

NORTH CAROLINA: OUR STATE, OUR TIME

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Career Fairs

The greatest benefit of attending a Career Fair is to connect. *Continued on page 8*

The Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education is a unit of the Office for Undergraduate Studies, "A Pathway to Intentional Learning for Undergraduate Students at Western Carolina University"

When WCU Students Are Building The Future

By Michael Despeaux, Associate Director of Career Services

Our campus-wide theme this year, "North Carolina: Our State, Our Time," couldn't offer more relevance to the career development of every student as they set goals, choose majors, seek opportunities to serve, extern, intern, or otherwise gain experience, develop core workplace competencies, achieve employment, and become the productive citizens who will define our future.

Our theme challenges all of us to address questions about growth, education, healthcare, arts and culture, and employment. Key workplace and career-related questions include how North Carolina business might evolve to compete in a global economy, how WCU should foster a climate of scientific, technological, and cultural innovation in the state, and what other issues our state faces for which we might help find solutions.

Here in Career Services, we offer a variety of professional in-person and on-line support and resources to help students engage with North Carolina employers, gain experience, apply academic knowledge, develop competencies, and prepare to enter the workforce. The numbers showcase these efforts. Last year, 1,852 students built skills and gained experience working in Cullowhee, on-campus. 272 organizations attended our career fairs on campus, and 1,744 students took advantage of the opportunity to meet them. Career counselors met individually with 243 students to discuss job search strategies, and 1,271 students met with a professional or student staff member to receive in-person resume assistance. As of this very moment, JobCat offers 497 professional positions within 100 miles of Asheville, with 312 full-time jobs being offered specifically for WCU students by employers who sought our assistance posting them. New opportunities for all majors get listed every day.

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Looking For More Advice?



Previous issues of Career Journal can be found at our online archive. More advice and resources are just a click away.

WCU Career Journal

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Career Services' PROGRAMS FOR SUCCESS

STUDENTS AND ALUMNI: TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE MANY SERVICES WE OFFER!

For More Information And Direct Access To The Following Programs, Visit Our Website At Careers.wcu.edu

JobCat

Internet-based recruiting systems that include jobs as well as opportunities to post a résumé and sign up for interviews.

Career Counseling

Set an appointment with a career counselor or seek immediate assistance from Peer Career Mentors on campus.

Career Testing

Take tests on our website assessing your values and skills. Schedule an appointment for interpretation.

Cooperative Education (Co-op)

Work in your field of study, receiving related work experience and class credit.

Résumé Critiquing Service

E-mail your résumé (cover letter, too!) to mdespeaux@wcu.edu or mashe@wcu.edu and make an appointment to discuss the document.

Student Employment

Need some cash? The [student employment office](#) can help you find a part-time job. We offer listings for on-campus as well as off-campus employment. View them at careers.wcu.edu.

Career Services Website

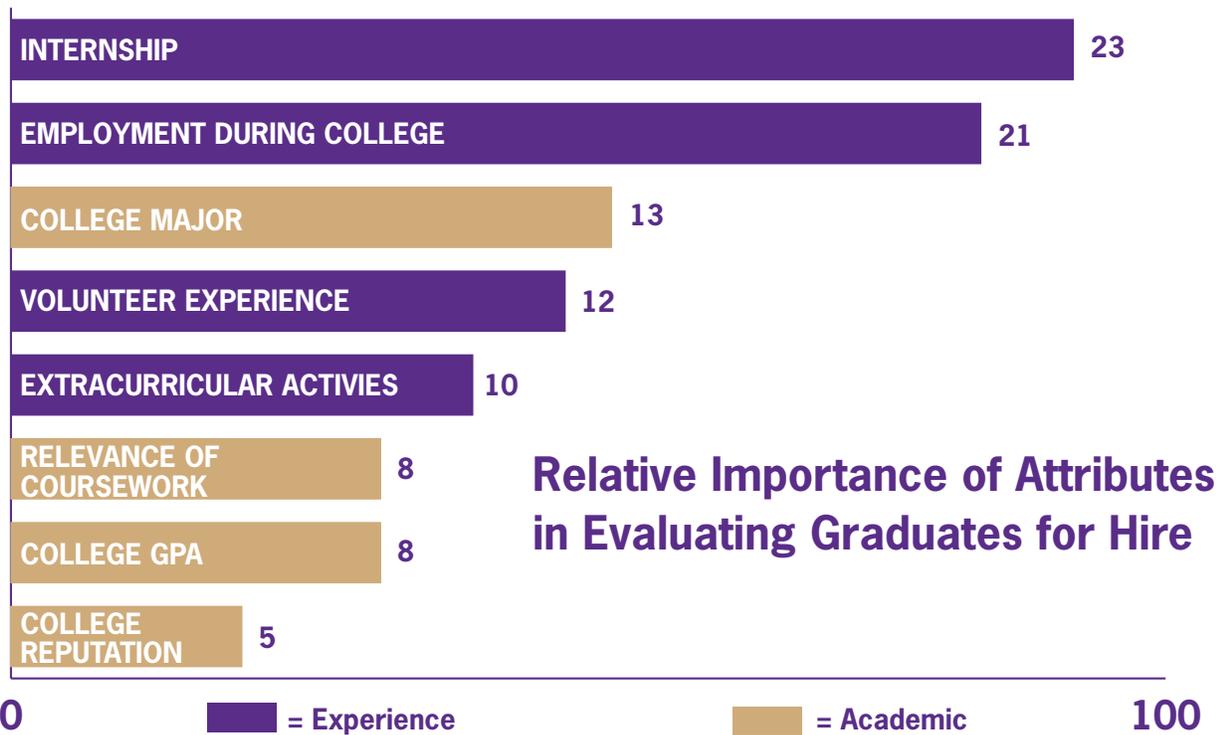
Our website offers links, articles, event calendars, job search tools, directories, videos and FOCUS-2, a computer-aided guidance program to help you in your career decision. Available at careers.wcu.edu.

