

Flight Path

A QEP for Bridgewater College, Bridgewater, VA

Flight Path Committee Co-chairs

Dr. Larry Taylor, Professor of Music (ltaylor@bridgewater.edu)

Ms. Jen Nelson, Director of the Center for Career Development (jnelson@bridgewater.edu)

The Flight Path initiative integrates career education and professional development into the purpose and execution of a liberal arts education.

Through Flight Path, students learn to appreciate the knowledge, skills and attitudes developed through their Bridgewater College education and effectively communicate them to serve their professional aspirations. The program integrates career education and support resources into general education and major curricula in ways that emphasize the power of the liberal arts and embody interdisciplinary and interdepartmental collaboration. The Flight Path Committee, co-chaired by a faculty representative and the director of the Center for Career Development, is responsible for developing programming that empowers students, faculty and staff to successfully translate the value of a comprehensive liberal arts education to those more accustomed to the terminology of professional qualifications, core competencies, and return on investment.

The Flight Path program consists of four specific initiatives that meaningfully improve career education and preparation at Bridgewater College:

1. The Résumé Development Package

The resume and cover letter component of the senior portfolio will include a new reflection requiring students to document the process by which the résumé was constructed, give concrete plans for their package, and document at least one practice interview completed with either a staff member, alumna/us, or Big Interview software.

2. Flight Check

In the second semester of the sophomore year, students will complete a Canvas training module designed by the Flight Path Committee to encourage students to participate in Center for Career Development programming, use online resources the Center provides, familiarize themselves with the professional development opportunities available in their major course of study, and actively pursue internships and other related opportunities. Students will be required to complete Flight Check prior to the spring academic advising session when they schedule courses for the following academic year.

3. The Transferable Skills Project

To empower students to articulate the varied skills and experiences of their BC education, the Flight Path Committee will, in collaboration with faculty, staff, current students, and alumnae/i, develop and disseminate a common vocabulary for translating activities associated with a BC education into terms that align with the Core Competencies of the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). Confidence explaining the value of these activities incentivizes student participation and expanded leadership.

4. Expanded Center for Career Development Programming

The Flight Path Committee will design programming appropriate for each of a student's four years at BC and assist faculty as those programs are built into both major and general education curricula. Pilot programs have already made participation in career education workshops required for the senior portfolio and some majors.