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A Novel Calling Intervention for Career Development and Well-Being

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Abstract

Callings describe work that serves a cause greater than oneself and provides meaning and purpose in life. Living a calling at work has been linked with a number of positive outcomes including well-being, intrinsic motivation, and life satisfaction. In this capstone, I describe a career and professional development class at a major university designed to help professional, graduate and postdoctoral students, predominantly in biomedical disciplines, find more meaning and purpose through callings. The class incorporates classic career counseling concepts with a calling framework that includes self-awareness, authentic purpose, and strengths. This capstone provides an overview of the course and a qualitative summary of student feedback.

Keywords

calling, positive intervention, higher education, students, positive psychology, authenticity, purpose, meaning, strengths

Disciplines

Educational Psychology | Other Psychology | School Psychology | Student Counseling and Personnel Services

A Novel Calling Intervention for Career Development and Well-Being

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University of Pennsylvania

A Capstone Project Submitted

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Applied Positive Psychology

Advisor: David Yaden

August 1, 2014

A Novel Calling Intervention for Career Development and Well-Being

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Capstone Project
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Abstract

Callings describe work that serves a cause greater than oneself and provides meaning and purpose in life. Living a calling at work has been linked with a number of positive outcomes including well-being, intrinsic motivation, and life satisfaction. In this capstone, I describe a career and professional development class at a major university designed to help professional, graduate and postdoctoral students, predominantly in biomedical disciplines, find more meaning and purpose through callings. The class incorporates classic career counseling concepts with a calling framework that includes self-awareness, authentic purpose, and strengths. This capstone provides an overview of the course and a qualitative summary of student feedback.

Introduction

Lessons from religion, folklore, myths and fables have served as man's guide to life for millennia, according to author Joseph Campbell, a well-known comparative mythologist who studied common themes of stories from across both time and culture. However, the life lessons offered by religion and myth today are decreasingly relevant to our modern values and moral sensibilities. As a result, we are struggling as a society and as individuals to find meaning, purpose and the "rapture of being alive" (Campbell, 1988, p. 1). He states that we are not sure how to live our lives in relation to each other, nature, or our internal emotional lives (Campbell, 1988, Chapter 1). Campbell writes, "It is only those who know neither an inner call nor an outer doctrine whose plight is truly desperate; that is to say, most of us today..." (Campbell, 2008, p. 23).

The personal quest to fulfill our life's purpose and the "experience of being alive" is called the Hero's Journey, according to Campbell (2008, p. 1). This inward adventure begins with a "The Call to Adventure", or the "signs of the vocation of the hero" (2011, p. 36) in which he discovers meaning, power, possibly a transcendent gift, and the lost wisdom of our generation (2011, Chapter 1). In order to find your path, you must "follow your bliss and don't be afraid, and doors will open where you didn't know they were going to be" (Campbell, 1988, p. 150). In contrast, failing to heed one's calling changes the hero's reality: "his flowering world becomes a wasteland of dry stones and his life feels meaningless" (2008, p. 23).

Unfortunately, the life devoid of meaning and purpose still resonates today, suggesting the continued relevance of callings in our modern lives. Though many definitions of callings have been described in the literature (Table 1), **I define callings as**

sensing one's authentic purpose, which provides energy and direction in the pursuit of a meaningful life. When study participants are asked whether they have a calling, job or career, 30-40% of people, including college students, feel they have a calling (Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007; Wrzesniewski, McCauley, Rozin, & Schwartz, 1997). Of those without a calling, approximately half are either searching for their calling or struggle to find their vocational identity that will lead them to their calling. However, these findings assume either a binary (present vs. absent) or ternary (calling, career, job) calling construct (Dik, Duffy, & Eldridge, 2009; Duffy, Dik, & Steger, 2011; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). Newer calling assessments are based on the assumption that calling occurs on a spectrum (Dik et al., 2012; Hagemer & Abele, 2012).

According to Campbell, to engage the call can be a high, historical undertaking that leads to one's destiny and provides energy, religious illumination and self-awakening (2008). For example, Martin Luther King, Jr. is the epitome of a modern hero. King was rebellious and aimless until, with the help of a mentor, he finds meaning and purpose within the church. He becomes motivated and focused, completing his PhD and becoming a pastor by the age of 25. King's life takes yet another turn when asked to lead a boycott in response to the Rosa Parks arrest. He answers the call, undergoes many challenges such as criticism and threats, and is provided almost supernatural aid by thousands of supporters. King reaches hero status as a result of his epic "I Have A Dream" speech and receipt of the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize. He arguably changes history by leading the civil rights movement and inspiring millions of people worldwide (Bio.com, n.d.).

King's journey illustrates that callings may affect the quality of our lives, direction of our lives, and our ability to positively impact our world. Though callings are frequently

expressed within the work domain (Table 1), they can impact our entire life. Indeed, living a calling is associated with life satisfaction (Duffy, Allan, Autin, & Bott 2012a; Duffy, Bott, Allan, Torrey, & Dik, 2012b; Duffy, Dik, & Steger, 2011) and well-being (Hunter, Dik, & Banning, 2010), i.e. the ability to live a good life. When expressed within the work domain, callings positively impact career decidedness, career engagement, career decision self-efficacy, and intrinsic work motivation (Hirschi, 2011; Steger, Pickering, Shin, & Dik, 2010). In other words, living one's calling can enhance both personal well-being and professional success. Thus, modern man's search for meaning through work provides an enticing opportunity to enrich current vocational counseling strategies using innovative calling interventions.

In this capstone, I describe a career and professional development program that combines both classic career counseling with modern conceptions of calling in order to elevate students' career decision-making to that of the Hero's Journey. First, I explore the various perspectives of the concept of calling and compare callings to vocation, i.e., a strong, internal desire to pursue a certain type of work. Next, I summarize calling interventions in the literature and their limitations. I then describe a career development program and class that we created in order to test our calling intervention. Finally, I summarize and discuss student feedback regarding the course as a whole and its impact on their feelings, self-efficacy, meaning, purpose and career direction.

Table 1. <i>Elements of Calling Described In The Literature</i>						
Calling element*	Summons	Pro-social	Authentic	Meaning/purpose	Multiple domains	Other
Dik & Duffy (2009)	x	x		x		
Hunter et al. (2010)	x		x		x	
Hagmaier & Abele (2012)	x		x	x		
Baumeister (1991)	x	x	x	x		Morally and socially significant
Hall & Chandler (2005)		x	x			
Elangovan et al., (2010)		x	x			Energy and guidance toward action
Hirschi (2011)			x			Interests, values, work preferences
Wrzesniewski et al., (1997)		x			x	Deeply fulfilling
Dobrow & Tosti-Kharas, (2011)				x		Consuming and passionate
Bunderson & Thompson (2009)				x		Duty and destiny in one's work

Callings

Researchers have examined the phenomenon of callings, which often include sensing a summons or call (Table 1). Feeling the call or summons refers to a having a strong desire, which originates either externally or internally, to pursue a certain mission. The neoclassical interpretation of callings generally refers to an external or sacred summons in which one senses a call, often from God, to serve God or the community (e.g., Bunderson & Thompson, 2009). In contrast, the modern or secular interpretation of

callings refers to an internal summons that creates happiness and life satisfaction (Baumeister, 1991 and summarized by Dik, Byrne, & Steger, 2013a, Chapter 1; Wrzesniewski, Dekas, & Rosso, 2009).

Callings and vocation are often equated and defined as the pursuit of work filled with meaning and purpose (Dik & Duffy, 2009). Purpose is defined by Kashdan & McKnight (2009) as a central, self-organizing life aim, whereas meaning implies a sense of serving a higher purpose that is both significant and positive (Steger, Dik, & Duffy, 2012). However, callings and vocation are sometimes described as related but distinct concepts. According to some (Dik, 2013, Chapter 1; Wrzesniewski et al., 2009), callings may include a summons that can be either internal or external, but vocation may have an internally derived sense of purpose more consistent with the secular, modern definition of callings.

Callings and vocation may also differ in their focus, where the latter tends to emphasize the work domain (Dik, 2013, Chapter 1; Hartung & Taber, 2013). As such, vocation includes choosing a suitable career or trade based on clear sense of self and available job opportunities. Though vocation focuses on work, one's vocation also includes the dynamic and complex relationship between work and personal life and the possibility that work may be used as a vehicle for life design. In contrast, callings are sometimes defined as spanning multiple life domains and may not necessarily pivot around the work domain (Table 1).

