

Professional Development

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Office Hours by appointment

AMGT 402/504 Fall 2019

Van Metre Hall Room 477

Arlington Campus

Wednesdays, 4:30-7:10pm

Professionalism is not a label you give yourself—
it is a description you hope others will apply to you.

—David Maister, *True Professionalism*

[Course Overview](#)

[Learning Outcomes](#)

[Course Requirements](#)

[Attendance](#)

[Communication](#)

[Technology Use](#)

[Readings](#)

[Assignments and Grading](#)

[Class Participation](#)

[21-Day Challenges](#)

[Informational Interview](#)

[Presentation](#)

[Portfolio and Interview](#)

[Course Schedule](#)

[Class 1: August 28](#)

[Class 2: September 18](#)

[Class 3: October 23](#)

[Class 4: November 13](#)

[Class 5: December 4](#)

[University Policies](#)

[Add/Drop Dates](#)

[Academic Integrity/Plagiarism](#)

[Disability Accommodations](#)

[Diversity Statement](#)

[Emergencies](#)

[Incomplete Grades](#)

[Privacy](#)

[Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Interpersonal Violence](#)

Course Overview

This course will explore what the term “professionalism” means today and how to become a true professional. While technical expertise is necessary to succeed in the workplace, equally important (and some would argue, even more important) are the “soft,” also called transferable, skills needed for career success such as oral and written communication, interpersonal, and leadership skills. These skills are helpful for any future career path. Through self-evaluation, peer feedback, and coaching, students will develop these professional skills and develop strategies to continue improving these skills throughout their careers.

Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to:

- Describe the qualities of professionalism and assess their career readiness
- Identify and articulate their core strengths
- Demonstrate effective oral and written business communication skills
- Develop and assess strategies for their continued professional development

At the end of the course students will have a career portfolio consisting of a resume, LinkedIn page, Handshake profile, cover letter, and a plan for continued professional development.

Course Requirements

Some of you may already have professional experience through work or an internship. For our purposes, think of being a student as your job and this course is a space for developing professional skills. Course requirements focus on developing these skills:

Attendance

Just as in a workplace setting, attendance is required for all class sessions. One excused absence is allowed without penalty. Please contact me if you will miss a class. Assignments are still due on days that you miss class.

Tardiness (unless excused) will negatively impact your participation grade.

Communication

All course announcements will be made via Blackboard and/or email. Just as in the business world, you should not use your personal email to communicate; use your Mason email. During the course, you will learn how to write professional emails and you will practice that throughout the course in exchanges with me or your classmates.

Technology Use

Technology is an important part of work and has its own business etiquette. You are welcome to bring your own device to use in class. Please be respectful and do not engage in activities that are unrelated to class. Such disruptions show a lack of professionalism and will affect your participation grade.

Readings

Successful professionals exhibit the desire to improve and learn. Three books are required in this course, along with a few freely available online articles.

Emily Post's The Etiquette Advantage in Business: Personal Skills for Professional Success, Peter Post with Anna Post, Lizzie Post, and Daniel Post Senning, 3rd edition, 2014. ISBN 978-0-06-227046-7.

The New One-Minute Manager, Ken Blanchard and Spencer Johnson, 2015. ISBN 978-0062367549.

Working with Emotional Intelligence, Daniel Goleman, 2000. ISBN 978-0-553-37858-0.

Assignments and Grading

Grades are based on:

- 25% Class participation (5 points/class)
- 20% Informational Interview (20 points)
- 20% Presentation (20 points)
- 35% Portfolio and mock interview (35 points)

In the workplace, it is important to meet deadlines. For every day late, you will lose the equivalent of a letter grade.

Class Participation

Includes attendance, reviewing the readings before class, asking and answering questions, and participating constructively and positively in all class activities.

21-Day Challenges

Habits make us who we are and can influence our success in work and life. Experts say it takes 21-30 days for a person to develop a new habit. Between class sessions, I have proposed a habit-making challenge that can positively impact your work in the areas of positive attitude, time management, and habits of mind. At the beginning of the next class we will discuss what you learned from the challenge.

