

# ***Supporting Seniors in their Post-Graduation Transition: Successful Career Planning Curricula***

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Denver, Colorado                      October 19, 2014



*The rising STAR of Texas*

# SESSION



- ❖ Address the challenges of senior students transitioning from college to the world of work
- ❖ Reveal areas where students are unprepared in career development
- ❖ Examine students' low readiness for career interventions
- ❖ Present Bachelor of General Studies Curriculum & identify student learning outcomes
- ❖ Explore BGS alumni post-graduation successes
- ❖ Discuss progressive methods for assisting senior students in workforce transitions

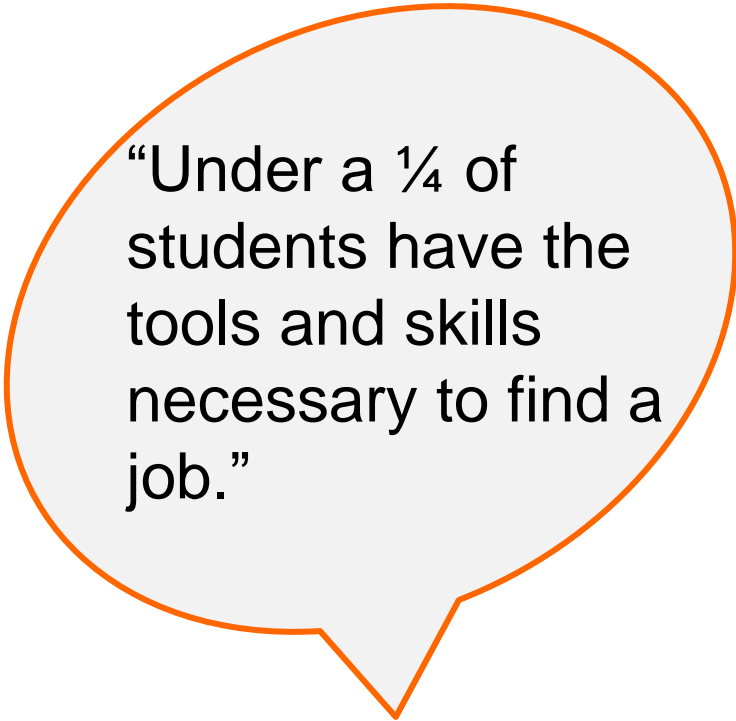
# SESSION AGENDA

- ❖ **Background & Rationale**
- ❖ Texas State's Bachelor of General Studies Degree
- ❖ Curricula (GNST 3350 & GNST 4350)
- ❖ Student Learning Outcomes
- ❖ Alumni Self-Reports & Testimonials
- ❖ Future Considerations & Session Summary
- ❖ Questions & Discussion



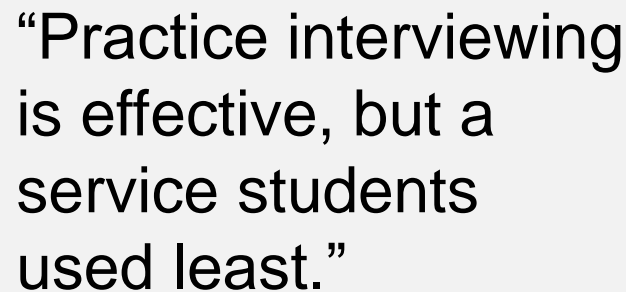
**SO WHY DO EMPLOYERS WANT  
NEW EMPLOYEES TO FORGET WHAT  
THEY LEARNED IN SCHOOL?**

**AS OUR STUDENTS  
PREPARE TO GRADUATE,  
HOW ARE THEY  
PLANNING THEIR  
TRANSITION FROM  
COLLEGE TO THE  
WORKFORCE?**



