

# Spreading the Word: How to Increase Interest in a Career Development Course for University Students

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## Abstract

The purpose of this research is to identify ways in which MacEwan's CDEL Navigating MyCareer Journey program can better reach students and increase enrollment and completion rates. This paper addresses these goals by looking at ways to improve the program's current marketing strategies and the features that affect its overall appeal. First, we researched fifteen scholarly articles regarding career development and student learning preferences. Next, we conducted three in-depth interviews with MacEwan students; one currently enrolled in the program and two not enrolled. After our analysis, we formulated a questionnaire aimed at solving the program's main areas of concern. A total of 126 respondents from the target group completed the survey.

The research indicates that CDEL should focus its marketing efforts on posters, friends, the MyMacEwan website, and Blackboard. It also showed that CDEL should focus on creating awareness through friends, parents, online forums, and professors. Our research indicates that networking skills, career/life opportunities, and developing a career mindset are the most important topics to students, and that CDEL should focus on those. Our research also identified that making a comprehensive, for-credit course might be the best way to increase their completion rate. We recommend that CDEL develop these key features of the program and modify the course to make it warrant credits.

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## Problem Definition

### *Background of Research Problems*

MacEwan Career Development and Experiential Learning [CDEL] is a value-add department within MacEwan that offers many free-of-charge services to current MacEwan students. As such, CDEL has created a career development course available online to all students for free. The course, called Navigating My Career Journey, guides students and helps them by increasing their self-awareness and finding their ideal life. Additionally, the program hopes to help students develop a positive career mindset and consider possible careers or lives after university. The program was just released this year and not many people have signed up or completed the program; CDEL is currently having trouble getting students enrolled in the program to complete it. Likewise, they are also having trouble increasing the number of students enrolled in the program and they are unsure how to do so. Finally, they are curious if there is a need or desire among the student body for a for-credit career management course.

### *Tasks Performed*

We completed many tasks before moving on to our quantitative data collection to ensure we understood the problem as best we could from both a management and marketing perspective. First, we had a long initial meeting with the client in which we discussed the general issues, their wants and needs, and their hopes for the project. Next, we completed a literature review of current papers regarding career development courses provided by universities. Afterwards, we had some follow-up questions for the client. Given the nature of the problem and client, we did not conduct any interviews with industry experts. Finally, we performed three in-depth interviews with members of CDEL's target market. These interviews gave us rich insights into the target market and helped us identify areas of interest for our survey. With all these steps completed, we felt we had gained a better understanding of their problem as well as their desired outcomes for the project. As a result of our previous work we were able to refine and simplify the management problem into three sections as well as two separate research questions.

### *Management and Marketing Research Problems*

After our initial meeting with CDEL we were not sure we fully understood their problem and what issues they were hoping to solve. As such, we found it necessary to communicate further with the client over email for several weeks asking more probing questions. After reviewing the emails and our meeting notes as a team, we were able to identify the following management problems:

1. They want to increase the number of students enrolled in the program.
2. They want to increase the number of enrolled students that finally complete the program.
3. They want to determine if there is a market among university students for a full-credit course centered on career development.

### **Analytical Framework of the Research Problems**

We used relevant literature and conducted in-depth interviews to develop our analytical framework. We present our analysis as follows.

### *Literature Review: Analysis and Synthesis of Articles Selected*

To develop an understanding of the problem at hand and generate ideas for our exploratory research, our group selected and read 15 scholarly articles. Each of them were related to the main issues that were identified by the MacEwan University Career Services management: How do we get a larger portion of the students that have enrolled in the online career-development course (Navigating My Career Journey) to complete it? and, How do we make the course more appealing to students? With these questions in mind, the process of selecting articles revealed three categories of potential solutions: student engagement through course design, academic benefits of career development courses, and employment benefits of career development

courses. Each of these categories was incorporated in the design of our exploratory research and provided us with the basic knowledge necessary to create questions for our interviewees.

