



IB292: Translating your IB Degree into Career Success

CRN 65405 | 1 credit hour

Time	Tuesdays 4:00-4:50PM
Room	2083 Natural History Building
Instructor	Christina Swanson
Contact	sillima2@illinois.edu or DM me on Discord Office: 2002 NHB
Appointment	https://go.illinois.edu/BookCareerConnections
Course Page	Moodle: https://learn.illinois.edu
Discord	https://go.illinois.edu/IBDiscord

- COURSE DESCRIPTION -

WHY SHOULD I TAKE THIS COURSE?

There are SO many things you can do with an IB degree, even if you know you love science or medicine, it is hard to find a role that is "right" for you. If you are lucky enough to know what you want to do, it's not so simple to figure out what you need to do to be successful in that career, or what experiences you need on your resume.

This course is meant to be an opportunity for you to figure out what you want to do next – and perhaps with the rest of your life - and to learn what it takes to be successful in whatever path you choose. **Take this course if you want to explore your options after college or if you want to know how to set yourself up for success in the job market.**

WHAT TO EXPECT

I will provide every opportunity for your success, because that is my number one course objective. In return, I ask you to reflect, and to think critically both during and outside of class.

There are no pop quizzes, memorization, or rigorous exams. Instead, you are in charge of your own learning process, and **we are focused on real-life application**. You will have input on how you spend your out-of-class time and what projects would benefit you the most. Our final project will be a real-life application of the course material, and is meant to further your career goals.

COURSE SUMMARY

In this one credit course, we will explore what jobs and industries are available to IB grads, and how your set of skills and abilities makes you uniquely qualified for these positions. You will explore your own skill set and values to determine what careers and industries are right for you, and how to decide if you're a good match for a job. This will also help you plan for what experiences and skills you need to include in your final semester(s) here at UIUC!

Once you have a few career paths in mind, we'll talk about how to communicate to employers what you can uniquely offer (your "brand"), to showcase why you are a good match for the positions in their fields.

We'll have experts along the way to serve as resources, including UIUC biology alumni that have been in your shoes and are now professionals in a range of fields. They are ready to share their experiences, wisdom, and insider information from their time working in positions and on the job market. You will get invaluable connections to IB fields, and advice from individuals at different points in their careers. You can read all about these co-educators on our website.

- COURSE CALENDAR -

WEEK (Date)	TOPIC	Co-Educators	Major Assignments Due
1 (17 Jan)	Introductions	Steve Caldwell	
2 (24 Jan)	Networking and the "hidden job market"	Grace Pixton	Introductory Survey
3 (31 Jan)	Career Panel 1	Angela Cruz Patrick Madigan Nathan Stables	Career Options
4 (7 Feb)	What do you have to offer as an IB student?	Sofia Anderson	1:1 Appointment
5 (14 Feb)	Making Career Decisions Career Design & Values	Grant Hansen	Career Design – Part 1
6 (21 Feb)	Career Panel 2	Madeline Keleher Grace Chappell Savannah Donovan	Email Request Draft

7 (28 Feb)	Job search & career exploration strategies	Jess Hoffelder	Interview Questions
8 (7 Mar)	LinkedIn Workshop Mid-semester check-in	<i>none</i>	Job Advertisement
9 (14 Mar)	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS		
10 (21 Mar)	Career Panel 3	Iza Redlinski Jake Gold Rachel Baits	LinkedIn Profile
11 (28 Mar)	Resumes & Recruiter insights	Eli Lilly	Resume
12 (4 Apr)	Writing application materials	Writers Workshop Allison Parker	Cover Letter
13 (11 Apr)	Application workshop + branding/framing	<i>none</i>	Career Design – Part 2
14 (18 Apr)	Getting the job: Interviewing	Career Center Joe Frumkin	Final Application Portfolio Presentation
15 (25 Apr)	Career Features (presentations)	<i>none</i>	Final Research Summary Interview Summary Application Review Summary
16 (2 May)	Your next steps	Steve Caldwell	End of Semester Survey End of Semester Reflection
17 (9 May)	FINAL WEEK - NO CLASS		

*We may have changes or updates to our co-educators throughout the semester. I will try to give you as much notice as I can if this is this case.

- STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES –

What will you get out of the course?

