

**ASSIGNMENT AND INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES WORKBOOK**

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY CAREER SERVICES

JULY 2015

University Student Commons

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**PURPOSE OF WORKBOOK**

This workbook was created in partial fulfillment of the Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) Career Services Strategic Plan 2013 – 2016 goal of establishing a career curriculum to foster learning by emphasizing self-directed resources and on-demand services resulting in increased access to and utilization of VCU Career Services. To date, several career-related courses exist on the VCU campus providing undergraduate and graduate students with the opportunity to explore careers in a classroom environment. This workbook has been designed as a part of a collaborative effort to 1) assist staff and faculty in developing career-related courses, and 2) to ensure that students are acquiring core professional development knowledge essential for post-graduate success.

In June 2015, a working group within VCU Career Services identified 11 primary career-related learning goals that align with the mission, vision, and existing outcomes of the department and university. These learning goals were identified with the intent that all students participating in career-related courses would achieve these goals by engaging in the activities and assignments within this workbook.

When creating a course syllabus, it is important to take into account how the 11 primary career-related learning goals are *directly measured*. In other words, each learning goal should have an assignment or activity that measures whether or not the student achieved the goal. This workbook consists of assignments and activities that staff and faculty can use in order to teach students about content required in order to achieve each goal.

Each of the career-related learning goals and specific student learning outcomes are outlined within Table 1.

**Table 1.**

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| **Career Development Phase (Internal)** |  **Primary Course Content (Learning Goals)** | **Learning Outcome(s) for Goals** |
| DISCOVERY | A. Self Discovery | A.1. Students will be able to explain how their personal skills, values, and/or interests correspond with a position within a field and industry.  |
| A.2. Students will be able to identify and locate specific opportunities that are in alignment with their personal skills, values, and/or interests.  |
| B. Informational Interviewing Skills and Preparation | B.1. Students will be able to identify persons of interest within their desired field, and will be able to appropriately schedule and take part in an informational interview. |
| C. Research of Interests, Professions, and Industries | C.1. Students will be able to identify resources in areas of their professional interest. |
| C.2. Students will be able to identify professional development opportunities and hiring trends within their areas of professional interest.  |
| C.3. Students will be able to differentiate between types of positions and fields of their professional interest.  |
| REFLECTION | D. Personal Narrative Development | D.1. Students will be able to explain how their academic experiences relate to a professional development goal.  |
| FOCUS | E. Resume and/or Curriculum Vitae Preparation | E.1. Students will be able to create a resume or curriculum vitae and tailor it to meet the needs of a particular organization, field, or industry.  |
| F. Cover Letter or Letter of Interest Preparation | F.1. Students will be able to author a concise cover letter for a specific position or experience in their area of interest. |
| CONNECT | G. Interview Skills and Preparation | G.1. Students will be able to differentiate between types of interview questions and deliver responses to questions using interviewing techniques and/or strategies. |
| ENRICH | H. Networking Skills and Strategies | H.1. Students will be able to identify and employ strategies that enhance their personal and professional networks within their field(s) of interest. |
| H.2. Students will be able to integrate appropriate online tools and resources in their professional networking strategy.  |

1. **SELF DISCOVERY**

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| **CAREER GENOGRAM** |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | SELF DISCOVERY |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to identify sources of personal skills, values and/or interests that influence their decisions. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes |
| **DESCRIPTION:** Activity is designed to assist students in exploring the source(s) of their understanding of a career and their own work values. * + - Sketch your family tree for three generations: your generation, your parents, and your grandparents.
		- You can also include non-family members like family friends, mentors, or other people who have influenced you.
		- Write down the careers or jobs of each person and think about their skills, talents and vocational attitudes.

Write down how each person would complete these sentences:* Work is…
* Success is…

