“A University of Washington education provides students with deep learning across disciplines and a range of professionally useful skills. And yet, many students don’t know what they know, or how it applies to the rest of their lives. We want to make sure students have that aha moment — that epiphany when they realize that what they are learning in classes has applications outside of the classroom.” — Gerald J. Baldasty, Interim Provost and Executive Vice President; Professor, Department of Communication

Research has proven time and time again that skills such as critical thinking, research and teamwork are extraordinarily valuable for our students’ futures. Helping students understand what they know, and practice sharing what they know with others, can make a major difference as they launch towards a new life after graduation.

In the incredibly competitive world new graduates now face, helping them learn to articulate just how excellent the preparation and depth of learning they experience at the UW is critical. Supporting them to recognize their strengths and talents does not have to add to the curriculum; rather, it can be an integral part of class that helps students truly understand the value of their learning.

Asking students “What class activities translate to careers or other aspects of your life after graduation?” or “What might you put on your résumé after this class?” not only prepares them to succeed in the job market, it helps them understand and appreciate the depth of their personal learning and academic passions. The richness of their deep academic work may be lost if we as a UW community don’t help students connect the dots.

**THE HUSKY EXPERIENCE**

The Husky Experience is a collection of transformative educational experiences — inside and outside of the classroom. These experiences help our students discover their passions in life and work, become independent thinkers, and gain the skills that lead to meaningful and rewarding careers as community, academic and industry leaders.

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**FEATURED PROGRAMS**

- History Fellows Program
- History Department
- Dance Senior Seminar
- Dance Program
- Career Kickstart, Networks, and More
- Department of Communication
- Capstones as Real-Life Applications
- Jackson School of International Studies and the Environmental Studies Program
- Career Prep at the College Level
- Career Center @ Engineering and Careers in the College of Arts & Sciences
- Student Success Templates: Linking Academic Assignments to Career Skills
- Faculty Senate, Career Center and the Office of the Provost

Photo credit: Tim Summers
Historians spend a great deal of time separating fact from fiction as they dive into myths and misinterpretations of the past. Now, through a mix of academics and professional engagement in the History Fellows Program, the UW History Department is dispelling the modern myth that a history degree is professionally limiting by helping undergraduates realize the wide variety of options open to them.

Launched in 2013, the History Fellows Program is open to junior and senior majors who apply for a three-quarter sequence of classes and workshops, culminating with an internship.

Faculty took the lead in this effort. “We’re confronting head-on the assumption that a history degree leads to nothing,” says Adam Warren, associate professor and director of Undergraduate Studies. Warren and his colleagues had noted the trend of students taking courses they see as ‘employable’ at the expense of indulging their curiosity and pursuing their passions. “It doesn’t have to be an either/or situation,” he says.

Faculty and staff collaborated to create programming to complement students’ academic coursework. “We wanted something in tandem with the academics they’re doing, and not imposing itself into the curriculum, because we don’t want our faculty to re-adjust how they teach history,” says Matt Erickson, the department’s director of Academic Services. “But we needed students to think concurrently about professional development while in their undergraduate career.”

Tailoring curriculum with the Career Center: The department hired doctoral candidate Michael Aguirre to lead the History Fellows Program with Undergraduate Adviser Jon Olivera. They reached out to Patrick Chidsey, a counselor in the Career Center, and together they developed a curriculum specifically for history majors.

The History Fellows Program focuses on placing each student’s career goal at the forefront. The first step is helping students identify their strengths and see how they relate to future options. “Especially in humanities where that path is less obvious, we want students to develop pride in the choices they’ve made, to recognize the value in what they’ve done inside and outside the classroom and to see the interrelatedness of it all,” says Chidsey, who was a history major himself.

Graduates of the History Department have gone on to jobs with Google, The Brookings Institute, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the National Park Service, Museum of History & Industry (MOHAI) and the Alaska Center for Energy and Power.

Peers help each other articulate unique skills with a new lens: In their first quarter, History Fellows build career skills through workshops on writing strong résumés, practicing interview skills, and expanding networks through informational interviews and social media. The sessions are purposefully structured for small group work.

“Small groups allow students to relate to one another, share the same concerns and push others to realize individual skills and accomplishments,” says Chidsey. “The intimacy to let down walls, challenge each other or brainstorm in a vulnerable way is important.” As they work together, each student builds confidence and practices articulating the skills gained from academic accomplishments such as writing major research papers.

