Career Readiness Teaching Ideas
Prepared by Faculty Fellows in the 2020-2021 Career Readiness Learning and Leadership Community, July 2020

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UO Faculty Ideas and Practices

1. Jagdeep Bala, Department of Psychology
“On a daily basis, I focus on helping students prepare for careers through strategic academic plans that include co- and extra-curricular pursuits related to their long-term career goals. My teaching already focuses on making explicit connections between course concepts and their application in related careers as well as on highlighting the many broadly applicable skills students gain through the different course assignments.

My goal is for students to gain field specific knowledge with the understanding of where and how they could or would apply it. This is apparent in the design of all my courses, be they online or face-to-face, foundational e.g. Mind and Brain (PSY201), or upper division specialty courses, e.g. Cognition (PSY305), Psychoactive Drugs (PSY383), Learning and Memory (PSY433), Hormones and Behavior (PSY450). As an example, one set of critical thinking exercises I have students engage in throughout the term are explicitly labelled ‘Psychology and the Law,’ or ‘Psychology in Education,’ or ‘Psychology in the News.’ For these assignments, students evaluate data, reflect on, debate and/or generate one deliverable for professionals in the field. I use them to introduce both the psychological principles and research, as well as their application through the tools the students develop—arguments, papers, presentations or posters. I discuss these assignment objectives in the context of students doing career research for themselves, as well as developing competencies essential to these careers that they themselves may use as practitioners in one of these fields. I also discuss the soft-skills required for the group assignments – teamwork and accountability, group dynamics, project planning and execution, written/oral communication. Finally, I remind them to reflect on their contributions and strengths as well as articulate their in-class experiences appropriately in their resumes, and to talk about them when interviewing for internships and jobs.”

2. Peg Boulay, Environmental Studies, Environmental Leadership Program
“This term, my ELP students were heartbroken to miss the opportunity to do field work every Friday. Although they were gaining practical research, natural resource planning, and writing skills through their revised projects, they were missing out on data collection, plant identification, mapping and other field skills. I wanted to compensate for this reality by providing additional professional development opportunities. I did a fair amount of experimenting, including creating a professional portfolio assignment and several new workshops. My favorite new activity was organizing two ELP Alumni Panels: they were informative and inspirational for current students and they allowed me to reconnect with wonderful former students.”

ENVS 429: Environmental Leadership Program
Wrap-up: Activity – Conservation Science in Action & Community Engagement
ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS

Quickly skim the announcements labeled for your project and “all projects,” then choose one to focus on. Read the announcement then write 4-6 phrases linking your ELP experience to the job announcement. What data collection, communication, teamwork, project management, etc. skills have you honed through ELP? What specific examples can you cite and how do they apply to this job? If you have time, also list other relevant experience gained through other classes, jobs and/or volunteer work. Note: These are actual job announcements but I have edited them to condense content.

(ALL PROJECTS) PROGRAM COORDINATOR, SOLV, Hillsboro, Oregon

SOLV is a non-profit organization that brings together individual volunteers, service and conservation groups, businesses and government agencies in activities to restore our natural spaces and provide educational opportunities to encourage environmental stewardship. We are hiring a Program Coordinator to supervise two statewide events: SOLV Spring Oregon Beach Cleanup and Beach and Riverside Cleanup.

Skills and Abilities:

- Strong organizational ability and keen attention to detail.
- Excellent interpersonal skills and comfort with phone work.
- Excellent listening, verbal and written communication skills.
- Ability to effectively work through problems to come up with creative solutions.
- Ability to work as part of a team.

(RIPARIAN RESTORATION) AQUATICS PROJECT MANAGER, Siuslaw Watershed Council (SWC)

The Aquatics Projects Manager works collaboratively with SWC partners and landowners and land managers to identify, develop, acquire funding for, implement, manage, inspect, and report on watershed and estuarine wetland monitoring and restoration projects; assists in the function of the SWC and the office. Qualifications: Bachelor’s degree in biology, fisheries, or related field with minimum of 1 year experience in work related to project management, stream restoration, or fish/natural resources management. Knowledge and experience related to watershed health and function, salmonids and aquatic organisms in the Pacific Northwest, estuaries and/or tidal wetland communities and function, and knowledge of related physical and biological sciences is preferred.