 Pick one you want to emulate and one you don’t want to imitate; why? |

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| **LIFE VALUES INVENTORY** |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | SELF DISCOVERY |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to explain how their personal skills, values, and/or interests correspond with a position within a field and industry. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate students and graduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes |
| **DESCRIPTION:** The Life Values Inventory is an assessment of values that is available for free at http://www.lifevaluesinventory.org/. If interested in administering the Life Values Inventory, the manual can be found at this link: http://www.lifevaluesinventory.org/. **ASSIGNMENT OPTION:** There are many activities and assignments that can be added to a syllabus using the Life Values Inventory. In accordance with the Career Course Curriculum, it is recommended that students write a one-page reflection essay based on their results from the online assessment. Guiding Questions: * Where are your values not being exercised?
* In your own words, how do values inform decisions about careers?
* What values are important to your closest friends or family members? How have their values influenced you and your decisions?
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| **MAD LIB PRE/POST MINI BIOGRAPHY** |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | SELF DISCOVERY |
| **LEARNING OUTCOME(S):**  | Student will be able to will be able to explain how their personal skills, values, and/or interests correspond with a position within a field and industry.  |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | First year and second year undergraduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes |
| **DESCRIPTION:** My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_(name)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I am passionate about \_\_\_\_\_\_(list one or more things you are passionate about)\_\_\_\_\_\_. The most important thing to me in my life is to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(life goal) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. If I don’t achieve this life goal, I will be \_\_\_\_\_(emotion)\_\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(reason)\_\_\_\_\_\_. I (have / have not) had conversations with my family about this life goal and it (is / isn’t / not sure) supported by them. I (am / not) sure what degree I want to pursue at VCUarts. I want to pursue a degree in \_\_\_\_\_(degree if you know)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. The main goal for me to get an education is \_\_\_\_\_\_(educational goal)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I (am / am not ) confident that I can achieve this goal. A personal weakness I may have in achieving this goal is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(list a weakness)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. A personal strength I have that will help me achieve this goal is \_\_\_\_\_\_(site a strength)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I (do / don’t) have someone in my personal life that has pursued a similar education as I am. People in my personal life (do / don’t) support my educational goal. If I am not pursuing this educational goal I (do / do not) know what I would be doing at this point in my life. I would be \_\_\_\_\_(list what you would be doing if you know)\_\_\_\_\_.I think that the biggest external road blocks between me and my goals are \_\_\_\_(list road blocks if any)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. These road blocks (do / don’t) make me \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(emotion)\_\_\_\_\_\_. I (do/don’t) know what I want to do for a career. I want to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_(career choices, can list more than one if you know)\_\_\_\_\_The most important thing to me when I think about my career is that I am \_\_\_\_(activity)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_every day. I want to live \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (city, state) because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (reason). If I don’t achieve this career goal, I will be \_\_\_\_\_(emotion)\_\_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(reason)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I (am / am not) willing to have a job just to make money to support my career if need be until I get on my feet. I can imagine for a job I could \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(list jobs that you could do to support your career if applicable)\_\_\_\_. These jobs would make me \_\_\_\_\_\_(emotion if applicable)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I (do / don’t) know what types of jobs I would refuse even if they paid a lot of money. Those jobs are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(list jobs you would not do)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I (do / don’t) know how much money I would need to earn from a job. I estimate that annual amount to be \_\_\_\_(dollar amount if you know)\_\_\_. |
| **NOTE TO SELF EXERCISE**  |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | SELF DISCOVERY |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to identify sources of personal skills, values and/or interests that influence their decisions.  |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes |
| **DESCRIPTION:** This activity is designed to assist students in developing an understanding about creating goals. By receiving the letter towards the end of the class, the student will be able to identify skills that they employed in reaching their specific goals, skills that they may need to improve upon, and obstacles that may have hindered their ability to achieve their short- and/or long-term goals. 1. Have students write down 3 short-term goals he or she is working on this semester and 3 long-term goals.
2. Have students write a letter to their future self. Where will they be by the end of this course? By the end of this semester?
3. Collect letters and return near the end of the course.
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| **ONLINE VIDEO REFLECTION ASSIGNMENT**  |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | SELF DISCOVERY |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to identify sources of personal skills, values and/or interests that influence their decisions.  |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes |
| **DESCRIPTION:** Assignment is designed to assist students in developing an understanding about their personal goals and specifically why they are pursuing them. **Assignment Options:** 1. Watch the Simon Sinek “Start With Why” TEDTalk online and respond to the following questions in a 2-page reflective essay. [Finding Your Why](http://sharpheels.com/2015/12/the-why-matters-in-business/?utm_source=WiB+Connections&utm_campaign=84ec8d588e-Newsletter_02_17_15_Newsletter_WiB_Connections&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_2dc8e3e993-84ec8d588e-97790581)

Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPYeCltXpxw* Why is your major/field interesting to you?
* Why would this be important to someone looking to work with you, hire you, select you for graduate study, or fund your project?
1. Watch the Simon Sinek “Start With Why” TEDTalk online and respond to the following question in a 2-page reflective essay.

Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPYeCltXpxw* If you could have any job or career, what would it be and why?
* What would the *ideal* day look like for you in this career?
1. Watch the Jason Silva “Optimism is a Self-Amplifying Feedback Loop” video online and respond to the following questions in a 2-page reflective essay.
* What would you do if you knew that you could not fail?
* Why would you do this?
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| **S.M.A.R.T. GOAL-SETTING WORKSHEET ASSIGNMENT** |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | SELF DISCOVERY |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Student will be able to will be able to explain how their personal skills, values, and/or interests correspond with a position within a field and industry. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate and graduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes |
| **DESCRIPTION:** **Step 1: Write down your goal in as few words as possible.*** My goal is to:

**Step 2: Make your goal detailed and SPECIFIC. Answer who/what/where/how/when.**HOW will you reach this goal? List at least 3 action steps you'll take (be specific):1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**Step 3**: **Make your goal is MEASUREABLE. Add details, measurements and tracking details.*** I will measure/track my goal by using the following numbers or methods:
* I will know I've reached my goal when:

**Step 4: Make your goal ATTAINABLE. What additional resources do you need for success?*** Items I need to achieve this goal:
* How I'll find the time:
* Things I need to learn more about:
* People I can talk to for support:

**Step 5: Make your goal RELEVANT. List why you want to reach this goal:****Step 6: Make your goal TIMELY. Put a deadline on your goal and set some benchmarks**.* I will reach my goal by (date): \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_.
* My halfway measurement will be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on (date) \_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_.
* Additional dates and milestones I'll aim for:
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| **WORK IMPORTANCE PROFILER REFLECTION ASSIGNMENT(S)** |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | SELF DISCOVERY |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Student will be able to will be able to explain how their personal skills, values, and/or interests correspond with a position within a field and industry.Students will be able to identify sources of personal skills, values and/or interests that influence their decisions. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate and graduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes.  |
| **DESCRIPTION:** Assignments are designed to assist students in developing an understanding about specific work-values. The *Work Importance* Profiler is a valid assessment of six work values (Achievement, Independence, Recognition, Relationships, Support, Working Conditions) derived from occupational needs. The assessment can be taken online via the O\*NET website (<https://www.onetcenter.org/WIP.html>) or the Virginia *Dream It, Do It* website (<http://www.dreamitdoitvirginia.com/wip/>). The six work values derived from this assessment map onto 800+ occupational profiles on O\*NET. **Assignment Options:** 1. After taking the assessment, prepare a two-page reflection essay addressing the following questions.
* What value is most important to you based on the results of the Work Importance Profiler? Is this accurate?
* Where does this value come from? Has the value been exercised in your day-to-day tasks so far?
* What do you *need* in a career? How do your perceived needs relate to your values?
1. After taking the assessment, visit the O\*NET website and use the <http://www.onetonline.org/find/descriptor/browse/Work_Values/> URL to find three (3) occupations of interest based on your top three values.
* Which position is most appealing to you and why? What is *not* appealing to you and why?
* Compare two positions. How are they different? How might your top values relate to each position?
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1. **INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING SKILLS AND PREPARATION**

