**Fall 2021 – MEJO 490.1 (544.1): Career Exploration and Preparation**Tuesday & Thursday – 9:30am - 10:45am

**Instructor:** Livis James Freeman, Jr  
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**Phone:** 919.389.3486  
**Office:** 226 **Office Hours:** Via Zoom by appointment only  
**Classroom:** Carroll 143  
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***Syllabus Changes***  
*As your professor, I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus, including project due dates and test dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible.* **COURSE OVERVIEW**  
Along with many other courses across UNC, this course is participating in an important initiative by the Institute of African American Research called [Student Learning to Advance Truth and Equity](http://iaar-slate.unc.edu/). IAAR-SLATE seeks to increase undergraduates’ understanding of race, racism and racial equity. All courses in the program include three required readings and three required activities that explore these topics. By enrolling in this course, you are committing to joining in all of the assigned elements of the program, some of which are in-class and some of which take place outside of our class time. We will discuss some material together in our class, but we will also have opportunities to meet and learn from people whose work or lives help us understand race, racism and racial equity better. In some of the activities, you will also be able to dialogue with students in other courses who are also participating in the same required activities.      
  
This course is for ***seniors only*** and by the time you’re eligible to take it, you should have already taken most of your required major courses, experienced internships and possibly studied abroad. This course is focused on providing detailed information about all communications careers; discovering which careers best suit you; making sure that your brand matches your career choice; and minimalizing the stress from the job search process by helping you maximize mentor relationships, become more effective networkers, and understand all available resources. ***An additional core component of this course will be learning to think more critically about the role that race, diversity, inclusion and racial equity have in the workplace and becoming advocates and leaders.***

This semester, you will:

(1) do a self-evaluation to help determine your skills, strengths, qualifications, motivations, passions and ***thoughts/feelings about race, racism and racial equity***  
(2) learn and understand how the chaos theory and butterfly effect will heavily influence your career choices  
(3) learn from grads turned professionals and industry leaders  
(4) become master networkers through executing informational interviews and better understand your job hunt competition   
(5) understand the importance of having mentors and career advocates  
(6) be introduced to career resources to assist your job search; learn ways to cope with job search stress  
(7) understand how your brand relates to your career focus; ***how to incorporate your race/culture/diversity into your brand***(8) mold your portfolios/resumes/cover letters/LinkedIn profile to accurately represent your education, experiences and achievements  
(9) learn and execute advanced interviewing techniques   
(10) understand corporate etiquette, the importance of race, diversity and racial equity in the workplace and how to effectively navigate all office environments (***including addressing racism related issues/complaints, etc. that may arise with internships and jobs)***  
  
This is an advanced and exciting process and I look forward to guiding you through it!  
  
**Required Course Materials, etc**.  
You must download the free e-book: “You Majored in What? Designing your path from college to career” – by Katherine Brookes, ED.D (<https://epdf.tips/you-majored-in-what-mapping-your-path-from-chaos-to-career.html>)

## **IAAR\_SLATE Readings: Reading #1 –** (To be completed before September 7th) - Demby, Gene, Shereen Marisol Meraji, and Angela Saini (2019) Is 'Race Science' Making A Comeback? An episode of the podcast Code Switch, 10 July 2019.  Listen here: <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2019/07/10/416496218/is-race-science-making-a-comeback> (there is also an optional written overview on the website)

**Reading #2 –** (To be completed before event with Michelle Lanier in October - TBD) - Rothman, Adam, curator (2017) Glimpses of Slavery at Georgetown College, an online exhibit: <https://www.library.georgetown.edu/exhibition/glimpses-slavery-georgetown-college>  
(read the summaries as well as the text of the original archival documents)  
Question: would people be interested in a session with an archivist/manuscript expert from our campus to offer tips on reading these kinds of texts?