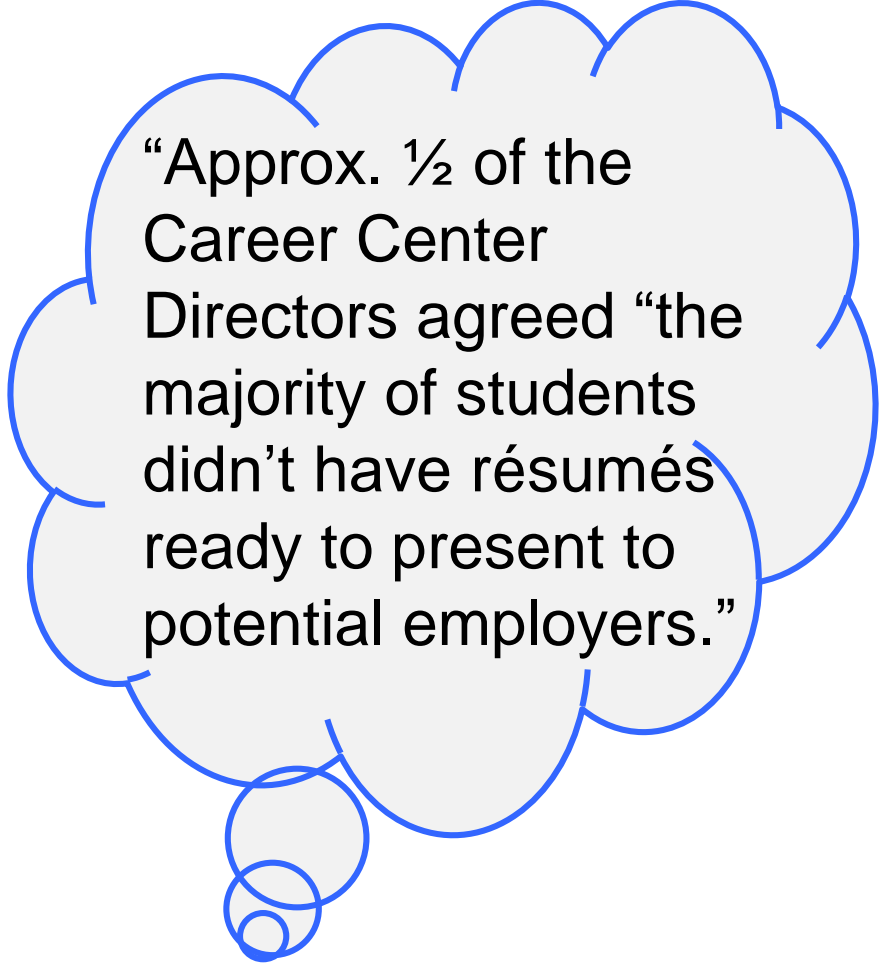
“Under a ¼ of students have the tools and skills necessary to find a job.”

**—2012 NACE Survey of 600 Career Center Directors**



“Practice interviewing is effective, but a service students used least.”

## **CAREER CENTER DIRECTORS ARE SAYING....**



“Approx. ½ of the Career Center Directors agreed “the majority of students didn’t have résumés ready to present to potential employers.”