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| **50 WAYS TO GET A JOB ASSIGNMENT**  |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING SKILLS AND PREPARATION |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to identify persons of interest within their desired field, and will be able to appropriately schedule and take part in an informational interview. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate and graduate students.  |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes.  |
| **DESCRIPTION:** Adapted From 50 Ways to Get a Job: “It’s a myth that stable careers follow linear paths. In fact, even the most seemingly ‘straightforward’ career trajectories likely happened due to chance meetings, unforeseeable circumstances or by trusting a hunch. Recognizing this makes pursuing a non-linear career path feel much more safe and secure, and normalizes the path you are already walking."**Activity:*** Choose someone that you know well who you imagine has had a linear career trajectory or simply a ‘regular job’. It can be anyone – a classmate or roommate, a friend, parent, etc. Ask to interview them about their career path.
* Seek to complicate that linearity. Explore what chances, occurrences, run-ins or meetings led them to towards this particular path instead of another.
* Ask them how they dealt with these unexpected turns. What did this lead to next?
* Add color to their story by finding out the details of their twists and turns.
* Using our transmedia approach for the semester, (will provide a list of suggestions on platforms and media) choose one social media platform (can use various media; however) to tell that story you heard.
* Now, “fictionalize” this person for privacy (that is, use a pseudonym
* You are being evaluated on a story well told (are the answers to the questions answered?).
* Save your work (Storify, SlideShare, etc.)- potential portfolio entry.
* Students will share and discuss in class (in small groups first, then and then a sampling from the larger group ).
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| **INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING E-CORRESPONDENCE ACTIVITY**  |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING SKILLS AND PREPARATION |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to identify persons of interest within their desired field, and will be able to appropriately schedule and take part in an informational interview. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes.  |
| **DESCRIPTION:** This assignment is designed to assist students in establishing relationships online with persons of interest within desired fields and industries. The activity is best suited as a brief blog assignment within a course or as an in-class activity. The instructor can offer to review the outcome for a grade (if deemed necessary and fit for the course). Assignment: 1. Identify a person of professional interest with whom you hope to have an informational interview with.
2. Draft a brief (not to exceed one page), professional email to the person, paying careful attention to include:
* Who you are
* Why you are contacting them
* What your goal is (e.g., a 30-minute phone call, or a meeting in-person, etc.)
* At least 2-3 times that you are available in the next few weeks
* How you prefer to be contacted
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| **WHY THEM? WHY YOU? LINKEDIN ASSIGNMENT** |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING SKILLS AND PREPARATION |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to identify persons of interest within their desired field, and will be able to appropriately schedule and take part in an informational interview. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes |
| **DESCRIPTION:** This assignment is designed to assist students in 1) creating an online profile that articulates relevant skills and interests to viewers, and 2) assists them in developing content for potential informational interviewing conversations. * Create a LinkedIn profile. After you have created your profile:
* Add a professional picture (we have a LinkedIn backdrop in our office)
* Add your Education
* Create your LinkedIn Headline; should not just be your job title. Think of the keywords that you would be using to find your next hire.
* Build your Skills and Expertise section. Add the skills that you have to this section (language, equipment, computer, communication, etc)
* Search for people using the University and Groups options from the search menu.
* Select two or three people to contact. Draft a message to them that addresses two areas: 1) what about them and their work is interesting to you? 2) what talents, skills, values, and the like do you think you bring that would make for an interesting conversation?
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1. **RESEARCH OF INTERESTS, PROFESSIONS, AND INDUSTRIES**

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| **IMPACT ANALYSIS ASSIGNMENT** |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | RESEARCH OF INTERESTS, PROFESSIONS, AND INDUSTRIES |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to identify professional development opportunities and hiring trends within their area(s) of professional interest. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate and graduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes <50 |
| **DESCRIPTION:** This assignment is designed to enhance a student’s understanding of a particular field and/or industry. Additionally, students will be able to critically evaluate how a trend in a particular field is influencing hiring trends within a field. This assignment should amount to a paper 3-5 pages in length (double-spaced, size 12, Times New Roman font). 1. Locate an article stating a trend in your desired field or industry.

Note: Students will be graded on the quality of their source. It is advised that they seek out the professional development association of their particular field(s) of interest and then identify either a publication from the association or a post from their organization-sponsored website/blog. The source should cite a trend that is current (within five years of assignment due date). 1. Prepare an impact analysis addressing specifically how the trend will impact or change the field, particularly in regards to how the trend effects hiring. The analysis should cite 5-10 sources (Wikipedia is not an appropriate source). Newspapers such as the New York Times, Richmond Times Dispatch, and Wall Street Journal are acceptable citation sources for this assignment. The analysis should address the following:
* What is the trend? At least one page of your analysis should be summary of the trend with citation of a credible and reputable source.
* How has the field changed as a result of this trend?
* What do you project will happen as a result of this trend? How will this trend effect hiring within this field or industry? Will new positions be created?
* Based on your understanding, does the trend reflect a positive or a negative change? Why?
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| **INDEX CARD PRE/POST ACTIVITY**  |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | RESEARCH OF INTERESTS, PROFESSIONS, AND INDUSTRIES |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to differentiate between types of positions and fields of their professional interest.Students will be able to identify resources in areas of their professional interest. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate and graduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes |
| **DESCRIPTION:** This activity is helpful to the instructor in assessing where students are in their own career development process. In the beginning and ending of the course, give an index card to each student and ask them to fill the card out in response to the following questions.1. Name?
2. Academic Program or Course of Study?
3. Where are you from? (i.e., city/town, state/province, country)
4. Desired geographic location after finishing current course of study or position at V.C.U.? (i.e., city/town, state/province, country)
5. What field/industry do you hope to be in?
6. What position or career do you see yourself in five years from now?
7. Do you know of any job search resources (e.g., websites, conferences) in your field of interest? If so, please list one or two resources.