Career exploration

- Learn about 25+ career options
- Connect with 20+ professionals in various IB fields
- Personal connection with a professional in your field of interest
- Individual meeting with Christina to identify careers that fit your interests
- Chance to get all of your questions answered by professionals in the fields you are interested in

Skill building

- List of *your* skills and experiences
- What skills and experiences employers are looking for
- Methods to find job openings in your field of interest
- Tailored application materials for a job / professional school of interest to you

- How to show your personality in a professional setting (job ads, interview, at work)
- How to know if a job and company is right for you
- What to include in your application materials, what employers are looking for
- What to expect at an interview, with field-specific insights from alums
- Practice developing and answering interview questions
- Practice writing application materials
- Polished LinkedIn profile and a start to your professional network
- Learn about other campus resources for career exploration and skill building, and meet other career professionals you can get answers from
- How to interpret job ads for what they are actually looking for and what's important to them
- How to talk about your skills and experiences

Self-Exploration

- Confidence in your abilities, since you'll know what those abilities are!
- Prioritized list of your values
- Ways to identify what you like and don't like in organizations and jobs
- Motivation to take steps towards your career goals
- List of your career/professional goals
- Less anxiety about your future, since you'll have concrete steps and professionals in your field to help you move forward

And much more!

- POLICIES -

MAKE UP AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Those with pre-approved absences can submit their homework, reflection, and follow-ups the following class period (e.g. conference presentation). Those with eligible absences* and documentation will receive an extension for all due work (e.g. death in the family).

*Please consult the Student Code Article 1, Part 5 to check whether a particular reason for absence is eligible for late submission of work: http://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1_part5_1-501.html.

ATTENDANCE

We realize that you have a life beyond the scope of this course. However, if you are unable to complete an assignment/attend class because of other obligations, you should notify the instructors ahead of time. It is good practice to prepare/post any assignments early before a planned absence.

Regular class attendance is expected of all students, but the lowest participation score for class attendance will be dropped to allow for extenuating circumstances, particularly as we realize many are still dealing with the effects from the Covid pandemic.

Following University policy, all students are required to engage in appropriate behavior to protect the health and safety of the community. Students are also required to follow the campus COVID-19 protocols.

Students who feel ill must not come to class. In addition, students who test positive for COVID-19 or have had an exposure that requires testing and/or quarantine must not attend class. The University will provide information to the instructor, in a manner that complies with privacy laws, about students in these latter categories. These students are judged to have excused absences for the class period and should contact the instructor via email about making up the work.

Students who fail to abide by these rules will first be asked to comply; if they refuse, they will be required to leave the classroom immediately. If a student is asked to leave the classroom, the non-compliant student will be judged to have an unexcused absence and reported to the Office for Student Conflict Resolution for disciplinary action. Accumulation of non-compliance complaints against a student may result in dismissal from the University.

Again, students should inform instructors in advance of missing class and generally adhere to the guidelines specified in the UIUC Student Code (http://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1_part5_1-501.html).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students are responsible for reading the [University of Illinois Student Code](https://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1/) (<https://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1/>). Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Examples of academic dishonesty include the following:

- Cheating
- Fabrication
- Facilitating infractions of academic integrity
- Plagiarism
- Bribes, favors, and threats
- Academic interference
- Examination by proxy
- Grade tampering
- Non-original works

Should an incident arise in which a student is thought to have violated academic integrity, the student will be processed under the disciplinary policy set forth in the [Illinois Academic Integrity Policy, using the FAIR system \(https://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1/part4/1-401/\)](https://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1/part4/1-401/). If you do not understand relevant definitions of academic infractions, contact your instructors for an explanation within the first week of class.

- INCLUSIVITY -

ACCOMODATIONS

To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the course instructor and the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) as soon as possible. To contact DRES you may visit 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign, call 333-4603, e-mail disability@illinois.edu or go to the [DRES website](#).

As accommodations are typically helpful to all, you do not need a DRES letter for accommodations, but you do need to communicate early and often about how we can meet your needs. You can reach out to Christina (sillima2@illinois.edu) if you anticipate any barriers to participation this semester.

The effectiveness of this course is dependent upon the creation of an encouraging and safe classroom environment. Exclusionary, offensive or harmful speech (such as racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, etc.) will not be tolerated and in some cases will be subject to University harassment procedures. We are all responsible for creating a positive and safe environment that allows all students equal respect and comfort. I expect each of you to help establish and maintain an environment where you and your peers can contribute without fear of ridicule or intolerant or offensive language.

While we strive to include as many voices and perspectives as possible, this course is by no means wholly representative of the diversity of backgrounds, paths, perspectives, and values in the various possible careers after graduation. All of you bring your own unique set of experiences, perspectives, and knowledge that will complement and enhance what we have to offer, and we are excited to hear what you bring to the group. Everyone's ideas and backgrounds will be respected and valued in this safe, welcoming space. We are glad to have you!