The analysis of our secondary research identified two main topics that we should focus on when answering the research questions. The first topic concerns the motivations that lead students to engage in career-development courses. Higher levels of engagement would likely lead to higher rates of completion. The articles we found suggested that the design of the course was a central factor in determining engagement. The research indicated that in-person courses elicit higher levels of engagement than online classes (Burch, et al., 2016). Though in-person classes are the ideal design in terms of engagement, better utilization of online mediums, such as YouTube and podcasts, would likely have a positive effect of engagement as well (Meyliana, et al., 2015). Thus, the potential of improving the design of the course to increase completion rates is an interesting topic that we have continued to explore.

A second topic of interest for our research is the value that students perceive the course to have. The research indicated that the key factors that students care about are the academic benefits (experienced while still in school) and the employment benefits (experienced after graduation) that result from completing a career-development course. Though the research on academic benefits was somewhat mixed, the overall sum of data indicated that career development courses help students find their interests and explore career possibilities. This in turn leads to better performance in school and a higher academic drive (Hanses, et al., 2017; Peterson & Bowman, 2015). The research on employment benefits was far more aligned. It indicates that the completion of a career-development course has significant benefits, including improved résumé quality, interviewing skills (McDow & Zabucky, 2015), improved career-planning abilities (Gysbers, 2013), increased self-exploration, more confident and effective career decisions (Cheung & Jin, 2016), and better management of careers (Staiculescu, et al., 2015). This secondary information was key in generating questions that were asked during our in-depth interviews.

### *Qualitative Research: In-Depth Interviews*

To complement the information uncovered with our literature review, we chose to conduct three in-depth interviews with MacEwan University students to better explore our marketing research problem. One of these students is currently enrolled in the Navigating MyCareer Journey program and two of them are not. Interviewing both perspectives provided us with a better range of data. The purpose of these interviews was to examine how CDEL can get a larger portion of students who are enrolled in its Navigating MyCareer Journey program to complete it, and how to make the course more appealing to students. Doing in-depth interviews allowed us to analyze individual opinions and feedback without any bias or influences caused by a focus group setting. Students may have been tentative to express personal opinions about one of MacEwan's in-house programs in front of their peers. We also wanted individual reactions because the program is very personal and specifically designed to be done on an individual basis. Our objective was to get legitimate feedback from current students that would help us develop a strategy to address the program's areas of concern.

To ensure that our research was done ethically, we gave each of our participants a consent form to sign before conducting our interviews. It explained that we would be recording the interview and using the information for our research. We also informed them that the information would be provided to the CDEL. The given consent form was adapted to state that it pertained to the Navigating MyCareer Journey program, provide each of our group members names, and indicate our compensation of a \$10 Tim Hortons gift card. We ensured that all information would be completely confidential and that their names would not be used at any time. All our interviews were conducted in person so we could provide a hard copy of the consent form and have it signed on site.

### *Research Questions and Hypothesis*

Research Question #1: What improvements or changes can MacEwan CDEL make to the program to make it more appealing to students and make it more likely for student to complete the program?

Hypothesis: Our initial research indicates that there's an argument for making the Navigating MyCareer Development course worth university credits. Our interview participants felt that it would greatly influence them to enroll in the program and complete it. Another aspect that kept coming up in our literature review was the importance to students of having at least some interaction with an instructor during courses.

Research Question #2: What changes does MacEwan CDEL need to make to its marketing strategy to better reach its target market? How can MacEwan CDEL increase the number of students enrolled in the program?

Hypothesis: From our initial research, we believe that implementing a Blackboard homepage link would help CDEL reach more students. We'd also think that getting professors to promote the program to students at the beginning of each semester would help in doing the same. With the feedback we've received during our interviews, it's clear that these two areas will be more impactful in reaching students and furthermore increase enrollment.