In general, callings are comprised of some combination of a summons, authenticity or specificity to the individual, pro-social or altruistic orientation where the focus is on serving others, creation of meaning in one's life, or other elements such as multiple life domains and active participation. Different perspectives on callings containing varying

combinations of these elements have been described in the literature, with the summons being a common but not a necessary ingredient (Table 1). Callings have been described by Dik & Duffy (2009) as feeling the summons, a purpose in life, and a pro-social orientation. Others add a requirement for authenticity (Hagmaier & Abele, 2012), extending into multiple life domains (Hunter et al., 2010) or moral significance (Baumeister, 1991; Table 1).

On the other hand, secularized definitions of calling, i.e. those that do not include the summons, may also include elements such as pro-social purpose and authenticity, but appear to more frequently include work within the definition (Table 1). For instance, Hirschi (2011) endorses an authentic component to callings, especially as it relates to vocational identity. Wrzesniewski, McCauley, Rozin and Schwartz (1997) describe callings as deeply fulfilling work that is pro-social. The authors contrast callings with careers which involve personal investment and professional advancement, and jobs which primarily provide material benefit (Dik & Duffy, 2009; Wresniewski et al., 1997). Callings are also defined as meaningful careers used to help others (Duffy & Dik, 2013) or a meaningful passion for work (Dobrow & Tosti-Kharas, 2011).

Though sensing and living a calling are strongly associated with positive life and work outcomes, callings can also have a downside. Steger (APA Monitor, 2013) summarizes the downside of callings which includes difficulty in walking away from one's calling, and being vulnerable to exploitation because of one's deep commitment. In addition, stress and feelings of regret are more likely to occur when one feels they have missed or failed to fulfill a summons (Berg, Grant, & Johnson, 2010).

Several variables have been identified that potentially interfere with identifying the right work or career. Life's barriers and constraints such as socio-economics, family demands, negative thinking, unemployment, poor self-confidence, and dysfunctional career thoughts can infringe on effective career problem solving, decision-making and the pursuit of preferred career decisions. Racial or gender identity minorities also often have difficulty obtaining or maintaining employment in their chosen field suggesting that minority status may also play a role (Duffy et al., 2012b; Hall & Chandler, 2005). Therefore, maintaining independence from cultural influence, emotional intelligence (EQ), and authenticity could improve career decision-making (reviewed by Erford & Crockett, 2011) and possibly the ability to determine one's calling.

In summary, callings appear to include some combination of summons, meaning and purpose, authenticity, service, action, and multiple life domains (Table 1). I hypothesize that a calling includes sensing one's authentic purpose, or deeply resonant call from within, which provides direction in the pursuit of a meaningful career and life. This premise was used to design a calling intervention that focuses on authentic purpose in a course that also provides traditional career counseling.

Opportunities in Vocational Counseling

Traditional career counseling focuses on helping people, usually high school and college students, to create their individual work identity. The process relies predominantly on Holland's vocational theory. As reviewed by Holland (1997), the theory assumes 6 vocational personalities summarized by the acronym RIASEC (realistic, investigative, artistic, enterprising, social, conventional). This behavioral and personality assessment,

called the Strong Interest Inventory, matches the individual to occupations within their dominant domains.

In addition, a key role for vocational counselors involves helping individuals overcome obstacles in career decision-making until they make their occupational choice. Such barriers include narrowing the number of choices, considering job factors such as required training and salaries, matching personal qualities with the job, helping to mitigate perceived social barriers and improving student self-efficacy in the decision process. Assessments such as the Career Decision-Making Questionnaire can be used to help with the counseling process. Newer assessments in career decision-making, maturity and self-efficacy are also being empirically tested (summarized by Erford & Crockett, 2012 and Gati & Levin, 2014).

Modern enhancements to traditional career counseling seek to more effectively incorporate individual characteristics into the career development process. A current career construction approach builds upon RIASEC by using personal narratives to assess and integrate personal identity into the career development and design process (reviewed by Dik et al., 2013, Chapter 6 and Erford & Crockett, 2011). Career counselors help to guide the process based on the students' aptitude, interests and track record. However, because of the challenges in the changing economy and workplace, the field must evolve to accommodate the modern graduates' need for greater resilience, creativity and entrepreneurship (Brown & Lent, 2013, p. 21-25; Hartung & Taber, 2013).

More recently, some have proposed that callings should be included in the vocational development process (Dik & Duffy, 2012; Elangovan, Pinder, & McLean, 2010; Hirschi, 2011) in part because of the benefits of success, and work and life satisfaction

provided by callings. Accordingly, Elangovan and colleagues (2010) suggest that the field move toward a “calling counselors” approach. In other words, instead of focusing on aligning student interests with available jobs, the role of the counselor can be extended into helping others align and integrate their authentic passions, interests and desires, i.e. calling, with their vocational development.

Positive Psychology and Career Counseling

Man once turned to mythology as the guide to the good life (Campbell, 1988), but now we turn to science. Positive psychology, the science of well-being (Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Seligman, 2002, 2011), can provide the framework for a new calling intervention or career counselors approach. The good life or well-being, also known as eudaimonia, are created from PERMA (positive emotion, engagement, positive relationships, meaning and accomplishment; Seligman, 2011). Positive interventions are used in positive psychology to increase PERMA and well-being either by improving and enhancing positive emotions and activities or by decreasing negative emotions and activities (J.O. Pawleski, MAPP Lecture, September 8, 2013).

Researchers have empirically demonstrated that positive interventions can increase well-being by various means including creating positive emotion (for example, see Seligman, Steen, Park, & Peterson, 2005), satisfying experiences, feelings of autonomy and relatedness, positive habits and/or new tools for resilience (Layous & Lyubomirsky, 2012). One of positive psychology’s most important positive interventions is development of strengths (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Csikszentmihalyi & LeFevre, 1989; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Character strengths are individualized and highly contextualized

according to the values, interests, and goals of the individual (Biswas-Diener, Kashdan, & Minhas, 2011). Schwartz and Sharpe (2006) argue for the development of a “master” strength of practical wisdom, i.e., striving to achieve optimal balance in the use of one’s strengths. Strengths optimization can be cultivated through a process of enhanced awareness and development where the individual’s unique strengths patterns are capitalized to create flow, engagement, excellence and achievement (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Csikszentmihalyi & LeFevre, 1989; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Thus, building strength literacy and proficiency, so that one can improve strengths identification, application, and enrichment, could be key to building greater authenticity and achievement.

Pawelski (n.d.) deconstructs positive interventions in order to facilitate creation or effective use of positive interventions. He hypothesizes that all interventions consist of an activity or an intentional action, an active ingredient (such as questions), a target system that is in the psychological, physiologic or social domain, a target change such as self-efficacy or self-determination, and desired outcome or purpose. Using this construct, interventions may be selected or designed based on the characteristics of the individual and the goal of the intervention.

These principles of positive psychology and well-being potentially can be used to design a new calling intervention. For example, an effective calling intervention may use coaching or assessments to target the psychological domain and to increase self-determination and self-efficacy in vocational decision-making. The desired outcome may be to help individuals identify a career that will provide meaningful work and a life full of meaning and purpose. The tools could be designed to cultivate authenticity, meaning, and

positive emotion in careers or during career development. Therefore, an effective calling intervention has the potential to improve or create well-being at work and possibly across other life domains by building upon currently available interventions in calling (Dik & Duffy, 2012; Hirschi, 2011) or creating meaning at work (Wrzesniewski et al.,1997).

Calling Interventions

Perhaps in part because of the lack of agreement regarding the essential elements of calling (Table 1), empirically tested interventions designed to help one identify or sense a calling are not available in the literature. However, increasing meaning in the workplace through the related area of job crafting has been a subject of investigation. Interventions such as job crafting are designed to increase meaning in the workplace within the context of one's current job regardless of whether the calling can be pursued within available work roles. In addition, job crafting approaches generally do not help individuals prospectively identify the careers that will bring passion and meaning to their work.

Therefore, calling interventions are needed that can help workers prospectively select a career that can provide a deep sense of meaning and purpose. Such interventions have been proposed, but have not been tested empirically. To identify a unique sense of calling, Hirschi (2011) recommends that one uses self-reflection and self-exploration to discover authentic personal interests, values (i.e., what is important to individuals), and work preferences.