Interviewing Skills Assistance

Participate in a mock interview and learn from the interaction through the online [Perfect Interview Program](#).

Career Days and Recruitment Events

Multiple [recruitment events](#) are held every year, like the Fall WCU Career Fair & Grad School Day, Health Services Career Fair, Etiquette Dinners and Receptions, Summer Jobs and Internships Fair, and the Education Recruitment Day, to name a few.



What Employers Want: THE KEYS TO LANDING A JOB

This fall, 3 million students will have started their first year of college at universities all over the country. How will you set yourself apart from the millions of other students earning degrees just like you? Experience.

When, for a recent article in *The Atlantic*, employers were asked exactly what they looked for when hiring recent graduates, experience was at the top of the list. Work-related experience is a key element that employers are looking for on resumes and one of the best ways for a student to become more marketable following graduation.

Outside of the classroom, students can gain relatable work experience through internships, externships, jobs, and service learning. In today's job market, employers recognize internships as the most significant professional development that occurs during a student's college career. While this may be true, the survey results show that a student's major, grades and coursework are also key determinants of the knowledge and skills a student will need to be competitive in their chosen field.

The combination of a student's coursework, major, and grades will qualify them for work-related internships, externships, and jobs throughout their undergraduate career. In return, these opportunities for professional development outside of the classroom and work-related experiences will make a student the most competitive in the job market following graduation.

Ready to be competitive in the job market?

For more information about work-related experiences contact career services or visit our website, careers.wcu.edu. New intern and externship opportunities are posted every day -- log onto JobCat to see these openings and many more!

Source: Thompson, Derek. "The thing Employers Look For When Hiring Recent Graduates." *www.theatlantic.com. The Atlantic*, 19 Aug 2014

Want to get on the career path?

USE **JobCat**

1. Log in to JobCat at careers.wcu.edu.
2. Complete a personal profile.
3. Upload a résumé.
4. Submit your online application by the deadline.

JobCat is updated with new jobs almost every day, so check for updates regularly!



Meet the 2014-2015 Peer Career Mentors By Cassie Spencer, Career Graduate Fellow

The Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education would like to introduce the 2014-2015 Peer Career Mentors. This year, we are excited to welcome back two returning Peer Career Mentors who are joined by four new Peer Career Mentors. These students share knowledge of professionalism in the work place and are thrilled to be assisting their peers this year with any career-related questions.

Our Peer Career Mentors are available each week from 11:00am-2:15pm at selected locations around campus. A schedule of the PCM mobile mentoring station is published on the back page of this journal, and on the career services website. Students and staff alike are all welcome to visit the table, even if just in passing and for simple inquiries. Our PCMs also give presentations to residence halls, registered student organizations, and other student groups on campus. To request a presentation from the PCMs or the office's graduate career fellow, please call the Office of Career Services and Cooperative Education at 828.227.7133.

