

Competencies for a Career-Ready Workforce



Career & Self Development

Proactively develop oneself and one's career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one's organization.



Communication

Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization.



Critical Thinking

Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.



Equity & Inclusion

Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different cultures and backgrounds. Engage in anti-oppressive practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism and inequity.



Leadership

Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.



Professionalism

Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits, and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.



Teamwork

Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.



Technology

Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.



What Is Career Readiness?

Career readiness is a foundation from which to demonstrate requisite core competencies that broadly prepare the college educated for success in the workplace and lifelong career management.

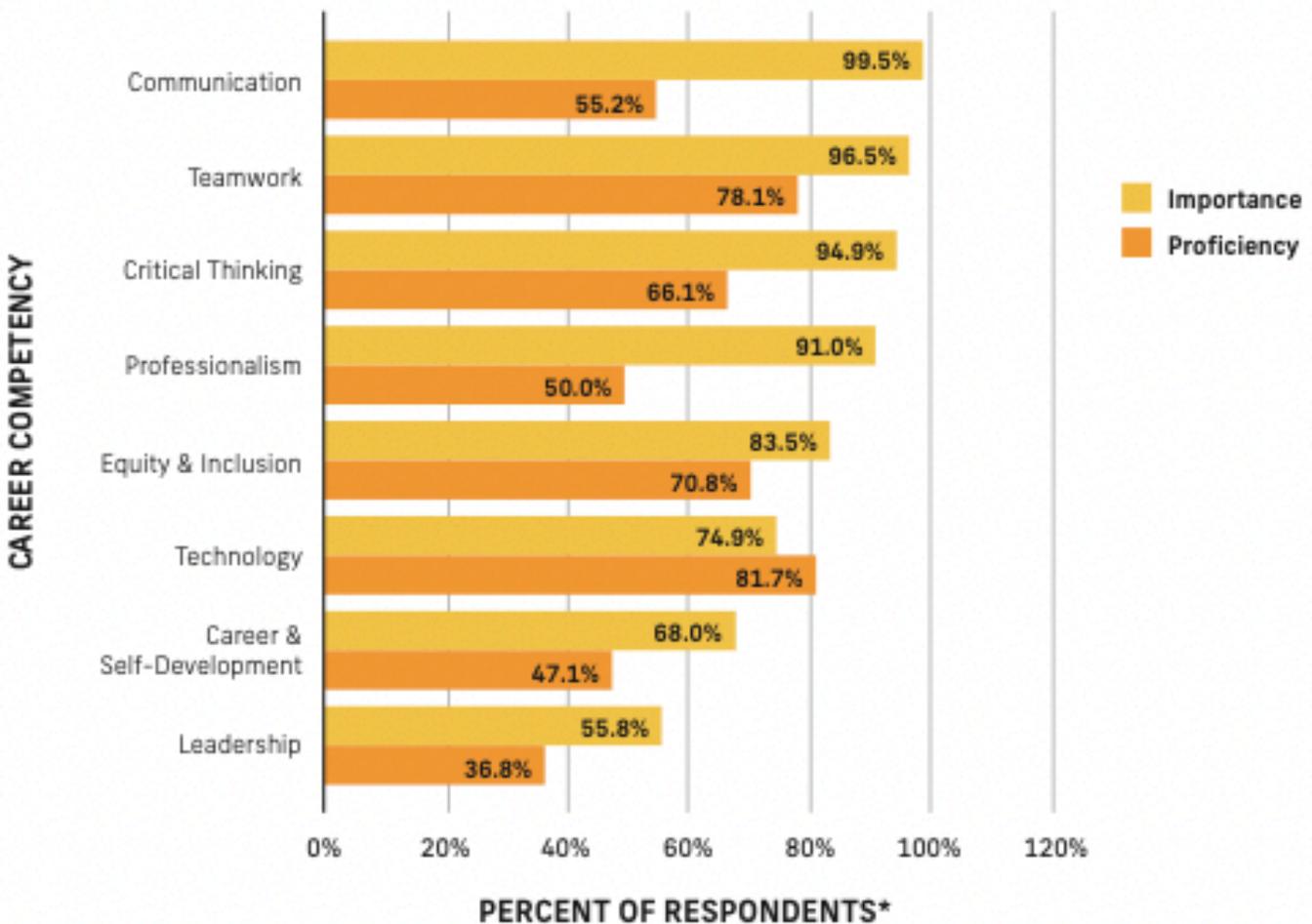


Integration

Incorporating these competencies into the curriculum at Roanoke College aligns with our institution's dedication to the development of the whole person. This approach ensures that students are prepared not just for their professional journeys but also for leading fulfilling lives. By embedding and articulating these competencies within general education courses and extending them throughout the academic experience, we guarantee equitable access to essential career readiness preparation for all students. This is particularly crucial for those who might not engage in additional programming due to various barriers, including work commitments, personal responsibilities, or other extracurricular involvements.

Additionally, evidence supports the integration of NACE competencies as a strategic approach to enhancing student outcomes. A survey conducted by NACE among employers revealed that more than 80% prioritize hiring graduates who exhibit strong competencies in teamwork, communication, and critical thinking — skills that are cultivated through the NACE framework. This comes as more and more employers shift away from GPA as the main hiring criterion and focus more on skills-based hiring (NACE, 2023).

**FIGURE 30:
IMPORTANCE VS. PROFICIENCY ON CAREER READINESS COMPETENCIES,
BY PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS**

