

“Assessing the Effectiveness of Teaching Career Readiness”

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In response to the growing need for colleges and universities to engage with students on career and world readiness, I developed a course that focuses on student career competencies and that fosters engagement in career exploration. This “Working in Politics” course (PSCI 315) introduces the career competencies that students will need in the 21st century, and allows students the opportunity to connect their curricular, co-curricular, and life experiences to these competencies to develop their understanding of how these experiences map onto what employers are looking for. This course is a required course in our major geared towards second-year students (or first year, if a transfer student). I investigate the effectiveness of implementing career planning and development in a course designed for such purposes on student career readiness.

Current research in the field—in political science and in higher education in general—tends to focus on practical “How To” or “Why To” teach career preparedness. These practical tips are invaluable to educators who are seeking to deliver career readiness content and have also proved to be indispensable in the development of the course and the assessment tools as discussed herein. There are a number of academic and additional studies that find that our students tend to be not prepared for the professional world, that employers are dissatisfied with new graduates, and that study the perceptions of students on their employability. But know that students do indeed acquire the competencies that are needed in the workforce, but it seems as though they struggle to be able to link those skills to their experiences. There are no—to my knowledge—empirical studies that examine how courses focused on career readiness in higher education impact student career preparedness. My study provides insight into the importance of career readiness curriculum in higher education. The paper proceeds with an overview of the course design, the assessment tools implemented, and the results of the assessments.

Course Design

The course is designed around three components and three specific goals, as outlined in Table 1 (the course syllabus is in Appendix 1) and discussed in turn below.

Table 1: Course Components, Goals, and Implementation Approaches

Component	Goal	Implementation
(1) Becoming “Career Ready”	*Connect skills employers are looking for with students’ academic, co-curricular, work, and life experiences	* Introduce and connect NACE competencies *Introduce and connect what it means to be “career ready” *Exploration of motivations— intrinsic vs extrinsic *Performance Evaluation meetings with student and professor 2x per semester *Resume workshop from Career Center *LinkedIn/Branding workshop from Career Center *Etiquette Dinner with instruction from Career Center *Courses and certifications *Career Preparedness & Exploration Project (components: Big Interview, LinkedIn account, resume/c.v., employability audit, and in-class presentation)
(2) Service-Learning Project	*Develop students’ career competencies (written and oral communication, critical thinking, leadership, professionalism, teamwork, and, for some, technology)	*Research client *Develop questions and interview client *Uncover unmet needs of client *Organize into teams to solve problems *Present to client the product
(3) Career Pathways for Political Science and Legal Studies students	*Solidify students’ understanding of the career pathways they are interested in in order to provide insight into the career competencies, education, and specifics that the career entails.	*Assigned readings on career areas of interest to students in the class *Guest speakers with career pathways backgrounds of interest to students *Career Center presentation on where to job/internship search * Career Preparedness & Exploration Project (Component: Researching career pathway and job search)

The first component centers on becoming “career ready” by introducing students to the eight career competencies as outlined by the National Association of Colleges and Employers

(NACE). These competencies were developed by those from higher education institutions and employers and are based on results from a national survey of employers. In the course, I introduce these competencies by spending two class periods fleshing out what they mean and with students undergoing various exercises in applying these competencies to curricular, co-curricular, work and life experiences, then we return to these competencies throughout the course as we explore various career paths, and we conclude the course with checking back and adding to this career readiness mapping of competencies to experiences. By the end of the course, my goals are (1) that students will be so familiar with these competencies that they can quickly draw on examples of their experiences as how they have these skills, and (2) that they will view curricular, co-curricular, work and life experiences through the lens of career competencies and readiness.

In addition to the career competencies, I also assist students in considering what motivations they have for their careers, specifically their intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Here, students consider, among many things, how they want to work (e.g., remote or in person), flexibility in their hours, and location. They also consider extrinsic motivators including salary, opportunities for promotion, benefits, rewards, and the like. Together, this provides a framework for students to carefully consider the various aspects of work-life balance and a rich, fulfilling life and career. Sometimes students identify location as a key factor in defining their career paths, and we discuss how this is just as important as perhaps someone who is motivated by moving up the career ladder and open to being located wherever that leads them. All of these perspectives are discussed and legitimized.

