**COUN 2970 - Special Topics in College Student Development**

*The Senior Year Experience - A Transition to the World of Work*

**Fall Semester 2006**

**Course Information:**
- Class Days: Tuesday/Thursday
- Class: 9:30 – 10:50 AM
- Class Location: 355 Aero Building

**Required Texts:**
  - Connie Harris – Michael Henle – Michael Stebleton
  - Prentice Hall: Upper Saddle River, NJ
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**Instructor Information:**
- Name: Jack Walls, Ph.D., NCC, Career Counselor
- Career Development Services (CDS)
- Office: 303 Martin Hall
- Phone/FAX: 844-3857/844-3871
- Email: wallsll@auburn.edu
- Office Hours: **Wednesday 9:30 – 11:30 AM**
  **Friday 1 – 3 PM**

**Course Description:**

The central focus of the course will be on the practical, developmental, and psychological elements experienced during a successful transition from life as an undergraduate student to the life of a citizen/worker. Emphasis will be placed upon integrating academic experiences into post-graduate plans of employment and life outside college. An intensive career planning process will be used to incorporate self-awareness, career exploration, and self-marketing techniques into plans for successful employment and career goals after college. The course will cover a holistic dimension of practical issues that deal with the process of leaving college, including the following: personal, social, vocational, political, civic, financial, and psychological.

**Course Goals:** After completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Prepare for the process of transition during and after their senior year, including examination of individual issues (such as personal, social, vocational, financial, political, civic, spiritual, physical, and psychological) from a developmental perspective.
2. Understand and implement the components of a career development and planning process.

3. Demonstrate improved writing and speaking skills in assignments of both an academic and professional nature.

4. Work as an effective member of a team to analyze, evaluate and decide the best courses of action, when confronted with a complex decision.

5. Organize, monitor team progress, and present their work to their peers for critical review and discussion.

6. Evaluate the practical issues facing graduating seniors through a series of seminars in areas such as deciding where to live and work; buy or rent a home, automobile and insurance; alumni involvement and responsibilities; adapting to the first year on the job; traveling for business and pleasure; managing wellness; and how best to adapt to new relationships and lifestyles.

7. Prepare a professional resume and cover letter and successfully interview for their career position of choice.

**Major Course Requirements:**

1. *Active Participation/Attendance (20%):* Each student will be expected to read all assigned readings prior to class, and to be prepared to participate in discussion, in the question, answer, and evaluation portions of presentations by fellow students, as well as with guest speakers.

   a. *Class Presentation and Discussion (5%)* - Each student will present a 5-minute summary of an article to the class on a topic related to transitions or career development after college. Handouts for the instructor and each member of the class will be a one-page summary.

   b. *Attendance (15%)* - Due to the fact that this course is highly interactive and a variety of topics are covered, **participation and class attendance are mandatory, and will be assessed daily.** In addition, when guest speakers are invited, these professionals are giving of their time and expertise to visit with the class. For this reason, students are expected to participate by being prepared to ask relevant questions of our guests. All requests for excused absences should be brought to the instructor's attention before the class is missed, if possible, and as early as possible. Students should do all in their power to avoid being late for class. Two late arrivals to class will count as one absence, unless the instructor agrees the tardy arrival was beyond your control. If you arrive late for class, it is your responsibility to inform the instructor at the end of the class to make sure you are recorded as present for class. Each unexcused absence will reduce your participation score by ten points. **Two unexcused absences will reduce your earned final grade one full letter grade. A third unexcused absence will reduce your earned final grade two full letter grades. If you have four unexcused absences, you will fail the course.**

2. *Career Planning Process (40%):* In order for you to master the skills necessary for career development and enhancement, this area of work will involve learning and implementing the processes of self-assessment, career exploration, decision-making, and self-marketing, which are all
necessary for successful transitions from college to the world of work and for future career changes. This process will require you to complete all of the following activities:

a. Completion and submission of all exercises and handouts regarding career planning and self-assessment.

b. Career Analysis Project:

(1) Completion of the TypeFocus assessment, including participating in a class interpretation session, and submission of a 1 to 2-page self-assessment paper.

