

PREPARING FOR PROFESSIONAL LIFE SYLLABUS
Fairleigh Dickinson University - Spring 2016

Course Title: Preparing for Professional Life
Section: UNIV 1002
Day & Time:
Building and Room:
Credits: 1

Instructor:
E-Mail:
Office Phone:
Office Hours:

PURPOSE OF COURSE

UNIV 1002 will assist second semester students in exploring career options utilizing personal values, interests, strengths, and preferences. Students will gain an in depth understanding of written and verbal communication skills and how to utilize them in a professional setting. This course will explore the importance and role of networking as a professional in both online and offline scenarios. Students will understand the importance of becoming a well-balanced candidate through internships, volunteer work, on-campus activities, and academic projects.

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

UNIV 1002 will be broken into three modules (the self, the community, and the global world).

The Self

Students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate clear and effective written and verbal communication skills for professional purposes;
2. Identify informational resources for professional development;
3. Articulate a personal definition of success based on values, interests, and strengths and explain how that relates to job vs. career.
4. Demonstrate a professional approach to their physical and digital presence.

The Community

Students will be able to:

1. Identify key professional networks and demonstrate skills to access and navigate those networks;
2. Explain the value of professional and academic experiences and articulate them in standard job search formats;

The Global World

Students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of global and cross-cultural competencies and how it can contribute to personal and professional success.

COURSE MATERIALS

Rath, T. (2007). *Strengths finder 2.0*. New York: Gallup Press.

National Association of Colleges and Employers (2013). *Job Choices*. Retrieved from <http://www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/nace/JobChoices0812/>

New York Times. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADE DETERMINATION

This course is graded on the University's grading system: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D, or F.
Final grades will be calculated as follows:

| | |
|------------|--------------|
| 93-100 A | 77-79.9 C+ |
| 90-92.9 A- | 73-76.9 C |
| 87-89.9 B+ | 70-72.9 C- |
| 83-86.9 B | 60-69.9 D |
| 80-82.9 B- | Below 59.9 F |

Your grade will be determined by the following (1000 pts total):

| Assignment | Point Value | Quantity | Total |
|---|-------------|----------|-------------|
| Attendance/Class Participation | 10 | 15 | 150 |
| Discussion Post/Response | 10 | 10 | 100 |
| Lead NY Times Discussion | 75 | 1 | 75 |
| Small Group Meetings | 25 | 2 | 50 |
| Assessment (StrengthsFinder) | 50 | 1 | 50 |
| Event Attendance | 10 | 3 | 50 |
| Resume, Cover Letter, Thank You Letter | 50 | 3 | 150 |
| LinkedIn Profile Creation | 25 | 1 | 25 |
| Career Focused Informational Interviews | 100 | 2 | 200 |
| Mock Interview | 50 | 1 | 50 |
| Professional Dress | 25 | 1 | 25 |
| Career Portfolio | 75 | 1 | 75 |
| Total | | | 1000 |

Attendance is mandatory.

- Attendance will be documented by the instructor or the peer leader at the beginning of each class.
- If students should miss any class, they are to complete a make-up assignment at the complete discretion of the instructor for that missed class. It is the student's responsibility to coordinate this make-up assignment promptly with the instructor. *Attendance will make up 10% of the student's final grade.*
- Excused absences include documented illness, emergency situations, and unavoidable University obligations (ex. travel for an athlete). For unavoidable University obligations, the student is required to provide advanced notification *in writing* to the instructor if a class is going to be missed. If the student fails to notify the instructor and/or provide necessary documentation, the absence will not be excused.
- Students must successfully complete UNIV 1002 in order to graduate.

Course assignment descriptions (detailed instructions included in appendix):

All course assignments (with some noted exceptions) will be completed on Webcampus (Blackboard).

