Making Headlines

News stories featuring the Neeley School of Business at TCU

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Career Services Finds Its Way – *by Tricia Bisoux*

Career development offices are navigating the post-recession hiring maze by finding new ways to satisfy more demanding employers and readjust the great expectations of the Millennial generation. Students and counselors alike quickly had to come up with Plan B, says **Pam Stoker, Assistant Director of Graduate Career Services at Texas Christian University's Neeley School of Business** in Fort Worth. "Students asked us why employers weren't coming to campus, and we answered, 'Haven't you read *The Wall Street Journal*?'" says **Stoker**. "These students were still denying that the financial collapse would affect them. But reality came crashing down on them when they started attending career fairs and weren't seeing the employers there."

Operation Outreach

To boost its corporate relationships, the **Neeley School created Neeley Connections**, a monthly roundtable discussion. Each discussion is held at a participant's company, which presents a case study of a problem. MBA students also attend the meeting dressed in business attire; they take 20 minutes to break into teams and propose their own solutions for the presenting organizations. "The companies get free MBA analyses and our students gain visibility," says **Stoker**.

Social Media Savvy

For years, career counselors have been touting the importance of networking to students. But perhaps for the first time, students are getting the message. "They're finally realizing that 80 percent of the jobs really do come from networking," says **TCU's Stoker**. Because much of that networking today starts with social media, the **Neeley School's career services** office offers an annual course to teach students how to use LinkedIn most effectively as a springboard for their personal networking efforts.

Career services no longer can communicate with students using a single medium – print or e-mail or Facebook or phone calls – and be affective," says **Stoker**. By employing multiple communications strategies, counselors can be sure to reach every student with at least one.

Stoker learned that lesson a few years ago, when she could not get a recent graduate to return her phone or e-mail messages. "Finally, one of my student assistants asked me, 'Did you try him on Facebook?'" She sent a message to him through his Facebook account and he responded within five minutes. "That was an 'aha' moment for me, when I realized that I need to reach out to them wherever they are."

Getting Past Phone Fear

The **Neeley School** is also putting an emphasis on training students to sell themselves and their skills to employers over the phone. But this emphasis has brought to light an unexpected problem among today's Millennials: "phone fear." While students of this generation may never be without their cell phones, they rarely use them to talk, says **Stoker**.

"These students text and use social media so much they're used to collecting their thoughts before blurting something out. They've either missed or lost the skill of telephone conversations," says Stoker. "I'm seeing this more and more, and not just in 18- to 22-year-olds. I'm also seeing it with experienced professional who are 28 to 33 years old."

Stoker has found it increasingly necessary to help students overcome phone fear and improve their telephone personas. For example, Stoker worked with one international student who did not want to call employers because he wasn't comfortable holding a phone conversation in English; she helped him write and practice scripts for different situations so he would gain confidence on the phone. She helped another student, who has been an actor in the past, to think of the phone conversation as a scripted dialogue in a play. She recommended *The Play of Your Life*, a career coaching book by Colleen Sabatina, to help him through the challenge.

"Every year I find that I have to be a life coach as well as a career coach, to help students see what missing piece is holding them back. And every year, we find that piece is changing," she says. "We have to tweak our approaches to suit different groups of students. It's probably one of the biggest challenges we face."

Careers in the Curriculum

Without the motivation of a grade, students often put their own professional development on the back burner, says Stoker. That was once the case at **Neeley**, where students could opt out of career workshops at the beginning of their programs. "If they didn't sign opt-out forms, the workshops were required," **Stoker** explains. But under the system, she says, it was a struggle to remind students of their commitment. The school addressed the issue by launching its first for-credit career development course in the fall of 2010. In just its first offering, the course "has transformed the rest of the year for us, because students took it so seriously," says **Stoker**. Held in the first eight weeks of the fall semester, the course provides a solid foundation for career development work the students complete during the rest of their programs. In the future, the course will be tweaked to make time for even more activities, including blocking out an entire week so that students can plan trips to Wall Street.