To further aid in preparing students for their careers, I also undergo two performance evaluation meetings with students. Here, the students and I separately rate their performance in

the course based on various aspects such as dependability, promptness, participation level, engagement in the course materials, and the like. Then I meet with each student individually to discuss their performance and the evaluations we have both completed. I frame this as a precursor to a probationary review that they will encounter in the workforce, and we treat it as such. The goal is that students will both improve their performance and also become comfortable evaluating themselves and responding to feedback.

There are a few public-facing components of professional development implemented in the course that assist in developing career preparedness. First, the Career Center provides a Resume building workshop in our class and students use this guidance in drafting/editing resumes. The Career Center also provides a branding workshop and how to maximize their LinkedIn profile and accounts. Students are required to create a LinkedIn profile with professional headshots, and connect with each other, faculty, our guest speakers, and others, and follow the guidelines laid out by the Career Center in their profiles. To further develop their competencies, I introduce students the variety of online trainings and certifications (e.g., AI, Microsoft, leadership and other skill building), and provide a day where students complete one of the trainings so they may add it to their resumes and LinkedIn. A final element, which the students very much enjoy, is a Career Center-led Etiquette Dinner for our class. Here, our Department pays for a five course plated dinner for students with the Career Center providing instruction on appropriate flatware usage, napkin usage, table conversation, and other “business meal” etiquette principles.

These items, and more, are part of a large culminating class project (included in Appendix 2), the Career Exploration Project. In addition to developing LinkedIn profiles and resumes, students undergo an AI-generated interview using Big Interview and reflect on the

feedback provided with this interview, complete an employability audit that provides connections between competencies and experiences,¹ and, to facilitate communication competencies, an in-class presentation over their proposed career pathway.

The second component of the course consists of a four-week service-learning exercise that connects to the first component discussed above. Here, students served as consultants to a nonpartisan organization, the League of Women Voters of Vigo County (LWVVC). Students worked on a project that focused on the unmet needs of the organization. Students researched the client, created questions for an interview with the client and interviewed them at their monthly Board Meeting, worked as a team to conceptualize the problems that were identified by the organization during the interview, organized themselves into teams to solve these problems, and then presented the results of their projects to the client at the next month's Board Meeting. This provided the opportunity for students to develop career and world readiness skills in an experiential learning context—one objective of this course.

There were a number of unmet needs that the LWVVC identified in the client meeting. One of the central obstacles identified was social media and the League's lack of ability to amplify itself on this platform, particularly with its limited number of active members and its overall aging membership who struggle with technology. The students proposed an internship program—with recruitment materials—that could assist the LWVVC with this and other work. The LWVVC implemented this program successfully in Fall 2024 with a paid intern from the university. Another issue that was highlighted by the LWVVC was the need for information on how to spread its message of voter information and access to the community going into the 2024

¹ This is adapted from the example provided by Waite and Wheeler in their paper from the 2024 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association titled "Beyond Civic Engagement: Emphasizing Employment Outcomes for Students of American Government."

general election. In response to this, a group of students researched the costs for local television, radio, and billboard advertisements and provided that—with contact information—to the LWVVC. There were other unmet needs identified and worked on by the class, but these are two such examples.

Working as a class and in small teams, students navigated teamwork and leadership dynamics, the need to meet a client's needs, new technology like Canva that they were not familiar with, how to handle themselves professionally, and to present to and work with a community partner. At times the students felt pressure to complete their tasks and work in a fast-paced and evolving project, and some did not like the open-ended components that required creativity and innovation. All of this was presented in the context of career preparation, becoming comfortable with being uncomfortable, and pushing them to develop their career competencies and be ready for the dynamics of the workforce.

The third component of the course centers on introducing students to various career pathways. The first step into this is developing a list of careers that students are interested in. From that list, we undergo readings and I enlist guest speakers situated within those careers (anywhere between five to seven pathways per semester). We explore these areas broadly. For example, a study of careers in the law includes lawyer and non-lawyer career pathways, while a study of state government careers covers working in the state legislature and the bureaucracy. The speakers tend to be alums from our department. The course is arranged so that we read about the career pathway and have a guest speaker the following class period. Students are required to review the resume of the guest speaker (provided by the instructor), connect with them on LinkedIn and view their profile, and then submit a question for the speaker ahead of the meeting time. Students are free throughout the meeting to ask whatever question they would like, but

preparing ahead of time provides a more fruitful discussion for the class. Throughout this study of career pathways, we return to five questions to guide our understanding of the career:

- 1.) What does the career entail?
- 2.) What formal education is required?
- 3.) What skills/career competencies are needed?
- 4.) How can one go about developing career competencies to meet the demands for the career path?
- 5.) What assignments, experiential learning opportunities, and/or other-of-class experiences can aid in developing skills for this position? How?

