



# Career Center Quarterly

*Career & Employment Trends Updates for Faculty*

Vol. 4, #3 | Summer 2013

## IN THIS ISSUE:

- What is Skill Seeker
- Make us part of your syllabus
- Become a Skill Seeker
- Skill Seeker in Communication Studies
- Fall 2013 Career Center events

## FROM THE CAREER CENTER:

Welcome to the special Summer 2013 edition of the Career Center Quarterly: Career & Employment Trends Updates for Faculty. This issue is going to focus on Skill Seeker and upcoming Career Center events. If you have information you would like posted in future newsletters, please contact Thom Rakes, rakest, or Diane Reed, reedd, with that information. We hope you find this information helpful for you and your students. A PDF version can be found online at <http://uncw.edu/career/facstaff.html>.

## MAKE US PART OF YOUR SYLLABUS:

The Career Center and all academic departments at UNCW share a similar mission: to prepare our students for meaningful and productive careers beyond UNCW. Whether students are gearing for graduate school or the workplace, they will benefit from the partnerships that are forged between the Career Center and your department. Here are some concrete ideas on how we can work together for the mutual benefit of our students and our departments.

### Presentation Topics:

- Writing resumes & cover letters
- Skill Seeker
- Interviewing:
  - Practice interviews
  - Dress for success
- Career Center overview
- Job search strategies which can include the following resources:
  - CareerShift
  - GoingGlobal
  - SeaWork
- Internships
- What can I do with a major in...

## WHAT IS SKILL SEEKER:

Recently the media has been filled with sensational headlines such as “College Grads Can’t Find Jobs”, “Is a College Degree Worth It?”, and “Employers Say College Graduates Lack Job Skills”. In a counter to that sentiment, the UNCW Career Center’s work with employers, students and alumni suggests that rather than a lack of skills, students may neglect to connect their meaningful experiences at UNCW to the skills they have developed. Our Skill Seeker initiative is one way we encourage students to reflect on their academic and co-curricular experiences, and identify the skills those involvements created and nurtured.

Beginning in 2010, the Career Center staff asked employers throughout the region to identify the core skills they were seeking in their interns and new full-time employees. We also searched the literature for other regional and national surveys that posed that same question. The review of this data suggested strong preferences for seven skill areas evident in the majority of industries and hiring organizations. These seven skill areas then became the essential elements of the Skill Seeker program.

Campus faculty and staff were asked to identify specific opportunities for the development of these skills, and these became suggested involvements for students, and reminders of skill building they already may have accomplished. [See the “Become a Skill Seeker” handout [here](#).] As with many learning scenarios, the deeper learning occurs when students reflect on the experience and gain an understanding of the broader meaning that experience suggests. The Skill Seeker provides a rubric for students to translate their learning into a language understood by both the student and the employer or graduate school.

We encourage you to use the Skill Seeker to help define the learning outcomes you seek for students in your classroom, class projects, writing assignments, research, internships, etc.

## SKILL SEEKER IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES:

*“Above all, our primary purpose is to provide our majors with a degree in which the philosophy, practice, criticism, and study of communication are emphasized and balanced. Specifically, we seek to integrate application with theory”*

This quote is posted on the Mission page of the Department’s [web site](#). Along with this mission, they created a [core skills](#) document to highlight the skills they are teaching and provide an example of how the students will learn those skills. It’s a great example of how an academic department can incorporate Skill Seeker into their program / courses.

Here are some of their core skills:

- **Confidence:** performance and writing assignments throughout the curriculum should work to instill confidence in your ability to speak and write well under pressure
- **Collaboration:** panel presentations, video projects and many other COM assignments will require and foster collaboration. It is important to explicitly work on becoming a better team member, as well as completing the task at hand. Both process and product are important concerns
- **Critical Thinking:** debates, class discussions and performance analyses, as well as essays that ask for arguments help to acquire and develop critical thinking skills
- **Problem Solving:** research and DIS projects, internships, extracurricular opportunities in and out of the department (Advertising Club, CSS, SGA, SBTV) are all ways to demonstrate and refine problem solving abilities



## BECOME A SKILL SEEKER:

Year after year, regardless of job market conditions, employers have a similar wish list for candidates’ skills and qualities. Below is a list distilled from employer surveys published by eminent national associations, universities and research groups.<sup>1</sup> Listed below each skill are some opportunities to explore and develop that particular skill or behavior. These suggestions will help students create their own powerful set of skills while at UNCW-- in and out of the classroom. A strong set of these skills and behaviors will increase their marketability for internships, jobs and graduate school.

### Communication Skills - oral & written

- Write stories, advertisements, press releases or newsletters for Student Media, or a campus or community organization
- Enroll in an academic class that is writing intensive, or includes presentations or speeches
- Work in a campus office; i.e. at an information desk, or in an operations or program assistant position
- Improve the way you listen to others; use empathy and self-control when diffusing disagreements
- Refine your job search materials (resume, cover letter, interview preparation) at the Career Center
- Act with a theater group, film or broadcast production
- Do fundraising for charities or nonprofit events; volunteer to work on a political campaign
- Help in a literacy or conversational English program

### Interpersonal Skills - relate well to others, confident, tactful, sense of humor

- Engage in discussions with people different from you
- Participate as an active team member in class, a campus organization, or at a job
- Live in a group living environment (on or off campus)
- Conduct interviews with people to gather information for a class project, organization or personal goal
- Volunteer for a telephone hotline, women's shelter, after school program, hospital, nursing home, etc.
- Work as a tutor, coach, camp counselor, mentor, literacy or conversation partner, or teacher
- Work as wait staff, info desk assistant, office or retail staff, recreation assistant, customer service staff, etc.
- Become a personal assistant for an individual with disabilities
- Develop interpersonal skills in classes that emphasize human relationships or intercultural issues