# WHAT EMPLOYERS SAY ABOUT COLLEGE GRADUATES AND THEIR CAREER PREPAREDNESS

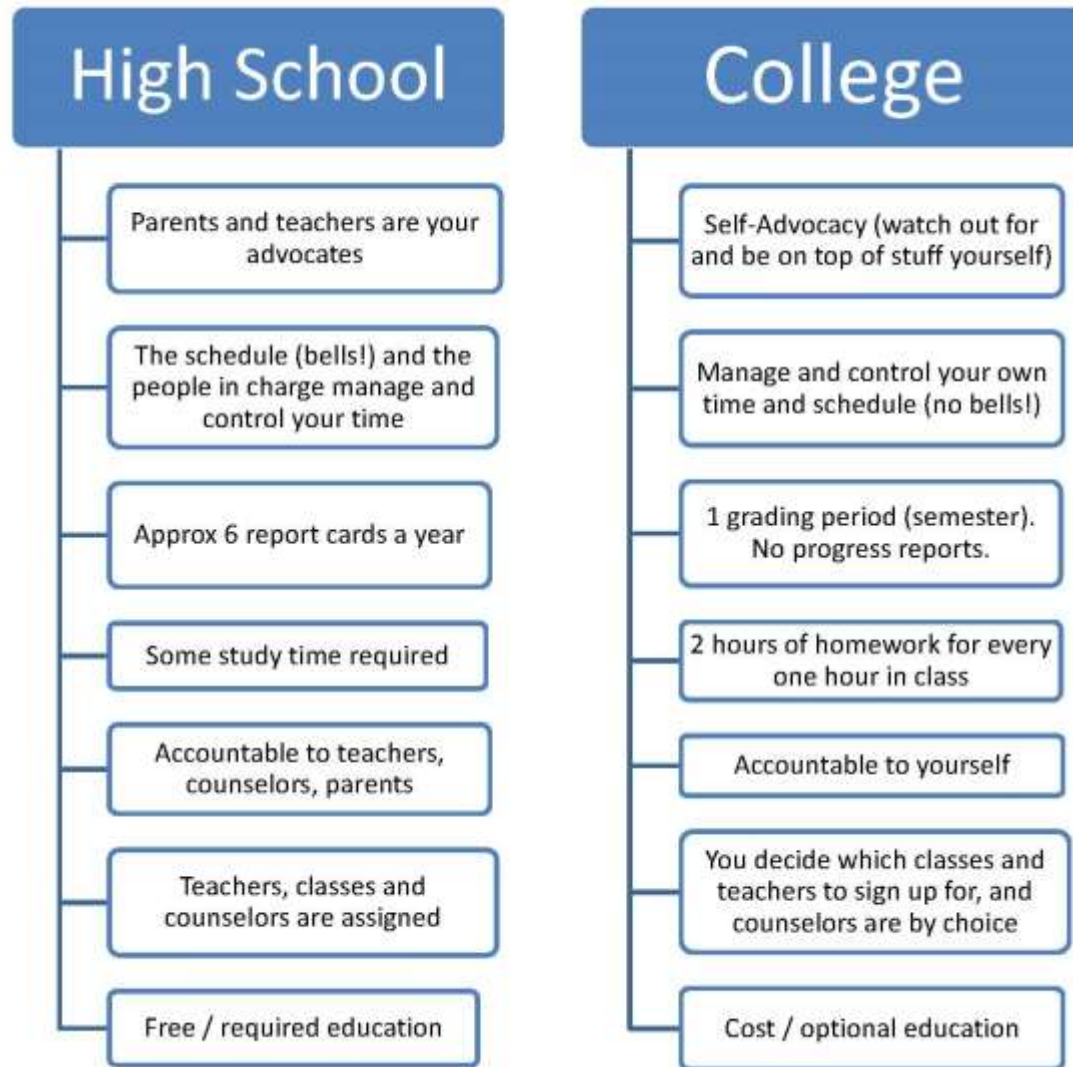
- ❖ “Fewer than two in five (39%) hiring managers say recent college graduates interviewed in the last two years were completely or very prepared for a job in their field of study.”
  - *--2013 Chegg Study of 1,000 Hiring Managers*
- ❖ “Recent graduates have the workplace competencies they need, but could not articulate or demonstrate their abilities.”
  - *--2013 Michigan State Univ. Collegiate Employment Research Survey*
- ❖ “36% of Human Resources Pros reported that recent graduates are unprepared” for the working world, and “33% said they have a bad attitude when interviewing.”
  - *--2014 Millennial Branding Consulting Firm and Career Network Beyond.com*

**“COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, AS THEY BRING NEW STUDENTS INTO THE COLLEGE, THEY REALLY DO A LOT TO TRANSITION.....THERE HASN'T BEEN MUCH HELP, I THINK, FOR STUDENTS AS THEY TRANSITION OUT.”**

*—Michele Meyer, Northland College, V.P for Student Affairs*



# HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE TRANSITION

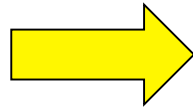


# COLLEGE VS. WORLD OF WORK MINDSET

College	World of Work
You are the primary owner of your time	Time is at the mercy of your employer
Financial awards depend on your efforts	Financial awards are fixed and determined by the employer
Work and leisure often are fused together	Leisure comes when work is done
Work is directed by you	Work is directed by your supervisor
Flexible schedule	Structured schedule
Professors	Supervisor
Frequent breaks and time off	Limited time off
Personal control over time, classes, and interests	Primarily responding to others directions and interests
Primarily individual effort	Often team effort
Intellectual challenge	Organizational challenge
Focus on personal growth and development	Focus on getting results for the organization