An additional aspect of this career preparation component of the class is instruction from the Career Center on where to search for jobs and internships in careers connected to political science and the law with students then undergoing such a search and reporting on it in the final project. For the latter, students identify a career pathway, find and discuss three position postings within that career track, and consider how their experiences and studies have facilitated the development (or could potentially do so) of the necessary career competencies for the position. This element of the final project provides practice in job searching, engaging in all that goes along with a job search, and then connecting to the first component of the course, career competencies.

Assessment Tools

I assess the impact of the course content on student career preparedness by using two pre/post assessment tools, and an assessment administered at the beginning of the semester with a more detailed follow-up end-of-the-semester only assessment tool. I collect and hold onto the first round of assignments, and I hand them back to students during Finals Week and provide a reflection opportunity during this class meeting to strategize about where students go from here.

The first set of assessment tools (pre-assessment) and second set of the same two tools (post-assessment) are non-graded items and both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The third

assessment tool is non-graded and qualitative, while the fourth assessment, also qualitative, is part of a larger graded assignment and is included in the final project grade.

The first round of assessments begins at the end of Week 1. The first assessment tool centers on students' understanding and comfortability of career readiness in general and it is administered before students are assigned reading and before class discussion ensues on career readiness (see Career Ready Self-Assessment 1.1/1.2 tool in Appendix 3). In addition to open-ended questions on defining what career ready means to them, and what kinds of career pathways they are interested in pursuing, there are three quantitative questions of interest. First, they identify the extent to which they are *familiar* with the types of skills that are needed for the pathways they've identified as part of their interested careers. This is a four-point Likert scale that ranges from "Not at All Familiar," "Slightly Familiar," "Somewhat Familiar," and "Very Familiar." This same kind of scale is asked about the extent to which they think they can *connect* their collegiate experiences and non-collegiate experiences to the skills that potential employers are looking for ("Not all Able to Connect" to "Very Able to Connect"). The third such question centers on how *comfortable* they are with talking about the skills they have developed in an imagined scenario of applying for an internship. The responses, again, range from "Not at All Comfortable" to "Very Comfortable."

In Week 2, there are assigned readings on career readiness and career competencies, and class discussion and exercises on these concepts. At the end of the class meeting on the second day of week 2 of the class, the second two assessments tools are administered. These assessments have students connect the career competencies to examples from their experiences (see Skill Mapping Self-Assessment tool in Appendix 3), and focus on students' perceptions of their level of competency on each of the NACE career competencies (see NACE Competencies Self-

Assessment 3.1/3.2 tool in Appendix 3). The Skill Mapping Self-Assessment tool has students provide one example from a listing of different types of experiences that demonstrates that they have the specific competency. This provides the first reflective/mapping component in the class. Students undergo this assessment, discuss with a classmate, and then we have a larger group discussion. This tool is not employed at the end of the semester, but is replaced with a more comprehensive tool, the Employability Audit, discussed below. Following this, the third tool, NACE Competencies Self-Assessment 3.1, is undergone in class. This is also reflective, as students rate themselves as novice, developing, proficient, or mastery on each of the eight competencies.

Taken together, this first round of assessments provides a benchmark for students to consider where they are in terms of what they know about the career competencies, the extent to which they can link the experiences that they have these competencies (academic, extra/co-curricular, and other lived experiences), and how comfortable they are talking about themselves vis-à-vis these competencies in, for example, a potential interview for an internship.