A Day In the Life

In 2009, **TCU's Neeley School of Business** offered any company that had posted a position, attended a presentation, or participated in an event over the last two years an "MBA for a Day." Although some companies were wary, because they had no jobs available, most companies agreed. Some hosted several students to shadow executives or go on field visits. **Neeley** staff coached students as that would for any job or informational interview. Students research the companies online and learned more about the people they would me meeting.

At the end, some students were offered positions. One company created an internship for a student whom it had interviewed the previous summer, but turned down. **Neeley** now hold its "MBA for a Day" event every spring.

The Washington Post

July 15, 2011

Crash and yearn - *By Brigid Schulte*

My green 1995 Volvo station wagon was not a great car…But I absolutely, unconditionally and devotedly loved that car…I thought I'd have that car forever, even after it hit 150,000 miles and the odometer broke…But, 12 years and one month to the day after I'd started driving it, the Volvo was hit on a particular stretch of Martin Luther King Avenue in Southeast…The insurance company told me that it would cost more to repair the Volvo than the old thing was worth. They'd decided to total it…I began to wonder why I loved this car so blindly. And I wondered whether others adored their cars, too.

Nancy Sirianni, assistant professor of marketing at Texas Christian University, spent years studying why people love their cars so much. She read up on the psychology of love and found that the same types of bonds humans share for each other could be found between a human and an auto. "There's passion, love at first sight. You see the car. You love it. You drive it," she said. "There's intimacy, where you get to know every detail, all the little noises, the chip in the paint here, the dent there. Then there's commitment: This is something you want to keep forever. Some people don't even want anyone else to drive it. You put all three together, and you have consummate love. Like an enduring marriage."

Her article, "Truly, Madly, Deeply": Consumers in the Throes of Material Possession Love," published this year in the prestigious *Journal of Consumer Research*, found that people also can love their guns. They're buddies with their bikes. And they are alternately pleased and frustrated with their fair-weather friend the computer. But nothing came close to the love they found that both men and women can feel for their cars.

"We found caring, nurturing behavior that we don't usually see in our consumer throw-away society," **Sirianni** said. "People would buy special wax or only take it to the best shop, like a new mother and her baby, only going to the best pediatrician in town." She said car marketers needed to take heed of people like us. "A lot of companies haven't thought about this — they treat their more passionate consumers like they're weirdos, and that's a huge, huge mistake," she said. "Subaru is just beginning to tap into it, with their 'Do you remember your first love?' commercials showing a guy driving a new Subaru, but his old one is still parked in the driveway."

The insurance auction company said that I could come to the salvage auction to see who bought my Volvo and to call in three months. When I called in two, the Volvo was already gone.Over the next several months, I called auto parts dealers, dismantlers, junkyards and rebuilders, trying to find the Volvo.

Car-love expert **Nancy Sirianni**, only mildly surprised, said I was showing an unusual amount of commitment to a car that was no longer mine. "It's very romantic," she told me. "Like searching for a long-lost boyfriend."

WTOP 103.5 FM

July 25, 2011

You really can be in love with your car – *Washington D.C. Radio*

Do you spend a lot of time admiring, touching and cleaning your car? Or do you prefer playing with your iPad, rather than talking to people? A study looks at what's called "material possession love," and researchers find that yes, you really can be in love with your stuff. Researchers at the **Neeley School of Business at Texas Christian University** conducted hundreds of interviews with car enthusiasts between the ages of 19 and 68 at five car shows.

The study found people seemed to use their attachment to cars to remedy pain and disappointment in their romantic lives.

"Material possession relationships may reduce the negative consequences of social isolation and loneliness, and can contribute to consumer well-being, especially when considered relative to less-desirable alternative responses like substance abuse, delinquency, and the side-effects of anti-depressant medications," says **Nancy Sirianni, assistant marketing professor.** "Love-smitten" gun owners, the researchers found, "spent six times more on accessories and enhancements for their prized guns than firearm owners." The study, "Truly, Madly, Deeply: Consumers in the Throes of Material Possession Love," is in the August edition of the *Journal of Consumer Research.*

tcu360

July 25, 2011

Neeley School's supply chain program is on the rise in every way but numbers - *By Pat Burns*

It's hard to miss the **Neeley School of Business at Texas Christian University.** Enrollment dwarfs almost all other majors, and its programs always seem to be in the news for garnering high marks. But not all the programs have been basking in popularity.