1. Discussion Post/Response

- a. Each week your instructors will distribute a career related article for you to read and post on webcampus three important concepts that you learned in the article.
2. **Classroom Discussion**
 - a. Students will be broken up into groups of 2-3 at the beginning of the semester. Each week the selected group will be required to lead a 15 minute class discussion on the topic being covered.
 - b. The group will read all posts and post a summary, using the comments and the summary as the basis of the class discussion.
3. **Small Group Meetings**
 - a. Students will have 2 small group meetings (or one on one or meetings, at instructor's discretion) throughout the semester with the instructor. Meetings will be scheduled following particular assignments such as StrengthsFinder, mock interview, resume creation, etc. At least one of the meetings should be focused on reviewing student resume, cover letter, and thank you letter. During these meetings, students and instructors will also be able to discuss the assignments/class as it pertains to the individual, adding increased value to the course.
4. **Assessment (SIGI 3, StrengthsFinder)**
 - a. Students will complete the StrengthsFinder assessment. Upon completion, students will print and bring the results to class to be analyzed and discussed.
5. **Event Attendance**
 - a. Throughout the course of the semester, students will be required to attend 1 event. Upon completion of each event, students will submit a reflection on the event. Students will be offered events in the following areas (subject to change):
 - i. Professional Development Program Events
 - ii. Becton College Career Readiness Program Events
 - iii. Resume Workshop
 - iv. United Nations Event
6. **Resume**
 - a. Students will create an initial draft and subsequent final draft of a resume utilizing samples provided in class. Instructor and in-class feedback will allow students to create a final version. Microsoft Word and other online resume templates should not be used in the creation of the resume.
7. **Cover Letter**
 - a. Students will create an initial draft and subsequent final draft of a cover letter utilizing samples provided in class. Mentor/instructor and in-class feedback will allow students to create a final version.
8. **Thank You Letter**
 - a. Students will create an initial draft and subsequent final draft of a thank you letter utilizing samples provided in class to send following their career focused informational interview.
9. **LinkedIn Profile Creation**
 - a. Students will create a LinkedIn profile and send their personalized link to the instructor for review.
10. **Career Focused Informational Interviews**
 - a. Students will conduct two informational interviews over the course of the semester. One informational interview should be conducted with a professional and the other should be conducted with an upper class student. Thank you letters should be sent to both interviewees.
11. **Mock Interview**
 - a. Students will complete a virtual mock interview. Through Perfect Interview (software provided by Career Development), students will register, record, and complete a virtual mock interview. Recordings will be reviewed by the instructor to provide valuable feedback.
12. **Professional Dress**
 - a. In the class following the virtual mock interview, students will come to class dressed as if they were attending an interview.
13. **Career Portfolio** (<https://sites.google.com/site/fducareerprogram/>)
 - a. During the course of the semester, students will utilize the portfolio template provided (link above) to develop an online portfolio. This portfolio will be a work in progress throughout the semester (and future) and will be used to showcase the student's work, experience, and skills.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

As this course is designed to prepare students to become reliable professionals, each class will be treated like the workplace. Therefore:

- Students are expected to be in class on time and students who arrive late will be marked absent.
- Please be courteous to other students and the instructor during the course. Texting, social media, etc. is not permitted during class time. If there is an emergency that requires cell phone use, please let the instructor know prior to the beginning of the class.

WRITING POLICY

You are expected to submit work that has been written and proofread carefully. To do your best work and meet the standards for acceptable work, you should do the following when you prepare the final drafts of written assignments:

- Make sure they are coherent, organized, and free of errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and documentation.
- Always use a computer spell check program.
- Know that typographical errors are unacceptable.
- Ask a peer editor or a Learning Center tutor to proofread the final draft of your work.

If your work does not meet these standards, it will be returned to you without a grade. You must revise and resubmit it to the instructor within a reasonable time frame. The “reasonable time frame” will be determined by the student and the instructor. If you do not resubmit an acceptable assignment, you will receive an F for that assignment. If you continue to submit unacceptable work, you will be assigned a lowered or possibly a failing grade.

DISABILITY STATEMENT

Any student with documented disabilities, who feels he/she may need academic accommodations while taking this course, should first contact the office of Disability Support Services at 973-443-8079 to discuss his/her specific needs. Once the disability is verified, pick-up your letters from the office of Disability Support Services, then make an appointment to see the professor.