Preferred skills, abilities, and areas of experience include:

1. Operate a variety of office equipment including personal computer and related software;
2. Utilize Geographic Information Systems (GIS) including use of the ArcGIS software suite and map making; 3. Conduct field surveys; collect and integrate data using GPS; 4. Analyze and interpret data; formulate recommendations; prepare technical reports; 5. Work effectively with people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives; facilitate meetings and develop consensus among a diverse group of stakeholders; 6. Work effectively and efficiently on a multidisciplinary team; 7. Self-motivated and able to learn and implement new tasks and concepts; 8. Excellent written and oral communication skills; 9. Organizational skills, ability to anticipate and meet deadlines in a timely manner; 10. Track and manage numerous long-term and short-term tasks and activities; 11. Monitor and follow project budgets, and, 12. Excellent management skills, including supervision of volunteers and interns.

(OREGON OAKS) PRAIRIE SCIENCE TECHNICIAN, The Center for Natural Lands Management (CNLM)

The Prairie Science Technician will provide essential support to prairie-monitoring projects aimed at quantifying success of on-going restoration in western Washington prairies and oak woodlands. The Technician will spend a majority of his/her time (> 95%) collecting vegetation data, monitoring prescribed-fire effects, and/or conducting butterfly surveys. The remaining time will be spent assisting staff with data entry and management and on-the-ground restoration, including propagating and planting native species, collecting native seed and working on prescribed-fire crews. This position entails a moderate-level of responsibility, strong organizational and interpersonal skills, sound work ethic, positive attitude during long field days, and ability to record and manage large amounts of data. Development of positive and effective relationships with volunteers and partners is critical. The Technician must also be able to work independently, completing substantial tasks without direct supervision or through the supervision of conservation partners. The South Puget Sound Prairie Program is science-based and the Technician will be required to document, appropriately file, and effectively conduct quality control on all data pertinent to the operations on a regular basis.

Requirements:

- Completion of or progress towards BA/BS/AS/Technical or vocational degree in science-related field or equivalent combination of education and experience.
- Experience working with or knowledge of natural systems; ability to recognize plant and animal species; knowledge of ecological land management principles.
- Ability to follow instructions from colleagues and supervisors.
- Ability to manage time and diverse activities under deadlines while delivering quality results.
• Ability to safely perform physical work, sometimes under adverse conditions or in inclement weather.

• Working knowledge of common software applications (e.g.; Word, Excel, Web browsers) and familiarity with ArcMap GIS and other database systems.

• Conduct work according to guidelines and limitations as described in a federal 10(a)(1)(A) permit for species covered under the Endangered Species Act.

(HENDRICKS FOREST) BOTANIC SPECIALIST I, Portland Parks & Recreation Urban Forestry (PP&R UF)

PP&R UF is seeking two six-month temporary Botanic Specialist I - Forestry Specialty to serve as crew leads for Portland's Urban Forest Inventory and Analysis in collaboration with the US Forest Service. These positions will train and lead assistant crew members in data collection, including land use type, land use boundaries, mapping tree locations, identification and assessment of tree species and size, understory vegetation, soil type, and ground cover type.

The following minimum qualifications are preferred:

Knowledge of:

1. Biology, physiology, and ecology of urban ornamental and native trees in the Pacific Northwest.

2. Signs and symptoms of common pests and pathogens occurring on native and urban ornamental trees in the Pacific Northwest.