“Sometimes you need somebody else on the outside to see your strengths. I believe we all left that workshop thinking, ‘Wow, we’re history rock stars,’” says Debra Pointer, a senior who was in the first History Fellows cohort. That confidence, along with support from program staff, helped her land an internship working in the archives at Planned Parenthood of the Greater Northwest in spring 2014.
Career fairs are a transformative experience: The Fellows program provides a framework for history undergraduates to articulate skills as humanists with their strengths in information literacy, critical thinking, cultural understanding and more. Even when faced with position descriptions that never ask for a history degree, the Fellows learn how to adapt and tailor their pitch.

Students are then required to put their freshly polished résumés to good use by attending at least two career fairs to gain practice. “I wanted them to immerse themselves in the experience and see what the competition is,” says Aguirre. “It was really eye-opening for the students.”

Pointer notes that the experience was challenging but ultimately helped each of them build confidence. “It’s hard to sell yourself. But you have the skills. It’s about finding your way to talk about what you can do,” she says.

Internships connect academics with careers before students graduate: Skills gained in the first two quarters are put in practice by spring quarter, when many students land internships. The program’s faculty and staff work to give students meaningful options, although they also encourage students to find new opportunities that suit their interests.

Senior Molly Malone, whose spring 2014 internship at the Labor Archives of Washington at the University of Washington inspired her to pursue master’s degrees in History and Archives and Records Management, is a strong advocate of these experiential learning opportunities. “I tell people all the time that they should do an internship,” Malone says. “It’s the best thing that ever happened to me.”

Studying the past, looking to the future: “So much of what we are doing is breaking down myths and getting history majors to realize they have skills to bring to the table, even in a supposedly technology-driven world,” Aguirre observes.

Through small-group workshops, networking practice and internships, the Fellows emerge more confident in themselves and their ability to find a fulfilling career after studying their passion.

“I followed my heart with my history degree,” says Pointer. “I would love to see all history majors know they have skills that mean something.”

“During the résumé workshop, students learned a lot from each other about presenting their skills in an attractive and concise way. If there isn’t something that catches an employer’s eye in about four seconds, they’ll move on. Even I edited my résumé after that!”

MICHAEL AGUIRRE
History Fellows Program co-manager and Doctoral Candidate, History

The History Fellows program nearly doubled enrollment in 2014-2015, which the department sees as an indication of the need for this type of co-curricular program. Photo courtesy of the College of Arts & Sciences
Graduates from the UW Dance Program pursue careers in arts leadership, nonprofits, teaching, medicine, movement therapy and more. Since many students double or even triple major, dance alumni enter the job market with a high level of skill in giving and receiving feedback that is valuable in a wide range of team and coaching environments. Faculty also focus on cultivating self-reflection, creative problem solving, critical thinking and a fearless willingness to try new things. Dance majors can then bring these attitudes to their job search, which gives them a jump-start in the Dance 480 Senior Seminar.

The seminar guides students to analyze both what they want from a career and how their individual strengths as an artist will match their aspirations. In the dancer’s tradition of experiential learning, they also spend nearly a full day on a job shadow. As they summarize what they learned in the class, students practice verbalizing the meaning of their personal experience with dance, a critical but challenging skill for dancers.

Thinking critically about CVs and personal strengths: Dance professor Hannah Wiley teaches the program’s senior seminar. She invites alumni and dance professionals to speak with her class about careers, and asks guests to make their curriculum vitae available ahead of time so that the class can analyze them. “They see how these professionals present themselves, and it helps the students shape how they will want to be presented,” says Wiley. After a guest lecturer’s visit, Wiley asks students to discuss what they learned from the content of the presentation and the way the visitor described his or her knowledge and skills.

Through this exercise, “I figured out how to explain the ways my public health degree relates to my dance degree,” says Sean O’Bryan, a senior double-majoring in dance and public health. “At first I didn’t think cover letters were that important, but now I see how I can represent my personality and accomplishments in them. I think it makes me stand out.”

Job shadowing helps students find the right professional fit: After learning about different careers from guests, students in the senior seminar choose a job to shadow. This offers students more nuanced insight into fields they’re interested in exploring. “I don’t know any job where you’d get any real sense of what it’s like in an hour,” says Wiley. “If a job is boring to you, you’re not going to figure that out in an hour, but you’ll figure it out in six.” Shadowing has helped dance students discover what they like and, just as usefully, what they don’t. “There have been some pretty amazing things that have happened,” says Wiley. “Like, a student going to shadow a first grade teacher and...”

HOW DANCERS CROSS DISCIPLINES WITH CREATIVE THINKING

Many dance students double-, or even triple-major, and often discover meaningful ways in which the creative thinking learned from dance applies to their other fields. For example, teaching choreography develops adaptable communication techniques. This aids many students whether they are a teaching assistant or, like O’Bryan, volunteering with patients at a local hospital for his public health studies. “I have to describe how to do something, so I can help someone visualize how to safely align their body, or I can show them myself,” he explains.

