

CONF 314 – Advisory Seminar  
**COURSE SYLLABUS – SPRING 2016**

**Class Day/Time:** Tues / Thurs, 12:00-1:15

**Location:** Robinson B 442

**Instructor:** Jane Walker

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**Office:** Northeast Module II, RM 105

**Office Hours:** by appointment

### **Introduction**

The main objective of this course is to offer students structured time to explore opportunities available in the School and field of Conflict Analysis and Resolution and discuss issues pertinent to career preparation of CAR majors. Course objectives include the following:

#### **Career Options**

1. Identify key “in demand” job skills; understand how the CAR degree develops job skills; identify personal skills; and prioritize skills to develop further;
2. Become familiar with organizations, institutions, and agencies related to the field;
3. Consider initial career path options analyzing the intersection of job sectors of interests, type of work, passions, values, factors of work happiness, skills, and other relevant factors;
4. Understand the broad applicability of the degree and the opportunities to develop specialized skills that appeal to marketability;
5. Be strategic about networking and take steps toward building a professional network of *relationships* through activities such as informational interviews, attending events, and becoming involved with co-curricular organizations;

#### **Career Readiness**

6. Develop a resume and cover letter that showcase the strengths of the individual student and appeals to the current job market;
7. Become familiar with trends relevant to employment/hiring such as behavioral interviewing, elevator speeches, job searches, LinkedIn, online applications, etc.;
8. Formulate a career plan and identify jobs and organizations of interests;

#### **Coursework**

9. Understand CAR requirements and gain assistance with academic planning;
10. Understand the importance and benefits of transitioning to a self-directed and intentional learner in and out of a classroom setting;
11. Be familiar with the undergraduate program’s policies and procedures, especially as they relate to the field experience requirement;
12. Discuss opportunities for special programs of study, minors, study abroad, internships, and independent research.

### **Class Participation**

This class is taught in a seminar format. Class preparation and participation is essential. 35% of your overall course grade is based on this component of the class. These points are divided evenly over the class periods and are earned by preparing for, being on time, and actively participating in the 2½ hours that we spend together each week. Please do not have your phone out during class time. If you plan to take notes on your phone, please let me know in advance. It is expected that you notify the instructor if you will be absent or late, prior to the start of class. If an unforeseen circumstance prevents you from attending class, follow-up communication with the instructor in a timely manner will be taken into account in calculating the participation grade. You will be expected to meet with the instructor to receive the information that was missed and/or do a makeup assignment

### **Recommended Reading:**

Getting from College to Career: 90 Things to do Before You Join the Real World by Lindsey Pollak

Working for Change: Making a Career in International Public Service by Derick & Jennifer Brinkerhoff

The Start-up of You by Reid Hoffman and Ben Casnocha

Practical Idealists: Changing the World and Getting Paid by Alissa Wilson, Ann Barham, and John Hammock

Excellent Sheep: The Miseducation of the American Elite and the Way to a Meaningful Life

by William Deresiewicz

### **Independent Research**

Throughout the semester, you will be asked to research some topics in advance of classroom discussion. You should plan on spending 45 minutes to an hour minimum on this research. It essentially will be taking the place of a lecture – treat it as such and get the equivalent “input” out of your research. You should take some notes and jot down information that you find useful. You will be asked to share this information in class discussions. I am looking for key points demonstrating that you have both done the research and thought about the information you found. The discussion will then be based on information shared among students.

### **Outside Events**

To broaden your knowledge of the CAR community, you are required to attend a minimum of **three** events outside of the classroom during the semester. You will need to present a summary of your event experiences at the exit interview. Outside events can be chosen from information sessions offered by the Center for Global Education, the Fellowship Office, Career Services, grad school fairs, job fairs, Dialogue and Difference events, Peer Mediation meetings, NVMS events, USIP events, AGORA meetings, relevant film screenings or lectures from across campus, SCAR events, dissertation defenses, etc. Ideally, each of the events would be different in nature (i.e. 3 AGORA meetings would not be accepted as I would like for you to gain a variety of experiences).

In lieu of three events, you may opt to instead do an **Informational Interview**. This is highly **recommended and encouraged**. (I will count additional outside events as makeup for an absence or extra credit). Credit for the interview will be based on your evaluation of the experience shared during the exit interview.

## LinkedIn

During the course of the semester you will need to create (or update if you already have one) your LinkedIn profile. The profile should be current and include a professional picture, work experience, and educational background. You should have at least 10 connections, but strive for 50. The profile must be complete by April 15th, but preferably completed by the date of your exit interview.

## Exit Interview

In lieu of a final, students will meet with the instructor for a 1 hour exit interview. Students should be prepared to discuss remaining questions from the course, review the academic plan and field experience plan, evaluate the resume and cover letter, discuss career goals, review linkedIn and present a summary of the outside events/informational interview experience.

