



Career Connection

A Quarterly Newsletter provided by the Office of Career Placement Services

Spring 2006

Volume 3, Issue 1

Our Programs:

- Placement Program – for graduating seniors and alumni
- Cooperative Education Program – for those students wanting hands-on experience in their respective majors
- Student Employment Program – for currently enrolled students looking for part-time, full-time, non-degreed opportunities.

Upcoming Career Fairs:

February 33 rd Annual Career Day	28
April Teachers Job Expo	6
Student Employment Job Fair	13

Career Placement Services

Student Services
Building, Room 2.101
956/381-2243
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From Career Placement Services

We all know that college is a unique world...but you do not realize how true that is until you start to work. How many of you have had difficulty preparing a resume? Networking with prospective employers? Obtaining employment? Maintaining employment?

The goal of Career Placement Services is to help students develop and enhance their job readiness and marketability skills so that these situations can be avoided. Job hunting is easier if you make a plan and put all the pieces in place. Here is a check list of 10 things you can do to get your job search off to a good start.

1. **Resume:** Make sure your resume looks good and is

easy to read.

2. **Networking:** Tell everyone you know, such as friends, family and the corner grocer, that you are looking for a job.
3. **Phone Calls:** After you have made a list of people you want to talk with, practice what you are going to say.
4. **Cover Letter:** Develop a letter to mail out with your resume. Tell employers what type of job you are looking for and something about your training and skills.
5. **Put in Time:** Take job hunting seriously. Treat it like a job.
6. **Before an Interview, Get Information:** Research the company ahead of time.

7. **Practice Interviewing:** Schedule a mock interview with Career Placement Services.
8. **Expand Your Horizons:** Sometimes it is possible to get a job near home, but there may be more money and more opportunities if you are willing to relocate. Make sure to look into opportunities outside your area.
9. **Dress for the Part:** Always look businesslike for a job interview.
10. **Be Positive:** Job hunting is an uncertain business, but it is important to be as upbeat as possible.

It is never too late to prepare yourself for the job search. Visit Career Placement Services today!

33rd Annual Career Day-February 28th

Mark your calendar now and be prepared with plenty of resumes to distribute throughout the 33rd Annual Career Day, taking place on Tuesday, February 28 from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. in the University Fieldhouse.

Career Day will provide a great opportunity for you to meet employers who represent a wide range of industries, and in some instances, obtain interviews with them. If you make a favorable impression, you have the best chance of being invited to interview.

According to Velinda V. Reyes, Director of Career Placement Services, "having self-confidence in interacting with employer

representatives is a must." A career fair gives you the opportunity to practice your interview skills in a less formidable environment than a formal interview. Reyes encourages students to use Career Day to practice talking about what you have done, what you know, and what your interests are.

Some of the companies attending Career Day include: AXA Advisors; Central Intelligence Agency; Comptroller of the Currency; Dallas Police Department; Dollar General; Enterprise Rent-A-Car; Farm Credit Bank of Texas; H.E.B. Grocery Co.; Harris County Hospital District; IBC McAllen and San Antonio; Internal Revenue Service; Luby's;

Mission Regional Medical Center; Monsanto; Pepsi Bottling Company; Schlumberger; Target Stores and Distribution; Texas Commission on Environmental Quality; Texas Department of Public Safety; Texas Parks & Wildlife; Toyota Motor Manufacturing-Texas; Walgreen's; Whataburger and many more. Door prize drawings will be conducted throughout the day and food will be provided as well.

For a complete listing of companies visit <http://careerservices.panam.edu>.

Workshops for Spring 2006

Unless otherwise mentioned all workshops take place in the Student Union, 2nd Floor, Palmetto Room.

February

14

Interview Styles

21

Resume Writing Critique Session

College of Business
Administration, 9 a.m. - Noon
and Student Union, Noon - 1
p.m.

22

Resume Writing Critique Session
College of Business
Administration, 1 - 4 p.m.

23

How to Prepare for Career Day

27

How do Companies Hire? Panel
Discussion, University Ballroom,
9:45 - 10:35 a.m.

Federal Employment Panel
Discussion, University Ballroom,
11:45 a.m. - 12:35 p.m.

Overcoming Barriers: How to

Achieve Career Success Panel
Discussion, University Ballroom,
1:45 - 2:35 p.m.

March

14

Internships 101

23

Dining Etiquette
University Ballroom, 5 - 6:30
p.m.

28

Communication Skills

April

6

Networking Magic

11

Appearance Matters

20

Job Offer Evaluation/Salary
Negotiation

25

From Student to Professional

On Campus Recruitment Activities

The following is a list of companies and the dates they are scheduled to interview on campus during the Spring semester.

This list is subject to change daily. Please check with Career Placement on a regular basis for up-to-date information.