Note: If the course is small enough (i.e., <20 students), you can use the card responses to help each student in their own personal job search. For example, you could use this information to post job search resources by industry on a BlackBoard site or use this content to review their resumes/curriculum vitaes.  |

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| **ROADTRIP NATION REFLECTION ASSIGNMENT** |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | RESEARCH OF INTERESTS, PROFESSIONS, AND INDUSTRIES |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | * Students will be able to identify resources in areas of their professional interest.
* Students will be able to differentiate between types of positions and fields of their professional interest.
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| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate and graduate students; most appropriate for first, second, and undecided students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes |
| **DESCRIPTION:** Assignment is designed for students interested in exploring career paths and learning about specific positions of their own professional interest. **Assignment:** Visit the Roadtrip Nation “Interests” website (<http://roadtripnation.com/explore/interests>) and identify at least one person in a career path of your interest. There are several excerpts and short videos that you can access for free through this website.Learn about the career path of at least one person on the site and prepare a 2-3 page reflection essay describing 1) the skills required for the particular position, 2) the education required for the position, 3) how the position differs from another career path that you have considered in the past, and 4) specifically mention how you would go about obtaining more information about this particular career. There is more on this series here: http://roadtripnation.com/The University College Discovery Advisers own a copy of this series at VCU if interested in borrowing for a course. |

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| **SALARY RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT**  |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | RESEARCH OF INTERESTS, PROFESSIONS, AND INDUSTRIES |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to differentiate between types of positions and fields of their professional interest.Students will be able to identify professional development opportunities and hiring trends within their area(s) of professional interest. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes |
| **DESCRIPTION:** Assignment is designed to help the student identify positions of interest and to generate knowledge about viable financial outcomes for persons in particular positions. **Assignment:** After walking students through the following steps, request that they select an occupation for which they have an interest and write a one-page summary of 1) the skills required for the position and 2) what the projected wages are for the position. Additionally, ask the student to reflect in one to two paragraphs on whether or not the projected wages are in alignment with their specific financial needs. **Step 1: Go to** [**http://www.onetonline.org/**](http://www.onetonline.org/)**Step 2: Search an occupation using the Quick Search feature in the top right-hand corner.** **Step 3: Search through the sample job titles and then read through the “Tasks” and “Wages & Employment Trends” section.**  |

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| **SOCIAL MEDIA INDUSTRY RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT** |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | RESEARCH OF INTERESTS, PROFESSIONS, AND INDUSTRIES |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to identify professional development opportunities and hiring trends within their area(s) of professional interest.Students will be able to identify resources in areas of their professional interest. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate and graduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes |
| **DESCRIPTION:** This activity is designed to help students identify trends and resources in areas of their interest while using social media websites. Social media platforms have become invaluable in job and opportunity searches and can point students to varying professional development resources they may not have otherwise found. **Assignment**: Using Twitter, LinkedIn or other social media platform, do the following:1. Find one organization and one thought leader to follow within your career interest, profession or industry.
2. Read at least three blog posts or articles posted by each of these (authored by or reblogged by them).
3. Using a media platform and media of choice, record your answers to the following questions for discussion:
* What did you learn new about these areas?
* What was surprising and/or inspiring?
* Do you see connections with something you’ve already done in your experiences – college employment, service-learning, travel or study abroad, co-curricular?
* What gaps do you see in terms of gaining entry-level access to this field? For example, are there any additional credentials or experience you should expect to get to make you more marketable upon entry?
* What is at least one short-term action step that you can take within the next 30-60-or 90 days?
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1. **PERSONAL NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