**Honor code:** This class operates in accordance with the university honor code. Even though you are encouraged to work together on some assignments and projects, you are expected to submit your own original work. You are required to attend outside events in person and write your own reflection papers. All suspected honor code violations will be reported to the honor committee for appropriate action. The Mason and S-CAR honor codes follow:

*"To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: **Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.**"*

*"All George Mason University students have agreed to abide by the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code. You can find a copy of the Honor Code at [academicintegrity.gmu.edu](http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu). All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee for review. With specific regards to plagiarism, 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. If you have questions about when the contributions of others to your work must be acknowledged and appropriate ways to cite those contributions, please talk with the professor. S-CAR requires that all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit a student's work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. S-CAR's policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace or substitute for it."*

**Open door policy:** The instructor is open to your comments, suggestions, and feedback on the course at any time. Feel free to email the instructor or see her before or after class to discuss your ideas and concerns. You may also submit your thoughts anonymously by leaving a note in my door box after hours.

**This syllabus:** You should consider this syllabus as your contract for the course. You must follow the directions for each assignment and ensure that you submit your work on time. This class will be most useful to you if you come to class prepared and turn in work in a timely and high quality fashion.

**Students with disabilities:** If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please let your instructor know at the first class meeting. All academic accommodations for students with disabilities must be arranged through the Office of Disability Services, (703) 993-2474 or <http://ods.gmu.edu>.

## Schedule

A course schedule is provided. Note that unforeseen circumstances may cause changes to the schedule, but you will be notified of changes accordingly. If class is canceled for some reason, you are expected to complete that week's assignment, as if class was held.

Date	Topics	Graded	Homework
1.19	Behavioral Interviewing  Syllabus Overview  Informational Interviews	<b><i>Introductions</i></b>  <b><i>Participation answering behavioral interviewing questions</i></b>	Visit multiple web sources addressing interviewing and identify what you understand to be 10 essential questions that you prepare for prior to an interview. Present a STAR response to <b>one</b> of those questions.  Read Bb article on interviewing  Research possible organizations and people in the field for the purpose of setting up an informational interview. Set up an informational interview prior to Feb 18 (or identify the outside events you will be attending).
1.21	What does a job in the field of Conflict Analysis & Resolution look like?	<b><i>Submit 10 essential questions that a job candidate should be prepared to answer and present a STAR response to one of those questions.</i></b>	Read at least 10 job/internship postings from a variety of sources/websites. Select and print off 3 that you would have interest in applying.  Read Bb chapter on job skills.
1.26	What are the "in demand" job skills & behaviors?  Job Skills Assessment	<b><i>Submit 3 job postings in class (with your name at the top).</i></b>  <b><i>Who will you be talking to and when? Or What 3 events will you be attending?</i></b>	Take the StrengthFinders Assessment <a href="https://masonwbu.gallup.com/signin/default.aspx#home">https://masonwbu.gallup.com/signin/default.aspx#home</a> .  Read 2-3 articles and/or consult a variety of sources on Informational Interviews. Develop 5-7 good questions to ask in your interview. Make sure you consider all information available to you on the person you will be interviewing.
1.28	Interests & Strengths  LinkedIn & Networking	<b><i>Share StrengthFinders Assessment in class.</i></b>  In class take the Holland Interest Inventory found in Career Services <a href="http://careers.gmu.edu/students/movingon/upload/document-2.pdf">Career and Internship Guide</a> located at <a href="http://careers.gmu.edu/students/movingon/upload/document-2.pdf">http://careers.gmu.edu/students/movingon/upload/document-2.pdf</a>	Research the key to work happiness. Read 2-3 articles and/or consult a variety of sources to help you determine 3 factors you feel will be very important in determining your work happiness.  Read Bb chapter on networking.  Begin work on your LinkedIn Profile.
2.2	Work Happiness & Values  Work Preferences Summary	<b><i>Bring to class your list of important factors key to your work happiness.</i></b>	Read Bb chapter on values.  Reflect on what is most important to you, what guides your decisions, both big and small, what causes you stress, and those circumstances in which you cannot compromise. After reflecting on these questions, identify 3 values at your core and evidenced in your life. Write a short reflective statement (approx. 500 words) that identifies 3 key values and how they are evident in your life.  Locate a copy of your most current resume to bring to the next class.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Graded this class</b>	<b>Homework for next class period</b>
<b>2.4</b>	Resume Formats, Tips, Recommendations, & Best Practices	<b><i>Submit reflective statement identifying 3 core values with examples of how they are evident in your life.</i></b>  <b><i>Bring a copy of your resume to class.</i></b>	Research resume formats, tips, and recommendations. Pay particular attention to conflicting information. Begin revising and updating your resume considering research and review of sample resumes. Be sure to utilize the Career Services <a href="#">Career and Internship Guide</a> . <b><u>Submit Resume via email by 8am Monday February 8<sup>th</sup>.</u></b>
<b>2.9</b>	Resume Review  Best Practices for Cover Letters	<b><i>Peer Review of Resumes</i></b>	Review information provided in the Career Services handbook distributed in class on cover letters and do additional online research on what makes a good cover letter. Draft a cover letter to an organization that you are interested in working for or interning with.
<b>2.11</b>	Mid-course check in and wrap up.  Career Fair Prep  Introduce Field Experience Requirement	<b><i>Bring 3 copies of your Draft Cover Letter to class for peer review.</i></b>	Review all information presented on the S-CAR website dealing with the field experience requirement found at <a href="http://scar.gmu.edu/undergraduate/10303">http://scar.gmu.edu/undergraduate/10303</a> .  Review trips available through the Center for Global Education, S-CAR, and SAIL. Also review opportunities for research available through OSCAR.
<b>2.16</b>	Independent Research & OSCAR Study Abroad	<b><i>Share field experience plan in class.</i></b>	Work on your LinkedIn Profile.  Finalize Resume and Cover Letter and submit via email to instructor by Feb 23.
<b>2.18</b>	Pizza with the Dean  Career Fair	<b><i>Sign in with Nathanael Lash at event with the Dean</i></b>	Visit <a href="http://advising.gmu.edu">advising.gmu.edu</a> to review requirements for minors.
<b>2.23</b>	Academic Planning Programs Minors Skills Classes Concentrations	<b><i>Submit final resume &amp; cover letter via email by beginning of class.</i></b>	Review courses available for spring enrollment. Look up opportunities with semester programs. Consider Minors. Plan skill building coursework. Sketch out remaining course plan with questions.
<b>2.25</b>	Question/Answer on Academic Planning  Personal Pitches	<b><i>Sign up for an Exit Interview</i></b>	Put together a draft academic plan with questions to discuss in the exit interview.
<b>3.1</b>	Alumni Panel	<b><i>Submit your academic plan</i></b>	Research the personal pitch / elevator speech. Consult several sources and perspectives. Jot down some notes to prepare for practice in class.
<b>3.3</b>	Elevator Speeches  Transition to Career Checklist	<b><i>Present a personal pitch</i></b>	Prepare for your final (exit interview). You will need: *verbal summary of outside events or informational interview *your remaining questions about field experience, academic plan, career options, etc. *finalize your LinkedIn Profile We will review your resume and cover letter. Please allow 1 hour for this meeting.
3.15 3.17 3.21 3.22	Final Exit Interviews	<b>10:30      12:00      1:30      3:00      4:30      6:00</b>	

