It’s Not Science Fiction
It’s Artificial Intelligence

Making a Mark in Esports

Nonprofit Management WITH A Magic Touch

Exploring the World OF Data Science

Winter quarter begins January 3
VENTURE CAPITAL DISRUPTS THE CONTINUING EDUCATION MARKET.

WHAT DOES THAT MEAN FOR UCI?

Venture capitalists are investing billions of dollars into the Continuing Education (CE) market, of about $90 billion in 2020. This capital infusion has radically disrupted the competitive landscape for university-based CE creating profound threats and huge potentials for CE programs offered by universities. The Division of Continuing Education (DCE) and the Division of Career Pathways (DCP) are both quickly adapting to this dramatic change in the CE marketplace.

Much of this new capital is flowing to non-university players who seek to capture efficiencies by using new technologies and pedagogical techniques to achieve economies of scale that are currently unavailable to universities.

This new landscape has several dynamics that must be recognized by universities. Education must be refocused on relevance to the workplace and competency-based learning, as opposed to the simple certification of learning through grades. Large investments in program development require the use of new, massive distribution channels that are analogous to the “big box store” development in retail markets—channels available to universities only through new partnerships. It is also imperative that universities understand demographic shifts, including the decrease in traditional college-aged students in the developed world and the preferences of younger adults for shorter courses and immediately deployable work-ready skills. It will be necessary to create clear pathways from school to work by extending services to students to help them find, enter, and change careers.

In adjusting to this new reality, universities will have to overcome some barriers imposed by traditional views of their roles. They will have to avoid the common lag in the adoption of new instructional technologies, expand their notions of their service areas and audiences, and as indicated above, broaden their career services.

These modifications will mandate a greater willingness to collaborate with other institutions and even for-profit companies. This will result in the need to identify new distribution channels and find ways to rely less on local, relatively limited marketing efforts. As a contrast to the massive markets addressed by the “big box stores,” universities will have to focus on local relationships, with employers and institutions, to leverage already robust university relationships, particularly regarding local employer needs for the talent universities possess. Universities will also have to turn to the huge international market where CE already has a significant impact.

The DCE and DCP have recently formed some important partnerships to take advantage of the investments being made in the emerging CE marketplace. We are a large partner of Coursera, a leader in the field of free and low-cost education, and in several other major distribution channels. The combination of the DCE and DCP assures that UCI is taking advantage of the school to work pathways that are opening to us—UCI leads the nation in career services innovations.

We face some huge challenges, but the future is bright for us as we seek to take advantage of the possibilities and avoid the threats of the new marketplace.

Sincerely,

Gary W. Matkin, Ph.D.
Dean, Continuing Education
Vice Provost, Career Pathways
Winter 2022

Making a Mark in Esports
Nonprofit Management with a Magic Touch
Alumni Spotlight: Dr. Aiman Altaqi, It’s Not Science Fiction—It’s Artificial Intelligence
Exploring the World of Data Science

12 In the Words of a Graduate: Karen Stivers, E-Learning Instructional Design
14 Putting the Person First in Financial Planning
18 Building a Full Stack Career
20 The Ultimate Internship Experience
30 Five Ways to Counter Implicit Bias
34 A One-Stop Center for Success
39-51 Certificate Programs
52 CareerZOT Talk: Creativity Matters

HOW TO enroll

Online: ce.uci.edu

Phone: (949) 824-5414 (Press #1)

Fax: (949) 824-2090 Download enrollment form at ce.uci.edu/enrollmentform

Mail:
UCI Division of Continuing Education
Student Services Office
510 E Peltason Dr., Irvine, CA 92697
Please allow 7-10 days for your enrollment to be processed.

WINTER 2022
COURSES BEGIN: JANUARY 3

SPRING 2022
REGISTRATION OPENS: JANUARY 20
COURSES BEGIN: MARCH 28
Esports Management certificate program puts professionals from all backgrounds at the controls of a new career.

Elite players battle it out with skill and precision, moving and shooting in furious competition while millions of viewers follow the action. But the action isn’t on a field, it’s taking place virtually on HD screens — popular videogames like League of Legends, Fortnite and Overwatch played by some of the most skilled gamers in the world.

Esports has evolved from a hobby into a worldwide billion-dollar industry. Pro leagues have thrived. Major events draw audiences rivaling some of the biggest sporting events in the world. Major universities, including UCI, field teams and offer scholarships for top international talent.

Competitive gaming is far from just a trendy phase — it has become a significant factor in pop culture, said Jimmy Baratta, an esports consulting professional and program instructor.

“Esports is just a small subsection of the videogame industry at large, and gaming is larger than music and cinema combined,” he added. “Esports, however, is that niche audience and community interested in the competitive element. What I can say is, to paraphrase my friend and mentor Clinton Sparks, the same way hip-hop has been the nexus of popular culture for the past 10 or so years, gaming and esports will certainly serve that function for the foreseeable future.”

Consider that the industry was projected to surpass $1 billion in 2021, according to a report by Newzoo Global Market Research, with global esports viewership reaching 577.2 million by 2024, surpassing the half-a-billion mark by 2022.

Although still a nascent industry, esports has evolved to create a wealth of career opportunities, attracting business professionals from a range of fields, as well as serious gamers. Baratta is from both worlds, a former litigation attorney as well as a lifelong gamer who has built a hugely successful career with a hand in many aspects of the industry.

“Esports is just a small subsection of the videogame industry at large, and gaming is larger than music and cinema combined.”

— Jimmy Baratta, Esports Management instructor

He went on to become a successful attorney and work with his father Jim Baratta, a legendary Orange County trial lawyer. But after seven years, his passion for gaming led him on a new career path.

“Working with my father and mentor is something I’d never take back,” Baratta said. “It was a hard career to leave, but I had to follow my passion. I first looked for local companies that had open legal positions. Then I broadened my search.
to business development in any gaming or esports company, which was the best career decision I ever made."

After exploring various paths, Baratta founded FT Empire, an esports consulting company that soon gained traction, allowing him to work with multiple companies and amass a wide variety of experience.

Baratta has worked with Forbes-listed organizations and advised Grammy-winning talent on live in-game events. Most recently, he added Chief Gaming Officer of Holodeck Media to his workload, along with being an investor and advisor for XSET and board member for the nonprofit North American Collegiate League. The list goes on.

Inspired to share his expertise and mentor a new generation of esports professionals, Baratta joined the program that he once briefly enrolled in, only to have his business take off unexpectedly before he could start his first class.

"I understood the value that the UCI name commanded, and the respect its esports program had already garnered for itself," he said. "The course that I teach, Overview of Esports, prepares the newcomer and the existing business professional alike with the knowledge and tools to transition into the gaming industry. It lays the foundation, identifies networking opportunities and other resources and outlets to achieve success."

