The Letters & Science Career Initiative

With the College of Letters & Science Career Initiative, we aspire to change lives. We are committed to helping our students effectively, purposefully use their time at UW-Madison, articulate their academic skills to potential employers, develop networks that lead to internships and job opportunities, and build connections between passionate, supportive Badger alumni and our students.

*We aspire to help every one of our 16,000 L&S students—not just the extra-motivated or well-connected few—chart his or her path to success.*

This initiative is particularly critical for first-generation college students and those hailing from small town Wisconsin and from historically underrepresented groups. By improving student career outcomes, we will enhance the overall quality of a UW-Madison education and extend the university’s reach far beyond our campus — we seek to create a new career services model for public research universities nationwide.

**OUR GOALS**

There is no playbook for the L&S Career Initiative. We are designing and implementing the initiative programs from scratch.

Key pieces include:

- **Launch** an innovative second-year course. The career course, currently being offered for the first time, teaches students how to assess skills, identify professional goals and aspirations, and master the basics of resume-writing, interviewing, networking and more.

- **Connect** our students to our vast, resourceful, and engaged body of alumni. By leveraging the power of Badger-to-Badger networking and using technology, we can open doors for our students.

- **Deepen** the Wisconsin Experience by launching the new L&S Career Kickstart residential program. This program gives 600 students in Ogg Hall an edge by creating early skill-building opportunities to help students strategically identify career and life experiences we know employers want.

- **Transform** the college’s career services office by improving the quality and accessibility of career advising, increasing opportunities for students to connect directly with employers and building stronger partnerships with employers across the country.

- **Be Accountable** using new measures and evaluation tools to track student progress and assess the L&S Career Initiative’s success.
ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

1. L&S surveyed 8,500 alumni (one-year and eight-ten years out of college) and can now demonstrate that liberal arts graduates have a 90% job and graduate school placement rate, and most feel their education has given them a competitive advantage over their peers in the workplace.

2. “Taking Initiative,” the new L&S Second Year Career Course, launched in spring 2015 and has now positively impacted over 600 students. Alumni mentors and career advisors participate in the course to provide guidance and support.

3. “Career Kickstart,” a one-of-a-kind, immersive career preparation residence hall launched in fall 2015 with 600 students in Ogg Hall. Residents participate in skill-building workshops, learn the basics of job and internship preparation, and network with employers and alumni.

4. The “Badger-to-Badger: Steps that Matter” video series featured national news correspondents, leading Washington, D.C. attorneys, NASA leaders, and entrepreneurs (among others) sharing how their UW liberal arts degree helped them rise to the top of their fields.

5. American Family Insurance, Covance, Qualtrics, and Epic joined the L&S Career Initiative as early corporate partners, and many Wisconsin companies are eager to join them.

6. L&S received two $300,000 Great Lakes Higher Education Corporation grants, to enable students from low-income backgrounds to participate in unpaid internships.

7. Alumni serving on +14 L&S Boards of Visitors are energized and many are working with faculty and staff to develop new internship and career connections for students.

8. 80% of L&S departments have added a new career resource for students, including online advising materials, LinkedIn pages, alumni mentoring events, among others.

THE PATH FORWARD

1. Create and implement a new, integrated career services model for the College of Letters & Science.

2. Launch “Badger Bridge,” an online program to promote and foster alumni-student engagement around career preparation.

3. Develop a comprehensive internship program for L&S students.

We cannot leave our students’ futures to chance.

We must forge a new commitment to guidance and mentoring that acknowledges our responsibility not only as educators, but as stewards of our most precious resource: our students.

For more information:
Rebekah Pryor Paré, Executive Director
L&S Career Initiative
Rebekah.Pare@wisc.edu • 608.262.2778
http://go.wisc.edu/lsci