



## UNIV 422 Professional Skills Development – DL1 (Online Course) Spring 2020

### Course Syllabus and Class Schedule

**Instructor:**

**Preferred Pronouns:** He, Him, His

**Email:**

**Phone:**

**Office Location:**

**Office Hours:** By appointment only (phone and virtual appointments available)

Course Uses Blackboard: <http://courses.gmu.edu>

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

**Course Description:** This is a transitional course designed specifically for GMU seniors and second-semester juniors. University 422 is designed to serve as a workplace simulation, helping you identify and practice the skills you will need to be successful in the workplace. This course is focused on developing specific competencies that include: professionalism and ethics, critical thinking and problem solving, team building and collaboration, and career management.

**UNIV 422–DL1 is an asynchronous online course.**

### LEARNING GOALS & OUTCOMES

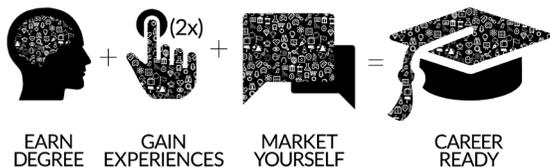
**University 422 Learning Goals:** This course emphasizes developing your readiness to transition to the workplace. In this class, you will explore ways to gain the hands-on experience employers expect, and effectively communicate what you have learned and the skills you bring to the workplace. You will also learn how to advocate for yourself in the workplace.

#### Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this asynchronous online course you will be able to:

1. Learn the NACE definition of Career Readiness and eight (8) skills needed to achieve it; cultivate these skills in the classroom as preparation for use in the workplace.
  - a. Appraise your own proficiency in these skills
  - b. Identify means and opportunities to improve proficiency
2. Apply critical thinking and analytical reasoning to propose solutions to common workplace issues and develop career management strategies.
  - a. Diagnose and propose innovative solutions to problem
  - b. Use relevant research to make data-informed decisions
3. Demonstrate effective written communication skills.
4. Express an understanding of contributions made to the workplace by individuals from diverse groups. Function professionally and productively with people who have ideas, beliefs, attitudes, backgrounds, and behaviors that are different from their own.

UNIV 422 will help you develop a path to career readiness. Earning your degree is the first step in preparing yourself for the world of work. To stand out as a competitive candidate, you should also seek two forms of relevant experience and the ability to market yourself.



As you work to develop your competencies, consider the following opportunities to get more experience:

**On-campus:** Activities and clubs, Leadership positions, Research opportunities

**Experiential Learning:** Community Service, Internships/Practica, Work-integrated learning, Volunteering

**Employment:** Full-time, Part-time, Temporary

## CAREER COMPETENCIES

In this UNIV course, you will learn the NACE definition of **Career Readiness** and eight (8) skills needed to achieve it. You will also cultivate these skills in the classroom as preparation for use in the workplace. You will also refine and demonstrate those competencies, and practice articulating them to show employers that you are career-ready.

Career readiness is the **attainment** and **demonstration** of requisite competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition into the workplace. In UNIV 422, you will demonstrate career competencies as you:

- Apply **Critical Thinking/Problem Solving** skills by evaluating common workplace scenarios and proposing possible, data-informed solutions
- Practice **Oral/Written Communications** through engaging in professionally appropriate communications via team discussions, reflections on course content, and other written assignments
- Use **Teamwork/Collaboration** to successfully navigate and complete team-based workplace simulations (e.g. developing team charters or workplace policies)
- Employ **Digital Technology** skills to navigate course materials (e.g. lynda.com) and complete assignments (e.g. Blackboard)
- Show **Leadership** by working cooperatively with classmates and instructor to empower peers achieve their career development goals while enabling them to help you achieve your own
- Demonstrate **Professionalism/Work Ethic** by developing appropriate classroom behaviors (e.g. fully engaging with course material by completing assignments to your best ability and participating fully while in the classroom)
- Practice **Career Management** through the conducting self-assessment, the development of a performance management plan, and reflection on progress through that plan
- Express **Global/Intercultural Fluency** by actively working to create an inclusive learning community through respectful and thoughtful interaction with peers and your instructor, virtually and in person

Read more about the career competencies here: <https://tinyurl.com/ybqkgb92>

## COURSE MATERIALS

- **Blackboard is required for this course. You can access the site at <https://mymason.gmu.edu>.** Username and passwords are the same as your Mason email account.
- **[Career Readiness Guide](#), University Career Services (referred to throughout the syllabus as Career Guide):** You may pick up a hard copy at the University Career Services Office, SUB I, 3400 (Monday-Friday, 8:30am – 5pm); just tell the front desk you are in my class. You can also access the *Career Guide* on Blackboard under the **Course Content** link.
- **Online Assessments (lab fee covered by tuition): Skillscan Drive – DUE Week 5 (2/25)**
- **Career Readiness Resources**