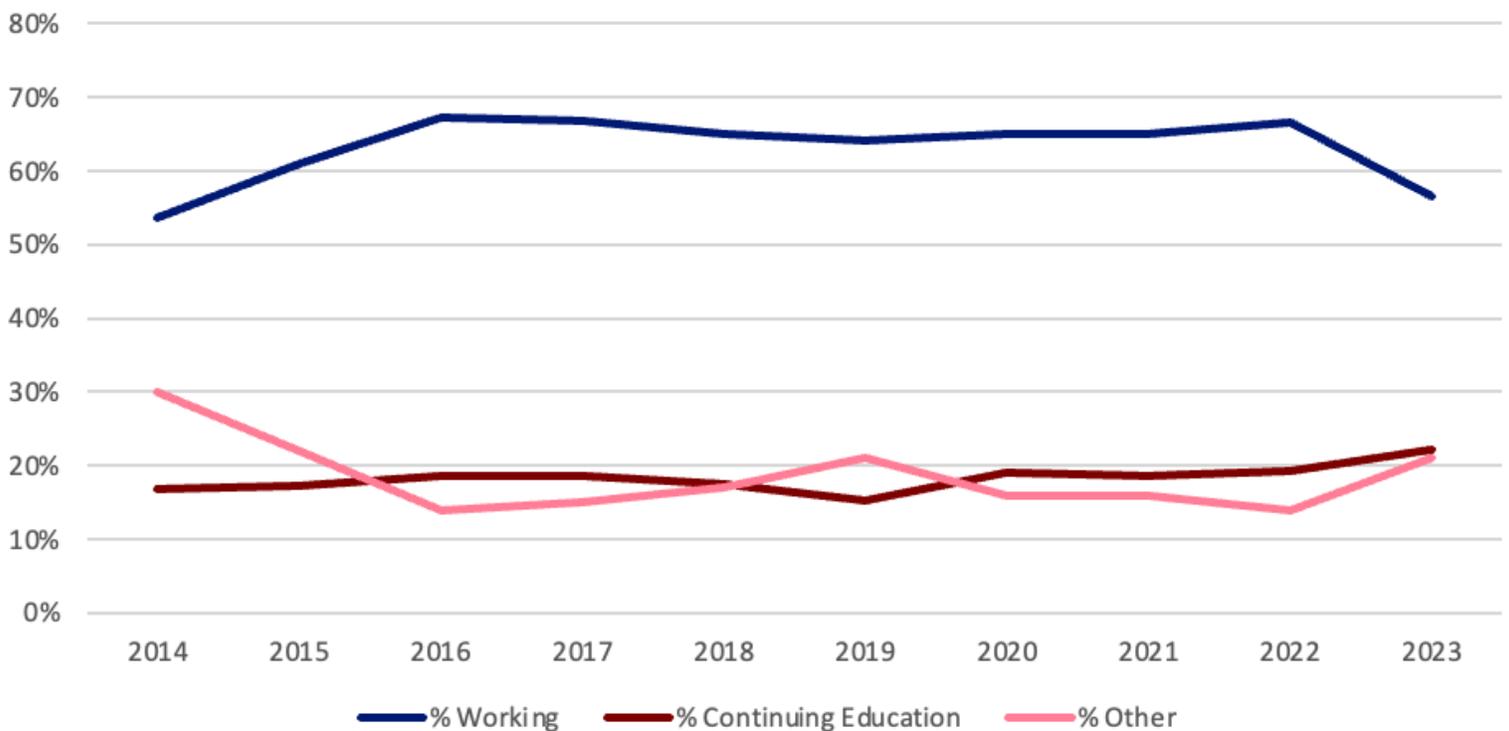


*The percentages corresponding to "importance" represent, among all responding employers, the percentage that, on a five-point scale, indicated that the respective competency was either "very important" (4) or "extremely important" (5) for college graduates to have to enter their work force. The percentages corresponding to "proficiency" represent, among all responding employers, the percentage that, on a five-point scale, rated recent graduates either "very proficient" (4) or "extremely proficient" (5) in the respective competency.

Roanoke College Outcomes

