

## PURPOSE

The UNT Career Center initiated the First Year Career Readiness Seminar in 2022. This course was created to provide first year students a framework and a set level of knowledge for successful career skills necessary for student graduates of UNT. This five-module course covers topics that are integral to student career success, including:

1. Self-discovery
2. Career exploration
3. Professional communication skills
4. Resume building; and
5. Networking and professional relationship building.

Each class is taught by a trained career coach that guides students through the seminar and helps them navigate important career resources. The goal of this course is to educate students early in their academic career on resources available for career exploration, resume and cover letter best practices, professional communication skills important to employers, and how to gain important transferable skills necessary for success in today's workforce.

## METHODS

We provided every first-time freshman attending UNT an opportunity to participate in the course. This course is not for credit and is done on a voluntary basis. The course has 5 modules aligned with the course topics mentioned above. The course content included mock interviews; career exploration assessments (skills and values tests and career quizzes); resume building techniques and drop-in resume help in-person and online; career coaching; and building online profiles for networking.

An indirect, pre/posttest assessment measured the students self-reported knowledge gained during the seminar. An end of semester evaluation collected information about the students' satisfaction with the course and solicited requests for overall course improvement. Using a paired two sample t-Test analysis, we analyzed the significance of the change in self-perceived knowledge from the pre to posttests, while also using basic calculations to measure effect size. Finally, we utilized line-by-line coding as the basis for a thematic analysis of the qualitative data in the final evaluation. At the time of this analysis, we only had success data for students who were in the course from summer orientation through Fall 2022. The following outlines the findings from this period.

## FINDINGS

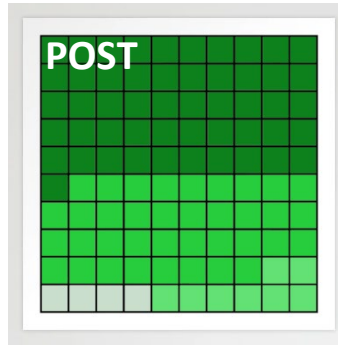
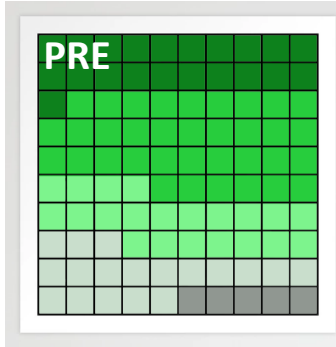
**Table 1.** Course Passing Rates for Fall 2022

<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>Dropped</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>NP</b>	<b>Passing %</b>
1761	60	1701	996	705	59%

We found a significant statistical difference ( $P(T \leq t)$  two-tail, 4.91469E-85) in the 623 pre/posttest tests analyzed at a P-value less than 0.05 significance level.

We wanted to not only know if these results were statistically significant, but if the effect size of that significance was high. For the pre/posttest, we calculated a Cohen's D Effect Size of .92, which represents a very high effect size. The changes in the pre/posttests answers were significant and very large. Out of 13 pre/posttest questions, 6 questions had a Cohen's D Effect Size of .63 or higher, strengthening the significance of knowledge gained from the pre to posttest for those questions. The results of 2 out of the 6 questions are illustrated in the charts on the back of this page.

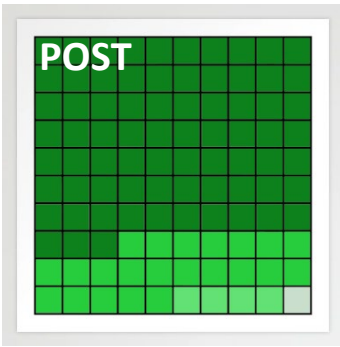
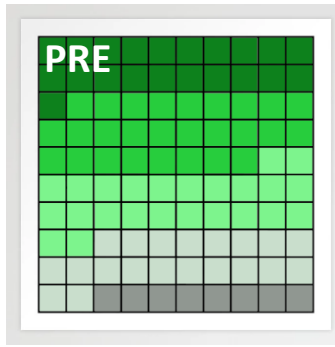
**I understand how to build my professional network**



**21** Strongly Agree  
**35** Somewhat Agree  
**21** Undecided  
**18** Somewhat Disagree  
**5** Strongly Disagree

**51** Strongly Agree  
**38** Somewhat Agree  
**8** Undecided  
**2** Somewhat Disagree  
**0** Strongly Disagree

**I understand how set up an appointment with my Career Coach**



**21** Strongly Agree  
**27** Somewhat Agree  
**24** Undecided  
**20** Somewhat Disagree  
**9** Strongly Disagree

**73** Strongly Agree  
**22** Somewhat Agree  
**4** Undecided  
**1** Somewhat Disagree  
**0** Strongly Disagree

**Students were asked what they found most helpful in the career seminar. They answered:**

**Resume building:** The activity taught them how to create a well-made resume, which will be useful when they start looking for jobs.

*“I got a lot of use out of planning and creating a carefully constructed resume. In the past I had created resumes, but I never had proper instruction in creating one professionally. Creating a resume helped me realize what skills I had and what was important to me in my career.”*

**Interview process:** The activity simulated the interview process, preparing them for real-life job interviews.

*“Interview skills helped because I tend to get nervous when I know stakes are high, so practicing with no stakes helps me prepare what I am going to say.”*

**Networking:** Several participants emphasized their appreciation of the module covering networking and building professionalism through social media platforms such as LinkedIn. A few participants mentioned the Handshake website as the most helpful, as it provides access to careers as well as part-time jobs, and opened their eyes to how many major-specific jobs they have access to, even on campus.

*“The part of this course that had the most impact on my career planning and exploration is setting up how I can build my professional network through social media. As a music major, connections are everything in receiving job opportunities so already starting that process now is very helpful.”*

**Career coaching:** Meeting with a career coach was mentioned by many participants as a valuable resource that helped them understand where and how to set up a meeting to get advice on resumes, networking, and future career planning.

*“Speaking with my Career Coach was extremely eye opening and beneficial to planning how I will tackle my time at UNT. Dr. August helped me reshape my resume and offered advice as to how to further get involved on campus in ways that will benefit my career and allow me to network.”*

For more information about the career seminar or the evaluation and assessment of this program, contact:



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