Siena Dumas Ang, a senior working towards three degrees in dance, math and computer science, applies many techniques learned in dance to her other fields. “There’s a lot of creativity and taking risks that I think has definitely influenced how I approach other coursework. It’s made me more proactive,” says Dumas Ang. “For example, in my math classes, I ask why a theorem works in one instance but not in another.”
realizing, ‘I could never do that.’ But another student saw first graders using dance throughout their day and thought it was the most beautiful thing she’d ever seen!”

**Meaningful reflection aids purposeful career decisions:** Students give a final presentation in which they reflect on their professional skills, how they expect to apply their personal strengths to the career they plan to pursue, and how what they learned from their job shadow affected their career plans.

“I ask them ‘why’ a lot,” says Wiley. “If they’re applying to medical school, they present to us on why they chose one school over another one.” Wiley says reflection helps students gain a sense of purpose and empowerment that they are in control of their own future, and know that they have skills to accomplish their goals.

The presentation also forces students to verbalize why dance and artistry matter to them. “It’s important that all of us in this field learn to talk about dance because talking isn’t how we relate to it, but it’s how we relate to other people about it,” Wiley explains. “The idea is to practice that skill.”

**Pushing students to take risks can lead to surprising results:** The dance faculty are constantly encouraging students to try something new, from experimenting with a different shoulder movement to applying for a dream job. “You have to try things,” says Siena Dumas Ang, who is triple majoring in dance, math and computer science. She says her dance training make her more willing to spend the time necessary to experiment in her other studies. “You might need to spend five hours writing code to see if it works, and a lot of people don’t want to spend that time, but in dance you just have to try a lift to know if it works.”

The results of trying something new or uncomfortable often surprises the students. Wiley pushes her seminar students by having them write a tailored cover letter for their dream job, even if they feel it is too far out of reach and don’t intend to send it. One recent graduate took a chance, submitted her dream-job application and was accepted for a year-long internship at the Kennedy Arts Center, which led to a position with the prestigious Dance USA. “It makes a difference to them to have someone say, ‘Yes, you can do that job, why wouldn’t you apply?’” notes Wiley.

**The confidence to know when to lead and when to follow:** The collaborative, interdependent environment of dance mirrors professional team settings in many ways. Both require a team player who knows her own strengths, how her performance fits in to the bigger picture, how other people rely on her, and when to step forward as a leader to give direction or even a solo performance. Moving between these roles requires a team member to be comfortable with giving and receiving objective feedback as well as a high level of self-awareness, which are nurtured through reflection and other exercises in the dance program.

Dumas Ang summarizes her experiences learning these skills with dance: “It’s about discovering what kind of artist you are, from the theoretical side and the practical side, blending it all and becoming somebody who is confident in who you are.”

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“Often students who are double-majoring learn more about creativity here, then suddenly realize ‘Oh, I am creative in math, I just never thought of it that way.’”

**JENNIFER SALK**
Program Director and Associate Professor, Dance

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“When you choreograph or dance, you have to be able to communicate corrections or changes — you have to do that in any subject you teach.”

**SIENA DUMAS ANG**
Teaching Assistant, Computer Science; Senior triple-majoring in Computer Science, Dance and Math

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Dance majors like Sean O’Bryan, above left, learn to give others useful feedback and to think critically about feedback they receive on their own performance. Photo credits: Imana Gunawan and Tim Summers
When the Communication faculty asked themselves if they were meeting the new needs of students, they realized they often saw students failing to connect their education with professional development.

“Students who are graduating now are entering such a different work place than we grew up in,” says Professor Nancy Rivenburgh. “There are whole new ways of thinking about career opportunities, and it’s important to stay up to date with that.”

Many students weren’t understanding how the creative and critical thinking skills developed in the classroom would actually apply in a work environment. Many also seemed unaware of the incredible variety of careers beyond traditional paths for which a communication degree prepares graduates.

“We were seeing a gap,” says Chair David Domke. “So we asked, ‘What is a 21st century approach to student development?’”

Based upon this self-assessment, the department inaugurated programming changes in 2013 and 2014 that seek to integrate academic learning with career strategy and leadership development. The new approach included remodeling a new collaboration space and adding a new director of student leadership to launch a Career Kickstart program and revamp their internship program.

Communication faculty also saw this as an opportunity to improve student engagement inside the classroom. “I have pure academic goals, of course, but students are motivated if they also see the relevance of what they do to post-University life,” says Rivenburgh. The faculty found that student motivation benefits most when programming is guided by two themes: connecting students with professionals and providing opportunities to experience real work environments.

