

ABEN 391 – Seminar

Career Planning and Job Search– Spring 2024

BASIC INFORMATION

Class information:

1 Credit
Spring 2024
Classroom: Ladd Hall, RM 114
Time: M, W 1:00PM - 1:50PM
01/08/2023 - 03/01/2024

Instructor information:

Dr. Iris Feng
Office: Ladd 104F
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Office hours: 2:00 - 3:00PM MW; or by appointment or drop in.

Web pages: Blackboard

COURSE OBJECTIVES

To assist students in planning careers and becoming employed before graduation by:

- Demonstrating the need for a thorough self-assessment of strengths and weaknesses to develop a personal marketing plan
- Assisting with the development of a resume, letter of application, and other job search-related communications tools (ABET - 3)
- Helping to develop interview skills (ABET - 3)
- Creating an awareness of the availability and services of the NDSU Career Center, commercial placement agencies, and Internet resources
- Creating awareness of plagiarism
- Creating awareness of graduate school opportunities

ABEN EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES AND ABET STUDENT OUTCOMES

The Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) requires that accredited engineering programs publish their program educational objectives (PEOs) and student outcomes (SOs). A goal of this course is to meet ABET requirements. The ABET criteria developed for this course are listed below:
*ABEN program educational objectives and supporting student outcomes.**

Graduates are expected to have established themselves as practicing engineers who, within a few years of graduation:

- A Successfully address emerging engineering challenges in the design or evaluation of machine systems, processing systems, and natural resources and environmental systems affecting the production of food, feed, and other biobased products.

Technical learning outcomes include student outcomes (1), (2), and (6):

ABET-1. an ability to identify, formulate, and solve complex engineering problems by applying principles of engineering, science, and mathematics

ABET-2. an ability to apply engineering design to produce solutions that meet specified needs with consideration of public health, safety, and welfare, as well as global, cultural, social, environmental, and economic factors

ABET-6. an ability to develop and conduct appropriate experimentation, analyze and interpret data, and use engineering judgment to draw conclusions

- B Effectively use professional communication, critical thinking, and interpersonal skills as team leaders and team members.

Communicational learning outcomes include student outcomes (3) and (5):

ABET-3. an ability to communicate effectively with a range of audiences
ABET-5. an ability to function effectively on a team whose members together provide leadership, create a collaborative and inclusive environment, establish goals, plan tasks, and meet objectives

- C Responsibly serve the public and their employers by participating in professional development and by maintaining the highest standard of professional engineering ethics.

Contextual learning outcomes include student outcomes (4) and (7):

ABET-4. an ability to recognize ethical and professional responsibilities in engineering situations and make informed judgments, which must consider the impact of engineering solutions in global, economic, environmental, and societal contexts

ABET-7. an ability to acquire and apply new knowledge as needed, using appropriate learning strategies

* See https://www.ndsu.edu/aben/about/abet_accredited/ for the current ABEN program educational objectives. See <https://www.abet.org/accreditation/accreditation-criteria/criteria-for-accrediting-engineering-programs-2019-2020/#GC3> for information on ABET student outcomes 1-7, effective as part of the "Criteria for Accrediting Engineering Programs, 2019-2020."

EVALUATION PROCEDURES AND GRADING CRITERIA

The course will be graded with the following weights:

Class attendance	5%
Class participation	10%
Assignment	85%
Total	100%

The cut off for letter grades are: $\geq 90\%$ (A); $\geq 80\%$ (B); $\geq 70\%$ (C); $\geq 60\%$ (D), and below 60% failing. No grading curves.

Class attendance: According to [NDSU Policy 333 \(www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/333.pdf\)](http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/333.pdf), attendance in classes is expected and randomly checked.

Veterans and student service members with special circumstances or who are activated are encouraged to notify the instructor as soon as possible and are encouraged to provide Activation Orders.

Class participation: You are expected to be an active participant in the class; ask questions, share your ideas about what works and what doesn't work, group work, etc.

Assignment: Due dates will be given with the assignments. Late assignments will be accepted with a *10% penalty per NDSU class day*. Late assignments will not be accepted after *3 NDSU class days* from the date they are due. ***Assignments must be submitted via Blackboard before the announced due dates to be credited to the day it is received. Also, keep a hardcopy with you for the in-class peer assessment/critique during breakout discussion when needed.*** If any homework is submitted electronically and require printing by the instructor, please note that points will be deducted if the instructor cannot open your file and print your work "as is," i.e., no adjustments for print areas, scaling, etc.