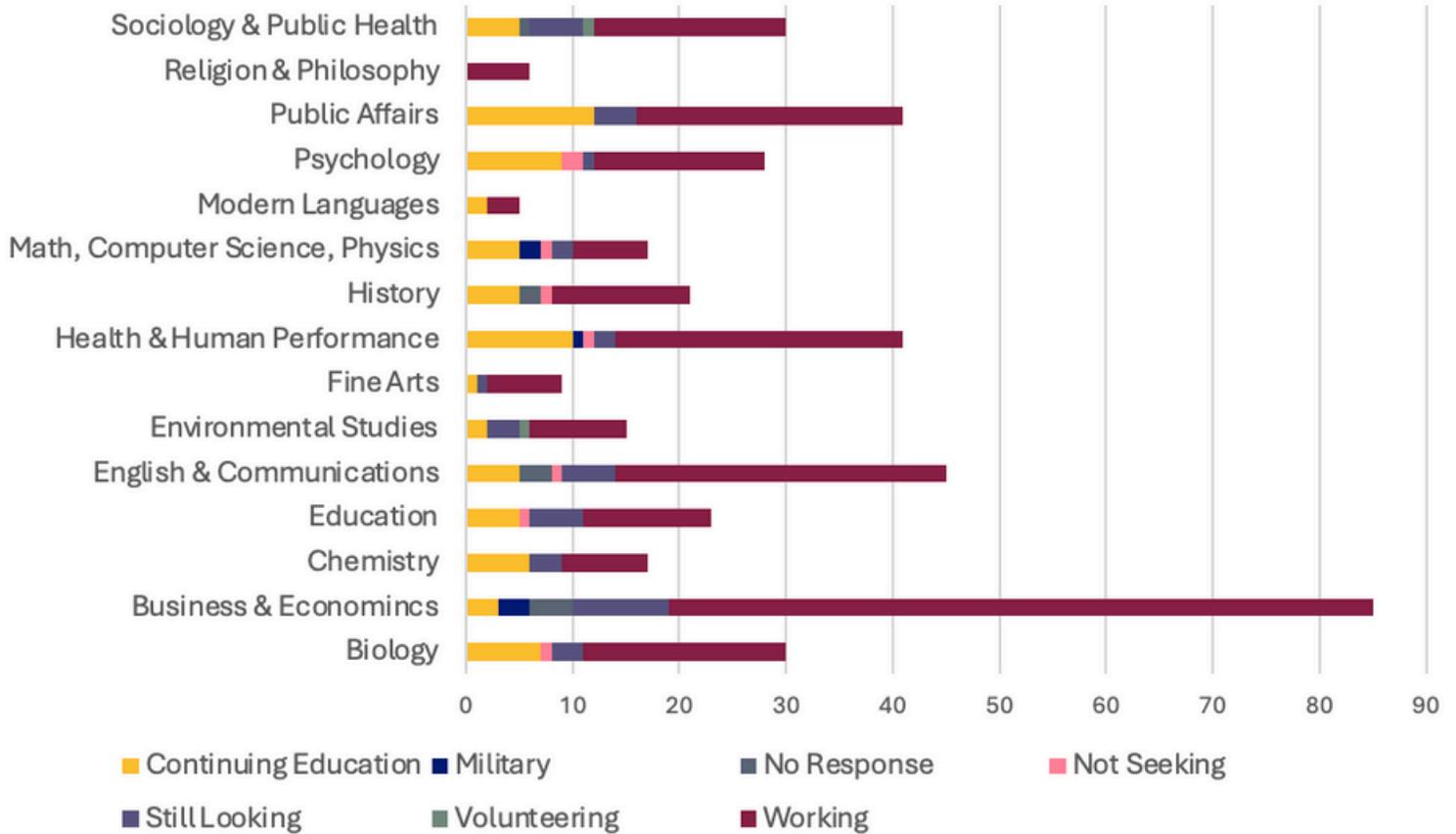
In our efforts to merge the foundation of liberal arts education with practical career readiness, we see our First Destination Data as a guide, driving efforts to better prepare students for life beyond graduation. This data highlights that the majority of our students are going straight into the workforce, underscoring the value of integrating career readiness activities within the student experience. This concerted effort aims to equip our students with the skills needed to thrive post-graduation, respecting the essence of liberal arts while addressing the practicalities of career preparation.