**Linking alumni to students facilitates meaningful, often lasting, connections:** Interactions with department alumni offer current students an approachable, accessible introduction to the job market in their field. The department involves alumni in several ways, including:

- **Communication Alumni Board:** Members offer real-world feedback and programming suggestions based on the latest market needs in their fields. “They’re constantly thinking about what kinds of opportunities we can give to students. They know what’s trending,” says Arianna Aldebot, the new director of student leadership who serves as staff liaison to the Board.

- **Professional Development Workshops:** Alumni volunteers focus on specific skills, such as pitching a story or tailoring a résumé for a specific job. “The workshops are so beneficial,” says junior Thomas Nguyen. “I think it’s something a lot more students should take advantage of.”
Alumni Database: When students have a career goal in a specific city, they can turn to Victoria Sprang, the alumni outreach manager, who recommends appropriate contacts for informational interviews and possible professional mentors.

Mentor Chats: Small group sessions offered nearly every week host alumni discussing how their studies and activities at UW helped launch their careers. “I want the students to feel like it’s more intimate, so they get comfortable asking questions,” says Aldebot. “The mentors like it as well because they feel like they get to really connect with the students.”

Beyond inspiration, alumni can also offer the kind of one-on-one mentoring that is invaluable to nervous or curious students. “We’re meeting people who had experiences we can relate to — they took the same classes, worked at The Daily. Hearing their stories fueled me to want to do better, knowing these people did it, and so can I,” says Nguyen. “I know I can go to them for advice.”

Career Exploration trips are high-impact experiences: Career Exploration trips started in 2013 with visits to Los Angeles and New York City, and day trips to businesses and media outlets around Seattle. Aldebot and Sprang pack the agendas with a variety of meetings, from a general alumni mixer to structured roundtables with professionals who speak about their companies and the range of communication jobs. From the senior editor of a fashion magazine to chief digital officer of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the exposure to active professionals and settings helps students make informed choices about their futures.

“Initially, I was hoping to be a features writer for a large newspaper outlet,” says Ashley Walls, a junior who went on the first trip to New York in 2013. After touring ESPN and meeting a range of people in communications there, she shifted her focus. “Now, I want to be a community relations director for a professional sports franchise, helping to establish partnerships between teams and nonprofit organizations, and encourage community engagement,” she says.

Experiencing the environment of a job market first-hand also helps students narrow the field for their job search. Nguyen explains, “I know students who started the trip thinking they would like to work in New York City. It saved them so much time when they realized how that market, and such a drastic change, wasn’t right for them.”

Career planning through a course offers more structure to students who need it: The department has also been updating COM 494: Careers in Communication. “We wanted something in the curriculum that gives students a chance to think concretely about applying their University learning to a career environment,” says Domke. “Sometimes students want to dive deep over several weeks in a group setting to process what it means to even think about a career.”

Today’s robust programming now delivers several explicit options to students. Many students make the most of a few workshops or mentor connections, while others find that visiting work spaces or having the guidance of an entire course has the most impact for planning their future.

THOMAS NGUYEN’S CAREER EXPLORATION TRIP: “IT KICKSTARTED MY MOMENTUM”

“Going to Deutsch Advertising, in New York City, was my aha moment where I connected everything I was learning in the classroom with my interests. Hearing from their planning director, I realized it was all the things I really wanted to do in one position. Before the trip, I was everywhere — interested in marketing, event coordinating, television. After the trip I found out I was really interested in advertising.

“Learning about different industries and work cultures and thinking about what kind of life we want helped me make a mental action plan. I know what internships to look into now, and I’m tailoring my class schedule to really build myself up for the career I know I want.”

THOMAS NGUYEN
Junior, Communication major
CAPSTONES AS OPPORTUNITIES FOR REAL-LIFE APPLICATIONS: THE JACKSON SCHOOL AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES PROGRAM

The Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies and the Environmental Studies Program at the Program on the Environment are interdisciplinary programs with capstones experiences that require students to work with active practitioners as they pull knowledge from a wide variety of fields to produce multidimensional research projects. In both undergraduate programs, faculty collaborate with practitioners so that students gain direct insight into the professional world through on- or off-campus experiences. Ultimately, students learn about finding a personally fulfilling career and discussing their skills and real-world experience during interviews and networking.