**Getting a thumb in the door**

The fully online program provides a solid background in various aspects of the industry from the standpoint of developers, athletes, fans, sponsors, and media. Students learn all the essential components in building and managing esports events, as well as how to apply project management skills and tools to plan and manage events. The program consists of four courses and can be completed in as little as six months.

Certificate program graduates will have access to DCE Career Services, a one-stop center that offers a wealth of tech resources for job seekers. Students can have their resumes reviewed and rated 24/7 with AI-powered VMock, practice job interview skills with Big Interview, and search highly targeted job and internship openings through Handshake. Students also can schedule one-on-one advising sessions to address specific issues and goals.

"Right now, there are so many types of career opportunities, it’s difficult to count," Baratta said. "As everyone seems to be succeeding in gaming, the rising tide certainly raises all ships. A few years ago, it was all about engineers, but today if someone is talented with editing, content creation, community management, business development or marketing, there is probably a role for you in esports."

In other words, you don’t have to be a dedicated gamer to succeed in the esports industry — but it can certainly be a plus.

"If you’re a true gamer and passionate about the space, that will shine through and set you apart from those that just see this as a hot opportunity. To somewhat paraphrase the great John Wooden, follow your passion, be yourself, and do what you love."

● Learn more [ce.uci.edu/esports](ce.uci.edu/esports)
Upcoming Free Events:

- **A Framework for Workplace Learning Analytics**
  Monday, November 1
  11am-12pm (PDT)

- **Getting Your Price Right for Growth: Pricing Models for IECs**
  Thursday, November 4
  11am-12pm (PDT)

- **Let’s Learn: Behind the Magic of Excel**
  Thursday, November 4
  12-1pm (PDT)

- **Challenges and Opportunities for Better Preparedness with Floodplain Management**
  Friday, November 5
  12-1pm (PDT)

- **Spa & Wellness Careers: Building Lasting Relationships in the Post-Pandemic Era**
  Tuesday, November 9
  11am-12pm (PDT)

- **TEFL Workshop: Activities for Teaching Pronunciation**
  Friday, November 12
  4-5pm (PDT)

- **ESL Lesson: Improve Your Pronunciation Through Shadowing**
  Tuesday, November 16
  4-5pm (PDT)

- **Let’s Learn: Nourishing the Entrepreneurial Spirit**
  Wednesday, December 1
  12-1pm (PDT)

- **Paralegal Career and Program Information Session**
  Thursday, December 9
  6:30-7:30pm (PDT)

- **TEFL Workshop: Activities for Teaching Reading**
  Friday, December 10
  4-5pm (PDT)

- **ESL Lesson: Review of Articles**
  Tuesday, December 14
  4-5pm (PDT)

*View all events at [ce.uci.edu/events](ce.uci.edu/events)*
UCI Division of Continuing Education partners with a number of universities to provide you a “next step” on your educational pathway. We have articulation agreements with the universities listed. These schools accept coursework from select UCI Division of Continuing Education certificate programs as credit toward specific degree programs.

Learn more at [ce.uci.edu/transfer](http://ce.uci.edu/transfer)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certificate</th>
<th>University and Degree Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Trials: Medical Device and Drug Development</td>
<td>Northeastern University, Master of Science in Regulatory Affairs for Drugs, Biologics, and Medical Devices OR Master of Science in Project Management Rutgers School of Health Professions, Master of Science in Clinical Research Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contract Management</td>
<td>Concord Law School at Purdue University Global, Executive Juris Doctor (EJD) Excelsior College, Master of Business Administration, Master of Science in Management</td>
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<td>Data Science</td>
<td>Excelsior College, Master of Science in Cybersecurity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Digital Marketing and Communications</td>
<td>Excelsior College, Master of Business Administration, Master of Science in Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>E-Learning Instructional Design</td>
<td>Excelsior College, Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts, Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Arts University of San Diego, Master of Science in Learning Design and Technology Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Embedded Systems Engineering</td>
<td>University of Wisconsin-Platteville, Master of Science in Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esports Management</td>
<td>Excelsior College, Bachelor of Science in Business, Bachelor of Professional Studies in Business and Management, Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lean Six Sigma</td>
<td>Excelsior College, Master of Business Administration, Master of Science in Human Resource Management, Master of Science in Organizational Leadership, Master of Science in Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medical Device Development</td>
<td>Northeastern University, Master of Science in Regulatory Affairs for Drugs, Biologics, and Medical Devices OR Master of Science in Project Management Rutgers School of Health Professions, Master of Science in Clinical Research Management University of Wisconsin-Platteville, Master of Science in Engineering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organizational Leadership and Communication</td>
<td>University of Wisconsin-Platteville, Master of Science in Organizational Change Leadership</td>
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<td>Paralegal</td>
<td>Concord Law School at Purdue University Global, Executive Juris Doctor (EJD) Excelsior College, Master of Science in Criminal Justice</td>
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<td>Personal Financial Planning</td>
<td>Cal Lutheran-California Institute of Finance, Master in Business Administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Management</td>
<td>Excelsior College, Master of Business Administration, Master of Science in Management, Master of Science in Human Resource Management, Master of Science in Organizational Leadership University of Wisconsin-Platteville, Master of Science in Project Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Systems Engineering</td>
<td>Drexel University, Master of Science in Systems Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supply Chain Management</td>
<td>University of Wisconsin-Platteville, Master of Science in Integrated Supply Chain Management</td>
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For John Guastaferro, becoming a dynamic leader in the nonprofit sector was a combination of marketing, relationship building, a passion for philanthropy — and a touch of magic. A highly successful magician who has toured the world and performed at the world-famous Magic Castle, he feels a strong connection between his stage craft and two decades of experience supporting community causes.

"It’s my life mission to connect people to the extraordinary," said Guastaferro, an award-winning brand strategist, nonprofit leader, and advisory committee member for the Nonprofit Management Specialized Studies program. "Whether through philanthropy or magic, I bring this mission to life in many ways. For example, when I inspire a donor to make a difference in a family’s life, it’s an incredibly magical moment. Likewise, when I perform magic, it also brings joy and wonder into people’s lives."

Guastaferro developed an interest in magic when he was seven, a hobby that ended up as a serious avocation. He has performed in 12 countries and is a regular headliner at the Magic Castle in Hollywood, considered the pinnacle of the craft. He has written 10 books on magic as well. Over time, he added art, music, leadership, and philanthropy to his repertoire.

"We all have multiple interests, which might make us feel pulled in different directions at times. I was no different," he said. "Then one day it just hit me, an ‘Aha!’ moment. I realized that all of my interests were leading me in the same direction. I became crystal clear on my purpose to create joy and wonder for people, making what seems impossible become possible, whether performing on stage or connecting donors to life-changing causes."

Guastaferro received his bachelor’s degree in marketing management from Cal Poly Pomona in 1992, launching a career in marketing and communications. Five years later he took a position at Anaheim Family YMCA, a move that sparked his passion for philanthropy and nonprofits.

