

# LA&S 492 Topics and Problems: Job Search Strategies for Liberal Arts & Sciences Students

## Syllabus – Fall 2012

### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is designed to introduce students to the fundamentals of planning and organizing job search strategies. Emphasis is placed on identification of individual goals, assessment of talents, exploration of career options, analysis of the job market, effective use of employment search tools (e.g., resumes, cover letters, interviewing, networking and management of career pathways). The course stresses the value of the arts and sciences degree in the labor market and develops job search skills that will be useful throughout life.

**COURSE CREDIT:** 1 credit hour course, primarily for junior or senior students.

**DAY/TIME OF CLASS:** Thursdays, 2:30-3:20 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Relays Room, third floor, Burge Union

**INSTRUCTOR:** Chance Clutter – Assistant Director  
P: 864-7674 Email: c.clutter@ku.edu

Craig Warlick – Graduate Teaching Assistant  
P: 864-7674 Email: c981w725@ku.edu

Office: University Career Center  
110 Burge Union  
785-864-3624  
KUCareerHawk.com

### TEXTBOOK and REQUIRED MATERIALS:

National Association of Colleges and Employers (2012). *Job Choices 2012*. Bethlehem, PA: (Given to you by Instructor or accessed online at: [www.jobchoicesonline.com](http://www.jobchoicesonline.com)) Other handouts provided by instructor during the semester.

*KU Career Connections* Registration. Complete the form in your information packet and turn it in on the first day of class. A guide, also included in your packet, will give you instructions to login, upload your resume on to the web-based system, access job vacancies, and sign up for on-campus interviewing. See the course expectations for further details. **This is a course requirement for all students.**

*StrengthsQuest* assessment. There is a required \$20.00 fee. See the instruction sheet in your information packet.

### OPTIONAL:

Bolles, R. N. (current). *What Color is Your Parachute? A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters and Career-Changers*. Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press.

### COURSE PURPOSE:

The purpose of this course is to assist Liberal Arts and Sciences students in assessing the value of their education/skills and managing their own career and employment search. The course will facilitate the development of life-long skills used in career development: self-assessment, career/employment researching and networking, job search skills, career management and adaptability to the changing world of work. *Job Search Strategies for Liberal Arts and Sciences Students* provides the opportunity to learn and practice career planning and job searching strategies that will be useful throughout life.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES:

At the completion of LA&S 492 – Job Search Strategies for Liberal Arts & Sciences Students, students will be able to:

- Assess personal strengths, skills, interests and values that influence the career search
- Identify marketable skills developed from a liberal arts education and demonstrate how to convey the value of transferable skills to employers
- Utilize networking strategies to identify future employment alternatives
- Construct a professional resume that clearly outlines student's unique skills and qualifications
- Write an action-oriented and concise cover letter and a professional thank you letter
- Research resources to assist with the employment search and acquire organizational knowledge
- Effectively use online professional networking sites
- Demonstrate an understanding of the dynamics of interviewing and effectively present their unique contributions in a mock interview setting
- Determine transitional issues for post-graduation endeavors and manage career advancement

## COURSE EXPECTATIONS

### **Attendance is required and expected.**

Because attendance is paramount to your success with the job search, you are expected to be in class each week. You are permitted one absence from class (excused or unexcused). **Each additional absence after the first, NO MATTER THE REASON, results in a 5-point deduction from the total points for the class** (assignments add up to 100 total points for the class). If you come to class, sign in and leave early FOR ANY REASON, you will be considered absent for that class period. If you wish to successfully complete this course, you must plan to attend each week for the entire 50 minute class.

Because we only have 50 minutes and will bring in many guest speakers during the semester, we will start class promptly at 2:30. Please be advised to act with courtesy and professionalism and arrive on time.

One final note: Do not expect to get a “freebie” absence for scheduling a job interview during class time. If you choose to do this, you are still missing class and are still held to the same attendance policy as stated above.

