CFA-222 Creating Your Career: Essential Skills and the Arts
Fall 2026 Course Syllabus

Instructor:
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Office Location: AR-115B

Student Hours for Questions or Connection: Thursdays at 10-10:50 am, Fridays at 11-11:50am OR by appointment, please email me to schedule an appointment.

Course Description:
Assists College of Fine Arts majors in developing professional practices that equip them with the skills and assets to advocate for their authentic artistic selves. Through in-depth self, artistic, and career exploration via classroom learning, online resources, and campus opportunities, students will explore a range of topics, including, but not limited to, the following: artistic identity, advocacy, and community, cultivating professional development skills and materials, building connections, and strengthening professional relationships through networking and mentoring practices.

Learning Outcomes
Students who fully participate will:
1. Develop a clear sense of self as a professional in their respective industry(s).
2. Identify and utilize personal strengths and values to build professional behaviors for college and career.
3. Create a personal brand with a foundation of authenticity as an artist.
4. Articulate how technology, communication, and critical thinking play a role throughout career development.
5. Establish professional documents needed to pursue internships and future careers.

Course Grading and Assignment Introduction:
Instead of a letter grade, you will receive credit (CR) or no-credit (NC) as your final evaluation; 70% is needed to receive credit. Because this class is one where you get what you put into it, a tiered system has been established to help you determine your approach and likelihood of passing. Assignments may be subject to change.

Aspiring Artist – achieves the foundational requirements to pass the class, setting a solid starting point for further growth and learning:
- Attend 10 out of 13 classes
- Attend 2 out of 3 CFA events
- Complete 4 out of 6 brand asset assignments
- Complete 2 out of 3 reflective/assessment assignments

Emerging Artist – demonstrates above-average engagement and effort, actively seeking to maximize learning opportunities and achieve significant progress in the class:

- Attend 11 out of 13 classes
- Attend 3 out of 3 CFA events
- Complete 5 out of 6 brand asset assignments
- Complete 2 out of 3 reflective/assessment assignments

Professional Artist – exhibits exceptional dedication and commitment, fully embracing the class's challenges and opportunities for growth, resulting in comprehensive benefits and personal development:

- Attend 12-13 out of 13 classes
- Attend all 3 CFA events
- Complete all brand asset assignments
- Complete all reflective/assessment assignments

Students who meet the Professional Artist level will receive a certificate at the Student Success Celebration in the spring and recognition within the College of Fine Arts.

Brand Asset Assignments: At the conclusion of this course, you will have documents and assets needed for internships, practicum, and jobs with a cohesive personal brand. The following are encompassed in these asset assignments; biographies, brand management sheet, resumes, cover letter, business card, and website/LinkedIn page. These assignments will be worth 35% of your total grade.

Reflection/Assessment Assignments: While this class is reflective in nature, you will have one reflection, a career research assignment, and an elevator pitch assignment that will fall into this category. These are worth 10% of your overall grade.

CFA Events: As students of the College of Fine Arts, we want to foster a community that supports all these areas and the students within them. You must attend an event in the School of Art, the School of Music, and the Department of Theatre and Dance by the end of the semester. Proof of attendance with a photo at the event will be the submission along with a brief written response in Canvas. A list of events can be found on the University Calendar. Events are worth 15% of total grade.

Attendance is Important:

Class attendance is important, and each session will be full of helpful information and activities. The in-class experience is vital for your success and can ripple throughout your time as a college student and beyond.

Attendance will be completed through aPlus+ Attendance on Canvas. You can download the Canvas app for your smart device. If you cannot connect to aPlus+ Attendance, you must check-in with your instructor at the beginning or end of class; otherwise, you will be counted absent. Attendance is worth 40% of total grade.

Technology Policy:

Technology will be used, when necessary, in the classroom; otherwise, laptops, tablets, and phones should be put away unless the instructor says otherwise, or a student has paperwork from the Office of Disability Services. After 3 tech warnings, you will be counted as absent for the week.

Late Work Policy:
All assignments are due by the set due date and time in Canvas. Students who meet this deadline will be able to receive credit. Assignments submitted after the deadline will receive zero credit unless an agreement has been reached with the instructor. It is subject to the instructor, on case-by-case basis.

AI Usage Policy:
Students are expected to critically engage with course materials and to develop their own ideas and work. While AI tools can assist in the learning process, they should not replace your own thinking, analysis, or creativity. The use of AI must be done ethically and responsibly.
Any work submitted for this course must be your own original work.
All work produced and/or submitted in this course should reflect your own ideas and demonstrate your current knowledge, abilities, and skills. **Therefore, GenAI should not be used to complete any portion of the assignments for this course**. Doing so constitutes a violation of Ball State University's Student Academic Ethics Policy.

Ball State University – Things to Note:

University Statement
We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse.

Freedom of Expression
In this course, we are committed to fostering a learning environment that values intellectual diversity, encourages free expression, and promotes open inquiry. As members of the Ball State Community, we treat each person in the Ball State community with civility, courtesy, compassion, and dignity and respect and learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions. Please review Ball State University's **Statement on Freedom of Expression**, the resources on Ball State's **Freedom of Expression webpage**, and **Ball State's Beneficence Pledge.**

Accessibility and Accommodations
If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact me as soon as possible. You will need to provide me with the documentation provided by Ball State's Disability Services office and set up a meeting to discuss what this looks like for you specific to this course.

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's **Disability Services** office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or **dsd@bsu.edu**.

The Basic Needs Hub

If you are having difficulty affording enough food, do not have a safe and reliable place to sleep, and/or experiencing an emergency or crisis, help is available through the **Basic Needs Hub**. The Basic Needs Hub has information, resources, and provides individualized support to students. To talk with a supportive staff member about your experience, receive one on one assistance, or learn more about resources, you can submit a **Basic Needs Assistance Form**.

The Counseling Center

The Ball State University Counseling Center offers free and confidential services to all students. The Counseling Center is located in Lucina Hall, Room 320. To schedule an appointment, you can contact us at 765-285-1736. Ball State also offers a 24/7 Crisis Line, which can be reached at 765-285-HOPE (4673). The Crisis Line is a mental health resource for those who are struggling with any mental health concerns, including thoughts of self-harm and/or suicide.

Semester Calendar (subject to change):

Focus	Week-By-Week	Class Topic	Homework
Discovering Your Artistic Identity	Week 1	Course Introduction	*None*
	Week 2	Artistic Identity	Biographies
	Week 3	Career Research	Research Worksheet
	Week 4	Creating Your Brand	Brand Sheet with Artistic Statement
Your Artistry as a Verb	Week 5	Resumes	Industry Resume and Traditional Resume

	Week 6	Resume Swap	Cover Letter & Updated Resume
	Week 7	Cover Letters in Action	*None*
	Week 8	Fall Break!	*None*
	Week 9	Swapping Contacts & Online Presence	Business Cards and Begin Website
Collaborating with Other Creatives	Week 10	Networking	Elevator Pitch
	Week 11	Professional Etiquette	*None*
	Week 12	Internships and Professional Memberships	Website Due this Week
	Week 13	Funding Your Art	Funding Reflection
Thriving in Your Artistry	Week 14	Thanksgiving Break!	*None*
	Week 15	GRIT and Resiliency	*None*