Today, John serves as executive director of the Anaheim Community Foundation, a nonprofit organization that connects donors to scores of charitable community causes. In 2020, the ACF received $4 million from the City of Anaheim to provide a philanthropic response during the pandemic. The ACF launched a Response and Recovery grant program in partnership with 76 nonprofits to help residents in need for food and basic necessities, as well as virtual learning and counseling services. This is one of the many ways the ACF serves as a hub of philanthropic response during the pandemic. The ACF launched a Response and Recovery grant program in partnership with 76 nonprofits to help residents in need for food and basic necessities, as well as virtual learning and counseling services. This is one of the many ways the ACF serves as a hub of philanthropy and collaboration in Anaheim.

“We can’t do this work alone. It takes a cadre of purpose-driven donors, partners, and board members. This inspires me every day.”

A true Renaissance man, Guastaferro is also a world-class Spanish guitarist with several albums streaming online. All of this informs his philanthropic vision, a life mission that comes together with creativity, leadership and a fierce passion for helping others.
Three pillars of success
When Guastaferro became VP of Marketing and Development at Anaheim Family YMCA, it was a life-changing moment, the beginning of a journey that brought his talents in marketing and philanthropy together with his creative vision, eventually leading him to become a Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE).

Along the way he began serving on several Orange County philanthropic boards, giving keynote speeches and hosting leadership forums, spreading his gospel of Purposeful Leadership.

Guastaferro structures his philosophy around a Leadership Triad that he feels is key to success in any endeavor.

“My Leadership Triad consists of Team, Brand and Cause,” he said. “Bringing them all together is a magical process that enhances success on any level, whether you are a nonprofit, for-profit business, coalition, or an individual leader. It can be highly effective in anything you do in life.”

Your Team is the power of how you connect to the world around you — those you surround yourself with to uplift and elevate mutual success. Think of your Brand as the promise you make through all you say and do.” And your Cause is the reason you exist; the problem you are uniquely qualified to solve through your skills and values.

When these align together as one, it sparks a synergistic effect that amplifies and compliments each facet. The best part is that it doesn’t take massive strategies to get there, but rather small, intentional shifts in action or perspective. Just a single degree can be hugely consequential. Guastaferro outlines this approach in his book “One Degree.”

“Achieving the extraordinary is closer than we think — just one degree away,” he said. “Even a small shift in approach or perspective, what I call a micro-shift, can have extraordinary impact, whether it’s life, work or magic. It’s an approach that helps leaders uncover pivotal one-degree micro-shifts to connect to Team, Brand and Cause. When these areas are in alignment, it adds wonder to all you do.”

A career and a cause
The Nonprofit Management Specialized Studies gives students all the tools they need to succeed working with mission-focused and values-based organizations large and small, with a focus on strategic financial management and fundraising practices.

Designed for current nonprofit staff members or anyone inspired to jump into the nonprofit space, the CFRE-approved curriculum provides a thorough understanding of all internal and external factors involved, along with the marketing, communications and strategic planning necessary for this specialized profession.

“It’s an excellent program, and I’m so happy to be part of it,” Guastaferro said. "It especially offers a great opportunity for students to make connections and discover ways to truly make a difference. I am seeing both young people and seasoned professionals exploring careers in the nonprofit sector for that very reason.”

Regardless of one’s background, just about any skillset can be applied to nonprofit work, whether it’s in marketing, communications, graphic design, finance, you name it. “Anyone can be a philanthropist, regardless of your career, income or status,” he said.

A bit of magic isn’t required — but it sure can’t hurt.

ce.uci.edu/nonprofit

“ It’s my life mission to connect people to the extraordinary.”

— John Guastaferro, Nonprofit Management advisory committee member

— ce.uci.edu
Become a Paralegal in 3 Months.

A Paralegal Certificate can open doors to a rewarding career.

Full-time Compressed Schedule
January 3 – March 24

- Part-time evening schedule is also available
- Program career services

“The instructors were so passionate about the subject matter and made it come to life. I left class every day feeling like they really cared and had my back.”

—NIKKI SILANANDA
GRADUATE, PARALEGAL
COMPRESSED SCHEDULE PROGRAM

Make a Difference Today!
ce.uci.edu/legal
By enrolling in **Concurrent Enrollment**, you can take advantage of a full catalog of UCI undergraduate and graduate courses without formal admission to the university, based on available space and permission of the course instructor and/or department. Courses carry university credit, may count toward a degree, and are taught by distinguished UCI faculty. Registration in Concurrent Enrollment does not constitute admission to UCI.

**Concurrent Enrollment is ideal for you if you are:**
- returning to school
- completing degree requirements from another college or university
- a high school student wanting to get a head start on college
- considering applying for admission to UCI
- preparing for graduate or professional school
- a lifelong learner

**When are Concurrent Enrollment classes offered?**
Concurrent Enrollment is offered during the fall, winter, and spring academic quarters.

**How many classes can I take?**
You may enroll in a maximum of 2 courses not to exceed 8 units per quarter. Students intending to transfer course credit to another college or university should first verify acceptance of the course at that institution.

**How do I obtain a UCI catalogue or schedule of classes?**
Course descriptions are listed in the UCI General Catalogue, online at catalogue.uci.edu. The schedule of classes can be viewed online at websoc.reg.uci.edu.

[ce.uci.edu/concurrent](ce.uci.edu/concurrent)
Technology, specifically artificial intelligence (AI), is transforming how humans and machines work together. And in the evolution of global healthcare, the potential for AI is vast. Just like in our everyday lives, AI is increasingly becoming a part of our healthcare eco-system. And indeed, AI is certainly poised to become a transformational force to improve patient outcomes.

Dr. Aiman Altaqi, Healthcare Analytics program graduate, is a board-certified pediatrician and current fellow at Rainbow Babies and the Children’s Hospital of Case Western Reserve University. His interests include global health, healthcare quality, safety, and IT.

He was born and raised in Syria and relocated to the U.S. to pursue his medical training. He completed his pediatric residency at the Cleveland Clinic Children’s Hospital and now provides very specialized pediatric emergency care for critically ill and injured children.

According to Altaqi, “Medicine is advancing daily, and AI is the next big thing that will create the future developments needed for the expansion of pediatric care. Although it will take time, AI will significantly impact clinical medicine, education, quality, safety, and research on a global scale.”

**The role continuing education plays to support physicians**

Altaqi understands that an additional investment in higher education is needed to supplement his learning so that he can determine how the application of AI will be intertwined into patient care.

Although AI is starting to be implemented in medical administration, supply chain, pharmaceuticals, radiology, and pathology, the real challenge facing physicians is bedside medicine and how patients will accept this as a part of a forward-thinking and emerging medical approach. Even as those barriers do, and will exist, AI has the potential to enhance efficiency, reduce cost, and improve quality and safety for patients.

