

**The Pennsylvania State University, College of the Liberal Arts
LA 401: Professional Development for the Liberal Arts Student**

Tuesdays, 5pm-6:15pm
208 Ford Building

Instructor Information:

Katie Wysocki, M.A.
Assistant Director,
Career Enrichment Network
101 Sparks Building

814-865-1070
kmw30@psu.edu
Office Hours: By appointment, scheduled
through your Network Symplicity account

Course Materials:

Penn State Career Guide 2017-2018: Planning for Life after Graduation (distributed in class)

Suggestion: Please bring a laptop or iPad to every class. We will be working on many of our assignments in class and this would be a great resource. If this is an issue, please feel free to share with me privately.

Purpose of the Course:

This course is designed to assist and educate students in the College of the Liberal Arts with the development of their careers through lecture, interactions, and practice. This course will cover topics such as career planning and decision-making, job/internship strategies, online presence, resume/cover letter writing, networking, interviewing, and skills for the transition from college to the world of employment opportunities.

Course Objectives:

The course will incorporate the [National Association of Colleges and Employer's \(NACE\)](#) definition of "career readiness" and competencies into the objectives of the course.

As stated on their website, NACE defines career readiness as, "is the attainment and demonstration of requisite competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition into the workplace." (<http://www.nacweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/career-readiness-defined/>)

Competencies:

- **Critical Thinking/Problem Solving:** Students will identify individual abilities, interests, and values and understand how to incorporate these into career decision-making.
- **Oral/Written Communications:** Students will present industry and career development related presentations as well as have the opportunity to engage with recruiters in practice networking and interview settings.
- **Teamwork/Collaboration:** Students will work with their peers to review professional documents and share feedback with each other.
- **Digital Technology:** Students will be aware of digital resources necessary in today's job and internship search including a better understanding of their online presence.
- **Leadership:** Students will be empowered to utilize various job search strategies including networking, targeted searches, and online job postings to identify potential jobs.
- **Career Management:** Students will utilize various resources and informational interviewing to research industries and careers, and informed career decision-making.
- **Global/Intercultural Fluency:** Students will have an understanding of the diverse hiring processes in this global climate of industry.
- **Professionalism/Work Ethic:** Students will transition successfully into the professional world, using skills and knowledge to conduct future career decision-making and job searches.

Attendance

Each class will cover a specific professional development topic, opportunities to network, in-class assignments, and more. As with any class, it is in your best interest to attend them all in order to get the most out of the course.

Students are able to miss two (2) classes with unexcused absence. After these two, your participation grade will drop 10 points for each additional missed class.

Students are expected to be in class at the start of class and remain until the end of class. Points will be deducted if student arrives 10 minutes late.

Students are responsible for all missed assignments. If a student missed class they have until the next class period to turn in any assignments due.

In a job you are required to notify your organization of your absence, planned or unexpected. Please notify me as soon as you know you will not be able to attend class through email, kmw30@psu.edu.

Participation

Participation comprises a portion (100 points) of your overall grade. Participation is essential to learning in this course. Class discussions and group projects will all be incorporated into each class in order to allow for peer-to-peer development and reflection. You can earn up to 8 points for each of the 13 classes we will be meeting for. This will be judged on participation, attendance, in-class assignments, unnecessary use of mobile devices, tardiness, etc.

Phones, computers, and tablets will always be a part of our personal and work environment. It is important, however, to realize when it is appropriate to be using them. Each of these devices will be welcome in class in order to complement some of our in class projects however when not needed they should not be out. Use of cell phones beyond required times will negatively impact your participation grade.

Assignments

All final assignments should be submitted to Canvas by the designated date and time on the class schedule. Please submit all assignments as Word documents; unless otherwise stated. For assistance with Canvas, visit Student Resources at <http://canvas.psu.edu/students/>.

Assignments submitted late without prior notice will be docked five (5) points for each class it is late. Class time will be provided for peer review of certain assignments. Please make sure to bring necessary materials for these classes. Please let me know if you have any questions about how to submit assignments; points will be deducted for not submitting assignments to Canvas.

Job/Internship Posting (10 pts)

Select a job or internship posting that reflects your dream position (search [Network Symplicity](#) for internship positions, [Nittany Lion Career Network](#) for full-time opportunities, or organization websites for both). This posting will be used through the entire semester for you to create your professional documents such as your resume and cover letter. Please submit either a .pdf or Word document to Canvas.