3. Damage agents common to urban trees, including but not limited to abiotic factors and human activities.

4. Forestry field techniques and data collection protocols.

5. GIS software and hardware.

Ability to:

1. Use and interpret topographic maps, aerial photographs, satellite imagery, compass, and GPS units. 2. Independently plan and implement assignments and resolve problems.
3. Manage data uploads and documents in a confidential and secure manner.
4. Communicate orally and in writing with a wide range of stakeholders.

5. Exercise tact and diplomacy in dealing with difficult or sensitive situations, issues, and people. 6. Work constructively in a team environment.

3. Alison Carter, Department of Anthropology
“...Many students take these courses because they sound interesting or might fulfill a requirement, but that most would not think that they could learn career-ready skills from an archaeology class if they weren’t going to be an archaeologist. I aim to provide opportunities in my class that will help students with many of the skills outlined by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (e.g. critical thinking/problem solving, global/intercultural fluency, teamwork/collaboration, and oral/written communication...”

Wrap-Up Handout for Major Project

What have you learned as part of this project?
There were two major goals in working on your project.

First, I wanted you to have an opportunity to research some archaeological artifacts from Southeast Asia and in doing so, gain a deeper understanding of these objects and one particular part of Cambodian/Thai archaeology and prehistory.

Second, your work has assisted me with a broader project to repatriate these objects to Cambodia/Thailand. The photographs and recording sheets will be sent to Cambodia so that there is a detailed database of objects being returned and they can easily accession these materials into their collection. Additionally, your posters will also be sent with the objects so that these will not be a collection of looted materials with no context, but will have some background information that will be of benefit to Cambodian students and scholars.

Additionally, this project gave you some “career-ready skills” that you can discuss with future employers! Benefits of working in a group

- Experience with cooperative learning. This kind of active learning helps students acquire and retain knowledge and achieve higher-order problem solving skills. You worked together with your group to answer questions about your objects (what they were, where/when they were from, what they were used for etc.)
- Enhance communication. Working with a group on a common goal (researching your objects and creating a poster) demonstrates that you can work collaboratively and gives you practice with oral and written communication. Successful teamwork is a benefit in both academic and office settings!
• Break a complex task (researching your objects) into parts/steps.
• Plan and manage time.
• Delegate roles and responsibilities and pool your knowledge and skills

Archaeological Skills Learned
• Original research on a group of objects with no context/provenience.
• Experience handling artifacts.
• Ability to identify academic sources about your objects and apply these to your research questions.
• Basic artifact recording (measuring, describing, in some cases using a Munsell soil color book) and photographing skills.
• Consideration of the ethics of studying a looted archaeological collection
• In-depth study of your specific topic/objects.
• Assisted with the repatriation of archaeological materials to their countries of origin (Cambodia/Thailand)

Academic Skills Learned
Learning how to put together original research into an academic poster (e.g. what kinds of information is presented in an academic poster, how to organize your argument and present your work coherently).

4. Chuck Kalnbach, Lundquist College of Business
“Students in BA308 are placed in teams at the end of Week 1 and work together for the next 9 weeks on a term-long project. Teams are assigned by the faculty member based on a student information sheet which helps us create as much diversity within the team as possible. For the past 15 years, the instructional team for BA308 has used Larry Michaelson’s work around team-based learning. Our process requires team members complete a team agreement on how they want to operate, provide feedback to each other (both orally and written which includes a ‘score’ on each person’s contribution to the project) twice during the term, and complete a team survey about how their team is operating. Embedded in this process are class lectures and exercises on team roles and communication styles, the power of teams versus individuals, how to create a psychologically safe team environment, and giving and receiving feedback (both written and oral) on observable behaviors in a ‘Radical Candor’ way.

During our mid-term peer evaluation process which takes a whole class period, students provide their oral feedback to other team members in a way that addresses the behavioral issue and maintains the relationships between team members. When receiving feedback, team members are only allowed to say “Thank You. Does anyone else have anything they would like to add?” That’s it. One student from this term said this process helped her overcome her “ruinous empathy” when giving tough feedback to another teammate. This mid-term process is for developmental purposes only—it does not affect a student’s grade. However, if the student
receives the same feedback and peer evaluation score at the end of the term, it may have a detrimental impact on their team project grade. Students who have had negative team experiences in past classes appreciate that no one is allowed to not pull their weight without repercussions.”