"In order for me to board the train towards the future of the medical industry, I need to learn the truth from the hype. I need to be better trained to understand the efficacy of AI and how to make its implementation as effective, safe, and ethical as possible."
Altaqi sought advice from his peers to identify the most meaningful and effective continuing education program to meet his needs and demands. He was searching for a program that would give him a panoramic view of the immense field of health data analytics so that he could choose how to specialize.

"Based on my evaluation of several different health data analytics programs from around the country, I was able to identify the subjects that I wanted to learn. As I was reviewing the curriculum from numerous healthcare analytics programs, I found that UCI had the most comprehensive program and included the critical coursework that I needed to develop and master my skills."

The upside of a fully online certificate program

Many students might perceive that an online program format may not provide the same learning and networking opportunities as that of a face-to-face program. The fact is that online courses are just as robust and still result in meaningful connections with peers—and based on Altaqi’s experience, he agrees.

"The online curriculum was all-inclusive and provided me with a considerable number of information-rich articles, videos, and resources to support the lectures. As a novice in my field, this teaching approach helped me grasp each concept with relative ease."

World-class education leads to world-class medical care

Altaqi felt he didn’t have a foundational background in the IT/data analytics field and was concerned about the gap in comparison to his classmates who may have degrees or even work in the field already. However, he found that the curriculum, and the instructors who delivered it, were supportive, responsive, and helped set a common ground to build upon, regardless of each student’s viewpoint and experience.

"This certificate is a critical stepping-stone in my plan to deep dive into health AI and how to apply it into quality and safety in pediatric healthcare. Considering the infancy of AI in healthcare, I may need to take a step back and learn about AI in other industries and delve more into its technicalities."

—Dr. Aiman Altaqi, Healthcare Analytics program graduate

ce.uci.edu/healthcareanalytics
Why did you choose the E-Learning Instructional Design certificate?
To make a long story short, I was transitioning careers after a big relocation. I knew that I didn't want to go back into teaching full-time, but I wanted to use my teaching skills in some capacity. Two of my colleagues had gone through the program and...recommended that I do the same. I ultimately settled on this program because of the length of the terms, the relative cost, the course topics, and the opportunities to do hands-on work with authoring tools.

What did you enjoy most about your experience in the program?
What I enjoyed most was feeling that I was learning directly through the content but also indirectly through the modeling. The instructors were good models of how to facilitate interactive asynchronous teaching. In addition, the assignments could be tailored to my interests, expertise, work, etc. I never felt like I was doing something just for school. My projects were able to serve a dual purpose, whether it be for work, my future portfolio, etc.

What was your favorite course in the program, and why?
It's hard to say, as each course had its own merits. I really enjoyed the Principles of E-Learning Instructional Design course because Dr. Don [Shannon] consistently curated examples of really great e-learning modules week after week. They set the stage for what to strive for. I also enjoyed Introduction to Designing and Developing Interactive E-Learning Courses because it presented some very innovative ways to leverage the online environment. The practicum also stood out to me because of the helpful shortcuts in designing the look and feel of a project.

What impact did earning your E-Learning Instructional Design certificate have on your career?
While going through the program, I worked at a community college in a position just intended to pay the bills. One day, the college posted a few job openings, including one for an instructional designer and one for a manager of instructional design projects. With the applications, I had to create an instructional video. Had I not gone through the program, I wouldn't have known how to do that in a way that made my video stand out. And that's exactly what happened. My application and video stood out, and I was invited to interview. I was surprised by how many opportunities I had to reference the concepts I learned in the program. Then I got the call-back. I wasn't being offered the instructional design job. I was being offered the “manager of instructional design projects” job. I am now two months into my new position, and I feel that this is exactly where I envisioned myself being when I first started out on my instructional design journey.

Learn More!  ce.uci.edu/eid
Post-Baccalaureate Premedical Program

Two-year program designed for people who are interested in applying to health profession programs and are in need of science prerequisites and guidance. This program is particularly suited to people who are career-changers and non-science undergraduates. It gives students the necessary academic preparation and competitive advantage that can help them get accepted into medical school or other desired allied health program.

Post-Baccalaureate Program in Psychological Science

Designed for anyone with a bachelor’s degree (in any discipline) with an interest in pursuing a graduate degree and/or career advancement in psychology. This certificate program provides the opportunity to acquire foundational knowledge, research experience, and/or internship experience needed to make your graduate school application more competitive.

POST-BACCALAUREATE PROGRAMS

Learn about admission requirements, curriculum, and application deadlines at ce.uci.edu/postbacc
The CFP® exam, as well as the program curriculum, are updated to reflect a new focus on empathy and communication.

To become a successful Personal Financial Planner, you need a solid academic background and a deep understanding of investments and retirement strategies. Those are the basics. Candidates must also pass a rigorous exam if they want to gain certification. But perhaps the most important quality is empathy — a desire to help others achieve their goals.

“I think effective communication, the ability to empathize, and a desire to continually improve are highly important traits,” said Avi Pai, instructor for DCE’s Personal Financial Planning certificate program. “When I say effective communication, I’m referring to both listening and speaking. In my experience, clients are not interested in being sold; they are more interested in being heard, educated, and assured they’re able to achieve their goals.”

The need to address these soft skills was recently recognized by the Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards, Inc. (CFP Board), which has added “The Psychology of Financial Planning” as a topic in their certification exam beginning in March. It’s an essential topic that has been incorporated into the DCE’s updated program curriculum, as well.

During his time as a planner, Pai has seen an increased emphasis on these qualities, starting when industry regulations became more focused on transparency between planner and client, taking steps that ensure the clients’ needs are understood and articulated to them, Pai said. The new focus on psychology is the latest step toward a more empathetic industry.

“The fiduciary standard and Regulation Best Interest (BI) have forced more transparency into recommendations and require people to be able to articulate why clients should invest the way they do far more than what the clients should invest in,” Pai said. “I think these changes make it easier for people that have a true desire to help people.”

Every five years the CFP Board reviews its Principal Knowledge Topics to ensure that certification requirements are continually updated to reflect current best practices. This latest update is a result of regular nationwide surveys to get a sense of what topics PFPs feel are in need of greater attention.

Getting personal

The Personal Financial Planning program provides a strong foundation in all the hard and soft skills needed to succeed in this rewarding field. Intended for a range of students, from recent college grads to financial professionals looking to switch careers, the program fulfills all the requirements to qualify for taking the CFP® exam and gaining certification — the industry’s gold standard for excellence.

Courses cover all the principles of financial analysis, with a deep dive into retirement and tax planning, investment strategies and more. Students also receive a $100 discount on Dalton Education’s CFP® exam review course.

A career as a planner can be both financially and personally rewarding, with a median salary of $88,000 up to $217,000 for highly experienced PFPs. The career is booming and much in demand, with more than 200,000 job openings with projected growth of over 11% through 2029 (Emsi Burning Glass – economicmodeling.com).