**Everyone is welcome and heartily encouraged to participate in this safe space.
Hate has no home here.**

- CLASS LOGISTICS -

Instructor Responses and Office Hours

Questions posted via email or to Discord generally will be answered within 48 hours. If possible, students are encouraged to answer questions posted by other students on Discord rather than waiting for an instructor's response.

Another way to communicate with the instructors is to make use of the virtual office hours or DM on Discord. The instructors will be available for office hours via Zoom by scheduled appointment (just email us!) and will be checking Discord frequently. You can also make an appointment using Christina's booking system: <https://go.illinois.edu/BookCareerConnections>.

PLATFORMS & TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

At least one class will be fully virtual and synchronous using Zoom, and all class sessions will have a Zoom link for you to join if you are unable to come to class in person. You will need the following to participate in virtual class:

- Access to internet for synchronous Zoom sessions
- Device with audio and video capabilities
- We will also be using the following platforms:
 - o Moodle
 - o Google Slides
 - o Slido (<https://www.sli.do>)
 - o Discord* (<https://discord.gg/k5ZgDy2UDl>)

*Discord will be used as an optional supplement to the course, as a community space to connect with professionals, peers, alumni, and others to further your career. We will also post opportunities regularly such as jobs, research, internships, volunteering, and useful resources.

- READINGS AND TEXTS -

Textbooks: There are no required texts for this course

Other Readings: Relevant articles and videos will be provided through our course website free of cost.

- SUPPORT -

Basic needs insecurity is common among college students and the negative impacts are real:

- Increases difficulty in concentrating and studying, lowers retention, and decreases graduation rate.
- Generates and/or elevates depression, anxiety, insomnia, headaches, and burnout.
- Lowers morale and motivation, reduces creativity, hinders communication, decreases productivity, increase absenteeism, and decreases social opportunities.

Students who are hungry, burned-out, depressed, preoccupied with issues like money are less likely to succeed academically, socially, and personally.

If at any point in the semester you are struggling with mental health issues (anxiety, depression, grief, PTSD, addiction, cultural struggles, coming out, etc.), inconsistent access to nutritious foods, housing or financial instability, or lack of access to any other basic needs, know that I have an open door and can help point you to the [many resources on campus](#) to help. Seeking support is healthy and courageous.

You do not need to come into class with a DRES letter for me to provide accommodations. I'm happy to work with you - at any point in the semester - to ensure your success in my course and your career journey.

MENTAL HEALTH

Significant stress, mood changes, excessive worry, substance/alcohol misuse or interferences in eating or sleep can have an impact on academic performance, social development, and emotional wellbeing. The University of Illinois offers a variety of confidential services including individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, psychiatric services, and specialized screenings which are covered through the Student Health Fee. If you or someone you know experiences any of the above mental health concerns, it is strongly encouraged to contact or visit any of the University's resources provided below. Getting help is a smart and courageous thing to do for yourself and for those who care about you.

- Counseling Center (217) 333-3704
- McKinley Health Center (217) 333-2700

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800) 273-8255
- Rosecrance Crisis Line (217) 359-4141 (available 24/7, 365 days a year)

You can visit <https://wellness.illinois.edu> to learn more. If you are in immediate danger, call 911.

COMMUNITY OF CARE

As members of the Illinois community, we each have a responsibility to express care and concern for one another. If you come across a classmate whose behavior concerns you, whether in regards to their well-being or yours, we encourage you to refer this behavior to the Student Assistance Center (217-333-0050 or <http://odos.illinois.edu/community-of-care/referral/>). Based on your report, the staff in the Student Assistance Center reaches out to students to make sure they have the support they need to be healthy and safe.

Further, we understand the impact that struggles with mental health can have on your experience at Illinois. Significant stress, strained relationships, anxiety, excessive worry, alcohol/drug problems, a loss of motivation, or problems with eating and/or sleeping can all interfere with optimal academic performance. We encourage all students to reach out to talk with someone, and we want to make sure you are aware that you can access mental health support at McKinley Health Center (<https://mckinley.illinois.edu/>). Or the Counseling Center (<https://counselingcenter.illinois.edu/>). For urgent matters during business hours, no appointment is needed to contact the Counseling Center. For mental health emergencies, you can call 911.