### **KU Career Connections Registration**

You must register for KU Career Connections and upload your resume to the system by **September 27**. Turn in your completed registration form (provided in the course packet of handouts) on the first day of class. If you are a Journalism or Business major, you will register in the J-School or B-School Career Centers, not at the UCC. Failure to sign-up for KU Career Connections will result in failing the class because you must be registered in order to sign up for an employer mock interview, which is required to pass the class.

### **Late assignments are NOT accepted**

Assignments will be collected during class on the due date. It is assumed that you will exhibit professionalism throughout the course, just as you would when conducting a job search, which includes turning in assignments on time. Because there are no exams in the class, your entire grade is based on your assignments. Therefore, it is extremely important to pay attention to deadlines and submit your assignments on the due dates.

*Please note: computer or printer problems are not acceptable excuses for assignments not being turned in at the time and date required.* You may email the assignment to the instructor prior to (not after) class on the due date (c.clutter@ku.edu). Since there are many computers available on campus to use, problems with your personal computer are not acceptable excuses for not being able to submit an assignment on time.

Again – let me stress this: I do not accept late assignments, period. End of story. Students are expected to exhibit professionalism by turning in assignments on time, on the date due. Do not come to me and expect special exemptions just for you. This is not how the “real world” works, and it isn't acceptable in this class either.

### **Extra Credit**

Extra credit assignments are available. Extra credit assignments are worth 5 points each with a maximum of 15 points possible for the semester. Check Blackboard for options. Extra credit will be accepted until the last day of class, December 6, 2012. Absolutely no extra credit will be accepted after the last day of class.

## Email Notices

I will occasionally send email reminders, notices, and sometimes current job openings through Blackboard to the class. When I do this, the email will clearly indicate in the subject line that the information is about the LA&S 492 job search strategies class. These messages will go to whatever email address you have officially registered with KU. If you do not check your KU email, you will miss this information from class. I cannot update or change this address in Blackboard, so if you want these messages sent to you at another address, you will need to make this change to your officially registered KU email.

## Students With Disabilities

The KU office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) coordinates accommodations and services for all students who are eligible. If you have a disability for which you wish to request accommodations and have not contacted SSD, please do so as soon as possible. Their office is located in 22 Strong Hall; their phone number is 785-864-2620 (V/TTY). Information about their services can be found at <http://www.ku.edu/~ssdis>. Please also contact me privately in regard to your needs in this course.

## ASSIGNMENTS

### Professional Resume

You will complete a rough draft of your resume (**due Aug. 30**), have it critiqued and returned to you, then revise it for final submission. For full credit, staple and submit both the critiqued rough draft and the revised version of your resume. **Final resume due Sept. 27**. For this one assignment only, if you do not receive full credit for your final resume, you may work on it and turn it back in for full points.

### StrengthsQuest

Use the StrengthQuest instruction sheet provided in your packet to complete this assignment online. There is a \$20.00 fee required for this assessment. You will pay online with a credit card, or, if you prefer to pay cash, you may come into 110 Burge Union and pay in person. You will need to complete the assessment prior to class on Sept. 6<sup>th</sup>, as the instructor will be printing out an additional report for you. Plan to complete StrengthsQuest by Sunday, Sept. 2nd.

**Business Career Fair** – Attend the Business Career Fair on **Thurs. September 15th** in the Kansas Union. The fair is held from 12:00 to 5:00 p.m. in the Kansas Union Ballroom. You will need to take the Career Fair Form provided in your course information packet with you to the career fair to complete this assignment. There is also a copy of this form on Blackboard. Be sure to have a staff person at the Career Fair sign your form. Complete the questions on the form and bring it to class the following week (**Sept. 20**) to receive points for completing this assignment.