Although a wide-ranging academic background is essential, Pai believes that it’s extremely helpful when PFPs can draw from their own life experiences, like buying a home or caring for aging parents. It helps planners relate to clients’ needs and can inform important aspects of their overall strategy.

“I think students who have a lot of life experience can make excellent financial planners, as they’ve been through major financial events themselves,” he said. “Experience with buying or selling a home, marriage, birth of children, loss of friends or loved ones, career changes and moving. These help planners understand what clients are dealing with.”
Pai pointed to some of his own life events that made him a more empathetic financial planner, like the time he and his wife bought a home before realizing it wasn’t a good fit after all. They soon cut their losses and moved to a place they loved.

“This made me realize things clients should consider if they’re going to buy a home. It even made me realize why some people prefer to rent where they live.”

Making the case for caring
An important part of building trust with clients is understanding their personal values, making sure they’re comfortable with the investments and financial strategies the planner is advocating, explaining everything in terms that their clients can relate to. Once trust and a personal bond are established, clients are far less likely to have “knee-jerk” reactions in times of roiling, uncertain financial markets.

To help establish that trust, the best PFPs take a keen personal interest in their clients’ lives, going beyond the basics of risk tolerance, tax sensitivity and time horizons, getting a sense of their overall life experience and situation, Pai said.

“I ask about their children, since they may have plans to fund their college education, and I am increasingly seeing adult children being dependent on their parents. I also ask about clients’ parents’ financial and health situations. I often find that the clients may be the most successful out of their siblings, and if their parents have not saved enough for retirement or future healthcare, we need to plan so they don’t have to sacrifice their own retirement due to supporting their parents.”

When Pai first got into financial planning he had a different attitude. He felt it was most important to show off his education and deep knowledge of the industry, offering Modern Portfolio Theory statistics and dissecting different complex estate-planning strategies. Over time, he developed a different perspective — putting himself in his clients’ shoes.

“My friends who are physicians have talked about how they need to work on their bedside manner with patients to be more effective. And I think it’s very similar for financial planners,” he said. “At first, I thought it was most important to show off how much I knew. Then I came to appreciate the maxim, ‘People don’t care about how much you know until they know you care.’

"I think students who have a lot of life experience make excellent financial planners, as they’ve been through major financial events themselves.”
— Avi Pai, Personal Financial Planning instructor
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(2020)

4.2%
PROJECTED GROWTH
(2020-2029)

$59k
MEDIAN SALARY
(HIGHLY EXPERIENCED WORKERS CAN EARN UP TO $120K)

(Source: Emsi Burning Glass – economicmodeling.com)
From healthcare to finance, more companies are hiring versatile full-stack developers to build web apps from the ground up.

So, you’re looking to flex your tech-savvy skills and launch a career in software programming but can’t decide which role would be the best fit. Maybe you have a flair for front-end design but want a solid background in back-end coding. Maybe building back-end frameworks is more your thing but you’d also like more creative input over the entire product.

Why not do it all and become a full-stack web developer, a highly coveted career that’s sort of a jack of all trades? A growing number of companies are streamlining operations and saving valuable time and money by adding versatile, expert full-stack engineers to take on multiple stages of software and web development, freeing specialized teams to focus their resources elsewhere.

“Full-stack web developers are primarily front-end engineers, but they also understand and can work on the full-stack, building Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) and databases,” said Lucas Krause, instructor for the UCI Full Stack Web Development certificate program. “They are especially valuable to organizations because they are simply more versatile, saving time to develop and fix issues, and also keep teams highly utilized on other issues.”

Full-stack pros make it easier for organizations to move resources around as needed, from team to team, enhancing team performance and making for a faster time-to-market, Krause added.

Before full-stack developers, companies would rely on separate teams to build APIs and User Interfaces (UIs), slowing down development and straining resources, but a single full-stack expert addresses all these needs, adding considerable value to an organization. And when software defects are found, full-stack engineers can investigate the front-end and back-end, getting straight to the root cause without involving other teams.

No surprise that full-stack developers are in great demand in a wide range of fields. There were more than 153,000 job openings for web developers in the latest annual figures from Emsi Burning Glass labor market data, with 14% growth projected through 2029. Median salary ranges from $77,000 to $146,000 for highly experienced professionals.

“There is a severe shortage of programmers and especially full-stack engineers,” Krause said. “It’s simply a unique skill set. If you can build working software and have the ability to do root-cause analysis, there are jobs out there for you. It is the curiosity and value-added through full-stack skills that is in highest demand.”

In our current economic climate, technology hiring has grown exponentially in virtually every field, "but some of the most popular and highest-paying industries are financial, health, and high-tech," he added.

“Everyone needs engineers, and in my 20 years’ experience it has always been recession-proof. The beauty of technology is that it is everywhere, usually everyone has some area of passion or expertise, and you can find a job in technology supporting that industry or projects.”

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Building a Full Stack Career
Stacking skills and success

The Full Stack Web Development certificate program provides a strong background in the technical and creative skills needed to expertly program, code, develop and design websites and apps from the ground up, beginning with a foundation in basic web development — learning front-end languages and then a deep dive into sophisticated back-end coding frameworks.

The program can be a perfect entry point to a new career for a wide range of candidates, including career changers, recent grads and tech-savvy hobbyists, as well as marketing professionals and other business pros who want to learn this versatile skillset. Along the way, students get the opportunity to build a solid web development portfolio.

“This is a well-designed program sets students up for success with skills currently most in need in the industry,” said Krause, a successful technology executive. “All of the classes add a unique element needed for a successful career in full-stack development.”

Krause’s course, Advanced React, dives into essential programming concepts with an array of web-building applications, showcasing student skills using the latest React web framework. Students get hands-on experience building web and mobile applications, learning advanced server-side framework skills to integrate with APIs.

Besides learning frameworks such as React and knowing how to program and understand different languages such as Java, JavaScript and SQL, full-stack developers also learn the skills needed to diagnose software problems and find their root causes, Krause said.

“Building software is highly complex and it is really a miniature example of empiricism or the scientific method. The process is to usually break things down into small steps, or experiments, then implement the easiest solution to that problem, until it is fixed or implemented, then continue until you have a finished program.”

Web design skills aren’t essential to be a successful full-stack developer, but they’re definitely “value-added skills,” along with some background in User Experience (UX), Krause said.

“Web developers mostly focus on the implementation of a design rather than building it, similar to an architect designing a house and a contractor building it. Sometimes people can do both, but it is becoming less common as the skillsets become larger and more specialized.”

In other words, a full-stack web developer doesn’t really need a background in design but can rather take designs from tools such as Figma or Adobe XD and apply these styles to web applications. Technical proficiency aside, perhaps the most essential skill sets are simply curiosity and a drive for continuous, lifelong learning, Krause added.

“The biggest value is learning how to keep learning and understanding, so that when things change next year or the year after, you will have a solid foundation to understand what changed, why it changed, and how to stay current. Technologies are changing constantly, so the ability to learn how frameworks work and why they change is essential to programming and problem-solving.”