(2) Write an analysis on your primary occupation of interest by researching the occupation using resources in the RBD Library, CDS, the Internet, and direct contact with organization representatives to investigate the specifics of your field of interest; the main responsibilities; needed training; specifics of the working environment; the job outlook; additional sources of information and job leads for the occupation; potential earnings and intangible, personal and professional characteristics of the position. This report should be 2-4 double-spaced pages in length.

(3) Submit a cover letter, a resume, and a 1-2 page double-spaced strategic marketing plan that maps out your job search strategy to include resources that will aid you in finding your first professional job. Refer to the Career Development Service's Handbook to give you a good guide for drafting your documents.

(4) Conduct an informational interview with a professional (either in-person or by phone) working directly or indirectly in your field of interest using the procedures and questions discussed in class and on the handout given to you in class. This report should be 1-2 double-spaced pages in length.

(5) Create a portfolio **table of contents and plan of action** in an effort to integrate the results of your overall development and activity/work efforts during your college career. The table of contents will involve listing "products" such as papers, awards, students organizations, projects, committees, etc. that you have produced or been a member of during your college career that illustrate your accomplishments and skills related to marketing yourself to employers. The plan of action describes how you will use the portfolio to illustrate your experience, strengths, and talents that make you an ideal candidate for the job you are seeking. Portfolios can be organized in chronological or functional formats.

3. **Team Project (20%)**: The class will be divided into teams of 4-5 members whose assignment will be to analyze a city of their choice as a potential site for college graduates to live and work. Project structure should be organized around three themes: strengths, weaknesses, and uniqueness. Information should include analysis of economic, financial, social, climate, and cultural elements, as well as an overview of major employers in the area. Grades will be based on organization, presentation, and depth of information developed. Each member of the group will participate in the presentation, and professional dress, handouts, and visual aids are expected.
4. **Examinations (20%)**: There will be two in-class tests given based on assigned readings, class presentations and discussions, handouts, article presentations, and seminar discussion. Each exam will be open book and the use of notes and handouts are also encouraged.

**Course Policies:**

1. Students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive on time. Penalties will be as described in the [Major Course Requirements](#) section of this syllabus.

2. Late assignments will result in a 10% per class day grade reduction for the assignment.

3. **Disability Statement**: Students who have a documented disability should notify the instructor as soon as possible, but not later than the first two weeks to discuss their needs.

4. **Academic Honesty Statement**: Students and faculty are required to abide by the Student Academic Honesty Code described in the 2006/2007 Tiger Cub.

5. Incomplete grades and absences beyond the minimum will be considered only for bona fide medical reasons (see Tiger Cub).

6. Written reports will be submitted to the instructor typed (size 12 font), and double-spaced.

**Grading Policy**: The final grade will be determined by evaluating your performance against the following point system:

1. **Attendance/Active Participation** 100 Points
2. **Career Planning Project** 200 Points
3. **Team Project** 100 Points
4. **First Test & Second Test** 100 Points

Your total number of earned points will then be compared to the following scale to determine your final grade:

- A = 450 - 500 (90 - 100%)
- B = 400 - 449 (80 - 89%)
- C = 350 - 399 (70 - 79%)
- D = 300 - 349 (60 - 69%)
- F = 299 or less (59% or less)
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Course Syllabus:

Class # 1 – Aug 17  

Course Introduction

**Activity:** Introductions and overview of the course, its syllabus, policies and requirements

**Assigned Reading:** Preface, pages xiii to xvii and pages 1 to 4 in your textbook, *Hired! The Job-Hunting/Career-Planning Guide, 3rd Edition*

Class # 2 – Aug 22

Career Development Process

**Activity:** Lecture on the Career Development Process

Class # 3 – Aug 24

Career Development Process

**Activity:** Lecture/Discussion Continued

**Assigned Reading:** Pages 5 to 38 in your textbook, *Hired! The Job-Hunting/Career-Planning Guide, 3rd Edition*

Class # 4 – Aug 29

TypeFocus

**Lecture and Demonstration:** How to use TypeFocus for career success.

**Assignment:** Exercises 1.1 through 1.9 in your textbook, and complete the personality type assessment using TypeFocus. Please print out and bring your TypeFocus results to the next class.