FOOD ASSISTANCE & WELLBEING PROGRAM

Among college students, 35-51% report experiencing food insecurity. At UIUC around 1 in 5 students experience food insecurity. Proper nutrition has been linked to positive brain function and better academic outcomes; don't settle for the "right of passage" of living on cheap, processed food. There are several community and campus resources to get you the nutrition you need to succeed. You can find them here: <https://odos.illinois.edu/community-of-care/resources/students/food-resources/>

- GRADING AND EXPECTATIONS -

GRADING PHILOSOPHY

I do *not* view grading as a punishment or reprimand for not knowing the answer, but as critical feedback that is used to advance your understanding of self, others, and content. These are opportunities to learn and grow – *everyone* can improve, so everyone will receive constructive comments. If my comments do not help you, or you are left with questions, please let me know and we will figure out another way to provide you with feedback. This should never be a stressful process, but this does not mean it will be without the mental burn of a good brain work out!

I *always* welcome feedback on my grading, teaching, or communication of concepts. Please feel free to come to me with any comments, questions, or concerns.

GRADING BREAKDOWN

ASSIGNMENT	POINTS	NOTES
Weekly Participation		
<i>Slide-O Q&A posts</i>	10	1 point each
<i>In-class engagement</i>	30	2 points/class
	40 total	
Career Exploration Project		
<i>Career Options</i>	2	
<i>Initial Career Research</i>	2	extra credit
<i>Research Summary</i>	4	
<i>Career Presentation/Slide</i>	6	
	12 total	
Application Portfolio		
<i>LinkedIn Basics</i>	1	
<i>LinkedIn profile</i>	5	
<i>Job Ad</i>	3	
<i>Resume</i>	6	
<i>Cover letter</i>	6	
<i>Application Review Summary</i>	4	
<i>Final portfolio (optional)</i>	3	extra credit
	25 total	
Networking Project		
<i>Email Request Draft</i>	2	
<i>Interview Questions</i>	3	
<i>Interview summary</i>	3	
	8 total	
Homework		
<i>Surveys</i>	6	3 points each
<i>1:1 Appointment</i>	2	

<i>Career Design Assignments</i>	3
<i>End of Semester Reflection</i>	4
	15 total

Your final grade will be either Satisfactory (Pass) or Unsatisfactory (Fail) according to the following grading scale:

Satisfactory	85 - 100+ points
Unsatisfactory	84 points and under

* You can complete as many assignments as you want and any points beyond the 4 required will give you extra credit towards your final grade

DUE DATES

- All assignments and projects are due by 3:50PM on Tuesdays (before class starts) and will be submitted through our Moodle course page.

GRADING DESCRIPTIONS

Weekly Class Engagement

Synchronous

- 2 points for thoughtful engagement with the material, speakers, activities, and classmates. Actively engaged at least once during the synchronous class period. Active engagement can mean adding question to Slide-O (with name), adding something to Zoom chat feature, sending a personal message to Christina to share with the class anonymously, using the Zoom audio function, or something else pre-approved by Christina.
- 1 point for surface level engagement, learning while texting, or anything else that hinders your or your classmates' learning.
- 0 points for not engaging in class at least once.

Asynchronous - *up to twice per semester, unless approved by Christina*

- 2 points for watching the entire video recording of the class. One paragraph synopsis (written as a note to yourself in the future about what you don't want to forget or as a set of instructions for you now to implement changes or take next steps) shows engagement with the material and thought about how it applies to your individual goals. Synopsis is submitted by noon Central Time the Tuesday following the class session (one week after the synchronous class date).
- 1 point for lack of effort, only watching and writing about a portion of the class, or lack of engagement.
- 0 points for not submitting your synopsis on time.

Weekly Pre-Class Slide-O Q&A Posts

- 1 point for thoughtful, relevant, and authentic questions that help you to learn more about the topic and/or career area. At least one post for each guest instructor must

include your name (first name, last initial is sufficient) but you may add as many posts as you'd like either anonymously or including your name.

- 0.5 points for incomplete or surface level engagement, not submitting questions for all guest instructors, or lack of effort on questions
- 0 points for missing assignments

End of Semester Reflection

- 4 points for a thoughtful and authentic reflection that discusses what you learned from the class, how/whether it helped you advance your career goals, how you applied what you learned from the semester, what your next steps are, and anything else that you would like to reflect on.
- 1-3 points for a summary of events, not answering all prompts, or clear lack of effort.
- 0 points if missing

Career Exploration Project

Initial Career Research (extra credit)

- 2 points for clearly outlining the career/job you're leading, the questions you are answering about that topic, and the results of your research. A substantial proportion of the research is complete, with approximately 80% of the questions answered.
- 1 point for missing or incomplete responses, or clear lack of effort
- 0 points for missing the assignment

Final Research Summary

- 4 points for clearly outlining the research done on your career/job, with links to each of the sources used. Clear language and organized format that an undergraduate IB/Biology major could use to compare different career options.
- 1-3 points for missing or incomplete responses, missing sources, unclear language or disorganized responses, or clear lack of effort
- 0 points for missing the assignment