In contrast, Dik & Duffy's (2012) calling intervention suggests that one intentionally crafts a meaningful and purposeful future by either assessing the importance of the summons or focusing on meaning-making in the absence of a summons. Their approach is

consistent with job crafting where workers are encouraged to shift to tasks that enable the use of their interests, strengths and passions. Empirical studies show that job crafting increases skill, task complexity, efficiency, quality, job satisfaction and commitment (Rosso et al., 2010; Wrzesniewski et al., 2010). Though the approach is not designed to prospectively identify a career consistent with one's calling, the effort may eventually enable one to evolve into the right vocation. Overviews of similar efforts (Dik, Steger, Fitch-Martin, & Onder, 2013b; Rosso et al., 2010) suggest that meaning at work can also be acquired through authenticity, self-efficacy, self-esteem, purpose, a sense of belonging, transcendence and finding meaning in cultural and interpersonal contexts. Therefore, current approaches fail to demonstrate how to create a sense of calling that can help one select a life and career path infused with a sense of deep meaning and purpose.

The importance of finding the right career path through callings for our young people cannot be more strongly emphasized given today's dynamic and uncertain economy. Between the cost of college, graduate and professional education and an increasingly competitive job market, our young graduates need to efficiently identify the career path in which they are most likely to succeed. Even STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) disciplines are demonstrating limitations in employment capacity. For instance, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Advisory Committee to the NIH Working Group on the Future of Biomedical Research Workforce (2012) examined the trends in biomedical graduate and postdoctoral education, graduates' career outcomes, and the disconnect between the traditional academic focus of biomedical scientist and the limited academic job market. Indeed, over 50% of science and engineering graduates do not work in either science or engineering; a mere 15-16% of biomedical PhDs are

employed in faculty positions in academia (Fuhrmann, 2011; National Science Foundation, 2002; NIH Advisory Committee, 2012; Milesi, Selfa, & Milan, 2014) and a significant number are probably underemployed (National Science Foundation, 2010). This declining employment trend so far appears to be continuing given that the percentage of definite commitments at graduation are at a 10- and 20-year low for science and non-science PhD graduates, respectively (National Science Foundation, 2012). Therefore, even in STEM disciplines at the doctoral level, improved effectiveness in career and calling counseling and interventions could potentially make a significant impact in the work and well-being of our young people entering the workforce.

In conclusion, development of a new framework for calling and the workplace could provide improved vocational counseling, increased life satisfaction, work satisfaction and achievement for today's young graduates by identifying and pursuing authentic purpose to create deep meaning in the workplace. **I hypothesize that a successful calling intervention not only will put a graduate on a path toward a successful career, but also fuel her well-being across multiple life domains.** Therefore, I have piloted a program that combines traditional vocational counseling with a calling intervention based on the Hero's Journey calling concept in attempt to help students pursue an authentic career filled with meaning and purpose.

Methods

Course and Program Overview

A student development program designed to combine traditional vocational counseling with modern conceptions of calling was created in GRAD611, Professional and

Personal Development, as part of the larger career and professional program for graduate, professional and postdoctoral students called VCU BEST (Broadening Experiences in Scientific Training) at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). VCU BEST (Appendix 1) is an optional, 3-4 semester certificate program (transcript notation) designed to be a comprehensive career and professional development program that includes 1 elective and 2 required courses, including GRAD611 (Tables 2, 3; Appendix 2) and a seminar course highlighting non-academic careers. VCU BEST offers a range of assessment, experiential and didactic components for the purposes of identifying an authentic, meaningful, and successful career path (Table 2).

Though primarily designed to offer career, professional and personal development for young biomedical scientists, VCU BEST is open to all professional, graduate and postdoctoral students on campus. VCU BEST includes career mentoring by alumni and community members, experiential learning including shadowing and service-learning within the community or university, interdisciplinary team projects, and career skill electives that include topics such as leadership, innovation, entrepreneurship, ethics and team-building. In addition, traditional career counseling interventions begin in GRAD611 and continue through the larger VCU BEST program (Table 2).

In Spring 2014, the VCU BEST pilot program was launched beginning with enrollment in GRAD611 of 15 students including 5 postdoctorals (1 of which was an adjunct faculty member), 8 PhD students, 1 certificate student and 1 clinical pharmacy fellow. The group was comprised predominantly of female (73%) and domestic (87%) students from across both Medical College of Virginia and Monroe Park Campuses.

Students were recruited via email announcements to all graduate students and graduate

faculty as well as through flyers (Appendix 3) distributed to the postdoctoral association. Students either self-selected or were asked by their advisors to enroll in the class.

GRAD611 has four related learning objectives: self-awareness, personal brand, managing relationships and motivating yourself and others (Table 3; Appendix 2). The course is a combination of lectures, class discussions, and self-assessments as well as homework assignments that include journaling, reflective writing via blogs and essays, and feedback from peers via group discussion and blog responses. Deliverables included an elevator speech, a branded resume or curriculum vitae, personal mission statement (PMS) and individual development plan (IDP), all presented at the end of the course in an e-portfolio. Students had access to faculty mentors, trained strengths and executive coaches and vocational counselors during and after the course.

Table 2.		
<i>Components of Calling in GRAD611 and VCU BEST</i>		
<u>Calling and vocational components</u>	<u>GRAD611</u>	<u>VCU BEST</u>
Self-transcendence	See Positive emotion below	
Prosocial and work/life orientation	Personal Mission Statement (PMS) coaching	
Meaning and purpose	PMS	
Action-orientation	Individual Development Plan (IDP)	
Positive emotion	Class discussions <i>Journal and Blog Assignments :</i> What Went Well* Gratitude* Savoring* Inspiration Acts of kindness* Forgiveness* Cognitive reappraisal Compassion toward self and others	
Values	LuckStone Igniter (valuesbasedleader.com)	
Strengths	Flow journal assignment Clifton StrengthsFinders (CSF) assessment and training VIA strengths assessment Peak experiences Moments of excellence exercise Strengths spotting	
Authenticity	Excavation exercise (based on Ban Breathnach, 1998) Best Reflected Self * Best Possible Self * PMS	
Career options		Seminar course Career mentor Shadowing Vocational counseling
Career & vocational counseling	Begin assessments	Longitudinally throughout BEST
Interest and personality	Strong Interest Inventory Five Factor Model (Costa & McCrae, 1992)	

Emotional Intelligence (EQ)		
Job crafting	Optional exercise	Career skill development Interdisciplinary project courses
Self reflection	Journaling and blog assignments Group discussions Elevator speech Final essay PMS development IDP development Passions Glimpses of excellence	Longitudinally throughout BEST
* Seligman et al., 2005		
Table 2		

Table 3.	
<i>GRAD611 Topic Summary</i>	
<u>Lecture #</u>	<u>Lecture Title By Module</u>
Topic Module 1- Knowing and Managing Yourself	
1	Self Awareness – Overview with Peak Experience Paired Introductions
2	Self Awareness - Managing Yourself
3	Self Awareness - Steps
4	Self Assessment - StrengthsFinders
5	Self Assessment - The Change Process
6	Self Assessment - Five Factor Model
7	Self Assessment - Emotional Intelligence
8	Planning - Time Management
Topic Module 2 – Branding Yourself	
9	Develop the message - Elevator Speech
10	Develop the message – Feedback on Elevator Speech Self Assessment – Values in Action Character Strengths
11	Your Written Brand - Vitae, Resume
12	Effective Oral Presentations - Presence
13	Effective Oral Presentations – Feedback on Presentations, CV, IDP and PMS
Topic Module 3: Managing Professional Relationships	
14	Personal Learning Network – Creating Your PLN
15	Commitment-Trust Relationships
16	Maximizing and Managing Relationships – Managing Relationships
17	Maximizing and Managing Relationships – Conflict Management
Topic Module 4 – Motivating Yourself and Others	
18	Workplace Culture and Norms
19-21	Leadership and Self-Deception
22	Engaging with Work - Positive Psychology in the Workplace
23	Tying It Together – PMS, IDP
24	Job Crafting
(optional)	
Table 3	

Calling Intervention

A calling intervention, designed to elicit the student’s authentic purpose and action plan via the PMS and IDP respectively, was created and tested in GRAD611 to determine whether calling can enhance the students’ career development. The intervention itself was comprised of calling concepts and tools including meaning and purpose, values,

authenticity, pro-social orientation and personal reflection, which were then integrated into the PMS and IDP exercises (Tables 1, 2; Appendices 4, 5) in a manner intended to provide the ingredients for a Hero's Journey (Campbell, 2008).