# STUDENT TRANSITION PROCESS (Example)

High School



College/University



Career



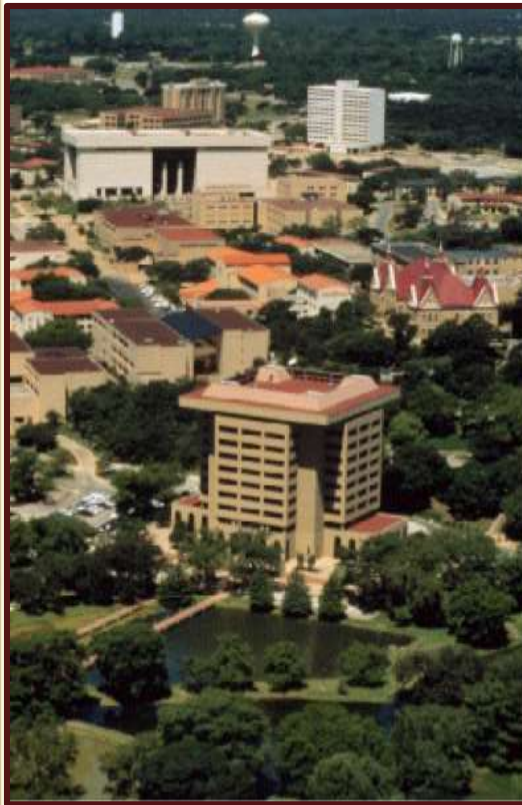
- New Student Orientation
- Freshman Seminar Course
- Freshmen Mentors
- Varied resources and career components

- Senior - major capstone course with exit exam?
- Career Centers
- Job Fairs

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**Texas State University**  
San Marcos, Texas

- Emerging Research University
- Enrollment: 36,790



**TEXAS  
STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

*The rising STAR of Texas*

MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM™

# CAREER TRANSITION CHALLENGES FOR TEXAS STATE STUDENTS

- ❖ Senior student's transition in thought: “A + B no longer equals C”

## Variables Contributing to Low Readiness for Effective Use of Career Interventions

- 1. Personal Characteristics**
  - Acute and/or chronic negative thoughts and feelings
- 2. Personal Circumstances**
  - Acute or chronic external barriers
- 1. Prior Experience with Career Interventions**
  - Limited prior experience with career resources

**“Students flourish when you can present what you’re doing in a program, than just meeting with a counselor.”**

*—Robert Earl, Barnard College, Director of Career Development*

# BACHELOR OF GENERAL STUDIES (BGS)

- ❖ Initiated in Fall 2007
- ❖ Individualized & interdisciplinary degree for students with a broad range of academic interests
- ❖ Combine three minors that support career interests
- ❖ Two BGS core courses identify & synthesize connections within the minor coursework (GNST 3350 & GNST 4350)
- ❖ Student analysis required to integrate three disciplines provides important workplace skills that are attractive to potential employers
- ❖ Graduates have potential for a wide variety of employment opportunities in numerous career fields

<http://www.txstate.edu/ucollege/bgs.html>

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- ❖ 68 minor options
- ❖ 2.25 TXST GPA required for each minor
- ❖ No course below a “C” for minor credit

# HOW DID THE BGS DEGREE EVOLVE FROM 2007 TO 2014?

**2007** Launched GNST 1150-  
Interdisciplinary Experiences  
(1.5 hrs. per week).

**2008**  
Collected feedback from  
students and refined  
freshman course.

**2009-2010**

Continued to refine and add  
more assignments &  
activities.

**2011**

Launched GNST 3350-  
Interdisciplinary Preparation  
(1.5 hrs. 2X per week)

**2012 -2013**

Collected feedback  
from students and  
refined courses.

**2014**

Launched GNST 3350-Interdisciplinary  
Preparation to non-traditional students  
(satellite campus)



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# GNST 3350- INTERDISCIPLINARY PREPARATION

## ASSIGNMENTS

- ❖ Self-assessment & Job Skills Matrix
- ❖ Career Field Presentation
- ❖ Group Presentation
- ❖ Job Application Packet [Résumé, Cover Letter, Thank-you Note, Employer Research]
- ❖ Employer Information Interview
- ❖ Practice (Mock) Interview with Career Services
- ❖ Project Topic Plan
- ❖ “What Color is Your Parachute” Exams