The students then again take the same two assessments (see Career Ready Self-Assessment 1.2 tool) and the NACE Competencies Self-Assessment 3.2 tool (see NACE Competencies Self-Assessment 3.1/3.2 tool in Appendix 3) during the last two weeks of the semester. Instead of taking the Skill Mapping Self-Assessment tool whereby students provide one example that demonstrates the skill, they instead undergo a more comprehensive mapping using the Employability Audit tool. This fourth assessment is undergone during Finals Week and is a working document for students to take with them and adapt as they continue their collegiate and professional experiences. This tool is reflective and has students undergo a thorough linking of the career competencies to all their curricular, co/extra-curricular, and off-campus activities.

This ends of up being a compendium of linkages so that students end up having a “file cabinet” full of examples to draw from in discussing their experiences and skills with potential employers.

Assessment Results

There were twelve students in the course being assessed in this study, all of whom completed the first round of assessments. However, for the second round of assessments, not all students completed all the assessments. Looking first at how students see themselves in terms of their career preparedness and how this changed over the course of the semester, nine of the twelve students completed both Career Self-Assessment 1.1 & 1.2 tools. Table 2 shows the mean level of students’ *familiarity* with the types of skills that are needed for their career path, the extent to which they can *connect* their experiences to the skills that employers are looking for, and how *comfortable* they feel about talking about the types of skills they have developed during college and non-collegiate experiences in Week 1, Week 14, and the difference between the two. As discussed above, this ranges on a four-point scale from “not at all” familiar/able to connect/comfortable to “very” familiar/able to connect/comfortable. The positive difference indicates growth—substantially so—in each of these domains over the course of the semester.

At the outset of the semester, before students were formally introduced to career competencies, students ranked their *familiarity* with skills needed with their future careers the highest (2.67; closer to “somewhat familiar”) across the three domains, with their *comfortability* in talking about their experiences in developing these skills was ranked the lowest (2.22; closer to “slightly comfortable”). By the end of the semester, though, students rated their ability to *connect* their experiences to the skills that employers are looking for as the highest value (3.67; closer to very familiar). However, there was growth across all these domains during the semester,

which both the ability to *connect* and *comfortability* in discussing their skills increasing by over 1 category on a four-point scale.²

Table 2: Career Ready Self-Assessment

Measure	Perception
<i>Familiarity</i>	
Week 1	2.67
Week 14	3.22
<i>Difference</i>	.55
<i>Able to Connect</i>	
Week 1	2.56
Week 14	3.67
<i>Difference</i>	1.11
<i>Comfort</i>	
Week 1	2.22
Week 14	3.33
<i>Difference</i>	1.11

Note: Based on student perception of their **familiarity** with the types of skills that are needed for their career path, the extent to which they can **connect** their experiences to the skills that employers are looking for, and how **comfortable** they feel about talking about the types of skills they have developed during college and non-collegiate experiences. Assessment fielded Week 1 and Week 14 of a sixteen-week semester.

Scale: 1 = Not at all Familiar/Able to Connect/Comfortable; 2 = Slightly Familiar/Able to Connect/Comfortable; 3 = Somewhat Familiar/Able to Connect/Comfortable; 4 = Very Familiar/Able to Connect/Comfortable

N = 9

In the qualitative assessment (Skill Mapping Self-Assessment tool in Appendix 3) taken at the beginning of the semester asking students to “provide an example from my experiences (classes, projects extracurricular activities, other collegiate, personal, work, etc.) that I could provide that I have this competency”, most students identified some experience but were overall very vague in their responses. For example, in this assessment when it comes to career and self-development a student noted, “I can’t think of anything off the top of my head. I do think I need to improve on this area though.” At the end of the semester, in the Employability Audit

² It is possible that students may overestimate their level of familiarity, ability to connect, and comfortability at the beginning of the semester before they are familiar with the competencies and give rise to problems of internal validity with the beginning of the year assessments. However, this does not bear out, as no student decreased their assessments along the domains, and there was only one student whose assessments did not change on any of the domains over the course of the semester.

assessment (located in Appendix 3), the student noted that “doing activities in class like making resumes and mock interviews is very helpful in giving me a sense of what it’ll be like when I finally have to enter the job market after I graduate or before I graduate.” In addition to showing that the student grew in their familiarity with this competency, this also demonstrates the impact of the course design and content on students’ perception and knowledge of their career development. This same student also showed growth in being able to point to specific experiences and link it to the communication competency. As the start of the semester, the student provided the following as an example of their communication competency: “I always make sure to reach out to my teachers or peers when I need help or don’t understand something.” This was their initial “top of the head” response when it came to this competency. By the end of the semester, the student was able to point to a number of examples of specific instances in which they had developed this competency in the areas of academics, student organizations, and working at a part-time job. There were other such examples, and nearly all students had specific examples of “stories” they could tell about these competencies by the end of the semester. One such example includes a student who noted at the beginning of the semester that they “do not have much experience in this department” when it came to the technology competency. However, by the end of the semester, they were able to link, among many things, how their experiences in using Excel to track budgets and keep track of legislation in student organizations tied to this competency.