First, the intervention focused on identifying the student's PMS, designed to identify the student's authentic purpose or call from within. Prior to the exercise, students were given assignments aimed at helping them to re-discover their early interests and desires (Excavation Exercise), learn what others view as their best attributes (Reflected Best Self Exercise), and envision their ideal future self (Best Possible Self) (Table 2). The students were then instructed to begin broadly drafting their PMS using additional self-reflection and envisioning exercises (Appendix 4). The PMS was later narrowed through coaching by a trained coach, consistent with the Elangovan and colleagues (2010) career coach model and Campbell's notion of a supernatural guide or helper (2008). Coaching was designed to help the student to avoid icebergs that could obscure authenticity such as 'should' and 'must' statements and thinking traps (such as tunnel vision and jumping to conclusions; Reivich & Shatte, 2002) that may impede their ability to identify their authentic purpose. Students were also asked, verbally and through coaching, to make their PMSs concise (1 sentence or less), global (applicable to both professional and personal life), and to consider whether a pro-social orientation was present.

Second, the intervention helped students to point their PMS or authentic purpose toward an action-based calling using the IDP (Appendix 5). The PMS by itself is insufficient as a career guide since it reflects a life philosophy and is accordingly global and broad. Thus, the IDP was used to help actualize the student's authentic life purpose through the creation of an action plan to direct their energy, consistent with the Elangovan and

colleagues' (2010) action-oriented calling construct and the Hero's Journey call to action (Campbell, 2008).

To create their calling action plan or IDP, students were asked to start with their PMS and then follow the clues, or what I call 'breadcrumbs,' to their calling. These breadcrumbs frequently are energizing activities and include their strengths (Clifton StrengthsFinders and VIA strengths; Rath & Conchie, 2009; authentichappiness.com; Peterson & Seligman, 2004), peak and flow experiences, values, passions, and glimpses of excellence (Table 2; Appendix 6). I view the breadcrumbs (in this case, derived from within) as akin to mentors who assist the Hero by providing guidance, gifts and inspiration for the journey (Campbell, 2008). The guidance provided by breadcrumbs help the students focus their IDP on broad goals aimed at developing their skills, exploring their interests and finding or creating career opportunities that enable use of their talents and passions.

I focus on flow and strengths for calling development because of the possibility for synergy with callings. Strengths may be used to intentionally create flow, self-transcendence, meaning and purpose. People experiencing flow are energized, intrinsically motivated and experience joy, creativity, a sense of mastery of their fate, alignment of goals and actions, and high performance (Brown & Ryan, 2004; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Csikszentmihalyi & LeFevre, 1989; Seligman, 2002, pp 102-121). In addition, according to the Broaden and Build theory, such positive emotion produces achievement in a mutually-reinforcing upward spiral (Frederickson, 2001, 2009). Accordingly, I also aim to cultivate positive emotion, inspiration, trust and camaraderie through class discussions and assignments (Table 2) to augment the students' Hero's Journey and the upward spiral.

In summary, the intervention was designed to help the student focus on their personalized global action plan (broad goals that enable their authentic purpose) and strategies (following their energy; using their strengths to find flow, peak experiences and excellence). I anticipate that the combination of authentic purpose and strengths will provide a mutually reinforcing flow/intrinsic motivation dynamic intended to increase self-efficacy, high performance, positive emotion and thus well-being.

Evaluation and Assessments

The students' final project consisted of an e-portfolio webpage, published publically at their discretion, consisting of their elevator speech and resume or vitae that reflect their personal brand, their PMS, IDP and any other supporting materials that they deemed appropriate. In addition, they were asked to write a 5-page essay describing what they learned in GRAD611 and how they will use that information going forward. Summary statements pertaining to the course objectives (self-awareness, personal brand, motivating yourself and others, and managing relationships), personal growth, career planning and general course impact were extracted from the final essays. The essays themselves were pooled and then transformed into a word cloud by wordle.net using word frequencies.

In addition, a course evaluation was administered at the end of the semester asking for course feedback in the following 4 areas: a) most and b) least helpful aspects of the course, c) what they would change about the course, and d) what, if anything, they would do differently after the course. The responses from each question were excerpted and organized by topic theme.

Assessments to measure calling (Calling Vocational Questionnaire, Dik, Eldridge, Steger, & Duffy, 2012; Multidimensional Calling Measure, Hagemer & Abele, 2012) and subjective comfort with course learning objectives were administered before and after the intervention and lectures. Given that VCU BEST is now in pilot stages, power analysis demonstrated that the sample size was not sufficiently large to analyze data regarding the impact of the calling intervention. However, comments from the evaluation and final essays will be used to plan future studies and course modifications.

Results

The calling intervention relied primarily on the PMS and IDP (Table 4, Appendices 4, 5), which were submitted at the end of the semester in an e-portfolio. All of the students were provided with some coaching either as an individual or part of a group discussion to facilitate the creation of a PMS that is succinct, global, and potentially pro-social. The students later submitted their final PMSs which appeared to largely comply with the requested criteria (Table 4).

Since the present pilot study did not have sufficient power for statistical analysis, student feedback regarding course and intervention effectiveness from the final essays (Table 5, Figure 1) and course evaluation (Table 6) were examined. The feedback indicated that the students as a whole benefitted from each of the course sections with the exception of personal brand (Tables 5, 6), though the learning objective assessment showed that student comfort with branding learning objectives improved after content delivery (not shown). Though most components of the course were viewed by at least some of the

students as “helpful” (Table 6), the strengths training seemed to be particularly useful and impactful to them in terms of self-awareness and understanding others (Table 5; Figure 1).

Based on the comments, the course appeared to have broad impact on some students in terms of how they felt about themselves or how they viewed themselves or the world, such as “(this course) made me realize that I am often harder on myself than what I should be” and “The language of the strength assessment type tests were like a pair of goggles from which one cannot take off – reality is forced to conform to them.” Many expressed an increase in self-efficacy, self-awareness, authenticity, empowerment, growth and change, such as “I uncovered the passion in life, learned of my strengths, as well as my morals and values all of which I was unsure existed. Being aware of my abilities and motivations caused had me to begin to stand up for the things I find important and my accomplishments. I was able to write about myself ... with confidence. I believed what I wrote and didn’t worry about the thoughts of others. I feel this course has given the tools I needed and I now feel more confident achieving my future goals. I know I can get to where I want to.” Often the students wrote about a change in perspective and feeling more focused on what they want to do professionally and/or personally such as “I finally found a clear picture of my life’s purpose.... By seeking the peak moments and linking my strengths, I finally figured out my ideal career.” Recognition of the importance of others is also apparent in their PMSs and final essays (note that student comments were condensed and presented in Tables 4, 5; Figure 1).

The student feedback from the course evaluations also demonstrated room for improvement. When asked what they found least helpful and what should be done

differently, the responses identified specific lecture topics, such as workplace dynamics, class assignments such as blogging, or course approaches such as the amount of homework. Organizing course concepts and activities into what feels like a cohesive product will be an area for future improvement as well as optimizing the timing and spacing of lectures, activities and discussions (Table 6).

Table 4.
<i>Students' PMS (End of Semester)</i>
<u>GRAD611 - Student PMS</u> Help those around me to accomplish both their professional and personal goals by mentoring and advising them to lead a balanced life Guide people to discover their authentic purpose Enabling people to be who they want to be To embrace nonsense and to amplify the signal in the noise To be a blessing to others To facilitate personal growth in others for the greater good To inspire and enable the health and well-being of individuals and communities To be a contributor to the well being of mankind and to build up healthy and committed individuals to continue this mission To foster connections, collaboration and synergy to create better understanding and optimal outcomes To use my active love in service and development To reduce preventable pain and suffering To positively enable others in a life affirming way To help others, especially those who can't speak up for themselves and are defenseless Using empathy, respect, and humor I will encourage and empower others to be positive self-advocates so they can achieve their dreams
Table 4