**Reading # 3 – (**To beCompleted before third event, presenter and date TBD (in November).  
George, Janel (2021) A Lesson on Critical Race Theory. In Human Rights Magazine 46(2) <https://www.americanbar.org/groups/crsj/publications/human_rights_magazine_home/civil-rights-reimagining-policing/a-lesson-on-critical-race-theory/>  
TIP: a useful bit of background analysis can be found here: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/fixgov/2021/07/02/why-are-states-banning-critical-race-theory/>  
  
Other reading materials will be assigned throughout the semester.  
 **Sakai/Email:**

Other than this syllabus, important information can be found on Sakai and will also be emailed to you. ***Updates will be frequent, so check the announcements section of Sakai often and your email for important course information.*** You are responsible for any course changes that may be made on Sakai or via email, including changes to the syllabus or assignments. Your grades are posted in Sakai only so that you can stay updated on your progress; overall grades on Sakai are rough approximations of your overall grade in the course.

**COURSE POLICIES**

**ATTENDANCE:**Attendance for classes is **essential**. Just as professionals in the real-world go to work each day, you as students in our professional school are expected to come to class on time and be prepared to work.  **University Policy:** No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences:

1. Authorized University activities
2. Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by [Accessibility Resources and Service](https://ars.unc.edu/) and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](https://eoc.unc.edu/what-we-do/accommodations/) (EOC)
3. Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the [Office of the Dean of Students](https://odos.unc.edu/), [Gender Violence Service Coordinators,](https://womenscenter.unc.edu/resources/gender-violence-services/) and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](https://eoc.unc.edu/what-we-do/accommodations/) (EOC).

**Class Policy**:   
I will take attendance for every class. *It is your responsibility to communicate with me in a timely manner (within 24 hours) if you are experiencing issues that fall outside of university guidelines that might cause you to miss a class.* **Unexcused absences****will result in your final grade being lowered.** The more classes you miss, the lower your grade will be. If you must miss class, excused or unexcused, it is also your responsibility to meet with your classmates and gather the information on what you missed. Missed in-class assessments and activities cannot be made up unless you were absent due to a University Approved Absence.

**The “Quality Control” Policy**You are media practitioners, and as such I expect that you will write and present yourself with great professionalism because that is what you have been trained and educated to do. Therefore, your course assignments and presentations will be scrutinized for their vernacular and presentation. **Assignment submissions must be grammatically correct and free from spelling errors.**

**Assignments and Grades Policies**

**Submission Requirements:** *Every assignment you submit to me MUST be typed, double-spaced and submitted as a* ***Word Doc.*** Acceptable citation styles for this course are APA or MLA – if at any point in your work you use information from other sources, you must cite it both in the text and with a properly formatted reference list. Not following these specific instructions will result in a loss of points on the assignment.

**Tests and in-class assignments:** Unless you have a legitimate, documented excuse, there will be no make-ups for in-class assignments or tests and no extra time given if arriving to class late. A make-up assignment or test must be done within the week following the original date and it is your responsibility to set up an appointment with me.   
 **Grade Questions/Challenges:** ​If you have concerns about a grade, please inform me via email. I ask that you wait 24 hours after receiving your grade. Please outline your concerns and provide evidence to support your claim. You have two weeks to challenge a grade after it has been posted on Sakai (this does not apply to grades posted during finals). NOTE: I do not discuss grades over email. So, after you contact me about a grade I will set-up a time to meet with me so we can discuss the grade. I do this to protect your grade information.   
  
**Graduate Students**  
Graduate students enrolled in this course will be held to a higher standard and required to complete at least one additional assignment. **Each graduate student must set up a meeting with me to discuss the assignment.** Grading for graduate students will be done according to the HPLF grading scale (High Pass, Pass, Low Pass, Fail).

**Extra Credit Policy:** It’s unlikely you will receive any extra credit opportunities in this course. In the rare and unlikely event that they occur, they will be class-wide, so please don’t ask for individual extra credit assignments.

**HONOR CODE:**  
I expect that each student will conduct himself or herself within the guidelines of the University honor system ([http://honor.unc.edu](https://outlook.unc.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=_PwXhu5wkEKfdEIVTpil9KJAr6RORM8IBwmgW7JyZPUuO4or7Dri_9D4gXEkBO0Z0IIreRKEjIQ.&URL=http%3a%2f%2fhonor.unc.edu)). All academic work should be done with the high levels of honesty and integrity that this University demands. You are expected to produce your own work in this class. If you have any questions about your responsibility or your instructor’s responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code, please see the course instructor or Senior Associate Dean C. A. Tuggle, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.     
  
