I. Course Description

This course is designed as a companion-learning course to educate and prepare students for graduate school or professional school. The goal of the course is to help students enrich their career learning through facilitated analysis and reflection on their work and to apply what they are learning in the classroom in a real world setting.

II. Intended Learning Outcomes, Goals and Objectives

This course is designed to help you develop competencies essential to your ability to effectively navigate and participate in graduate and professional school opportunity. Specifically, this course supports the development of your ability to:

- Research graduate school programs, application requirements, curriculum, and competitiveness.
- Create a cost benefit analysis, calculate ROI (return on investment) for graduate school programs by weighing costs of program versus income, and expected post-graduate income.
- Understand financial aid, assistantships, fellowships, and other methods of funding graduate school.
- Understand the application process for graduate/professional school choice. This includes the application and selection criteria, personal statement/essays, and testing requirements (GRE/GMAT/MCAT).
- Understand the value of college involvement, internships, relationships and networked connections for graduate/professional school.
- Enhance your understanding of professionalism and graduate school behavioral expectations, including the range of what is considered acceptable across higher education institutions.
- Apply the knowledge and skills learned during your undergraduate coursework towards writing a personal statement.
III. Course Readings and Instructional Strategies

a. Required Textbook
There is no required textbook for this course. The Instructor will provide any reading material that is necessary to the student.

b. Brightspace by D2L
This course is a hybrid course, meaning instruction is split between an online environment and in-person class meetings. Online meetings are coordinated through Brightspace by D2L. It is imperative that you check Brightspace by D2L multiple times throughout the week to stay informed with any course updates. Additionally, students should check their grade points in Brightspace by D2L and any discrepancies in points must be resolved within one week after the assignment grades have been posted. Otherwise, the posted grade points are considered final and will not be reviewed at a later date.

If you ever experience technical difficulties, please use the contact information listed here: Brightspace by D2L technical support (936) 468-1919; General computer support (936) 468-4357. Please note the Brightspace by D2L technical support is not available on weekends.

IV. Course Assignments, Evaluation, and Assessments
Correct use of spelling and grammar, along with the display of professional writing skills are necessary for all course assignments, discussion boards, and emails. Errors in spelling and/or grammar will result in a loss of points. Turnitin will be used to monitor writing originality and plagiarism.

All assignments must be submitted through the online course in a Microsoft Word format unless noted otherwise. Additionally, all assignments, quizzes, and exams will have an 11:30 PM deadline on the specified date. You will not have access to complete an assignment, quiz, or exam after that time.

If you have a question regarding an assignment, please email the Instructor in a timely fashion. It is your responsibility to make sure that questions arrive in a timely manner. Any emails sent after 12:00 PM on Friday may not be answered until the following Monday.

a. Attendance
The class will meet four times throughout the semester in a face-to-face environment. During these class meetings, we will engage in discussion with experienced Graduate School professionals to develop an understanding of expectations & experiences related to pursuing a graduate/professional degree. Class attendance is required and graded based on student presence, timely arrival, and professional demeanor.

b. Discussions
Throughout the course the student will engage in six online discussions as a way to critically evaluate and analyze learned material. Each student will post one response
to each discussion, in addition to commenting on a minimum of two other classmates’ posts. If a student fails to engage in the discussion by commenting on classmates’ responses, the student will not earn full credit for the discussion. Each discussion is worth 20 points each.

c. Graduate School Comparison Chart 150 points
The student will research two potential graduate schools that house programs of their interest. After completing the comparison chart, the student will critically analyze and reflect on the two schools researched in further identifying best of fit for their future. The reflection will be submitted with the comparison chart as a two-page analysis.

d. Cost-Benefit Analysis & Summative Report 150 points
Each student will complete a cost-benefit analysis worksheet and calculate ROI (return on investment) for graduate school programs by weighing costs of the program versus income and expected postgraduate income. This assignment consist of researching the cost of two graduate programs, the average entry income for the career path you desire, and determine whether graduate/professional school is worth attending based on the amount of debt and earnings one is expected to acquire. After completing the cost-benefit analysis, the student will write a two-page summative report outlining the information found.

e. Graduate Student Interview 150 points
Creating & building relationships within your anticipated field is an essential component for applying to graduate school. Those relationships are key for deciding on graduate schools, career opportunities and more importantly providing letters of recommendation that your graduate applications require.

You are required to seek out a current graduate student in your field of interest and conduct an interview. The interview will be turned in as an essay with the following guidelines:
- APA format (this includes a cover page)
- 500 words, double spaced
- 1 inch margins
- 12 point Times New Roman font

f. Professional Philosophy Paper 150 points
When applying to graduate school, you will be required to exhibit your writing skills within an essay called a professional philosophy statement. A professional philosophy statement allows a school to see what makes you a strong applicant for their program beyond your grades. Each student will write a personal statement that will adhere to the following guidelines:
- APA format (this includes a cover page)
- 2 pages, double spaced
- 1 inch margins
- 12 point Times New Roman font
g. **Professional Resume**  
80 points
Throughout the semester, the student will work on several assignments designed to prepare them for a career after college. These assignments will include creating and revising a resume, completing a virtual interview through InterviewStream, and creating a LinkedIn Profile.

h. **Grading Criteria**
There is a total of 1200 possible points to be earned from course assignments, discussions, and projects. YOU impact your grade. The grade you receive is the grade you have earned.

