**Independent Opportunity Research Assignment- Faculty Instructions**

**Module 7: Career Preparation – Becoming Employable**

This assignment will give students the chance to learn more about some of the types of opportunities available to gain the skills, experiences, and contacts they’ll need to become employable. This modified version of the Opportunity Research team project assignment requires no class time.

Each student will select at least two of the types of opportunities discussed in the module to research. Depending on how extensive you wish to make the assignment, you might assign three. You might also decide to remove “class projects” as an option and have your students choose from the other eight. Students will conduct web research on the two opportunities they have chosen, and write a paper summarizing their findings.

On the following page you will find instructions you can give to your students, or modify and give to your students. In addition to the possible changes noted above, you may also wish to change the length requirement, or add additional requirements such as following a certain format or including citations.

**Independent Opportunity Research Assignment- Student Instructions**

**Module 7: Career Preparation – Becoming Employable**

**Overview:** This assignment will give you the chance to learn more about some of the types of opportunities available to gain the skills, experiences, and contacts you’ll need to become employable.

You will select 2 of the 9 types of opportunities discussed in this module to research. You should select these based on which you feel are going to be the most valuable to you in your own career preparation, or based on which you need to know more about in order to take advantage of. You will use the web resources discussed in the module to learn all you can about each opportunity and how to go about taking advantage of it. Once your research is complete, you will write a paper summarizing your findings, which should address all of the topics listed below. Your paper should be a minimum of 2 pages in length.

**Topics Your Paper Must Address:**

* Explain why you chose each of the types of opportunities you researched, and why you felt the information would be relevant to your personal career preparation.
* Provide specific examples of things within each opportunity type that students can get involved in (i.e. specific volunteer opportunities like Project Jamaica, Service-Learning projects students are currently working on, research projects happening currently on campus, types of part-time jobs posted on BroncoJobs or available on campus, etc.).
* How would you go about getting connected with/taking advantage of this opportunity? What is the process and what are the steps involved? Who can help? What additional resources are available?
* Using the 9 professional skills critical for employability, discuss which you think you would be most likely to gain in each opportunity type, and explain HOW you could gain that skill by participating in this kind of opportunity.
* Discuss the other ways in which this type of opportunity could benefit you in your career preparation (i.e. internship-type experience, technical skills, who might you be able to meet and network with, etc.).
* Based on what you’ve learned about each opportunity, do you think it belongs in your career preparation plan? If not, why, and what do you plan to do instead? If yes, what are the next steps you will take towards getting involved in it?

**Tips for Each Type of Opportunity:**

**Internships:** Research the types of internships available and how to go about getting an internship. Use your department’s website and the Career Center’s internship database to see what students in your major have done before. If you haven’t declared a major, check for all the majors you are considering (which could give you more information to help you make your choice!). Use the Career Center’s website to learn about the process of how to find internship opportunities, apply for them, and get registered to get academic credit for your internship.

**Volunteering:** Research the types of volunteer opportunities available (both through Boise State and through local non-profits) and the different ways in which you can go about getting involved with a volunteer opportunity. In what ways can the Student Involvement and Leadership Center help you connect to volunteer opportunities? What other approaches might you take to finding opportunities? Browse the list of non-profit organizations available on the Service-Learning website and find some that you might be interested in. Remember that there are two types of volunteering - community service-type volunteering and internship-type volunteering.

**Service-Learning:** Research the ins and outs of the Service-Learning program at Boise State. Provide examples of actual Service-Learning projects students have done or are doing. Discuss how those projects can provide internship-type experience. If you want to take a Service-Learning class, how do you go about that?

**Student Clubs and Organizations:** Research the different types of student clubs and organizations available and how to go about finding and joining one. Provide some specific examples of clubs or organizations you find that you might be interested in or that you think could provide skills you need or relevant experience.

**Research:** Find out more about undergraduate research at Boise State, the opportunities available, and how to find and get involved in a research project. Look on your department’s website for information about research opportunities, or look at faculty bios to find out about their research interests and current projects. Because there isn’t as much information available on a single website for research as for some of the other opportunities, you might consider speaking with a faculty member in your department about research opportunities and the best ways to get involved in that particular department.

**International Learning Opportunities:** Research the different programs offered through International Learning Opportunities at Boise State and the process you would need to go through to take advantage of one of those opportunities. Provide specific examples of things you could do while studying abroad that could help you prepare for your career, such as international internships.

**Jobs:** Research the types of part-time job opportunities available to students on-campus at Boise State and off-campus in the community, as well as how to go about finding and applying for open positions. Where and how can students look for jobs? How can you be a competitive applicant for the jobs you want? (Use the Career Center’s information on how to get a part-time job.)

**Class Projects:** You should only choose this opportunity type if you know what your major is going to be. Also be aware that there might not be very much information available on the web about the types of class projects available in courses in your department. Check your department’s website for any information they do have available on courses that involve significant projects. Talk to department staff and faculty to find out more about what kinds of projects you’re likely to complete, and if there are elective courses you can sign up for that involve significant projects.

**Professional Organizations:** This opportunity is a little different than the others in that there are MANY professional organizations, and there is no singular Boise State resource for finding or connecting with them since they are independent of Boise State. Your goal is to find local and national professional organizations relevant to your intended career field, and then look into the resources they provide to students, how you would go about joining, and what types of events or other opportunities they host that could allow you to meet and network with professionals in your field. Use the “Links” section of “What Can I Do With This Major?” (available on the Career Center website), and Google to find local organizations.