

CFAN / CDES/ APS 5201, Career and Job Search Preparation for Graduate Students

Fall 2014, Section 1, 5:15-6:30 pm, Tues.(check schedule for dates)

10 McNeal, STPAUL, 1 credit

Instructor: Maggie Kubak, M.A., kubak001@umn.edu

Graduate Intern: Jeremy Williams

Instructor's office: Career and Internship Services (serves CCE,CDES and CFANS), 198 McNeal. Office hours: by appointment. Call 612-624-2710 to schedule.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

Welcome to CFAN/DES/APS 5201, Career and Job Search Preparation for Graduate Students. I'm glad you're here, and am excited for the progress I know you'll make on your job search preparation this semester. I look forward to getting to know you, and to being a resource for you. The purpose of this course is to understand and utilize the synergistic elements and tools of job search preparation and career development: self-awareness, job and employer research, relationship-building (networking), self-marketing and strategic planning. The focus is primarily non-academic job search but some class content and work may be targeted to academic search and careers.

Upon completion of class, you can expect to:

- Identify and articulate your skills, interests and individual strengths as relates to your career interests and goals.
- Identify and utilize career and employer research tools and resources to understand and capitalize on options.
- Evaluate "fit" of position(s) of interest: to your skills and employers' needs, to your life and to organizations' cultures.
- Create marketing materials that best represent your skills, experience and career interests to targeted employers, for targeted jobs (resume and/or CV and cover letter).
- Learn interviewing preparation and performance skills, emphasizing behavioral interviewing techniques and use of your portfolio to demonstrate your skills.
- Develop a positioning strategy and related career development action plan.

REQUIRED READING:

- The syllabus, including pages 7-9 for assignment instructions.
- Course Packet for CFAN / DES / APS 5201: Bring to each class (you'll be turning worksheets in, so do not staple). Available in the University Bookstore in St. Paul for under \$7. If they don't have it, let bookstore staff know when you need it, at which location (please let instructor know immediately of any difficulty as well).
- Articles posted to Moodle site (use Firefox, not Internet Explorer). If you're unfamiliar with Moodle 2, see the Moodle 2 Student Orientation videos (2 x 7 min each) at <http://uttc.umn.edu/training/tutorials/moodle/orientation/index.htm>
- See many specific resource lists at the top of the course Moodle site: international students; government and consulting careers; academic job search; Graduate School resources

COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance and Participation

Attendance is required for the benefit of your learning and as a courtesy to your classmates and the professionals (class guests) who volunteer their time for your benefit. It is important that you be prepared to participate fully in each class; readings should be read in advance of each class as they will be the basis of class discussion and group work. This is an interactive course; input from everyone will benefit everyone. Class will begin promptly at start time; please be ready. Please turn off your cell phone (this isn't necessary any longer, is it!).

Course Communication

Some course communication will take place over email. You will be responsible for the contents of course material and communication sent to your U of M email account. Use your U of M email for all course correspondence.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

We are committed to providing reasonable accommodations (as is the University of Minnesota) to students who have documented disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. If you need special accommodation please contact Disability Services (180 McNamara Center, 612-626-1333) to discuss your needs and talk with me once you have done that, if necessary.

Student Conduct

Please see "Student Academic Integrity and Scholastic Dishonesty" at http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment, ask. Students whose behavior may violate the University Student Conduct Code (http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf) may be referred to the Director of the University Counseling Office and/or Office for Student Academic Integrity.

COURSE SCHEDULE and ASSIGNMENTS:

- I recommend keeping all of your completed assignments throughout class. They will build on one another and be useful for your final assignment (Synthesis / Action Plan).
- **Instructions for the three major assignments (* below) are on the last few pages of syllabus. Worksheets are in your packet (some may be on the Moodle site).**
- Do weekly readings (Moodle and in course packet) in advance of the related class session.
- Assignments are due at the start of class on due dates.
- Save a tree: print double-sided or on recycled paper (print on the back of used paper), use 3/4" margins (instead of 1"), do NOT use cover pages.

