

## STRATEGIES TO ASSIST STUDENTS OBTAIN GLOBAL CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN AN UNCERTAIN ENVIRONMENT

**Helena Czepiec, Dolores Barsellotti, Patricia M. Hopkins Susan Peters, Juanita Roxas, Charles Taylor, Debbora Whitson, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, College of Business Administration, Pomona, CA 91768; (909) 869-4532**

It is safe to say that the goal of most international business and marketing students is to get a job. This is true both in the best of times and the worst of times. However, many students have difficulty articulating what kind of career they want and how to go about securing it. This observation is based on many years of teaching courses and of counseling undergraduate students. During the good times most students need assistance to define and obtain their ideal job. In economic downturns, students are even more helpless to land jobs that will lead to rewarding careers.

The economic tides have turned. Our students currently find themselves in the unfortunate position of preparing to enter the market in a climate of economic uncertainty. It is important to incorporate activities and offer classes designed to help them reach their goals. This special session proposal consists several such activities.

In "The Informational Interview: Building Networks To Career Security," Helena Czepiec discusses the Informational Interview Assignment where students interview a business professional. The interview consists of two parts, (a) a structured survey and (b) probing questions that deal with factors needed to succeed in the business as well as the biggest challenges faced while working in the business.

In "Internship Programs for Undergraduates: A Look at the Issues, the Problems and the Benefits in Today's Marketing Programs," Dolores Barsellotti describes the Cal Poly model for internships. One of the unique aspects of this program is that preference is placed on internships for pay, as well as having the international/marketing focus. However, during tough economic times, maintaining these types of programs can, indeed, be a challenge in today's academic environment.

In "Effective Personal Enhancement: Strategies for the Workplace," Debbora Whitson discusses a course assignment where comparisons are drawn between equity in the brand/product world and equity in one's private and/or professional life. The course also

includes an investigation of the ideologies of people who have risen to the top of their fields.

In "Making Marketing Research Real," Susan Peters, shows how to adapt a country notebook or marketing study project, frequently used in the International Marketing class, to a "real life" experience. It involves working with real companies and involving company personnel into the project. As a result of the experience, students enhance their resumes and often obtain internships or jobs.

In, "Honing Student Presentation Skills in the Professional Selling Environment," Charles Taylor, provides a technique for building student presentation skills. The project in his Professional Selling Class consists of students preparing a professional presentation designed for executives using PowerPoint. Each stage of the presentation is prepared as a PowerPoint slide and presented to the instructor, teaching assistant, and the class for critical analysis. This practice of presentation and critique is done periodically throughout the quarter so that in the end, students have a high caliber, professional presentation worthy of any professional firm.

In "Stark Dose of Reality," Juanita Roxas, describes a project in a course on careers in international business and marketing, where students are required to do a content analysis of high level (VP or higher) want ads from publications like the Economist or the Wall Street Journal. They are required to put on a spread sheet the job title, requirements, and benefits. Based on these ads, students are able to get an idea of how to plan their careers and judge the kinds of experience and qualities that will contribute to attaining their ideals in the future.

In "Developing "Coping" Skills," Patricia Hopkins describes the Undergraduate Seminar Class where students develop skills in the career search arena. The art of resume writing, letter writing and interviewing skills are presented using guest lecturers from the field. Students are made aware of expected behavior, suitable clothing and how to negotiate. In addition, the course covers a long list of "coping" skills including job politics and two career families.