

University of North Texas (UNT)

Executive Summary of CareerConnect

UNT Career Connect concentrates on problem-solving skills, communication and teamwork. UNT students participate in high-impact experiences every day – in classes and through their extra-curricular activities. For example, students learn teamwork skills in class projects as well as clubs or organizations. They build communication skills in research projects, study abroad and class projects. They solve problems using critical thinking in their classes, in their internships and with service learning. These are just a few examples of the experiences that build important skills. This comprehensive plan aims to enhance, assess and tie together these experiences so that students can know and demonstrate these important skills. This QEP will boost their academic experience and ensure our graduates remain highly sought after by employers.

UNT Career Connect promotes university-wide engagement by placing students, faculty, staff, and communities in reciprocal partnerships that promote specific learning outcomes. This is already being done in a number of ways at the university - including both curricular and co-curricular activities - but this plan will expand it to ensure that every student has the opportunity to connect their valuable learning experiences. The plan gives students more opportunities to interact with the surrounding community, solve problems and strengthen their critical thinking and communication skills. An exciting component of the QEP is the introduction of the Connect e-portfolio system that allows students to collect, connect, and showcase the evidence of learning from a student's curricular AND co-curricular real-world experiences that build the skills.

Career Connect experiences give students the opportunity to work with a community partner towards a mutually beneficial goal. Connect experiences include high impact activities like: internships, volunteer work, research projects, study abroad trips, service learning, capstone experiences, student research, creative endeavors, etc. Every UNT student already experiences some of these activities during their time here. Once students complete each Connect experience, their skills are evaluated and then they get the chance to write a reflection to help understand the skills they're building - all to prepare them for future job interviews, career fairs and their professional life while building a habit of reflection.

“UNT's QEP is about engagement, which places students, faculty and communities in reciprocal partnerships that promote specific learning outcomes. This approach is interdisciplinary and integrates teaching, learning, research and service. Our QEP is based on the realistic assumption that UNT has hundreds of high-impact activities underway, but without cohesive organization, shared objectives and meaningful assessment, they lack the impact we seek.” (UNT President Neal Smatresk)

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