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## Professional Development: COLA 100L

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## Professional Development: COLA 100L

### The practice and the need it addresses

#### Professional Development in Curriculum

The need for professional development integration into curriculum is vital for student success. Colleges and universities across the country are implementing career and professional development opportunities into classroom curriculum to better prepare students for life outside the classroom. Specialized events and focused learning opportunities help students successfully navigate through the career development process, and is exactly what students need.

By having professional development opportunities and experiences built into curriculum, students can experience a real-world and innovative approach to their education. Professional development in curriculum can come in the form of internship or job search workshops, resume building events, mock interview experiences, networking activities, etc. All activities contribute to the goal of fostering professionalism at the heart of curriculum and student learning experience.

This advanced curriculum drives students out of their comfort zone and allows them to explore careers and professionalism outside the classroom.

### Evidence this practice benefits UNLV Students

#### Impacts of Professional Development in Curriculum

Students in career preparation courses (involving mentorship and access to career information) report less indecision about their future careers, regardless of approach to the course, and a higher confidence in their ability to make career decisions (Ciarocco, 2018).

Students, who completed professional development activities with Career Services through COLA 100L, made the following comments in reflection journals and a post-semester survey:

*“One of the best activities I could ever do, helping me build confidence and future connections throughout. It was very difficult at first, but it was a progress of building confidence.”*

*“I’m grateful for this opportunity because I’ll be prepared in a real-life situation to give an [elevator] pitch.”*

*“I feel more confident in myself than I did a year ago when I could barely say three words to someone without crying, an obvious change from today. I have to say this activity was a success and I will network more often.”*

*“I love how this program allowed me to do many mock interviews! Normally I would have anxiety over an interview, but now I feel a lot more confident. This is a skill that is extremely pertinent in my future”*

### Resources and where to find them

#### Who Can Help Build Professional Development Curriculum?

UNLV Career Services, located in SSC-A Suite 201, is a helpful resource in implementing professional development into curriculum. By partnering up with a representative from Career Services, students are provided the opportunity to connect with professional development resources, including mock interviewing opportunities, events with employers and professionals in their field, resume building, internship and job search, assistance with social media in the application process (LinkedIn), etc.

For more information, visit <https://www.unlv.edu/hirearebel>

In addition, external resources including the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) is a helpful tool to find literature about career and professional development on college campuses.

For more information, visit <http://www.naceweb.org/>

### How other UNLV teachers might adopt this practice

#### Where Can I Begin?

When implementing career and professional development into curriculum, it is important to begin thinking of ways to address career as a part of the subject being taught. For example, a first-year seminar instructor may choose to bring in guest speakers, such as a professional panel (consisting of professionals in varying career industries). While, another instructor may choose to implement professional development into their curriculum by simply scheduling a presentation or workshop with Career Services to present to their class on topics, including: resumes, social media in the application process, interviewing and more.

When building professional development into curriculum, it is imperative to be cognizant of the subject being taught, the audience being reached, and the future goals of the students in the course. Exposing students to career and professional development is useful at any grade level.

One way to begin is to dedicate 1-2 classes each semester to career and professional development. Following, monitor the student’s reaction/feedback. Finally, work with UNLV Career Services to build up future professional development opportunities for students in your classroom.