

Career Development in Psychology

(The Junior Seminar)

If we all did the things we are capable of, we would astound ourselves. – Thomas Edison

The real measure of our Jesuit universities lies in who our students become. – Peter Kolvenbach

Catalog Description:

(Prerequisites: Junior standing; Psychology major) This seminar entails studying, discussing, and applying information on academic planning, career development, and graduate school. Fall only.

Student Learning Objectives:

1. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of **academic planning** for psychology majors as evidenced by satisfactory completion of quizzes, a self-authoring paper, a career plan, and group discussions.
2. Students will develop **career development skills**, specifically on preparing for graduate school and obtaining employment with a baccalaureate in psychology, as demonstrated in satisfactory completion of multiple quizzes and graded assignments (informational interview, LinkedIn profile, CV/resume, mock interview, cover letter or personal statement).
3. Students will establish **realistic career goals** as judged by the acquisition and use of information obtained in the course (e.g., advising checklist, career plan, individual career review, quiz performance).

Faculty Information:

Instructor: John C. Norcross, PhD, Distinguished Professor & Chair of Psychology
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Teaching Assistant: Kyla A. Weckel (kyla.weckel@scranton.edu)

Required Texts (all paperbacks):

- Kuther, T. L., & Morgan, R. D. (2020). *Careers in psychology* (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. (identified as **K** on class calendar)
- Bolles, R. N., and Brooks, K. (2022). *What color is your parachute? Your guide to a lifetime of meaningful work and career success* (2022 edition). Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press. (identified as **B** on class calendar)
- Norcross, J. C., & Sayette, M. A. (2022). *Insider's guide to graduate programs in clinical and counseling psychology* (2022/2023 edition). New York: Guilford Press. (**N** on class calendar)



Catch the Fever!



Evaluation Process:

Your performance in this seminar will be assessed via the August reading quiz, 5 additional quizzes, 4 assignments involving moderate work (10 points each), and 5 briefer assignments (worth 5 points apiece). You will have a quiz, an assignment, or both due each class. The quizzes will be administered at the beginning of the class; makeup quizzes are not permitted. Each quiz is based primarily on the assigned reading for that week and the prior week. We shall count only your 4 best quiz grades; you can miss or “drop” a quiz (but not the August reading quiz).

The 4 assignments entailing moderate work will be graded on a specific rubric, which will be discussed in class prior to the assignment.

The 5 briefer assignments will be graded as follows: 5 points = assignment delivered on time, in class, and excellent work; 4 points = assignment delivered on time, in class, and good work; 3 points = assignment delivered on time, in class, and satisfactory work; 2 = assignment delivered on time, in class, but below satisfactory work. Points will be subtracted for late assignments.

Thus,	August reading quiz	15
	4 best of 5 quizzes (10 points apiece)	40
	Career plan	10
	Informational interview	10
	Cover letter or personal statement	10
	CV or resume	10
	5 additional assignments (5 points apiece)	<u>25</u>
		120 possible points

Course Policies:

This is our class. Please be interested, honest, curious, responsible, and active. Let’s manifest in class the characteristics of successful employees and graduate students!

Regular class attendance is essential for a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. If absent from a class meeting, you are responsible for the material covered. You are responsible for all announcements made in class.

Please turn off your cell phone while in class. Violation of this policy will demand punishment – though one that does not infringe on your eighth amendment rights.

Refer to the University’s *Academic Code of Honesty*. Plagiarism or dishonest quiz behavior on your part will result in a grade of F for the course.

Please familiarize yourself with all university policies related to this course. These can be viewed at www.scranton.edu/studentlife/studentaffairs/student-conduct/university-policies.shtml and here: www.scranton.edu/academics/provost/academic_policies.shtml

Guidelines for the Assignments:

All papers are to be typed with one-inch margins. Please place your name and section time on the top of your paper. You are encouraged (but not required) to print assignments double-sided.

The **Self-Authoring paper** is a combination of expressive writing and goal setting. This assignment has produced positive career effects and perhaps reduced gender, SES, and racial disparities in course performance (Schippers et al., 2015). What keeps your engine running and what gets you up in the morning? Where is your happy place? What stands between you and your career dreams?