If during the semester you find a new position you would like to focus on, you are welcome to submit that to me.

Bring to class to use for in-class activity on January 16 in addition to submitting it electronically to Canvas

Résumé Draft (25 pts)

Use your selected job/internship position to tailor your résumé towards. The final copy of this assignment is the résumé you should be prepared to use in your internship or job search and will be included in your Final Job Application assignment.

Using the points discussed in class and in the Career Guide, draft a one-page résumé. Your résumé should include:

- Clear and accurate contact and header information
- Consistent formatting; résumé should be without grammar and spelling errors
- Logical and strategic organization of information
- Descriptions of experiences demonstrating transferrable or related skills to the objective of the résumé and position

Suggested length: One page

You are required to submit this assignment to Network Symplicity in addition to submitting it electronically to Canvas on January 23

Liberal Arts Career Week Reflection (25 pts)

Students are required to attend two events during Liberal Arts Career Week: <http://bit.ly/lacareers> . One of these events must be a 5:30pm event any night between Monday and Thursday. The second event is up to you. Please be sure to register through Network Symplicity if necessary for your event you select. Class is cancelled this week on January 23rd.

After attending both events, write a 1-2 page reflection on the following:

- Include the names of the events you attended
- Why did you select these?
- What did you learn?
- How did this event benefit your career development?
- What would you suggest for next year's Liberal Arts Career Week?

Suggested length: One to two pages typed and double-spaced. **Due: January 30th to Canvas by 5pm.**

StrengthsFinder® Assessment and Meeting with Network Staff Member (50 pts)

You are required to complete this assessment through the Career Enrichment Network (even if you have completed it through another source). I will confirm your completion of the assessment. For details and instructions, visit: <http://www.la.psu.edu/current-students/cen/strengthsfinder-r>. Register for a code and complete the assessment. You will receive a Signature Themes Report that will provide you with your “top five” signature themes.

Please be aware that it takes 24-48 **business** hours to receive a code.

You are also required to meet with a Career Enrichment Network staff member to review your Signature Themes Report by **February 13th**; you will schedule your appointment via Network Symplicity (you can meet with any staff member). Please bring your Signature Themes Report with you to your appointment. Be prepared to discuss.

StrengthsFinder® Assessment Reflection (25 pts)

Use your Signature Themes Report you received when completing the assessment with your “top five” themes and write a reflection on your results. You should think about and answer the following:

- What are your strengths according to your report? What did you learn about your strengths? What surprised you about your results?
- How will these strengths translate to or help you with your career path?
- How can you apply your strengths to specific careers and career fields?
- How will you work to improve on skills you would like to develop further?
- What did you gain from your StrengthsFinder meeting with a Network staff member?

Suggested length: Two to three pages typed and double-spaced. **Due: February 13th to Canvas by 5pm**

Cover Letter Draft (25 pts)

This assignment should be written for the job or internship opportunity you handed in at the beginning of the semester. If you have found a job or internship posting you would rather use, please also submit it with your cover letter. The final copy of this assignment is the cover letter you should be prepared to use in your internship or job search and will be included in your Final Application Materials assignment.

Using the points discussed in class and in the Career Guide, draft a cover letter. Your cover letter should include:

- Address blocks for you and the employers, as well as date information
- Professional writing with no grammar or spelling errors
- Specific references to a company and position
- Professional formatting including contact information of employer
- Information demonstrating your specific interest in that company/position (e.g. research on company)
- Summary of your skills and experiences related to the job (do not repeat résumé bullet points)
- A salutation and your signature (can be signed or electronic)

Suggested length: One page + Copy of job description (if not using the assignment submitted previously)

You are required to submit this assignment to Network Symplicity (just the cover letter, not the position description) in addition to submitting it electronically to Canvas on February 20th

Spring Career Days or C.A.R.E. Fair Reflection/Selfie (25 pts)

You are welcome to attend Spring Career Days on February 5th or 6th OR the C.A.R.E. Fair on February 22nd to complete this assignment.

Take a picture of yourself at whichever day you attend and include with your reflection.