Returning PCMs:

Summer Brathwaite is a senior from Goldsboro, NC. While majoring in both Psychology and Criminal Justice, she is also a member of the Honors College, and the Pi Gamma Mu Social Science Honor Society. She is an academic course tutor and ambassador with the WaLC and plans to graduate in May of 2015. In her spare time, she enjoys exploring local music and reading poetry.

Stefani Cronley is a senior Acting major with a minor in Film Studies. She is looking forward to graduating with the Class of 2015 in May and starting her career in the film industry. Stefani grew up on Long Island, New York and currently resides in Waxhaw, NC. She is excited to be returning as a PCM and looking forward to another great year helping her fellow students. She credits being a PCM with helping her realize that "there is so much more to being qualified for a job; that every experience you

have helps you in some way, gives you skills that employers look for, and it's not just about being specifically trained in one area." She hopes she can pass this on to other students and help them feel more confident in their job search.

New This Year:

Molly Lancaster is a junior from Greensboro, NC. She is studying Recreational Therapy and plans to graduate in the spring of 2016. Molly is a member of the Honors College, actively involved with the University Participant Program, and serves as Publicity Committee Chair for the Recreational Therapy Association.

On being a PCM: "I love all of the values to being a Peer Career Mentor. I want to help people find a purpose on the campus and that is exactly what this service strives for. Being a Peer Career Mentor helps me grow professionally as I am helping people meet their own professional goals."

Edith Lemus a senior from Shelby, NC, is pursuing a Bachelor in Business Administration and Law with a minor in Economics, and she plans to graduate in May 2015. Edith is also a member of the Honors College, Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society, and serves as an Honor's College Mentor. She speaks two languages, really enjoys meeting new people and learning new things. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, listening to music, and exploring nature.

On being a PCM: "Being a peer career mentor would not only help me improve personally and professionally but it will also allow me to help my fellow students. I look forward to gaining new skills that will help me in my career goals and sharing all that knowledge with my peers to help them better pursue their career goals."

Keyv Nelson is a junior from Holly Springs, a small town right outside of Raleigh. Keyv

is a Psychology major and Communication minor with the hopes of graduating in May of 2016. She is uncertain of what field or career path she will take in the future but hopes that she will be inspired through her work as a Peer Career Mentor.

On being a PCM: "When I heard of the position for Peer Career Mentor I was instantly intrigued. Writing has always been a love of mine, and the idea of assisting students by improving their resumes greatly

appealed to me. I hope that working with students will allow me to help them prepare for future careers and help to fine tune my communication skills at the same time."

Emily Tish is a senior from Waxhaw, NC, and is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a concentration in Law and Management and a minor in Conflict Resolution. She is the vice president of the Mediation Society and also a member of the National Society of

Leadership and Success. After graduating in May, she plans to pursue a master's in Business Administration and a career in human resource management.

On being a PCM: "Being a peer career mentor will help me learn numerous valuable skills that will help me achieve my future career goals. I also have a strong desire to help my peers reach their own career goals. I am excited to have this wonderful opportunity to help my peers!"

North Carolina: Our State, Our Time- when WCU students are building the future

Continued from cover

For a September visit by UNC's Board of Governors, our Office of Public Relations recorded a short film titled, "Western Carolina University, Partners in the Climb," in which campus and regional leaders described WCU's role in the growth of our region and economy. The entire film may be viewed on-line (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GI95nET2Gqo&feature=youtu.be>), but here are some statements that showcase both expectations and opportunity for WCU and our students:

Charlie Kimmel, CEO of Kimmel & Associates: "This area is now poised to really take off, ... with New Belgium Breweries coming, with Sierra Nevada Breweries coming, with GE Aviation coming, it shows that industry wants to be here. These are large, international corporations that are choosing Western North Carolina because it is such a great community."

Scott T. Hamilton, Executive Director of the Appalachian Region Commission: "As the jobs do come back, ...they are coming back in a higher skilled workforce area. Having a comprehensive university being available to develop the workforce is critical for the success of business and industry in this region and not just in the more metropolitan area of the Asheville-Buncombe area but in the more rural communities."

Dr. David Belcher, Chancellor: "Growth here means incredible growth for Western North Carolina" and, "...we're looking for innovative and entrepreneurial ways that we can partner with other regional leaders, organizations, businesses, industries, health care agencies, schools – public and private, to make everything we can of Western North Carolina."

Dr. Alison Morrison-Shetlar, Provost: "Our students are making a huge impact in this region. Our curriculum is designed so that they get the opportunity to do high impact practices and go out into our region and make a difference."