Table 5.
Excerpts From Final Essays By Topic

Course Topic	Comments from Final Essay (with subcategories)
<p>Self - awareness</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Self Awareness</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Self Management</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Empowerment</p>	<p><u>Specific self knowledge</u> - Much better understanding; more insight to myself; Dramatically raised my self-awareness; Uncovered the passion ... strengths ... morals and values all of which I was unsure existed</p> <p><u>Reaction to self-knowledge</u> - Surprised at the incongruity; A real eye-opener; eye opening; Enjoying the journey of self-realization</p> <p>Better (able to) deal with the stresses</p> <p>Making a plan and sticking to it</p> <p>Focusing my personal mission</p> <p>Figure out the barriers ..(and) manage them</p> <p>Makes me feel more relaxed</p> <p>I can ... accomplish (my goals)</p> <p>Empowering</p> <p>Putting a positive spin on life</p> <p>Work through my negative emotions</p> <p>Am often harder on myself than what I should be</p>
<p>Managing relationships</p>	<p>More tolerant of (others); More accepting</p> <p>More often have well gauged reactions and am slower to anger</p> <p>People make decisions based mostly on how you make them feel; not tearing others down; Makes me more understand others; (My friends and family) feel stronger that they are being loved... I get joyful and enduring relationships (as a result)</p>
<p>Motivating yourself and others</p>	<p>Help me accomplish what I set out to do</p> <p>Letting others know that I appreciate their dedication and help</p> <p>Being self-aware ...is critical to my professional success</p> <p>I am never going to stop striving</p>
<p>Personal growth</p>	<p>Getting feedback</p> <p>Being present; Meditate more regularly ... notice .. beautiful detail in the world</p> <p>Think more critically about what I consider failure; More self-aware .. (and) more accepting</p>
<p>Planning career</p>	<p>Better understand where I want to go with my career; I'm (now) on the right (career) track(with) a greater understanding of what I want to do... and.. headed in the right direction</p> <p>Found my mission... I believe in this mission strongly; Clear picture of my life's purpose....(and) my ideal career; learned... what I really wish to do in life</p>
<p>Impact</p>	<p>Making change</p> <p><u>Positive change</u> - Really change me a lot. I benefit from it; Make some key changes in my life that will lead to a happier and healthier me; Made me a different person and assesses life differently; I begin to stand up for the things I find</p>

	important and my accomplishments
Feelings	<u>Ingredients for change</u> - I learned...(what) was essential for change...I am excited about this change <u>Positive Emotion</u> - Improve my life by changing the way I feel ; More happy and more confident ; Comforting ...to learn the reasons behind my own feelings, observations and behavior
Direction, Meaning and Purpose	<u>Emotion+ Direction</u> - I feel empty ... lost ... (then) I managed to find out what is the meaning of life <u>Meaningful Direction</u> - Defined the direction in which I need to go; Have my personal mission statement... and (pursue) my career goal; One of the most impactful lessons ... was developing my personal mission statement; Important(ce of living) your personal mission in both your personal and professional life; Shape my personal and professional life
Authenticity	I have to be authentic I've reclaimed my authentic self.
Self-efficacy/confidence	<u>Tools</u> - Can overcome .. Given (me) the tools I needed; Given me the tools to overcome barriers I may encounter and continue my mission; Learned what professional skills and attributes I should gain for future success; a foundation for a good career <u>Positive emotion</u> - Feel more confident achieving my future goals; Helped me give the most successful presentation in my career; Very empowering ; More focused and feel more assertive
Perspective	<u>Broader</u> - Think outside the box ; A wealth of material to think about. <u>Healthier</u> - More focus(ed) on these advantages of myself rather than my weakness; Step out of my own irrational mind frame and learn some important truths <u>Different</u> - Like a pair of goggles from which one cannot take off ; Reframe how I thought of things in my life; Valuing more my accomplishments and thoughts; Everything we go through does make us who we are today This transition ... will continue for the remainder of my life .
General course comments	This is one of the most helpful courses I have ever taken One of the more unusual yet useful courses I've taken
Table 5	

Table 6.
Themes From Mid- and Final-Course Evaluation

<u>Comments by Theme</u>	<u>a) Most helpful</u>	<u>b) Least Helpful</u>	<u>c) Recommended Changes</u>
Lecture topic	Self awareness Knowing my strengths Emotional intelligence Public speaking Managing conflict Branding and presentation tips Time management All the topics were helpful	I love it all! A lot of time spent on workplace dynamics Elevator speeches and time waster classes Spend more time on time-management strategies All the topics were helpful Future career choice	Strong Interest Inventory More interactive conflict management I would not change much Less workplace dynamics, more career-focused learning Put personality assessments at beginning of class and decrease number of topics discussed I liked them the way they are More focus on what is needed for job search, interview skills, networking or crafting resumes and CVs The job crafting lecture should be (required)
Assessment, tools and exercises	Writing the blog IDP Writing the PMS The Reflected Best Self exercise	Too much homework; streamline them Journaling Hard to understand the point of some of the personal assessments Blogging weekly - somewhat repetitious	More clear structure of what will be discussed and how to use the IDP template

Course design	<p>Personal development I have enjoyed every bit of GRAD611 so far; I love it and will be sad when it's over Meeting others outside one's own discipline Group discussion; it's ok to acknowledge (our) emotions Journaling prompts</p>	<p>Personal journey-type of work Disconnect between journaling/blogging and class discussions About career direction Not getting response back from faculty mentor</p>	<p>More cohesion between blog/journaling in discussions but they may have led to more open-ended discussions Minimize personal relations work and more tools to manage personal life More time for group discussion</p>
<p>d) Course outcomes comments AND What you will do differently after GRAD611</p>	<p>Feel differently</p>	<p>Realize the value of emotional responses Be more self aware Be more confident View differently individuals with whom I have conflicts Recognize when I'm "in the box" and try to treat others as a person</p>	
	<p>Create new habits and use new tools</p>	<p>Manage my time better Be more diligent about journaling Use my strengths Writing every day to organize my feelings Blog more Using conflict resolution points Better self and relationship management</p>	
	<p>Change focus or direction</p>	<p>Steer my career in a direction I never thought of Think about how my work aligns with my personal mission</p>	
	<p>Change perspective or view</p>	<p>Become more aware of myself in different professional situations Be more authentic and less Machiavellian</p>	
<p>Table 6</p>			

subsequent action plan (Appendices 4, 5). We started with a traditional PMS exercise format which used self-reflection, interests, values and passions; indeed, cultivating our interests, skills and values may contribute to an internal calling (Duffy & Dik, 2013). Student coaching allowed us to ensure the student's PMS was consistent with their innermost desire for impact on the world, was as concise as possible, felt deeply authentic to the student, and applied globally to their life (Table 4).

Consistent with this premise, most students seemed to have a PMS that was intuitive, fairly specific and tended to be pro-social (Table 4). To illustrate using my own PMS as an example, my PMS is to help others be the "best possible version of themselves"; not "helping others maximize who they already are." Though similar to my actual PMS, this latter version does not reflect my authentic purpose. During coaching, students may state that a particular phrase is not quite right; coaching continues until they indicate that that they have discovered just the right wording.

Since having "true self-knowledge" or authenticity predicts life meaning (Schlegel, Smith, & Hirsch, 2013), centering vocational planning around a deeply authentic PMS could infuse a student's life and work with meaning and purpose. This preliminary study suggests that the PMS exercise was helpful to many of the enrolled students for providing global direction and focus to their lives and career planning. Statements such as "This course really allowed me to think about new directions to take my career path ... I feel like I'm on the right track" and "I finally found a clear picture of my life's purpose.... I finally figured out my ideal career" suggest that their sense of purpose provides direction and motivation to their career journey and perhaps even broadly to their lives (Table 5).

In addition, strengths seemed to be perceived by the students as a useful approach to build self-awareness, self-efficacy, positive relations and positive emotions (Tables 5, 6; Figure 1). Strengths may also be an effective tool for pursuing one's calling. For example, statements such as "I can use strengths to accomplish (my goals)" and "Strengths help me accomplish what I set out to do" indicate that this intervention may help to provide tools to enable one's mission (Table 5). Furthermore, the course as a whole seems to have had a personal impact on a subset of students as indicated by statements such as "GRAD 611 helped me to step out of my own irrational mind frame and learn some important truths" and "GRAD611 has made me a different person and assesses life differently. I feel like this class has given me the tools to overcome barriers I may encounter and continue my mission" (Table 5).

The current pilot study suggests that developing a student's calling through identification and direction of authentic purpose may provide a useful starting point for students' vocational journey leading to a satisfying career (Tables 4-6). Though preliminary feedback for GRAD611 is largely positive, additional course improvements such as more effectively monitoring and modeling the expectations around journaling, blogging, blog feedback, and active constructive responding during peer feedback could improve course and intervention outcomes. The branding section will be reviewed to determine whether it can be made to be more impactful, perhaps by integrating into the PMS and IDP as a way to communicate and live authentic purpose. Furthermore, the course in its current form should be extended past the usual 15-week semester or reformatted due to the density of the content and the time needed for adequate self-reflection.