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| **3-MINUTE VIDEO ASSIGNMENT**  |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | PERSONAL NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENT |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to explain how their academic experiences relate to a professional development goal. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes <25 |
| **DESCRIPTION:** This assignment is designed with two purposes in mind. The first intent is to provide the student with the opportunity to verbally articulate the relationship between their educational experiences and their short- or long-term goals. The second intent is for students to practice talking about themselves without the benefit of having in-person paralinguistic feedback. Given that many first-round interviews are taking place online, it has become increasingly important for students to practice articulating their interests, skills, and abilities online or over the phone. Access to a web camera is required for this assignment. Note: Requires that the staff member or instructor set up a “pre-made” interview question in *Interview Stream*. **Assignment**: 1. Login to the HireVCURams portal found on the [www.careers.vcu.edu](http://www.careers.vcu.edu) website.
2. Search for a job, internship, or federal work-study position that is appealing to you. Review the requirements for this position thoroughly.
3. While logged into the HireVCURams portal, select the *Interview Stream* link on the left-hand side of the home screen.
4. Select the pre-made interview question and record your response to the question: Why are you the best candidate for this particular position?
5. When prompted, select the option to send your 3-minute question response to the staff member or instructor of your course.
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| **INTERVIEW WITH YOUR BOARD OF ADVISORS** |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | PERSONAL NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENT |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to explain how their academic experiences relate to a professional development goal. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes |
| **DESCRIPTION:** The purpose of this assignment is for the student to develop an understanding of how others would describe their professional development. This activity can be particularly helpful for students that are undecided in regards to their interests, values, and skills (or abilities). **Assignment:** 1. Select 3-5 people with whom you spend the *most time with*. Try to select people that know you from different times or places within your life (i.e., work, school, home-life, church or faith-based activities, volunteer roles).
2. Schedule a time to meet with each of these individuals separately (either in-person or by phone/Skype/FaceTime).
3. Ask each of these individuals the same three questions (see below).
	1. In your opinion, what do you believe would be the best fit position for me and why?
	2. Based on your interactions with me, what are my strengths and weaknesses?
	3. Based on your experiences with me, are you able to tell what I am passionate about? If so, can you tell me more about why you believe this to be true?
4. After interviewing each person, write a 1-3 page reflection essay based on your interpretation of their responses.
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| **PROFESSIONAL PHILOSOPHY ESSAY (PRE/POST)**  |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | PERSONAL NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENT |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to explain how their academic experiences relate to a professional development goal. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate and graduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes |
| **DESCRIPTION:** These assignments are designed to provide students with an opportunity to reflect on the experiences they have had and those that they hope to have in their professional career. Students should relate their skills, interests, and values to either a specific position or field/industry. Essays should be no longer than 2 double-spaced pages, size 12, Times New Roman font. **Assignments:** 1. **Professional Philosophy Essay #1**

Write an initial professional philosophy essay that summarizes your educational experiences, skills, values, and interests as they relate to your current career goals. Questions for you to consider when writing your essay have been provided below. * What skills and values are necessary for success within your field? How do you define success?
* What has influenced your decision to pursue a career in the field that you are currently in?
* How have your educational experiences to date contributed to your long-term goals? Are there specific courses or people that have shaped your philosophy or perspective of the field?
1. **Professional Philosophy Essay #2**

Write a second essay addressing how the experiences in this course have influenced your interpretation of your professional philosophy. Questions for you to consider when writing this essay can be found below. * Has your professional philosophy changed since your first draft? After hearing from the varying guest discussants, has your definition of success changed?
* Have you learned anything new about yourself? If so, how has that influenced the development of your professional philosophy?
* Are there specific values that you have that may contribute to your definition of success within your field? If so, how do these values fit into your professional philosophy?
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| **PICTURE OF EXCELLENCE EXERCISE** |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | PERSONAL NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENT |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to explain how their academic experiences relate to a professional development goal. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes  |
| **DESCRIPTION:** This exercise can be offered as an in-class activity that serves students by providing them with an opportunity to reflect on what or who influences their individual perceptions of success or excellence. **Activity:** 1. Write the name of an effective or successful person below.
2. List some characteristics of this person.
3. Now complete these statements about yourself
* The time when I am at my best is . . .
* The best thing about me is . . .
* What I enjoy doing most is . . .
* The best time in my life is/was . . .
* I earn my best grades when I . . .
* I enjoy learning about . . .
* The best job I ever had was . . .
* The best project I’ve ever been involved with was . . .
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| **DEMONSTRATING CULTURAL COMPETENCE ACTIVITY** |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | PERSONAL NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENT |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to explain how their academic experiences relate to a professional development goal. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate and graduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes |
| **DESCRIPTION:** Students come from varying backgrounds, cultures, and environments. Additionally, students bring to the classroom identities that may differ from those in a particular occupational environment. A “cultural broker” is often defined as a person that acts as a mediator between two or more groups of different cultural backgrounds (Jezewski, 1990). In the workplace, it may be necessary for an employee to play the role of a cultural broker in order to reduce or mitigate conflict that may arise.**Activity:** Consider yourself as a “cultural broker” espousing varying identities. Write a 250-word biography that specifically highlights your disparate identities, skills, values, and experiences as a cultural broker. Are there areas that you wish to further develop? If so, what are they?  |

