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**Welcome to Western!**

By Brandy Kiger

Whether this is your first year or your last, we are glad that you're here. The beginning of the school year is an exciting time, with Valley Ballyhoo, new friends, and new classes. As the dorms open up and college gets back into the full swing of things, we'd like you to start thinking about your goals. What do you want to achieve while you are here at Western? What do you want to do when the doors close on your senior year, and you're out in the real world?

If you haven't started thinking about that yet, or don't know where to start, feel free to come by the Career Services office.

We're here to help. We'll talk with you about career opportunities, help you decide what major would best suit your plans and career goals, and go over important career documents like resumes and cover letters. Our counselors are available Monday-Friday, and we recommend that you call ahead or e-mail to schedule a time to meet with them.

We also have career events scheduled throughout the year, and Fall 2008 events are outlined on the calendar on page 4 of this newsletter. It's never too early to start scouting out internships or potential employers, so stop by our Career Fairs and Expos to see who is hiring. In addition to those events, you are welcome to sign up for



**A Personal Perspective on the Job Market**

By Mike Despeaux

With tighter credit, a struggling real estate market, high gas and food prices, and our larger economy in a probable recession, today's college students may feel anxious about their future. Some may personally experience financial hardship, and nobody can escape the daily deluge of tough economic forecasts in the news and on the internet. As a college graduate during the recession of 1991, I can personally relate to the fear induced by coming of age during a period of rising unemployment and difficult times.

While it can be challenging to maintain perspective, students at Western can take heart in some great initiatives happening at their University that will prepare them to weather this storm and be successful in the new economy. During lean times, employers in every field look for the workers who can offer proven skills in areas such as communication, teamwork, and the ability to apply classroom knowledge in a real-world setting; at Western, our QEP seeks to provide every student with the opportunity to develop and apply these qualities. Whether required in their major or not, co-ops and internships offer every student a chance to gain career-specific experience and an edge in the job market. We expect career fair attendance to rise as employers seek to hire graduates who can improve their efficiency and raise the bar in terms of energy and innovation. At Career Services, we also help students capture these skills and experiences on their resumes and job application materials and prepare to interview.

Many opportunities exist now and on the horizon for students who are purposeful and prepared. As one professor told me in 1991, in any economy, there will always be "room for excellence." Through careful selection of ma-

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# Career Services Programs for Success

Students and Alumni: Take advantage the many services we offer!

## **JobCat, MonsterTRAK, and Localjobs.com**

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

## **Career Testing**

If you are having difficulty making a decision about a major or a career, we offer career testing and interpretation.

## **Career Counseling**

If you have a career concern that you would like to discuss, call for an appointment with a career counselor.

## **Cooperative Education**

Co-op is a program that allows you to work in your career or major field and receive directly related experience and credit WHILE you are still in school.

## **Career Days and Recruitment Events**

Career Services offers 18-20 recruitment events every year, including the Career and Graduate School Expo, the Allied Health and Nurses' Career Day, Spring Job Fest, Summer Job Fair, Engineering, Math, and CS Fair, Construction Management Fair, Education Recruitment Day and multiple etiquette-development events.

## **Resume Critiquing Service**

Email your resume (cover letter, too!) to [mdespeaux@email.wcu.edu](mailto:mdespeaux@email.wcu.edu) or [mashe@email.wcu.edu](mailto:mashe@email.wcu.edu) and make an appointment to discuss it!

## **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. Visit them at <http://careers.wcu.edu>.

## **Career Services Website**

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

## **Interviewing Skills Assistance**

You can participate in a mock interview and improve your skills through our online Perfect Interview program.

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## Career Services Information

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Want to get on the career path?

## Use JobCat.

1. Log into JobCat at [careers.wcu.edu](http://careers.wcu.edu)
2. Complete a personal profile
3. Upload a resume
4. Submit your online application by the deadline.

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

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**Welcome Back!**, continued from p.1

our Business Etiquette dinners and receptions where you can learn good networking skills, as well as how to conduct yourself at a business function.

Internships and Co-ops make a valuable addition to your resume and curricular experience. If you are looking for one for Spring semester, drop by our Fall Career Fairs where employers will be interviewing, and check JobCat and the local area job board for opportunities. For more information about internships and co-ops, please contact our office and set up an appointment with a Career Counselor.

Seniors, make sure to come by and let us help polish your resume so that you can put your best foot forward. Check out professional opportunities, such as jobs and internships via JobCat, which can be accessed through our website. It's a great resource for local and national jobs and professional opportunities.

Also, take advantage of our online resources such as [Perfect Interview](#). [Perfect Interview](#) allows you to participate in a mock interview, record it, and review your performance. It's a great tool that will give you an advantage when you start interviewing for jobs.

Do you need a little extra cash to get you through the semester? Our office also provides student employment opportunities with non-work study and local jobs. Check out our listings at <http://careers.wcu.edu/> by clicking on the 'Local Jobs' link. From there, you can contact employers and set up an interview. Whatever your career needs may be, we're here to help. Stop by our office, call or send us an email. We promise to do our best to prepare you for the real world, whether it's tomorrow or four years from now. Have a great semester!

