IB292 – Course Syllabus

CRN 65405  1 credit hour

Time       Tuesdays 4:00-4:50PM
Location   2083 Natural History Building
Instructor  Christina Swanson
Contact    sillima2@illinois.edu | 2002D Natural History Building
Office Hours Wednesdays 3:00-4:00PM, or by appointment
Course Page Moodle: https://learn.illinois.edu

OVERVIEW

In this one credit course, we will explore what jobs and industries are available to IB grads, and how your set of skills and abilities makes you uniquely qualified for these positions. You will explore your own skill set and values to determine what careers and industries are right for you, and how to decide if you're a good match for a job. This will also help you plan for what experiences and skills you need to include in your final semester(s) here at UIUC!

Once you have a few career paths in mind, we'll talk about how to communicate to employers what you can uniquely offer (your "brand"), to showcase why you are a good match for the positions in their fields.

We'll have experts along the way to serve as resources, including UIUC biology alumni that have been in your shoes and are now professionals in a range of fields. They are ready to share their experiences, wisdom, and insider information from their time working in positions and on the job market. You will get invaluable connections to IB fields, and advice from individuals at different points in their careers. You can read all about these co-educators on our website.

WHY SHOULD I TAKE THIS COURSE?

There are SO many things you can do with an IB degree, even if you know you love science or medicine, it is hard to find a role that is "right" for you. If you are lucky enough to know what you want to do, it's not so simple to figure out what you need to do to be successful in that career, or what experiences you need on your resume.

This course is meant to be for you to figure out what you want to do next - and perhaps with the rest of your life - and to learn what it takes to be successful in whatever path you choose. Take this course if you want to explore your options after college, or if you want to know how to set yourself up for success in the job market.
WHAT TO EXPECT

I will provide every opportunity for your success, because that is my number one course objective. In return, I ask you to reflect, and to think critically both during and outside of class.

There are no pop quizzes, memorization, or rigorous exams. Instead, you are in charge of your own learning process, and we are focused on real-life application. You will have input on how you spend your out-of-class time and what projects would benefit you the most. Our final project will be a real-life application of the course material, and is meant to further your career goals.

- COURSE OVERVIEW -

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>CO-EDUCATORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>28 Aug</td>
<td>Introductions</td>
<td>Steve Caldwell</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4 Sep</td>
<td>Networking 1: The “hidden job market”</td>
<td>DaTeng</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Andrea Baldwin</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Brenna (video)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>11 Sep</td>
<td>Alumni Panel 1</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>18 Sep</td>
<td>What do you have to offer as an IB student?</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>25 Sep</td>
<td>Networking 2: But what do you say?</td>
<td>The Career Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2 Oct</td>
<td>Alumni Panel 2</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>9 Oct</td>
<td>How to explore career options</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>16 Oct</td>
<td>What skills are employers looking for?</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>23 Oct</td>
<td>Writing application materials</td>
<td>Writers Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>30 Oct</td>
<td>Company analysis and self-exploration</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>6 Nov</td>
<td>How do I know if I’m a match?</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>13 Nov</td>
<td>How to talk about yourself (your “brand”)</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>20 Nov</td>
<td>FALL BREAK – NO CLASS</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>27 Nov</td>
<td>Alumni Panel 3</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>4 Dec</td>
<td>Interviewing</td>
<td>The Career Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>11 Dec</td>
<td>Metacognitive Moment (reflection)</td>
<td>Steve Caldwell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>19 Dec</td>
<td>FINALS WEEK, NO CLASS</td>
<td></td>
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*The schedule is subject to change throughout the semester. If changes do occur you will be provided with a revised syllabus.*
**- COURSE OUTLINE, DETAILED -**

**Week 1 – Introductions**  
CO-EDUCATORS: Steve Caldwell  
DESCRIPTION: Introduction to the structure of the course, expectations, our co-educators, and one another

**Week 2 – Networking 1: the “hidden job market”**  
CO-EDUCATORS: Steve Caldwell  
TBD  
DESCRIPTION: What networking is and why it is so important and beneficial  
Specific ways that each alum has benefited from networking  
How to take initiative and use this class most effectively

**Week 3 – Alumni Panel 1**  
CO-EDUCATORS: Steve Caldwell  
TBD  
DESCRIPTION: Alumni panel discussion with a focus on what skills alumni use in their professions and what they do on a daily/weekly basis

**Week 4 – What do you have to offer as an IB student?**  
CO-EDUCATORS: Steve Caldwell  
TBD  
DESCRIPTION: Exploration of your skills, experiences, values, ideals, and goals. Explicit connection of your IB experiences to tangible skills gained. Identifying your unique skill set

**Week 5 – Networking 2: But what do you say?**  
CO-EDUCATORS: The Career Center  
TBD  
DESCRIPTION: How to reach out, and what to say in an initial email to a new contact  
How to maintain your contacts  
How to utilize your LinkedIn profile and other networking platforms

**PROJECT:** Revised email draft and LinkedIn profile + Person inviting to participate in the informational interview or job shadow (2 October).