### Professional Cover Letter

You will find a job announcement of interest to you and write a letter of application to the job. (This could also be written for an internship announcement that you are applying for). You are required to print or keep a copy of this announcement to turn in with your assignment. You may use KU Career Connections to find an appropriate job announcement. Indeed.com is also recommended. Be sure to address the qualifications and job requirements that the employer is seeking in your letter. Market yourself to the employer by highlighting your experiences that will make you a good candidate for this job. **For full credit, you are required to submit a copy of the job announcement with your one-page cover letter.** Your letter should be completely error-free. Employers will disregard application letters with errors, so it is expected that you will carefully proofread your letter before turning it in. You are encouraged to have a friend or relative proofread your letter before you submit this and all assignments. The letter will automatically have two (2) points taken off the grade for typographical or grammatical errors. **Due Oct. 25.**

### Informational Interview Summary and Thank You Letter

Interview a professional from your area of career or job interest using questions provided in class. Write a 2 to 3-page paper discussing what you learned about the career and/or particular industry. Carefully follow the instructions on page 7 of the syllabus for this assignment. (**due Nov. 8**)

- **Thank You Letter** – You will write a thank you letter after your informational interview. Please attach a copy to the Informational Interview summary and send the original to the professional granting you the interview. (**due Nov. 8**)

### Employer Mock Interview

During the designated weeks you will sign up for a mock interview on KU Career Connections with a scheduled employer at UCC. A list of the employers conducting mock interviews and instructions for signing up will be provided to you on Sept. 27 in class. The interview schedules will be available on **Sept. 27** and you will have until **Friday, Oct. 14** to select a mock interview and sign up. If you need to change your time for any reason after the **Oct. 14 deadline**, contact the instructor immediately to make this arrangement.

You must sign up for a mock interview to receive a passing grade in the class. There are no exceptions or substitutions for this assignment. **If you do not sign up for an interview or fail to show up for your assigned interview time, you will fail the class.** You will attach the employer evaluation (form provided) to a self-evaluation summary of your strengths/weaknesses (be specific) during the interview—provide specific plans for improving your interviewing skills. Your summary does not need to be longer than a page, but do include specific examples of what you did well during the interview, what areas you need to work on and some specific plans you have to improve your job interviews in the future. **(due Nov. 15)**

### Final Paper

*Where I am, where I want to go, transition plans.* The final paper combines all you have learned during the course about yourself, your career plans, your job search skills, and plans for career management after graduation. Include in your discussion why you selected your college major and how you will use the skills you've developed during college in your future career. The paper should include: your strengths and weaknesses, your career focus, a job search skill critique, and career management plans. What are your career plans at this point? If you do not have a specific career focus, where are you in the process of discovering your career interests and making plans to pursue them? Be sure to devote a portion of the paper to your future plans and how you plan to transition to the world of work or graduate school. Length of 2-3 pages typed. **(due Dec. 6)**

## EVALUATION

Assignments will be collected during class on the due date. See the note on late assignments above. Point allocation for each of the assignments is below.

Assignments	Points	Due Date
Resume Draft (not graded, no points)	---	8/30
StrengthsQuest assessment	15	9/6 (complete by 9/2)
Business Career Fair on Sept. 15th	5	9/22
Final Resume	20	9/27
Cover Letter	10	10/25
Informational Interview Paper	15	11/8
Thank you letter	5	11/8
Mock Interview Summary	15	11/15
Final Paper	15	12/6
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>100*</b>	
(115 points possible with 3 extra credit assignments, 5 points each)		
*Failure to register for KU Career Connections (9/27) will result in failure of the class		
*Failure to sign up or attend a mock interview will result in a failure of the class.		
After one absence, each subsequent absence, no matter the reason, will result in a 5-point deduction from the total points.		

Grading Scale:	
90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
Below 59	F