● Learn more: ce.uci.edu/webdev
The Ultimate Internship Experience

A DCE program allows international students to find their best internship opportunities in the U.S.

For international students seeking to live and work in the U.S., an internship is the perfect complement to a strong academic background. It’s an opportunity to put their education to work in the real world and acclimate to American business culture. But developing the necessary skills to land a position, from writing a solid resume to acing a job interview, can be a challenge without proper guidance.

Learning to take these soft skills to the next level can be an invaluable capstone for a study abroad experience and the key to opening doors to a coveted internship, said Amy Bue, manager for DCE’s Internship Experience program.

“We know that doing an internship makes students much more likely to gain meaningful employment after their education, and ultimately we aim to support that process,” she said. “The Internship Experience program is really focused on providing our international students in Accelerated Certificate Programs (ACPs) with career development opportunities through an internship here in the U.S.”

Communication skills, especially learning to write well-crafted covers letters and resumes, play a big part in the program. International students are encouraged to look at themselves as a total package, take inventory of all their skills, and not merely focus on full-time job experience and prior internships.

“We do emphasize resumes a great deal in the program, largely because we use it as a building block for a student to think through their skills and experiences,” Bue said. “We encourage students to think about their experiences in ways that they often haven’t before. Part-time jobs or student organization involvement can be incredibly valuable for demonstrating transferable skills. But our students often overlook these.”

Working on interviewing skills and gaining confidence can be key to making a strong impression. And seeing international students grow into these soft skills and land a successful internship is one of the most satisfying parts of her job as Internship Manager.

One introverted student especially stood out to Bue. She was attending UCI as a study abroad experience and added time to her U.S. stay just so she could pursue an internship here. The student was shy and lacked confidence at first, but as she worked on her resume writing and communication skills, she began to shine.

“We could see her confidence begin to build,” Bue said. “She was hired as an intern at a marketing firm, focused on social media. I will never forget when she came to me concerned because her supervisor was asking for her opinion in meetings, and she was afraid to give critical feedback.”

Bue talked it out with the student, and a few weeks later she came back to share some good news: Not only had she shared her opinion, she also provided alternative recommendations that were quickly adopted by her supervisor and proved hugely successful.

“It was a proud moment for both of us,” Bue added.

Experience of a lifetime

The DCE Internship Experience is a two-quarter program for international ACP students that concludes with a 10-week internship working with a local business that aligns with their educational background and career preference. The first step is attending an information session, then enrolling in the required Resume Writing & Interviewing Skills course.

Students receive support and guidance on all facets of the internship application process. Once the process is complete, candidates can start their search, on their own or within a large network of local organizations eager to take on ACP students.

“Our employer network is incredible, I really have to say,” Bue said. “We have had well over 200 companies host our students, many of which come back quarter after quarter because of how much they enjoy the experience, not to mention how valuable the interns are.”
UCI has a close relationship with several Orange County start-ups that are quite popular with ACP students, Bue said. “Especially those in the Innovation Management & Entrepreneurship ACP, I’m really proud that we have been able to build this network for our students while at the same time welcoming new companies.”

Getting a foot in the door

An internship with a U.S. company can offer valuable work experience and on-the-job training for international students. But one of the most common obstacles to achieving success is timidity, failing to get involved, and not seeking clarification if they encounter something they don’t understand, Bue said. “The number one piece of advice we give to students is to ask questions! The beauty of an internship is that it is focused on learning. Students should never be hesitant to ask questions of each other, their supervisor, or colleagues at their internship site. In fact, questions are welcomed and encouraged.”

Speaking up can be difficult for students working in an unfamiliar culture. They don’t want to bother anyone or risk asking a question about something they feel they should already know. “I think this is a common feeling for many of us,” Bue said. “But it’s also especially heightened with our diverse cultural backgrounds.”

Living in an American household can be helpful for ACP students seeking to live and work here, she added. It can greatly enhance their experience, acclimating them into day-to-day life and increasing their exposure to the English language.

To be sure, Bue believes many of the most important lessons offered by the Internship Experience program happen outside the classroom. And while learning to write a good resume and navigating difficult job interviews are essential for launching a career, the real keys are often the most intangible.

“If I could sum up factors for a successful internship in one word, I would say intention. We really want students to be intentional as they think about not only their internship, but academic plan as well. Being thoughtful about what they want for their future, and what kind of work environment they want to be in can really make or break an internship experience.”

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2021 Checklist – DONE
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*(Thanks UCI!)*
Insights into the tech tools students need to succeed in the dynamic field of data science and analytics.

In today’s digital economy, Big Data is king, and knowing how to mine, process and analyze it is essential for organizations to thrive in the global business community. Making sense of the trillions upon trillions of raw data bits that power the world is inarguably the key to developing the most effective strategies in the 21st century.

It’s no surprise that data science and analytics have evolved into dominant disciplines for tech-savvy professionals in virtually every industry imaginable, enabling organizations to make the most informed decisions internally and externally, whether it’s in marketing, engineering, product development — you name it.

Clearly the data science ecosystem has grown from a luxury of sorts to a necessity for any business hoping to remain competitive. Enhanced by advanced technologies such as Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, the field has grown exponentially more sophisticated in the past decade or so, branching out with a broad range of specialized applications.

To get a better understanding of this dynamic and innovative field, a trio of DCE instructors explored the current state of data science in a wide-ranging webinar discussion, highlighting the tools students need to launch a successful career.

Science vs. Analytics
Professionals with a strong background in data science and analytics are in high demand, all three experts agree. But what’s the relationship between the two? Think of the latter as a specific application of the former.

“Data analytics is sort of a new term for what we used to call data mining or decision-support systems about 20 years ago,” said Dursun Delen, Data Science instructor. “The idea is, how can we use this most valuable asset of organizations — the data itself — to make smarter and faster decisions? That’s what data analytics stands for: making smarter, faster decisions using evidence-based information you get from data both inside and outside the organization.”

A good way to visualize the relationship between data science and analytics is to draw a large circle with a smaller one within it, said Majed Al-Ghandour, Data Science instructor. “I’ll draw two circles, with the big circle being data science and a smaller inner circle representing data analytics.”

“Right now, if you’re going to be a data scientist in the data analytics field you have to know Python — you can’t get away from it.”

— Dursun Delen, Data Science instructor

In a business setting, the role of the data analyst is quite similar to that of the project manager, Delen added. “I actually teach a course on project management in analytics that covers basic project management skills.”

Building your toolkit
To succeed in this space, it’s a good idea to start building a solid foundation in data science and develop a range of versatile analytic tools based on your career goals. Don’t become overly dependent on whichever tool or application that happens to be trending at the time.

