College to Grad School

UNIVERSITY 421- Section DL1 (Online 1 credit) Spring 2021

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PURPOSE OF THE COURSE

This is a transitional course emphasizing development and readiness for Graduate/Professional school. This course will cover all aspects of the research process and application to graduate programs. In addition, this course focuses on workplace readiness and job search skills including resume/cv preparation, and interviewing.

UNIV421 – DL1 is a section delivered as an asynchronous online course.

LEARNING GOALS AND OUTCOMES

UNIV 421– DL1 is a section delivered as an asynchronous online course. Though the delivery method is different, it should take you the same amount of time as a face-to-face undergraduate course. You should expect to spend 4 hours on coursework each week (this includes the time you would have spent in a classroom).

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Assess the appropriateness of graduate study as part of a career development plan, based on industry standards and personal education goals.
2. Identify and evaluate at least two possible programs of study/academic disciplines and related career paths, incorporating learning about values, interest, personality, and skills, and their impact on career satisfaction.
3. Assess desirability and achievability of at least two possible programs of study, based on learning through networking and research of industry, job function, and program
4. Develop standard components of an application package (e.g. personal statement, professional resume)
5. Identify possible sources of funding for continuing education and asses appropriate, financially sustainable funding sources based on personal budget and available options

COURSE MATERIALS

What you will need for this course

1. Career Readiness Guide by University Career Services
2. **Blackboard (BB)**: http://courses.gmu.edu (Username and passwords are the same as your Mason email account
3. **LinkedIn Learning (formerly Lynda.com)**: https://lil.gmu.edu/ (Username and passwords are the same as your Mason email account) – you should log in in a separate tab and then click the link in Blackboard
4. **Handshake:** (Username and passwords are the same as your Mason email account) https://careers.gmu.edu/handshake
5. **InterviewStream**: https://gmu.interviewstream.com/Account/Login?ReturnUrl=%2f (you will need to create your account)
6. Career assessments
    - **a.** CliftonStrengths log-in instructions here: https://strengths.gmu.edu/log-in-instructions/
    - **b.** iStartStrong. You will receive an email invitation to take this assessment.
        - i. ***Mobile devices support:*** Elevate supports mobile devices running Android or iOS.

ii. ***Browsers supported:*** Elevate supports Internet Explorer 10 or above, Safari 6 or above, and current versions of Firefox and Chrome. https://www.themyersbriggs.com/en-US/Support/Contact-Us

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

You will be expected to learn/understand the technologies used in this course, as well as how to seek support from the appropriate sources if you have trouble. If you find that your technology is not functioning properly, it is your responsibility to troubleshoot any issues you are experiencing, and communicate with your instructor what steps you have taken before asking for exceptions or extensions.

Your instructor may not be immediately available to help you navigate these issues, so don't wait until the last minute to test out the system.

- **Mason technologies** (i.e. your Mason email, wifi or other campus internet concerns): https://itservices.gmu.edu/index.cfm?. If you cannot log in to myMason please contact the ITS Support Center at (703) 993-8870 or reset your Mason NetID password at http://password.gmu.edu
- **Blackboard at Mason:** http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/Students/
- **Handshake**:
  - https://support.joinhandshake.com/hc/en-us/categories/202711128-Student-Alumni
  - careers.gmu.edu
- **InterviewStream:** https://gmu.interviewstream.com/Home/ContactUs

When you reach out to the appropriate resources, include a detailed explanation of the issue you are experiencing, along with screenshots whenever possible. CC your instructor, or forward the communication you have had with the appropriate office.

SOFTWARE

Many courses use Blackboard as the learning management system. You will need a browser and operating system that are listed compatible or certified with the Blackboard version available on the myMason Portal. See supported browsers and operating systems. Log in to myMason to access your registered courses. Some courses may use other learning management systems. Check the syllabus or contact the instructor for details. Online courses typically use Acrobat Reader, Flash, Java, and Windows Media Player, QuickTime and/or Real Media Player. Your computer should be capable of running current versions of those applications. Also, make sure your computer is protected from viruses by downloading the latest version of Symantec Endpoint Protection/Antivirus software for free here.

Students owning Macs or Linux should be aware that some courses may use software that only runs on Windows. You can set up a Mac computer with Boot Camp or virtualization software so Windows will also run on it. Watch this video about using Windows on a Mac. Computers running Linux can also be configured with virtualization software or configured to dual boot with Windows.