First Destination Outcomes



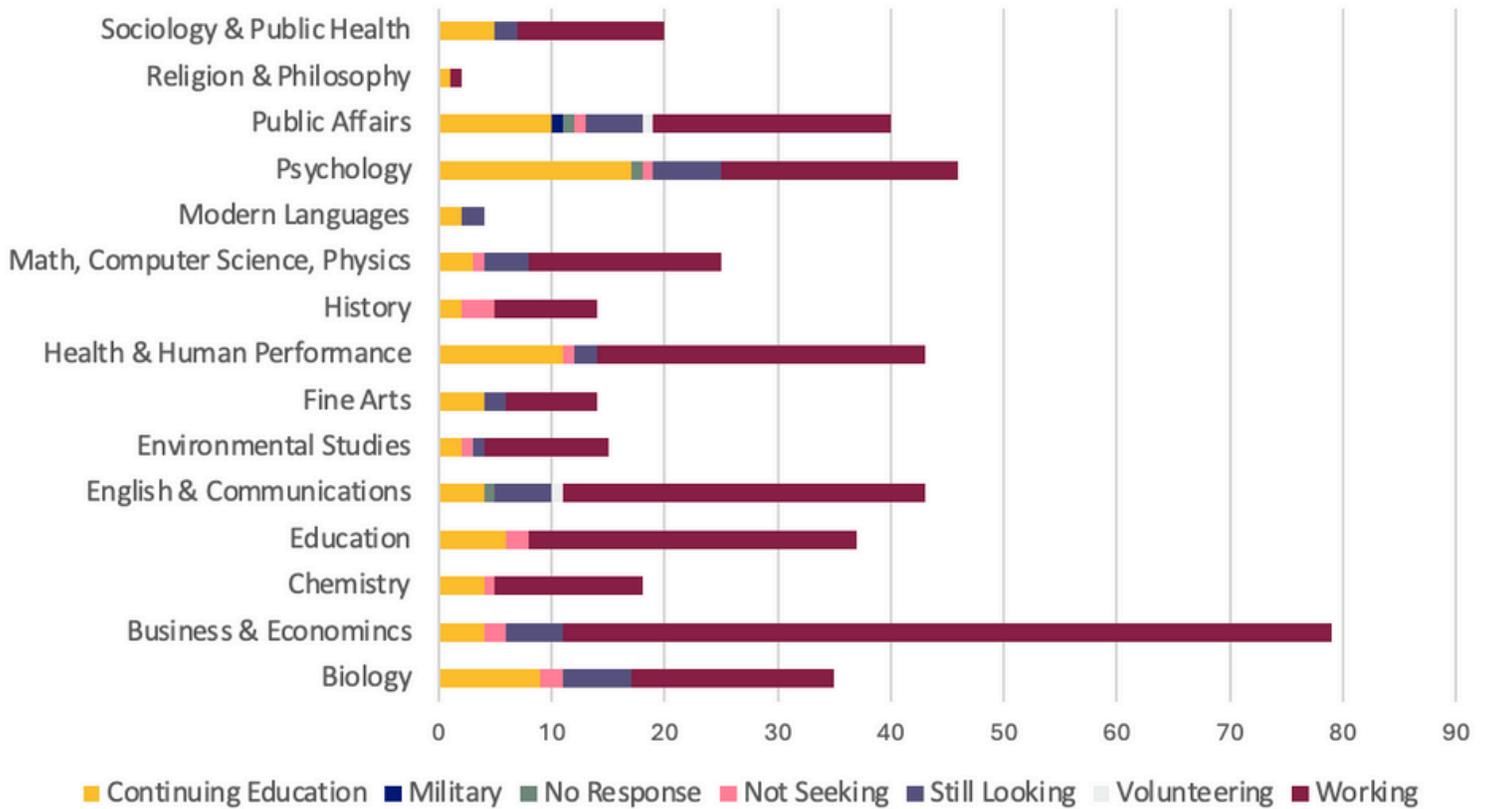
*Collection of FDS data began through Handshake in 2020. Previously, collected via paper and pencil survey.