February

23

HACU Information Table
Student Union Commons
Area, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

March

1

Pepsi Bottling Company Interviews

(Marketing, International
Management, Economics,
Management,
Communications,
Communication Studies)
GPA 3.0 or higher

Enterprise Rent-A-Car Interviews

(Accounting, Finance,
Marketing, Communications,
Communication Studies,
International Business

Management, Economics,
Management)

1 - 2

Comptroller of the Currency Interviews

(Accounting, Finance) GPA
2.5 or higher

13

Schlumberger Information Session

Engineering Building
Auditorium Room 1.300, 4:00
pm -5:00 pm (Chemistry,
Electrical Engineering,
Mechanical Engineering,
Manufacturing Engineering,
Computer Science, Physics)
GPA 2.75 or higher

14

Schlumberger Interviews

TARGET Stores & TARGET Distribution information Session

Engineering Building
Auditorium Room 1.300,
Noon - 2:00 pm (All Majors)
GPA 3.0 or higher

Walgreens Information Session

Student Union Sage Room,
5:00 pm-6:00 pm (All Majors
Prefer Liberal Arts) GPA 3.0

or higher

15

TARGET Distribution Center Interviews

(All Majors) GPA 3.0 or
higher

Walgreens Interviews

16

Sherwin Williams Interviews

(Accounting, Finance,
Marketing, Business
Technology, Communication
Studies, CIS, International
Business Management,
Economics, Management,
General Studies,
Psychology, History,
Spanish)

20

Halliburton Information Session

Engineering Building
Auditorium Room 1.300, 5
p.m. - 6 p.m. (Biology,
Interdisciplinary Studies,
Math, Chemistry, MECE, EE,
Manufacturing Eng., Physics)
GPA 2.0 or higher

21

Halliburton Interviews

TARGET Stores Interviews

27

**L-3 Communications, Link
Simulation & Training
Information Session,**
Engineering Building
Auditorium Room 1.300,
Noon - 2 p.m. (Electrical
Engineering, Computer
Science and Masters in
Computer Science) GPA 3.0
or Higher

28

Luby's Interviews

L-3 Communications, Link Simulation & Training Interviews

April

11

**U.S. Bureau of the Census
Information Session**
Student Union Sage Room, 5
- 6 p.m. (Marketing, Political
Science, Sociology, CIS,
Anthropology, CJ,
Economics, Psychology and
MA in CS) GPA 3.0 or higher

12

U.S. Bureau of the Census Interviews

Student Interns – Share Their Experiences

As the job market becomes increasingly competitive, internships have become an important part of a student's education. Although, the majority of majors at UTPA do not require an internship to graduate many students are making the decision to gain experience in their field of study before graduation.

During 2005 many UTPA students participated in internships not only throughout the Rio Grande Valley area and in Texas, but throughout the United States where they were able to acquire practical experience they would have never learned from textbooks. The Office of Career Placement Services would like to congratulate all the students who completed an internship and would like to highlight the experiences of three students of these students.

Robert Gilchrist, a senior mechanical engineering major, had the opportunity to intern with Monsanto during the Summer and Fall 2005 semesters. Gilchrist stated, "Monsanto gave me the opportunity to experience working in the chemical industry and reinforced my interest in mechanical engineering. It also helped me decide what I wanted to do with my degree."

Marketing major, Yvonne Villescas, interned at The White House while participating in the Bill Archer Fellowship Program during the Fall 2005 semester. "My experience in the Bill Archer Fellowship Program enabled me to participate in an amazing internship with the White House, gain an in-depth understanding of key government topics, network with prominent individuals, and enjoy the benefits of

living in our nation's capitol. As an aspiring business professional, I now have the confidence to venture out of my comfort zone and pursue my dreams," Villescas said.



Yvonne Villescas

Lizette Moreno, Communications Studies major, participated in three internships while at UTPA. She interned with Planned Parenthood Association of Hidalgo County, VAMOS Hispanic Scholarship Fund and Miller Brewing Company. Moreno stated "The experience and guidance I have acquired through my internships have aided me in developing vital skills needed in the workplace." As a December 2005 graduate,

Moreno also added "It is mainly my internships that have set me apart from other recent graduates during my application process."



Lizette Moreno

With the Spring semester here and the Summer not far away it is time for students to begin exploring internship opportunities. We currently have many local and national opportunities posted with our office. Do not sit back and wait for them to disappear, all students are encouraged to visit our office today to learn about these opportunities. For more information contact the Cooperative Education program at (956) 381-2781.

Interview Success Checklist

At Last! The long-awaited event for which you have worked hard to achieve has arrived - **A Job Interview!** The interview is your greatest opportunity to sell the skills and qualities you have to offer an employer. Doing well in your coursework, being involved in activities, building a strong network, and developing effective job search tools are all important in the job search process.

Do not think that an interview is just a setting to answer questions. Instead, impress the interviewer with your preparation. Here are some tips to convince a prospective employer that you are the one for the job.

1. Thoroughly research the job and company. Try to know as much about the company as you can.

Preparing will make you feel confident and you will not be nervous if you are asked specific company-related questions.