“The trick is, if you’re too tool-focused your perspective becomes too narrow,” said Keith McCormick, Predictive Analytics instructor. “It becomes the career equivalent of trying to manage a hedge fund, and that can be a dangerous game.”
The landscape can change quickly, he warned, and if a candidate goes into a job interview banking on their expertise with a buzzworthy analytic tool, that can backfire big time. It’s much more advantageous to gain expertise in a handful of essential tools, he added.

Perhaps the most essential skillset of all is a background in Python Programming, Delen added. “Right now, if you’re going to be a data scientist in the data analytics field you have to know Python — you can’t get away from it. Python is going to be your default scripting program if you’re going to be a data scientist.”

Along with Python, Delen stressed the need for mastering at least three to five tech tools that can be used interchangeably, “depending on what the constraints are.”

A path to success
DCE offers four certificate programs that cover the full range of data science disciplines and specializations, each providing a wealth of essential tools for aspiring professionals. Together they form a path to success in every area of data science; separately they can bolster expertise in any single specialization.

Data Analysis for Business teaches an array of tools and skills for driving strategic business decisions. Students learn fundamental concepts behind collecting, storing, and analyzing data to accurately forecast trends and behaviors, covering predictive, prescriptive, and descriptive analytics. Elective courses include introduction to Python Programming and SQL, as well as data warehouse development.

Data Science lays the foundation for students seeking a broad background as a data scientist, covering statistical and computer science techniques for exploring and analyzing data. Students learn how to use common data science tools along with basics in cloud computing, R Programming, and introduction to Machine Learning and Python.

Predictive Analytics teaches how to develop actionable plans from corporate data and initiatives to increase sales, reduce marketing costs, and improve customer retention. Students are provided key tools for solving business problems with predictive analytics, while taking a deeper dive into R Programming and Big Data.

Machine and Deep Learning focuses on Natural Language Processing, the current state of the art in Artificial Intelligence, as well as data mining and data analysis. The curriculum includes introductory and intermediate Python, as well as a background in Artificial Neural Networks and Big Data analysis.

A strong background in any area of data science can be a gold ticket to a lucrative career. Often overlooked, however, is that working in this field can be, well, fun. “I’m very lucky because what I’ve been doing got more and more popular, and now it’s the pinnacle of almost all professions,” Delen said. “I’m enjoying it every day. It’s fun to turn raw data into something that makes sense, something that solves a question that is seemingly unsolvable and then helps an organization move forward.”

Learn more: ce.uci.edu/tech
On a traditional campus like UCI, students are supported by staff in Visitor/Information Desk, Admissions, Registrar, Cashiering, Financial Aid, Bursar, Student Success, Academic Advising, Student Health & Wellness, International Center, Student Conduct, Community Services (OLLI & Concurrent), Parking, and more.

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/ˈkäntrakt ˈmanijər/

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Technology has brought our world together in dramatic fashion, joining a rich variety of cultures and customs into one vibrant global community. The benefits are significant: Businesses can work with employees and clients across multiple continents, and students anywhere in the world can take classes at UCI or any school offering online instruction.

Gaining exposure to a wider range of cultures, races and gender identities can be hugely rewarding personally and professionally, expanding awareness as well as opening new markets. But there are potential pitfalls when it comes to unconscious bias — social stereotypes that lurk below the level of awareness.

Unconscious or implicit bias is far more common than conscious, explicit bias. Recognizing these blind spots can be challenging, even for outwardly enlightened individuals, as we all learn to live and work together. That’s why it’s imperative for organizations to educate and promote cultures of diversity, equity and inclusion that benefit everyone.

“I am all living in this interconnected global village with a common stake,” said Sky Zheng, CEO of Interactive Pro, an international online education facilitator. “All countries are closely connected and share in a common future. Leaders who have a global mindset enable companies to open up to more global opportunities while recognizing the challenges in different countries and cultures, presenting and finding solutions.”

Zheng was part of a panel of experts that addressed the following strategies for confronting blind spots and raising awareness in the moderated UCI webinar Leadership Strategies: Minimizing Unconscious Bias.

1. **Cultivate self-awareness**

   Becoming more self-aware is a powerful way to recognize and reign in negative unconscious tendencies — and it’s essential for leaders in building organizations where people feel valued and excited to work, said Oliver Beach, general manager of Jolt, a leading innovator in online education.

   “First of all, unconscious bias is a lack of self-awareness,” Beach said. “We show our bias when we’re unaware of ourselves and the people around us, and it manifests itself in so many different scenarios including job interviews, the people you bring into an organization, how meetings are set up, how you give a voice to other people in your team.”

   A lack of self-awareness precludes sensitivity to other people’s realities, and it prevents leaders from changing their behavior or even recognizing unconscious bias when it happens.

2. **Promote global awareness**

   For global corporations, educating leadership and employees on the cultures and customs in the countries where they operate is key to countering unconscious bias. And at companies like Bayer Crop Science, it’s an important part of doing business.

   “When we’re in North America, Latin America, Europe and Asia, we recognize that each one is a different situation,” said Gabriela Burian, global director for sustainable food systems at Bayer, which spans six continents and over 100,000 employees. “What we’ve been doing is mapping out each country, highlighting where our company is. It’s one of the tools that we use to help adapt our employees to the local reality.”

   It’s especially important to foster multicultural awareness at a university like UCI which has tens of thousands of international students and employees, said Douglas Haynes, Vice Chancellor for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at UCI.

   “It’s important to celebrate cultural diversity by learning more about the very diverse communities that represent us as faculty, staff and students, but also the surrounding community,” he said. “We can’t assume that everyone knows what implicit bias is.”
3. Teach diversity, equity and inclusion

Each person has a different life journey that helps inform their worldview. Someone who has lived among diverse populations or traveled widely, for example, can have greater awareness of potential bias than those who haven’t had that advantage. But education can help broaden perspectives and make up for lack of real-world experience.

Haynes points to his own journey growing up in culturally diverse San Francisco and moving outside of his comfort zone by traveling. “I think it’s so important to see diversity, equity and inclusion as a process of personal growth, because otherwise it’s easy to sort of get grounded in one place, and that’s where you start having blind spots,” he said.

“My role is about personal growth and career advancement, and one of the key things is equipping people with diversity, equity and inclusion as a competency. That’s something that is really a learning process where people enter at different stages and can continually grow.”

4. Listen and learn

Bringing to light hidden bias isn’t solely a top-down endeavor, but rather involves a loop of sorts in order to adapt and learn about other cultures, Burian said. She calls it reverse mentorship — having leadership listen to feedback from the people the company serves and does business with. “If we can meet and talk with leaders then we have reverse mentorship, where we can provide feedback to leaders and vice versa. Leaders can hear from the communities.” Simply put, constructive feedback is essential for recognizing and minimizing unconscious bias fostered by an unfamiliar culture or identity. “This is when we need to hear other voices,” Burian added.

5. Support inclusive organizations

Choose to support and work at organizations that reflect the right values — and speak up if you feel they fail to live up to their initial promise. That’s the path Oliver Beach took before he joined Jolt. At the time, he was raising capital from investors and made it clear he only wanted to work with people who share and respect his values.