5. Dean Livelybrooks, Department of Physics

Weekly, cross-disciplinary seminars: what to do with your STEM degree. “In my department, Stephanie Majewski and Laura Jeanty have developed a well-received seminar series named “Putting your Physics Degree to Work.” These are offered once to twice a term, and involve bringing alumni and colleagues to present to our undergrads. and grads about their careers—what they do, how they prepared for them, etc. The choice of speakers is generally dialed away from those within higher education career pathways, in part to reflect American Institute of Physics national degree outcomes tracking showing that around 65% of physics baccalaureate achievers first enter private industry, with 10 % moving along graduate academic career paths (https://www.aps.org/careers/statistics/bsempsectors.cfm). A sampling of posters advertising these seminars can be found here (https://blogs.uoregon.edu/smajewsk/physics-career-seminars/). Perhaps you have something similar in your department? My perception is that URG members find non-academic (‘industry’) career outcomes to be more motivational to their completing science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) degrees, for example UCLA’s successful PEERS program lists ‘academic and career seminars’ as the first of its four essential elements (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4477728/).

We can look south to see some other ideas from the California State system, as described in an article from Inside Higher Ed (https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2019/01/14/recommendations-making-stem-education-more-diverse-opinion). These ideas in general support connecting and leveraging cross-disciplinary and cross-programmatic efforts as supporting gains in STEM persistence by members of under-represented groups (URGs). A quote from that article states that “The solution is this: we need to work across units to create an integrated community of support for students. Instead of more programs and interventions, we need more connections between existing efforts—especially between student affairs and academic affairs.”

So here’s a ‘what if’ question: what if each of our STEM departments committed to sponsoring 1-2 of this type of presentations per term, throughout the academic year (say 4 each, annually, if we all commit) as part of a 10-presentation per term, joint seminar series aimed particularly at lower-division STEM majors? This series would be intentionally cross-disciplinary and a significant percentage of the mix of speakers would include those following private industry, K-12 education, and other non-higher ed. career pathways. Further, what if a joint seminar was constructed that had a standard format: the same day/time/place each week (organize it as a 1-credit XXX 407M/607M seminar?), a 40 minute talk followed by extensive time for pizza, questions and discussion? We could ask each speaker to address a standardized list of points in
their presentation, for example: their educational and social background; an event that strongly influenced their decision to major in STEM; a challenge to their persisting to a degree successfully met; some cool aspect of their current job; how they use knowledge and skills from other STEM disciplines within their jobs; perhaps how they see their job as benefitting society.” In hearing of this idea, another faculty suggested that the talk be more of an interview of the speaker by students in attendance.”

6. Leslie McLees, Department of Geography
“When I started my position as the geography undergraduate coordinator and advisor in 2014, I became interested in the consistent theme from students of ‘what can I do with this degree?’ It pushed me to figure out how best articulate the value of a degree in geography, which in turn led me to realize that major doesn’t matter. A degree in the liberal arts provides students with the most desirable skills that employers are looking for: Critical thinking, problem-solving, understanding data, effective communication, and so much more. Students will develop those skills best if they apply them in something their interested in (hopefully their major!).”

Weekly Assignment Guidelines
Due each week by Sunday at 11:59pm

Purpose:
To effectively assess students’ understanding of concepts presented in the course by looking at how they apply them in different regional contexts. To have students articulate ideas and concepts in a more modern, visual medium that reflects the current ways of consuming information.