**LA&S 492: Job Search Strategies for Liberal Arts and Sciences Students**  
**TENTATIVE OUTLINE – FALL 2012**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading Assignment</b>	<b>Project Assignment</b>
8/23	Introductions Course Expectations/Assignments Resumes - introduction	Job Choices: pg. 8-9  (Bolles: Ch 1-3)	- <b>Student Information Form</b> - <b>KU Career Connections</b> - <b>Registration Form</b> (completed in class)
8/30	Creating Your Dynamic Resume	Job Choices: pg. 27-31  Resumes, References and Cover Letters (blue booklet): resume section  (Bolles: Ch. 5)	<b>Resume draft due</b> (You may use Optimal Resume to create your draft resume at <a href="http://www.KUcareerhawk.com">www.KUcareerhawk.com</a> )
9/6	Understanding yourself and your Career Development – Using your strengths in the world of work.  Value of liberal arts degrees: Identifying and selling your skills, Identifying your job targets  Follow up with resumes – return rough drafts with comments	StrengthsQuest assignment: Use the instructions sheet in your packet. Print a copy of your five strengths and bring it to class  (Bolles: Ch. 11, pgs 179-227)	<b>StrengthsQuest Assessment</b> - <b>Complete it online by Sunday, Sept. 2nd</b> - I will be printing a report from your results which I will give you in class.  -Revise your resume for the Business Career Fair.
9/13	Career Fair Tips-How to successfully attend a career fair	Job Choices: pg. 16, 20-21  Handout on Blackboard: How to attend a career fair  Handout in class: job search worksheet	<b>Attend Business Career Fair on Sept. 20, Kansas Union Ballroom, 12:00 to 4:00 p.m.</b> Take the career fair form with you to the fair.
9/20	*Note – <u>No</u> class meeting in the Burge today. Please: <b>Attend Business Career Fair on Sept. 20, Kansas Union Ballroom, 12:00 to 4:00 p.m.</b>  -Take the <i>career fair form</i> with you to the fair.	Job Choices: pgs. 12-13  Handouts on Blackboard: Marketing your liberal arts degree, job search timeline.  (Bolles: Ch. 11, pgs. 228-265)	<b>Complete Career Fair Form</b> (and bring to class on 27th along with Revised/Final resume)
9/27	Online professional networking; Career/organization research skills	Job Choices: pg. 17  Handouts on Blackboard: Researching Employers, Online Image	<b>Career Fair form due</b> <b>Final Resume due</b> Employer mock interview sign up begins. Go to KU Career Connections and select a mock interview time by Oct. 14 <sup>th</sup>

10/4	Networking and informational interviewing	Job Choices: pg. 14-15 Handouts on Blackboard: Informational Interviews (Bolles: Ch. 4)	Informational Interview Paper and Thank You: Due: Nov.8  Reminder: Go to KU Career Connections and select a mock interview time by Oct. 14 <sup>th</sup>
10/11	Cover letters–Correspondence and email etiquette	Job Choices: pg. 22-26  Resumes, References and Cover Letters (blue booklet): cover letters section	<b>Deadline to sign up for mock interview – Sunday, Oct. 14</b>  Print job description and write cover letter for that job (Due Oct. 25 <sup>th</sup> )
10/18	Develop your interviewing skills- Behavioral interview practice	Job Choices: pg. 32-36	Reminder: Start planning your informational interview, due Nov. 15 <sup>th</sup>
10/25	Interviewing – Putting the whole package together	UCC Preparing for Job Interviews Booklet  (Bolles: Ch. 6)	<b><u>Cover Letter Due</u></b>
11/1	Government and Non-Profit Careers (Guest Panel)	Job Choices: pg. 18-19  Handout in class: Working for a Non-profit Organization	Mock Interviews at UCC during the week of Oct. 30 through Nov.4
11/8	Recruiter Perspective – what employers look for when recruiting new hires (Guest Panel)		<b><u>Informational Interview Summary and Thank You Letter Due</u></b>  Mock Interviews at UCC during the week of Nov. 7 through 11
11/15	Navigating job offers and the art of salary negotiation	Handout on Blackboard: Negotiating your salary  (Bolles: Ch. 7)	<b><u>Mock Interview Summary Due</u></b> Attach your evaluation form to your one-page summary
11/22	<b>Thanksgiving Break – no classes</b>		
11/29	Transition from college to the workplace; Managing your Career	Handout in class: The critical first year on the job	
12/6	The long distance job search Final comments Course evaluation		<b><u>Final Self-Evaluation Paper Due</u></b>