

**Engaged Humanities Futures**  
**Spring 2025 · CAS 391A · M 7:00-7:55 · DB 231**  
**Dr. Jen McDaneld · [mcdaneld@up.edu](mailto:mcdaneld@up.edu) · DB 105**  
**Office Hours: M 2:30-4:00, T 2:00-3:30, and by appointment**

## **COURSE OVERVIEW**

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Welcome to the Spring iteration of the PRF course! During the fall semester, we focused on learning how the engaged humanities can help us create meaningful research projects that connect the academic with the public and the communities in which we live. This semester, we'll shift to explore how humanities mindsets and practices can help us think about our own personal and professional futures.

For every college student who's been asked, "What are you going to do with that?" and been annoyed, on the one hand, and also a little unsure in your response, on the other—this course was designed with you in mind. Maybe you have a pretty clear idea of what you want to do after college, but you're not quite sure about the steps you should take to get there. Or maybe you've got no clue what you want to do, and need a push to help you imagine your options. No matter what major you've chosen, it can be difficult to build bridges between what you're studying and your post-graduation path. This course aims to address this disconnect by creating structured opportunities to help you visualize how your college experience prepares you for a wide array of professional paths and fulfilling personal lives. And it turns out, just as the engaged humanities help us connect our research to the public, they also provide excellent tools for thinking about our future—whether it's big-picture reflection on what you want out of a career (and a life), or pragmatic methods for close-reading job listings and tailoring application materials, the practices and skills and ways of thinking of the humanities can guide you in making crucial connections between your time in college and your life after graduation. By trying out a series of humanities-inspired resources, tools, and activities alongside a supportive cohort, the course is designed to help you carve out time and space to develop useful, concrete outcomes as well as habits of thinking that you can take with you after the year is over.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

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By participating in this course, students should expect to:

- cultivate understandings of how humanities mindsets and skills contribute to your professional development
- learn about potential professional pathways through research and alumni interviews
- develop knowledge of your own interests and strengths and explore how to translate those into concrete materials for future professional and/or educational opportunities
- create connections between your PRF research experience and your future goals, developing frameworks for demonstrating its value in multiple contexts

You will work toward these objectives through:

- commitment to coming to class each week
- participation in class discussion, small group work, and reflection
- a series of assignments and activities

## REQUIRED TEXTS

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- All readings and resources will be available as PDFs or links on our course Moodle site

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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This workshop is pass/fail; to pass the course, you need to:

- attend and actively participate in at least 9 of our 12 class sessions
- complete the following:
  - Weekly readings (which will be kept light!) and activities like writing your own success story, interviewing a UP alum, and completing career exploration exercises
  - Attendance at one career center event (either the Career Fair, or a workshop, or a one-on-one meeting to review your resume or other materials) and brief reflection on your experience
  - Begin your own “futures” portfolio (may include items like a tailored cv/resume, cover letter, RATE entries and/or an interview pitch)
  - Respond to a short set of final reflective questions; the questions will serve to help you reflect on what we’ve done and how it relates to your next steps in your own professional development and will also help us consider how to revise and continue building the course for future cohorts

## COURSE STRUCTURE AND LOGISTICS

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Classroom Environment: Because of the nature of professional development, classroom engagement in this course is particularly important. Not only will actively engaging during our sessions benefit you as you think about your own professional future, it’s vital to your cohort as well—this stuff can be lonely! Rather than work on it in a vacuum, it’s far more productive to work on it together. The course will be most successful when we all bring ideas, energy, and preparation to our meetings.

Tech Etiquette: To make the most out of our time together, please keep our classroom a multi-tasking free zone. This means keeping phones out of sight/on silent and keeping laptops closed unless actively using them to refer to an online activity or resource. And last: be sure to check your UP email daily for class updates.

Office Hours and Communication: I will hold office hours on Mondays from 2:30-4:00pm and Tuesdays from 2:00-3:30pm. If you’d like to meet outside of those hours, just send me an email to schedule an appointment and we’ll figure out a time.

## CLASS SCHEDULE

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- Readings/activities are due the day they are listed; note that because of the experimental nature of the workshop, we might make changes to the activities/schedule as the cohort sees fit.
- All readings/activities are available on the Moodle course page.