Real-world, job-ready skills gained through this assignment:
• Effective communication (designing and writing)
• Research (finding legitimate archival information, such as news or historical documents online)
• Organizing information (you will need to organize your findings coherently each week)
• Critical thinking (applying concepts from one region to another)
• Problem-solving (figuring out how to design your response on your assignment submission)

People become geographers often because they are fascinated by the world around them. Research often focuses on fieldwork: getting outside, getting dirty, talking to people, etc. Unfortunately, this class cannot encompass real fieldwork in different areas in the U.S. and Canada, so we have to focus on other potential research tools: online archival research.

This weekly assignment is the primary assessment to understand how you are incorporating the concepts presented in the class. By primary assessment, this means that this project replaces a standard test, so take this seriously. You will be graded seriously. […]
Keep in mind that each week's prompts will be a part of your final storymap project. The feedback you receive for each assignment should be taken into consideration as you develop the following week's assignment. See the final storymap assignment for more details.

Each post should be 200-300 words and include at least three visuals (images or links to outside videos). Starting in week 4, each entry will need to include a map created in ArcGIS online.

[...]

7. Dorothee Ostmeier, Department of German and Scandinavian

“...More recently I experimented with including experiential learning components into my regular teaching. I presented collaborative public lectures with graduate students, and most recently I received a grant from the JSMA (2018) to invite Kansas artist Peregrine Honig for an interactive public lecture about her satirical and socially engaged portrayal of fairy tales. Upon receiving this grant, I designed a Clark Honors College 400 level course that included an internship component in which I trained students to organize a public event presenting and discussing the materials we studied.

In the first 5 or 6 weeks we studied cross-cultural fairytales as vibrant sources for the exploration of controversial issues, as for example, class and gender struggles, child abuse, civil rights etc., topics, that Peregrine Honig actualizes and tackles in her art. Then we discussed the details of organizing a public event: students collaborated on poster design, hosting the lecture, writing and presenting introductions, on rehearsing and practicing a public discussion with the artist. Here you can review the result, a very well attended event at the JSMA: “Satire And Fairy Tale In Contemporary Art Projects Of Peregrine Honig” Students were in charge and ran the whole event. They enjoyed sharing their studies with the public, and to collaborate with the artist. I was very pleased to sit back and to enjoy their great performance. In the end we met with the director and curator of the JSMA and critically discussed and reviewed the lecture, discussion, exhibition and reception. During this class my students practiced professionalism in interacting with JSMA professionals, the artist and the very diverse audience of the JSMA, management skills and team work in problem solving.

Future Goals [...]

As instructor of fairy tale and fantasy courses for GER, FLK, or CHC I am eager to train students to organize public fairy tale /storytelling events, for example, at the Holiday Market in Eugene, the Country Fair, or in some kind of storytelling café setting at the UO or downtown. Students will set up a booth and organize and run spontaneous storytelling circles or games that involve actual communal story telling. Organizing and running such public events would exercise all career readiness skills outlined by the National Association of Colleges and Employers. However, this is a huge project and needs careful planning, collaboration with colleagues, and probably grant writing in order to secure support.”
“Career readiness lies at the heart of my advising and teaching. As a Professor of Practice, a key part of my role is to bring industry to the SOJC and to take the SOJC out to industry. I work towards this goal through a variety of means, including research and creative work designed to inform media leaders, as well as practice-based teaching and experiential learning. Alongside enabling students to develop their critical thinking and craft skills, I also place a strong emphasis on helping them understand the consequences of their digital footprint, how to network, and creating a professional online presence. In my experience, our students may be digital natives, but they are often very naive about how to harness tech platforms for professional purposes. To address this, assignments that I have developed include:

1. **Start of Term Digital Icebreaker**: students buddy-up with a classmate they do not know and research them online. Based on the information they find, 10-mins later they “present” their partner to the class. The—often surprisingly accurate—conclusions offer students a valuable reminder of what is already “out there” about them.

2. **Information Interviews**: introduced this year, students connect with another journalist in the field they want to work in. Although a proven networking method, I have found most of my students are unfamiliar with the term, nevermind the techniques required to master it. Guest speakers frequently emphasize the value of networking but we fail to teach students how to do this effectively. This assignment seeks to remedy that.

