

What Does It Mean To Be “Business Ready”?

By: Joseph Long

Director of Undergraduate Affairs/Instructor of the College of Business

From the beginning of human history and as far as we can see, there have always been four jobs: pioneers, innovators, entrepreneurs, and intrapreneurs. These four jobs have always added value to society and always will. Aside from being a business process, innovating, pioneering, entrepreneurship, and intrapreneurship are human processes of change and development that are responsible for everything we are and everything we will be.

The College of Business is committed to helping students create their own brand and become “Business Ready.” Too often, students think of themselves as just the sum of their education and work experience. Being “Business Ready” requires a much broader understanding of what education is. Education includes more than classes, semesters, and a diploma. Education and becoming “Business Ready” includes all the skills and abilities developed as students complete their studies. Understanding what it means to be a pioneer, innovator, entrepreneur, or intrapreneur is part of the process, but so are traditional skills like networking and an understanding of diversity, ethics, and global issues.

As each Western Carolina University student transforms into “Business Ready,” the College of Business guides students through four main processes: discovering, synthesizing, designing, and communicating.

A student’s discovery includes making new friends, exploring new ideas (locally and globally), and gaining an understanding of those things that make each student’s life satisfying.

While discovering new friends, new opportunities, new skills, and new ideas, students will learn to synthesize, or pull together, all of their skills, abilities, knowledge, and contacts from classes, outside experiences, and global travels into a set of unique benefits that each student may offer to the world and future employers.

During this synthesis, students will begin to design their future goals. Courses within the College of Business major will provide students the opportunity to think about and visualize their strategies for personal success.

After the discovery, synthesis, and strategic design, students finalize their “Business Ready” education by creating a communications package that clearly defines their ability to add value to potential employers. The College of Business teaches that communication in the business world is much more than a simple resume, it is networking, understanding diversity, recognizing and confidently reacting to ethical dilemmas, and tackling issues on a global scale. It is imperative that students are able to establish their brand as unique and valuable. Students should ask themselves, and respond positively, that they can show up, step up, and demonstrate commitment.

At Western Carolina, students learn to apply their various “Business Ready” behavioral and situational skills both inside the classroom while earning their degree and outside of the classroom during internships. After graduation, students have skills and abilities that make them “Business Ready” and attractive to employers, business partners, and investors throughout North Carolina, the Southeast, and the global marketplace.