2020-2021



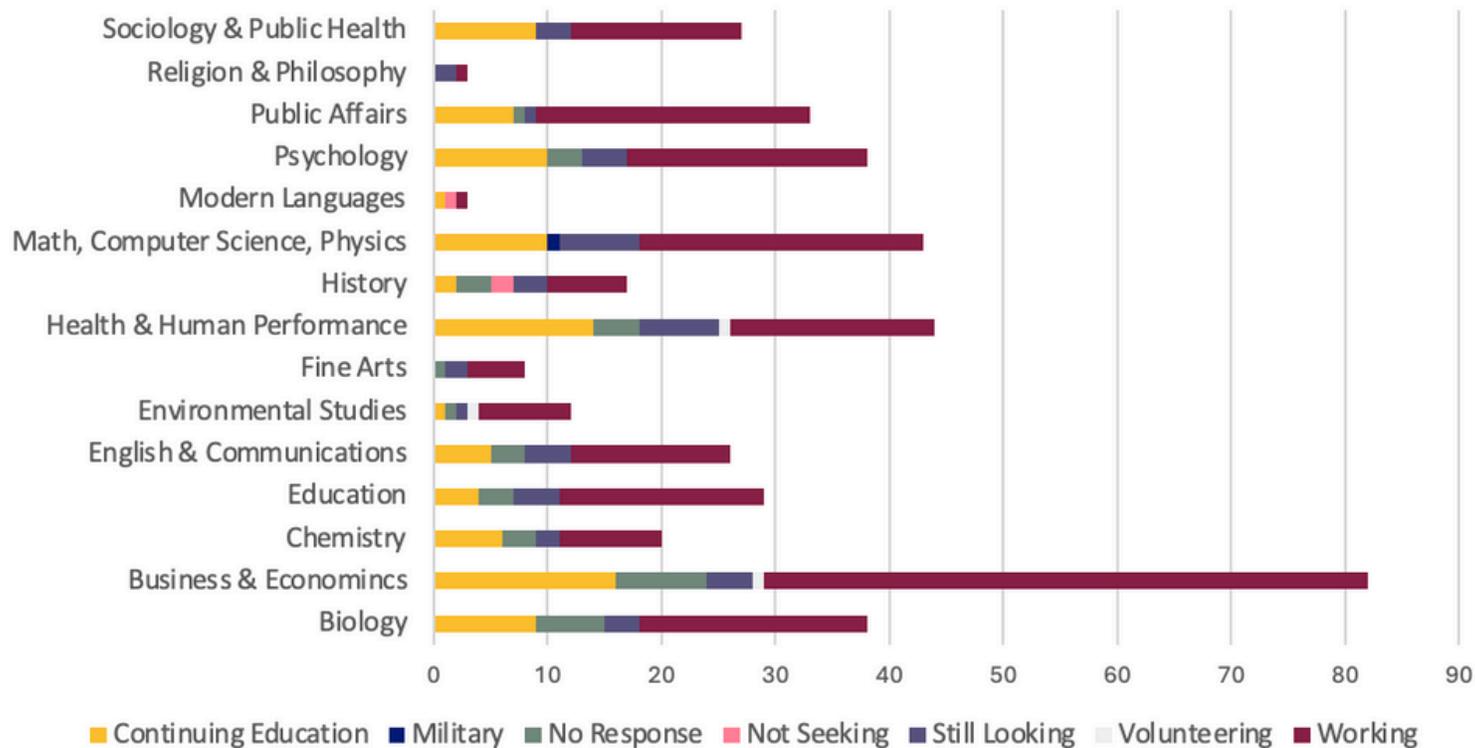
Department	Continuing Education	Military	No Response	Not Seeking	Still Looking	Volunteering	Working	Total Students
Biology	7	0	0	1	3	0	19	30
Business & Economics	3	3	4	0	9	0	66	85
Chemistry	6	0	0	0	3	0	8	17
Education	5	0	0	1	5	0	12	23
English & Communications	5	0	3	1	5	0	31	45
Environmental Studies	2	0	0	0	3	1	9	15
Fine Arts	1	0	0	0	1	0	7	9
Health & Human Performance	10	1	0	1	2	0	27	41
History	5	0	2	1	0	0	13	21
Math, Computer Science, Physics	5	2	0	1	2	0	7	17
Modern Languages	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	5
Psychology	9	0	0	2	1	0	16	28
Public Affairs	12	0	0	0	4	0	25	41
Religion & Philosophy	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6
Sociology & Public Health	5	0	1	0	5	1	18	30
Aug 20, Dec 20, May 21 Totals	77	6	10	8	43	2	267	413
2020-2021	19%	1%	2%	2%	10%	0%	65%	

