

Planning for the Future: Athens State University Develops Career Seminar Course With iHire's Student Game Plan



ORGANIZATION



iHIRE SOLUTION

Student Game Plan

RESULTS

- Helped instructors develop Career Seminar course curriculum
- Empowered 282 students with skills to find jobs after graduation

Background

Athens State University is the oldest educational institution of higher learning in Alabama. As an upper-division university, Athens State serves junior, senior, and graduate students, many of whom are looking to finish or advance their degrees. The university places a “genuine emphasis on producing graduates that employers desire” and provides extensive career development resources and services to prepare students for the workforce.

Goals

In the fall of 2020, Athens State introduced **UNV 400 – Career Seminar** as a one-credit core class requirement in all undergraduate majors after receiving a U.S. Department of Education Title III Grant to expand student advising and career readiness. The seminar equips students with the skills they need – and cannot be assumed they have – including the fundamentals of resume and cover letter writing, networking, and interviewing for post-graduation employment in the modern workplace.

In creating the career seminar course, Athens State sought to build upon the university's experiential learning initiative to better prepare students who are nearing graduation with the ability to navigate employment opportunities in the field they're looking to enter. To support the learning objectives of the course, Athens State utilizes course content within iHire's Student Game Plan.

Solution

iHire's **Student Game Plan** is a comprehensive online learning platform designed to empower students with the strategies and tactics needed to stand out in their job search and find meaningful work in any industry.

Meticulously crafted by career experts at **iHire** – an industry-focused recruitment company – Student Game Plan covers the four pillars of getting hired, broken into four modules: Gaining the Right Experience; Building and Maintaining Your Network; Mastering Your Resume, Cover Letter and Personal Brand; and Interviewing for Jobs and Internships. Within its modules, Student Game Plan offers 120+ career advice articles, 20 exclusive videos, hand-selected audio files, downloadable checklists and worksheets, and 20 quizzes and assignments. All content is accessible online 24/7, making it ideal for Athens State's virtual students.

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- **Emerald Simmons**

*Career Development Advisor
Athens State University*

Emerald Simmons, Athens State’s Career Development Advisor, led the selection and implementation of Student Game Plan, which helped her design the Career Seminar course from the ground up. Simmons has found Student Game Plan to be highly flexible and easy to incorporate into the curriculum. She has even been able to draw from Student Game Plan to create new materials, worksheets, and other assignments with an industry-specific spin for her students studying education.

For Simmons’ classes, one of the most useful assignments from Student Game Plan is a worksheet on informational interviews – students must request meetings with individuals at companies of interest to learn more about a career path and establish connections. Prior to Student Game Plan, many students were unfamiliar with informational interviews and their value in one’s job search.

Results

During three semesters, 282 Athens State students have used Student Game Plan to prepare for their future job searches and careers. Because Student Game Plan is entirely online, it integrates well with the Active Flex learning model Athens State is rolling out – students can choose if they want to learn synchronously (through live lectures) or asynchronously (through on-demand lectures).

“It’s easy to pull content from Student Game Plan for assignments,” Simmons said. “When I’m using Student Game Plan, I know for a fact that students are going to get the information they need to find a job and succeed in their career after graduation. It’s a pretty complete package, from an instructor’s standpoint.”

According to Simmons, students have given positive feedback on Student Game Plan thus far – her end-of-semester survey has generated four- and five-star (out of five) ratings for the Career Seminar course as a whole. In addition, students have lifetime access to Student Game Plan, so they can reference it after they graduate or whenever they need to polish their resume or prepare for an interview. Plus, information in Student Game Plan is continuously updated, so Athens State knows students are always receiving the most recent and relevant information.

Looking ahead, Athens State is expanding the Career Seminar course by creating a “master shell” for the curriculum that each instructor can customize based on their students’ field of study, just as Simmons has done for her education students. Student Game Plan will provide a foundation for those curricula, so the university anticipates a continued relationship with iHire.

iHire

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iHire is a leading career-oriented platform that powers a family of 57 industry-focused talent networks, including WorkInSports, iHireVeterinary, iHireDental, iHireConstruction, and iHireChefs. For more than 20 years, iHire has combined advanced job matching technology with our expertise in the talent acquisition space to connect job seekers with employers in their desired sector. With an industry-specific, candidate-centric, and data-driven approach to recruitment, iHire helps candidates find meaningful work and employers find unique, high-quality talent – faster, easier, and more effectively than a general job board. Visit www.iHire.com for more information.