



TEXAS A&M
UNIVERSITY
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FOCUS

ON YOUR FUTURE

CAREER COMPETENCIES
STUDENT GUIDE



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At TAMUK, you'll gain the knowledge and experience to succeed in any field. With a blend of professional opportunities, academic excellence, and varied involvement both on and off campus, you'll graduate JAVELINA STRONG!

The 7 Focus on Your Future - Career Competencies provide the framework to connect all of your experiences to the language employers use when recruiting future professionals.

Focus on Your Future is adapted from the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) Career Readiness Competencies, other leading universities' career engagement initiatives, and high-impact practices you will get to experience at TAMUK. Highlighting these career competencies in your job search can help you stand out.



 **COMMUNICATION**
WRITTEN • ORAL • NONVERBAL • GROUP

 **PROFESSIONALISM**
INTEGRITY • PERSONAL BRAND • DEPENDABILITY

 **CRITICAL THINKING**
LOGICAL THINKING • THOUGHTFUL ANALYSIS • ATTENTION TO DETAIL

 **TEAMWORK**
COLLABORATION • COMPROMISE • ACCOUNTABILITY

 **LEADERSHIP**
INITIATIVE • WORK ETHIC • TRUST

 **DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY**
ADAPTABILITY • ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE • EFFICIENT

 **CAREER MANAGEMENT**
SELF AWARENESS • CURIOSITY • GOAL ORIENTED

★ COMMUNICATION:

The ability to effectively convey information, concepts, opinions, and thoughts in a professional or education setting.

KEY BEHAVIORS

- ★ Ask questions for specific information from faculty, supervisors, and others.
- ★ Demonstrate active listening and attentiveness during group discussions, showcasing respect and encouraging others to participate.
- ★ Create and present prepared, purposeful presentations designed to increase knowledge, foster understanding, or promote change.
- ★ Write professional digital correspondence.



👁️ Where to build it 👁️

- + Class projects and presentations
- + Student and part-time employment
- + Research projects
- + Student organization positions
- + Professional internships
- + Practice interviews



WHAT EMPLOYERS ASK

- Describe a situation in which you were able to win over a difficult customer.
- How do you ensure that your verbal communication is clear, concise, and engaging?
- Give an example of a time when you used your written communication skills to achieve a positive outcome.
- How do you adapt your communication style to different audiences?

RESUME EXAMPLES

- *Welcomed students into Career Engagement Office, answered questions, and directed students to appropriate resources.*
- *Tailored communication and explanations to students based on current level of understanding.*
- *Emphasized product features to customers based on analysis of needs and knowledge of product.*
- *Designed and presented final capstone project findings to class of 20 colleagues as a culmination of 10-week research experiment.*

★ PROFESSIONALISM:

Different jobs and workplaces can be different from each other. Learn and show good work habits – like being on time, staying organized, and working well with others – and always try to do what’s best for your team and your community.

KEY BEHAVIORS

- ★ Be on time for work, meetings, and classes.
- ★ Listen and accept feedback using it to improve your work.
- ★ Manage your tasks by staying organized so you don’t forget anything important.
- ★ Doing what you say you’ll do and being reliable so others can count on you.



◁ Where to build it ▷

- + Student and part-time employment
- + Campus activity involvement
- + Professional internships
- + Career events and workshops
- + Class discussions
- + Practice interviews



WHAT EMPLOYERS ASK

- ★ Describe a situation where you received constructive criticism. How did you respond?
- ★ How do you stay motivated and productive during routine or repetitive work?
- ★ Talk about your time management approach during a busy period.
- ★ How do you maintain a professional image in the workplace?

RESUME EXAMPLES

- ★ *Collaborated with team members on group projects, exhibiting respect, accountability and strong work ethic.*
- ★ *Participated in campus events and workshops to develop communication skills and professional etiquette.*
- ★ *Balanced a part-time job and academic course load through excellent organizational and time management abilities.*
- ★ *Took initiative by volunteering for leadership roles in student organizations, modeling dedication and responsibility.*
- ★ *Received positive feedback from supervisors during internship for punctuality and attention to detail.*

★ CRITICAL THINKING:

Identifying and responding to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information. The ability to think clearly and rationally to make decisions.

KEY BEHAVIORS

- ★ Make decisions and solve problems using sound, inclusive reasoning and judgment.
- ★ Proactively anticipate needs and prioritize action steps.
- ★ Accurately summarize and interpret data with an awareness of personal biases that may impact outcomes.
- ★ Gather and analyze information from a broad set of sources and individuals to fully understand a problem or situation.



◁ Where to build it ▷

- + Classroom discussions and projects
- + Research projects
- + Customer service roles
- + Attend workshops and seminars
- + Take Philosophy classes
- + Engage in Peer Tutoring
- + Participate in Study Abroad programs



WHAT EMPLOYERS ASK

- ★ Tell me about a time when you used data to make an informed decision about your next steps in a project.
- ★ Recall a time when your education and experiences did not prepare you for a task. What did you do?
- ★ Give me an example of a time when your attention to detail prevented a mistake or error.
- ★ Describe a time when you had to come up with a creative solution to a problem.

RESUME EXAMPLES

- ★ *Creatively planned and implemented residential programs that focused on social and academic success.*
- ★ *Analyzed customer purchase history using sales tracking database to produce product ordering guidelines for local small business.*
- ★ *Tailored communication and explanations to students based on current level of understanding.*
- ★ *Strategically evaluated materials submitted to determine placement and flow of marketing communications.*
- ★ *Conducted extensive research on foreign companies and international trade for capstone project.*

★ TEAMWORK:

Building and maintaining collaborative relationships to work effectively toward common goals, while appreciating various viewpoints and shared responsibilities.