2021-2022



Department	Continuing Education	Military	No Response	Not Seeking	Still Looking	Volunteering	Working	Total Students
Biology	7	0	0	1	3	0	19	30
Business & Economics	3	3	4	0	9	0	66	85
Chemistry	6	0	0	0	3	0	8	17
Education	5	0	0	1	5	0	12	23
English & Communications	5	0	3	1	5	0	31	45
Environmental Studies	2	0	0	0	3	1	9	15
Fine Arts	1	0	0	0	1	0	7	9
Health & Human Performance	10	1	0	1	2	0	27	41
History	5	0	2	1	0	0	13	21
Math, Computer Science, Physics	5	2	0	1	2	0	7	17
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Psychology	9	0	0	2	1	0	16	28
Public Affairs	12	0	0	0	4	0	25	41
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Sociology & Public Health	5	0	1	0	5	1	18	30
Aug 20, Dec 20, May 21 Totals	77	6	10	8	43	2	267	413
2020-2021	19%	1%	2%	2%	10%	0%	65%	

2022-2023



Department	Continuing Education	Military	No Response	Not Seeking	Still Looking	Volunteering	Working	Total Students
Biology	9	0	6	0	3	0	20	38
Business & Economics	16	0	8	0	4	1	53	82
Chemistry	6	0	3	0	2	0	9	20
Education	4	0	3	0	4	0	18	29
English & Communications	5	0	3	0	4	0	14	26
Environmental Studies	1	0	1	0	1	1	8	12
Fine Arts	0	0	1	0	2	0	5	8
Health & Human Performance	14	0	4	0	7	1	18	44
History	2	0	3	2	3	0	7	17
Math, Computer Science, Physics	10	1	0	0	7	0	25	43
Modern Languages	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	3
Psychology	10	0	3	0	4	0	21	38
Public Affairs	7	0	1	0	1	0	24	33
Religion & Philosophy	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	3
Sociology & Public Health	9	0	0	0	3	0	15	27
Aug 22, Dec 22, May 23 Totals	94	1	36	3	47	3	239	423
	22%	0%	9%	1%	11%	1%	57%	