Dr. Carol Burton ('89), Associate Provost: "If we can have students apply a civic engagement component, that's really who we are. It's not just job preparation – that is incredibly important, we understand that, but as for our students, the kinds of students we are attracting, they are hungry for opportunities to make a difference in their world."

Tom Apodaca ('80) NC Senator, 48th District: "We're going to continue to grow, and Western's going to be vital in that growth."

Michell Hicks ('87), Principal Chief, Eastern Band of the Cherokee Nation: "Western has been a great partner in matching their capability with the needs that we have as a tribe and a region."

These local voices reflect broader trends. In a 2013 national survey of business and non-profit leaders, the Association of American Colleges and Universities and Hart Research Associates found that employers look for students who developed and demonstrated workplace skills during college through "active, effortful work—practices including collaborative problem-solving, internships, senior projects, and community engagements." An August 2014 article in *The Atlantic* concluded that internships are critical and cited research that shows almost 50% of all employers value experience or jobs held during college

above all other things. Clearly, according to our campus and regional leaders, Western's curriculum is intentional about helping students achieve this, and both public and nonprofit employers in our region clamor for it.

At WCU, all are jointly committed to helping realize these predictions and goals. Career Services partners with the offices of Service Learning and Alumni Affairs, the graduate school, and colleges and academic programs to promote experiential opportunities for students and help them engage both vocationally and civically in every sector of our state economy. By using our resources, going to career fairs, pursuing co-curricular work experience, and looking for purposeful ways to make a difference, students secure not only their own futures but also that of our mountain region and the state of North Carolina.

Sources:

WCU Office of Public Relations, "Western Carolina University, Partners in the Climb,"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GI95nET2Gqo&feature=youtu.be>

"It Takes More than a Major: Employer Priorities for College Learning and Student Success." 2013. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities and Hart Research Associates.

DEREK THOMPSON, "The Thing Employers Look For When Hiring Recent Graduates...isn't something that can be done on campus. It's an internship." *The Atlantic*. August 19, 2014

<http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2014/08/the-thing-employers-look-for-when-hiring-recent-graduates/378693/>

FINISH IN FOUR

FINISH IN FOUR: THE ROADMAP TO SUCCESS

A CAREER DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE By: Cassie Spencer, Career Graduate Fellow

Career services provides students with the resources necessary to finish their undergraduate degree in four years and to be ready to enter the job market. Our program also provides students with a year-to-year career development timeline to prepare them in as many ways possible for future careers.

First-Year Students: As first-year students, it is important to begin exploring career options. To get students started, career services offers major and career exploration assistance as well as career interest tests. Peer Career Mentors are available to students who want to start building their first resume and to provide information about career events throughout the year.

Sophomore Year: As sophomores, students should begin to seek internships and externships to see the ins and outs of potential career choices and to gain valuable work experience. Career services posts all jobs, internships, and externship opportunities on JobCat. Externships are a great way for student to shadow a job of interest for 8-20 hours and receive a certificate of completion from Career Services.

Junior Year: Junior year is the time for students to begin researching companies they are interested in working for and to look for

internships, externships and part-time jobs that will set them apart from the pack. It is also time for students to refine their resume and to begin seriously networking. Career services and Peer Career Mentors can critique a student's resume, provide information about career fairs, and teach students how to search for jobs.

Senior Year: Seniors should update their resumes and have them reviewed by career services. Learning to write cover letters will also be essential in job hunting. Students can seek the help of Peer Career Mentors or a career counselor. It is important that seniors attend career fairs and professional etiquette events. Seniors should begin looking for jobs at the start of the school year and even submitting applications before the start of their last semester or in accordance with their field's recruitment practice.

Career services is available to guide students in making informed career decisions and implementing the necessary skills and events needed to prepare students to enter the job market. Peer Career Mentors are available Monday through Thursday at various locations across campus from 11:00am-2:15pm. A schedule of locations can be found on the career services website.

The Career Services office is currently offering the following presentations for any student organization on campus, free of charge, to help develop the students professionally.

APPROPRIATE ATTIRE

Learn to identify the context in which business casual or business professional is required. Guidelines for men and women are both featured.

JOB SEARCHING

Explore job search resources available at Career Services while briefly reviewing how to write resumes and cover letters.