In sum, by the end of the semester, most students increase their familiarity with career competencies, their ability to connect their experiences to these competencies, and their comfortability in talking about these competencies. Thus, students are better able to link and discuss how their curricular, co-curricular, and life experiences map onto the competencies. This

is a central component of the course design—focusing on specific stories that students can tell about themselves to potential employers that demonstrate their competencies and make them competitive on the internship and job markets.

As an exploratory exercise, I have students assess their level of competency on each of the NACE career readiness domains at the start and at the end of the semester (see NACE Competencies Self-Assessment 3.1/3.2 tool in Appendix 3). This provides some insight into whether the service-learning project aided in developing competencies, as qualitative evidence from the Employability Audit suggests that it did, and an opportunity for students to compare and consider where they think growth might be in order as they move forward in preparing for their careers. Table 3 shows the beginning of the semester, end of semester, and the difference between the two. The positive difference indicates growth in each of these competencies over the course of the semester. Eight of the students in the class completed both sets of assessments.

Overall, we see that most students enter into the class with a perspective that they are “Developing” (i.e., in the process of growing in this area, but are still working to improve) or “Proficient” (i.e., demonstrate this competency, but there is room for personal growth) in these competencies. Career and Self Development and Leadership appear to be the lowest scoring areas, but not by much. By the end of the semester, critical thinking and team work are leading categories for students. Over the course of the semester, students perceive their competencies on these career readiness attributes to slightly increase, except in the case of technology.

During Finals Week, when students are handed back both of these assessments, we reflect as a class on these pre and post assessments. This provides a strategizing session for students to consider ways in which they can further develop their competencies among their peers. This ends

of being an excellent way for students to come together and build on the community we have in our department, all the while knowing that others have similar goals and concerns that they have.

Table 3: NACE Competencies Self-Assessment

Measure	Perception
<i>Career & Self Development</i>	
Week 2	2.38
Week 14	2.63
<i>Difference</i>	.25
<i>Communication</i>	
Week 2	2.63
Week 14	2.88
<i>Difference</i>	.25
<i>Critical Thinking</i>	
Week 2	2.63
Week 14	3.25
<i>Difference</i>	.62
<i>Equity & Inclusion</i>	
Week 2	2.88
Week 14	3.00
<i>Difference</i>	.12
<i>Leadership</i>	
Week 2	2.38
Week 14	2.8
<i>Difference</i>	.42
<i>Professionalism</i>	
Week 2	2.63
Week 14	2.89
<i>Difference</i>	.26
<i>Teamwork</i>	
Week 2	2.63
Week 14	3.13
<i>Difference</i>	.5
<i>Technology</i>	
Week 2	2.63
Week 14	2.63
<i>Difference</i>	0

Note: Based on student perception of their competencies on the eight NACE career competencies. Assessment fielded Week 2 and Week 14 of a sixteen-week semester.

Scale 1 = Novice “you are just beginning to develop this competency; extensive growth is required”; 2 = Developing “you are in the process of growing in this area, but are still working to improve”; 3 = Proficient “you demonstrate this competency, but there is room for personal growth”; 4 = Mastery “you demonstrate this competency effectively and can eloquently articulate the experiences that led you to master it”

N = 8

Discussion

My first run of this course was in Spring 2022 and a student commented to me the next semester that the course was “the most important class I’ve ever taken.” As an instructor who designed, taught, redesigned, and taught this course again, I see the lasting impact of the course on students and their approaches to internships and careers. The results of the assessment provide empirical evidence that a career readiness course yields better-prepared graduates and empowers our students to think and be professional-minded. I am at present working with my colleagues to incorporate career readiness and competencies into other required courses in our program so that as our students continue to work through our program, they are consistently in a “career readiness” frame of mind in connecting their assignments and experiences to the skills employers are looking for.