**1/13: Segue from Fall Fundamentals: The Engaged Humanities and Your Personal/Professional Development**

**1/20: MLK DAY—NO CLASS**

**1/27: Liberal Arts Futures: Two Perspectives**

Read: William Deresiewicz, [“What Are You Going to Do With That?”](#) and Lynn Pasquerella, [“Yes, Employers Do Value Liberal Arts Degrees.”](#)

**2/3: New Narratives of Success**

Read: [“Applying Humanities Mindsets to Your Career Development”](#)

Listen: Browse through the episode descriptions of the podcast [What Are You Going to Do with That?](#) and choose two episodes that especially interest you to listen to in full. Take a few notes on these episodes and your reactions to share with the class.

**2/10: Creating Your Own Success Story**

Browse/read: Arizona State’s [Humanities Success Stories site](#), reading at least 8 of them in full (they’re short).

Do: After reading some examples, create your own tile by imagining yourself 10 years past graduation. What could your success story look like?

**2/17: Analyzing Your Interests and Experience**

Browse: the [“What Can I Do With This Major?” resource](#): select your major and browse through the options

Read and Do: Read Derek Attig, [“Avoiding an All or Nothing Approach to Your Career”](#) and complete the sticky note activity he outlines in the article. Take notes on your thoughts as you complete the process.

**2/24: Exploring UP Alumni Data**

Browse: the [Alumni Tab on the UP LinkedIn page](#) that allows you to see where UP alumni work as well as the [Pilots Guiding Pilots LinkedIn page](#) and the official [UP Alumni LinkedIn page](#). (You’ll need to create a LinkedIn account if you don’t have one already.)

Do: From your LinkedIn research, choose one alum to interview; reach out to them to set up a time in the next two weeks. Create a list of questions you’d like to ask them and bring to class for workshopping.

**3/3: Spring Break—No Class**

**3/10: Shifting from Others' Experience to Your Own: Debriefing Interviews, Developing Portfolios**

Do: Interview your chosen alumni and record your takeaways using the guide on Moodle.

Do: In preparation for class this week, familiarize yourself with the [RATE tool](#) by browsing the site as well as the "[Core Competencies](#)" (from the University of Minnesota) that it's based on; during class we'll learn how to use it and complete 1-2 entries.

**3/17: Exploring Professional Opportunities**

Read: "[Using Job Ads for Career Exploration](#)" and "Humanities Skills for the Job Search: Close Reading for Analyzing Job Descriptions" (PDF on Moodle)

Do: [Create a Handshake profile](#) if you don't have one. Using that site (or another one you find useful), find a job, internship, or educational opportunity that interests you. Bring the listing to class, along with 4 print copies of your resume (no need to do anything special with it in advance).

**3/24: The Art of Tailoring Materials to Opportunities**

Read: "Your Persuasion Ready Pitch" Part 1: How Rhetoric Can Help You Craft Your Appeal to Employers" and Part 2: Applying Your Understanding (PDFs on Moodle)

Do: Draft a cover letter for the opportunity you identified, using specific details from the listing, your RATE entries, and/or your sticky note exercise to build out the piece. Bring two hard copies to class.

**3/31: Pitching Your Experience**

Browse: Review the [University of Vermont's list of sample Interview questions](#).

Optional: Want to delve deeper into the ins and outs of interviewing? Review the [Career Education Center's resource here](#).

Do: Select two sample questions from UVM's list and use your RATE activities to develop verbal responses (less than 2 min.) that pitch your PRF experience and how it prepares you for your selected job/internship/educational opportunity.

**4/7: UP Alumni Panel**

Do: prepare at least 2 questions for our alumni panelists with an eye toward your own unique perspective and interests.

**4/14: Clean Up Day: What Haven't We Covered that You'd like to Work on?**

**4/21: Identifying Next Steps, Reviewing the Semester for Future Cohorts**

Do: Reflective assessment.

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND RESOURCES

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**University of Portland’s Code of Academic Integrity:** The University of Portland is a diverse academic community of learners and scholars who are dedicated to freely sharing ideas and engaging in respectful discussion of those ideas to discover truth. Such pursuits require each person, whether student or faculty, to present truthfully our own ideas and give credit to others for the ideas that they generate. Thus, cheating on exams, copying another student’s assignment, including homework, or using the work of others without proper citation are some examples of violating academic integrity.

Especially for written and oral assignments, students have an ethical responsibility to properly cite the authors of any books, articles, or other sources that they use. Students should expect to submit assignments to Turnitin, a database that ensures assignments are original work of the student submitting. Each discipline has guidelines for how to give appropriate credit, and instructors will communicate the specific guidelines for their discipline. The Clark Library also maintains a webpage that provides citation guidelines at <https://libguides.up.edu/cite>.

