

**FOR 4934**  
**Professional Development in the Natural Sciences**  
**Course Syllabus -- Spring 2016**

**Course Coordinator:**

**Kimberly Bohn, Ph.D.**

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**Credits:** 1

**Class meets:** *Tuesdays 4-5pm.*

Course materials, lectures and discussion posts will be available for students to participate on-line. At least 2 required on-campus visits will be necessary for practicing face-to-face interview skills. These will be scheduled later in the semester.

**Course Description:**

Effective professional skills are needed to successfully obtain employment in the competitive job markets of science-based fields. In this one credit course students will learn and practice techniques for building an effective resume and cover letter and for enhancing interview skills, with emphasis on a formal job search and securing employment upon graduation. Professional ethics and standard business practices will also be discussed.

**Course Format:**

The course format is designed as a series of 'workshops' so that by the end of the course students will have a resume, cover letter, and interview skills suitable for job applications. The class time will be spent either discussing how to develop those documents/skills or reviewing and editing each other's work. Occasionally, guest speakers, including alumni and local professionals, will be brought in to discuss a variety of topics related to job searches and opportunities, what employers look for in a good candidate, and professional behavior.

**Course Objectives:**

- 1) To learn how and where to look for the best jobs to suit individual skills and interests.
- 2) To develop proper business communications skills to obtain the job; including attractive cover letters, resumes, and brochures for businesses
- 3) To participate in a mock interview and to act as interviewer in order to develop proper interview and post-interview etiquette.
- 4) To initiate interactions with professionals and potential employers

**Prerequisites:** none

**Textbook:** none

**Electronic communication:**

Course materials, such as reading materials and examples will be available through e-learning site. You should read through any assigned handouts prior to class in order to participate in the discussion. If you cannot attend the class in person, a discussion post will be available for you to participate with the class (though live attendance is highly encouraged). All written assignments will also be submitted through the e-learning site.

Announcements for class and emails will be posted through the e-learning site. I strongly suggest you set up your e-learning account to forward these announcements and messages to your UF webmail and/or be checking the e-learning site on a regular basis.

**DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS:**

**Resume:** A resume should be concise, yet attractive for potential employers. You will review example resumes that will help you build a strong profile. You will develop a first draft of your resume outside of class and receive feedback from fellow students and instructors during class to make adjustments before the final resume is submitted.

**Cover Letter:** You will select an actual job announcement and practice how to develop a 1 to 2 page cover letter describing why you are interested in a particular position and demonstrating how your experiences and skills will meet the needs of the particular position and organization.

**Mock Interview:** The mock interview will be a role play activity where students will get a chance to both ask questions and provide answers. The purpose of the mock interview is to give the students constructive feedback on their interview skills in preparation for the formal interview. You will receive a participation grade for completing this activity and given a formal grade for the ‘formal interview’

**Formal Interview:** The formal interview will involve a 2 to 3 member panel including UF faculty, staff, or local professionals as interviewers. This will be your opportunity to demonstrate the interview skills developed from the mock interview.

**Brochure:** Many students in natural sciences go on to work for consulting agencies or start their own businesses. You will practice and demonstrate skills for developing a brochure or advertisement for “selling” your skills or business in the form of a tri-fold brochure or other creative work.

**‘Interaction w/ Professionals’ Report:** Each student will be responsible for interviewing and/or shadowing a professional in a job of interest to you (related to your major). You will also interview this person and provide a written report summarizing your interview or experiences and describing the company/agency they work for, their job requirements, and what skills their employers look for when hiring new graduates. You will also provide a brief, informal oral report to the class. Bonus points awarded if you can also get that person to speak to the entire class.