KEY BEHAVIORS

- ★ Listen carefully to others, taking time to understand and ask questions without interrupting.
- ★ Be accountable for individual and team responsibilities to achieve common goals.
- ★ Employ personal strengths, knowledge, and talents to complement those of others.
- ★ Build strong, positive working relationships with supervisor and team members/coworkers.
- ★ Exercise the ability to compromise and be agile.



◁ Where to build it ▷

- + Student organizations
- + Class projects
- + Student athletics and intramural sports
- + Part-time and student employment



WHAT EMPLOYERS ASK

- ★ Describe a situation when you were able to help a team member or peer.
- ★ Tell me about a time when you worked on a successful team project. What was your role in the team, and what did you contribute to the team's success?
- ★ Can you give me an example of a time when you had to compromise your ideas for the success of the overall team's project?
- ★ How do you ensure that all team members' ideas are heard and considered?

RESUME EXAMPLES

- ★ *Worked closely with other team members on a semester-long software engineering project, delivering a high-quality product on time and within budget.*
- ★ *Collaborated with fellow student organization members to plan out semester activities for chapter outreach.*
- ★ *Served as team leader for a group of 10 students in a business case competition, guiding the team to a second-place finish.*
- ★ *Brainstormed ideas with a team of five to create better working and living environment as a Resident Assistant.*
- ★ *Volunteered with a team of students to provide free tutoring services to underprivileged children in the community, helping to improve their academic performance.*

★ LEADERSHIP:

Recognizing and capitalizing on personal and team strengths to achieve organizational goals. The ability to influence and motivate others to achieve a common goal.

KEY BEHAVIORS

- ★ Inspire, persuade, and motivate self and others under a shared vision.
- ★ Use innovative thinking to go beyond traditional methods.
- ★ Serve as a role model to others by approaching tasks with confidence and a positive attitude.
- ★ Motivate and inspire others by encouraging them and building mutual trust.
- ★ Plan, initiate, manage, complete and evaluate projects.



◁ Where to build it ▷

- + Student organization executive boards
- + Student athletics
- + Volunteer positions
- + Resident Assistant roles
- + Part-time and student employment
- + Class projects



WHAT EMPLOYERS ASK

- ★ Tell me about a time when you took the lead on a team project.
- ★ Describe a situation in which your efforts influenced the actions of others.
- ★ How have you served as a role model for your peers in a non-leadership role?
- ★ Tell me about a time when you faced a lot of challenges in your work.
- ★ How satisfied were you with the end results and why?

RESUME EXAMPLES

- ★ *Recognized and responded effectively in emergencies.*
- ★ *Oversaw floor meetings and floor programs to inform and entertain residents.*
- ★ *Coached students to develop study schedules to increase time management skills.*
- ★ *Independently led fourth grade classroom of 30 students for 12 days in a local public elementary school.*
- ★ *Held progressively significant leadership positions in my student organization.*

★ DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY:

Understanding how to utilize and leverage technology to solve problems efficiently and ethically.

KEY BEHAVIORS

- ★ Navigate change and be open to learning new technologies.
- ★ Use technology to improve efficiency and productivity.
- ★ Identify appropriate technology for completing specific tasks.
- ★ Utilize Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems in appropriate and ethical settings.
- ★ Effectively communicate through multiple digital platforms.



◁ Where to build it ▷

- + Personal learning
- + Class projects
- + Student organization social media roles
- + Professional internships
- + Professional certificate programs
- + Part-time and student employment
- + Microcredentials



WHAT EMPLOYERS ASK

- ★ Describe how you've gone about learning a new technical skill or digital tool quickly?
- ★ How can one effectively use AI tools to make our individual jobs easier?
- ★ Tell me about a time when you used technology to improve a process or solve a problem?
- ★ What are your thoughts on the future of work and how technology will impact it?

RESUME EXAMPLES

- ★ *Utilized Excel to analyze customer user data for local small businesses as part of Business class project.*
- ★ *Earned multiple Google Certificates through the Coursera platform.*
- ★ *Quickly adapted to new software tracking system implemented within the accounting department.*
- ★ *Directed social media communication plan for 200-person student organization, responsible for advertising events and recruiting new members.*
- ★ *Presented research paper on the ethical uses of ChatGPT, Gemini, and other AI tools by high school students in Texas.*

★ CAREER MANAGEMENT:

Proactively develop oneself and one's career through continual personal and professional learning, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, navigation of career opportunities, and networking to build relationships within and without one's organization.

KEY BEHAVIORS

- ★ Show an awareness of own strengths and areas of improvement.
- ★ Identify areas of continual growth while pursuing and applying feedback.
- ★ Develop plans and goals for one's future career.
- ★ Seek and embrace development opportunities.
- ★ Display curiosity; seek out opportunities to learn.



◁ Where to build it ▷

- + StrengthsFinder assessment
- + Informational interviews – talking to people who have the jobs you wish to have after graduation
- + Visit with Career Engagement and faculty advisors
- + LinkedIn interactions
- + Mentoring programs
- + Professional societies



WHAT EMPLOYERS ASK

- ★ How have you explored possible career paths related to your major or interests?
- ★ Describe any steps you've taken to develop your professional skills outside the classroom.
- ★ What are your greatest strengths and areas you're actively working to improve? How did you identify these?
- ★ How do you stay motivated when working towards long-term goals?
- ★ If you could give your freshman-self one piece of advice, what would it be?

RESUME EXAMPLES

- ★ *Sought and incorporated supervisor feedback to improve customer service rating by 15%.*
- ★ *Completed passion project: Organized a college-wide networking event, connecting students with industry professionals.*
- ★ *Regularly pursued professional development by attending campus career workshops and industry webinars.*
- ★ *Completed the "Job Search Academy" on Indeed, focused on job search strategies and workplace skills.*