Assignments (% of grade):

- Skills, Values and Priorities Worksheet OR Strengths Grid (5%)
- SMART Goal Setting Worksheet (5%)
- Fit Analyses Worksheet (5%)
- Career and Employer Research and Resources Worksheet (10%)
- * Resume (20%), cover letter (10%) and references (5%)
- Targeted Interview Highlights Summary (5%) (provided in class)
- * Informational Interview Preparation Form (5%) and paper (15%)
- * Synthesis/Action Plan (15%)

Plan to meet individually with the instructor twice this semester (required):

First meeting: No prep is required. Sign up on the Google doc for a meeting within the first few weeks of class. We'll talk about your goals, questions, needs for class.

Second meeting: EITHER:

- a. schedule an individual meeting Oct 1 – Nov 14 (call 612-624-2710) to check-in about your work and questions thus far (synthesis papers for this option are DUE 12/2) OR
- b. sign up in class for your individual appointment (during the last 2 weeks of class) and present your synthesis paper at that meeting.

COURSE SCHEDULE (note that class meets 11 times over 15 weeks):

WEEK / DATE	TOPICS	ASSIGNMENTS DUE TODAY
Session 1, Sept 2	Intros, Syllabus, Self-Assessment, Networking (elevator speech)	- Sign up for your first individual appointment with instructor (required) on the Google doc.
Session 2, Sept 9	Goal-setting, Networking (informational interviews)	- Read the syllabus completely, thoroughly. - Access and familiarize yourself with Moodle site. - Skills, Values and Priorities Worksheet
Session 3, Sept 16 (NO CLASS, Sept 23)	Fit Analysis, Resume / CV	- SMART Goal Setting Worksheet - ALSO: Bring a copy of your resume AND a posting (job or internship opening) for a position that interests you and for which you are, or will soon be, qualified.
Session 4, Sept 30	Cover Letter, References (networking) and Portfolio	- Fit Analysis Worksheet - Informational Interview Prep Form
Session 5, Oct 7 NOTE LOCATION: Lrng&EnvironSci230	Career and Employer Research and Resources, Job Search Strategies (Networking)	- Draft Resume
Session 6, Oct 14 (NO CLASS, Oct 21)	Career Panel – Networking: building relationships	- Career and Employer Research and Resources Worksheet
Session 7, Oct 28	Interviewing, Salary Negotiation	- Resume, Cover Letter and References Assignment
Session 8, Nov 4 (NO CLASS Nov 11)	Practice Interviews	- Targeted Interview Highlights Summary
Session 9, Nov 18	Professionalism / Business Culture (case studies)	- Informational Interview Assignment
Session 10, Nov 25	Career Panel – Professionalism and Organizational Culture	
Session 11, Dec 2	Additional Essentials	- Synthesis / Action Plan

ABOUT ASSIGNMENT QUALITY and PROFESSIONALISM:

Actions in and about class should be “as if” the instructor is your employer. I find this a really useful way to approach job search and career preparation. Consider this class, and your professionalism related to it, a “trial run” for your job. Evaluation of your performance will be “as if” by an employer; expectations will be “as if” of an employer. Examples? Employers will typically not follow-up for you about assignments and deadlines. They’ll expect you to ask questions before it’s too late and to communicate with them in professional (not text-message style) manner. Because the “team” will be counting on everyone’s best effort on every project, an employer expects team participation of the highest quality. Keep in mind as you participate in class and submit your assignments that the consequences for anything less than exceptional work in the “real world” can cost you a job, a promotion or a reference.

Like most employers, I will be reasonable in the case of a genuine emergency. If you contact me immediately, as you would an employer, about an emergency that may or will affect your performance, accommodations may be considered.