**ARS**  
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability or pregnancy complications resulting in barriers to fully accessing University courses, programs and activities.

Accommodations are determined through the Office of Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. See the ARS Website for contact information: [https://ars.unc.edu](https://ars.unc.edu/) or email [ars@unc.edu](mailto:ars@unc.edu).

**Counseling and Psychological Services**CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Go to their website: <https://caps.unc.edu/> or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building for a walk-in evaluation to learn more. 

***TITLE IX***  
Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Reports can be made online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>. Please contact the University’s Title IX Coordinator (Elizabeth Hall, interim – [titleixcoordinator@unc.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@unc.edu)), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office ([reportandresponse@unc.edu](mailto:reportandresponse@unc.edu)), Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators ([gvsc@unc.edu](mailto:gvsc@unc.edu); confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at [safe.unc.edu](https://safe.unc.edu/).

**POLICY ON NON-DISCRIMINATION**The University is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and to ensuring that educational and employment decisions are based on individuals’ abilities and qualifications. Consistent with this principle and applicable laws, the University’s [Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination](https://unc.policystat.com/policy/4467906/latest/) offers access to its educational programs and activities as well as employment terms and conditions without respect to race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, genetic information, disability, veteran’s status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.  Such a policy ensures that only relevant factors are considered and that equitable and consistent standards of conduct and performance are applied.

If you are experiencing harassment or discrimination, you can seek assistance and file a report through the Report and Response Coordinators (see contact info at  [safe.unc.edu](https://safe.unc.edu/)) or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](http://eoc.unc.edu/), or online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>.

**DIVERSITY STATEMENT**   
I strive to make this classroom an inclusive space for all students.  Please let me know if there is anything I can do to improve; I appreciate any suggestions.  More broadly, our school has adopted diversity and inclusion [mission and vision statements](http://hussman.unc.edu/diversity-and-inclusion) with accompanying goals. These complement the University policy on [prohibiting harassment and discrimination](https://eoc.unc.edu/our-policies/ppdhrm/). In summary, UNC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran’s status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. The Dean of Students (Suite 1106, Student Academic Services Building, CB# 5100, 450 Ridge Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-5100 or [919] 966-4042) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the University’s nondiscrimination policies.

**MASK USE**   
All enrolled students are required to wear a mask covering your mouth and nose at all times in our classroom. This requirement is to protect our educational community -- your classmates and me – as we learn together. If you choose not to wear a mask, or wear it improperly, I will ask you to leave immediately, and I will submit a report to the [Office of Student Conduct](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UNCChapelHill&layout_id=23).  At that point you will be disenrolled from this course for the protection of our educational community. Students who have an authorized accommodation from Accessibility Resources and Service have an exception.  For additional information, see <https://carolinatogether.unc.edu/university-guidelines-for-facemasks/>.

**ACCREDITATION**  
The Hussman School of Journalism and Media’s accrediting body outlines a number of values you should be aware of and competencies you should be able to demonstrate by the time you graduate from our program. Learn more about them here: <http://hussman.unc.edu/accreditation>. No single course could possibly give you all of these values and competencies; but collectively, our classes are designed to build your abilities in each of these areas.  
**ASSIGNMENTS (grading rubrics will be provided)**

**Class Participation – (15% of total grade)**We will have numerous guest speakers throughout the semester. Speakers will include MJ-School alums, hiring managers, industry experts and leaders presenting on topics such as ***understanding the importance of race, racial equity, and inclusion in the workplace;*** corporate etiquette, freelance work, working for an agency vs working in-house, entrepreneurship, brand awareness, public speaking, human resources, etc. You will be required to submit **three takeaways** from each speaker – these will be **due before the following class**. These must be written in paragraph form and submitted via Sakai. Late submissions will be counted off by 50%. Submissions later than 48 hours will **NOT** be counted.

Your participation grade will be based on your takeaways, how active of a participant you’ve been with guest speakers (by asking questions and making comments), and participation in in-class exercises. You may also have other assignments included as part of your participation grade as the semester goes on.