Topical Reflections / Discussions: \_\_\_\_\_/70

- 1.19 Introductions /behavioral interviewing \_\_\_\_\_/5
  - 1.21 What does job in the field look like? \_\_\_\_\_/5
  - 1.26 Outside Event Plan/ Info Interview Date \_\_\_\_\_/5
  - 1.28 Share results of Holland / StrengthFinders \_\_\_\_\_/5
  - 2.2 Work Preferences Summary \_\_\_\_\_/5
  - 2.4 Resume Best Practices \_\_\_\_\_/5
  - 2.9 Peer Review of Resumes \_\_\_\_\_/5
  - 2.11 Peer Review of Cover Letters \_\_\_\_\_/5
  - 2.16 Field Experience Plan \_\_\_\_\_/5
  - 2.18 Pizza with the Dean \_\_\_\_\_/5
  - 2.23 Academic Planning \_\_\_\_\_/5
  - 2.25 Academic Questions / Exit Interview Sign-up \_\_\_\_\_/5
  - 3.1 Alumni Panel \_\_\_\_\_/5
  - 3.3 Personal Pitch \_\_\_\_\_/5
  - \*Additional Outside Event \_\_\_\_\_/5
  - \*Additional Outside Event \_\_\_\_\_/5
- \*denotes optional extra credit*

**Networking** \_\_\_\_\_/15

Informational Interview

**OR**

Outside Events

#1 – \_\_\_\_\_ / 5

#2 – \_\_\_\_\_ / 5

#3 – \_\_\_\_\_ / 5

**Academic Plan (due 3.1)** \_\_\_\_\_/15

**Career Readiness**

Interview Questions with STAR Response \_\_\_\_\_/15

Identify & Share 3 Job Postings \_\_\_\_\_/10

Value Statement \_\_\_\_\_/10

LinkedIn Profile \_\_\_\_\_/12

Cover Letter Draft (6) and Final (12) \_\_\_\_\_/18

Resume Draft (8) & Final Copy (12) \_\_\_\_\_/20

\_\_\_\_\_ /85

**Exit Interview** \_\_\_\_\_/15

Total \_\_\_\_\_/200

**Grading Scale**

A+ 100

B+ 89-87

C+ 79-77

D 69-60

A 99-94

B 86-84

C 76-74

F Below 60

A- 93-90

B- 83-80

C- 73-70