Note: If you are using an employer-provided computer or corporate office for class attendance, please verify with your systems administrators that you will be able to install the necessary applications and that system or corporate firewalls do not block access to any sites or media types.

CREDIT OPTIONS

UNIV 421 is available as a 1 credit or 0 credit option, but it appears to default to 0 credits in PatriotWeb. You can adjust your credit option from the registration screen in Patriot Web until the last day to add. I highly encourage you to register for 1 credit, as you should earn credit for the work you'll do in this course. However, if you have a reason to take it for 0 credit, that option is available

APPOINTMENTS / E-MAIL CONTACT

I encourage you to contact me to ask questions, clarify assignments, make me aware of any unexpected situations, or to obtain additional help. You can always contact me via email at cprofess@gmu.edu to set up an appointment, too. I check email regularly Monday through Friday and prefer more communication over less. ****Please include "UNIV 421" in the subject line of your emails***

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please email me within the first week of class and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at http://ds.gmu.edu or 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.

HONOR CODE

It is unlikely that plagiarism will be an issue in the course. However, consistent with the University's Honor Code, any work considered being in violation of the Code due to plagiarism or other integrity issues will be reported to the University Honor Committee. A failing grade on any assignment resulting from an Honor Committee process will result in a failing grade for the course.

STUDENT PRIVACY

All course materials posted to Blackboard are private to this class; by federal law, any materials that identify specific students (via their name, voice, or image) must not be shared with anyone not enrolled in this class.

DIVERSITY

George Mason University is committed to providing equal opportunity and an educational and work environment free from any discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, or age. George Mason University adheres to all applicable state and federal equal opportunity/affirmative action statutes and regulations. Please see the Office of Equity and Diversity Services for more information – http://equity.gmu.edu.

NETIQUETTE

Our discussion goal is to be collaborative, not combative; you are creating a learning environment, sharing information and learning from one another. Respectful communication is important to your success in this course and as a professional. Please re-read your responses carefully before you post them so others will not to take them out of context or as personal attacks. Be positive to others and diplomatic with your words and I will try my best to do the same. Sarcasm is never appropriate and you should be careful when using humor. Without face-to-face communications your joke may be viewed as criticism. Experience shows that even an innocent remark in the online environment can be easily misconstrued.

TECHNOLOGY

The use of computers, translation devices, smartphones, and social media is a privilege that comes with great responsibility. Gadgets should not distract you from earning your participation points or distract your classmates. Absolutely no gadgets should be out during guest speakers. Such disruptions show a lack of professionalism and will affect your participation grade.

LATE CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments will be submitted via Blackboard by 11:59pm on the specified due date, which is usually a Tuesday each week. **Late work turned in after the deadline will automatically be 50% off of your grade. Assignments turned in more than a week late will not be accepted**. Exceptions may be given for extenuating circumstances if you notify me prior to the due date.

INCLEMENT WEATHER OR OTHER CAMPUS CLOSURE

Because this is an online class, assignments are still due by 11:59pm on the specified due date even if the University is closed due to inclement weather.

STUDENT EXPECTATION AND SERVICES

Some of the assignments for the class will require you to collaborate or respond to your peers. Assignments are still due by the due date. Please be respectful of each other's time and availability. If there is an issue, please contact Professor prior to assignment due date.

This course is an online and asynchronous which means you have flexibility as to when you access the weekly topic and assignment, however, the due dates stand firm. You are responsible for managing your time, completing work, and communicating proactively should unforeseen circumstances arise.

SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS

All work for this course must be submitted via Blackboard.

CAREER READINESS RESOURCES

University Career Services (UCS) helps Mason students to connect what they know and have learned from their degree with their career goals. We work with students at all points in the career development process: assisting them in exploring how to best use their talents, strengths, and interests to select majors and career paths, as well as connecting with employers and strategizing for breaking into their industry of interest. For individualized attention and assistance beyond what is covered in class, reach out: careers.gmu.edu.