## ACTIVITIES

- ❖ Self-assessment & Job Skills Group Discussion
- ❖ Class Evaluation of Career & Group Presentations
- ❖ Soft Skills (10) In-Class Practice
- ❖ Career Services Workshops (3): Résumés & Cover Letters, Interviewing Skills, First-Year Professional
- ❖ Networking Reflection & Practice
- ❖ Group & Class Discussion After Each Assignment

**“Colleges should be embedding career development into the fabric of undergraduate education...this better prepares students for life after college.”** —Andy Chan, Wake Forest Univ., V.P. for Personal & Career Development

# **GNST 4350- INTERDISCIPLINARY PROJECT**

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

- ❖ Students will design and complete a culminating project linking the three minors incorporated into her/his individual Bachelor of General Studies degree plan. The project may consist of research, reviews and/or other information gathering/analysis targeted at a specified audience, which results in a written or media product substantial enough to merit three hours of credit.

## **PRIMARY COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- ❖ To develop a detailed proposal for a project to tie together the component minors.
- ❖ To determine resources and techniques, which will allow a thorough examination of the proposed topic.
- ❖ To prepare and complete the General Studies project.
- ❖ To display the information gathering and analytical techniques necessary to complete such a project as well as meet the grammatical and style standards traditional to such projects.
- ❖ To learn how to provide documentary and analytical evidence to support conclusions.
- ❖ To effectively present, explain and discuss the completed General Studies project.

# GNST 4350 SAMPLE PROJECTS

## ***“Understanding Cultural Backgrounds and Applying Principles of Effective Communication: A Series of Training Sessions for Supervisors of CMC Steel Texas”***

→ Minors: Communication Studies, Leadership Studies, Sociology

- ✧ Promoted to Trainer and Supervisor at CMC Steel

## ***“Financial Planning for Spouses of Deployed Air Force Personnel”***

→ Minors: Aerospace Studies, Family & Consumer Science, Mass Communication

- ✧ 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. in the USAF Support Readiness Division, Portugal
- ✧ Asked to assist military dependents with finances and budgeting

## ***“A Music Education Tour Bus for Southeast Texas”***

→ Minors: Business Administration, Mass Communication, Music

- ✧ Works for Austin Music Festival
- ✧ A Texas oil company is interested in her touring musicians project

## ***“An Investor Prospectus: Alternatives for Expanding a Kolache Bakery”***

→ Minors: Business Administration, Mass Communication, Technology

- ✧ Has three successful dining establishments in San Marcos, Texas

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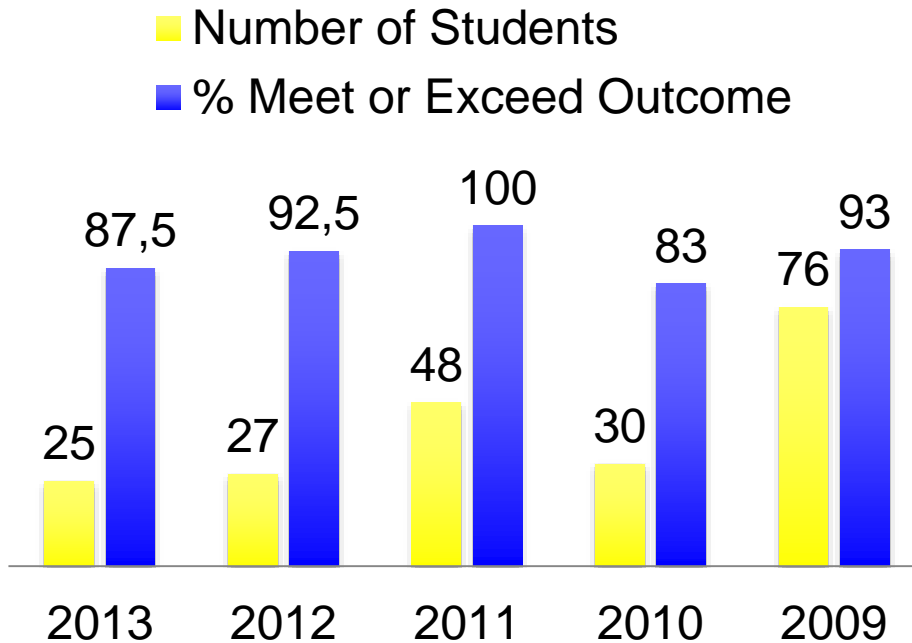
# GNST 3350 – Interdisciplinary Preparation

