

UW-Madison

Pol. Sci. 400 Careers in Political Science

A 1-credit course designed to enhance your career and professional options

Fall 2019

Instructor: Joel Clark, Ph.D.

Class Meetings: Tuesdays (Education L159) 1:20-3:15pm, **starting week 2** of the semester and running for 7 weeks total.

Office/hours: Mon. and Wed. 10-12noon (North Hall 306); or we can meet by appt. using Starfish.

Phone: 263-2031 office

Course description:

Students majoring in the Political Science and related social science disciplines often ask: What jobs will be open to me with my degree? Not only do students want to know about the kinds of careers they can pursue, but they also seek to acquire the necessary applied skills, experiences, and professional networks that employers now insist they have. This course facilitates individual and group work to better prepare students for the transition from their undergraduate program to meaningful and rewarding professional opportunities including jobs, graduate study, post-graduate fellowships and other professional options. Coursework and activities in this class address how students can now start building on their activities and achievements including work with campus organizations, student research, for-pay work, and interaction with alumni and other personal networks to increase their chances of professional success upon graduation. This course also provides practical ways students can become more aware of potential opportunities and expand their 'career competencies.' Throughout the course students work together on developing essential professional marketing materials including resumes, cover letters, writing samples, elevator statements, LinkedIn and other social media profiles, and professional portfolios to be shared with others.

Course expectations:

In this course we will work together on several activities. These include:

Engaging in reflection on the skills that are acquired through the major and through a liberal arts degree;

Exploring and researching various career areas by making use of career/interest inventories, learning how to research career trends and tracks, and specific organizations (including internet

resources and informational interviews), and discussing the value of extracurricular activities such as service learning and internships;

Acquiring concrete career skills (e.g., resume and cover letter construction and writing, interview skills, business etiquette, etc.).

And, through participation and completion of these and other course activities, students should achieve the following course objectives:

Understand the values of their undergraduate degree and be able to articulate them to employers;

Investigate library and internet informational resources, social media and informational interviews to gather career information;

Identify possible career paths and graduate school options;

Identify and cultivate relationships crucial to academic and career success;

Discuss career strategies and opportunities with UW-Madison alumni in various professional sectors including nonprofits, for-profits, and governmental entities.

These goals will be achieved through completion of course readings, reflection on the readings and course discussion through journal entries and thoughtful participation in discussions. A variety of in-class activities will help inculcate the habits and knowledge necessary to increase each student's career competencies.

Assignments:

You will be expected to complete several short assignments and exercises in this course. While these are not individually graded, the quality of your assignments will be taken into account when assessing your participation/professionalism score. In addition, you will conduct a career/professional 'informational interview' with someone on your list of potential contacts, and write up the highlights from that interview. Finally, you will compile a professional portfolio of artifacts (e.g., resume, cover letter, etc.) you develop and that will be included in your final portfolio.

Grading:

Your work in this 1-credit course will follow the Traditional Carnegie Definition – Two hours (i.e. 120 minutes) of classroom or direct faculty/instructor instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work each week over approximately 7weeks,

Students in this course will receive a letter grade based on the following class requirements:

Attendance and class participation/ professionalism: 15%

Career interview write-up: 30%

Portfolio including elements such as updated resume and sample cover letter, elevator statement, writing sample, list of contacts, etc., and quality of portfolio formatting/style: 40%

Final Portfolio Presentations: 15%

Late assignment submission will result in an initial 5 point deduction. Further delay in submission will result in an additional 2 points deduction per day.

CALENDAR

All readings and assignments must be completed before the start of class meetings.

CLASS WEEK ONE Sept. 10:

Week One Goals and activities:

*Assignment for week one: Complete your initial professional values self-assessment and submit to the course dropbox.

Topics: The Values of a liberal arts education in general, and Sociology specifically. Connecting your personal and work values to initial strategies for advancing your early career prospects. Initial keys to success for students.

Integrating your liberal arts/ social sciences curricula with career and internship experience.

Completion of interests and academic/professional goals questionnaire.

Exploring 'career competency'.

Review of university and other career resources.

Discussion of importance of ongoing self-assessment of personal and work values and skills.

Resume basics

***Assignments for Week Two:**

--Read and apply resume basics, at L & S Career Services at <http://careers.ls.wisc.edu/resume-and-cover-letters--students.htm>

--Read "The Art of Employment: How Liberal Arts Graduates Can Improve Their Career Prospects." Read pp. 1-8, skim rest of report. Come prepared to discuss supplemental skills and work. experiences you have had and/or could develop while you are a student at UW-Madison.