You will be required to develop and write a resume, cover letter, and other correspondence associated with a complete job search. This work may be iterative - you will have the opportunity to complete some assignments at least twice to provide the opportunity for continual improvement. I will grade each homework assignment as if I was an employer who wanted to pick 3 people to interview from a pool of roughly 30 - this is subjective, but I hope you get the point.

What matters:

1. Following all directions exactly
2. Using complete and grammatically correct sentences
3. Using *professional* language (avoid jargon, figurative, and colloquial language)
4. Using *precise* language (say what you mean and mean what you say)

Assignment grades will be based on the percentage of total course marks as noted below (300 points total)

Assignment Posted	Due Date	Points
HW1: Self-Assessment	17-Jan	20
HW2: Resume Initial	26-Jan	40
HW2: Resume Rewrite	7-Feb	60
HW3: Cover letter Initial	2-Feb	40
HW3: Cover letter Rewrite	14-Feb	60
HW6: Attending Career Expo	12-Feb	15
HW4: Interview Questions	23-Feb	50
HW5: Thank You Email	1-Mar	15
Total Points		300

Assignments #2 & 3 will be graded twice by the instructor and one time by peers (your HWs will be randomly assigned to two peers). Fixing the items noted by the instructor in the first draft is likely not sufficient to earn an A, so you will need to do your own critical thinking. The instructor may omit some errors intentionally to assess whether you reviewed your revised document carefully and fixed it on your own or not. I have two goals and the assignment guidelines are structured to help us meet them:

- 1- You should have quality products that will serve you well in the job search.
- 2- You should recognize writing quality and be able to produce better professional documents on your own.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE / OUTLINE / CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The following is a **tentative** schedule. It will change as necessary due to changes in speaker schedules/commitments, the needs of the class, etc.

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#	Date	Conversation Topic	Assignment Posted	Due Date
1	8-Jan	Classes begin at 4:00 p.m.		
2	10-Jan	Syllabus/Introduction/Self-Assessment	HW1: Self-Assessment	17-Jan
3	15-Jan	HOLIDAY — Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (no classes)	NA	NA
4	17-Jan	Resume/Cover letter Writing (<i>Brandon Schutz, NDSU Career Coach</i>)	HW2: Resume Initial	26-Jan
5	22-Jan	Job Search/Interview Preparation (<i>Brandon Schutz, NDSU Career Coach</i>)	HW3: Cover letter Initial	2-Feb
6	24-Jan	Guest speaker (<i>Andrea Haugland, Titan Machinery Talent Acquisition Specialist</i>)		
7	29-Jan	Guest speaker (<i>Justin Lester, Kimley-Horn, Civil Analyst</i>)	HW2: Resume Rewrite	7-Feb
8	31-Jan	Guest speaker (<i>Preston Wilson, Graduate Student, ABEN</i>)		
9	5-Feb	Resume/Cover Letter Critiques	HW3: Cover letter Rewrite	14-Feb

10	7-Feb	Spring Career Expo (No class, require attending the Expo)	HW6: Attending Career Expo	12-Feb
11	12-Feb	Engineering Ethics		
12	14-Feb	Guest speaker (<i>Chelsey Singhateh, Bobcat Early Talent Acquisition Manager</i>)	HW4: Interview Questions	23-Feb
13	19-Feb	HOLIDAY — Presidents' Day (no classes)	NA	NA
14	21-Feb	Evaluating Job Offers/Job negotiation (<i>Brandon Schutz, NDSU Career Coach</i>)		
15	26-Feb	Guest speaker (<i>Andy Luikens, RDO Equipment Co. Recruiting Program Manager</i>)	HW5: Thank You Email	1-Mar
16	28-Feb	Social Media/LinkedIn (<i>Brandon Schutz, NDSU Career Coach</i>)		

HOMEWORK DESCRIPTION

HW 1 (Self-Assessment): Due on Jan 17, 2024

See the HW description on Blackboard.

