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Career Development in Curriculum: COLA 100E

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Professionals in the Classroom

“Growing public concern about the return on investment (ROI) associated with higher education has created pressure for both public and private institutions to assume greater responsibility for students’ post-graduation outcomes.” (Koproske, 2017)

Engagement with Professionals, from the local community, in the classroom allows for students to learn about a variety of career paths and gain career advice. This practice also provides the institution a tangible way of preparing students for their graduation plans and allows for mentorship to develop naturally among the students and professionals.

Based on the common reader for COLA 100E, Callings by Dave Isay, 2-3 professionals were brought in to serve on professional panels where students would ask a variety of questions pertaining to their field. A total of 5 panels were brought in throughout the semester. Examples of questions asked were:

- What’s your salary range?
- What is the hardest part of your career?
- Best part of your career?
- What’s your work/life balance look like?

Students were surveyed, mid-semester, and asked specifically about their likes and dislikes of the course thus far (students were not given prompted responses). When surveyed 55.6% of students stated they liked the “Professional Panels”

Student & Community Professional Feedback

Community Professionals also greatly enjoyed the experience.

Dee Williams from Infinity Hospice stated

“It was such a pleasure and honor to be with you and your students in a time of sharing on Thursday morning. The time spent was so precious and I can assure you it will be forever in my thoughts.”

John Barry from Kevin Barry Fine Art Associates “Hopefully some things resonated with some of them and it will be beneficial in their respective career paths.”

Research & Resources

“The National Association of Colleges and Employers, through a task force of college career services and HR/staffing professionals, has developed a definition, based on extensive research among employers, and identified eight competencies associated with career readiness.” (NACE, 2018)

First Year Field Exposure (Koproske, 2017) is one of the ways to integrate academic and career development.

Collaborating with Career Services allows for Faculty to be able to focus on teaching, while Career Services professionals can help identify Community Professionals to come into the classroom.


Resources and where to find them

Curriculum

Collaborate with UNLV Career Service to help identify Community Professionals (or alumni) to serve on a Professional Panel within your course curriculum.

Survey students within your course about fields they’re interested in pursuing after graduation.

Provide a course assignment where students provide questions they want to ask the panel.

Provide a course assignment where students write a thank you email to the panelist to develop a natural mentorship activity.

Contact Information

For additional information or assistance please feel free to contact me at Jenna.Heath@unlv.edu

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