THE JACKSON SCHOOL TASK FORCE CAPSTONE

The Task Force capstone (JSIS 495) in the Jackson School gives students a taste of global affairs work with the guidance of policy professionals as a complement to academic knowledge. Students work in teams, or task forces, of 15 to 17 people to study a global policy question, develop a substantial research brief, and arrive at a set of policy recommendations that would be timely and relevant to a variety of organizations, similar to presidential commissions. Topics have ranged from climate change policies to redressing human rights violations in El Salvador, and more. “When I started directing the Task Force program eight years ago, we noticed that while students were academically prepared, they were missing some methodological skills,” says Professor Sara Curran, chair of International Studies. In response, the program developed a new prerequisite, the Policy Memo Workshop led by Philip Wall, affiliate professor and a retired senior Foreign Service officer, to teach students the skill of condensing 25-page studies into one-page summaries. Because Task Forces operate on a very tight deadline at a different pace than a one-quarter class, Wolfram Latsch, director of the Jackson School Academic Services, developed a student handbook that lays out roles, responsibilities and timelines so that team members understand what is expected and why their work matters. "We didn't have any surprises we weren't prepared for," observed Jwanah Qudsi, who participated in the 2014 “Drone Wars” Task Force her senior year.

Introducing students to professional expectations for careers in international affairs in two critical ways:

- When students learn directly from practitioners — instructors range from elected officials to retired Foreign Service officers — they experience a new perspective and are often treated more as colleagues working towards a shared goal. “We deeply appreciated getting that insider point-of-view of what it's really like,” says Qudsi about working directly with her instructor, U.S. Congressman Adam Smith.
- Students learn to manage both time and people while balancing different roles and deadlines for the group and as individuals. “Students are used to controlling their own space, so they have to adjust to this lack of control,” says Latsch. “It can be disorienting.”

Task Force Evaluation Day is designed to add additional layers of real-life experiences: The culmination of the Task Force experience is an in-person briefing to an external, expert evaluator. “This intense engagement requires professional preparation and quick thinking, as the students combine a polished presentation with on-the-spot answers to critical questions from the expert evaluator,” says Curran. Latsch points out how the evaluation “again mirrors the professional world, as one's work will often be more visible and persuasive if an articulate argument is matched with evidence.” At the formal closing dinner, evaluators and instructors often continue discussing the reports with Task Force members, exposing students to a new dimension of professional conversation and social networking. “It's given me an appreciation for how hard it can be to get policy passed,” Qudsi observes. Wall believes the combination of thorough academic preparation with a real-life simulation is essential to preparing students for a wide variety of careers. “I have yet to meet a fellow Foreign Service officer, active or retired, whose response to my description of the Task Force capstone was anything other than 'I wish I could have taken that course,'” says Wall.
ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

Through a three-quarter Capstone Experience course series (ENVIR 490, 491, 492), Environmental Studies students gain valuable hands-on experience, explore meaningful career possibilities and develop professional skills. The Capstone Experience is built around a quarter-long internship in which students produce a research project and a portfolio of professional writings supported by faculty and on-site mentors. Capstone partners range from community-based nonprofits, private sector organizations, state and federal government agencies, and faculty research projects on topics ranging from e-waste to food security to environmental education in the digital age.

The Pre-Capstone Seminar prepares students for the Capstone Experience through targeted academic study and professional development: Because many students have not held internships before, the seminar introduces them to the job search process with sessions on résumés, cover letters and ways to adapt their “pitch” for an informal job fair or formal interview to land their top choice project. “Once they’ve secured that internship, that’s when we think about how that hands-on professional experience is going to relate to their scholarly work, and apply it in an academic setting,” says Capstone Instructor Sean McDonald.

During the Capstone Experience students adjust to two roles — scholars and professionals: As scholars, the students develop insightful research questions based on their hands-on experience and assemble a thorough bibliography under the guidance of a faculty adviser. As professionals, they acquire project management skills and report to their site supervisor with specific project deliverables and deadlines while learning to navigate a professional work environment.

Throughout the internship, site partners and faculty mentors provide support and encouragement to students. “They remind students to communicate regularly about their progress and any challenges, and to not be afraid to ask for help,” says Clare Ryan, director of the Program on the Environment.

Reflection — on the process and the results — is built in to multiple assignments: Students synthesize and reflect on their experience with a variety of writing projects. Assignments include:

- Writing memos, which pushes students to succinctly summarize their progress and research while honing their professional writing techniques
- Reporting research findings in an academic analysis paper, akin to a senior thesis
- Summarizing their experience in public-facing integrative essays
- Documenting and contemplating the process in personal journals
- Sharing updates with peers through informal discussion on a Tumblr class blog while strengthening their network of future colleagues

Students learn to communicate to multiple audiences: Students present their research to site partners, potential employers and a general audience at the culminating Capstone Symposium. At this point, students understand how their experience relates to the broader context of their Environmental Studies education and their own future goals, and are able to market their capstone experience for their job search or graduate school applications. “They start to see a connection between what’s going on in the classroom and what’s going on outside of it,” says McDonald.

