

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

## Syllabus – Fall 2007

### 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:** Tuesdays, 2:30-3:20 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Gridiron Room, first floor, Burge Union

**INSTRUCTOR:** Ann Hartley – Associate Director  
ahartley@ku.edu  
864-7674

Graduate Assistant - TBA

Office: University Career Center  
110 Burge Union  
864-3624  
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### TEXTBOOK and REQUIRED MATERIALS:

National Association of Colleges and Employers (2007). *Job Choices 2008*. Bethlehem, PA: Author. (Given to you by Instructor) 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. The following week in class you will be given a password that allows you to 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.**

### 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 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
- Analyze job market trends and future career pathways
- 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
- 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. To receive credit for attending class, you must remember to sign the attendance sheet each week. If you forget and do not sign in, you will be considered absent even if you were in 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.

**KU Career Connections Registration** – You must register for KU Career Connections and upload your resume to the system by **September 28**. Turn in your completed registration form (provided in the course packet of handouts) on the first day of class and the following week you will receive your password and instructions. If you are a Journalism or Business major, you will register in the J-School or B-School Career Centers, not at 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** – 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. The general policy of the class is that **no late work will be accepted**. However, exceptions are made from time to time. Late assignments, when accepted, will not be given full credit. Carefully read the conditions below under which late work is accepted

*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 if needed. (ahartley@ku.edu) Assignments immediately lose two points off the possible grade when they are turned in after the class in which they are due, and one point for each additional day that they are late thereafter.

**Extra Credit** – Extra credit assignments are available. Extra credit assignments are worth no more than 5 points each with a maximum of 15 points possible for the semester. Check on Blackboard and see the instructor for options. All extra credit papers must be attached to the extra credit form provided on Blackboard. Print a copy of the form, fill in the required information at the top of the form and attach it to your paper before turning it in. Extra credit will be accepted until the last day of class, December 4, 2007.

**Email Notices** – I will occasionally send email reminders, notices, and sometimes current job openings through Blackboard to the class. When I do this, I 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

### Self-Assessment

This assignment asks you to evaluate your values, interests, and skills related to career decision-making. A copy of the self-assessment handout is provided with the course materials and is also on Blackboard. Be sure to complete all the sections of the assignment for full credit. *If you leave parts of the assignment blank, you will not receive full credit.* Assignment is due in class on **Aug. 28**.

**Business Career Fair** – Attend the Business Career Fair on **Thurs. September 20** 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 Career Fair sign your form. Complete the questions on the form and bring it to class the following week (**Sept. 25**) to receive points for completing this assignment.

### Professional Resume

You will complete a rough draft of your resume (**due Sept. 4**), have it critiqued by a member of the UCC staff, then revise it for final submission. For full credit, staple and submit both the critiqued rough draft and the revised version of your resume. **You may re-do your resume until you receive full points. (Final resume due Oct. 2)**

### Professional Cover Letter

You will find a job announcement of interest to you and write a letter of application to the job. 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. Career Builder 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. 9**)

### 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 Oct. 30**)

- **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 Oct. 30**)

### 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 prior to October 1. The interview schedules will be available on **October 1** and you will have until **Tuesday October 16** to select a mock interview and sign up. After October 16, the interview schedules will be opened to students outside of the class and you will not be guaranteed a time slot. If you need to change your time for any reason after the **October 16 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. 13)**

**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. 4)**

**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.

<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Points</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Self-Assessment Exercises/Reflections	15	8/28
Resume Draft (not graded, no points)		9/4
Business Career Fair on Sept. 20th	5	9/25
Final Resume	20	10/2
Cover Letter	10	10/9
Informational Interview Paper	15	10/30
Thank you letter	5	10/30
Mock Interview Summary	15	11/13
Final Paper	15	12/4
<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 (9/28) will result in 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.		

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