



CONVERSATIONS

AROUND (Remote)TEACHING AND LEARNING

Faculty Center | Westfield State University

Career support for students during the Coronavirus Pandemic

This may not be the ideal job situation for students, but there are opportunities out there. The plan for a student's dream job may have to take a back seat, but to think practically and pay bills, they can take jobs that are Plan B or C and D. There may be hidden career opportunities in those as well, and students may even benefit from jobs which are not apparent immediately, they may even discover a new interest.

In the meantime, students should remain active, and work on items that make them visible to their potential employers of the future, use this time to blog, write articles, use social media channels to observe and comment on work that companies do through such mediums as LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. Students should use social media channels for career advancement. LinkedIn for visibility, Twitter to tweet messages to companies, Handshake to reach out to peers (for peer to peer support). Students should clean up their Facebook and Instagram pages- not necessary to remove everything that is not employment oriented, but more inappropriate elements (racist comments, inappropriate language, promoting marijuana etc.)

The Career Center's website offers a great deal of support. Most noteworthy is the first of its kind "Ready to Work Campaign" that will feature students (especially seniors) and highlight them, providing them support and working to connect them with employers.

Students can go to <http://www.westfield.ma.edu/academics/career-center> to receive additional help and assistance from the Career Center staff. There are up to the minute updates under the tab "Check out these Resources". For instance the "Company hiring and hiring freezes is updated daily". Handshake, the Career Center's online job platform, continues to be a great resource for promoting full-time/internship openings.

The Career Center team also continues to provide help with interviews, CV and resumes and career counseling. They provide appointments through telephone career counseling as well. Students can reach out directly to careers@westfield.ma.edu to set up appointments. There is also a "Coffee with Chat" offered on Wednesdays by one of the office staff members for students to discuss careers.

Regarding internships and jobs: Internships are impacted- employers like Disney and other have paused, and The Washington Center has made internships virtual this summer. If students have lost jobs they can go to Massachusetts 'One Stop Centers' in cities like Holyoke, Springfield and Worcester, Boston etc. where specialists can help them navigate the unemployment process. The landscape in opportunities has change employers needs are different. For instance the Mass. Department of Public Health is hiring for Contact Tracers for Covid-19 patients, so it is a good idea to look out for those opportunities. Also, students can apply for remote internship opportunities with the Federal Government between June 1st and June 30th on (www.usa.jobs.gov). If your students have questions, refer them to the Career Center at careers@westfield.ma.edu and a member of the office will reach out immediately.