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## How to Job Search in an Uncertain Economy

By Brandy Kiger

Planning your future in an uncertain economy can seem daunting, but it doesn't have to be. There are only so many things you can control, and while the job market might look a little shaky, it's your best bet to focus on yourself and your academic success, instead.

There are lots of opportunities available out there, you just have to look for them. We recommend you use a SWOT analysis approach to corner your area of the job market and look for what is best for you. SWOT is an acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. These are determined by internal and external factors.

The internal factors, your strengths and weaknesses are unique to you, and only you have control over them. It is important to know what you're good at and where you fall short. What do you already bring to the table? What can you do to improve your marketability in this economy? Make a list, and look for ways to strengthen your weak areas by participating in internships and co-

ops, and pursuing service learning opportunities. Take those extra classes that will give you a leg up on the job market. Is your GPA not so hot? Get a tutor. Be proactive and focused, and it will take you a long way.

The external factors are opportunities and threats in the job market. These things are what you don't have a lot of control over. While you should definitely be aware of them, they should not your primary sources of concern.

Right now, the job market is tight and highly competitive, so know what it is that employers are looking for and tailor your experiences to meet that demand. More and more employers are looking to see what kind of soft skills a potential employee can offer. They want to know if a candidate has good communication skills, and if he or she write clearly and effectively. They want to hire people with a strong work ethic and character. Think about how you can showcase these things and you'll be golden.

**Personal Perspective**, continued from p. 1

jobs and minors, developing a career plan with short-term and long-term goals, pursuing experience in the areas of co-ops, internships, and service learning, and effectively marketing themselves to employers, Western students will be seen as purposeful, prepared, and excellent.

*Michael Despeaux,  
career counselor and  
publisher of the  
[Career Journal](#)*



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 keyword: **"WCU Career Services"** on Facebook.

*Facebook is a registered trademark of Facebook, Inc.*

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Here are some ways that you can make yourself marketable:

- ▶ Keep a strong GPA
- ▶ Network with people in your field
- ▶ Identify your skills and how they fit in with the job you want
- ▶ Clean up your resume
- ▶ Participate in Internships & Co-ops
- ▶ Take advantage of service learning opportunities
- ▶ Improve your oral and written communication skills
- ▶ Practice your interviewing skills

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# Calendar of Events : Fall 2008

## September

### **30** Etiquette Dinner **6:00 pm - 8:00 pm, UC Grandroom**

This event is intended to teach students the rules of proper dining and conversation in a formal setting. Attire is business casual. The event is \$15.00 per person, and cash, check or student meal ticket/CatCard is accepted. Tickets can be purchased at Career Services in 205 Killian Annex.

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## October

### **8** Construction Management Career Fair\* **9:00 am - 12:00 pm, UC Grandroom** **1:00 pm - 5:00 pm, Interviews**

Meet with the experts in multiple segments of the construction and construction related industry. You do not have to pre-register to attend the career fair portion of the event. Interviews may be available with some attending organizations from 1pm -5pm following the career fair. Check out the Career Services website for possible interviews.

### **21&22** Teaching Opportunities for Non-Teaching Majors

**3:30 pm - 4:30 pm, UC Catamount Room**  
So, you have (or are getting) a degree and you don't know what to do with it. Have you considered teaching? There are lots of ways to get into the system for non-education majors. Come check out the information and see what you might be missing out on!

### **28** Engineering, Math and Computer Sciences Career Fair\*

**9:00 am - 12:00 pm, UC Catamount Room**  
**1:00 pm - 4:00 pm, Interviews**

Employers in the fields of engineering, engineering technology and math and computer science are invited to attend this fair. Meet experts in these fields and receive information on careers, occupational trends, hiring qualifications & job openings. Check the Career Services website for possible interview opportunities.

### **28** Education Recruitment Day \* **9:00 am - 12:00 pm, Ramsey Center Concourse**

Education Recruitment Day is a great opportunity for students, alumni, and the general public who are interested in opportunities within schools and school systems.

### **29** Graduate School & Corporate Career Expo\* **1:00 pm - 4:00 pm, UC Grandroom**

The Graduate School & Corporate Career Expo is an excellent opportunity for any student wishing to continue their education to shop for a graduate school or for those looking for a full time job, internship or co-op. All majors are encouraged to attend!

### **30** Criminal Justice Career Fair **1:00 pm - 4:00 pm, UC Grandroom**

This career fair is open to all WCU students & alumni interested in public sector careers within the law enforcement, corrections, forensic science fields. Meet experts in these fields and receive timely information on careers, occupational trends, hiring qualifications & job openings. It is not necessary to pre-register for this event.

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## November

### **6** Allied Health & Nurses' Career Fair\* **4:00 pm - 6:00 pm, UC Grandroom**

Our Allied Health & Nurses' Career Day is a great opportunity for juniors, seniors and alumni to find out about health field-related jobs and internships.

#### **\*For all Expos and Career Days:**

Business casual to professional attire is required. Students and alumni are encouraged to bring several copies of your latest resume. We also suggest uploading a resume into JobCat. If you need assistance with developing a resume, please visit Career Services (205 Killian Annex) or schedule an appointment with a career counselor 828.227.7133.

Lists of attending organizations will be available at <http://careers.wcu.edu> and on JobCat. Lists will be updated as registrations are received.

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