UNIV 420 College to Career – DL3 (Online Course)
Fall 2018
Course Syllabus and Class Schedule

Instructor:
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Skype Office Hours: By appointment only
Course Uses Blackboard: http://courses.gmu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Course Description: This is a transitional course designed specifically for GMU seniors and second-semester juniors. This UNIV course will help you refine your three-part path to career readiness: earn a degree, gain at least two types of relevant experience, and market yourself.

In UNIV 420, you will choose/learn more about ways to use your degree, explore ways to gain the hands-on experience employers expect, and effectively communicate (market) what you have learned and the skills you bring to the workplace.

UNIV420 – DL3 is a section delivered as an asynchronous online course.

LEARNING GOALS & OUTCOMES

University 420 Learning Goals: This course emphasizes developing your readiness to transition to the workplace. Career readiness is the attainment and demonstration of requisite competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition into the workplace. Read more about the career competencies here: https://tinyurl.com/ybqkgb92. In addition to developing career competencies, you will create an effective resume and cover letter, practice interviewing, network with industry professionals, and establish a career action plan.

Course Learning Outcomes:
By the end of UNIV 420 you will demonstrate career competencies as you:

1. Apply Critical Thinking/Problem Solving skills by researching careers and industries of interest, using career assessments to evaluate possible career paths, and developing career/academic action plans based on your learning.

2. Practice Oral/Written Communications through articulation of your career concerns and learning through course assignments and presentations (via a personal pitch, informational interviews, practice interviews, and a career action plan).
3. Use **Teamwork/Collaboration** by taking an active role in your career development through participation (via online class discussions), and ongoing conversations with your instructor about your career concerns/plans and course progress.

4. Employ **Digital Technology** skills through participation in class activities, utilizing Blackboard, Kaltura Media, InterviewStream, Lynda.com, etc.

5. Show **Leadership** by working cooperatively with classmates and instructor to empower peers achieve their career development goals while enabling them to help you achieve your own (via online discussions).

6. Demonstrate **Professionalism/Work Ethic** by developing appropriate classroom behaviors (e.g. fully engaging with course material by completing assignments to your best ability and participating fully while in the classroom) and networking strategies (via informational interviews and LinkedIn).

7. Practice **Career Management** through identification and articulation of values, interests, personality and skills, career goals, and areas necessary for professional growth (via resumes, cover letters, and a career action plan).

8. Express **Global/Intercultural Fluency** by actively working to create an inclusive learning community through respectful and thoughtful interaction with peers and your instructor, virtually and in person (via online discussions).

As you work to develop your competencies, consider the following opportunities to get more experience:
- On-campus: Activities and clubs, Leadership positions, Research opportunities
- Experiential Learning: Community Service, Internships/Practica, Work-integrated learning, Volunteering
- Employment: Full-time, Part-time, Temporary

**COURSE MATERIALS**

- **Blackboard** is required for this course. You can access the site at [https://mymason.gmu.edu](https://mymason.gmu.edu). Username and passwords are the same as your Mason email account.
- **Career Readiness Guide, University Career Services (referred to throughout the syllabus as Career Guide):** You may pick up a hard copy at the University Career Services Office, SUB I, 3400 (Monday-Friday, 8:30am – 5pm); just tell the front desk you are in my class. You can also access the Career Guide on Blackboard under the ‘Course Content’ link.
- **Online Assessments (lab fee covered by tuition):**
  1. SkillScan Drive assessment
  2. **Strong Interest Inventory**
- **Mason’s Career Readiness Resources:** [https://careers.gmu.edu/](https://careers.gmu.edu/)
  - University Career Services (UCS) helps Mason students to connect what they know and have learned from their degree with their career goals. We work with students at all points in the career development process: assisting them in exploring how to best use their talents, strengths, and interests to select majors and career paths, as well as connecting with employers and strategizing for breaking into their industry of interest. For individualized attention and assistance beyond what is covered in class, reach out: careers.gmu.edu. No-appointment, 15-minute drop-in hours are Mon-Fri 11am-1pm.

**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS:**

**Hardware:** You will need access to a Windows or Macintosh computer with at least 2 GB of RAM and access to a fast and reliable broadband internet connection (e.g., cable, DSL). A larger screen is recommended for better visibility of course material. You will need speakers or headphones to hear recorded content and a headset with a microphone is recommended for the best experience.

For the amount of Hard Disk Space required taking a distance education course, consider and allow for:
  1. the storage amount needed to install any additional software and
  2. space to store work that you will do for the course.

**Software:** Many courses use Blackboard as the learning management system. You will need a browser and operating system that are listed compatible or certified with the Blackboard version available on the myMason Portal. See supported browsers and operating systems. Log in to myMason to access your registered courses. Some courses may use other learning management systems. Check the syllabus or contact the instructor for details. Online courses typically use Acrobat Reader, Flash, Java, and
Windows Media Player, QuickTime and/or Real Media Player. Your computer should be capable of running current versions of those applications. Also, make sure your computer is protected from viruses by downloading the latest version of Symantec Endpoint Protection/Antivirus software for free here.