Appendix 1: Syllabus

PSCI 315: Working in Politics

Course Overview:

The skills students in the liberal arts learn throughout their educational journey—skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, and oral communication—are essential in the workplace and in the lives of citizens. This places students in political science and legal studies at a unique advantage in the job market, as these degrees center on developing the skills employers are looking for (e.g., analytical thinking). In this course we will focus on identifying, applying, and building students' career competencies toolkit. Students will develop a thorough understanding of how the skills toolkit they are assembling in the classroom and through experiential learning and other opportunities connect to their post-graduation lives.

In addition, we will work to build these skills through a group service learning project. Here, our class will be taking on a client and helping them with their work. Along the way, this will develop students' career competencies toolkit and will help build students' resumes through this experience.

Finally, we will explore specific career paths that students with political science/legal studies degrees tend to gravitate towards. These careers include politics, government, non-profits, and the law, to name a few. As we navigate through these career paths, we will be using the following questions as a guide:

- 1.) What does the career entail?
- 2.) What formal education is required?
- 3.) What skills/career competencies are needed?
- 4.) How can one go about developing the career competencies to meet the demands for the career path?
- 5.) What assignments, experiential learning opportunities, and/or other out-of-class experiences can aid in developing skills for this position? How?

This course is a mixture of readings, discussions, guest speakers, and two projects.

Assignments:

Class Participation: 100 points

In this class your participation is mandatory, and students are expected to be active participants in the classroom. In order to facilitate this, class preparation is key. The professor expects students to have read the assigned readings before the class meeting period. To facilitate this, students will post one or two thoughtful and reflective discussion question based on the readings to Canvas by 8am on the day of the assigned readings. Students will also be required to review guest speakers' credentials before attending class and submitting a high quality question for the guest speaker. Finally, students must submit all other assignments, such as completing and providing a link to a draft of their LinkedIn profile and completing and posting a draft resume for peer review, on time.

In short, students may maximize participation points by doing the following: 1.) being in class, arriving on time, and staying the entire class period; 2.) reading all assigned content, 3.) submitting a high quality question(s) for class discussion by 8am on day of assigned readings or guest speaker, 4.) submitting all assignments on time; 5.) engaging in class discussions with high quality discussion contributions (beyond

their submitted discussion question) that demonstrate having read and considered the assigned course reading or guest speaker background and that is respectful to the class participants and guests of the day; 6.) having phones, laptops, etc. put away unless the professor indicates otherwise.

Readings and Tasks (e.g., Discussion Board Questions, assignments, etc.) will be posted on Canvas by 11am two days before the class meeting for which it is assigned.

There will be two performance evaluation meetings during the semester whereby students will evaluate their own performance in the class and will meet with Dr. Schmitt to discuss this performance. These will be structured like those for which students will likely experience in their future careers. Based on the performance reviews, a grade will be assessed (100 points per review). These grades are reflective of the performance in the class, as discussed in the performance review and include all the elements listed above.

Service-Learning Project: 100 points

Students will work together as a team to complete a project for the League of Women of Voters of Vigo County, a nonpartisan voter education group. On Thursday, January 25th at 5:15pm, students will interview the Board of Directors of the League to hear what the needs of the organization are. The class will work on this project for a month and then present their work to the League Board of Directors at their meeting on Thursday, February 22nd at 5:15. This project will aid students in adding to their career competency toolkit and provide resume-building content.

Career Exploration Project: 100 points

The final project will task students with exploring a potential career path. More details on this project will be presented in April.

Course Schedule:

January 16	Introduction to the Class
January 18	Introduction to Career Readiness & Service Learning Project
January 23	Service Learning Project
January 25	Service Learning Project / Meeting Preparation LWVVC Meeting / 5:15 VCPL
January 30	Debrief - LWVVC Meeting
February 1	What Employers are Looking For & Service Learning Project
February 6	Appeals on Wheels--Meet in DEDE I
February 8	Career Preparedness & Service Learning Project
February 13	Career Preparedness & Service Learning Project