## OUTCOME #1

**STUDENT WILL DESCRIBE AND ANALYZE PERSONAL STRENGTHS/INTERESTS AND DEVISE A PLAN FOR MAXIMIZING THEM.**

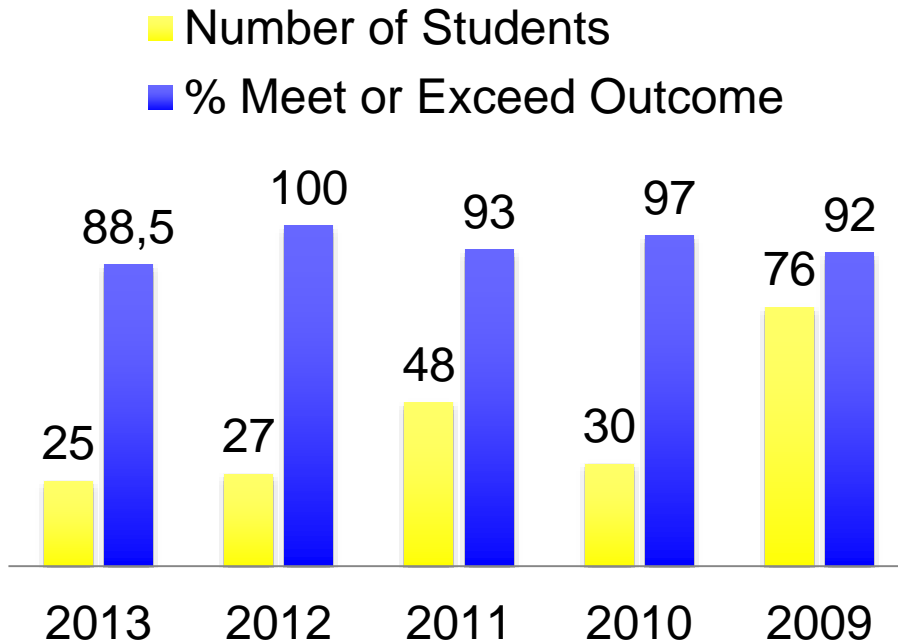
### METHOD #1

Faculty review of a self-assessment and job skills matrix assignment completed by students in GNST 3350 will show that **70% meet** (equivalent to C letter grade on the assignment) **and/or exceed** (equivalent to higher than a C letter grade on the assignment) **minimum expectations.**



# GNST 3350 – Interdisciplinary Preparation **OUTCOME #1**

**STUDENT WILL DESCRIBE AND ANALYZE  
PERSONAL STRENGTHS/INTERESTS AND DEVISE  
A PLAN FOR MAXIMIZING THEM.**



## **METHOD #2:**

Faculty review and evaluation of a **job application assignment** (resume and cover letter) completed by students in GNST 3350 will show that **70% meet** (equivalent to C letter grade on the assignment) **and/or exceed** (equivalent to higher than a C letter grade on the assignment) **minimum expectations.**

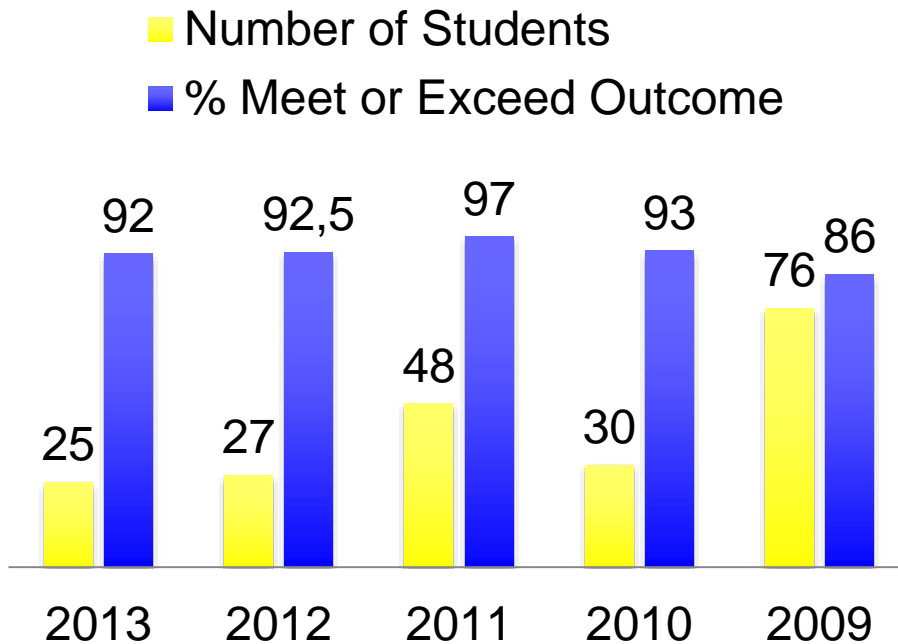
# GNST 3350 – Interdisciplinary Preparation