3. **Creation of an About.Me website, Portfolio website, and a LinkedIn profile**. Few students—including seniors—have a strong professional digital presence. Through a three-step approach, they refine the personal brand they want to project online, while critiquing the portfolios of their peers and guest speakers further develops their knowledge of best practice.

I believe each of these ideas/assignments are replicable across campus, but that navigating LinkedIn is an area every UO-graduating job seeker (not just SOJC’ers) would benefit from. [...] Home to 675 million monthly users, 30 million companies and 20 million open job listings, LinkedIn is also the 5th most popular social media platform for Americans (ahead of Snapchat and Twitter). Proficiency in the platform is beneficial for: your digital footprint (when prospective schools and employers Google you), finding jobs and information about trends, companies and fields you are interested in, understanding how to market yourself (including keywords and phrases required for SEO and resume-scanning technology), demonstrating thought leadership, and researching sources, networks and contacts relevant for any line of work. I have refined this assignment, graduating from general tips to an **11-point profile checklist** and in-class discussions on networking via the platform. I am keen to further develop these ideas and the on-going career readiness of these efforts, given the potential and
importance of this platform for all UO students, faculty, staff and alum, throughout their careers.”

9. Judith Raiskin, Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies

“For many years I have been running an internship seminar for senior majors in Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies (WGS 411/511 Feminist Praxis: Internship Seminar). I designed this class and have developed relationships with over 20 organizations in Eugene because I think it is essential that our students have guided and self-critical internship experiences before they graduate. Many of my students have not had this kind of experience and need help translating their academic skills and theoretical knowledge into work-related capabilities. As part of my course students read about social justice movements and they intern in community organizations. Each week they reflect in writing on 3 questions: one on their experiences that week as interns, one on the organizational structure of their agency, and one on the relationship of the mission of their organization to the social justice movement they are studying that week. We also spend a couple of weeks preparing for the fall Career Fair by infusing their resumes (usually they don’t have one yet) with both their academic and work-related skills.

Another class I teach that is an excellent preparation for the work-world is a public writing seminar offered through the Clark Honors College (the Calderwood Seminar for Public Writing). This seminar has a specialized format of multiple weekly peer-editing and revisions of writing for the purpose of reaching a broader readership. The course helps students translate their academic knowledge and specialized language for public venues (magazines, newspapers, blogs, grant proposals, etc.). They are encouraged to get rid of jargon, overly complex sentences, wordiness, and obscure references. I would like students who are not in the Honors College to also have access to this kind of training because it is exactly the kind of writing they will need to amplify their own ideas and communicate clearly in the workplace.”

10. Emily Simnitt, Department of English, Composition Program

“One of the learning outcomes of WR 122 is for students to explore and identify different forms arguments can take depending on the context and audience. Another core experience in the course is using discussion and writing to identify the points of conflict in an argument. We have developed material to help students engage in difficult conversations during this process. An assignment or activity that has students identify how the issue might be addressed in a particular workplace and then practice how the discussion and writing might play out differently in the workplace from an academic setting could begin to build student career readiness skills at the start of their UO educational experience.
In a recent Association of Public Land Grant Universities report, employers identified ‘gaps’ in college graduates’ education. Among those was comfort with taking risks, ‘practice opening conversation and breaking the conflict taboo,’ and understanding workplace roles. I believe that there is an opportunity to revise existing assignments/activities in WR 122 in such a way as to address these gaps and to give students language they can use to communicate to future employers that they have begun learning these skills. This would add to the Composition Program’s ongoing work on alternative assessment practices that support students learning to take risks in their writing.”