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| **WRITE YOUR OWN JOB DESCRIPTION ASSIGNMENT**  |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | PERSONAL NARRATIVE DEVELOPMENT |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to explain how their academic experiences relate to a professional development goal. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate and graduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes |
| **DESCRIPTION:** This assignment to help the student gain insight into their specific values and needs, while recognizing skills required for their short- and/or long-term goals. This assignment is an activity appropriate for any stage of career development and can be included in a syllabus as a reflection assignment. **Assignment:** You will be asked to write a one-page job description detailing your ideal job opportunity. Be sure to include required skills, knowledge, and experience. Use the resources below to help you in constructing your one-page description. 1. Review the following resources to assist you in this process.
* *Worker for Hire: How Would You Advertise Yourself*

 <http://idealistcareers.org/worker-for-hire-how-would-you-advertise-yourself/>* *Society for Human Resource Management Job Descriptions Training for Supervisors PowerPoint*

[*http://www.shrm.org/templatestools/samples/powerpoints/pages/jobdescriptionstraining.aspx*](http://www.shrm.org/templatestools/samples/powerpoints/pages/jobdescriptionstraining.aspx)* O\*NET Occupational Handbook

[*https://www.onetonline.org/find/*](https://www.onetonline.org/find/) |

**V. RESUME AND/OR CURRICULUM VITAE PREPARATION**

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| **RESUME REVIEW IN-CLASS EXERCISE**  |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | RESUME AND/OR CURRICULUM VITAE PREPARATION |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to create a resume or curriculum vitae and tailor it to meet the needs of a particular organization, field, or industry. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate and graduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes |
| **DESCRIPTION:** **In-Class Activity:** For this activity, post a job description on the screen and hand out an "okay" resume. It doesn't have any glaring errors, but it's not great either. Then, ask students, "Would you hire this person?" Many will say yes. Some will say it depends on how they interview. Then, hand them a stellar resume that has been tailored for the position description and ask the same question. Wrap up by saying that bad resumes aren't the problem. It's the good ones that get passed over because they aren't tailored. A little tailoring can take your resume from good to great. |

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| **RESUME A & B - 7 SECOND SCAN**  |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | RESUME AND/OR CURRICULUM VITAE PREPARATION |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to create a resume or curriculum vitae and tailor it to meet the needs of a particular organization, field, or industry. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate and graduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes |
| **DESCRIPTION:** This is an in-class activity designed to help students identify poor formatting and content on a resume. In a competitive applicant pool, an employer may spend only 7-10 seconds scanning a resume. It's important for students to recognize how formatting and content on a resume requires strategy. This activity helps students recognize the aesthetic value of a document. **Activity:** As an instructor, you'll need to develop two resumes (one good, one with glaring errors and formatting mistakes). It helps if you add a large 'A' and 'B' to the backs of each of these documents. If possible, have both resumes reflect one person's experiences (make sure to change formatting considerably). Give students both documents face down, and ask that they not look at either document without your instruction. Instruct students to flip over the good resume and after 7 seconds, tell them to flip it back over. Now instruct students to flip over the bad resume and after 7 seconds ask them to flip it over. Without flipping over either document, ask students who they would hire and why? Now, have the students flip over both documents and review the errors on each document. |