In addition to replicating the intervention with a larger cohort in the future, questions remain regarding intervention efficacy, reproducibility given the PMS coaching component, and logistics of intervention scale-up to a larger cohort. Additional studies in the areas of achievement, long term outcomes, and optimum age/career stage for intervention are also needed. Also, since this intervention took place in the context of a larger course that had several positive interventions, the calling intervention should be tested in isolation from other positive interventions to determine what are the minimum ingredients for efficacy. Reproducibility of the coaching portion of the intervention will also be a topic for future research and development.

Empirical measures regarding the efficacy of this course are in progress in the areas of feeling a calling, career self-efficacy, and efficacy based on vocational identity and initial calling orientation (have a calling, searching for a calling, versus not searching for a calling; Duffy & Sedlacek, 2007; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). However, despite the many remaining questions for this specific intervention, the practical implications in general of a successful calling intervention potentially include taking vocational counseling and career development to the next level, i.e., helping individuals identify and create a deeply satisfying career filled with achievement, engagement, purpose and meaning that fuels a flourishing life.

Conclusion

According to Joseph Campbell (1988, 2008), man's life purpose is to engage in a Hero's Journey that leads him to his destiny. To date, research and interventions in vocational and positive psychology have provided pieces of the Hero's Journey that help

bring people closer to more meaningful and purposeful work through interventions such as job crafting. However, the Hero's Call to Action, or calling, has largely gone unstudied or have been limited to creating meaning in the work domain.

Campbell states, "There is perhaps nothing worse than reaching the top of the ladder and discovering that you're on the wrong wall" (Campbell, n.d.). Thus, a successful calling intervention should enable individuals to select authentic pathways that provide a deeply meaningful career and life, and help us to "let go of the life we planned so as to have the life that is waiting for us" (Campbell, n.d.). This calling intervention is designed to help individuals heed the call and provide energy and direction toward a achieving a deeply meaningful life:

"We have not even to risk the adventure alone; for the heroes of all time have gone before us, the labyrinth is fully known; we have only to follow the thread of the hero-path. And where we had thought to find an abomination, we shall find a god; where we had thought to slay another, we shall slay ourselves; where we had thought to travel outward, we shall come to the center of our own existence; where we had thought to be alone, we shall be with all the world" (Campbell, 1988, Chapter 5).

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APPENDIX 1

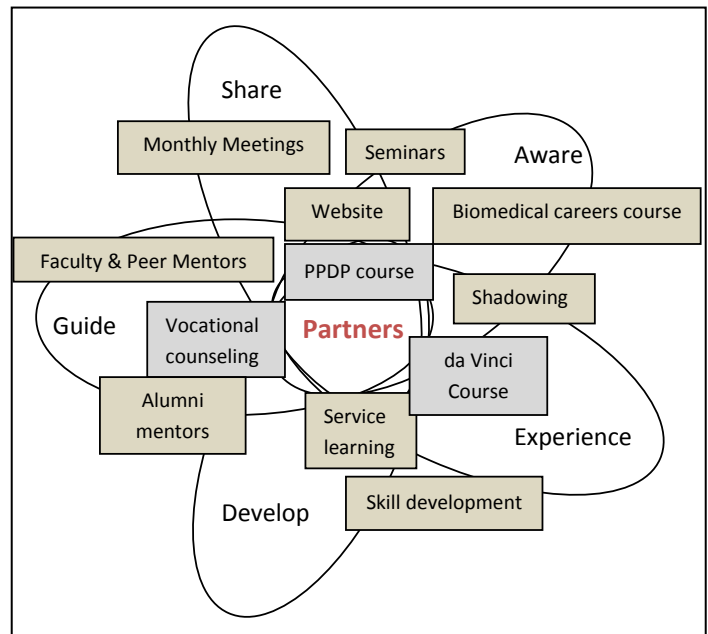
VCU Best Conceptual Outline

Vision:

Transform the culture of biomedical scientist training at VCU by developing AEGDS, a training platform that broadens student *awareness* of potential careers in biosciences, provides opportunities for students to *experience* those career paths, provides *guidance* that enables students to select the career path(s) that best suit their interests and personalities, allows students to *develop* the technical, leadership, communications, and specialized skills sets necessary to be successful in their chosen career paths, and encourages students to *share* their experiences, thereby broadening exposure of others in the community. We envision that AEGDS-trained students will be better prepared to select the right career paths, work in interdisciplinary teams in those careers, and mentor other aspiring biomedical scientists.

Objectives:

1. Create an innovative student/postdoctoral professional and personal development program that puts student on an optimized, individualized career path that incorporates their strengths and personal goals.
2. Build a sustainable program that builds on existing/volunteer faculty and resources and unique training opportunities already in place at VCU. Each participating unit at VCU will be counseled in mechanisms to sustain and continue the program after the funding period, in collaboration with a campus steering committee.
3. Develop mechanisms to engage the entire VCU community, as well as alumni, and community partners – alumni engagement/participation, providing and encouraging interdisciplinary participation throughout schools/programs and with partner organizations, seminars for campus community
4. Empower students to engage, take responsibility for their future, improve self-knowledge and self-management, and for mentoring others to do the same.



- Ongoing evaluation to optimize the program and ensure that it continues to meet the needs of trainees and mentors.

Table 1. Summary of VCU BEST Certificate of Completion (certificate enrollment not required for participation)						
REQUIREMENT PILLAR	Timeline	Course work	Mentoring	Experiential	Partnerships	Assessment^a (program/personal)
GRAD611 - Professional and Personal Development (PPD) – 2 credits	1 st semester (mentoring all 2 yrs)	X	X			X /X
Biomedical Science Careers Seminar – 1 credit	2 nd semester	X			X (Alumni Assoc)	X /-
Project Course ^b or Service Learning (1-2 credits elective)	3 rd semester	X		X	X (da Vinci Center and community partners)	X /-
Supplemental Career Skills - VCU elective or up to 3 Career Skill Courses (2-3 cr elective)	4 th semester	X		X	X (Graduate School and other units)	X/-
Vocational counseling	All 4 semesters		X		X (UCC)	X /X
Shadowing	2 nd semester	(reflection)	X		X (Alumni Assoc and corporate partners)	X/-
Monthly meeting	All 4 semesters		X (also peer mentoring)			X/X

^aAssessment - Managed by vocational psychologist, Victoria Shivy, Dept. Psychology. Used for program assessment and improvement. Trainees will also be given self-assessments in the PPD.

^b Team projects – choice between:

- Product innovation - EGRB591-905 Innovation course, course coordinator Russ Jamison
- Administration/management interdisc teams – VCU project (ala GEHLI)
- Service Learning project participation – VCU or beyond

Table 2. VCU BEST Partners

BEST Component	Partner
BEST investigators/steering committee	Schools of Pharmacy, Allied Health, Medicine, Education, College of Humanities and Sciences, Office of Vice President for Research, Graduate School, UCC
Unit Coordinators	Schools of Pharmacy, Allied Health, Medicine, Education, Dentistry, Engineering, Nursing, College of Humanities and Sciences, VCU Life Sciences
Experiential Learning	Office of Community Engagement; participating VCU units, participating community partners
Vocational counseling	UCC, College of Humanities and Sciences
Elective offerings	Graduate School (will also involve many units in course creation such as Technology Transfer), UCC, da Vinci Center and affiliated partners all academic units at VCU (Appendix 4)
Career Mentors	Alumni Association
Shadowing	Alumni Association; Shadowing host sites
Core curriculum	Graduate School, Biomedical science units (contribute and identify seminar speakers),
BEST administration	OVP, Graduate School, BEST investigators, VCU Development Office (resources)
Advisor/program director training	VCU Global Education Office
BEST Advisory Committees	Participating VCU units, alumni representing non-academic careers, PSGP Graduate Advisory Board
Team projects	Any unit at VCU

VCU BEST TEAM/Steering Committee

Table 3. VCU BEST Steering Committee			
Susanna Wu-Pong, PI	School of Pharmacy	Barbara Boyan	School of Engineering
Ann Nichols-Casebolt, co-PI	OVP	Suzanne Barbour	School of Medicine
Aron Lichtman	School of Medicine	Mark Shaefermeyer	Graduate School
Joyce Lloyd	School of Medicine	William Korzun	School of Allied Health Professions
Victoria Shivy	College of Humanities and Sciences	Rosalyn Hargraves	Schools of Engineering and Education
Joseph Testani	UCC		

Note: Institutional and External Advisory Boards will also be used to provide feedback and guidance on BEST program assessment, execution, and future directions.