**Grading:**

Assignment	% of grade	Criteria for assessment
1 <sup>st</sup> drafts of written work	10	Timeliness of submission
Cover letter- final	20	Appropriate content, grammar, writing skills, formatting
Resume- final	20	Appropriate content, grammar, writing skills, formatting
Brochure/ creative work	10	Appropriate content, grammar, formatting
Formal Interview	20	Professional demeanor, ability to answer questions
Interaction Report	10	Appropriate content, grammar, writing skills, formatting
Class Participation	10	Contribution to discussion, edits, and mock interview

<i>Letter Grade</i>	A	A <sup>-</sup>	B <sup>+</sup>	B	B <sup>-</sup>	C <sup>+</sup>	C	C <sup>-</sup>	D <sup>+</sup>	D	D <sup>-</sup>	E
<i>Numeric Value</i>	93-100	90-92	86-89	83-85	80-82	76-79	73-75	70-72	66-69	63-65	60-62	<60

**Attendance:**

Many of the scheduled periods have been set for revising and editing your assignments and the feedback you receive during these workshops and/or through our on-line discussion posts will undoubtedly improve your final products (and grade). Your participation grade is also based on your participation each week. In the event of an absence, you will receive a 0 for participation unless excused by the professor prior to the start of class.

**Late Policy:** Rough drafts of the resume, cover letter and brochure are due to the instructor by **Monday at noon through Canvas**, so that I can review your drafts prior to class. Final drafts of the resume and cover letter can turned in electronically to the instructor by 5:00 pm of the due date. Unless previously arranged with the instructor, late assignments will not be accepted. Approved late assignments must be turned in no later than two weeks following the original due date. Because guest panelists for the formal interviews must be scheduled well in advance, only students with a valid and prior excuse will be given a make-up interviews.

**Online Course Evaluation Process**

Student assessment of instruction is an important part of efforts to improve teaching and learning. At the end of the semester, students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course using a standard set of university and college criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open for students to complete during the last two or three weeks of the semester; students will be notified of the specific times when they are open. You will have an opportunity during one of the last class periods to fill these out. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

**Academic Honesty**

The University of Florida requires all members of its community to be honest in all endeavors. Cheating, plagiarism, and other acts diminish the process of learning. When students enroll at UF they commit themselves to honesty and integrity. Your instructor fully expects you to adhere to the academic honesty guidelines you signed when you were admitted to UF.

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the Honor Code, which includes the following pledge: *“We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.”* You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: *“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.”*

It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g. assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>.

### **Software Use:**

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

14. A statement related to accommodations for students with disabilities. A standard statement is provided below.

### **Services for Students with Disabilities**

The Disability Resource Center coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation

0001 Reid Hall, 352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)

### **Campus Helping Resources**

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general well-being are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. The Counseling & Wellness Center provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance.

• *University Counseling & Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Road, 352-392-1575,*

[www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/](http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/)

Counseling Services

Groups and Workshops

Outreach and Consultation

Self-Help Library

Wellness Coaching

• *Career Resource Center, First Floor JWRU, 392-1601, [www.crc.ufl.edu](http://www.crc.ufl.edu)*

**Tentative Class Schedule:**

**Most class meetings will consist of some combination of lecture/discussion (by the instructor or guest speaker) and ‘workshops’ to discuss, critique, and improve on skills. Some topic dates are tentative towards the end of semester, and will be re-arranged as guest speakers are scheduled.**

<b>Week:Date</b>	<b>Topics and Activities</b>	<b>Assignment due:</b>
1: 1/5	Discussion: Intro to course; short and long term career goals, job searching	
2: 1/12	Discussion: Creating effective resumes, Seeking References (who, what, when)	
3: 1/19	Workshop: feedback and revisions of resume drafts	Resume rough draft by <b>Mon noon</b>
4: 1/26	Discussion: How to write a cover letter	Resume: final version due
5: 2/2	Workshop- feedback and revisions on cover letter drafts	Cover letter rough draft by <b>Mon noon</b>
6: 2/9	Discussion: How to create effective brochures/advertising	Cover letter final version due
7: 2/16	Workshop- feedback and revisions of brochures	brochure rough draft by <b>Mon noon</b>
8: 2/23	Discussion: Professional ethics and demeanor; Using professional (and other) networking sites	Brochure final draft
9: 3/1	SPRING BREAK- no class	
10: 3/8	Guest lecture: tbd	
11: 3/15	Interview preparation (“what to say and do”) Interview workshop- informal ‘q and a’ practice	
12: 3/22	Mock interview (in class) Interview follow-up	
13: 3/29	Formal Interviews- conducted throughout week	
14: 4/5	Tips for negotiating the job offer; Time management skills	
15: 4/12	Student selected topics	
16: 4/19	Students present their interactions w/ professionals	Write-up due