RÉSUMÉ & COVER LETTER WORKSHOP

Methods of how to craft a resume based upon the needs of the audience:

- Creating your first resume, and how to use it later as a repository for future activities
- Modifying a pre-existing resume to focus on strategy and answering more job-specific questions

NETWORKING AT EVENTS AND THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Learn how to professionally and methodically grow a beneficial network by finding networking arenas, pursuing contacts and maintaining correspondence.

INTERVIEW SKILLS & PREPARATION

Provide students with a space to prepare and practice for an interview. The Perfect Interview program will be demonstrated as a resource.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES AT WCU

This presentation describes the ideal chronological progression of career development for students while providing an overview of services within our office. Actual resources will be described or demonstrated, including career counseling, FOCUS 2, resume assistance, job search tools like JobCat, and Perfect Interview.

If you are interested in booking a presentation for your student organization, please contact Career Services at careers.wcu.edu at least two weeks prior to the potential date of the event.

CATAMOUNT EXTERNSHIPS By Audra Begg, Graduate Intern

Internships, co-ops, service learning, and externships are work-related experiences that represent a form of experiential learning and offer a particular set of benefits to participants. In their second year being offered at WCU, externships offer students a unique insight into “a day in the life” of their potential profession. The Catamount Externship experience provides students with the opportunity to shadow a professional within an industry or field of interest. The Catamount Externship is a structured shadowing experience during which students observe and practice workplace competencies and receive guidance and mentoring from practicing professionals.

The specific requirements and focused applicability of the internship, co-op, and service learning opportunities offered to Western Carolina students inspired the creation of the Externship Program. Many types of experiential learning offer structured opportunities that are restricted to only some sectors or require a higher level of time or other commitment: internships and coops often require prerequisite coursework and a semester-long commitment; service learning tends to focus on nonprofit organizations and community service endeavors; and, general shadowing may sometimes lack structure for reflection and learning or is overly selective, which can make it less effective or inaccessible. The Catamount Externship is designed to balance structure with accessibility, and to function as a precursor to more formal experiential learning opportunities such as internships or co-ops.

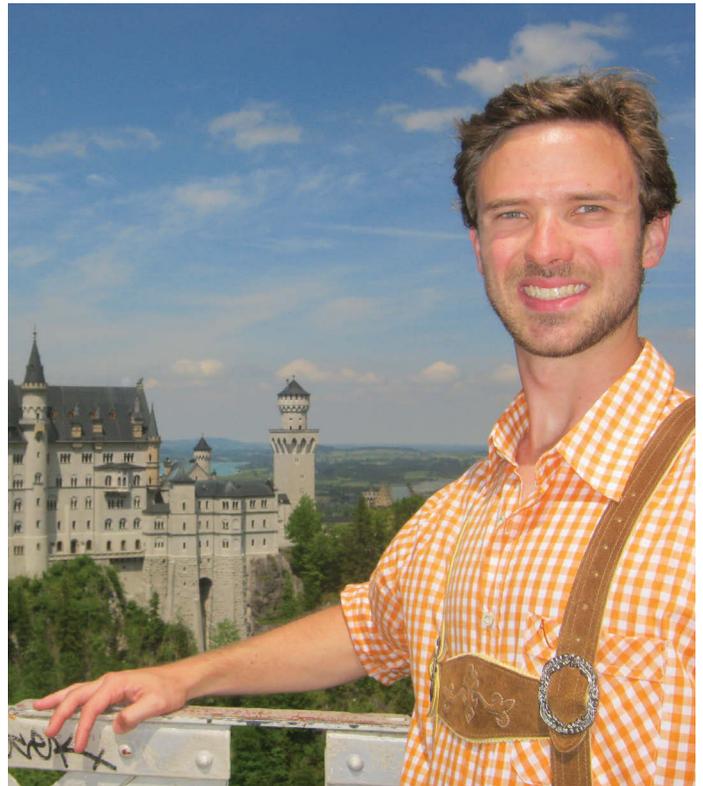
The Catamount Externship program is open to any student wishing to participate. While an externship is ideal for first- and second-year students eager to gain preliminary exposure and experience within a field of interest, it also may benefit a junior or senior in need of professional guidance and networking prior to entering the job market. Although students do not receive payment or class credit, externships prove worthwhile in terms of confirming or disproving career aspirations, developing workplace competencies, investigating a functional area, and networking with professionals in a chosen field. Additionally, externships may prevent the students from prematurely declaring or repetitively changing their majors. Ultimately, the externship offers an experience that assists students in making timely decisions about their appropriate major and career path.