February 15	Career Preparedness & Service Learning Project
February 20	Career Preparedness & Service Learning Project
February 22	LWVVC Meeting Preparation LWVVC Presentation / 5:15 ISU Library, Events Area
February 27	Debrief - LWVVC Meeting
February 29	No Class Meeting
March 5	Performance Evaluation Meetings
March 7	Finding a Career You Love
March 12 & 14	No Class—Spring Break
March 19	Exploring Career Path #1: The Law Reading(s) and Discussion Board Task(s) Posted in Daily Module
March 21	LinkedIn and Building Your Brand Reading(s) and Discussion Board Task(s) Posted in Daily Module
March 26	Careers in the Law: Guest Speaker Reading(s) and Discussion Board Task(s) Posted in Daily Module
March 28	TBD
April 1	Etiquette Dinner -- Professional Dress and Arrive on Time 5:15pm in 9th Floor of HMSU
April 2	Career Path #2: Careers in State Government: Guest Speaker Reading(s) and Discussion Board Task(s) Posted in Daily Module
April 4	Exploring Career Path #2: State Government Reading(s) and Discussion Board Task(s) Posted in Daily Module
April 9	Exploring Career Path #3: Working on Campaigns & in the Federal Government Reading(s) and Discussion Board Task(s) Posted in Daily Module
April 11	Careers in the Federal Government and Working on Campaigns: Guest Speaker Reading(s) and Discussion Board Task(s) Posted in Daily Module
April 16	Exploring Career Path #4: Political Strategist Reading(s) and Discussion Board Task(s) Posted in Daily Module
April 18	Careers as a Political Strategist and Organizer: Guest Speaker Reading(s) and Discussion Board Task(s) Posted in Daily Module
April 23	Workshop: A Practical "How To" for Finding Jobs and Internships & Resume Building

April 25	Workshop: Certificates
April 30	Career Exploration Project Submit Resume for Peer Review in Discussion Board
May 2	Career Exploration Project TBD
Finals Week	
May 8	Upload Career Exploration Project Submission by 8pm
May 9	In-Class 8-Minute Career Project Presentations

Appendix 2: Career Preparedness & Exploration Project

Part I: Resume

Students are to upload a final draft of their primary resume with all experiences, awards, etc. listed.

Be sure to follow the guidance from the Career Center presentation and the additional resume resources on Canvas. A draft of this due on Canvas on Tuesday, April 30th for peer review.

Part II: Employability Audit

Students are to complete the employability audit and submit as part of the project. This will be located in this Canvas Module.

Part III: Social Media Brand

Update your LinkedIn account by building your brand in a way that demonstrates an understanding of the branding concepts presented in both sets of Career Center presentations. Finally, connect with Dr. Schmitt, your classmates, and the guest speakers we had in this class, (and others, too, of course!). This should look like your primary resume.

Part VI: Career Pathway

For this portion of the assignment students are to devise a career pathway, identify and locate three position postings within that career track, and consider how their experiences and studies have facilitated the development (or could potentially do so) of the necessary career competencies for the position.

In 1-2 paragraph(s), the paper should outline in detail what career pathway that the student would like to pursue, and their definition of the ideal position in this career pathway. Here, students should consider their “dream job” and then create a map of how to get there. Specific attention

needs to be paid to the details of this roadmap. For example, if a student wants to be a corporate lawyer, they will need to outline how, from this moment, they are going to get there from their GPA to LSAT to the types of law schools they’d need to get into, and what LSAT & GPA they would need, to everything else after between and after that. Recalling our course readings, class discussions, and the insights from our guest speakers would be particularly helpful in drafting the roadmap.

In 1 paragraph, the paper should identify and locate three “dream jobs” in the real world. Attach the copy of each job ad, and then discuss why you are interested in this particular career path and how this job is especially interesting to you. A strong response will highlight what aspects of the career pathway is most appealing while also noting the potential challenges.

In 2 paragraph(s,) the paper should identify the necessary skills for this position and then map those skills to the career competencies you’ve developed. Specific examples of assignments or experiences are warranted. If some career competencies still need to be developed, discuss how you, the student, could go about developing these.

Part V: Big Interview

Students are to complete the Big Interview (see resources on Canvas). Be sure to select the “General” list of questions. After completing the mock interview, reflect on your experience in 2-3 paragraphs. This reflection should

focus on not the user experience, but rather what your strengths and weaknesses were during your interview, and what you might need to focus on to do a better job at interviewing in the future.