ASSIGNMENTS: *INCLUDE YOUR OWN ASSIGNMENTS AND POINT SYSTEM HERE*

Please note: This table is a list and description of all assignments and is not necessarily in chronological order. Please review the course calendar below for a description of course progression with due dates

Assignments and Due Dates	Assignment Description
Assessments (20 total, 10 pts each)	Complete the iStartStrong (10 points) and CliftonStrengths assessments (10 points). Instructions to take each assessment will be communicated through email/Blackboard
Graduate Research Worksheet (30 total, 15 pts each)	Using the graduate research worksheet provided on Blackboard, research two different graduate programs.
Industry and occupation worksheet (20 pts)	Using the worksheet provided on Blackboard and the recommended web resources, identify a field of interest and complete an industry/occupational research worksheet
Resume (35 points) (15 pts Peer Review/Draft, 20 pts Final Resume)	Submit a draft resume, review an assigned peer's resume and provide feedback, and submit a final resume or CV. Submit a draft to a peer (assigned) for review and review the one you receive.
Personal Statement (50 points) 20 pts Group Sample Essay Review 30 pts Personal Statement Optional: Submit a revised essay for grade improvement	Work with partners (assigned) to review and evaluate sample personal essays. Prompt and rubric provided. See module for assignment details. Prepare a personal essay for one of the schools using the prompt and rubric provided. More details on Blackboard.
Interview Stream (15pts)	Complete an interview on InterviewStream. Access code will be provided.
Budget (10 pts)	Prepare a budget outlining the costs and resources needed for a graduate program of your choice. Using your graduate school research worksheet for tuition and fees, etc. as well as information about scholarships, financial aid, etc. Prepare a spreadsheet of income and expenses as well as a brief write up explaining your

	information.
Informational Interview Synthesis (20 pts)	Identify an alum or current graduate student of your program of interest. Conduct an interview gathering information about their experience and advice.
Journals (35 points total)	Complete a thoughtful reflection for each journal prompt of approximately 250-500 words. When there is a journal for the week, it is due no later than Tuesday 11:59pm of that week. Journals can be found in the weekly module folder or under Quizzes/Journals in Blackboard.
Class Participation/Quizzes/Online Discussions (12 quizzes, 2 discussions=70 total points)	In order to receive full credit for participation, you must actively participate in all class discussions and activities. This means replying to discussion prompts with a thoughtful but concise response (100-250 words) and saying more than simply "I agree/disagree, etc." You may of course, agree/disagree, but need to back up your statement. Discusses, quizzes, etc. are due by 11:59pm on Tuesdays.

Source of Points		Possible Points
Class Participation	2 Discussions, 12 quizzes	70
Assessments	CliftonStrengths and iStartStrong	20
Interview Stream		15
Peer feedback and Draft Resume		15
Resume		20
Industry and occupational research worksheet		20
Budget		10
Graduate School Research (15 each, 2 worksheets)		30
Sample Personal Statement - Group Review Project		20
Personal Statement		30
Informational Interview		20
Journals		35
TOTAL		305

Letter Grade	**Percentage**
A+	100
A	99-94
A-	93-90
B+	89-87
B	86-84
B-	83-80
C+	79-77
C	76-74
C-	73-70
D	69-60
F	Below 60

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES: (8 points each-choose up to 3)

- Find, post, summarize and react to an article on graduate school or graduate degrees and the job market
- Complete one extra graduate school research sheet
- Attend a career or graduate school related event and complete a write up
- Complete your Handshake profile 100%
    - (NOTE: The Handshake profile is worth 16 points. If you complete this, you are only eligible to complete one additional extra credit assignment)

All extra credit assignments are due no later than 5/4

Week/Date	Topic	Video/Reading	Assignments Due This Week (on Tuesdays by 11:59pm)
Week 1 1/25	Course Overview/ Introductions	**Read** through the syllabus **View** professor's introduction video	
Week 2 2/1	Timelines Standardized tests Why graduate school?	**Review** the PDF presentation: Considering Grad School – UNIV 421. **Read** the articles (links in Blackboard): Should I get a master's degree, Bureau of Labor Statistics Graduate School Timeline, UC Berkeley Graduate School Application Timeline, Princeton Review **Complete** the Grade School Readiness Self-Assessment If you wish to pursue a JD or MD degree, also review the relevant additional resources available in Blackboard.	Discussion 1, part 1: Introduction Video. See Week 1 Module for details. **Due 2/2** Syllabus Quiz, **2/2**
Week 3 2/8	Researching Industries and occupations	**Review** article: Should I get a master's degree, Bureau of Labor Statistics **Review** presentation on industry & occupations in Blackboard **Refer** to Career Services - Industry-specific resources Select an industry of interest. Explore some occupations of interest using O*Net or the Occupational Outlook Handbook	Journal 1: Reflection on process and time line. **Due 2/9** Discussion 1, part 2: See Week 1 module for details. **Due 2/9** Timelines for Grad School Quiz, **due 2/9**
Week 4 2/15	Researching schools and programs	**Review** presentation on researching graduate schools and the list of questions to consider when selecting a graduate program **Read** the articles (links in Blackboard): Criteria for Choosing a Graduate Program, LiveCareer 5 Things to Consider When Preparing to Visit a Prospective Grad School, Peterson's **Complete** two Graduate Program Research Worksheets using the sources provided or your own research sources.	Complete industry worksheet **Due: 2/16** Industries and Occupations Quiz, **due 2/16** Journal 2 **Due 2/16**
Week 5 2/22	Resumes	**Read** *Career Readiness Guide* pp. 52 - 61 and review the resume samples, pp. 82 - 97 **Review** presentation on resumes	Complete 2 graduate school research worksheets **Due 2/23**