Students owning Macs or Linux should be aware that some courses may use software that only runs on Windows. You can set up a Mac computer with Boot Camp or virtualization software so Windows will also run on it. Watch this video about using Windows on a Mac. Computers running Linux can also be configured with virtualization software or configured to dual boot with Windows.

Note: If you are using an employer-provided computer or corporate office for class attendance, please verify with your systems administrators that you will be able to install the necessary applications and that system or corporate firewalls do not block access to any sites or media types.

APPOINTMENTS / E-MAIL CONTACT
I encourage you to contact me to ask questions, clarify assignments, make me aware of any unexpected situations, or to obtain additional help. You can always contact me via email hayer@masonlive.gmu.edu to set up a Skype appointment, too. I check email regularly Sunday through Thursday and prefer more communication over less. **Please include “UNIV 420” in the subject line of your emails.**

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS.
If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please email me within the first week of class and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at http://ods.gmu.edu/students/ and 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.

NETIQUETTE
Our discussion goal is to be collaborative, not combative; you are creating a learning environment, sharing information and learning from one another. Respectful communication is important to your success in this course and as a professional. Please re-read your responses carefully before you post them so others will not to take them out of context or as personal attacks. Be positive to others and diplomatic with your words and I will try my best to do the same. Sarcasm is never appropriate and you should be careful when using humor. Without face-to-face communications your joke may be viewed as criticism. Experience shows that even an innocent remark in the online environment can be easily misconstrued.

LATE CLASS ASSIGNMENTS
All assignments will be submitted via Blackboard by 11:59pm on the specified due date, which is typically a Sunday of each week. Late work turned in after the deadline will automatically be 50% off of your grade. Assignments turned in more than a week late will not be accepted. Exceptions may be given for extenuating circumstances if you notify me prior to the due date. Please see this link for strategies for online learning success.

INCLEMENT WEATHER
Since this is an online class, assignments are still due by 11:59pm on the specified due date even if the University is closed due to inclement weather.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS AND SERVICES
Please review the “Responsibilities/Services” section within our course on Blackboard for a full list and explanation of the expectations and services for George Mason University students. If you have any questions about these policies, please email me within the first week of class.

GRADING
I take grading very seriously and I assign grades with care and thought. In general, the more proactive you are in dealing with your coursework and understanding where your point totals are throughout the semester, the opportunity for unexpected surprises and disappointment is reduced considerably.
EVALUATION TOOLS & ASSIGNMENT POINT VALUES

1. Participation (Online Discussions/Journals) 65 points
2. Career Action Plan 35 points
3. Cover Letter 20 points
4. Resume 20 points
5. Personal Pitch 15 points
6. Practice Interview 30 points
7. Informational Interview 45 points
8. LinkedIn Profile 20 points

TOTAL COURSE POINTS 250 Points

Participation – 65 points (5 points per week for 13 out of the 15 weeks):

Participation through Online Discussions and Journals: This course uses an interactive-style approach. Therefore, your active participation online is critical for effective learning to take place. An ongoing dialogue about course topics and readings will be maintained via Blackboard discussion forums. Most weeks you will complete an online discussion, or online journal, worth 5 points each. These points will make up your participation grade. Due to the interactive nature of many of these assignments, late responses for online discussions and journals will not be accepted.

Points Participation Criteria for Online Discussions and Journals

5 Outstanding: Demonstrates consistent on-time preparation, and constructively participates in weekly module activities and discussions; consistently demonstrates insight by asking questions, making statements that add to and facilitate the online discussion, and/or builds upon others’ comments. Consistently demonstrates respect for professor and other classmates.

4 Very Good: Demonstrates consistent on-time preparation, and constructively participates in weekly module activities and discussions; demonstrates insight by asking questions or making statements that are relevant, add to, and facilitate the online discussion.

3 Average: Demonstrates consistent on-time preparation; occasionally participates in weekly module discussions, regularly participates in other activities. Generally demonstrates respect for professor and other classmates.

2 Below Average: Demonstrates inconsistent timeliness/preparation for weekly module activities; may occasionally be unengaged in online activities and/or turn in turn in activities and assignments in late.

1 Poor: Demonstrates consistently poor preparation

0 Fail: Failure to turn in the weekly module participation assignment within the specified deadline will result in an automatic fail for the week.

Online Discussion/Journal Instructions

How will I benefit from having online discussions/journals? Online discussions/journals will help you to reflect on our class discussions, assignments, activities, career-related articles, and material from Career Guide. For online discussions, you will also learn from your classmates’ reflections, insights, questions, and experiences.