The Catamount Externship Experience Specifics

The Catamount Externship experience requires shadowing a professional for a minimum of eight hours over the course of two-to-five business days. Students may find an externship site on their own or through JobCat. Students are required to complete and submit a Catamount Externship Student Application as well as a Catamount Externship Host Application (if you find one on your own; if it's on campus or through Career Services/JobCat, this is already on file). Externs are expected to articulate and specify which skills and competencies they would prefer to observe or practice. Upon completing the externship, students will complete a Catamount Externship Student Reflection. Students who successfully complete their externship experience will receive a Certificate of Completion.

CATAMOUNT EXTERNSHIPS CAN BE PURSUED AT THE GRADUATE LEVEL!

Catamount Externships, 8-20 hour job shadowing experiences designed to help students explore career areas, gain experience and core competencies, network, and sometimes get a foot in the door, can be pursued by graduate students as well as undergraduate students at every level. Here is one example:



Christopher “Adam” Ray is a first year Graduate student enrolled in the College Student Personnel program at WCU, with a graduate assistantship helping Dr. Carol Burton in the Office of Undergraduate Studies. As an actively involved student, Adam was eager to participate in the externship program organized through the Career Services Office at WCU.

“I developed an interest in participating in the externship program after realizing that I can play an active role within another department of interest on campus while also balancing my own academic responsibilities. Through my experience working with the Campus Recreation and Wellness center I have broadened my understanding of the beneficial services that WCU offers to both students and faculty. In addition to this, I had the opportunity to develop both my leadership and effective communicating skills by becoming actively involved in the policies and procedures of the supervising staff within the Campus Recreation and Wellness center. This experience has proven to be extremely rewarding, and I plan on participating in additional externship opportunities in the coming years.”

Peer Career Mentor Mobile Mentor Schedule 2014-2015

The Peer Career Mentor Mobile Mentor Station can be found at the following location during the coinciding dates:

Monday through Thursday*

11:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m.

Sept. 29-Oct. 2	Forsyth <i>Main entrance</i>
October 6-9	Belk <i>Glass Entrance next to the WaLC</i>
October 13-17	Fall Break
October 20-23	Forsyth <i>Main Entrance</i>
October 27-30	University Center <i>2nd Floor</i>
October 28 ADVISING DAY	Killian Annex/One Stop <i>2nd Floor</i>
November 3-6	Belk <i>Glass Entrance next to the WaLC</i>
November 10-13	Killian <i>Main Entrance near Room 102</i>
November 17-20	Library <i>Main Floor across from Check Out Desk</i>
November 24-28	THANKSGIVING
December 1-4	Killian Annex <i>First-floor atrium</i>

*The Mobile Mentor Station will not open during official University holidays or the week of Thanksgiving, but will be open on Advising/Reading Days.

Fall 2014 Career Events

FALL ETIQUETTE DINNER

October 7

UC Grandroom, 6-8pm

To make reservations call Career Services 828.227.7133

https://wcu.experience.com/stu/cf_details?fhnd=6804

WCU CAREER FAIR & GRADUATE SCHOOL DAYS

October 22 and 23

UC Grandroom, 1-4pm

Please visit the following website for a list of registered employers that plan to attend.

https://wcu.experience.com/stu/cf_registered_employers?fhnd=6802

https://wcu.experience.com/stu/cf_registered_employers?fhnd=6803

Fall Career Fair & Graduate School Days

October 22 & 23

1:00–4:00pm | UC Grand Room

Students of ALL MAJORS can attend! Attend both days! In addition, if you are in the Communications field, we are highlighting those fields during the WCU Career Fair and Graduate School Day I on October 22. If you are in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math) field, we are highlighting those fields during the WCU Career Fair and Graduate School Day II on October 23.

Prepare – Update your resume – visit the Peer Career Mentor table to get feedback before the fair, and don't forget to print multiple copies of your resume to give to potential employers.

Practice your Pitch – Why are you interested in their company? What do you have to offer?

After the Fair – Follow up! Send thank you e-mails!

New This Year: This year, students can commit to attend the fair in advance by visiting the Peer Career Mentor Table. Students who commit in advance will be able to skip the day of registration line and will receive a printed name tag to wear during the fair.



Find us on
Facebook

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WCU Career Services has a Facebook page!

Become a fan, and we can send you updates on Career Services and Co-Op Event happenings.

Find us online by searching keywords: "WCU Career Services" on Facebook.