

Leveraging Arts Staff Expertise and Resources for Departmental Practical and Career Learning

Arts ISIT Welcome Back Conference

Moderated by:

Julie Walchli

Executive Director, Work Integrated Education, Arts



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Arts Instructional Support & Information Technology
Faculty of Arts



Panelists

Learning with Alumni in Department Events

Ashley Samsone, *Head's Assistant* | *Department of Central, Eastern, and Northern European Studies*
Reshaad Ali, *Alumni Engagement Manager* | *Arts Development & Alumni Engagement*

Design Thinking in Curriculum

Siobhán Wittig McPhee, *Associate Professor of Teaching* | *Department of Geography*
Julie Walchli, *Executive Director* | *Arts Work Integrated Education*

Career Learning in Courses

Rosanne Sia, *Assistant Professor* | *Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice*
Robyn Stalkie, *Arts Career Strategist* | *UBC Career Centre*

Learning with Alumni in Department Events: Careers Night 101

Ashley Samsone, *Head's Assistant | Department of Central, Eastern & Northern European Studies*
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Case Study: Department of Central, Eastern & Northern European Studies

Motivation & Context – Department & Students

- Highlighting the value of an Arts degree
- Connection
 - Stories connect us and support students
 - Create a tradition for Departments and Students
- Professional Development

Motivation & Context - Alumni

- Arts alumni are keen to stay connected to UBC and interested to give back via volunteerism and/or mentorship
- Alumni want to share their career story, lessons learned and how their student experience and Arts degree benefited their journey and continue to play a role in their careers
- Pay it Forward™: alumni recognize the value of career planning as students



Learning with Alumni in Department Events: Careers Night 101



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Collaborative Process

- The idea - *Usually starts within the Department (staff/ Head/ faculty)*
- Contacting DAE via [Arts Career Programming Request Form](#)
- Coordinate meeting with key stakeholders: Department / Alumni Engagement (AE) / Career Strategist
- What is the plan? Goals?
- Event details: date, time, budget, etc
- Format?
- Identify alumni criteria
- Establish next steps & responsibilities
- AE Process: Recruitment & Alumni Relations
- Department/Student Process: Event & Program Management

Advice

- **Start EARLY** – *Advance planning is essential to success*
- Partnerships ease the workload and can benefit students

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Impact

- *For the students*
 - Networking skills, professional development gained working alongside alumni UBC and their Department, gaining insight as to what is possible with a degree in the humanities and how it's valuable
- *For the Department*
 - Providing a resource for students
 - Further promotes major/minors and courses
 - Cultivate a diverse community with a strong foundation
- *For Alumni*
 - Professional development
 - Opportunity to share their post-grad career story and successes, promote their projects, and a way of giving back
 - Reflect on their UBC student experience and the value of an Arts degree; nourishing pride

Design Thinking in Curriculum

Siobhán Wittig McPhee, *Associate Professor of Teaching | Department of Geography*
Julie Walchli, *Executive Director | Arts Work Integrated Education*

Collaboration Overview

- GEOG 350: Urban Worlds – A focus on Vancouver

Logistics

- One hour of a three-hour session dedicated to guest speakers.
- Guest speakers include former students, connection through Julie's office colleagues, and personal connections from external professionals.
- Weekly reflections assess students on speaker insights and relevance to course themes.
- One hour Design Thinking session was intended to support students in choosing the topic for their final course assignment, and to give them tools for the group work that was also valuable in career design



Design Thinking in Curriculum



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Outcomes

Recognition of Diverse Career Paths

- Emphasis on transferable skills like critical thinking
- Design Thinking approach prepares students for varied career trajectories, not just within Geography.

Integration of Theory and Practice

- Connect theoretical concepts with real-world applications
- Guest lectures from professionals in sustainable engineering, census collection, and Vancouver port

Design Thinking and Positionality

- Encourages students to reflect on their social identity (positionality) in their work
- Enhances understanding of how positionality influences academic and professional environments

Experiential Learning and Tangible Outcomes

- Final assignment involves contributing to an open-source wiki
- Students create a practical asset for future use, building a resource for others

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Positive Student Feedback

- Students valued the challenge of applying theory to practice through guest speakers.
- Appreciated writing for a wiki, focusing on accessibility and critical thinking.

Advice for those considering similar work:

- Let choices be guided by course learning outcomes
- Tap into existing instructor networks and Practical Learning team networks
- Integrate speakers' content with assignments and assessments so it's integral to the course

Career Learning in Courses

Rosanne Sia, Assistant Professor | Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice
Robyn Stalkie, Arts Career Strategist | UBC Career Centre

Collaboration Overview

- GRSJ 480: Decolonizing Praxis: A practicum in Social Justice
- 2 workshops facilitated by Robyn as a compliment to the practicum experience, alumni panel, seminar discussions, and showcase

Workshop Overview

- *Introduction to Practicum Skills*
 - Themes: Benefits of/Contributions through Practicum, Workplace Norms, "Professional" Communication, Goal Setting, Curiosity Conversations
- *Identifying and Articulating Values & the Skills gained through Practicum*
 - Themes: Values & Skills Reflection, Resume/Cover Letter Writing, Interview Tips



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Impact and Outcomes

- Common understanding of workplace communication, expectations, and reciprocal benefits
- Increased confidence in applying to jobs after graduation in alignment with values and experience
- Connection to additional resources (1-1 advising with Robyn, workshops and events through the Career Centre, etc.)

Advice for those considering similar work:

- Tap into the available resources – you don't have to do it alone!
- Approach the collaboration with curiosity & openness, knowing there is room for nuanced and complex discussions about bringing career learning into your discipline

Practical Learning Strategies

<https://isit.arts.ubc.ca/services-support/teaching-learning-strategies/pedagogical-approaches/practical-learning/>





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