dig deeper into and learn more about from others in the region?	• • • • •

Discussion Questions	Breakout Group 4
5. What's working at your college to engage students in WBL activities?	• • • • •