

Career Center can demystify job hunt

Even though the job market is doing well, it pays to plan early

By Amy Goldhammer
Oregon Daily Emerald

Realizing they don't have to stand in line to buy a 12-pound chemistry book ever again and their last days of listening to that annoying girl in their 11 a.m. class are long gone, many graduating students will jump for joy. However, testing the waters of the "real world" can be frightening and almost shocking for some graduating students.

The Career Center helps students figure out what they want to do and then assists them in finding a job doing it, said Larry Smith, Career Center director.

"We help find out where in the world companies pay people to do stuff they (the student) like to do," Smith said.

Students need to know themselves before venturing into the job market, Smith said.

"Through our array of programs and services, students can get information they need to know about themselves," Smith said. "They will discover their strengths, preferences and will confirm interests."

The Mentor Program, offered through the Career Center, connects students with University graduates in job fields they're interested in.

"There is a mentor opportunity for everyone," Smith said.

As well as the Mentor Program, the Career Center sponsors the Interview Program. The Interview Program is for students graduating in 1999.

"We want them to be aware of opportunities that recruiters coming to the University are bringing," Smith said.

The Interview Program and career fairs give employers a chance to look for graduating students who are hunting for jobs, Smith said.

"Many students get jobs this way," he said. "It's successful and extraordinarily easy."

This program is a wonderful place for students to become clearer about the type of work they want to do, Smith said.

The job market continues to be very strong for college graduates, Smith said. There are always dif-

ferent demands.

"Overall, the American economy continues to offer many opportunities for college students," he said.

For many recent graduates, the first job he or she will hold only lasts for a short period of time, about one to three years, Smith said. These entry-level jobs help accomplish the goal of being an income producer, being able to pay bills and being completely being on one's own, he said.

"The expectation there will be a lot of job changes is really true," Smith said. "Like most things, the first time through that process is the scariest."

There are job opportunities, particularly for people who are able to articulate the kind of work they want to do, Smith said.

"It's one of the more difficult things for a lot of graduates," Smith said. "It sounds like forever."

On his or her way to the dream job, students should highly consider an internship, Smith said.

"It's pretty dog-gone easy to get one," he said.

There are many internship programs available on campus. Many departments offer them as well as the Career Center. Students also have the opportunity to propose their own internship.

Through the Career Development Internship Program, students earn credit toward graduation while learning valuable job skills.

The Career Center not only caters to graduating students, but to the rest of the student body as well. The Career Center helps students find jobs during the school year.

"There is major traffic to get part-time jobs when school starts," Smith said.

About 70 percent of students work during the academic year, Smith said. During the Week Of Welcome before classes begin and the first few days of school, tables are set up outside the EMU. This makes it very accessible for students to get job leads, he said.

"The Career Center is very comprehensive and very good," Smith said. "Our staff is very friendly and want to help students get their career launched."

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