*Note: If you miss a class that had a guest speaker, you must reach out and send me a recent article related to a career that you’re interested with a paragraph summarizing 3 takeaways from it. It is up to you to do this before the next class if you still want credit.*

**Your First Personal Branding Statements and Headshots – (Part of “Participation” grade)**The one question (and first question) that you can count on being asked in an interview is “tell me a little bit about yourself.” This will be your first step in learning how to ace your answer!

You must get someone to record your answer to the question “tell me a little bit about yourself.” There is no time limit and no guidelines/instructions other then that these must be 1-take recordings, meaning that you only get one shot and can’t re-record (since you will only get one chance to answer it in an interview). If you mess up, just keep talking through it and DO NOT start over. Don't worry, these will not be graded for content or structure - I just want to see what you're starting off with and let you see how far you will have grown by the time you make your final polished statement at the end of the semester. *Upload your video to YouTube and submit the link here.* You must also have the same person to take a photo of you **FROM THE SHOULDERS UP** and submit them here along with your personal branding statements.

**“The beginning of the end” – (15% of total grade)**  
This will be a written piece (3-4 pages) chronicling your starting point in this career prep process. It must address the following: your career goals and life aspirations; what you’ve learned in your majors and minors to this point and your confidence in conveying how you’ll apply them to future employers both on paper and in person; ***what race, diversity and inclusion means to you/what makes you different;*** your career research/job search details to this point; a mini personal SWOT analysis as it relates to your career qualifications (strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats – write about a paragraph for each or make a bulleted list); and mention 1-2 mentors (could be professors/employers/family members) who’ve had the biggest impact (and why) and how you anticipate them helping you get started with your career, etc. Last, but not least, talk about your current level of stress related to your job search/career plans and explain why.  
 **Networking Assignment – (20% of total grade)**  
This will be a 2-part assignment that you’ll work on weekly throughout the duration of the course:  
  
**Part 1:** You must create a networking spreadsheet and list 20 companies you’re interested in working at/with or learning more about (why you’re interested in them; write a basic description of the company, year they were founded, services they provide and types of clients they serve/names of some clients you know; ***their stance on race, racism, racial equity, diversity and inclusion – how they demonstrate it; list*** their locations; number of employees; links to their website and social media address; names/LinkedIn profile addresses of employees you know who have or used to work there; names/LinkedIn profile addresses of current or Tar Heel grads who work there). Then, you must list 20 people you’re interested in networking with whom you feel can be beneficial to helping with your future career (tell why you’re interested in networking with them; how you found out about them; why you think they can help you; what they do/where they work; how long they’ve worked there; college(s) they attended; link to their LinkedIn profile; and how you plan to network with them). You should first focus on former/current Tar Heels.

**Part 2:** You must conduct 5 informational Interviews (two must be with J-School graduates, two must be with professionals working in your desired career industry and one must be with a UNC professor). These must be done via the phone or Zoom/Facetime (whichever you prefer and is most convenient for you and your interviewee). These interviews should be conversational, but try to obtain the following:

• Specific career advice/instructions to increase your field knowledge  
• Tips to help you prepare for your transition from school to the career  
• Details about their career paths and insights about their current jobs  
• Three people they recommend you networking with (and why)  
• One place to visit (and why). This could be an office of a company you’d like to work for or somewhere to experience the types of services or clients that you want to work with  
• Two books or magazine/online articles (and why)  
• Two to three websites to peruse (and why).

Provide detailed summaries (at least 1 page each) for each interview. Must provide an introduction that tells why you choose each interviewee, how you anticipate them helping you, how the interviews were conducted (on the phone, Zoom/Facetime, etc,), how long they lasted, and a conclusion that tells if/how they actually end up helping you.   
 **Midterm Exam – (20% of total grade)**  
This midterm exam will be a test of everything learned from the book, lectures and guest speakers to that point.

**Your Final Portfolio/Interview – (30% of total grade)**  
*Your Portfolio*  
This will function as your final exam and be the ultimate test of what you’ve learned throughout the course. Your portfolio will include your polished resume and cover letter (both tailored for a specific company/position), updated LinkedIn profile and professional headshot. *These materials will be due the week prior to your Interviews (I will review them and refer to them during your interviews).  
  