When are online discussions/journals due? Your online discussions/journals are due by 11:59pm on Sundays. You may post your entry any time during the week, as long as it is finished by the deadline. You will need to post 13 entries over the course (9 discussion posts and 4 journal entries). (Discussions are found under the Discussions link and Journals under the Tools link in Bb)

What should I write about? Each online discussion/journal should consist of these sections:

1. Reflections on Weekly Discussions/Assignments/Activities/Materials
The bulk of your online discussion/journal should be about your reflections related to the videos you will watch, assignments, activities, and readings from career-related articles and the textbook. Your professor will post a discussion/journal question that pertains to these areas.

2. Comment on Classmate’s Post (For online discussions only)
Read your classmate's posts and comment on at least one classmate’s post. Your comment should be respectful, substantive, insightful, and add value to your peer’s reflections.
Will I get feedback? I will provide feedback on all of your online posts possibly asking follow-up questions, responding to your questions and comments, or giving you additional things to think about.

How will my online discussion/journal be graded? The grades for your online discussions/journals will be based on:
Entries should be at least 250 words.
- Compliance with the requirements (on-time submission and required preparation for the discussion (i.e. videos, assignment, activity, reading).
- Quality of insights related to the discussion questions.
- Quality of insights related to your classmate’s post (online discussions only).

Assignments

Personal Pitch - 15 points, Due dates: Pitch Script 9/2 (5 points) and Pitch Video 9/9 (10 points)
Every professional must have an up-to-date personal pitch (or elevator speech). The personal pitch is a 30-60 second verbal summary of your background, work history, skills, education and work objective. This summary is something you will use in many professional settings, including interviews. You will submit the script on Bb under Assignments section of the corresponding weekly module for feedback, and the video you will make using InterviewStream and submit in the designated InterviewStream assignment folder for a grade.

Resume - 20 points, Due dates: R-1 (first draft) 9/16 (10 points) and R-2 (second draft) 10/7 (10 points)
A compelling resume is a key step to getting noticed and landing an interview. We will spend a lot of time improving your resume throughout the semester. There will be many opportunities to get feedback on your resume.

Cover Letter - 20 points, Due dates: CL-1 (first draft) 9/30 (10 points) and CL-2 (second draft) 10/21 (10 points)
Create a letter that is tailored to the industry and position that is of interest to you. If you cannot find a position that is of interest to you, you may create a prospecting letter to a company of your choice. Submit on Blackboard in the Assignments section under the corresponding weekly module. This assignment will be revised and graded 2 times.

LinkedIn Profile - 20 points, Due date: 11/11 (20 points)
We will be discussing the importance of professional networking during the semester. LinkedIn is today’s standard electronic platform that will allow you to connect with other professionals. Submit a link, or multiple screen shots of your LinkedIn profile under Assignments section of the corresponding weekly module on Bb.

Practice Interview Assignment - 30 points, Due date: 11/11 (30 points)
Career Services has purchased a cutting edge internet tool called InterviewStream that will help you improve your interviewing skills in the comfort of your own room! It includes over 3000 interview questions, answers and hints which have all been professionally produced on digital video. This project will require that you practice and record an interview via this tool. Further instructions found on Blackboard.

Informational Interview – 45 points, Due date: IIS (synthesis) 12/2 (30 points) and IIP (presentation) 12/2 (15 points)
An informational interview is the best way for you to learn about careers and companies in a comfortable environment for you and the employer. This kind of interview allows you to ask questions about the person you are meeting with, understand how they came to work in their company/industry, and get advice and information about what you need to do to prepare for a similar career. You will conduct one informational interview with someone in a field of interest (professional in the field, faculty and/or professor still working in the field). Before the interview, you are required to conduct research on the interviewee’s field and organization. NOTE: You may NOT interview a family member for this assignment. Further instructions and rubric found on Blackboard.

Career Action Plan - 35 points, Due date: Dec.9 (35 points)
The Career Action Plan is a project designed to help create your own personal career search strategy that you can implement immediately upon completion of this course! Detailed instructions will be posted on Blackboard.
Grading Scale:
Your grade will be assigned on a straight scale based on the number of points you earn as noted above. There are a total of 250 possible points for this semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Total Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>245-250</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>239-244</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>235-238</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>225-234</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>210-224</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>198-209</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>175-197</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>148-174</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>0-147</td>
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Extra-credit opportunities:
Throughout the semester there are opportunities for up to 10 extra credit points (in addition to the required assignments; not to replace them):

- Meet with a Career Services staff member for a scheduled 45-minute individual Career Counseling and Assessment appointment (obtain a signature from a career staff member and email it to me to receive credit) (5 points)
- Attend a Career Services Event/Panel* (obtain a signature from a career staff member and email it to me to receive credit) (5 points)
- Complete the Patriot Experience Career Readiness Pathway Level 1 (5 points)
- Submit your own idea with an explanation on how it will be beneficial to your career development (this must be approved by me to receive extra credit) (5 points)