Part VI: Presentation

Students will present on their career pathway portion of this assignment to the class. Using Part IV prompts as a guide, additional items relevant to career pathway exploration may be included. The goal is for students to be able to verbally articulate their career pathway aspirations and what they need to do to get there (and the potential for challenges, too). Students should dress professionally.

Appendix 3: Assessment Tools

Career Ready Self-Assessment 1.1/1.2 Tool

- 1.) What do you think it means to be “career ready”?

- 2.) What kinds of career paths are you interested in? If you aren’t sure, go ahead and list some that you might be interested in learning more about.

- 3.) Overall, to what extent are you familiar with the types of skills that are needed for the career path(s) you identified above? (circle one)

Not at All FamiliarSlightly FamiliarSomewhat FamiliarVery Familiar

- 4.) To what extent do you think you can connect your collegiate experiences (i.e., assignments, projects, extracurricular activities, leadership positions, etc.) and non-collegiate experiences (jobs, etc.) to skills that potential employers tend to be looking for? (circle one)

Not at All Able to ConnectSlightly Able to ConnectSomewhat Able to ConnectVery Able to Connect

- 5.) Pretend that you applied for a number of internships in a field that you are interested in for a potential career and that you have been called in for an interview. At this point in time, how comfortable would you be in talking about the types of skills you have developed via your collegiate experiences (i.e., assignments, projects, extracurricular activities, leadership positions, etc.) and non-collegiate experiences (jobs, etc.)? (circle one)

Not at All ComfortableSlightly ComfortableSomewhat ComfortableVery Comfortable

Skill Mapping Self-Assessment

Competencies that Employers/Internship Coordinators are Looking For:	An example from my experiences (classes, projects, extracurricular activities, other collegiate, personal, work, etc.) that I could provide that I have this competency:
<i>Career & Self-Development</i>	
<i>Communication</i>	
<i>Critical Thinking</i>	
<i>Equity & Inclusion</i>	
<i>Leadership</i>	
<i>Professionalism</i>	
<i>Teamwork</i>	
<i>Technology</i>	

NACE Competencies Self-Assessment 3.1/3.2

Assess your career readiness by reflecting on your mastery of eight competencies

Introduction

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), through a task force of college career services and HR/staffing professionals in various career fields, has identified eight competencies associated with career readiness. As a college student, you should strive to achieve mastery in all eight areas by the time you graduate.

Assessing Your Competencies

There are four levels of competency from which you can select:

- **Novice:** you are just beginning to develop this competency; extensive growth is required
- **Developing:** you are in the process of growing in this area, but are still working to improve
- **Proficient:** you demonstrate this competency, but there is room for personal growth
- **Mastery:** you demonstrate this competency effectively and can eloquently articulate the experiences that led you to master it

NACE Competencies

Career & Self-Development

Proactively develop oneself and one's career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and outside of one's organization.

Novice	Developing	Proficient	Mastery
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Communication

Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of organization and people that you know.

Novice	Developing	Proficient	Mastery
--------	------------	------------	---------

Critical Thinking

Identify and respond to needs based on understanding of situation context and logical analysis of relevant information.

Novice	Developing	Proficient	Mastery
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Equity & Inclusion

Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different local and global cultures. Engage in anti-racists practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism.

Novice	Developing	Proficient	Mastery
--------	------------	------------	---------

Leadership

Recognize and capitalize on persona and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.

Novice	Developing	Proficient	Mastery
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Professionalism

Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits, act in the interest of the larger community and work place.

Novice	Developing	Proficient	Mastery
--------	------------	------------	---------

Teamwork

Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities

Novice	Developing	Proficient	Mastery
--------	------------	------------	---------

Technology

Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals

Novice	Developing	Proficient	Mastery
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Employability Audit

<i>Career Competencies</i>	Curricular (Processes, Courses, and Assignments, etc.)	Extra-Curricular (Associations & Activities, etc.)	Off-Campus (Associations, Activities, Jobs, etc.)
<i>Career & Self-Development</i>			
<i>Communication</i>			
<i>Critical Thinking</i>			
<i>Equity & Inclusion</i>			
<i>Leadership</i>			
<i>Professionalism</i>			
<i>Teamwork</i>			
<i>Technology</i>			