Appendix 2

Professional and Personal Development, GRAD611

Spring 2013

Meeting times: Mon, Th 4:00-5:30 pm (2.0 credits)

Location: Smith 224

Course coordinator:

Dr. Susanna Wu-Pong, Dean's Office
Smith 500a
swupong@vcu.edu
828-4328

Course faculty:

Dr. David Holdford
Dr. Jean Gasen
Dr. Teresa Carter
Others as indicated on syllabus

Course goals:

- Develop leadership and professional development opportunities for professional, graduate and post-doctoral students that will enable them to thrive in today's professional environment and empower them to make meaningful contributions to society as they realize their potential as future leaders
- Build a network of internal and external partnerships and identify resources to support and guide *leadership* and professional development initiatives for professional, graduate and post-doctoral students

Learning Objectives:

See table below.

Course Description:

This 2 credit course is open to graduate students and postdoctoral fellows at VCU. The course will meet regularly for the equivalent of 2 -3 hours/week (1-1.5 hours lecture plus laboratory). The course will involve self-assessment student participation, and development of the student's personal mission statement (PMS) and individual development plan (IDP) in consultation with faculty and alumni mentors from the student's discipline.

Student eligibility and Enrollment:

- Pre-submission of CV required; will enroll up to 20-25 students for Spring 2014

A Novel Calling Intervention

- Enrollment therefore will be by permission of instructor
- Cost for materials – est \$100 – 150. Students are encouraged to seek support from their units for materials if scholarships are not available. Students will be required to cover the cost of the materials at the start of the program if other support is not available.

Mentor/School element:

A mentor/advisor from the student's school and alumni will be recruited to review and provide feedback on self-assessment practices, personal mission statement and personal development plan.

Grading:

This course is graded S/U/F. To complete this course successfully, students must complete the assignments (see Tables below) from each module in a satisfactory manner, determined by criteria established by the respective instructor. Students will have until the end of the semester to satisfactorily complete all assignments. Failure to do so by the end of the semester will result in an I grade with a defined timeline for completion. After that date, the grade will be converted to either a U or an F.

Attendance:

Attendance is required to all sessions. Make-up assignments may be provided for any classes that are missed.

PMS and IDP assignments:

PMS and IDP discussions will occur during class sessions. MENTOR FEEDBACK must be obtained prior to the discussion. Plan on giving your mentor at least 3 business days advance to review your draft.

Writing Guidelines:

Though this course is S/U/F, we do expect that you will put your best effort into each assignment in terms of your preparation, thoughtfulness and writing. Though we will not be grading on the quality of your writing, please try to submit your best work in terms of grammar and clarity.

Journaling:

1. Find a time/place to journal every day – Journaling should become part of your routine for the semester. Pick a time of day (either when you first arise, get to school, arrive home, or at the end of your school day or at bedtime) that you think you can consistently have five minutes to contemplate consistently and without distraction.
2. Pick a medium – your journal can either be paper/pen or electronic. Pick whatever format will work best given your lifestyle and preference.
3. Format – the journal is for you so you can write as little or as much as you want. The weekly reflection blog (see Weekend below) should be detailed and contain enough content for your classmates to understand and comment on. Use the questions in the

table as a guide for your reflection. Weekly blog is due Saturday at midnight. You must comment on at least two classmates blog by class on Monday.

4. Content - The topic of the week will be assigned each Monday.
5. Weekdays – do the assignment each weekday.
6. Weekend – each weekend you will reflect on the past week and post on the course blog site. Your blog should be no more than 1 page double spaced. This is due Saturday at midnight each week. You will also read the blogs of your classmates and comment on at least two of them by noon on the following Monday.

Homework:

Homework will be assigned most weeks on Monday. Typically assignments will be due at the end of the week but some may have more than one week allotted. A summary, no longer than 1 page (double spaced), will be due Saturday at midnight prior to the lecture due date. You will have until the following Monday to comment on at least two classmates homework blog.

TOPIC 1 - Knowing and managing yourself

Wk	Dates		Topic/Learning Objectives	Instructor	Assignment
1	1-M, Jan 13	Unit 1: Lectures 1-3	Paired intro exercise	Gasen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin Journal
	2-Th, Jan 16		"Self Awareness"	Discuss why you need know and manage yourself before you can lead others	
2	3-M, Jan 20 (holiday?)		List the basic steps of self awareness and self management	Gasen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values assessment • Begin Personal mission statement
			PMS and journal exercise assignment	SWP	
	4-Th, Jan 23	Unit 2: "Self Assessment"	Use Strengths Finders or other assessment tools to assess your personal strengths	SWP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>StrengthFinders</u> Test due Lecture 4; bring copy of all results
3	5-M, Jan 27		Discuss the change process and identify areas where you wish to change	SWP	

			or grow and include in your plan to implement that change Mission statement, journaling discussion;		
4	6- Th, Jan 30		Five Factor Model	Shivy	• Five Factor assessment – Due: Lecture 6
	7-M, Feb 3		Five Factor Model	Shivy	
	8-Th, Feb 6		Define emotional intelligence and discuss why it is essential for influencing others	Deaton	• EQ - <u>Emotional Intelligence 2.0</u> Test due: lecture 8
5	9-M, Feb 10	Unit 3 "Planning"	Discuss the importance of effective time and energy management; develop an initial time management plan;	Holdford	
			Discussion PMS	SWP	• PMS - Working draft due Lecture 9

TOPIC 2 - Branding Yourself

Wk			Topic	Instructor	Assignments
6	10-Th, Feb 13	Unit 4: Lectures 10-11 – "Develop the message"	Actionable descriptors Draft "elevator speech"	Holdford	• Elevator speech due Lecture 12
	11-M, Feb 17		Discuss PMS working draft, journaling, IDP	SWP	Begin Individual Development Plan; 1 st draft due Lecture 16
	12-Th, Feb	Unit 5:	Vitae, online Professional	Carter	• 1 st Draft of CV

7	20 13-M, Feb 24	Lectures 12-14 - "Your written brand"	etiquette		due Lecture 12 • Branded CV due Lecture 16
	14-Th, Feb 27		Review elevator speech		
8	15-M, Mar 3	Unit 6: Lectures 15-16 - "Effective oral presentations"	Presence	SWP	• Career mentor contact due Lecture 16
	16- Th, Mar6 (Mar 9-16 spring break)		Discussion - CV, IDP, PMS feedback; IDP implementation	SWP	

TOPIC 3 - Managing Professional Relationships

			Topic	Instructor	Assignments
9	17-M, Mar17	Unit 7: Lectures 17-18 "Personal learning network"	Creating your PLN	Nugent	
	18 -Th, Mar 20				
10	19- M, Mar24	Unit 8: Lectures 19-20 "Commitment-Trust Relationship"	Commitment-Trust	Holdford	• Feedback from Career Mentor due Lecture 20
	20- Th, Mar27		Discussion – IDP, journaling, Career Mentor; REVIEW career assessments		

11	21-M, Mar 31	Unit 9: Lectures 21-22-	Managing relationships and expectations	Gasen	Conflict dynamic profile due Lecture 21
	22- Th, Apr 3	"Maximizing and managing relationships"	Conflict management	Gasen	

TOPIC 4 -Motivating Yourself and Others

			Topic	Instructor	Assignments
13	23-M, Apr 7	Unit 10: Lecture 23 "Workplace culture and norms"	Workplace culture and norm	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final drafts PMS and IDP due Lecture 23
14	24-Th, Apr 10	Unit 11: Lectures 24-26-	Leadership and Self-Deception	SWP	
	25-M, Apr 14				
15	26-Th, Apr 17	Unit 12: Lectures 27-28 "Engaging with work"	Positive psychology in the workplace Self-awareness and strengths at work	SWP	
	27-M, Apr 21				
16	28-Th, Apr 24	Unit 13: Lecture 29-30 Life's purpose	Discussion – IDP, PMS	SWP	
	29-M, Apr 28				
	30- Th, May 1			SWP	

Appendix 3

V C U

Broadening Experiences in Scientific Training:

A career and professional development program for doctoral and postdoctoral scientists in the biomedical sciences.

- Aware - increase awareness of career options
- Experience - broaden exposure to career options
- Guide - career path guidance and counseling
- Develop - grow career skills
- Share - experiences with other students and biomedical scientists

Begins Spring 2014

WHO

Any VCU graduate student or postdoctoral
can participate in any/all components. Partners include VCU Graduate School, Office of the Vice President for Research, Office of Community Engagement, da Vinci Center, Alumni Association, University Career Center. Service learning sites will include any unit at VCU or beyond that wishes to involve a junior biomedical scientist in a project.