The 3 major assignments must be typed, double-spaced, and well-written (well-organized, no typos or grammatical errors, etc). Proofreading is expected. Cite your references. Save a tree: print double-sided or on recycled paper (print on the back of used paper), use 3/4” margins (instead of 1”); do NOT use cover pages. The worksheets may be typed (if available on the Moodle site) or hand-written (all in the course packet).

Professionalism is expected, of course! This includes timely and professional-style communication with the instructor as necessary, preparedness for class (which may be evaluated with in-class reflective writings about assigned readings), and collaboration and participation in class. Please communicate in writing with me immediately if a serious and genuine emergency arises, keeping you from class or from submitting an assignment on time.

Students bring to this class a wide range of job search experience. Challenge yourself to keep moving forward and developing your own plan and skills, regardless of your or your classmates’ starting point(s).

Preparation for each class includes reading the relevant materials in the course packet and 2-3 articles on each class topic, either that you’ve found on your own or from the list posted to the course website. Come to class prepared to discuss.

Written communication skills are essential in today’s workplace. If I suggest that an assignment would be strengthened by additional writing help, please take my advice seriously. For assistance:

- Center for Writing, including support for multilingual writers, <http://writing.umn.edu/sws/index.htm>
- OWL: online writing lab, about grammar, spelling, punctuation, <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/>
- Academic English Program (ESL), <http://cce.umn.edu/Minnesota-English-Language-Program/Academic-English-Program/index.html>

EVALUATION / GRADING POLICY

Every question or element of every assignment must be clearly addressed. Please read the details of each assignment carefully; they have been painstakingly crafted and every word is meaningful (as are the position descriptions and application instructions you'll utilize in your job search). Attention to the detail of assignments will affect your course evaluation, as it will affect your performance review on the job. When assignment components are numbered or lettered, you must begin your response with the number / letter you are addressing (to help you and me be certain that the assignment is complete).

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Late job applications are not acceptable to employers – similarly, late assignments will NOT be accepted for class. Most employers are reasonable and compassionate about genuine emergencies however, so do talk to me immediately if you have an emergency situation that affects your course work.

The time commitment for a one-credit class is a total of 45 hours. Therefore, plan to spend just under 2 hours each week (x 15 weeks) on coursework in addition to class meetings and the two required individual appointments.

This course is offered S/N (Satisfactory/Not satisfactory). To earn an "S", every component of each worksheet and assignment must be completed on time at a "C" or better quality, as described by the University Grading Guidelines, below. Incompletes will not be considered except for genuine emergencies.

You will be notified if any of your assignments are less than "C" quality. If you disagree, a request for re-evaluation must be submitted in writing, and within 48 hours of the comments/grade having been made available. The request should include a brief explanation and request for a meeting (then we'll meet together to review the assignment).

University Grading Guidelines:

A 100-93 A- 92-90	Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B+ 89-87 B 86-83 B- 82-80	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
C+ 79-77 C 76-73 C- 72-70	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
D+ 69-67 D 66-64 D- 63-60	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
F 59 or below	Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an Incomplete.

To assure the best possible learning experience for you, attendance at all class sessions is required, as is participation in two individual 30 min appointments with the instructor (one at the beginning of the semester to assist in tailoring the course to students' needs and one later to discuss course work/questions OR final papers). More than 2 absences will result in an N.

Evaluation of assignments will be generally based on the following factors:

- Depth of analysis and reflection
- Quality of communication (organization, professional style)
- Attention to detail (including deadlines and completeness)

ASSIGNMENTS

The relationship between position descriptions, fit analysis and resumes: A position description is the description of a job (or internship) opening typically found on a job website or forwarded from an employer to your advisor or department. Reading them carefully and thoroughly is essential to understanding the needs and expectations of the employer. This in turn helps you determine "fit" of a position with your goals and skills, and then to create a powerful and effective resume and cover letter. Both your draft and final resumes for class should be targeted to a particular position (the description of which should be submitted with your draft and final resumes. The instructors will be attentive to your targeting). This exercise will help you to understand and evaluate position descriptions, and to create a resume and cover letter that clearly describes why and how you're the best applicant for a position!