“I only want to work with investors who care about diversity, inclusion and equity, because those are areas which are really important to me and the communities I work with” he said. “They’re really important in the work that I do with Out in Tech, this incredible global LGBT+ tech nonprofit which I brought over to the U.K. from the U.S."

This is not just words. Beach has actively refused and walked away from investment when capital was coming at a cost. “I’m not willing to compromise on integrity for equity,” he said.

View recorded webinar: Leadership Strategies: Fostering Culture Through Inclusion and Innovation ce.uci.edu/fosteringculture

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“Becoming more self-aware is essential for leaders in building organizations where people feel valued and excited to work.”

— Oliver Beach, General Manager, Jolt
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A continuing education certificate can provide a solid foundation for anyone looking to advance in their career or transition to a new one. Learning from experienced professionals and capitalizing on networking opportunities are vital building blocks for success. But the certificate alone is just the beginning of the journey.

Honing interview skills, crafting a standout resume, and finding the best employment and internship opportunities are key to landing a lucrative dream job. And that’s precisely the mission behind Career Services, a recently expanded one-stop center for DCE students and alumni that offers a range of valuable resources.

“We empower our students to take control of their job search by providing access to one-on-one career advising sessions and technology like VMock, Big Interview and Handshake,” said Dakota Serafin, UCI DCE Career Educator. “Our technology, in combination with the one-on-one career advising appointments, provide students assistance in formulating job application documents, interview preparation, and access to UCI’s job and internship search platform.”

Launched a year ago to serve the Project Management and Paralegal certificate programs, Career Services has expanded to include Esports Management, Data Science, Human Resources, and E-Learning Instructional Design. The idea was to focus Career Services resources on programs that reach the largest number of students, Serafin said. The benefits are significant, providing a comprehensive pathway for participants to take their DCE education to the next level.

“Students in these programs are able to access our technologies to search for employment opportunities, practice their virtual interviewing skills, and receive 24/7 resume help through the use of our VMock resume-review platform,” Serafin said. “Additionally, they are able to schedule 30-min one-on-one advising appointments with me to discuss anything career-related.”

Career Services platforms feature a number of easy-to-use tools. Handshake has an interface for searching targeted job opportunities and internships within a chosen field, allowing candidates to directly connect with employers who are actively recruiting DCE students and alumni, as well as network with former students who have worked for these companies.

VMock, powered by AI, allows candidates to upload a resume and get instant feedback, then edit it accordingly and resubmit until it receives a top score. And Big Interview provides challenging virtual mock interviews for all experience levels, covering dozens of industries. It also has a database of thousands of typical job interview questions, along with tips on how to answer them.

These technologies are complimented by private counseling sessions that allow students to discuss specific concerns and career goals. For Serafin, meeting and interacting with all the participants is her favorite aspect of managing Career Services.

“To me, the one-on-one advising sessions are the best part. It’s so much fun. Students will come in because they want help with their resumes, and once we get talking, we end up covering so much more than just resume writing. I’ve
met a lot of them beforehand. I have a great rapport with the instructors, and they sometimes invite me to give talks to their students. And I love meeting returning students and see how far they’ve come, how they’ve managed to advance their careers even during the pandemic.”

Blazing a career path
The Career Services website features a number of free resources including recorded webinars and helpful how-to Career Guide videos, tutorials that address resumes and cover letters, networking, interviewing and job searches. The site has links to Career Success Specialization open online courses presented by Coursera — a series that includes subjects such as Project Management, Finance for Non-Finance Professionals and High-Impact Business Writing. Each course can be taken independently or all together in any order, culminating in a certificate of completion following a capstone project.

Career Services also links to CareerZot, UCI DCE’s official blog that covers a broad range of current career-related topics. Recent posts include Managing Your Team in a Virtual World, Finding a New Career During the COVID-19 Pandemic, and Writing a Captivating Bio in 10 Easy Steps. “CareerZot is a great blog,” Serafin said. “It features current, curated topics, and it has become very popular. It really took off during the COVID lockdown.”

After expanding to six certificate programs, Career Services will likely be adding more in the near future, along with a new lineup of Career Discovery Series webinars featuring panels of experts addressing current issues and topics relevant to the participating programs.

“We are excited to once again host a Career Discovery Series panel in collaboration with the Division of Career Pathways. The success of last year’s Project Management panel is getting us very excited to start brainstorming this year’s event,” Serafin said. “Additionally, we are looking forward to hosting webinars that appeal to all of our programs with topics ranging from virtual interviewing to networking in a hybrid world.”

Preparing for growth
Following a year of expansion and early success — along with rave reviews from participants — Career Services seems to be just getting started.

“Definitely! It’s great to see the progress we’ve made in our first year, and our hope is to continue expanding to other DCE certificate programs over the next few years,” Serafin said. “We have grown from two programs to six this year — and we want to keep that momentum going.”

Learn more: ce.uci.edu/career
Program Highlights

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hr@uci.edu

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Lean Six Sigma Green Belt Specialized Studies
Meeting & Event Management Specialized Studies
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COVID-19 has stilled our creativity. The sameness and lack of novelty has squashed our ability to put ideas together in new, meaningful combinations to solve problems. The future is uncertain however, creativity will change the game. And importantly, it will make the difference between success and failure.

A revolution is necessary. We need to realize that we just need to be different and better. Remote or not, it’s our time to be motivated to try harder, to experiment, to transform, and to produce.

A recent study found that 75% of working professionals believe they are not "living up to their creative potential," and are, "under pressure to be productive rather than creative at work." This is not the way forward into our future economy.

For leaders who need convincing, here are three ways to benefit from prioritizing creativity.

1 Embrace. You must unleash the talents and passions of many people and harness them into a unique work environment that is dynamic and has purpose. Innovation is a journey. It’s a type of collaborative problem solving, usually among people who have different expertise and different points of view.

2 Empower. Use active listening and give your staff the chance to have a voice and to advocate for their point of view. Trust your employees because they do understand that ingenuity rarely happens unless you have both diversity and conflict. Creative agility is about being able to test and refine ideas through reflection and improvement. It’s about discovery—and the most creative companies certainly experience organic revenue growth and total return.

3 Champion. Encourage your staff to actively champion projects. This will allow them to take action—immediately. For those that get on board with this ideal, they will stand out and speak up and become the next generation of leaders. They will be original and will drive creativity and change in the world. And trust me—they will become the people you bet on.

Be thankful, share credit, build personal relationships, ask questions, welcome creativity, input and new ideas, and recognize and appreciate that your colleagues have an abundance of potential.

Read more at ce.uci.edu/careerzot

“We keep moving forward—opening up new doors and doing new things—because we’re curious. And curiosity keeps leading us down new paths. We’re always exploring and experimenting. We call it Imagineering—the blending of creative and imagination with technical know-how.”

— Walt Disney
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