CAREER-READINESS COMPETENCIES: FACULTY GUIDE

For a successful transition into the workforce or graduate school, students must be able to connect their **academic experiences** to career aspirations and workplace competencies. Faculty can help students recognize and articulate such connections by using NACE's (National Association of Colleges and Employers) career readiness framework, which includes eight competencies and related sample workplace behaviors. (Learn about these Career Readiness Competencies on the AU Career Center's Website and NACE's website.)

Inspired by NACE's research into career readiness, the Career Center would like to offer some quick examples of how faculty might easily integrate career readiness into curriculum. First, we list a few general tips, followed by competency-specific suggestions.

Syllabus:
- Map *career-readiness competencies* to students' learning outcomes: provide career-readiness competency icons to related course assignments. (The Career Center will provide you with graphics)
- Use the language related to *specific career-readiness competency* and *respective workplace behaviors* throughout the syllabus. (Visit the Career Center's website or request a career consultation/translation)
- Require students in upper classes to work on their *professional development portfolio*, including resume/CV, sample cover letter; sample elevator pitch; LinkedIn profile; self-reflections; etc.

In class:
- Help students recognize **specific career-readiness competencies** they are developing through your course. Use relevant workplace examples.
- Invite alums/experts to your class to share their career paths; create assignments around these invitations, e.g. asking students to research individuals; come up with questions; send them Thank you letters and LinkedIn invitations after class
- Provide opportunities for students to reflect on their progress in developing **career-readiness competencies** through course assignments and classroom exercises.

Individual interactions: Refer to career readiness competencies and use professional (workplace) language in your student feedback to help students identify areas for further development.

CAREER-READINESS COMPETENCIES:	*Critical Thinking*

- **Definition of Competency:** Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.

Workplace Behaviors	Additional Ways to Recognize/Develop in Class

• Make decisions and solve problems using sound, inclusive reasoning and judgment.
• Gather and analyze information from a diverse set of sources and individuals to fully understand a problem.
• Accurately summarize and interpret data with an awareness of personal biases that may impact outcomes.
• Effectively communicate actions and rationale, recognizing the diverse perspectives and lived experiences of stakeholders.
	• Create assignments that encourage students to:
	  ➢ pose questions for themselves (a group, class, professor)
	  ➢ explain their thinking process
	  ➢ identify gaps/success in their process of gathering information
	  ➢ reflect on their personal biases in interpreting information; and
	  ➢ suggest improvements to their own information gathering/problem solving strategy.
	• Articulate how reading mindfully will help students develop this competency.

CAREER-READINESS COMPETENCIES:	*Communication*	

- **Definition of Competency:** Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization.

Workplace Behaviors	A*dditional* Ways to Recognize/Develop in Class
• Communicate in a clear and organized manner so that others can effectively understand. • Ask appropriate questions for specific information from supervisors, specialists, and others. • Promptly inform relevant others when needing guidance with assigned tasks. • Employ active listening, persuasion, and influencing skills.	• Encourage students to seek guidance with assigned tasks by attending office hours and communicating by email – relate this to the communication behaviors at the workplace. • Create assignments that encourage students to practice a variety of writing styles (e.g. short answers; on-line chats; summaries, reflections, etc.); highlight similarities between class writings and writings in the workplace (memos, reports, emails, etc.). • Create opportunities in class for discussions; Q&As; presentations, and let students provide feedback to each other; highlight similarities to workplace's peer reviews/team feedback. • Provide resources on diverse communication styles; share tips on how to improve communication skills.

CAREER-READINESS COMPETENCIES	*Teamwork*

- **Definition:** Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.

Workplace Behaviors	Additional Ways to Recognize/Develop in Class
- Listen carefully to others, taking time to understand and ask appropriate questions without interrupting. - Exercise the ability to compromise and be agile. - Collaborate with others to achieve common goals. - Build strong, positive working relationships with supervisor and team members/coworkers.	- Create opportunities for collaboration and teamwork. - Provide a template outline to aid groups in identifying roles, goals/desired outcomes, tasks, and timelines at the start. - Guide how to have a respectful dialogue/civil discourse; may include "rules for discussion." - Have students complete a reflection evaluating how well the group "worked together, found consensus, shared leadership, and developed effective results", as well as their individual contributions to the group's efforts.

CAREER READINESS *COMPETENCY*	*Equity and Inclusion*

- **Definition:** Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different local and global cultures. Engage in anti-oppressive practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism and inequity.

Workplace Behaviors	Additional Ways to Recognize/Develop in Class
- Keep an open mind to diverse ideas and new ways of thinking. - Solicit and use feedback from multiple cultural perspectives to make inclusive and equity-minded decisions. - Seek global cross-cultural interactions and experiences that enhance one's understanding of people from different demographic groups and that leads to personal growth. - Actively contribute to inclusive and equitable practices that influence individual and systemic change.	- Enable students to practice engaging in dialogue with recognition of impact on individuals, communities, and structures. - Have students complete a questionnaire that evaluates the diversity of the perspectives reflected in their source materials for assignments. - Have students reflect on how their identities and biases may have affected their assignment/course experience. - Have students complete a reflection on which course materials or experiences helped them better understand people from different demographic groups.

CAREER READINESS COMPETENCY	*Professionalism*

- **Definition:** Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits, and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.