11. Julie Voelker-Morris, School of Planning, Public Policy and Management

“Larger worldwide and national issues of the COVID-19 pandemic, Black Lives Matter protests, massive unemployment, and a teetering gig economy make job prospects seem tenuous. Yet, career and professional development faculty like myself continue to offer student and alumni job seekers excellent advice in these tenuous times—as in all times. As Senior Instructor II and Career Services Director for the School of Planning, Public Policy, and Management (PPPM), I regularly integrate career readiness content into all course work and advising with my students. For example, I work with students to craft individual professional development plans that meet individualized career and learning goals. Such plans first identify professional positions to which students aspire. Students then identify specific job descriptions for positions available on the market. They determine gaps in their knowledge, skills, and overall career development in association with those descriptions. After identifying these gaps, students and I work together to determine strategies to gain further professional experience. Strategies consistently include experiential learning opportunities such as internships, micro-internships, research projects with faculty or public agencies, part-time jobs, board governance and other volunteer services, fundraising and special event projects. These experiential learning opportunities are grounded in PPPM’s focus on inclusion and equity that includes professional development in addressing workplace issues of racism, sexism, and classism, among others.”

12. Matthias Vogel, Department of German and Scandinavian

“My efforts to create opportunities for students have resulted in a Certificate in Global Business for LCB as well as language and literature students. I have worked together with Collette Niland in the LCB and other colleagues to create this certificate. I also coordinate an internship program (German 409) which sends some of our undergraduates to Edison elementary school where they gain valuable job experience instructing elementary school kids.

Additionally, for two decades I have worked in experiential learning settings. I have led the Global Engagement ARC, and have served as Faculty-in-Residence in the GSH since 2018. I work together with the UO Career Center frequently to enrich my GE ARC (and other GSH) students’
experience with job skills workshops such as advanced resume writing and interview skills workshops. GE ARC students also participate (as part of the ARC class) in the Undergraduate Research Symposium for which they prepare team research projects. They learn collaboration skills, leadership skills, engage with “glocal” topics to enhance their intercultural fluency, all in addition to the research skills we are training to prepare for the symposium. I have also invited visits from job recruiters to give presentations to students in the GSH and have collaborated with recruiters to create internship and job opportunities tailored to the particular student population in the GSH while adjusting the curriculum upon their input.

[...] I believe strongly that the general undergraduate student population can benefit greatly from what we in the languages and literatures have to offer (see recent Forbes and Pew Research Center publications) while our humanities majors would benefit from concrete skills they can acquire in classes outside of our disciplines. As the Pew report underlines, in today’s world, analytical, critical thinking, listening, communication, and interpretation skills are very important to get that dream job. These are among the main skills trained in my classes and I want to help integrate more active and experiential teaching methodologies into UO curricula. I also want to help further the articulation of the linkages between skills learned across the disciplines as an important part of the UO undergraduate education. This is a particularly urgent problem since students (and their parents) first must recognize the importance of a broad education to enhance learner readiness. With internships, public research projects, expanding experiential learning, I believe we can pique students’ curiosity to learn more and we can demonstrate the applicability of skills they are learning across the disciplines.”

13. Eleanor Wakefield, Department of English, Composition Program

“I have done two successful career-readiness activities in my courses that I would like to build on in upcoming terms: presentations by industry professionals, and an interview assignment. In both cases, students reflected on how our course material connected to what they learned, and, in some cases, I adapted some class activities (or explanations) to show how the class content matched with what professionals taught us. The presentations I found so successful were a key component of my WR320: Scientific and Technical Writing course in Winter 2019. I had a variety of people visit our class, both from around campus (staff from the admissions office, from the communicating science group, and from the grants office) and from the community (two local engineers and the executive director of United Academics). I prepared our guests with a set of general questions about how they use writing, how their writing is technical/scientific, what conventions they tend to use, and so on; during the presentation, students collaborated on taking notes in a Google doc, which they shared with the other class section, as not all students could see all the guest speakers. This activity worked even better than I dreamed in that everyone who came emphasized the same material I had been emphasizing (often in the same words!), which made me look correct, but moreover it showed the students the wide variety of ways scientific and technical writing happen in many jobs they may not have considered. As a result, it reinforced the material of the class while more importantly making an argument for the importance of the subject.
The other activity, interviews, I have done successfully in both first-year writing courses and in Scientific and Technical Writing. This assignment has students find someone in a job that they might like (or a job they already have, or just a job they are curious about) and ask them questions about what kinds of writing they do and what makes that writing “good.” Depending on how long we have, I sometimes teach them about writing good questions and have in-class time to work on those, which they turn in along with a rough transcript of the interview. After they conduct their interviews, I usually have them share with their group or the whole class what they found interesting or surprising, and again, this ends up reinforcing the material and the importance of a required writing class in general. I had a biology major talk to a faculty member once, and she explained the multiple audiences the professor had to write to, connecting that to some of our lessons in class; I had another student talk about her boss, who reported that he rarely wrote anything and relied on the student to do it, from which response she learned that she needed to improve her professionalism and proofreading. I try to then make explicit how our class, though we are doing argumentative writing that might seem distinct from professional writing, provides them with skills that transfer to those different fields and jobs.