A student who wishes to contest a grade must do so within one week after a grade has been given. After that week, the grade will be considered final.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>1200-1080</td>
<td>100-90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>1079-960</td>
<td>89-80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>959-840</td>
<td>79-70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>839-720</td>
<td>69-60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>719-0</td>
<td>Below 60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A grade of an A indicates excellent; B, good; C, average; D, passing; F, failure

Further explanation of assignments, grades, course progress will be discussed during office hours on an individual basis.

This syllabus presents a “best” plan for this course; however, plans can change when circumstances necessitate change. Any changes to this syllabus will be announced to the class in a timely manner.

V. **Class Rules**
Following these rules will help maximize the course experience for you and your classmates and are nonnegotiable.
- You are responsible to engage with the class through timely discussions and manage course requirements. **Participation is extremely important to your success in this course.**
- Read the assigned material and submit all required work on the day it is due. **No late work is accepted.**
- Treat everyone in the class with respect and courtesy.
- All students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior and use language appropriate for the classroom learning experience.

VI. **General Student Policies**
The following policies apply to all students enrolled in courses at Stephen F. Austin State University.
a. **Class Attendance and Excused Absence (Policy 6.7)**

Regular, punctual attendance, documented participation, and, if indicated in the syllabus, submission of completed assignments is expected at all classes, laboratories, and other activities for which the student is registered. Based on university policy, failure of students to adhere to these requirements shall influence the course grade, financial assistance, and/or enrollment status. The instructor shall maintain an accurate record of each student’s attendance and participation as well as note this information in required reports (including the first 12-day attendance report) and in determining final grades. Students may be excused from attendance for reasons such as health, family emergencies, or student participation in approved university-sponsored events. However, students are responsible for notifying their instructors in advance, when possible, for excusable absences. Whether absences are excused or unexcused, a student is still responsible for all course content and assignments. Students with accepted excuses may be permitted to make up work for up to three weeks of absences during a semester or one week of a summer term, depending on the nature of the missed work. Make-up work must be completed as soon as possible after returning from an absence.

b. **Student Academic Dishonesty (Policy 4:1)**

Abiding by university policy on academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members must promote the components of academic integrity in their instruction, and course syllabi are required to provide information about penalties for cheating and plagiarism, as well as the appeal process.

**Definition of Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and/or (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp

Penalties for academic dishonesty may include, but are not limited to reprimand, no credit for the assignment or exam, re-submission of the work, make-up exam, failure of the course, or expulsion from the university. Any student who wishes to appeal decisions related to academic dishonesty should follow procedures outlined in Academic Appeals by Students (6.3).

c. **Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (Policy 5.5)**

At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic unit head, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the
course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F, except as allowed through policy [i.e., Active Military Service (6.14)]. If students register for the same course in future semesters, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

d. Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities (Policy 6.1 & 6.6)
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/

e. Student Code of Conduct (Policy 10.4)
Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the iCare: Early Alert Program at SFA. Information regarding the iCare program is found at http://www.sfasu.edu/judicial/earlyalert.asp or call the office at 936-468-2703.

f. Course Evaluations
Near the conclusion of the semester, you will have the opportunity to evaluate the course. Evaluation data is used for a variety of important purposes including: 1.) Course and program improvement, planning, and accreditation; 2.) Instruction evaluation purposes; and 3.) Making decisions on faculty tenure, promotion, pay, and retention. As you evaluate this course, please be thoughtful, thorough, and accurate in completing the evaluation. Please know that the faculty is committed to excellence in teaching and continued improvement. Therefore, your response is critical!
## Fall 2019 Tentative Class Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Modules &amp; Meetings</th>
<th>Topics &amp; Assignments (DUE at 11:59pm CST)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug 27</td>
<td>Class Meeting EDAN 126</td>
<td>• Course overview &amp; Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 3-16</td>
<td>Introduction Module</td>
<td>• Introduction Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 17</td>
<td>Class Meeting EDAN 126</td>
<td>• Dr. Pauline Sampson, Dean of Graduate School &amp; Research Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sep 17-30</td>
<td>Module 1: Evaluating Graduate Schools</td>
<td>• Graduate School Comparison Chart &amp; Analysis&lt;br&gt;• Module #1 Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 1-14</td>
<td>Module 2: Maximizing your Network</td>
<td>• Graduate Student Interview&lt;br&gt;• Module #2 Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 15</td>
<td>Class Meeting EDAN 126</td>
<td>• Graduate Student Success Panel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 15-28</td>
<td>Module 3: Feasibility Study</td>
<td>• Cost-Benefit Analysis &amp; Summative Report&lt;br&gt;• Module #3 Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 29-Nov 11</td>
<td>Module 4:</td>
<td>• Module #4 Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 12</td>
<td>Class Meeting EDAN 126</td>
<td>• Mrs. Tina Oswald, Reference Librarian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 12-25</td>
<td>Module 5: Research Methods</td>
<td>• Creating Research Worksheet&lt;br&gt;• Module #5 Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov 25-29</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 3</td>
<td>Class Meeting EDAN 126</td>
<td>• TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 3-11</td>
<td>Module 6: Polishing for the Profession</td>
<td>• Professional Philosophy Statement&lt;br&gt;• Resume Critique Submission</td>
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