Your Interview*  
Each student will meet with me for a final formal interview - I will represent the company in which you tailored your resume/cover letter for. You’ll start by making your new and improved personal branding statement. Then, you’ll answer a question based on your final portfolio materials. Then, you’ll answer one of a possible five interview questions (the five questions will be provided in advance but the one you must answer will be randomly selected during our interview). Finally, you must answer a follow-up interview question which I will select based off your earlier responses. Even though these will be done   
via Zoom, I still expect you to be **dressed to impress** (as these will be recorded)!  **TOTAL SEMESTER GRADING BREAKDOWN**  
Class Participation – **15%**  
Beginning of the End Paper – **15%**  
Networking Assignment – **20%**  
Midterm – **20%**Your Final Portfolio and Interview – **30%  
Total = 100%**

Grading guidelines Dec be found here: <https://registrar.unc.edu/academic-services/grades/explanation-of-grading-system/>.

Grades are **EARNED**, not given, and **“A” grades are reserved for truly exceptional performances.** Grades follow a typical pattern: A = 94-100, A- = 90-93, B+ = 87-89, B = 84-86, B- = 80-83, C+ = 77-79, C = 73-76, C- = 70-72, D+ = 67-69, D = 63-66 and F = below 63.  
 **COURSE SCHEDULE** (*This tentative schedule is subject to change)*\*Please see [UNC academic calendar](https://registrar.unc.edu/academic-calendar/) for the Fall 2020 schedule.   
\*\* Subject to change due to COVID-19 **August**  
19 - Class intro; ***read Chapters 1&2***  
  
24 - Lecture on Self-assessment and Chapter 1; ***First Personal Branding Statement Videos and Headshots Due***26 - Mastering the Art of Networking; Conducting informational interviews (Intro to Networking Assignment); ***read Chapters 3 and 4***    
  
31 - **Hussman Career Services Session:** Advanced Job Search Tips and Techniques; ***read 1st IAAR-SLATE reading***  
**September  
2 –** Lecture on Chapters 2-4***; read Chapters 8-9; Beginning of the End Papers (15%) Due***  
  
7 **- Guest speaker: Gary Kayye on Personal Branding**; ***first IAAR-SLATE reading should be completed***  
9 – Lecture on Chapters 8 - Irresistible Resumes  
  
14 – Lecture on Chapter 9 - Killer Cover Letters; Additional tips/guidelines for resumes, cover letters and LinkedIn**;**  
16 – **Out-of-class Project**

21 – **Guest speaker: TBD**  
23 – **In-class Cover Letter and Resume Workshop; *Read Chapters 5 and 6***   
  
28 – **Cover letter/resume workshop recap and Interview Prep**30 – **Guest speaker: Dorothy Howard’s Interview Prep Workshop**   
  
October  
5 – Lecture on Chapters 5 & 6; ***read 2nd IAAR-SLATE reading***   
7 – **Guest Speaker: TBD**  
  
**12 -** **NO CLASS (University Day)**  
14 – Preparing for Personal Branding Statements/Interview Questions/Final Portfolios

19 – **Guest Speaker:** **TBD**; will receive midterm review guide**21 – FALL BREAK – NO CLASS**  
  
26 - Midterm Exam Review   
**28 –** **Midterm Exam (20%)**   
  
November  
**2 – Mental health awareness workshop: self-care through the job search process; *read 3rd IAAR-SLATE reading*   
4 – Guest Speaker: TBD**  
**9 – Preparing for final interviews**; **Final Portfolio Materials Due (Resume/Cover Letter/LinkedIn)   
11 – Final Interviews  
  
16 – Final Interviews  
18 – Final Interviews**   
 **23 – Final Interviews25 –** **NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING BREAK)**30 – **LDOC**:Lecture on Corporate etiquette; Ways to improve your skills – exploring graduate programs, internships and fellowships/certificates/digital training programs and videos; **Networking assignment due (20%)**  
  
**FINAL EXAM SESSION – Course review: *8:00am on Tuesday, Dec 7th***

Final exam times are based on the University final exam schedule. Exams are scheduled according to the day and start time of the first meeting of the course each week and held in the regularly assigned meeting room unless the instructor is otherwise notified.

If you are unable to hold your final at the assigned time, contact [Dr. Tuggle](mailto:catuggle@unc.edu) to check rescheduling options.