"If we as faculty only focus on the classroom, we’re missing the opportunity to get students engaged and make them passionate about a greater topic."

Sean McDonald, Lecturer and Capstone Instructor, Environmental Studies

"I am experiencing the applicability and value of my capstone to my current job. It is really cool to be referencing my own academic writing. I would not be where I am today had I not had that experience."

Mikaela Winter ’13
Partnership Associate, 3Degrees Group; B.A., Environmental Studies

Photos courtesy of Environmental Studies

LESSONS LEARNED

Ask students to apply academics to professional situations:
For example, students in Environmental Studies utilize research methods honed over years of study, while the ability to write thorough analysis papers helps Jackson School Task Force students to quickly produce a detailed chapter for their section of the full report.

Prepare students to adapt to unexpected, real-world challenges:
For instance, real environmental data may be incomplete or evolving, while in an international affairs simulation, students must be able to react to changing world events.

Invite professionals to serve as mentors and team members:
In a variety of fields, having active practitioners to interact with and review their work gives students a head start before beginning their career.
CAREER PREPARATION AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL

CAREER CENTER @ ENGINEERING

Designed for efficiency and collaboration, the new Career Center @ Engineering will be a branch of the Career Center housed in the College of Engineering. The joint center is scheduled to open to students in fall 2015 and will be located in Loew Hall. It will function as a single entry point for employers seeking to hire engineering professionals. The center aims to improve visibility and responsiveness to students and companies, to increase the number of companies hosted at career fairs and conducting on-campus interviews, and to provide students with more opportunities for internships and jobs.

As College of Engineering Dean Michael Bragg describes it, “The Career Center @ Engineering is an important initiative for the college — one that promises to enrich our students’ educational experience and deepen our industry partnerships. Our students develop strong technical skills in the classroom. This center will expand opportunities for experience-based learning through increased industry interaction, internships and training. This will allow our students to enter the workforce with confidence and, at the same time, meet the needs of industry.”

The Career Center @ Engineering will coach and prepare students in areas of career strategy and successful job search techniques, including:

**Basic job search skills:**
Writing and tailoring a résumé to a specific opportunity, how to build and sustain a professional network, and how to conduct an excellent job interview.

**Knowing future options:**
Familiarity with the variety of engineering careers and how to explore these options.

**Connecting academics with professional experiences:**
Understanding of skills gained through leadership, research, community service, internships and other co-curricular and curricular experiences at UW.

**Ability to articulate proficiencies:**
Concisely communicating about talents, strengths, values, transferrable skills and experiences in ways that align with various industries and engineering career options.

“These are powerful partnerships bridging academics with career preparation, with benefits both inside and outside the classroom. We’re hoping that this model might be attractive to other colleges.”

Susan Terry,
Director,
Career Center

Benjamin Janicki, mechanical engineering master’s student (BS ’14) consults with Jim Buttrick, Boeing employee, in the new Boeing Advanced Research Center that enables students to work collaboratively with Boeing engineers on aircraft and spacecraft assembly and manufacturing.

Photo credit: Brian DalBalcon
COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES CAREER PREPARATION

The College of Arts & Sciences is helping students learn how to translate their education to career applications through various college-to-career opportunities focused on job skills, networking, internships and strategic mentorship. Robert Stacey, dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, says the goal is to “introduce students to the skills and attributes that employers are seeking, and to do so early in their UW careers. We want them to recognize that, regardless of major, they can increase the value of their education by starting to prepare now for the world of employment.” Students can add to their experiences beginning with the following options:

**Koru@UW A&S:**
The College has partnered with Koru, a Seattle-based training company, to offer Koru@UW A&S, an intensive program that will introduce Arts & Sciences students to skills needed to be successful in the business world. Beginning in late summer 2015, students can enroll in a two-week long session on the UW's Seattle campus. Students will learn about a range of businesses and will work in small teams to tackle real-life business problems presented to them by a local company. The Career Center is planning follow-up sessions specially tailored to take these students to the next level of professional development, including how to land an internship and refining LinkedIn profiles.

**A&S Internships (under development):**
The College is rethinking how students approach and take advantage of internship opportunities. From scope of work to location and duration, Arts & Sciences is piloting new ways students can integrate internships with their undergraduate experience. These might include novel forms such as “micro-internships” that last just a day or two, allowing students to quickly assess projects and organizations to more closely align with their skills and interests. Numerous partners, both on and off campus, are committed to reimagining what the internship experience could look like.