COURSE SCHEDULE

- Opening activity for each class: Group leads NY Times discussion (15 minutes)
- Short homework assignment for each week: Discussion post on Webcampus
- Additional StrengthsFinder and NACE readings as assigned

Week 1: Course Overview and Introduction

- In class:
 - Introduction to the world of work and careers; Bridge between UNIV 1001 and this seminar
 - Discussion regarding the linkages between formal education and a career and informal education and a career; the difference between and job and a career
 - Generate lists about the linkages between education/college and your career
 - What are the three factors that have most influenced your choice of major and tentative career choice right now? (Utilize 3.5 x 5 index card)
- Homework:
 - StrengthsFinder Assessment
 - Record yourself answering “Tell me about yourself” – Scenario: you are in an elevator and an executive of a company you want to work for is with you, you only have 30-60 seconds to introduce yourself and impress them! (Will re-record at end of semester to see improvement)

Week 2: Personal and Professional Values OR Cohort Specific Topic

- In class:
 - Exploring personal and professional values
 - Exploring rival understandings of the meaning of success

[NOTE: This week would allow heterogeneous sections to spend more time thinking about their goals through discussion of different understandings of success. However, homogenous sections may focus on cohort specific topics.]

Week 3: Exploration and Commitment OR Cohort Specific Topic

- In class:
 - Discussion of idea of multiple selves
 - Difficult decisions exercise

[NOTE: This week would allow heterogeneous sections to spend more time thinking about their goals through discussion of the process of making difficult decisions. However, homogenous sections groups may focus on cohort specific topics.]

Week 4: The Self: Strengths, Interests, Skills, and Academic/Career Possibilities

- In class:
 - Share/present “Tell me about yourself” videos
 - Discussion, analysis, and exploration of StrengthsFinder Results
 - Small group discussion of results with presentation by group spokesperson
 - What they learned about this assessment regarding their choice of academic program
 - Introduce how to utilize O*Net
- Homework:
 - Research careers using StrengthsFinder assessment results via O*Net, Occupational Outlook Handbook, NY Times and Facts on File. (Reflection/Analysis Paper based on Research: Paper should include 3 possible career options)

Week 5 and 6: Career Possibilities

- In class:
 - Individual presentations on findings including required preparation, necessary skills and abilities, career responsibilities and career opportunities available
 - Bring one of three career options the first week – next two will be discussed the next week.
 - Introduction of Career Clusters and/or Self-Directed search

Week 7: Written communication

- In class:
 - Discussion of: volunteer/community service, extracurricular experiences, leadership opportunities, on campus resource; what do you want on your resume in one year, two years
 - Introduce resumes, cover letters, thank you letters
 - Small group work: develop resume; handout various templates
- Homework:
 - Develop resume and cover letter
 - CHECK YOUR MIDSEMESTER PROGRESS REPORTS ON WEBADVISOR

Week 8: Digital self

- In class:
 - Discuss learning about and managing your digital self (including email etiquette); Dr. Caroline Munoz, Silberman College of Business, Marketing Department

Week 9: Oral communication

- In class:

- Review homework: resume and cover letter
- Discuss how to network, develop your elevator pitch/brand, and how to conduct informational interviews
- Homework:
 - Develop LinkedIn profile
 - Conduct one informational interview (upper class interview due in one week; professional interview due week 10); send thank you letter to interviewee

Week 10 and 11: Networking and Interviewing

- In class:
 - Discussion of informational interviews, in class speed interviews, and continued networking discussion
 - Create sociogram – who is your success team?
 - Simulated interviews

Week 12: Experiential Education

- In class:
 - Discuss the importance of internships, steps to find an internship, and building/maintaining a career portfolio
- Homework:
 - Register on CareerShift (fdu.careershift.com) and find 5 possible internships; Begin portfolio

Week 13 and 14: Professional Persona

- In class:
 - Students should come to class in professional dress
 - Nonverbal communication
 - Discuss appropriate dress, dining etiquette, and overall professionalism
 - Utilize professional etiquette videos developed by Silberman College
- Homework:
 - Re-record yourself answering “Tell me about yourself” – Scenario: you are in an elevator and an executive of a company you want to work for is with you, you only have 30-60 seconds to introduce yourself and impress them!

Week 15: Global Competencies, Global Citizenship, and Professional Success

- In class:
 - Tie together course and explain the importance of global experience/engagement. Introduce Global Engagement Program; Bridge to UNIV1003 and UNIV1004
 - Course wrap up and evaluation

Please note that scoring rubrics based on the master rubrics in the Draft University Core Assessment Plan being refined