The misuse of AI to shortcut course learning outcomes will be treated as a violation of academic integrity comparable to plagiarism or cheating. Faculty are responsible for including a written “Course AI Policy” in their syllabi that clearly states what they consider appropriate and inappropriate uses of AI in the context of their courses. Students are responsible for using AI in ways that do not detract from the established learning outcomes of the course. All members of the scholarly community are responsible for demonstrating sound judgment in discerning when and how to utilize AI in their work, upholding standards of citation, originality, and integrity.

**Assessment Disclosure Statement:** Student work products for this course may be used by the University for educational quality assurance purposes. For reasons of confidentiality, such examples will not include student names.

**Accessibility:** The University of Portland strives to make its courses and services fully accessible to all students. Students are encouraged to discuss with their instructors what might be most helpful in enabling them to meet the learning goals of the course. Students who experience a disability are encouraged to use the services of the Office for Accessible Education Services (AES), located in the Shepard Academic Resource Center (503-943-8985). **If you have an AES Accommodation Plan**, you should meet with your instructor to discuss how to implement your plan in this class. Requests for alternate location for exams and/or extended exam time should, where possible, be made two weeks in advance of an exam, and must be made at least one week in advance of an exam. Also, if applicable, you should meet with your instructor to discuss emergency medical information or how best to ensure your safe evacuation from the building in case of fire or other emergency. All information that students provide regarding disability or accommodation is confidential. All students are responsible for completing the required coursework and are held to the same evaluation standards specified in the course syllabus.

**Mental Health:** Anyone can experience problems with their mental health that interfere with academic experiences and negatively impact daily life. If you or someone you know experiences mental health challenges at UP, please contact the University of Portland Counseling Center (<https://www.up.edu/counseling/>) in the upper level of Orrico Hall (down the hill from Franz Hall and near Mehling Hall) at 503-943-7134 or [hcc@up.edu](mailto:hcc@up.edu). Their services are free and confidential. In addition, mental health consultation and support is available through the Pilot Helpline by calling 503-

943-7134 and pressing 3. The University of Portland Campus Safety Department (503-943-4444) also has personnel trained to respond sensitively to mental health emergencies at all hours. Remember that getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do – for yourself, for those you care about, and for those who care about you. For more information on health and wellness resources at UP go to [www.linktr.ee/wellnessUP](http://www.linktr.ee/wellnessUP).

**Non-Violence:** The University of Portland is committed to fostering a safe and respectful community free from all forms of violence. Violence of any kind, and in particular acts of power-based personal violence, are inconsistent with our mission. Together, all UP community members must take a stand against violence. Learn more about what interpersonal violence looks like, campus and community resources, UP's prevention strategy, and what we as individuals can do to assist on the [Green Dot website](http://www.up.edu/greendot), [www.up.edu/greendot](http://www.up.edu/greendot). Further information and reporting options may be found on the [Title IX website](http://www.up.edu/titleix), [www.up.edu/titleix](http://www.up.edu/titleix).

**Ethics of Information:** The University of Portland is a community dedicated to the investigation and discovery of processes for thinking ethically and encouraging the development of ethical reasoning in the formation of the whole person. Using information ethically, as an element in open and honest scholarly endeavors, involves moral reasoning to determine the right way to access, create, distribute, and employ information, including: considerations of intellectual property rights, fair use, information bias, censorship, and privacy. More information can be found in the Clark Library's guide to the [Ethical Use of Information](http://libguides.up.edu/ethicaluse) at [libguides.up.edu/ethicaluse](http://libguides.up.edu/ethicaluse).

**The Learning Commons:** Students can get academic assistance through Learning Commons tutoring services and workshops. The Co-Pilot peer tutoring program provides students with opportunities to work with other students to get help in writing, math, group projects, and other courses. Schedule an appointment to meet with a Co-Pilot (tutor) by visiting the [Learning Commons website](http://www.up.edu/learningcommons) ([www.up.edu/learningcommons](http://www.up.edu/learningcommons)). Students can also meet with a Co-Pilot during drop-in hours. Check the Learning Commons website or drop by the Learning Commons in BC 163 to learn more about their services. Find a tutor at the Learning Commons to get support on your academic journey.