The **supply and value chain management program,** boasts a successful track record, but struggling to find a following among students. The program focuses on the management of a product from its creation to after sale customer support.

The process is essential in a global economy, where many goods are shipped worldwide. It's become so important that there are more openings than there are people in the supply chain field. **A recent report from Gartner Supply Chain Leaders ranked TCU's program the 19th best program in the country in educating students** to become leaders in the business world. The program was also evaluated on how well its curriculum fit into the Gartner Talent Attribute Model, according to a release from the Neeley School.

A Program on the Rise

The main goal of the program, "end to end thinking" or learning the entire process of a supply chain rather than looking at only one facet of a business.

"We're trying to get students to think about all these business activities in this big picture view, so when you think about making decisions, you're not just thinking about your own organization, but how it affects the supply chain and how it affects the overall customer," said **Morgan Swink, professor and executive director of TCU's Supply and Value Chain Center.** This big picture view means that students will not only have to know about the cheapest and most effective way to ship a product using math skills, but they must also be able to communicate with business partners effectively to secure business deals. This differs from more focused majors like finance and accounting, he said.

"It's definitely a challenge, because people tend to be more left or right-brained," **Swink** said. "Generally, the left-brained people are in accounting or finance, and the right-brained people are in marketing and communications. In supply chain, you have to have both. "

The school prepares students for the dual roles by having the students work in groups as much as possible, to ensure they know how to communicate with each other and cooperate as a team. And their classes feature aspects of both sides of business. For example, students might have to complete a practice negotiation for part of a project, and be graded on their ability to properly communicate with others. But in another exercise, they will need to figure out the most cost effective way to ship a product.

"There's a healthy mix in just about every class. You're going to have a lot of communication activities and relationship management, like working in a team," he said. "But you're also going to have some math in there… We're looking for students who are well-rounded people and can do both."

In addition, the top students in the school will get an opportunity to participate in the executive program, where students spend a semester creating a supply chain plan for a major business. **Swink** said the executive program has been a major success, and that many of the students who participate are often hired after graduation.

Swink said the program's **Supply and Value Chain Center** is unique. The center helps bring students in contact with companies and potential employers through recruiting events and trips to businesses on location. Some students visited China for an up-close look of what supply-chain management is like in the real world. "A lot of schools don't have that," he said. "They'll have a program, a major, but they don't have a center. It supports in a way that I don't think that other programs do."

Getting more people

Neeley in the News - continued

Despite the success in a short amount of time (the program began eight years earlier) for the **supply and value chain program**, the number of students in the program is still relatively small. **Swink** said they currently have 70 undergraduate students, with 35 graduating a year.

"Our biggest issue is students don't know what it is, and their parents don't know what it is," he said. "They know what marketing and finance is, so they tend to gravitate towards those careers, but it's our job to draw them here."

Currently, the executive program only takes the top ten percent of students to participate. Because of the small size, **Swink** said that results in only three or four students who will get to be chosen. He said multiple companies have expressed interest in the executive program, so that means more bodies are needed in order to satisfy demand."We'd like to grow the program, but we just need more students to be able to support it."

In order to help get more people interested in the program, **Swink** said the program is launching a campaign to raise awareness around campus; first up, posters around campus mentioning the school and its successes. There are events planned for the fall, one will give students the opportunity to speak with job recruiters and learn about the skills needed to impress employers. Swink said events like these and a greater knowledge of the program will hopefully boost enrollment.

"We've got 35 graduating each year, and we need to double that," he said.