Career Presentation and Slide

Career Slide

- 3 points for filling in all five sections within the template. Research summary is directly linked in the advertisement
- 1-2 points for not including information in all sections, not linking to the research summary, or clear lack of effort
- 0 points for missing the assignment

Career Presentation

- 3 points sharing your career research with the class and answering questions (as applicable)
- 1-2 points for clear lack of effort
- 0 points for missing the assignment

Application Portfolio

LinkedIn Profile

- 5 points for a complete profile that includes all of the areas mentioned in the assignment. Added Christina Swanson and your Career Exploration team to your network.
- 2-4 points for an incomplete profile OR a complete profile without adding me to your network
- 0 points if missing

Job Ad

- 3 points for submitting a PDF and link of a job ad that you are qualified for right now, a list of 3-5 skills and 3-5 experiences you will need for the position, and a thoughtful response to how that position will be a good fit for you
- 1-2 points for incomplete or surface level engagement with the activity
- 0 points for missing assignments

Resume

- 6 points for including all relevant background information (e.g. education, work experience, awards, certificates, special skills) with description of your role and skills gained. Experiences and skills highlighted are specific to the position you're applying to and not a repetition of the generic LinkedIn profile. Feedback from the LinkedIn profile assignment is taken into consideration and integrated.
- 2-5 points for missing key background information, insufficient description of your experiences or skills, or clear lack of effort. Isn't specific to the position applying for.
- 0 points if missing

Cover Letter

- 6 points for a thoughtful argument for your benefit to the organization and fit for the role. Nothing is copied or listed from the resume, but some experiences from the resume are explained in further detail.
- 2-5 points for repeating resume items, writing in list form (I did this, and then this, and then this...), or a clear lack of effort.
- 0 points if missing

Final Portfolio (optional)

Cover Letter (1.5 points)

- 1.5 points for a thoughtful argument for your benefit to the organization and fit for the role. Nothing is repeated or listed from the resume, but some experiences from the resume are explained in further detail. The experiences highlighted are specific to the position, and showcase your unique brand.
- 0.5-1 points for repeating resume items, writing in list form (I did this, and then this, and then this...), no clear focus, or a lack of effort.
- 0 points if missing

PDF Version of Resume (1.5 points)

- 1.5 points for including all relevant background information (e.g. education, work experience, awards, certificates, special skills) with active and specific descriptions of your role and skills gained. The experiences highlighted are specific to the position, and showcase your unique brand. Updated from the previous draft, incorporating feedback.

- 0.5-1 points for missing key background information, insufficient description of your experiences or skills, or clear lack of effort. Very little updated from previous draft or missing feedback.
- 0 points if missing or not updated.

Networking Project

Email Request Draft

- 2 points for a concise, tailored email with one single audience in mind (the audience can be a job type or career type at this point). Includes a reason for contacting them, a call to action (what you are asking of them), a little about you, and a formal salutation with your contact information.
- 1 point for a lengthy, generic, or non-descriptive email.
- 0 points if missing

Interview Questions

Informational Interview Questions (2 points)

- 2 points for 15 tailored, driving questions to ask during the interview. All must be tailored to the person being interviewed and at least 5 must be fully customized.
- 1 point for only including generic questions, less than 5 customized questions, or a clear lack of effort.
- 0 points if missing

Reflection Responses (0.5 points)

- 0.5 point for thoughtfully responding to the reflection prompts - select the end product(s) of the informational interview, identifying and articulating the challenges you're currently facing. These are the topics you'd like to prioritize for the current conversation.
- 0 points for clear lack of effort, or missing

Initial Research (0.5 points)

- 0.5 point for researching the individual you are going to be talking with (for example: work history, information about their company/field, interests and skills, their areas of expertise, articles they've written or about them, other pieces of information that will help to generate specific questions)
- 0 points for clear lack of effort, or missing

Interview Summary

Reflection and Impressions (2 points)

- 2 points for a thoughtful and authentic reflection on what you learned and how it applies to your career goals. A short, but thoughtful, initial impression of the position and career. Reflection is approximately 1-2 paragraphs, the impression is a few sentences.
- 1 point for a summary of events, a clear lack of effort, or a cursory examination of what you learned from the interview.
- 0 points if missing

Completed Outline: Initial Research, Interview Questions, Responses (1 point)

- 1 point for a completed packet with: research specific to the individual you are talking to; tailored, driving questions asked during the interview and/or prepared for the interview; thorough notes of interviewer responses.

- 0.5 points for few or incoherent notes about their responses, or a clear lack of effort.
- 0 points if missing