## OUTCOME #2

**STUDENT WILL ANALYZE CAREER POTENTIALS  
BASED ON PERSONAL STRENGTHS, INTERESTS  
AND ACADEMIC PREPARATION.**

### METHOD #1:

Faculty review and evaluation of written student reports documenting interviews of potential employers completed by students in GNST 3350 will show that **70% meet** (equivalent to C letter grade on the assignment) **and/or exceed** (equivalent to higher than a C letter grade on the assignment) **minimum expectations.**





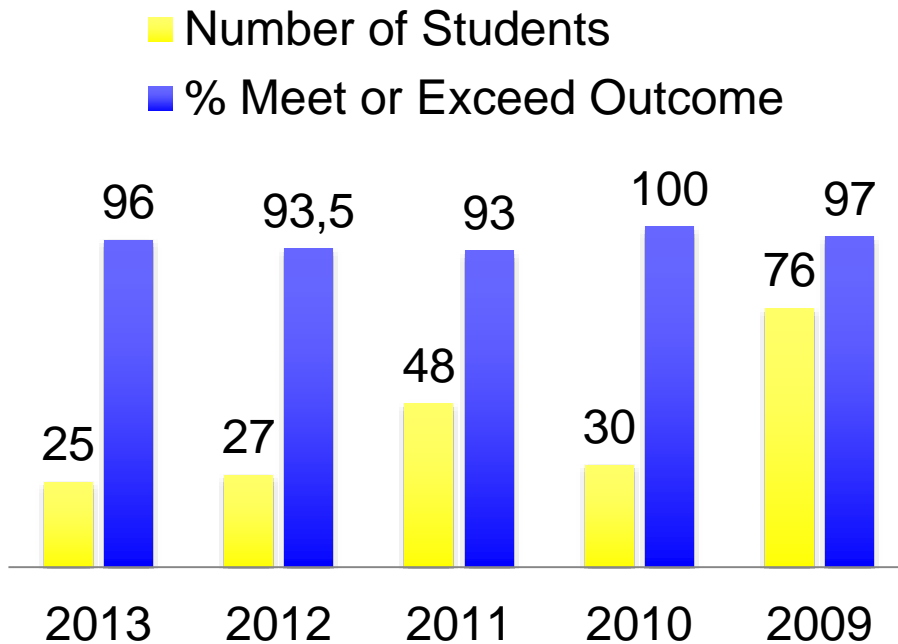
# GNST 3350 – Interdisciplinary Preparation

## OUTCOME #2

**STUDENT WILL ANALYZE CAREER POTENTIALS  
BASED ON PERSONAL STRENGTHS, INTERESTS  
AND ACADEMIC PREPARATION.**

### METHOD #2:

Faculty and review of career field research assignments completed by students in GNST 3350 will show that **70% meet** (equivalent to C letter grade on the assignment) **and/or exceed** (equivalent to higher than a C letter grade on the assignment) **minimum expectations.**



# GNST 4350 STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

## ❖ **Outcome 1**

- Student will synthesize and incorporate information from three component minors into a written project

## ❖ **Outcome 2**

- Student will gather, analyze, organize and document information from a variety of sources into a logically structured written project

## ❖ **Outcome 3**

- Student will communicate complex information effectively to a specified audience