HW 2 (Resume): Due on Jan 26, 2023 (Round 1) and Feb 7, 2024 (Round 2 + Peers)

- Page 1: Find out and save a job description that you would be interested in applying for. Highlight the phrases or keywords in the job description that are most important for you to address in your resume. I will review your resume in general for formatting and proofreading, and specifically for how it addresses the job description.
- Page 2: Make a resume for yourself to apply for the position. Review your resume against the Resume Rubric and Resume Checklist and revise, revise, revise. Have someone else check it. Repeat the process until you would be proud to hand it to the person hiring for your dream job. Submit this version to the instructor via Blackboard for scoring.
- Page 3: When you are happy with your resume, evaluate it against the Resume Rubric. Fill out the evaluation form and sign it at the bottom to indicate you completed it. One full letter grade will be deducted if you fail to complete or attach the rubric.

HW 3 (Cover Letter): Due: Feb 2, 2024 (Round 1) and Feb 14, 2024 (Round 2 + Peers)

Write a cover letter for a job that you would like to apply for. If you don't have a specific job in mind, you will have to be a little more creative in making the letter as realistic as possible.

- Page 1: Include the position description of a job that you would want - preferably the same one used for the resume. As before, this should be a description of the job, not just the job title. A job description will include duties that will be performed and/or qualities or experience the employer is looking for.
- Page 2: Write a cover letter which will accompany your resume to apply for the above position. Use the Cover Letter Checklist and revise, revise, revise. Have someone else check it. Repeat the process until you would be proud to hand it to the person hiring for your dream job. Submit this version to the instructor via Blackboard for scoring.
- Page 3: Print, complete, and sign the Cover Letter Checklist indicating that you reviewed the letter against all listed criteria. You should only sign it if you honestly used it, but one letter grade will be deducted for not including the signed checklist.

HW 4: (Interview Questions) Due: Feb 23, 2024

There is a list of common interview questions on Blackboard. Pick 5 of the bolded questions (at least 3 must be Behavioral Interview questions) and write out a short answer for each.

- I won't be grading it based on grammar (since spoken language has a different standard than written language) but I will be looking for you to give me the details of a relevant story you could tell in about 2-3 minutes. Aim for around 150-300 words per question. If it is more than this, try to make it more concise. If it is shorter than this, add some detail. If it is outside of these bounds, it should be a strong enough story to justify that.
- Follow the Situation/Task/Action/Result (STAR) format to answer the Behavioral Questions. I'll give a maximum of 10 points per story- you can't use the same story for multiple questions unless you clearly put a different spin on it. Your score will be docked if Behavioral Questions are not answered in STAR format (loosely) or if you didn't provide enough detail for it to be a useful response.

HW 5 (E-mail - Thank You for Interviewing You) Due: Mar 1, 2024

E-mail will likely be appropriate for business communication in your job search, and when you send them, they need to be professional. Please send me an e-mail (xiaoyu.feng.1@ndsu.edu) thanking me for having interviewed you for whatever position it is you would like to interview for.

- Write the e-mail exactly as if it were being sent to a real interviewer, except you should write it to me.
- Be creative in addressing specific follow-up points relevant to the fictional interview.
- I suggest writing and editing in Word, then copying and pasting the text into your e-mail program. Please do not write or send from your phone.
- Start the subject header with the exact phrase [ABEN 391 HW5-YOUR NAME], including the brackets and spacing, followed by your actual subject header.

HW 6 (Spring Career Expo) Due: Feb 12, 2024

Visit at least three career fair booths and collect company materials (e.g., company brochures, gifts, benefits brochures, taking photos of your interested posters or taking a selfie).

- Spring Career Expo, Wednesday, February 7, 2024
11am - 3pm @ Fargodome
- What to bring: Student ID and copies of your resume. We also recommend dressing professionally.
- Prepare for the fair:
 - Check out attending companies on Handshake
 - Update your resume
 - Select a business professional outfit
 - Check out the Career and Advising Center! We can help with resumes, cover letters, mock interviews, career fair tips, and more. Our office is located in Ceres Hall 306 and we are open Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm for drop-in services or by appointment.

<https://career-advising.ndsu.edu/events/2024/02/07/spring-career-expo-3/>

ACADEMIC HONESTY

The academic community is operated on the basis of honesty, integrity, and fair play. [NDSU Policy 335: Code of Academic Responsibility and Conduct](#) applies to cases in which cheating, plagiarism, or other academic misconduct have occurred in an instructional context. Students found guilty of academic misconduct are subject to penalties, up to and possibly including suspension and/or expulsion. Student academic misconduct records are maintained by the [Office of Registration and Records](#). Informational resources about academic honesty for students and instructional staff members can be found at www.ndsu.edu/academichonesty.