It can be very helpful to underline the specific phrases on your position description that describe the individual requirements and responsibilities of the position, and then to go over your resume line by line to be sure you've adequately referred to your skills and accomplishments related to each of the requirements and responsibilities.

Informational Interview Paper

20% of total assignments

Purpose: To expand your professional network while researching a career option and/or employer.

Preparation: Utilize handouts in your packet related to informational interviewing, networking, interviewing, cold calling, and thank you letters. Also see “Connect with Alumni and Professionals” at <http://www.careerhelp.umn.edu/interviewprofessionals.html>

Evaluation will be based on:

- Relevance of the interviewee’s work to your own career goals
- Depth of analysis and reflection
- Quality of communication (organization, professional style), including thank you note
- Attention to detail (including deadlines and completeness)

2-3 pages, double-spaced.

Evidence of your preparation, and of understanding networking as a life-long professional development practice, is required in the form of the Informational Interview Prep worksheet in your packet. It is due several weeks in advance of Info Interview Paper.

As one of the goals of this assignment is to expand your professional network, informational interviews must be intentional (planned) “first-time” interviews. They may not be relatives, students, advisors, faculty (unless you plan to pursue a faculty career in higher education), current or past mentors, though all of these are great ideas for future info interviews.

From your personal networking list of professionals in your career area, select an individual to interview. After the interview, reflect and integrate what you learned in a summary. Develop your questions so that you can answer the following. Please number your responses to each numbered question:

1. Who did you interview (name, job title, employer)? Why? How did you get connected to this person?
2. In what ways is this work a good fit for you, and in what ways might it be a challenge? How do your skills, values and competencies fit with this career and employer. Be specific (refer to your findings from the Skills and Values Assessment (online card sort and the worksheet)).
3. Describe the organizational culture (values / behaviors that contribute to the unique social / psychological environment of an org., <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/organizational-culture.html>) How will it support or stifle you?
4. How does your interviewee network (Committee work? Work-related collaborations? Professional associations?) What strategies or resources does s/he recommend for you?
5. What advice about positioning yourself for a successful job search AND successful career were you given by the professional? How, specifically, will you follow up?
6. What did you hear or learn that surprised you? How will this information be helpful to you?
7. What next steps did this conversation inspire? What action will you take as a result?
8. Ask if your contact is willing to refer you to another professional from whom you could learn more (through another informational interview). Provide the name and contact number of the individual.

Submission instructions will be provided in class.

Also, send a thank you letter to your interviewee within 24 hours of your interview. This is a requirement of the assignment. This is a professional or business communication (not casual and informal). It can be handwritten (more memorable and indicate more effort) or typed (more formal, using business letter format. Use your judgment based on your industry). Submit a COPY of this dated and signed note/letter with your paper.