For your reflection, think about your experience at Spring Career Days or the C.A.R.E. Fair and answer the following questions:

1. Did you feel prepared to speak with employers? If not, how could you have prepared better?
2. Choose two employers with whom you spoke. How did you discuss your skills, experiences, and interest in the midst of many other students trying to do the same?
3. How did the classes before these events help you prepare? What would have helped you prepare more?

Suggested length: One page typed and double-spaced. **Due: February 27th to Canvas by 5pm.**

Mock Interviews (40 pts)

Mock interviews will be held in class on March 27th in the Bank of America Career Services Building from 5pm to 6:30pm. In order to complete this assignment you must be in class on this day. You will be assigned to interview with an alumni, recruiter, or faculty/staff member. Interviews will most likely be held in a group setting to provide both one-on-one interviewing experience as well as peer-to-peer feedback. If you are unable to attend this class, please contact me as soon as possible to schedule an alternate assignment.

Mock Interview Reflection (25 pts)

After completing your mock interview, please complete your reflection answering the following questions:

1. Did you feel prepared to speak to the interviewer?
2. What questions do you feel you did well answering and what questions do you need to work on?
3. How will you prepare for your next interview?

Suggested length: One page typed and double spaced. **Due: April 3 to Canvas by 5pm.**

Informational Interview & Presentation (50pts)

1. *Informational Interview* - For this assignment, you will need to conduct an informational interview (minimum 30 minutes) with an individual in a position/company/field that interests you; *do not interview an undergraduate student or someone in your immediate family.*
Using the readings and information from class, come up with a list of topics or questions you would like to ask your interviewee. You can use LionLink, LinkedIn, or personal networking connections. If you have difficulty finding someone to interview, notify the instructor as soon as possible for assistance. Sample interview questions will be available on Canvas and in your Penn State Career Guide.
2. *Presentation* – Present a 4-5 minute presentation on your informational interview to the class on **April 10th or 17th**. Include the following topics and any additional information you want to share.

Turn in a one page summary after your presentation or submit a PowerPoint presentation. **All summaries or PowerPoint presentations must be turned in on April 10th to Canvas by 5pm.**

- a. Who you interviewed, their background, (education/career) and why?
- b. How you found this professional? Form of communication for the interview (email, phone, in person, etc.)
- c. What did you learn?
- d. What might you do differently in the future
- e. How this impacts your career path?
- f. Overall experience

Suggested length: One page summary or PowerPoint presentation submitted before presentation to Canvas on April 10th at 5pm.

Job Application Project (100 pts)

Pt. I – Job/Internship Description: Include the job/internship description that the application project is designed around.

Pt. II- The Résumé: Create a final professional résumé using feedback you've received based on the submitted job/internship description. This final version should include all the elements from your draft and integrate any feedback you've received from the instructor, peer review, and/or other review.

Pt. III- The Cover Letter: Re-work your cover letter using feedback and ideas from peer review. Cover letter will also be designed around the submitted job/internship description. This final version should include all the elements from your draft and integrate any feedback you've received from the instructor, peer review, and/or other review.

Pt. IV –Job Application Process Reflection

- Job Search Strategy:
 - Layout your job search plan – how you plan to implement job searching in your schedule and what your approach is.
 - Identify 2-4 job search resources you plan to utilize (websites, company sites, etc.)
 - Outline how you would organize your job search, applications, and track follow-ups
- Interview Process:
 - How would you prepare for your interview?
 - Identify three (3) facts you want the employer to know about you (provide examples to support these facts)
 - Identify two (2) behavioral based questions you expect to be discussed (use the job description to help you) and one (1) general interview question
 - List two (2) questions that you plan to ask the employer during the interview
 - Address why you want to work for this employer and why you want this position
 - Identify three possible references (2 professional, 1 personal) and why you chose them
- Self-Evaluation
 - Address what makes you a strong candidate for this position
 - Address any weakness in your application-lack of experience, related education, etc.
 - *If you know your weaknesses you can develop strategies to address them.*
 - Is there anything you can do before graduation to strengthen your resume/application for this job or any other you desire?

Include any resources you used to address all of these questions/topics. The paper is to be double spaced. The first 3 pages should be the job posting, one page resume, and cover letter. There is no minimum or maximum page limit for this assignment as long as all the topics and questions are thoroughly addressed. Use this to help you actually apply for a job or to give you good practice for the future. The instructor will give you feedback to help you with future job applications.