Informational Interview

An informational interview is when you sit down for 20-30 minutes with a professional working in a career you are interested in, and ask questions to obtain information and advice about that career. It is a great way to expand your professional network and practice professional skills such as email etiquette, communication skills, and follow-through. You can conduct the interview in person, via video conference, or phone, but not email. Interviewees can be found via Handshake or LinkedIn. After the interview, you will write, format, and submit a 2-page memo to me about the experience. Specific questions to address (taken from the U of MD Office of Career Services):

- With whom did you meet and why?
- For what organization does this person work, and what is his or her job?
- Describe the interview—what were the main topics that you discussed?
- What did you learn from the interview?
- What steps will you take to follow-up after the interview?

The memo must include the name, position title, and email address of the person you interviewed. I will contact them via a survey to get their impressions of your professionalism.

Presentation

One of the most valuable skills you can learn is to communicate your ideas clearly and persuasively. This separates average performers from top performers. In this activity, you will choose an area of career readiness that you wish to improve or learn more about. You will imagine you have been asked to give a short professional development workshop on this topic to colleagues in your field. This talk should be no longer than 5 minutes. Further instructions will be distributed on October 23 when we cover oral presentation skills. Please select your topic by October 23.

Portfolio and Interview

Throughout the course, you will be working on developing a professional resume, cover letter, and LinkedIn profile. You will receive both feedback from me and your classmates which will give you experience receiving and giving feedback in a professional setting.

You will also have the opportunity to practice your interviewing skills using Interview Stream (<https://gmu.interviewstream.com/>), an online interview practice tool. Mid-semester, you will record a practice interview and receive feedback. At the end of the semester, you will record a final interview to include in your portfolio. Further instructions will be distributed mid-way through the course.

On the last day of class, you will submit a portfolio which includes your polished resume, cover letter, LinkedIn profile, link to your final interview and your goals for continued professional development.

Course Schedule

Class 1: August 28

- What makes someone a professional?
- How to present yourself ..and why you should care
- Putting Yourself on Paper: Resumes
- Setting Your Goals

Read:

The Etiquette Advantage in Business, Introduction-Chapter 4

Working with Emotional Intelligence, Part I

GMU Career Readiness Guide , pgs 6-41

https://careers.gmu.edu/sites/career_svcs/files/careerReadinessGuide2018_19.pdf

Assignment: Print out three job/internship postings or job descriptions that interest you. You can find current job postings on the program website (<https://artsmanagement.gmu.edu/category/job-opportunities/>) or on GMU Handshake (<https://careers.gmu.edu/handshake>), among other places. We will use these in class to identify professional skills and goals. Due at beginning of class.

Class 2: September 18

- Presenting yourself online: Phil Wilkerson, Career Services
- Writing for business
- Understanding your strengths
- Giving and receiving feedback

Read:

The Etiquette Advantage in Business, Chapter 22-27

Working with Emotional Intelligence, Part 2

“Manage Your Digital Identity,” Gradhacker.org, 2013,

<https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/gradhacker/manage-your-digital-identity>

Assignments:

1. Bring in your resume for peer review.
2. Take the online StrengthsFinder (<https://masonwbu.gallup.com/signin/default.aspx?#home>) and come prepared to discuss your strengths and career goals. It will be helpful for you to save on your device or print out your five leading strengths.

Note: Some of you may have taken the StrengthsFinder and do not think you need to do it again...not so! Don't be surprised if some of your five core strengths will have changed, which will show you how much you have grown since you last took the assessment.

21-Day Challenge- Positive Attitude:

Each day, find at least three things to be grateful for and see how it impacts your outlook. This challenge is based on the work of psychologist Shawn Achor's "The Happy Secret to Better Work" https://www.ted.com/talks/shawn_achor_the_happy_secret_to_better_work.