### Teamwork Skills - work well with others, flexible, adaptable

- Lead a project team or committee in class, a student organization or job
- Use an internship, study group, class or research project to help turn a group of people into a team with common goals
- Help a new team develop through the stages of forming, storming, norming and performing
- Join a musical group or act in a play
- Participate on intramural team or sports club, coach Little League, become a summer camp counselor or recreational leader
- Contribute as a valuable member of a team focusing on team goals more than personal goals

### Initiative - strong work ethic, risk-taker, entrepreneur

- Identify a campus or community need and proactively find and implement solutions
- Select a skill which you would like to improve, and seek out experiences which help you achieve that goal
- Appropriately balance academics, co-curricular activities and employment
- Solicit strong instructor/supervisor references from academic, co-curricular or employment activity
- Study abroad; interact with other cultures
- Start your own business while in college

**FALL 2013 EVENTS:**

(complete list with details on [Career Center web site](#))

**Resume Coach (10am – 3pm)**

September 18, FSC lobby  
October 30, Randall Library

**Learn LinkedIn Lab**

September 24, 6 – 8 pm  
CIS Trading Lab 1003

**Academic Majors Fair**

September 25, 11 am – 2 pm  
Burney Center

**Career Fair**

October 2, 12 – 3 pm  
Burney Center

**FBI Summer Internship Program**

October 4, 2 – 3 pm  
Azalea Coast Rm, FUU

**CareerLeader: Invest in Success**

(premier business career assessment created by Harvard Business School, \$20)  
October 7, 5:30 – 7 pm  
Cameron Auditorium 105

**Pre-Health Fair & Admissions Panel**

October 14, 3 – 5:30 pm  
Burney Center

**Sophomore Jump**

October 19, 10:30 am – 3:30 pm  
Cape Fear Rm, FUU

**Multicultural Networking Reception**

October 23, 6 – 8 pm  
Clock Tower Lounge, FSC

**Nursing & Health Careers Fair**

November 4, 9 – 11 am  
McNeill Hall 1051

**Law School Day**

November 7, 12 – 3 pm  
Burney Center

**Writing a Powerful Personal Statement**

November 13, 4 – 5 pm  
Azalea Coast Rm, FUU

**Analytical Skills - problem-solver, detail-oriented, organized, planner**

- Participate in undergraduate research with a faculty member
- Work as a lab assistant with computers, science or language
- Organize a campus event, including volunteer staff, budget, publicity, etc.
- Seek opportunities to evaluate data to support decision making
- Manage your time well; meet deadlines
- Take a topic you are passionate about, and research the opposing view
- Read an article in an academic area different from your own and develop implications for your area
- Develop a decision tree for an upcoming purchase, researching all relevant information (brand, model, size, etc.)
- Develop a three-year strategic plan for a student organization
- When considering a difficult decision, appraise your choices realistically and seek professional advice when appropriate

**Leadership Skills - communicate vision, action orientated, motivate others**

- Earn Leadership Certificates through the Office of Student Leadership & Engagement, the Cameron School of Business or a Leadership Studies minor
- Run a campaign for student government or campus issue; or get involved in local or state politics
- Be an active officer or committee chair of a campus organization
- Identify a campus or community need and proactively find and implement solutions
- Facilitate group discussions in class or in a campus organization
- Organize and manage an intramural sports team, camp or recreation group
- Lead children's programs, tutor kids in a local school, or coach a children's sports team
- Get an internship in an area of career interest; consult with the Career Center and your department's internship coordinator
- Train new campus organization members or employees at your job

**Technical Skills - utilize computer software & hardware, web resources**

- Work as a student network or computer lab consultant with Residence Life or ITSD
- Design or maintain web sites for a student or community organization, campus office or yourself
- Design a brochure, advertisement or newsletter using desktop publishing software
- Assist community agencies with databases, statistical analyses, financial or service reports
- Keep budgets or financial records for campus or community organizations, or work in a billing office
- Design PowerPoint presentation for class or a campus organization
- Work as a tech or projectionist in Campus Life
- Sell computer hardware or software, or start a web-based business
- Work in the studio or control room of a radio or TV station
- Learn computer and technical skills in classes and workshops that focus on software programs and applying technology

<sup>1</sup> Sources include the National Association of Colleges & Employers (NACE), Michigan State University, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Hart Research Associates, CareerBuilder, US News & World Report, World Future Society, American Society for Training & Development and the U.S. Department of Labor.

<sup>2</sup> Campus leadership and peer educator positions include Resident Assistant, Orientation Leader, Ambassador, Seahawk Link, ACE, Fraternity & Sorority Life, SGA/GSA, Office of Student Leadership & Engagement, CARE/Crossroads, Health Promotion and the University Learning Center.

**[SEE THE SKILL SEEKER HANDOUT ONLINE](#)**

If you have economic information from your academic area you would like posted in future Career Quarterly editions, please email it to Thom Rakes, [rakes.t](mailto:rakes.t), or Diane Reed, [reedd](mailto:reedd)



Career Center, Division of Student Affairs, *Creating experiences for life*

University of North Carolina Wilmington

Fisher University Union 2035, 910-962-3174, [careercenter@uncw.edu](mailto:careercenter@uncw.edu), [uncw.edu/career](http://uncw.edu/career)