ROANOKE COLLEGE



Resources

Competencies + INQ

NACE Competencies

STUDENTS WHO COMPLETE INQ CURRICULUM WILL BE ABLE TO:	Career & Self-Development	Communication	Critical Thinking	Equity & Inclusion	Leadership	Professionalism	Teamwork	Technology
PRODUCE WRITTEN WORKS THAT EXPRESS IDEAS EFFECTIVELY	✓	✓				✓		
PRODUCE ORAL WORKS THAT EXPRESS IDEAS EFFECTIVELY		✓				✓		
USE QUANTITATIVE REASONING IN DECISION MAKING			✓		✓	✓		
FORMULATE AND EVALUATE ETHICAL ARGUMENTS		✓	✓		✓	✓		
APPLY THE CONCEPTS AND METHODOLOGIES OF THE SCIENCES, SOCIAL SCIENCES, AND HUMANITIES TO ADDRESS SIGNIFICANT QUESTIONS			✓	✓		✓		✓
ANALYZE SELECTED ISSUES OR EVENTS EITHER BY APPLYING CULTURAL FRAMES OF REFERENCE OR PERSPECTIVES, OR IN TERMS OF GLOBAL INTERCONNECTIONS AND INTERDEPENDENCIES			✓	✓		✓		
WORK COLLABORATIVELY ON A COMMON GOAL		✓			✓	✓	✓	
APPLY HEALTH RELATED FITNESS CONCEPTS TO THEIR LIVES	✓					✓		
COMMUNICATE IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE		✓		✓		✓	✓	

NACE Career Readiness

ROANOKE COLLEGE



Resources

Competency Mapping + Additional Resources

How Does This Course Help You to Get Career Ready?

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) has a set of [career readiness competencies](#) college students should aspire to. Let's [take a look](#) at these competencies and see how we'll work to develop them in POSC 354: Ethics in International Affairs.

Competency	How We Develop That Competency in POSC 354
Teamwork	You'll work in a team to do your semester-long Wicked Festival project. We'll work on some skills to improve your teamwork mojo along the way. You'll evaluate your teammate's contribution, and they'll evaluate you.
Critical thinking	We're going to be doing critical thinking every day in class. We'll think critically about how to solve ethical dilemmas and analyze how others have done so.
Career and self-development	We will consider a career track that builds on ethics: corporate social responsibility. In addition, we'll discuss many international relations issues that have attendant career possibilities: international aid, humanitarian relief/intervention, counter-terror, war and conflict.
Equity and inclusion	You can practice inclusion every time you form a small group for discussion in this class. Consider including someone new, maybe even someone who thinks differently or looks differently from you.
Communication	We'll work on lots of different types of communication: (oral) small-group, full class, Wicked Festival presentation, in-class presentation; (written) you'll also write papers, improving your written communication.
Leadership	You can be a leader in class, helping us to be brave in confronting the thorny ethical dilemmas in this class in a way that lifts everyone in class up. You can show leadership in how you approach your project group. Can you help organize the troops to achieve your goal?
Professionalism	You are asked to dress and behave professionally at the Wicked Festival. It is a major professional development opportunity.

*Example from Paige Tan, Political Science faculty member at Radford University.

[NACE Competency Curriculum Mapping](#)

[The Handbook | Curated Resources for Teaching and Assessing Career-Readiness Competencies](#)

[Faculty Toolkit](#)

[College Student Motivations](#)

[Roanoke College Student Employment Evaluations](#)

[What is Career Readiness?](#)

Burning Glass Institute and Strada Institute for the Future of Work (2024). *Talent Disrupted: Underemployment, College Graduates, and the Way Forward*. <https://stradaeducation.org/report/talent-disrupted/>.

References

Gallup and Strada. (2018). *Why Higher Ed? Top reasons US Consumers Choose Their Educational Pathways*.

<https://news.gallup.com/reports/226457/why-higher-ed.aspx?thank-you-report-form=1>.