Class 3: October 23

- Preparing for an interview
- Meetings and other public speaking

Read:

Etiquette Advantage in Business, Chapters 5 and 12

"How to Give a Killer Presentation," Harvard Business Review, 2013

<https://hbr.org/2013/06/how-to-give-a-killer-presentation>

Watch: How to Avoid Death by PowerPoint: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lwpi1Lm6dFo>

Assignments: 1. Conduct an informational interview and submit your memo.
2. Come to class with a topic in mind for your presentation.

21-Day Challenge- Time Management: Try the Pomodoro method with your coursework or job and see what happens! This is a popular time management technique developed in the 1980s: <https://www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/the-pomodoro-technique-is-it-right-for-you.html>.

Class 4: November 13

- In the Workplace: Working with your boss and co-workers
- Presentations (1/2 class)

Read: *Etiquette Advantage in Business*, Ch. 5-14

The One-Minute Manager

Working with Emotional Intelligence, Part 3

Assignment: By November 6, record a practice mock-interview using Interview Stream. (<https://gmu.interviewstream.com/>). By November 13, provide feedback on an assigned classmate's video.

21-Day Challenge- Habit of Mind: Successful people are constantly looking for ways to improve. Set aside 30 minutes each day to read something that will enhance your career.

Class 5: December 4

- Presentations (1/2 class)
- Wrap up: Open question period
- How do I keep developing professionally?

Assignment: Submit your final portfolio. Due at beginning of class.

University Policies

Add/Drop Dates

The deadline for adding classes is Tuesday September 3. The deadline for dropping classes with a full refund is Monday, September 9, 2019. Between September 10-17, students may drop with a 50% tuition liability. Students are able to withdraw from classes via Patriotweb from Sept 18-Sept 30; however, students will be liable for 100% of the tuition of the class and will receive a grade of W. Selective withdrawal is available for undergraduates only from October 1 to October 29 with 100% tuition liability.

Academic Integrity/Plagiarism

Student members of George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work. To read more about the Honor Code, please visit <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/>. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using MLA or APA format. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.

Disability Accommodations

If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should: 1) make sure this documentation is on file with the Office of Disability Services (SUB I, Suite 2500; (703) 993-2474; <http://ods.gmu.edu>) to determine the accommodations you need; and 2) talk with me to discuss your accommodation needs.

Diversity Statement

George Mason University is an inclusive community of learners. Your instructor and all classmates should abide by the University's Diversity Statement found at <http://ctfe.gmu.edu/professional-development/mason-diversity-statement/>.

Emergencies

Please sign up for the Mason Alert System by visiting the website <https://alert.gmu.edu>. An emergency poster exists in each classroom explaining what to do in the event of crises and further information about emergency procedures exists on <http://www.gmu.edu/service/cert>.

Incomplete Grades

An incomplete grade (IN) is only considered if a student requests it in writing, in advance. An IN counts as a failing grade until completed, and it automatically turns into an F if a grade is not turned in by the deadline in the Schedule of Classes.

Privacy

Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information.

Federal law (FERPA) requires faculty and staff to protect the privacy of student information. Faculty should not speak about a student's record with anyone other than the student. The record includes how a student is doing in a course, whether a student has attended class, information about performance or grades, whether a paper has been turned in, etc. This prohibition includes parents, siblings, and spouses.

Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Interpersonal Violence

George Mason University is committed to providing a learning, living and working environment that is free from discrimination and a campus that is free of sexual misconduct and other acts of interpersonal violence in order to promote community well-being and student success. We encourage students who believe that they have been sexually harassed, assaulted or subjected to sexual misconduct to seek assistance and support. University Policy 1202: Sexual Harassment and Misconduct speaks to the specifics of Mason's process, the resources, and the options available to students.

As a faculty member and designated "Responsible Employee," all professors are required to report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per university policy 1412. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact the Student Support and Advocacy Center (703-380-1434), Counseling and Psychological Services (703-993-2380), Student Health Services, or Mason's Title IX Coordinator (703-993-8730; cde@gmu.edu).