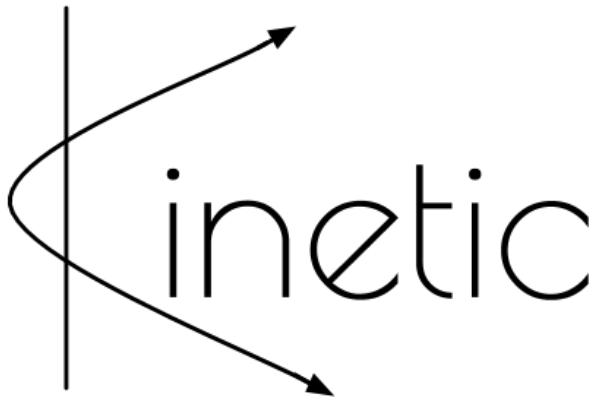


LEEP
Leading Engaging and Empowering Professionals



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Contributing Authors

Derek Galvin, Daniel Yu, Conrad Wahl, Marcone
Correia, Akhil Dayal, Miaoru Guan, Lawrence Luo,
Krushi Maisuria, Chetan Patel, Phuong Vo, and Yinga Xia

kineticeducationwilliams@gmail.com

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Practical Education Curriculum

Introduction

The goal of this practical education program is to prepare high school seniors/juniors to be professionals. Similar curricula tend to be taught in disjoint workshops; our program is unique because sessions explicitly build on one another, guiding students through every step of the job search process. In addition, the curriculum is intended to encourage students to seek employment specifically in North Adams. Students will take classes in self-discovery, communication, networking, interviewing, resume/cover letter writing, financial literacy, and North Adams history. Every class concludes with a product/resource sheet that the student keeps for easy reference. Through a combination of class and homework time, students will apply to and participate in the internship of their choice.

Summary of Program

- 1. Who Am I and Who Are You?:** Introduces the program and its goals. Students familiarize themselves with each other through team-building exercises. They will also begin a process of self-discovery through the True-Colors personality test.
- 2. What do you do in an Elevator?:** Through an improv practice warm-up, students handle surprising and unplanned networking opportunities. In addition, students develop their own elevator pitches and learn strategies for highlighting their strengths.
- 3. Trash Your Values:** Students brainstorm a list of their most closely held values and narrow down which are most important. Then, they discuss how one might use this information about core values in day to day life, or in job searches.
- 4. Talk It Out:** Students practice introducing themselves to an employer. They also write effective emails to follow up with their introductions.
- 5. LinkedIn Yourself:** Students create a LinkedIn profile and connect with friends and professionals.
- 6. Resume Workshop:** As an assignment for this workshop, students use a template to create their preliminary resume. At the workshop, students collaborate with peers and instructors to develop and complete their resumes.
- 7. Internship Exploration:** Students explore the wide range of internships available in North Adams and develop an action plan to complete their applications. Students also brainstorm connections they can use to learn more about these opportunities.
- 8. Covering your Bases—Cover Letter Workshop:** Students write a cover letter for a desired internship and examine samples of good cover letters while critiquing classmates' cover letters. They will also continue to revise their internship applications through meetings with the instructor.

10. Fake It ‘Til You Make It: This is a mock interview workshop. Students respond to common interview questions and answer surprising questions on the fly. By role-playing both the employer and the hiring candidate, students will be able to offer one another constructive feedback and gain greater perspective.

11. The Rollercoaster of Life: Students play a custom-designed game that simulates life after high school. In this game, students make life decisions for their characters when unexpected situations arise, and systematically allocate funds to a selection of expenses. Throughout the game, students discuss their decision-making process and the impact of their decisions on the game.

12. Be The Money Boss—The IRS and Taxes: Students learn to manage their money, read W2 forms, and file taxes. By filling out sample forms, students will learn how financial documents work.

13. Be The Money Boss—Saving and Investing: Students research various investment vehicles: evaluating risks and returns.

14. It’s a Snowy Day Today: Students gain awareness of what rejection in the job market or professional setting looks like: passed over for a promotion, not getting an interview, getting laid off, etc. To combat unexpected situations will learn to file for unemployment and create a snowy day fund. Students are also introduced to local help centers.

15. Service Learning: Students learn to design effective service projects by evaluating their strengths, the community’s needs, the stakeholders, and the project’s sustainability. They think about how they can pursue socially impactful careers.

16a. Exploring North Adams, Part I: Students travel to Mass MoCA and discuss its history with social entrepreneurship on site. This lesson plan will build on the skills and education from the previous lesson plan as students will be able to directly apply the knowledge they have learned through a practical connection.

16b. Exploring North Adams, Part II: Students learn the structure of the municipal government in North Adams. They investigate the function of its various committees and visit the city hall. Then, students visit the Uno Center and discuss ways in which they can be involved.

17. I’m So Fancy, You Already Know: Students will gather for an elegant dinner with business leaders in North Adams. While learning proper dinner etiquette, students will meet stakeholders and network with social entrepreneurs in the community. In this last workshop, students will also celebrate the completion of the program.