A Success Story

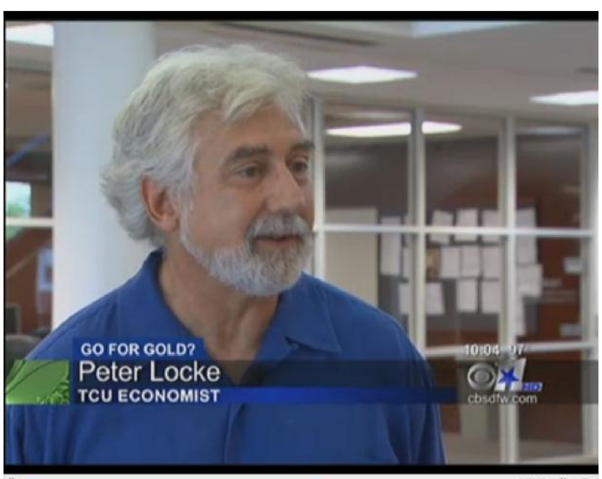
Andrew Conant, a supply chain major who graduated in May, now works for American Airlines in Fort Worth. Conant deals with ordering meals for the Fort Worth-based airline. After taste-testing between a variety of particular dishes from different companies, Conant will choose which company he thinks is best and begin to negotiate the price of the food. He also makes sure the order information is correct, and the food is shipped where it's supposed to be. Conant said the education he received did a great job of getting him ready for the workplace.

"I think the program prepared me well," he said. "We have all the classes that have come in to my job. We took global supply chain, and I'm dealing with Europe and the duties and tariffs that are paid on the food… When I got to first start my job, they had all these terms, and they would say, 'Oh, we'll explain it to you later,' and I would say 'Well, I already know what they are.'"

Conant says he's enjoyed his time on the job in the few months he's been on it. It's allowed him to travel the country and he gets to meet new contacts and friends. The best part about his job, though, is the negotiating process."If we're about to buy 24,000 pieces from a company, and they're not going to lower their price, I can say I'll take my $2 million that I'm going to spend with you elsewhere, and they're like 'Whoa, wait a minute!' That's always fun."

CBS DFW

August 9, 2011



Gold Prices Jump, But Experts Warn Against Investing

Michael Meyers opened two yellow envelopes Tuesday and poured out a tangle of necklaces, rings and bracelets. It was $3,000 to $4,000 of gold he bought, from just two sellers. He could buy as much as $25,000 worth before the end of the month.

"The higher it goes the more people we get coming in, and not only," the gold-buyer said, interrupted by a man bringing in a ring.

Gold prices are so high – $1,743 dollars an ounce – he says gold owners almost can't afford to keep it just sitting at home. He was previously able to pay about 50 percent of full value to buy it – now the business is so competitive, sellers are getting as much as 90 percent of the value of the gold's weight.

"We're definitely seeing a more affluent customer come in," he said. "We're seeing stuff like Tiffany's and Rolexes."

Gold is worth so much that there's very little being resold inside the jewelry cases at the store. People can't afford the high prices and shops can actually make more money selling it for scrap. As sure as selling is, economists say buying gold as investment may not be a safe escape from the up-and-down stock market.

"There's no reason for it, in and of itself, to be safe," said **TCU economist Peter Locke.** "It doesn't have as much use, for instance, as silver."

Metals that have an actual use in construction like aluminum, copper and nickel have moved less than four percent or even dropped in value, while gold has climbed 16 percent. Its value is tied to emotion, experts say, and as surely as it went up, its price will likely go back down.

"It's just a fear factor," **Locke** said. "It's always been that way. It's been that way as long as we've been trading gold."

Gold may still have some room to grow –it would have to get close to $2,300 an ounce to match its inflation-adjusted peak, which it hit in 1980.

August 18, 2011

PITTSBURGH TRIBUNE-REVIEW

August 18, 2011

Area lawmakers say they want action, not just talk, on economy - *By Salena Zito*

Pittsburgh-area congressmen want less blame and more action when President Obama talks next month about spurring the economy.

"Talking about jobs does not create jobs," said Rep. Mike Doyle, D-Forest Hills, who expects the president to offer more than just words in his highly anticipated speech after Labor Day. Doyle and fellow House members from Western Pennsylvania said they want to hear support for legislation they think will help the economy.