University Career Services (UCS) helps Mason students to connect what they know and have learned from their degree with their career goals. We work with students at all points in the career development process: assisting them in exploring how to best use their talents, strengths, and interests to select majors and career paths, as well as connecting with employers and strategizing for breaking into their industry of interest. For individualized attention and assistance beyond what is covered in class, reach out: [careers.gmu.edu](http://careers.gmu.edu).

## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

**Hardware:** You will need access to a Windows or Macintosh computer with at least 2 GB of RAM and access to a fast and reliable broadband internet connection (e.g., cable, DSL). A larger screen is recommended for better visibility of course material. You will need speakers or headphones to hear recorded content and a headset with a microphone is recommended for the best experience.

For the amount of Hard Disk Space required taking a distance education course, consider and allow for:

1. the storage amount needed to install any additional software and
2. space to store work that you will do for the course.

**Software:** Many courses use Blackboard as the learning management system. You will need a browser and operating system that are listed compatible or certified with the Blackboard version available on the [myMason Portal](#). See [supported browsers and operating systems](#). Log in to [myMason](#) to access your registered courses. Some courses may use other learning management systems. Check the syllabus or contact the instructor for details. Online courses typically use [Acrobat Reader](#), [Flash](#), [Java](#), and [Windows Media Player](#), [QuickTime](#) and/or [Real Media Player](#). Your computer should be capable of running current versions of those applications. Also, make sure your computer is protected from viruses by downloading the latest version of Symantec Endpoint Protection/Antivirus software for free [here](#).

Students owning Macs or Linux should be aware that some courses may use software that only runs on Windows. You can set up a Mac computer with Boot Camp or virtualization software so Windows will also run on it. Watch [this video](#) about using Windows on a Mac. Computers running Linux can also be configured with virtualization software or configured to dual boot with Windows.

**Note:** If you are using an employer-provided computer or corporate office for class attendance, please verify with your systems administrators that you will be able to install the necessary applications and that system or corporate firewalls do not block access to any sites or media types.

You will be expected to learn/understand the technologies used in this course, as well as how to seek support from the appropriate sources if you have trouble. If you find that your technology is not functioning properly, it is your responsibility to troubleshoot any issues you are experiencing, and communicate with your instructor what steps you have taken before asking for exceptions or extensions.

Your instructor may not be immediately available to help you navigate these issues, so don't wait until the last minute to test out the system.

- **Mason technologies** (i.e. your Mason email, wifi or other campus internet concerns): <https://itservices.gmu.edu/index.cfm?>. If you cannot log in to myMason please contact the [ITS Support Center](#) at (703) 993-8870 or reset your Mason NetID password at <http://password.gmu.edu>
- **Blackboard at Mason:** <http://coursesupport.gmu.edu/Students/>
- **Handshake:**
  - <https://support.joinhandshake.com/hc/en-us/categories/202711128-Student-Alumni>
  - <https://careers.gmu.edu/handshake>
- **SkillScan:** <https://www.skillskan.com/contact>

When you reach out to the appropriate resources, include a detailed explanation of the issue you are experiencing, along with screenshots whenever possible. CC your instructor, or forward the communication you have had with the appropriate office.

## **APPOINTMENTS / E-MAIL CONTACT**

I encourage you to contact me to ask questions, clarify assignments, make me aware of any unexpected situations, or to obtain additional help. You can always contact me via email [mmyers16@gmu.edu](mailto:mmyers16@gmu.edu) to set up a phone, virtual, or in-person appointment. I check email regularly Monday through Friday and prefer more communication over less.

*\*\*Please include "UNIV 422" in the subject line of your emails.*

## **SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS.**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please email me within the first week of class and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at <https://ds.gmu.edu/> and 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through ODS.

## **NETIQUETTE**

Our discussion goal is to be collaborative, not combative; you are creating a learning environment, sharing information and learning from one another. Respectful communication is important to your success in this course and as a professional. Please re-read your responses carefully before you post them so others will not take them out of context or as personal attacks. Be positive to others and diplomatic with your words and I will try my best to do the same. Sarcasm is never appropriate and you should be careful when

using humor. Without face-to-face communications your joke may be viewed as criticism. Experience shows that even an innocent remark in the online environment can be easily misconstrued.