Find a location where you can thoughtfully reflect and write for about one hour. Don't get hung up initially on how you are saying things; instead, get your thoughts out in any form they choose to move from your brain to paper/computer. "Reflect, imagine, and daydream" about your future. Think about and write on each of the following relative to your life:

1. What is ONE thing that you would like to do better? (5 min)
2. What do you want to learn in this course over the semester? (5 min)
3. Which personal habit affecting your career would you like to improve? (5 min)
4. How would you like to spend your leisure time in more meaningful ways? (5 min)
5. Write about your ideal life. Hopefully, a life that is "honorable, exciting, productive, creative, and decent." (15 min)
6. Write about the life you would like to avoid. What might happen to you if you fail to create, pursue, and achieve worthy goals? (15 min)

Compile your answers, eliminate redundancies, polish the prose, and structure it as a paper using the numbers 1 – 6 (no need to repeat the questions in your paper). One paragraph per answer, please. Maximum of 2 double-spaced pages.

For the **Career Plan**, select two desirable career paths, either baccalaureate-level or graduate-degree, in or outside of psychology. Please access your CAPP sheet or DegreeWorks to assist you in answering these questions and attach it to the finished paper. Then, in numbered order, please write about the following elements.

1. Identify the two possible careers and their degree level (baccalaureate, masters, or doctorate)
2. List your major(s), minor, and concentration (if any)
3. Your planned semester of graduation with a BS in psychology
4. Undergraduate psychology courses (including psychology electives) you still need to complete the psychology major. Specify which psychology electives you plan to take.
5. Undergraduate psychology experiences (e.g., research, lab experiences, field experience, teaching assistantship, extracurriculars) you plan to acquire in the future (Specify in which areas or with which professors you plan to complete these)
6. Undergraduate courses *outside* of the psychology major (including free area/cognate electives) you still need in order to graduate (include GE courses, minors, and concentrations)
7. Undergraduate experiences *outside* of the psychology major you plan to acquire for your desired career (Specify in which areas or with which professors you plan to complete these)
8. Timeline (semester by semester, including the summer break) by which you will secure the courses and experiences identified in #4 - #7

Remember to attach your CAPP sheet or DegreeWorks to your finished assignment.

For the **LinkedIn assignment**, create a basic account online using your actual name, including your middle initial. LinkedIn is the world's most widely used resource for professional networking. It has 600 million users (including 34,000 U of Scranton alumni) located in 200 countries. Approximately 80% of recruiters employ the website to find job candidates. This assignment will showcase your strengths and expand your career network. Here's how to complete the assignment in 5 steps.

1. *Create your page on the LinkedIn website:* Go to www.linkedin.com/home and click “join now” in upper right-hand corner

2. *Populate your profile:*

- Top right – click on your profile
- Click view profile
- Add information by clicking the + icon on the top right corner of the desired section
- Edit by clicking on the pencil icon in the top right corner of the desired section
- Enter information manually. Include your middle initial.
- Optional: Attach your CV or Resume in the “About” or “Experience” section (remember to attach it again after you receive feedback on it and revise it later in the semester)

3. *Follow these research-supported guidelines:*

- Create a captivating headline, like a newspaper headline. Find some exemplars here: www.jobscan.co/blog/impactful-linkedin-headline-examples/
- Write your profile text (50 – 100 words) in the first person. Here are some examples: <https://business.linkedin.com/talent-solutions/blog/linkedin-best-practices/2016/7-linkedin-profile-summaries-that-we-love-and-how-to-boost-your-own>
- Conclude your profile with an “ask” – seeking connections, internships, research experience, employment, or the like
- Use a color, headshot photo
- Complete most of your profile. Research by psychologists demonstrates that longer profiles with more connections and a photo are favored by employers. That’s how to get noticed.

4. *Begin to grow your network:*

For this assignment, search LinkedIn for your professor and TA and invite them to connect with you. Then, search for people of similar status and interests and invite them to connect with you. It is probably best to connect with fellow University students initially.

5. *Bring to class to complete the assignment:*

a draft of your profile text (50 – 100 words)

a printed screenshot of your LinkedIn profile

For the **Informational Interview**, you will interview, in person or by telephone, a professional in a field you are considering pursuing as a career. Please do *not* interview a family member or a close friend. The concise paper will summarize, in 3 paragraphs, the interview. The first paragraph will specify the date of the interview, the name of the interviewee, the person’s position/profession, educational degree, and employment setting. The second paragraph will explain in a sentence or two why you chose to interview that person; that is, how the interviewee relates to a career you are considering. The third paragraph will summarize what you learned about the potential career and the most valuable pieces of advice you acquired from the interview. Maximum of 1 double-spaced page, please.