**Week 6 – Alumni Panel 2**  
CO-EDUCATORS: Steve Caldwell  
TBD  
DESCRIPTION: Alumni panel discussion, using student-generated questions

**Week 7 – How to explore career options**
CO-EDUCATORS  TBD
DESCRIPTION  Ways to explore your career(s) of interest, such as informational interviewing and job shadows
Conduct a job search and find an actual job ad to use for your application project

**Week 8 – What skills are employers looking for?**
CO-EDUCATORS  Steve Caldwell
TBD
DESCRIPTION  Identify the skills you anticipate needing for a position
Discuss the skills and experiences alumni use in their jobs, and/or look for in employees
Dissect job ads for explicit, implicit, and most important skills and experiences
Compare your expectations with the results of our research

**PROJECT:** First draft of application materials due (23 October) - cover letter and updated LinkedIn resume (PDF resume for extra credit)

**Week 9 – Writing application materials**
CO-EDUCATORS  Writers Workshop
Steve Caldwell
TBD
DESCRIPTION  The Writers Workshop will introduce us to the application genre and the writing process in general
Ask questions, debrief on your experience writing application materials

**Week 10 – Company analysis and self-exploration**
CO-EDUCATORS  Steve Caldwell
TBD
DESCRIPTION  Identify and articulate your long- and short-term goals
Identifying the values and goals of employers
Dissecting your career - how to project company culture, daily tasks, responsibilities, etc.

**PROJECT:** Final draft of application materials due (6 November) - cover letter and updated LinkedIn resume (PDF resume for extra credit)

**Week 11 – How do I know if I’m a match?**
CO-EDUCATORS  TBD
DESCRIPTION  How to assess if you’re a match with a position/organization
How to determine if you can do the job (if you’re qualified)
Research and brainstorm ways to gain missing skills/experiences (prep for Unit 1 Project)
Week 12 – How to talk about yourself (your “brand”)
CO-EDUCATORS TBD
DESCRIPTION Overview: what is a “brand”? Alumni share their brands Generating your own brand

Week 13 – FALL BREAK, NO CLASS

Week 14 – Alumni Panel 3
CO-EDUCATORS Steve Caldwell TBD
DESCRIPTION Alumni panel discussion with a focus on either how they navigate the balance between professionalism and their own set of values OR starting out in their field ("before they were successful")

Week 15 – Interviewing
CO-EDUCATORS The Career Center TBD
DESCRIPTION TCC and alumni discuss what to expect, how to prepare for, and what the point is of interviews TCC and/or alumni review interviewing techniques (story telling techniques)

PROJECT: End of Semester Reflection and Informational Interview Project due (11 December)

Week 16 – Metacognitive moment (course reflection)
CO-EDUCATORS Steve Caldwell TBD
DESCRIPTION End of semester feedback (ICES) [15 min, beginning of class] Pulling it all together – discussing what we’ve learned from the semester (course reflection)

-COURSE OBJECTIVES-

• Increased awareness of SIB-related careers, both at a macro level (e.g. what skills are most needed in the science job market) and a micro level (e.g. what a day or week looks like for X or Y career).
• Help students elucidate and articulate their own goals, values, and ideals and then use this to create a message that resonates with a specific, target audience.
• Provide a safe, welcoming, inclusive space in which students feel encouraged and confident
• Foster a critical and reflexive attitude through active reflection and self-evaluation.
  • Development of self-evaluation and self-correction skills
• Articulation of your skills, and why that makes you uniquely qualified
  • Students will be able to create a “brand” or personal narrative
• Decipher the implicit and explicit goals, objectives, and ideologies of potential employers
• Understand how employer goals align with the skills and tasks required for each job
  o Students will know how to research and interpret employer goals
• Unveil the “hidden” genre of application materials and interview techniques
  o Know how and why to be specific and active in your language
  o Articulate why you are uniquely qualified for any job
  o Connect your experiences with what you can do in that particular job
  o Always focus on your goals
• Cultivate a sense of empowerment to succeed in one’s chosen career
  o Students will feel prepared and confident to tackle each component of the job search, and to build the skills necessary to be competitive on the job market
  o Students will be able to find resources to define or further their career goals
• Students will develop the tools to understand their own values, beliefs, and rationale for their actions; this metacognitive awareness will be fostered through modeling (from alumni, instructors, and advisors) as well as activities promoting self-evaluation and reflection.
• Foster transferable soft skills such as problem solving, teamwork, critical thinking, evaluation, etc.
• Articulation of long- and short-term goals
• Promote individual initiative and agency, and especially an awareness of the necessity of taking ownership of one's educational experience and future opportunities
• Foster a more interconnected and articulate understanding of your skills and how this amalgam can be conveyed to resonate with a target employer’s goals
• Better understanding of the real-life dilemmas, problem solving, and complexities in a science-based work environment
• Practice learning from one’s mistakes in a safe space; learning what can be improved (there is always something!) and what resources can be used to implement the change(s).
• Enhance overall rhetorical abilities, by: focusing on and identifying genre-specific elements; tailoring a message to a specific audience; probing one’s own values and goals for deeper and more meaningful communication; purposeful connection of one’s own goals with those of their audience; application of these ideas to several different modes and genres of communication
• Apply all of the above skills, lessons, goals, and techniques in a real-life, high-stakes culminating event: your informational interview and/or job shadow and application materials