**VI. COVER LETTER OR LETTER OF INTEREST PREPARATION**

**VII. INTERVIEW SKILLS AND PREPARATION**

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| **INTERVIEW STREAM ASSIGNMENT**  |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | INTERVIEWING SKILLS AND PREPARATION |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to differentiate between types of interview questions and deliver responses to questions using interviewing techniques and/or strategies. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate and graduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for classes <50 |
| **DESCRIPTION:** This assignment is designed to assist students in differentiating types of interview questions. Using an online interviewing software, an instructor can offer direct feedback pertaining to their responses to specific questions and their nonverbal mannerisms. **Assignment:** Use the questions on our web site to write down your examples or practice with a friend: http://careers.vcu.edu/undergraduates/job/questions.html• Use InterviewStream (it's a pre-recorded interviewer who asks you questions and a webcam records your answers) - try it at home or from your phone (with a webcam and sound card) http://vcu.interviewstream.com/ You will be sent to the Dashboard. You have the option to Conduct, Watch, Mobile, and view Resources. For the first time user, select Conduct an Interview. Select the question set called "Created for Me". You can choose my Presentation Practice, General Interview, Graduate School Interview, or Two Minute VCU Career Services Pitch. Select the question set that is best for you. Then, begin the process of verifying your sound card and webcam. NOTE: if you do not have a webcam, but you have a smart phone, use the Mobile Interview Option to start your practice. While you are in the interview, you will have three options with each question: 1) accept the answer and move to the next question. 2) watch your answer in playback 3) re-record your answer. Once you have completed the interview, you can complete the Assessment feature as well as Share your interview with your adviser or any references.  |

**VIII. NETWORKING SKILLS AND STRATEGIES**

**SUPPLEMENTAL: POSITION AND EXPERIENCE SEARCH STRATEGIES**

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| **CAREER PATH TRACING ASSIGNMENT**  |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | POSITION AND EXPERIENCE SEARCH STRATEGIES |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to create a personal strategy for a position and/or experience search in their area of interest. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes |
| **DESCRIPTION:** This assignment is designed to assist students in developing knowledge about specific career paths. This assignment requires that the student and instructor have a basic familiarity with features of LinkedIn.com. This assignment can be particularly helpful for students that are not yet decided about their particular career path. It can also be helpful for students that think that there is only one path to a particular outcome (i.e., major in finance to get an investment banking job or major in biology in order to become a doctor). LinkedIn.com provides students and alumni with an opportunity to search profiles based on the professional’s major. This is often the best place to start with students that are undecided about what to do with varying majors. **Assignment:** 1. Visit [www.linkedin.com/alumni](http://www.linkedin.com/alumni) and select your current institution (Note: You will need to login to create an account before completing this assignment).
2. Toggle the screen to the right (using the > button to the right of the screen), and select or type your major or concentration.
3. Select one or two professional profiles and note the following:
	1. How did they get to where they are?
	2. What jobs did they have along the way?
	3. What skills do they have?
4. Write a one-page reflection essay detailing what you learned from using this search feature. Consider each of the questions and incorporate a response to each in your essay.
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| **IDENTIFYING ORGANIZATIONS BY INTERESTS AND VALUES**  |
| **LEARNING GOAL:**  | POSITION AND EXPERIENCE SEARCH STRATEGIES |
| **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**  | Students will be able to create a personal strategy for a position and/or experience search in their area of interest. |
| **TARGET AUDIENCE:**  | All undergraduate students |
| **CLASS SIZE:**  | Appropriate for all class sizes |
| **DESCRIPTION:** This activity is geared towards first- and second-year undergraduate students that are undecided about their particular path, but aware of professional interests and values. The goal of this activity is to have students learn about specific organizations, companies, and work environments that embody their personal and professional interests and values. Many students are generally unaware of specific positions within organizations, by emphasizing a “backwards” search, a student first learns about a specific organization and *then* particular positions typically offered within that place of employment. This activity could be included as a blog post or a take-home assignment in a course. **Activity:** 1. Ask students to create a list of topics that have piqued their interest in the last year. They should include academic interests as well as personal (or hobby) interests. Request that they be specific (e.g., rather than listing “health” as an interest, ask students to specify a domain or topic, such as “cardiac health of women in their 40s and 50s” or “diabetes risk among youth”). If a student is having difficulties generating a list, prompt them with a few of the following questions.
	1. When passing by a magazine rack at a bookstore, what type of magazine do you pick up? Why did you pick that? What articles do you read when skimming through such magazines?
	2. What have been your most interesting courses? Why? What topics were of particular interest to you?
	3. What do you do when you are not studying? What hobbies do you have? Have you thought of how your major (or concentration) might relate to your hobby?
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