"The first thing the president needs to do to put faith back into the economy is to stop blasting Congress and the Republicans," said Rep. Tim Murphy, R-Upper St. Clair. "It reminds me of child custody cases I would attend and each parent would blast the other. You could never move forward."

Obama said this week that he would discuss ideas to create jobs and help the poor and middle class. That will add to a series of programs the president introduced to jump-start an economy dragging out the recession that officially ended in June 2009. Since taking office, he authorized a $789 billion stimulus package, convened several jobs summits, kicked off a "recovery summer," discussed a StartUp America jobs initiative in his State of the Union address and held a manufacturing jobs tour in Pennsylvania, Iowa, Ohio and Virginia.

The programs did little to increase consumer confidence or spur job growth, according to **Stanley Block, professor of finance at Texas Christian University.** "They don't fit well into the free enterprise model that we have in the United States," **Block** said, noting the programs are too dependent on government and regulation.

August 31, 2011

tcu360 All TCU. All the time.

August 31, 2011

New program for accounting majors takes them straight to a master's degree *– by Jennifer Retter*

The new program from the ***Neely School of Business*** *lets accounting majors get a Master of Accounting in one year*

The **Neeley School of Business** plans to get accounting undergraduates enrolled in a new Professional Program in Accounting that would take students through their master's degrees, **Sandra Callaghan, director of the new program, said.**

Callaghan said students could apply for the **Professional Program in Accounting** their junior year. Students would earn the undergraduate accounting degree then matriculate to graduate studies to earn the **Master of Accounting (MAc)** in one additional year.

"The demands of the accounting profession are different than other professions," **Callaghan** said. "In accounting, you prepare for your internship in your junior year and you intern senior year, then go full-time after your MAc."

Callaghan said she believes the new program would keep students on track and thinking about their careers earlier.

"Essentially, you are making those decisions at the beginning of your junior year," **Callaghan** said. "We have to move very quickly to get them ready."

Callaghan said students who choose to apply to the **Professional Program in Accounting** would receive the Personal Success Plan, an element of accounting education unique to the university.

"Any student who is in the professional program will have a Personal Success Plan, which includes a curriculum portion, recruiting portion and a personal development program," **Callaghan** said. "They will be following through with those programs through their junior year, senior year and their **MAc** year."

For accounting students, earning a master's degree is essential to career development.

"People who want to become a CPA [Certified Public Accountant] now have to have 150 hours of education," **Brian Lauderdale, a current MAc student** , said. "A bachelor's degree only gives you 124 to 126 hours, so you need an extra year."

"The 150-hour requirement includes two hours of research, two hours of accounting-related communications, three hours of a state-approved ethics course and 30 hours of upper-level accounting," **Callaghan** said.

Lauderdale said he thinks the new program would be less stressful for students looking into graduate schools.

"For students who know they're going the accounting route, it's a good option for them because they won't have to deal with the uncertainty of getting into a program," **Lauderdale** said. "They have senior year to focus on internships instead of where they're going to go grad school."

Other major accounting schools in the state, such as the University of Texas, have already integrated bachelor's and master's programs in accounting. According to UT's business school's website, UT allows students to enroll in a five-year program and take as many as half of their graduate courses at an undergraduate tuition rate. Both UT and TCU still allowed students to apply for their master's during their senior year, like the old program.

Accounting professor Jerry Turner said colleges were changing to fit the accounting profession.

"The change in the profession itself is causing universities to change a little bit of what they do," **Turner** said. "We need to stay modern and make sure all of our people get jobs."

Callaghan said the accounting department had more changes to come.

"Changes are huge," **Callaghan** said. "We are in the process of redefining both the undergraduate and graduate curriculum. We hope a new curriculum will roll out next fall."

Interested students should attend one of four upcoming information sessions. Senior sessions are Sept. 7 and 8 while junior sessions are Oct. 6 and 7. The department would begin accepting applications from seniors on Sept. 15 and from juniors on Oct. 15.