***All parts of the Final Job Application Project Due on April 24th at 5pm in Canvas. You may turn in the assignment early.**

Extra Credit

Extra credit is available to students who participate in any of the following events. If there is another professional development workshop/event you want to attend for extra credit. Please email me the information for extra credit approval a week before the event at kmw30@psu.edu.

Extra Credit Opportunities-3-5 points per event. (Maximum of 25 earned)

Event	Date/Time	Location
Liberal Arts Career Week <i>You must attend 2 events (one must be an evening event) but additional events will be given extra credit.</i>	Monday, January 22 nd - Friday, January 26 th Bit.ly/lacareers	Various
Lunch & Learn Series*: Careers in Philanthropy	Thursday, February 1st 12:15pm-1:15pm	124 Sparks Building
Lunch & Learn Series*: Careers in Libraries	Thursday, March 1 st 12:15pm-1:15pm	124 Sparks Building
Lunch & Learn Series*: Careers in Human Resources	Thursday, April 5th 12:15pm-1:15pm	124 Sparks Building

**All Lunch & Learn events require RSVP through Network Symplicity*

Grades

This syllabus provides you with a point breakdown for each assignment as well as an overall distribution for the class and the grading scale.

Grading Scale:

Employer's Decision

A = 93-100%

Would definitely offer you a job

A- = 90-92%

B+ = 87-89%

Would probably offer you a job

B = 83-86%

B- = 80-82%

Some interest; might give you another interview

C+ = 77-79%

C = 70-76%

D = 60-69%

Definitely would not offer you a job

F = <60%

Assignment/Attendance	Points	Assignment Due Dates & Times
Participation	100	
Job/ Internship Posting	10	January 16 th , 5:00pm
Resume Draft	25	January 23 rd , 5:00pm
Liberal Arts Career Week Reflection	25	January 30 th , 5:00pm
StrengthsFinder Assessment & Meeting	50	February 13 th , 5:00pm
Strengthsfinder Assessment Reflection	25	February 13 th , 5:00pm
Cover Letter Draft	25	February 20 th , 5:00pm
Spring Career Days or C.A.R.E. Fair Reflection/Selfie	25	February 22 nd , 5:00pm
Mock Interview (in-class)	40	March 27 th , 5:00pm
Mock Interview Reflection	25	April 3 rd , 5:00pm
Informational Interview Reflection & Presentation	25/25	April 10 th , 5:00pm
Job Application	100	April 24 th , 5:00pm
Total	500	

Course Schedule

Date	Topic(s)	Assignment(s) Due in Canvas by 5pm
January 9	Introduction & Syllabus Review <i>Professional Development Defined</i>	
January 16	Resumes	Job Description Due
January 23	Liberal Arts Career Week: No class <i>Students required to attend 2 events (1-evening) during Liberal Arts Career Week and write a reflection.</i>	Resume Draft Due
January 30	Spring Career Days/C.A.R.E. Prep Penn State Career Services	Liberal Arts Career Week Reflection Due
February 6	Advice from Recruiters: Employer Panel	Attend Spring Career Days, February 5 th /6 th or C.A.R.E. Fair, February 22 nd
February 13	Cover Letters & StrengthsFinder	StrengthsFinder Assessment, Reflection, & Meeting Due
February 20	Job/Internship Searching	Cover Letter Draft Due
February 27	Networking & Informational Interviewing	Attend Spring Career Days, February 5 th /6 th or C.A.R.E. Fair, February 22 nd Spring Career Days or C.A.R.E. Fair selfie/reflection due
March 6	<i>No Class-Spring Break</i>	
March 13	Interviewing: Part I	
March 20	The Professional You Online, Social Media & LinkedIn	
March 27	Interviewing: Part II <i>Class will meet at Career Services</i>	Mock Interview (in class assignment)
April 3	Post-Interview Strategies/Job Offers/ Real World	Interview Reflection
April 10	Informational Interview Presentations	Informational Interview Summary or PowerPoint submitted before class
April 17	Informational Interview Presentations	Presentation (in-class)
April 24	<i>No Class</i>	Job Application Project Due

***Note: This syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class.**

Important Dates ([Consult the University's academic calendar regularly](#)):