WHAT ELSE

Participants will work on their CV, individual development plan, personal mission statement, identifying career paths, and interviewing skills.

B E

S T

HOW (+ how you can assist)

- Courses in Professional and Personal Development (GRAD611), Career Skills, and seminars+ on Nontraditional Career Paths
- Interdisciplinary projects
- +Faculty, alumni and peer mentoring
- +Service learning/community engagement
- +Shadowing with alumni
- Vocational counseling
- Career Counseling
- An optional 6-8 credit curriculum spanning two years resulting in a Certificate of Completion

WHAT NEXT

For program information, program application or to become involved as a mentor, shadow host or service learning site, please go to http://www.pharmacy.vcu.edu/programs/graduate/vcu_best/, contact Susanna Wu-Pong or a unit coordinator:

- Pharmacy – Susanna Wu-Pong (swupong@vcu.edu)
- Medicine – Aron Lichtman (alichtman@vcu.edu) Joyce Lloyd (jlloyd@vcu.edu), Suzanne Barbour (sbarbour@vcu.edu)
- Engineering and Education – Rosalyn Hargraves (rhobson@vcu.edu)
- College H&S – Victoria Shivy (vshivy@vcu.edu)
- Allied Health Professions – Bill Korzun (wjkorzun@vcu.edu)
- Graduate School – Mark Schaefermeyer (mjschaeferme@vcu.edu)
- University Career Center – Joe Testani (jatestani@vcu.edu)

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY



VCU

Make it real.

Appendix 4

VCU School of Pharmacy

Professional and Personal Development Program, Pilot

Personal Mission Statement Exercise

Overview -

A personal mission statement reflects you, your vision and your values, and serves as your guide, or your constitution, to living your life. Your mission may evolve over time, and you should review it regularly to make sure your mission statement is still applicable to you.

Purpose -

- To identify the areas of your life in which you find meaning, passion and engagement and in terms of what you want to be and do in your life
- To focus your activities, leadership and personal development around these areas

Writing Process -

- Allow plenty of time for introspection and reflection while performing this exercise. Phase 1 requires approximately 3 hours.
- Find a quiet place where you can reflect and be uninterrupted while you work. Consider both your personal and professional life when answering the questions. Take the time to reflect thoughtfully on each answer; this will allow you to create a statement that is the best reflection of *you*.

Writing Assignment -

PHASE 1

1. Visualization exercise – for each visualization, describe your vision in as much detail as possible, including what the scene or people look like, how you feel in the moment, how things are said. You do not need to share this with anyone but be prepared to discuss elements of your narrative with your mentor. This will help with your creative process for the remainder of Phase 1.

- a. Write your own eulogy
 - b. Imagine your family at your 25th and 50th anniversary milestones. Describe your family relationship at each of these milestones. If you are married, include your spouse in this exercise.
 - c. Visualize your retirement party and your colleagues do a “roast”. What will they say about your contributions and achievements?
 - d. Assume you have only 1 semester to live and that you’ll continue to be a student during this time. What will you do and how will you live during this semester?
2. Next, go to the Franklin Covey Mission Statement Builder and complete the exercise (<http://www.franklincovey.com/msb/>). Save and print your results.

NOTE: The action plan sections should be saved and considered for inclusion in for your IDP.

2. Draft your mission statement - Begin your mission statement draft with the following statement, "My mission in my personal and professional life is...."

Now, write continuously for five minutes without stopping and without worrying about content or style.

3. At least 1 day later, write a draft of your mission statement. Send this draft to your mentor for review, comments, and for drafting your first IDP. Revise your statement after receiving feedback from your mentor. You will also discuss this draft in group discussion in class.

PHASE 2

1. Review and edit your mission statement - every 4-6 weeks over the next 3-4 months. Each time you reconsider your mission statement, find a quiet time and space, and reflect deeply on what is most important and meaningful to you.
2. Review and edit your IDP according to your final mission statement.

References:

Covey, SR, The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, *Simon & Schuster, New York, 1989*

www.franklincovey.com

VCU School of Pharmacy

Professional and Personal Development Program, Pilot

Individual Development Plan

<p>2. Able to present oneself and personal mission positively: I present my personal and professional goals such that...</p> <p>3. Competently manages relationships: I am aware of my role in my personal and professional relationships ...</p> <p>4. Motivates self and others: I understand sources of motivation for myself and others and I....</p>	<p>mission positively: Look for opportunities to network and to present myself and my goals....</p> <p>3. Competently manages relationships: Evaluate and plan how to improve.....</p> <p>4. Motivates self and others: Enlist others to help....</p>
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Development Outcomes/Actions	Due Date	Status
1a. Demonstrates self-knowledge:		Not Started
Action:		Not Started
Action.		
Advisor/faculty Commitment, Resources and Support Needed:		
Progress and Achievements:		
1b. Exhibits ability to manage self:		Not Started
Action:		
Action:		Not Started
Advisor/faculty Commitment, Resources and Support Needed:		
<i>Seek third party feedback and coaching as appropriate.</i>		
Progress and Achievements:		
2. Able to present oneself and personal mission positively:		Not Started
Action:		Not Started
Action:		Not Started

VCU School of Pharmacy

Professional and Personal Development Program, Pilot

Individual Development Plan

Advisor/faculty Commitment, Resources and Support Needed:		
Provide coaching as appropriate.		
Progress and Achievements:		
3. Competently manages relationships:		Not Started
Action:		Not Started
Action:		Not Started
Advisor/faculty Commitment, Resources and Support Needed:		
Progress and Achievements:		
4. Motivates self and others:		Not Started
Action:		Not Started
Action:		Not Started
Advisor/faculty Commitment, Resources and Support Needed:		
Progress and Achievements:		

Mentoring
I am in a mentoring partnership : Yes/No with student _____ or other professional _____

Signatures

VCU School of Pharmacy

Professional and Personal Development Program, Pilot

Individual Development Plan

Student Signature and Date

Mentor Signature and Date

60 €

Appendix 6

VCU BEST PROGRAM

Professional and Personal Development, GRAD611

Pointing Your PMS

You should have a rough draft of your PMS by now. The PMS should be a brief and concise statement that summarizes your unique and authentic purpose in both your professional and personal life. You should not have a different statement for each as you are *the same person in both contexts*. If you haven't refined your PMS, don't worry. It is a living statement and you should continue to revisit and revise it as necessary.

The question now is, how do you direct and orient your PMS? Think about the WHAT you will do as separate from HOW you will do it.

- **WHAT** you do is dependent on what your values are, VIA strengths, and breadcrumbs. You began to touch upon breadcrumbs in your peak experiences and flow homework. They include things you yearn for, things you do with ease and excellence, often surprising yourself and others, activities that put you into flow.

Breadcrumbs can also be disguised as setbacks. As you consider your breadcrumbs, think of times you have surmounted obstacles or have been redirected to something that worked out well.

- **HOW** you do it involves using your CSF and VIA strengths, as optimally as possible.

<i>Aspect of me:</i>	Where I can find this:	Specifically, I am.....
<i>What I'm here for:</i>	PMS	
<i>What's important to me:</i>	Values (Luck Stone Igniter or Holdford HO)	(Circle the ones that resonate the most with me)
<i>Things I love to do:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flow • Yearning 	(Circle the ones that resonate the most with me)
<i>Things I'm really good at doing:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peak experiences • Things people say I should do for a living 	(Circle the ones that resonate the most with me)
<i>Setbacks disguised as breadcrumbs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obstacles surmounted • New pathways discovered 	
<i>What I'm good at/ How I approach relationships:</i>	VIA	
<i>How I'm successful:</i>	CSF	

Now, try to put it all together by filling in the blanks. You'll have more than one item you can potentially put into each of these blanks, but choose the items that resonate the most. It may not sound quite right at this stage. This is meant to be a starting point. You might bounce the idea off your mentor or a trusted friend or family member who is a good listener. When you next work on your IDP, use this statement as a starting point for HOW you will use your strengths to purposefully live your mission.

My Authentic Purpose -

I am going to _____ (PMS) _____ by _____ (things I love to do/am good at doing) _____ and living by my values of _____ (values) _____ .

Optional exercise – How well does your Authentic Purpose align with the mission of your organization? What can you do to align them better?