			Researching Grad School Quiz, **due 2/23**
Week 6 3/1	iStartStrong and Clifton Strengths Assessments	**Review** presentation on assessment interpretation and your reports	Complete the iStartStrong and Clifton Strengths assessments **Due 3/2** Draft and Peer Review Resume **Due 3/2** Resume Quiz, **due 3/2** Final/revised resume **Due 3/9**
Week 7 3/8	Interviewing for Graduate School	**Read** *Career Readiness Guide, pp 74 -77* **View** the presentation on interviewing **Read***:* Multiple articles. See online module.	Journal 3: Reaction to self-assessment results and Strengths activity **Due 3/9** **Reminder:** Final/revised resume **Due 3/9** Assessment Quiz, **due 3/9**
Week 8 3/15	Personal Statements	**Watch** Personal Statements video, Purdue OWL **Read the excerpt:** Excerpt, Writing a Personal Statement.pdf **Sample Personal Statement – Group Review assignment –** details in Blackboard **Personal Statement** Details in Blackboard.	Submit Interview Stream practice interview **by 3/16** Interviewing for Graduate School Quiz, **due 3/16**
Week 9 3/22	Personal Statements cont'd	Ask a peer or mentor for feedback on your essay	Sample Personal Statements – Group Review Assignment **due 3/23** Personal Statement Quiz**, due 3/23** Personal Statement **due 3/30**
Week 10 3/29	Letters of Recommendation	**Review** presentation on letters of recommendation in online module **Read** Requesting Letters of Recommendation, Cornell University Graduate School Recommendation Letter Etiquette, Seattle Pacific University	Personal Statement **due: 3/30**
Week 11 4/5	Informational Interviewing/ Networking/ LinkedIn	**View** presentations **Read** *Career Guide pp.45-49.* **Read** 3 Steps to a Perfect Informational Interview, MUSE Building a Great Student Profile, LinkedIn Review Informational Interview Synthesis assignment. You will be asked to complete an informational interview with someone who has a degree (or is pursuing) that you are considering or is working in the field you are considering. Let me know now if you need help finding someone to interview. This is due in two weeks, but start contacting folks and scheduling now.	Journal 4: List three people you think will write you a strong letter of recommendation. What is your connection and why do you think they will be a valuable reference? **Due 4/6** Letter of Recommendation Quiz, **due 4/6** **ALERT:** The major assignment for the Informational Interview module is to find a relevant alum, grad student, or professional to interview. Start contacting folks to set something up

			now. Informational Interview Synthesis is **due in two weeks, 4/20**
Week 12 4/12	Budget and financial planning	**Review** the presentation on financial planning	Journal 5: Connect with two peers from class and ME, your professor, on LinkedIn. Briefly explain why you chose to connect with them**. Due 4/13** Complete an informational interview with someone who has a degree (or is pursuing) that you are considering or who works in the field you are considering. Submit your informational interview synthesis **by 4/20** Informational Interviewing Quiz, **due 4/13**
Week 13 4/19	Decision making	**Read** article: Criteria for Choosing a Graduate Program, LiveCareer **Watch** TedTalk: Ruth Chang, How to Make Hard Choices	Submit your budget for grad school. **Due 4/20** Budget & Financial Planning Quiz, **due 4/20** Reminder: Submit informational interview synthesis. **Due 04/20**
Week 14 4/26	Wrap-up and Next Steps	You'll receive an email invitation to complete a post-course survey from Career Services. Please complete this survey AND the University Course Evaluation. Note: Career Services may not send a eval this term, but at least complete the University Eval.	Journal 6: What will help you make a decision? If you gain acceptance into multiple schools, or receive a job offer, how will you decide where and when. **Due 04/27** Decision Making Quiz, **due 04/27** Discussion 2 -Wrap up, **due 5/4** **Extra Credit, due by 5/4**