In this class, you may consult with a classmate on procedures for homework designated as requiring individual work, but the final product must be your original work. Homework, reports, or projects which involves team effort, will be designated as such and the following policies apply. The team will typically submit one set of papers for grading. Sharing of the workload, writing, reporting, etc. is acceptable and

expected. It is expected that all participants will have access to copies of the material and that all participants will contribute toward completion of the final product. Sharing of material between teams is not acceptable; the policy above for individual work also applies to interactions between teams.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Any students with disabilities or other special needs, who need special accommodations in this course are invited to share these concerns or requests with the instructor and contact the Disability Services Office (<http://www.ndsu.edu/disabilityservices/>) as soon as possible. The instructor may ask for verification and that, plus other assistance, can be requested from Disability Services in the Lower Level of the NDSU Library (231-8463).

IMPORTANT DATES

Jan 8 Mon Classes begin at 4:00 p.m.
Jan 9 Tue First full day of classes
Jan 15 Mon HOLIDAY — Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (no classes, offices closed)
Jan 16 Tue Last day to be added to Campus Connection Wait Lists
Jan 18 Thu Last day to Add classes via Campus Connection* Permit needed after this date.
Jan 18 Thu Last day for no-record Drop of classes @ 100% refund*(full semester classes only)
Jan 18 Thu Last day to Withdraw to Zero Credits @ 100% refund*(full semester classes only)
Jan 18 Thu Attempted credits calculated for financial aid SAP (11:59 p.m.)
Jan 18 Thu Eligible Pell/TEACH/ND Grants/Scholarships based on enrollment at 11:59 p.m.
Jan 23 Tue Financial aid applied to NDSU account balances
Jan 24 Wed Payments due for NDSU account balances
Jan 26 Fri Last day to submit ND Resident Student Status Application for Spring 2024
Jan 29 Mon Last day to submit requests to Audit, Pass/Fail
Feb 5 Mon Enrollment Census
Feb 14 Wed Summer registration begins online based on total credits
Feb 19 Mon HOLIDAY — Presidents' Day (no classes, offices closed)
Feb 19 Mon Last day to Withdraw to Zero Credits @ 75% refund*full semester classes only
Mar (1st Week) Fall schedule available
Mar (2nd Week) Fall registration appointment times available
Mar 1 Fri Grades of 'Incomplete' convert to 'F'
Mar 4-8 Mon-Fri Spring Break Week (no classes, offices open)
Mar 11 Mon 2nd half (8-week session) of Spring semester begins
Mar 15 Fri Undergraduate/Professional Spring Graduation Applications due
Mar 15 Fri Graduate student Intent to Graduate survey for spring and summer semester
Mar 15 Fri Late fee applied to unpaid account balances (11:59 p.m.)
Mar 21 Thu Last day to Withdraw to Zero Credits @ 50% refund*(full semester classes only)
Mar 21 Thu Fall registration begins online based on total credits completed
Mar 29-Apr 1 Fri-Mon HOLIDAY -- Spring Recess (no classes, offices closed Friday, offices open Monday)
Apr 5 Fri Last day to Drop classes with 'W' record*
Apr 5 Fri Last day to Withdraw to Zero Credits for Spring
Apr 12 Fri Spring Commencement Participation deadline
Apr 15 Mon Late fees applied to unpaid account balances (11:59 p.m.)
Apr 15 Mon Registration appointment times no longer needed for Fall
Apr 29-May 3 Mon-Fri Dead Week
May 3 Fri Last day of Spring classes
May 6-10 Mon-Fri Final Examinations
May 10 Fri Graduation Application and fee (Certificate and Plan C Students)

May 11 Sat Commencement ceremonies (10:00 a.m. & 2:00 p.m. in Fargodome)
May 15 Wed Late fees applied to unpaid account balances (11:59 p.m.)

ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

If you do not come to class due to the illness, you will still need to complete the assignments, reading, etc. necessary to meet class learning objectives. The instructor will work with you to make up the material. Please let the instructor know as soon as possible, and in advance if possible, if you will miss a class session due to illness.

Masks are not required in this class, but if you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or tested positive, I ask that you wear a mask to help protect my health and the health of your peers. Where possible, please spread out within the classroom, including not sitting in the first row of the classroom, to maximize social distancing.