Focus 2: Career Readiness

Assignment Purpose:
In a recent 2022 student survey by NACE, graduating seniors were asked what they thought their proficiency levels were for these career readiness competencies. They ranked themselves as “very or extremely proficient” particularly in communication, professionalism, and teamwork competencies. However, employers rated their new graduate employees’ proficiency in these competencies as only “somewhat to very proficient.” While the article acknowledges that these ratings are not terrible, it does indicate that there is a discrepancy between what the students and employers feel about their readiness in the work environment.

Focus2 is a series of self-assessments, one of which can be used to help students to understand their current career readiness. All UAlbany students can create free Focus2 accounts and have access to the assessments. Directions on how to do so are outlined on the Office of Career & Professional Development website. This current assignment aims to help students increase their understanding of their abilities and continue to grow.

NACE Career Readiness Competencies this project covers:
Career and Self-Development: By reflecting on their career readiness, students will build an understanding of their strengths and areas of development.
Critical Thinking: Students will practice analyzing data from multiple sources to inform their self-perspectives.

Assignment Directions:
For this assignment, students will log into their Focus2 accounts and complete the “Am I Career Ready?” assessment which will be displayed on the home page. The students will answer questions that are related to the eight National Association of College and Educators (NACE) career readiness competencies: Professionalism, Career & Self-Development, Critical Thinking, Communication, Teamwork, Technology, Equity & Inclusion, and Leadership.
After the students have taken the assessment, they will be given a particular level of development (Not yet developed, Slightly developed, Moderately developed, Highly developed, and Very highly developed) for each career readiness competency.

As students click through their results, they will see suggestions as to what they can do to further develop a particular career readiness competency.

Once the students have reviewed the results, you might ask them to reflect on their results by responding to Question set A or B. The questions can be adapted to meet the needs of each faculty’s class.

Reflection Questions:
Category A (1 trait): Professionalism, Career & Self-Development
**Category B (2 traits):** Critical Thinking, Communication, Teamwork, Technology, Equity & Inclusion, Leadership

**Question A:**
**Pick 1 competency from Category A and 2 competencies from Category B.**
All the eight competencies are traits that should be developed throughout your college experiences to prepare you for your career. Think through the three traits from Category A & B that you have chosen.

1. What were your results in the three competencies that you chose?
2. Do you feel that the developmental level for all three competencies accurately describes you? Why or why not?
3. How are these three competencies relevant to your major in the XXX Department?
4. How do you envision utilizing these three career readiness competencies as you think about your future aspirations?

**Question B:**
**Pick 1 of the 8 competencies.**

1. Choose one competency trait that you would like to develop further this semester. Why?
2. From the Focus2 assessment suggestions, choose 2-3 ideas that will help you develop this one career readiness competency further this semester?
3. What other ways can your particular major in the XXX Department support you in ensuring your development to be career competency ready?

**Optional**
At the end of the semester, have the students report on the activities they said they would do. This could be a presentation, a reflection paper, or a class discussion.

**Faculty Resources:**
To increase your knowledge of the career readiness competencies and how they can be built into your instruction, we recommend viewing [day 3 of the Career Champions Challenge](#). This module provides up-to-date research about discrepancies between college graduates’ understandings of their skills and employer’s evaluations.