14. Ashley Walker, Department of Human Physiology

“An example of career readiness that I integrate into my course is to build students ability to communicate with a general audience. I teach a course in the Physiology of Aging, where students apply their previous technical knowledge of physiology to the field of aging and geriatric medicine. When students enter my class, they have an abundance of experience in technical communication of physiology concepts, such as preparing lab reports in 300-level physiology series. As most students plan to pursue a career in health care, my goal is for them to develop their ability to communicate complex physiology concepts to a lay audience, such as their future patients. The development of this skill is integrated throughout the course in assignments and in class discussions. We analyze samples of lay communication such as TedTalks and excerpts from books targeted at a general audience. Students identify strategies for lay communication from these samples that work well or do not. We also discuss and practice techniques for explaining a complex concept, such as the use of imagery and metaphor. Students practice their communication through written assignments, where the prompt is to describe a technical research article to “an older patient who does not have a science background.”

Assignments receive peer and instructor feedback, and opportunities to revise. While this example is for communication about aging and physiology concepts, the ability to communicate about a highly technical concept to a general audience carries over to many careers students may pursue in the short- or long-term (sales, management, etc.).”
15. Kristin Yarris, Department of International (Global) Studies

“I have been building experiential learning and professional development into my teaching in Global Health and Migration Studies through the department of International (Global) Studies for the past eight years. There are many rewards to doing this work— notably, writing reference letters for my students’ later successful applications to jobs and graduate programs! — but also many challenges.

It requires faculty who are willing to take the time to build connections through broader research and professional communities and engage those connections through our teaching. It also demands a good deal of faculty time mentoring and supporting our students. This said, I can’t imagine teaching purely theoretical concepts or methodological skills without addressing real-world problems in my classes and engaging students in addressing those, even through mock assignments like policy briefs or program intervention proposals. [For example, in my spring course] that I brought together very quickly to address the pandemic and state-level responses in global-local perspectives. For that course, students produced a variety of final project/products, which were available to broader publics: Twitter accounts, YouTube videos, and StoryMaps sites were just a few of these. In my zero-week summer course, I’m having students engage in “project-based learning” to design a hypothetical intervention to address COVID-related health risks in diasporic or immigrant/refugee communities in Oregon. I’m bringing in guest speakers from community-based and health care organizations to share their expertise with students.”

16. Michal Young, Computer and Information Science

“One thing I already do: In CIS 422 (software methodology 1, a core required course featuring team projects), I lecture on small group teamwork, including group decision making and holding effective meetings. Often I also coach individual teams who experience conflict that threatens their success[…]

One thing I would like to do: The majority of our majors pursue careers in software development. I believe collaboration across domains is a key skill for software developers. The most effective software developers are very good at collaborating with partners and clients and whose expertise is in other fields. We currently have no curriculum that specifically addresses working with people who are not software developers. We should. Moreover, it might be possible to develop approaches to cross-domain collaboration that would partner computer science students with students in other disciplines, to their mutual benefit.”