COURSE SCHEDULE—For more detailed information, view the corresponding Weekly Module in Blackboard. Please note that Weeks 3, 6, 11, and 14-15 are more demanding. Please plan accordingly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Video/Reading</th>
<th>Assignments Due This Week (on Sundays by 11:59pm)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. 8/27-9/2</td>
<td>Course Introduction, Personal Pitch</td>
<td>• Read through the syllabus</td>
<td>*Online discussion #1: Profile &amp; Goals document with photo; don’t forget to comment on a peer’s post!</td>
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<td>• Read Career Guide: Personal Pitch section (pg.45-46)</td>
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<td>• Watch videos on Personal Pitch</td>
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<td>• Review PowerPoint slides</td>
<td>*Create and submit Personal Pitch script on Blackboard (Bb)</td>
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<td>2. 9/3-9/9</td>
<td>Networking</td>
<td>• Read Career Guide: Networking section (pg.45-50)</td>
<td>*Complete Personal Pitch video on InterviewStream</td>
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<td>• Watch videos on Networking</td>
<td>*Complete the pre-course survey</td>
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<td>3. 9/10-9/16</td>
<td>SkillScan, Resume</td>
<td>• Read Career Guide: Resume (pg. 7-30)</td>
<td>*Complete the SkillScan Drive assessment (do this before Online Journal #1)</td>
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<td>• Watch videos on Resumes</td>
<td>*Online Journal #1: SkillScan Reflection</td>
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<td>*Online discussion #2: Resume preparation using the T-chart</td>
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<td>*Submit resume incorporating learning from videos &amp; readings (R-1)</td>
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<td>Week</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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- Read Career Guide: Job Search (pg.50-56)  
- Watch videos on researching employers and the job search  
- Watch videos on preparing for the fair  
*Online discussion #3: Prepare for the Career Fair  
*Mark your calendar: Attend the Career Fair 10/3-10/4 (11am – 4pm)  
*Continue researching employers for the fair |
| 5.   | 9/24-9/30 | Cover Letters | - Read Career Guide: Cover Letters (pg. 31-41)  
- Watch videos on cover letters  
*Online discussion #4: Cover Letter and feedback (post early!)  
*Write a cover letter for position/company of interest and submit on Bb (CL-1) |
| 6.   | 10/1-10/7 | Attending the Resume Clinic and Career Fair (or alternative assignments if you cannot attend) | Attend the Resume Clinic and Career Fair—Continue researching employers who will be attending the Career Fair  
Bring your resume to the Resume Clinic on 10/1 (11am-5pm) or 10/2 (1-7pm) – optional extra credit  
*Attend the Career Fair (10/3 and/or 10/4)  
*Online discussion #5: Career Fair Debrief  
*Submit final version of resume (after reviewed at Resume Clinic) (R-2) |
| 7.   | 10/8-10/14 | Informational Interviews | - Read through sample Informational interview questions  
- Watch video on informational interviews  
*Online discussion #6: Informational Interview Plan  
*Take Strong Interest Inventory and prepare for Online Journal #2. |
| 8.   | 10/15-10/21 | Strong Interest Inventory (SII) Assessment | Read through your assessment results pdf  
*Submit final draft of Cover Letter on Bb (CL-2) |
| 9.   | 10/22-10/28 | Job & Work Environment Fit | Read articles on workplace culture  
*Online Journal #2: Strong Interest Inventory reflection  
*Online Journal #3: Workplace Expectations |
| 10.  | 10/29-11/4 | Job Interviewing | - Read Career Guide: Interviewing section (pg. 57-62)  
- Watch videos on interviewing  
*Online discussion #7: Practice Interviewing  
**Heads up: Career Action Plan due at the end of the semester; don’t wait until the last minute to complete the assignment |
| 11.  | 11/5-11/11 | LinkedIn | - Watch videos on LinkedIn  
- Read through all supplemental material  
*Online discussion #8: LinkedIn Summary  
*Complete the practice interview on InterviewStream (PI)  
*Complete your LinkedIn profile (LIN) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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**Heads up: Informational Interview Assignment due in two weeks!** |
| 13.  | 11/19-11/25 | Thanksgiving Recess | NONE | None |
| 14.  | 11/26-12/2 | No new topic--work on your Informational Interview Assignment due this week | NONE | *Online discussion #9: Practice Interviewing  
*Informational Interview Summary and presentation (IIS & IIP)* |
| 15.  | 12/3-12/9  | Wrap-up and Next Steps | NONE | *Career Action Plan due on Bb (CAP)  
*Complete:  
- Post-Course Survey  
- University Course Evaluation (Grades will be posted on Patriot Web once the online surveys are completed)* |