January 2-22 – Intent to Graduate Period

January 13 at 11:59 p.m. – Regular Drop Deadline

January 14 at 11:59 p.m. – Regular Add Deadline

January 14 – Late Drop Begins

January 15 – Late Registration Begins

April 6 at 11:59 p.m. – Late Drop Deadline

April 27 at 5:00 p.m. – Withdrawal Deadline

April 27 – Last Day of Classes

April 30-May 4 – Final Exams

Academic Integrity

Students enrolled in this class are expected to attend class and complete assignments in an honest and responsible manner in accordance with the Faculty Senate's statement on Academic Integrity (<http://www.psu.edu/ufs/policies/www.psu.edu/ufs/policies/>) policy #49-20 and Conduct Code (<http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/conduct/codeofconduct/http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/conduct/codeofconduct/>). Appropriate referencing is expected when citing the ideas, words, or work of others, including websites. Class attendance and participation, and on-time submission of work is an expectation in this class. Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions and will be reported to the University's Judicial Affairs office for possible further disciplinary sanction. *Please note that all work must be the student's own original work unless otherwise cited. Plagiarism will not be tolerated.*

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the intentional act of using another person's words or ideas as your own without attribution. It is a breach of academic integrity. The policy on plagiarism is available at <https://handbook.psu.edu/content/academic-integrity#integrity>.

If you have any questions about plagiarism and its consequences (or about any other aspect of academic integrity), please ask. Because plagiarism demonstrates contempt for ethical standards, your instructor, and your peers, if you are caught plagiarizing, you risk failing the course. You may also be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs, and this may result in probation, suspension, or expulsion.

Educational Equity

Penn State University has adopted a "[Protocol for Responding to Bias Motivated Incidents](http://equity.psu.edu/reportbias/reports/protocol-for-responding-to-bias-motivated-incidents)" (<http://equity.psu.edu/reportbias/reports/protocol-for-responding-to-bias-motivated-incidents>) that is grounded in the policy that the "University is committed to creating an educational environment which is free from intolerance directed toward individuals or groups and strives to create and maintain an environment that fosters respect for others." That policy is embedded within an institution traditionally committed to [academic freedom](https://guru.psu.edu/policies/OHR/hr64.html) (<https://guru.psu.edu/policies/OHR/hr64.html>) Bias motivated incidents include conduct that is defined in University [Policy AD 91: Discrimination and Harassment, and Related Inappropriate Conduct](https://guru.psu.edu/policies/ad91.html) (<https://guru.psu.edu/policies/ad91.html>). Students, faculty, or staff who experience or witness a possible bias motivated incident are urged to report the incident immediately by doing one of the following:

- * Submit a report via the [Report Bias webpage](http://equity.psu.edu/reportbias/) (<http://equity.psu.edu/reportbias/>)
- * Contact one of the following offices:

University Police Services, University Park: 814-863-1111
Multicultural Resource Center, Diversity Advocate for Students: 814-865-1773
Office of the Vice Provost for Educational Equity: 814-865-5906
Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs: 814-865-0909
Affirmative Action Office: 814-863-0471

- * Dialing 911 in cases where physical injury has occurred or is imminent

Disability Accommodation

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. Every Penn State campus has an office for students with disabilities. Student Disability Resources (SDR) website provides [contact information for every Penn State campus](#) (<http://equity.psu.edu/sdr/disability-coordinator>). For further information, please visit [Student Disability Resources website](#) (<http://equity.psu.edu/sdr/>).

In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: [See documentation guidelines](#) (<http://equity.psu.edu/sdr/guidelines>). If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus disability services office will provide you with an accommodation letter. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early as possible. You must follow this process for every semester that you request accommodations.

Counseling and Psychological Services

Many students at Penn State face personal challenges or have psychological needs that may interfere with their academic progress, social development, or emotional wellbeing. The university offers a variety of confidential services to help you through difficult times, including individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, consultations, online chats, and mental health screenings. These services are provided by staff who welcome all students and embrace a philosophy respectful of clients' cultural and religious backgrounds, and sensitive to differences in race, ability, gender identity and sexual orientation.

[Counseling and Psychological Services at University Park \(CAPS\)](#)
(<http://studentaffairs.psu.edu/counseling/>): 814-863-0395

Penn State Crisis Line (24 hours/7 days/week): 877-229-6400
Crisis Text Line (24 hours/7 days/week): Text LIONS to 741741