

NOTE to STUDENTS: If you need any accommodations related to attending/enrolling in this course, please contact one of the Graduate School's 504 Coordinators, Cheryl Spitzenberger or Natalie Sirisaengtaksin. We ask that you notify GSBS in advance (preferably at least 3 days before the start of the semester) so we can make appropriate arrangements.

Term and Year: Summer 2026 Course Number and Course Title: GS21 1191: Effective Career Planning Credit Hours: 1 Meeting Location: In-Person Building/Room#: BSRB S3.8351 Gallick Classroom	Program Required Course: No Approval Code: No (If yes, the Course Director or the Course Designee will provide the approval code.) Audit Permitted: No Classes Begin: May 20 Classes End: July 15 Final Exam Week: No exam
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Class Meeting Schedule

Day	Time
Wednesday	3:30 -5:00pm

Course Director

Name and Degree: **Raquel Salinas, PhD**

Title: **Asst. Dean, Career and Alumni Engagement**

Department: **GSBS**

Institution: **UTH MDACC**

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Contact Number: **713.500.9860**

NOTE: Office hours are available by request. Please email me to arrange a time to meet.

Course description:

This interactive, discussion-based course teaches career planning through the lens of personal and professional leadership. Students will explore leadership concepts and apply them to clarify their strengths, values, and career interests. Through self-assessments, discussions, informational interviewing, and skill-building activities, students will develop the insight and confidence to navigate their career. The course culminates in a Leadership Development Plan presentation, where each student outlines their career vision, goals, and next steps. The course alternates between careers in academia and the life sciences industry, while maintaining a consistent emphasis on self-awareness and strategic career development. This course is open to all GSBS students and is especially recommended for post-candidacy PhD students and final-year MS students preparing for their next career step.

Course Objective/s:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will....

1. Develop self-awareness around their strengths, values, transferable skills, and leadership style 2. Identify and evaluate career paths aligned with their interests and strengths 3. Conduct effective informational interviews and build professional relationships 4. Create targeted application materials including CVs/resumes and cover letters 5. Develop and present a Career Leadership Plan	
Student responsibilities and expectations: Students enrolled in this course will be expected to perform the following activities each week. 1. Attend and contribute to course discussions during each session 2. Complete pre-work for each session (short assignments and reflection questions) 3. Conduct 2 informational interviews with life science professionals 4. Present a Leadership Development Plan	
Grading System: Pass/Fail	
Student Assessment and Grading Criteria : <i>(May include the following:)</i>	
Percentage	Description
Homework and assignments (30 %)	Informational interview reflections
Final Exam (30 %)	Leadership Development Plan
Participation and/or Attendance (40%)	Class participation

CLASS SCHEDULE

Course Schedule:

Special Topic for Summer 2026: Leading Your Transition into Industry

Week	Date	Lecture Topic
1	May 20	Course Introduction: Leadership and Career Planning Overview of course framework. Introduction to leadership concepts and their application to building a career in industry. <u><i>Class prework</i></u> 1. <i>Reflect and be prepared to discuss:</i> • <i>Why are you considering a career in industry?</i> • <i>What feels unclear or stressful about career planning?</i>
2	May 27	Leading Your Career Transition Identify transferable skills and begin translating academic experience into professional impact. Career Guest: TBD Guest Conversation: <i>An industry professional shares their transition story, key inflection points, and lessons learned navigating the move from academia to industry.</i> <u><i>Class prework</i></u> 1. <i>Write down and be prepared to discuss:</i> • <i>3–5 skills you’ve developed during your training</i> • <i>2 examples of projects or accomplishments you’re proud of</i> 2. Bring 2 questions for the career guest
3	June 3	Exploring Career Paths and Defining Your Target

		Review career options, analyze job descriptions, identify target roles, and begin a skills gap analysis. Career Guest: TBD Guest Conversation: A cross-functional industry professional discusses how teams collaborate, how decisions are made, and how different roles contribute to organizational goals. <u>Class prework</u> - Find and bring 2 job postings that interest you. Be ready to discuss: - What appeals to you - What you don't understand - What skills seem required - Bring 2 questions for the career guest
4	June 10	Strategic Networking and the Hidden Job Market Learn effective networking strategies, practice outreach, and observe an informational interview. Career Guest: TBD Guest Conversation: An industry professional discusses how networking shaped their career trajectory. <u>Class prework</u> - Identify 2–3 people you could potentially reach out to (LinkedIn, alumni, etc.) - Draft one outreach message (rough is fine) - Bring 2 questions for the career guest
5	June 17	Positioning Yourself for Industry Develop targeted resumes and practice communicating your value clearly. <u>Class prework</u> Bring your current CV OR a draft resume (if you have one)
6	June 24	No Class
7	July 1	Interviewing and Negotiating Offers Practice behavioral interviewing and discuss evaluating and negotiating offers. Career Guest: TBD Guest Conversation: An industry professional shares insights on what distinguishes strong candidates, common mistakes PhD applicants make, and how to demonstrate readiness for industry environments. <u>Class prework</u> - Draft responses to: "Tell me about yourself" "Tell me about a time you navigated a conflict" - Bring 2 questions for the career guest <u>Course Assignment Due</u> Informational Interview #1 Reflection

8	July 8	No Class <i>Course Assignment Due</i> <i>Informational Interview #2 Reflection</i>
9	July 15	Industry Career Leadership Showcase & Course Wrap Up Students present their career strategy, including goals, narrative, skills development, and action plan. <i>Course Assignment Due</i> <i>Leadership Development Plan Presentation</i>