**Mentorship Activities (under development):**
The College is also working closely with the UW Alumni Association to develop a program pairing UW alumni with current students preparing to enter the world of work. Alumni/student mentorships will address a multitude of shared UW Arts & Sciences experiences such as tackling a challenging academic major, leveraging a diverse and ever-evolving undergraduate curriculum, and becoming informed citizens. The mentor/mentee relationship will help students connect their degree to their life and goals after graduation.

“I’d recommend Koru to anyone, whatever major. Whatever program you’re looking to go into, I would say Koru is for you. It gives you a new way to think about school and education, and your career path later in life.”

**Gabriela Rojas-Luna, Sophomore, Philosophy major**

Photo courtesy of the College of Arts & Sciences
Students aren’t always aware of the full depth of what they know — or know how to explain what they know to others. Faculty and staff may think the relevance of classroom learning to life after the UW is obvious. However, employer feedback from national surveys (See Further Reading, p. 14-15), as well as data from employers gathered at UW career fairs, show that UW students often join their peers across the nation in struggling to make the connection. Faculty and staff can help students see the connections by making more explicit the link between academic learning and careers.

**Faculty are the front line in helping students connect the dots**

Faculty are best poised to lead this effort for two reasons: they are the only people students are guaranteed to see on campus, and they know exactly what is taking place in the classroom. While advisers and career counselors are valuable resources, not all students take advantage of their services. Yet faculty can do a great deal to help make connections. As students understand the relevance of coursework to their lives after graduation, faculty may also see increased student motivation, engagement and learning in the classroom. Examples of faculty leading reflection are featured throughout this report, and are also available in Innovators Among Us: Preparing Students for Life after Graduation, May 2014 (p. 8-9).

**How to make the career-relevant skills developed in class clearer to students**

There are three basic ways faculty provide guidance to students so they better connect the dots between academics and careers and are able to articulate their skills after graduation.

- **Tell**: Highlight the skills developed during an assignment — by mentioning them in class, and including them in the assignment instructions or in the syllabus.
- **Ask**: Prompt students to reflect on what career-relevant skills they learned during an assignment in addition to content knowledge. Then ask them to draft a few lines to add to their résumé.
- **Support**: Explicitly build in career-relevant skills to assignments. For example, introduce students to team dynamics as part of a group project. Follow up an academic assignment by asking students to present the same content in a professional format, such as writing an executive summary of a long research paper. Or, reframe an assignment as a real-life simulation.

**Helping students better articulate their skills and knowledge on a résumé**

Without guidance, a student might answer the question, “What did you learn in your major?” with a focus on content. While content is central to some job opportunities, surveys indicate that employers are primarily looking to hire graduates who are adaptable and able to solve problems, pick up new knowledge and skills quickly, and work both independently and in teams. A UW education is an excellent preparation for these skills — a preparation that goes unrecognized by employers unless students are able to articulate their strengths.

With an understanding of the skillsets developed in the classroom, in addition to deep knowledge from the discipline or degree, students feel more prepared for the future and more confident seeking employment.

“Students have a wide variety of goals for their lives, and the relationship between these goals and a class syllabus is not always clear to them — or to instructors and academic programs. Creating this template has helped me better understand this issue, as an instructor and as an adviser. While a class will always generate a grade, we can now explain more clearly what else it can do for students, beyond the important but seemingly intangible benefits of understanding or critical thinking. Applicability does not have to be an afterthought.”

Wolfram Latsch
Director of Jackson School Academic Services

Photo courtesy of the Jackson School of International Studies
Templates point out career-relevant skills learned through academics

To help faculty talk to students about how academic assignments build professional skills, departments across the UW’s Seattle campus have begun to customize a template designed to show the connections between assignments and learning goals, and to give students practice in articulating their skills and learning. The template sample below shows how history majors might describe what they learned if left to their own devices compared to how they can articulate their skills to employers with the benefit of guidance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the academic assignment?</th>
<th>What class goals relevant to careers are on the syllabus?</th>
<th>What are students likely to put on their résumés or say in an interview?</th>
<th>What SHOULD students put on their résumé or say in an interview? (with guidance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10-page research paper on the French Revolution</td>
<td>Research skills, including database search Analysis, synthesis of sources, perspectives Writing Responding to feedback</td>
<td>History major Studied the French Revolution Wrote papers</td>
<td>History major Able to develop well-researched reports based on analysis and synthesis of a variety of sources Advanced database search skills Seeks out constructive criticism and implements change based on feedback Meets deadlines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Faculty are customizing the templates

Customized templates are posted on the Career Center’s Faculty & Department Examples page. Participating departments, schools and programs to date, include:

- Communication
- Comparative History of Ideas (CHID)
- Dance
- Economics
- Environmental Studies
- History
- International Studies
- Law, Societies, & Justice
- Linguistics
- Math
- Slavic Languages & Literature
- Spanish & Portuguese Studies

Faculty senate leadership, in partnership with the provost, are encouraging departments, schools and colleges across campus to customize the template and to use it to jumpstart classroom conversations and advising. To invite the provost or faculty leadership to come talk to your unit, or to get started creating your own template, please email Marisa Nickle at mnickle@uw.edu.
Continuing the conversation

The goal of the Provost’s *Leading Change in Public Higher Education* report series is to broaden and connect conversations on the UW’s three campuses, share best practices and provide common reference points to inform our plans for the future. We welcome your participation, feedback and suggestions at edtrends@uw.edu.

UW resources

Faculty and staff

Departments on all three campuses can invite career centers (the Career Center, UW Tacoma’s Career Development, and UW Bothell’s Career Services) to facilitate tailored workshops for students on career skills and discipline-specific job searches. The Career Center’s faculty resource page offers examples and recommendations for helping students link academics and careers, specifically:

- Career Paths include information faculty and staff can share with students about professional options open to them, in addition to the obvious, with their major.
- Student Success Templates, customized by departments, link common academic assignments to career skills in the classroom.

Students

- Campus career centers (the Career Center, UW Tacoma’s Career Development, and UW Bothell’s Career Services) offer information on internships, job opportunities, skill-building workshops, advising, courses, job fairs and more.
- The Graduate School’s Core Programs offer online resources, career workshops, networking receptions with alumni and career symposia with employers.

Further reading


What Can I Do With A Major In...

The Career Center offers Career Paths to help students explore the wide variety of possible careers available by major. Students select a major on the Career Paths webpage to view possible professions suited to their studies. Additionally, this tool lists potential employers by industry. Career Paths also helps students to connect the dots between their experience at the UW and real world skills needed in their chosen career.

Photo courtesy of the College of Arts & Sciences
Many thanks to the UW faculty, students, alumni and staff who contributed their stories and photos for the features of this report, and to the UW subject matter experts who lent their advice and assistance, including Amy Barbour ’14 and Monique Thormann of the Jackson School of International Studies; Joe Kobayashi of the Program on the Environment; Isaiah Brookshire and Megan Gilshire of the College of Arts & Sciences; Molly McCarthy and Jack Stoller of the College of the Environment; Kris Bain of the Dance Program; Amanda Hornby of University Libraries; and Susan Terry of the Career Center.

Additional contributors to the report series include Candice Douglass and Kevin Mihata of the College of Arts & Sciences; Beth Kalikoff of the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL); Glenna Chang, Sean Ferris and Leigh Tucker of Student Life; Kirsten Atik, Anne Browning, Janice DeCosmo, Jennifer Harris, Michaelann Jundt, Francesca Lo, Christine Stickler, Rachel Vaughn and LeAnne Wiles of Undergraduate Academic Affairs (UAA); Gabriel Gallardo, Erin Rowley and Kristian Wiles of the Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity (OMA&D); Katy DeRosier, Kelly Edwards and Elizabeth Lowry of the Graduate School; Tomitha Blake, Verena Hess and Christy Kessler of Academic and Student Affairs (ASA); Gabriel Gallardo, Erin Rowley and Kristian Wiles of the Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity (OMA&D); Katy DeRosier, Kelly Edwards and Elizabeth Lowry of the Graduate School; Tomitha Blake, Verena Hess and Christy Kessler of Academic and Student Affairs (ASA); Grant Kollet, Paul Rucker and colleagues of the UW Alumni Association (UWAA); University Marketing and Communications colleagues; and Alicia Palacio of the Office of the Provost.


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**Series Editors**

Gerald J. Baldasty, Interim Provost and Executive Vice President; Professor, Department of Communication

Marisa Nickle, Director, Strategy & Academic Initiatives, Office of the Provost

**Writing, Design and Photography**

Jillian Reddish, Graduate Student Assistant, Office of the Provost

**Research**

Elizabeth Barrett, Graduate Research Assistant, Office of the Provost

Jillian Reddish, Graduate Student Assistant, Office of the Provost

**Editing and Proofing**

Elizabeth Barrett, Graduate Research Assistant, Office of the Provost

Kris Freeman, Public Information Specialist, Office of the Provost

Katie Kirkland, Program Operations Specialist, Office of the Provost

Ignacio Lobos, Communications Manager, UW-IT

Kay A. Pilcher, Communications Manager, UW-IT

**Additional Photography**