- 2. Bring extra copies of your resume.** Just in case, the interviewer does not have a copy.
- 3. Make eye contact.** It shows that you are focused and confident.
- 4. Demonstrate interest and enthusiasm about the company.**
- 5. Dress professionally.** Whether the company's style requires a suit or has a business casual dress code, you must always dress professionally. Wear a conservative colored suit. No loud colors.
- 6. Try to respond to questions within 60 seconds.** You do not want to be monosyllabic but lengthy responses will make

the employer lose interest and you might lose your own focus.

- 7. Listen and respond to answers directly.** If you are unclear about a question, ask for clarification.
- 8. Be prepared to discuss your past experiences.** Give examples that show your value.
- 9. Ask questions.** Sharp questions show that you are prepared, that you researched the company and you want to make sure that this company is the right place for you.
- 10. Send a thank you note within two days of the interview.** Express your interest in the position and thank the interviewer for his or her time.
- 11. Prepare and over-prepare.** Plan your strategy by preparing your answers

for the possible interview questions you may be asked--and then practice, practice, practice.

- 12. Firm hand shake at all times.**
- 13. Be nice to the receptionist.** The person interviewing you will usually ask for their opinion of you.
- 14. Always sit up straight and never slouch.** **Women** - you may cross your legs at the ankles, but not the knee. **Men** - keep your feet flat on the floor during the interview.
- 15. Be clear on your strengths and weaknesses.** You are almost certain that this question will be asked. Know your strengths and emphasize those that relate specifically to the position for which you are being considered.

Employer Spotlight – Farmers Insurance

Visibility on Campus

Farmers Insurance has been actively recruiting on campus for several years through participation in Career Expos and on-campus interviews. Farmers is interested in the development of all UTPA students in making the transition from student to professional, and will be presenting a seminar on this topic in Spring 2006. Future projects in development include classroom presentations and the creation of an internship program.

Summary of Farmers Insurance

The Farmers Insurance Group® companies comprise the nation's third-largest personal lines property & casualty insurance group – helping to restore the lives of over 15 million customers when the unexpected happens. Headquartered in

Los Angeles and doing business in 41 states, these companies provide homeowners, auto, business, life insurance, recreational products and financial services to more than 10 million households through 17,000 exclusive and independent agents and district managers. Locally, Farmers Insurance has a Branch Claims Office in McAllen and 45 agencies located throughout the Rio Grande Valley.

Since our founding in 1928, Farmers Insurance has been committed to improving the communities where our customers, agents and employees live and work. We have been proud, active partners in bettering the lives of our neighbors across the country for many decades. Farmers believes that every American is enriched by the many contributions made by

diverse groups and cultures in the United States. To promote understanding, Farmers has created a program honoring Hispanic culture called Young Americanos. Young Americanos is a reflection of our commitment to the Latino community and to strengthening the bridges of communication and understanding among all the diverse cultures that make up the United States.

Career Opportunities

Currently, Farmers Insurance has immediate openings at our McAllen Claims Office as well as other Claims Offices throughout the country. We welcome students from all fields of study. Our recent hires have majors as diverse as Finance, Political Science, and Rehab Services. Prospective applicants should have strong investigation and negotiation skills, exceptional

time management, and excellent communication skills. Outside of the Rio Grande Valley, Farmers has career opportunities in information technology, accounting, actuarial, e-business, claims, marketing, communications, auditing, legal, sales, administration, human resources, and underwriting. Farmers provides key training in top industry methods, support for continued education, and plenty of opportunity for growth. Our employees are rewarded with great benefits, bonus programs, company-sponsored pension plans, and profit sharing.

For more information on our company or career opportunities visit <http://www.farmers.com>.

Alumni Spotlight – Esmer Cancino

Business Planning Manager – General Mills



What are some of your main job duties at General Mills?

- Develop, implement, and evaluate effective merchandising strategies.
- Business planning analysis to identify distribution, shelving, merchandising and pricing opportunities and tactics

- Assist in the identification and development of business opportunities through analysis and interpretation of consumer and customer data through collaboration with marketing and sales managers
- Lead, develop and motivate Direct Reports
- Communicate marketing and sales annual business plans to the field sales team
- Provide support and guidance through Account Planning Sessions as well as daily communication with field sales representatives

What is your best memory from your time at UTPA?

Senior year - for these reasons:

- I was taking courses that pertained directly to my major, Marketing, and this was what peaked my interest.
- I was taking these courses w/ the friends that I had made through my college years.
- The courses were being taught by professors that I had come to know and built relationships with.
- I was recruited by General Mills in my Fall semester - which meant I had a position waiting for me all through Spring and upon graduating.

What advice would you give UTPA students about finding a job?

- **Start Early** - Many

students wait until their last semester on campus to begin researching for a position. Start as early as you can - do so by looking for internships & part time positions.

- **Be prepared** - Career Fairs & Interviews are very important. Make sure you are ready for these events.
- **Be open minded** - There are many different career opportunities - if you do not do your research - you will not know what's out there.
- **Utilize your resources** - Utilize professors & the Career Services department. They are there to help you.