### **LATE CLASS ASSIGNMENTS**

All assignments will be submitted via Blackboard by 11:59 pm on the specified due date, which is typically a **Tuesday** of each week (unless otherwise noted). Late work turned in after the deadline will automatically be 50% off of your grade. Assignments turned in more than a week late will not be accepted. Exceptions may be given for extenuating circumstances if you notify me prior to the due date. If Blackboard is not working for any reason, email me a copy of the assignment directly before the deadline passes.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

Since this is an online class, assignments are still due by 11:59pm on the specified due date even if the University is closed due to inclement weather.

### **STUDENT EXPECTATION AND SERVICES**

Please review the “Responsibilities/Services” section within our course on Blackboard for a full list and explanation of the expectations and services for George Mason University students. If you have any questions about these policies, please email me within the first week of class.

### **GRADING**

I take grading very seriously and I assign grades with care and thought. In general, the more proactive you are in dealing with your coursework and understanding where your point totals are throughout the semester, the opportunity for unexpected surprises and disappointment is reduced considerably.

### **EVALUATION TOOLS & ASSIGNMENT POINT VALUES**

Because this course takes place in an asynchronous learning environment, your preparation and participation tasks will primarily be submitted via Blackboard, with points attached. You will need to reference the Weekly Modules in Blackboard for a detailed breakdown of these tasks.

Your tasks and assignments will fall into four (4) categories:

<b>Task/Assignment Category</b>	<b>Points</b>
Professionalism and ethics	264
Critical thinking and problem solving	148
Team building and collaboration	374
Career management	714
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>1500</b>

### **Team (Group) Assignments**

- You will be assigned several team-based tasks over the course of the semester, beginning Week 1. Your instructor will randomly assign your team after the second week of class.
- You will introduce yourself to your team via video. To meet your teammates, you will watch their videos.
- You will also complete a self-assessment and peer-assessments of all team members at the end of the semester.

### **Team Discussion**

Much of the work of this class will come from participation in team discussions. You will use the discussions to demonstrate your learning on the assigned topics through synthesis of content and application to either your personal/professional experiences or assigned content. This is also a way for you to refine your written communication, and demonstrate a necessary workplace skill. To that end, you must engage fully in discussion.

Your contributions to team discussion (and your grade) must include

- Critical Analysis (Understanding of Readings and Outside References)
- Participation in the Learning Community
- Etiquette in Dialogue with Peers
- Quality of Writing and Proofreading

Please refer to the [Online Discussion Rubric](#) for more details.

## **Grading Scale**

Your grade will be assigned on a straight scale based on the number of points you earn as noted above. There are a total of 1500 possible points for this semester.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Total Points</b>
<b>A+</b>	1486-1500
<b>A</b>	1366-1485
<b>A-</b>	1350-1365
<b>B+</b>	1305-1349
<b>B</b>	1245-1304
<b>B-</b>	1200-1244
<b>C</b>	1050-1199
<b>D</b>	900-1049
<b>F</b>	0-899

## **Extra-credit opportunities**

Throughout the semester there are opportunities for up to 120 extra credit points (in addition to the required assignments; not to replace them).

- Meet with a Career Services staff member for a scheduled 30-minute individual appointment (30 points)
- Attend a Career Services Event/Panel\* (bring a signature from a career staff member and upload to Blackboard to receive credit) (30 points)
- Practice Interview with Career Services staff (30 points)
- Submit your own idea with an explanation on how it will be beneficial to your career development (this must be approved by me to received extra credit) (30 points)

\*See calendar of events: <https://careers.gmu.edu/events>

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

This schedule is subject to change based on instructor assessment of student learning needs.

***For more detailed information, view the corresponding Weekly Module in Blackboard***

<b>Week/Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1. 1/21-1/28	Onboarding/Welcome
2. 1/29-2/4	Working in Teams
3. 2/5-2/11	Financial Well-being: Healthcare planning
4. 2/12-2/18	Financial Well-being: Budgeting and financial planning
5. 2/19-2/25	Career Management: Self-assessment
6. 2/26-3/3	Career Management: Goal setting
7. 3/4-3/10	The Workplace Experience: Communications
8. 3/18-3/24	The Workplace Experience: Performance Reviews
9. 3/25-3/31	Diversity: Introduction
10. 4/1-4/7	Diversity: Inclusion in the workplace
11. 4/8-4/14	Leadership: Strengths-based leadership
12. 4/15-4/21	Leadership: Managing up, followership
13. 4/22-4/28	Leadership: Influencing without authority
14. 4/29-5/6	Wrap-up