Workplace Behaviors	Additional Ways to Recognize/Develop in Class
- Be present and prepared. - Demonstrate dependability (e.g., report consistently for work or meetings). - Prioritize and complete tasks to accomplish organizational goals. - Consistently meet or exceed goals and expectations. - Have attention to detail, resulting in few if any errors in their work. - Show a high level of dedication toward doing a good job.	- Encourage students to seek guidance with assigned tasks by attending office hours and communicating by email. - Provide sample email language to help student understand the differences between communicating in a professional setting and informally. - Share information, campus resources, and tips on how to improve time-management skills. - Incorporate the most current trends in the **Professionalism** concept and related language throughout classroom instruction and interactions with students. - Require students to reflect on their experience with group and individual assignments through Professionalism lenses.

CAREER READINESS COMPETENCY	*Leadership*

- **Definition:** Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.

Workplace Behaviors	Additional Ways to Recognize/Develop in Class
- Plan, initiate, manage, complete and evaluate projects. - Seek out and leverage diverse resources and feedback from others to inform direction. - Motivate and inspire others by encouraging them and by building mutual trust. - Serve as a role model to others by approaching tasks with confidence and a positive attitude.	- Point out opportunities for students to practice/develop this skill in the classroom through active participation, keeping a small group dialogue on track and reporting back to the entire class, and in group projects, where each role within the group can lead at different times. - Articulate what group leadership looks like to you (e.g. listening to others, making final decisions, encouraging others in their tasks, and taking responsibility for the project outcomes.) - At the conclusion of group projects, have students reflect on the roles they played within the group and articulate ways in which they demonstrated leadership. - Acknowledge to individual students the ways in which you observe them demonstrating leadership in the classroom.

CAREER READINESS COMPETENCY	*Technology*

- **Definition:** Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.

Workplace Behaviors	Additional Ways to Recognize/Develop in Class
- Use technology to improve efficiency and productivity of their work. - Identify appropriate technology for completing specific tasks. - Manage technology to integrate information to support relevant, effective, and timely decision-making. - Quickly adapt to new or unfamiliar technologies.	- Incorporate technology into assignments and explain how the use of that technology is helping students to build workplace skills. - Require students to use presentation software, develop graphics, or create websites for certain assignments. - Encourage and model the use of collaboration tools such as Teams or Slack for managing group projects. - Award extra credit for the completion of OIT or LinkedIn Learning training sessions on tools used in class, such as Excel or PowerPoint. - Integrate AI tools into classwork: teach ethical and responsible use; require students to use AI for research, brainstorming, or drafting, followed by critical evaluation.

CAREER READINESS COMPETENCY	*Career & Self Development*

- **Definition:** Proactively develop oneself and one's career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and outside one's organization.

Workplace Behaviors	Additional Ways to Recognize/Develop in Class
- Identify areas for continual growth while pursuing and applying feedback. - Develop plans/goals for one's future career. - Professionally advocate for oneself/others. - Display curiosity; seek opportunities to learn. - Establish, maintain, and/or leverage relationships with people who can help one professionally.	- Conduct a survey of your students to find out what career-related topics they would like to tackle during this course. - Include career resources in your syllabus and canvas site. - Create assignments to encourage students' pre- and post-reflection on strengths and areas for growth - can be done using **Big Interview (Career Center's resource).** - Share your own career story with your class. - Encourage students to attend office hours to discuss their career aspirations. - Require completion of at least 1 assignment selected by student from the list of career-related assignments provided in the syllabus.

CAREER READINESS RESOURCES AND SERVICES

Resources

- AU Career Center Website: (eight career readiness competencies, resume templates, resume samples, cover letter outline, interview tips, how to network, etc.)
- Big Interview (interview practice platform – can create custom interview sets and assignments for classes/students) - *faculty access available from Career Center upon request*
- Career Readiness Competencies and Common Student Experiences: How to reflect those effectively in a resume – handout (In Handshake > Career Center > Resources > Application Materials > Resume Guide and Templates)
- Presentations on various career topics (e.g. Interviews; Job Search; Cover Letters; Resume; Networking, Salary Negotiations, etc.) - *available from Career Center upon request*
- Presentation template on connecting an academic major to NACE's career readiness competencies - *available from Career Center upon request*
- Handout for Alumni Career Panel Moderators - *available from Career Center upon request*
- Various assignments/exercises to help students map career readiness competencies and related workplace behaviors to their academic assignments - *available from Career Center upon request*
- NACE (National Association of Colleges and Employers)
- YouTube (AU Career Center YouTube channel with recordings of previous events and programs)

Services for Faculty

- Individual consultations on how to infuse career readiness into the curriculum
- Class presentations/workshops on career topics
- Support with alumni career panel logistics including marketing
- Facilitating collaborations with faculty across majors/programs (e.g. connecting with the faculty experienced in including career content into class/pedagogy)
- Assistance with finding alumni/employer speakers

Services for Students

- Individual appointments
- Access to career development platforms:
  - Big Interview; Interstride; LinkedIn Learning
  - Handshake resource pages (additional resources for career development)
- Connecting with employers:
  - Handshake
  - Job/Internship fairs; Employer information events
- Connecting with Alumni
  - AlumniFire; American University Alumni LinkedIn Page
  - Alumni panels; networking events and job fairs