Class # 5 – Aug 31

The Self-Assessment Process

**Activity:** Lecture/Discussion

**Assignment:** Write a 1 to 2-page self-assessment paper due Sep 5th


Class # 6 – Sep 5

Exploring Careers

**Activity:** Virtual tour of Career Development Services (CDS)

**Assignment Due:** Self-assessment paper

**References:** Occupational Outlook Handbook & TypeFocus

Class # 7 – Sep 7

Exploring Careers
Activity: Work on Career Analysis Project # 2

References: Occupational Outlook Handbook & TypeFocus

Assignment: Career Analysis Project # 2 due Sep 14th


Class # 8 – Sep 12

Writing Resumes for Tiger Recruiting Link (TRL)

Activity: Tiger Recruiting Link (TRL) Orientation

Assigned Readings: Handouts on how to write effective resumes and cover letters

Class # 9 – Sep 14

Writing Effective Cover Letters & Resumes

Activity: Lecture/Discussion on Cover Letter, Resume, and Self-Marketing Plan

Assignment: Career Analysis Project # 3 due Sep 21st

Assignment Due: Career Analysis Project (2) Due


Class # 10 – Sep 19

Informational Interviewing

Activity: Lecture/Discussion


Assignment: Career Analysis Project (4) due Nov 30th

Class # 11 – Sep 21

Developing A Portfolio

Activity: Lecture/Discussion

Assignment Due: Career Analysis Project (3) Due

Class # 12 – Sep 26

Developing A Portfolio

Activity: Work on Portfolio table of contents

Assignment: Career Analysis Project (5) due Oct 12th


Class # 13 – Sep 28

The Job Search Process

Activity: Lecture/Discussion

Class # 14 – Oct 3

Researching Companies and Cities
Activity: Using on-line resources and the RBD Library in Your Job Search & Research on Companies and Cities

Class # 15 – Oct 5  
Test # 1

Class # 16 – Oct 10  
Test # 1 Review  

Class # 17 – Oct 12  
Interviewing for Success  
Activity: Lecture/Discussion  
Assignment Due: Career Analysis Project (5) Due  
Assigned Readings: Handout on Business Etiquette

Class # 18 – Oct 17  
Business Etiquette and the Second Interview  
Activity: Lecture/Discussion  
Assigned Readings: Auburn University’s Career Services Handbook, pages 55 and 56; and the handout on Negotiating Your Salary

Class # 19 – Oct 19  
Negotiating the Job Offer  
Activity: Lecture/Discussion  
Assignment Due: Individual Presentation Topic  

Class # 20 – Oct 24  
Financial Planning  

Class # 21 – Oct 26  
Relationships & Lifestyle Choices  
Activity: Lecture/Discussion  
Guest Speaker: Adapting to Relationships & Personal Change  
Dr. Doug Hankes, Staff Psychologist  
Student Counseling Services, Auburn University  

Class # 22 – Oct 31  
Your First Year On the Job
Activity: Lecture/Discussion
Assigned Reading: Harvard Case Study
Assignment: Team Project Outlines

Class # 23 – Nov 2  
Harvard Case Study

Activity: Seminar Discussion

Class # 24 – Nov 7  
Individual Presentations

Activity: Individual Presentations
Assignment Due: Team Project Outlines Due

Class # 25 – Nov 9  
Individual Presentations

Activity: Individual Presentations

Class # 26 – Nov 14  
Group Presentations

Activity: Team Presentations

Class # 27 – Nov 16  
Group Presentations

Activity: Team Presentations

Thanksgiving Break – Nov 20th through Nov 24th

Class # 28 – Nov 28  
Test # 2

Class # 29 – Nov 30th  
Test # 2 Feedback, Course Review & Wrap Up

December 5th, 2006  
No class due to Southern Association of Colleges & Employers Conference