Questions you may ask during the information interview include:

How did you decide to go into your current field?

What, exactly, is the title of your position?

What training and credentials are needed for this job?

How did you get this job?

Where did you go to school?

What are the typical job duties or tasks of this position?

What is a typical day at work like for you?

What are the best features of your job? What are the worst?

What are some of the pressures and stressors you face in your job?

- What is the probable salary range for this occupation?
- What is the most valuable piece of advice you can give?
- What skills did you acquire through experience that you didn't learn in school?
- Are you still challenged and stimulated by your job?
- What was your biggest misconception about your profession?
- What do you know now that you wish you had known earlier?
- What do you think the future holds for this field?

For the **CV or Resume**, you will prepare one or the other. The CV will be prepared according to one of the two formats presented in the *Insider's Guide* (but double-space between sections). One of those formats is presented on the website of our Center for Career Development. The resume will be constructed using one of the templates on the Career Development or Vault website and then reviewed in person with one of the Career Services staff.

For the **Cover Letter or Personal Statement**, you will prepare either a single-spaced cover letter to accompany your resume for employment or a portion of a double-spaced personal statement required for graduate school applications. Your cover letter will be addressed to a particular person at a specific organization and will explain your qualifications. Your personal statement will address, typically in one lengthy paragraph each, (1) why you are pursuing graduate study in that particular area and (2) why you are applying to that particular graduate program. For both the cover letter and personal statement, please research an actual job (cover letter) or a graduate program (personal statement) and prepare your assignment accordingly. Word count for this assignment should be in the 400 to 600 range.

For the **Interview Responses**, you will be assigned in class three questions frequently asked during interviews. Your paper will present the questions and your responses to them. You will be asked at least two of those three questions during your Mock Interview. The length should be between 400 and 600 words for the entire assignment.

For the **Mock Interview**, you will participate in an interviewer for a 20-minute employment or graduate interview during interview day. If you miss class that day, then you will need to complete a videotaped mock interview at the Center for Career Development.

For the **Individual Career Review**, you will meet individually with the seminar instructor for 15 – 20 minutes outside of class time. You shall bring your revised CV or resume, current DegreeWorks/CAPP sheet, and an updated/revised Career Plan. You should arrive with at least three written questions about your academic and career development. Please come prepared and inquisitive, as your preparation contributes to your grade for this assignment. This assignment will be completed in the latter half of the course.



Careers in Psychology

Course Calendar and Assignments:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading</i>	<i>Assignment</i>
Aug 29	A Royal Welcome; Catch the Fever		August Read Quiz
Sep 5	Labor Day; no class		
Sep 12	Psychology Curriculum & Advising Tips	K1, B1	Self-Authoring
Sep 19	Accessing University Resources: Field Trip to Center for Career Development	B2, B3	Quiz 1
Sep 26	Employment & Grad School Selection Criteria	N 32 - 36 B4, B5	Career Plan
Oct 3	Preparing for Your Life's Work: Courses, Research, Experience, & Extracurriculars	N 36 - 48 B8	Quiz 2 LinkedIn Profile
Oct 10	Fall Break; no class		
Oct 17	Baccalaureate-Level Career Options Graduate-Degree Career Paths	N1, N2	Informational Interview
Oct 24	Applications and CVs/Resumes	N7 K221 - 229	Quiz 3
Oct 31	Entrance Examinations Researching Positions and Selecting Schools	N48 - 59 B7, N6	CV or Resume
Nov 7	Cover Letters & Personal Statements	B8, N103 - 109	Quiz 4
Nov 14	Letters of Recommendation	N108 - 114 K272 - 274	Cover Letter or Pers Statement
Nov 21	Interviewing Strategies & Practice	N8, B9	Interview Responses
Nov 28	Interview Day	K231 - 237	Mock Interview
Dec 5	More on Interviews; Making Final Decisions	N9, B10	Quiz 5
Dec 12	Let Your Life Speak; Keep the Fever; Parting		Individual Career Review



Keep the Fever!