- READINGS AND TEXTS –

Textbooks: There are no required texts for this course

Other Readings: Relevant articles and videos will be provided through our course website free of cost. The reading is supplementary in nature, and will not make up a large component of the course.

- GRADING AND EXPECTATIONS -

GRADING PHILOSOPHY
I do not view grading as a punishment or reprimand for not knowing the answer, but as critical feedback that is used to advance your understanding of self, others, and content. These are opportunities to learn and grow – everyone can improve, so everyone will receive constructive comments. If my comments do
not help you, or you are left with questions, please let me know and we will figure out another way to provide you with feedback. This should never be a stressful process, but this does not mean it will be without the mental burn of a good brain work out!

I always welcome feedback on my grading, teaching, or communication of concepts. Please feel free to come to me with any comments, questions, or concerns.

**GRADING BREAKDOWN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Participation</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2 points/class, active participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2 points each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester Projects</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15 points each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Semester Reflection</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Follow Up (bonus points)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1 point each</td>
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<td>up to 10 can be submitted for credit</td>
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**Total possible points** 110 points

Your final grade will be either Satisfactory (Pass) or Unsatisfactory (Fail) according to the following grading scale:

- **Satisfactory** 85 - 100+ points
- **Unsatisfactory** 84 points and under

**GRADING DESCRIPTIONS**

**Homework**
- 2 points for thoughtful engagement with the activity, careful consideration, and thorough responses
- 1 point for incomplete or surface level engagement with the activity
- 0 points for missing assignments

**Class Participation**
- 2 points for thoughtful engagement with the material, speakers, activities, and classmates.
- 1 point for surface level engagement, learning while texting, or anything else that hinders your or your classmates’ learning (arriving late, non-relevant activities, etc.).
- 0 points for not engaging in class

**Follow Up (bonus points)**
- 1 point for thoughtful engagement, careful consideration, and thorough responses
- 0.5 points for incomplete or surface level engagement with the activity
- 0 points for missing assignments
- *Pick up to 10 of these to complete for credit, but I’m happy to provide feedback on all of them

**Application and Informational Interview Projects**
- Grading rubrics TBA

**End of Semester Reflection**
10 points for a thoughtful and authentic reflection that discusses what you learned from the class, how/whether it helped you advance your career goals, how you applied what you learned from the semester, what your next steps are, and anything else that you would like to reflect on.

4-8 points for a summary of events, not answering all prompts, or clear lack of effort.

0 points if missing

DUE DATES
- The homework and optional follow ups are due the week after they are assigned, by the beginning of class (4:00PM), submitted through our Moodle course page.
- The Application Project is due by 4:00PM on 6 November.
- The End of Semester Reflection and the Informational Interview Project are due by 4:00PM on 11 December.

- POLICIES –

MAKE UP AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS
Those with pre-approved absences can submit their homework, reflection, and follow-ups the following class period (e.g. conference presentation). Those with eligible absences* and documentation will receive an extension for all due work (e.g. death in the family).

Late assignments are not accepted, but there will be opportunities to revise your assignments for a higher score.

*Please consult the Student Code Article 1, Part 5 to check whether a particular reason for absence is eligible for late submission of work: http://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1_part5_1-501.html.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
All students are responsible for reading the University of Illinois Student Code. Pay particular attention to http://admin.illinois.edu/policy/code/article1_part4_1-402.html concerning plagiarism and cheating.

- INCLUSIVITY -

To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the course instructor and the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) as soon as possible. To contact DRES you may visit 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign, call 333-4603 (V/TTY), or e-mail a message to disability@illinois.edu

While we strive to include as many voices and perspectives as possible, this course is by no means wholly representative of the diversity of backgrounds, paths, perspectives, and values in the various possible careers after graduation. All of you bring your own unique set of experiences, perspectives, and knowledge that will complement and enhance what we have to offer, and we are excited to hear what you bring to the group. Everyone’s ideas and backgrounds will be respected and valued in this safe, welcoming space. We are glad to have you!

Everyone is welcome, and heartily encouraged to participate in this safe space.

Hate has no home here.