Resume, Cover Letter and References	35% of total assignments
<p>Purpose: To create targeted and finely-crafted application materials, appropriate to your qualifications and goals, and to introduce your skills, accomplishments and career goals to employers.</p> <p>Preparation: Utilize handouts and checklists in your packet related to resumes, cover letters, and job searching. See “resumes and CVs”, including samples, at http://www.stpaulcareers.umn.edu Get feedback from your career center and professionals in your field.</p> <p>Note: It's common for non-academic organizations to expect or request a CV for PhD-level research positions. If the positions in which you have interest require a CV instead of a resume, talk to the instructor about CV resources and submit a CV for this assignment.</p>	
<p>Evaluation will be based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriateness of the position to your interests and qualifications (indicative of your understanding of yourself, the position and employer, and the job search process). • Improvement from (very good) draft to (excellent, ready-to-submit) final version. • Attention to the conventions, expectations and recommendations about visual appeal, organization and format, quality of skills statements, and targeting to your position, as described in class. • Quality of communication (powerful / descriptive skill statements, professional style, proofread). • Inclusion of feedback from a professional in your discipline or employment sector is not required but can be extremely useful so is highly recommended. 	
<p>Construct (and refine) a resume, cover letter and reference list that you could use to apply for a position that is related to your career goals and for which you are, or will soon be, qualified. Your cover letter and resume must be targeted to a specific position for which you are “applying”. Resume, cover letter and references should appear as a “set” (same font, style, format). This assignment is composed of several components, over several weeks.</p> <p>Email assignments as an attachment (title each doc with your name and its contents, such as “M.Smith resume”) to kubak001@umn.edu AND Jeremy Williams, will4932@umn.edu</p> <p>In addition to your documents, submit the position description to which your draft, resume and cover letter is targeted. It should not be a link, but rather the complete description, and include qualifications and responsibilities. Consider using a position that will be recruited for at the Career Fair, http://www.careerhelp.umn.edu/envjobfair/index.html (though this is not required!).</p> <p>ABOUT THE DRAFT-- Your DRAFT should be as finely crafted, and targeted, as you are able. The draft is the version, of the two required for this assignment, that demands most of your effort (and for which the instructor expects to provide most feedback). Submit your resume draft, the position description to which it was targeted, and the completed resume checklist (hard copy, in class) on the date assigned.</p> <p>ABOUT THE FINAL ASSIGNMENT -- Submit your cover letter, FINAL resume, and references on the date assigned, in one doc, in that order. Also send the position description to which it was targeted.</p>	

Synthesis/Development Plan	15% of total assignments
<p>Purpose: to create a job search and career development plan which integrates your learning in this class including self-assessment, employer and career research resources, and goal setting.</p> <p>Preparation: Review all the readings in the course packet and the Individual Development Plan for Graduate Students at the University of Minnesota, http://www.grad.umn.edu/career/IDPgrad.pdf</p>	
<p>Grading will be based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depth of analysis and reflection • Quality of communication (organization, professional style, proofread) • Attention to detail (including specificity of plans (e.g. names and dates of meetings, contact info for future informational interviews), deadlines and completeness) 	
<p>Approximately 3 pages, double-spaced.</p> <p>What are your next steps in your job search and career development? In a concise summary paper, lay out your plan (please number your responses to each numbered question). Practice your communication skills by articulating your responses as you might in an interview or cover letter (thoughtfully, descriptively, professionally). Tables and lists are acceptable.</p> <p>Be specific in this assignment (e.g., <u>which</u> business course will you take <u>when</u>, to be better informed about your industry? How, exactly, will you gain the lab or stats experience that will make you a more competitive applicant? <u>With whom</u> will you do another informational interview, <u>when</u>? <u>How</u> exactly will you gain grant-writing experience?)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe your career goal(s), in detail, as an introduction to the remainder of the paper. See #4 too. 2. List the skills / competencies required of the positions/careers in which you have interest. Provide specific evidence for those skills you have, and specific strategies and timelines to develop those you don't. What <i>job search</i> skills do you still need to strengthen? How will you do so? Be specific. <p>Additionally, what more do you need to know about your career, industry or employers of interest? How will you find what you need? Name at least five resources which you will continue to research and connect to (employers, professional associations, websites, mentors and colleagues).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Describe your values and personal qualities and how they will fit with the positions you'd like to hold and with the organization(s) for which you'd like to work. How did you or will you familiarize yourself with the business or work culture of these employers? Be specific about who you talked to, to learn what. 4. Describe your short (2-5 yrs) and long-term (10-15 yrs) career goals, and how you will position yourself to achieve each. If you will still be in school for a year or more, include your goals for that time. Be specific (include dates and times of this year's networking events, contact information of resources, application deadlines, etc.) and include a timeline. Goals are most likely achieved when they are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-defined (SMART). 5. What surprised you about yourself, your career options and the job search process (there will be many more surprises along your way. We hope you embrace them with zest!) 	