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# BGS ALUMNI

## (Sample Occupations & Education Post-Graduation)

- ❖ **Entrepreneur** (*Opened 3 San Marcos restaurants*)
- ❖ **Event Planner** (*Austin Music Festival*)
- ❖ **Real Estate Agent** (*Houston*)
- ❖ **Associate Recruiter** (*Arthur/Marshall, Inc.*)
- ❖ **Assistant Store Manager** (*Kohl's*)
- ❖ **Outside Sales Associate** (*Austin IT Company*)
- ❖ **Administrative Officer** (*Veteran's Medical Administration Service*)
- ❖ **Bank Associate** (*Amegy*)
- ❖ **Law School** (*Oregon*)
- ❖ **Graduate Student** (*Baylor, Univ. of Texas, Sweden*)

# BGS ALUMNI- Sample Testimonials

**"I can honestly say that the assignments in General Studies have played an important part in my personal growth."**

--BGS Graduate, 2012

**"Thank you for everything you taught me, I got a job interview with the bank I based my research project on, and now I am interviewing with them!"** --BGS Graduate, 2009

**"The GNST 3350 class really paid off. I used the one-page format for my résumé and the Performance Based Interview Panel was really impressed. I was nervous during the interview but knocked their socks off when outlining my degree."**

--BGS Graduate, 2012

**"I have gotten an offer letter from nearly every company I interviewed with since graduation, and I have no doubt that my GNST courses are the reason why. Not only have they helped me with my interview skills, but made me more thorough and attentive to detail in my daily responsibilities at work. I just wanted to say thanks, and tell you the coursework was 110% relevant."**

--BGS Graduate, 2009

**"I had a job lined up right after graduation. I am absolutely positive that without all the preparation and training I received from the classes, I would have never gotten the job offer. The teachings really do work. Out of 500 interviews done in the Austin/San Antonio areas, I was offered one of four openings. Only 300 positions company-wide were filled across the country and I was one of those, so thank you."** ---BGS Graduate, 2011

# BGS ALUMNUS

## Testimonial 2014

**“I’d like to extend my thanks for helping me hone an education that has served as a foundation for the many projects and achievements I have endeavored towards these last few years. Texas State provided me a framework where I can create and manage design on a very high level, champion a new product, and run business strategy for a medical device startup, as well as teach young people how to go out into the world and create things that matter. These all relate to the education I received at Texas State, within the General Studies program.”**

**--BGS Texas State University Graduate, 2012**

**--MFA University of Texas Graduate, 2014**

GNST 4350 Project Topic:

**Presentation to City Managers: Intentional Community Design as a Path to Economic Growth**

→ Minors: Economics, Public Administration, Sociology

Current occupation: University of Texas Design Lecturer

# BENEFITS OF EARLY CAREER INTERVENTIONS

- ❖ Students are more likely to stay in college
- ❖ Fewer major changes & transfers
- ❖ Transfer students increase their connection to college
- ❖ Greater chance of graduating “on time”
- ❖ Better understanding of chosen career and increased appreciation post-graduation

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# FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS AT TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY

- ❖ Expand **GNST 3150- Career & Major Exploration [Freshmen, Undecided]**
  - Determine interests and abilities linked to appropriate careers and majors
  - Instructional teams from the PACE Center, University College, Career Services)
  - Reviewed: Ohio State, Univ. of Utah, Univ. of Florida, Univ. of Calif.,Irvine
  
- ❖ Offer **GNST 3350** as an advanced elective to all majors
  
- ❖ New course: **GNST 3160- Career Preparation [Seniors, All Majors]**
  
- ❖ University College “**Transition Studies**” minor
  - Allow students to gain skills and learn theories and principles from multiple disciplines that address the challenges accompanying the transition from school through job-seeking and on to professional responsibility
  - Designed for students interested in gaining an understanding of what is needed to become better prepared and successful when entering the workforce

# SESSION SUMMARY

- Employers and Career Services staff agree that more should be done by higher education to prepare students for the workforce
- Interventions such as career-oriented coursework and career-related assignments have shown positive outcomes in post-graduation professional success



# REFERENCES

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**So.... Let's Not Have this Interviewee be a Graduate from Your School!**

# QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

Thank you for attending!

Please contact me for further questions.

Lisa Chrans, M.A.

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Texas State University

***What are you or your institution doing to assist seniors in transitioning to the workforce?***