NACE. (2023). *Job Outlook 2024*. National Association of Colleges and Employers. www.naceweb.org.



Career Readiness Curriculum Mapping

Step 1. Review the NACE Career Readiness Competencies

Review the list of [National Association of Colleges and Employers \(NACE\) Career Readiness Competencies](#) to understand their definitions. Sample behaviors are included that undergraduates are expected to demonstrate after learning each competency.

Career & Self-Development - Proactively develop oneself and one's career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one's organization.

Communication - Clearly and effectively exchange information, ideas, facts, and perspectives with persons inside and outside of an organization.

Critical Thinking - Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.

Equity & Inclusion - Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different local and global cultures. Engage in anti-racist practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism.

Leadership - Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals.

Professionalism - Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits, and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.

Teamwork - Build and maintain collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating diverse viewpoints and shared responsibilities.

Technology - Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.

Step 2. Evaluate Course Sequencing

List below the required courses for your academic department, including the learning outcomes. Use the checklist below to identify which NACE competencies are addressed by the outcomes of each course. Highlight specific words or phrases when needed.

Course:

Requirement Description:

List of Learning Outcomes:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

<i>Career Readiness Competencies</i>	
Career & Self-Development	
Communication	
Critical Thinking	
Equity & Inclusion	
Leadership	
Professionalism	
Teamwork	
Technology	

Course:

Requirement Description:

List of Learning Outcomes:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

<i>Career Readiness Competencies</i>	
Career & Self-Development	
Communication	
Critical Thinking	
Equity & Inclusion	
Leadership	
Professionalism	
Teamwork	

Technology	
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Course:

Requirement Description:

List of Learning Outcomes:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

<i>Career Readiness Competencies</i>	
Career & Self-Development	
Communication	
Critical Thinking	
Equity & Inclusion	
Leadership	
Professionalism	
Teamwork	
Technology	

Step 3. Analyze the total frequency of the NACE Career Competencies in the required Course Sequencing

The chart below is provided to quantify the number of times a NACE Career Competency was evaluated in the previous steps and identify specific courses in which the competency occurred. Use the chart to determine any competency gaps that may exist in the required curriculum as well as which competencies may need to be scaled or balanced for relevant career pathways, job functions, or industries relevant to your degree programs.

Competency	Course Outcome Frequency	Course Title(s)
Career & Self-Development		
Communication		
Critical Thinking		
Equity & Inclusion		
Leadership		

Professionalism		
Teamwork		
Technology		

Other Questions to Consider

- **Authentic Integration:** How can I authentically embed NACE Career Competencies into course materials, assignments, and assessments? How do I ensure that these competencies are not treated as an add-on but are woven seamlessly into the fabric of the course?
- **Interdisciplinary Connections:** How can I leverage the interdisciplinary nature of a liberal arts education to incorporate NACE Career Competencies from multiple disciplinary perspectives? How might these competencies intersect with other areas of study to provide students with a more comprehensive understanding?
- **Student Engagement:** How can I engage students in developing and applying NACE Career Competencies? What strategies can I employ to foster reflection, self-assessment, and goal-setting related to these competencies?
- **Equity and Inclusion:** How can I ensure that the integration of NACE Career Competencies promotes equity and inclusion in my classroom? How do I address potential disparities in access to resources or prior experiences that may impact students' ability to develop these competencies?
- **Experiential Learning Opportunities:** What experiential learning opportunities can I provide to help students develop and practice NACE Career Competencies in real-world contexts? How can I facilitate internships, service-learning projects, or other hands-on experiences that align with course learning outcomes?
- **Assessment and Feedback:** How will I assess students' attainment of NACE Career Competencies? What types of assignments, projects, or assessments will allow students to demonstrate their proficiency in these areas? How can I provide meaningful feedback to support their ongoing development?
- **Faculty Collaboration:** How can I collaborate with colleagues across disciplines to share insights, resources, and best practices for integrating NACE Career Competencies into our respective courses? How might interdisciplinary collaboration enhance students' understanding and application of these competencies?

*Adapted from VCU's Career Service Office.