--Bring a paper copy of your one-page resume for the peer review exercise in class on Sept. 19.

WEEK TWO Sept. 17:

Week Two Goals and activities:

Exploring various careers paths that can stem from your Political Science or other liberal arts program.

Compiling the basics: resumes and cover letters.

Review of job and internship search strategies for opportunities on campus and off.

Discussion of salary data for Political Science and related fields.

Peer review of resumes.

***Assignments for Week Three**

-- Identify and analyze key requirements of 3 desirable (for you!) entry-level jobs and/or internships currently being advertised AND reflect on the experience of exploring the internship and/or job market at this point in your professional development.

--Read and apply 'cover letter basics' found at L & S Career Services at http://careers.ls.wisc.edu/documents/Cover_Letter_Basics_Packet_June2013.pdf

--Write a one-page cover letter addressed to one of the jobs or internship options you found in this week's assignment. Bring a paper copy of the cover letter to class on Sept. 26 for peer review

WEEK THREE Sept. 24:

Goals and activities:

Exploring Your Options—Internships, Extracurricular Activities, Study Abroad, etc. Compiling the basics: Cover letters.

The value of internships—Why get one? How to make the most of the experience

Designing a career and internship search: moving beyond listings

Values of other experiential opportunities including study abroad, service projects, workshops, and directed study or student/faculty research collaborations

You, Inc.

Peer review of cover letters

Developing your 'elevator pitch'

***Assignments for Week Four:**

--Read: Quintessential Careers. Informational Interviewing: A Powerful Tool for College Students. http://www.quintcareers.com/student_informational_interviewing.html

--Read '22 LinkedIn Secrets LinkedIn Won't Tell You, at <http://www.forbes.com/sites/williamarruda/2014/03/04/22-linkedin-secrets-linkedin-wont-tell-you/>

--Read: 'The Perfect Elevator Pitch to Land a Job', <http://www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2013/02/04/the-perfect-elevator-pitch-to-land-a-job/>

--Prepare a draft elevator pitch using the guidelines provided and tips from the reading, and come to class on Oct. 3 prepared to share your pitches with your fellow students.

WEEK FOUR Oct. 1

Goals and activities:

Assignment of portfolio presentation dates for last two class meetings

Building Your Academic and Professional Networks

What is networking and how can you become good at it?

Using LinkedIn and Badger Bridge for networking and other academic and career goals.

Using course work, internships, and outside activities to develop writing samples and other portfolio artifacts for employment, fellowships, graduate school, etc.

Informational interviewing.

Thinking about your 'brand' and tools to reinforce it.

Networking activity

Assignments for Week Five:

-- Compile a list of 3 categories of people (4 people each); those you know (and who know you) well and consider part of your current network, those you kind of know but want to get to know better, and those you don't know but want to try to know them. Be specific about their job or other titles if you have them. Also discuss potential strategies you might employ to further engage people in your #2 category.

---Request and schedule an 'informational interview' with someone you 'sort of' know to learn about her or his current position and career path (guidelines to be provided).

--Read 'Behavioral Interviewing: The basics of the CAR Method'

<http://www.kristidaeda.com/2009/02/09/behavioral-interviewing-the-basics-of-the-car-method>

--Come prepared to discuss 2 or 3 potential questions you might have for an employer who is interviewing you for a position you are interested in.

WEEK FIVE Oct. 8:

Goals and Activities:

Internship and Job Interview Strategies

Understanding and using the CAR Method of Interviewing

Opportunities and pitfalls of phone and in-person interviews

Group practice/discussion of common interview questions

Peer review of 'elevator statements'

E-portfolios

Week SIX Oct. 15

Creating or enhancing your LinkedIn and Badger Bridge profiles

Portfolio presentations. Students will be assigned to present either week six or seven. Plan to speak for 6-8 minutes and address the following questions:

- What are your current career plans?
- What have you learned from this course?
- What questions do you still need to answer?
- How will you leverage internships and/or other experiences to achieve your goals?

- What resources will you take advantage of here at UW Madison and beyond?

WEEK SEVEN Oct. 22

Goals and Activities

Pulling it all together: Career strategies for now and beyond

Integrating career strategies and action steps

E-portfolios (part two)

Portfolio presentations. Students will be assigned to present either week six or seven. Plan to speak for 6-8 minutes and address the following questions:

- What are your current career plans?
- What have you learned from this course?
- What questions do you still need to answer?
- How will you leverage internships and/or other experiences to achieve your goals?
- What resources will you take advantage of here at UW Madison and beyond?

Assignments Due Nov. 18:

--Complete your informational interview and write a career interview report and assessment.

--Submit a link to your e-portfolio.