### **Research Design: Descriptive Design**

#### *Target Population and Data Collection*

Our target population for this study was current MacEwan university students. The students could be full-time or part-time, young or old, and in any year of study. As such, our screening question simply asked respondents which year of their program they were in. If they answered "not a student at MacEwan" then we knew to exclude them from our analysis. All of our data was collected in the field in face-to-face surveys. All of our surveys were collected and distributed in a classroom during one of the researchers' classes. After gaining approval from the professor, we would go in front of the class and explain our project and the reasoning behind the survey. As we distributed surveys, we told everyone that participation was completely voluntary and that they did not need to participate if they did not want to. We did not

ask for any personally identifying information such as name, student ID, or email, in order to ensure we received honest feedback.

We had a sample size of 126 and all 126 were current MacEwan students and therefore were in our sampling frame. There was a fairly even split of our sample, with 56% being male and 44% being female. Furthermore, roughly 88% of our sample was between the ages of 20-25. This makes sense, as all of our sample were current university students and nearly 73% of respondents were in their third or fourth year of studies. Likewise, 7% were between the ages of 26-28 and only 4% were 29 or older. Additionally, only 16% of respondents have used CDEL services in the past with roughly 25% having never heard of them before. Table 1 shows a more detailed breakdown of our sample characteristics.

Table 1. Profile of Survey Respondents

Demographics	Number of Respondents	% of Respondents
Sex		
Male	70	55.6%
Female	56	44.4%
Age		
17-19	0	0.0%
20-22	71	56.3%
23-25	40	31.7%
26-28	9	7.1%
29-31	3	2.4%
32 or older	3	2.4%
Year of Study at MacEwan		
First year	1	0.8%
Second year	12	9.5%
Third year	35	27.8%
Fourth year	57	45.2%
Fifth year or later	21	16.7%
Ever used CDEL services		
Yes	20	15.9%
No	75	59.5%
Never heard of them	31	24.6%
International Student		
Yes	5	4.0%
No	121	96.0%
How concerned about life path post-graduation		
Not at all concerned	8	6.3%
Slightly concerned	25	19.8%
Moderately concerned	36	28.6%
Very concerned	35	27.8%
Extremely concerned	22	17.5%

### *Operationalization of Variables*

Our survey was quite substantial with 15 questions and multiple variables for each question. Our survey used a few different types of scales including Likert and rank order. In order to find out why a student might not finish an online course after they had started, we asked them what hypothetical roadblocks might stop or slow their progress. Additionally, we asked students to rate different topics [1 to 5 scale] in order to find out what students are looking for in a career development course. By finding out what students are interested in, we can discover what will drive students to the program and what will ensure they will complete the program once they've started—two big problems CDEL currently has. Furthermore, we asked students how likely they would be to take a free, online career development course as well as a for-credit career development course. The purpose of this question was to ascertain students' interest in a for-credit course in order to help CDEL determine whether there is a market for such a course.

Also, we asked students to check off where they learned about events/opportunities at MacEwan. This question was designed to help CDEL further refine its marketing program to ensure they get the most impact for their dollar. Finally, there were many questions designed to gain demographics. We wanted to study and find out if there were differences between males and females in their desire to take a career development course or if, for instance, fourth year students were more interested in career development than second years or vice versa.

### *Questionnaire Development*

The draft questionnaire was written and edited together by our group. Over the course of two-to-three days we first thought of the data we were hoping to get. Next, we tried to think of questions and options that would get us the information we needed to answer the research questions we had. All the groups were given class time to work on their surveys and ask our professor any questions. Afterwards, we wrote and formatted our draft survey and submitted it to our professor, Dr. Angulo. Our professor then provided feedback and recommendations on possible changes to improve our survey. At the same time, we conducted a pre-test of our survey to five fellow students. This pre-test was done during class-time and is something all the groups did in our class. Next, we made the necessary edits and additions to our survey based on the feedback we received from our professor and fellow students. We then passed on a copy to MacEwan CDEL for them to review. The client provided very detailed feedback and, after discussing their recommendations as a group, we made the final round of changes to the survey. The process took roughly a week from the beginning to the end and the resulting survey was more refined and polished than, we think, gave us the information we will need to answer our marketing and management problems.

### *Ethical Issues*

We ran into no major ethical issues while collecting our data. As mentioned previously, we made a choice to not ask for any personally identifiable information in the survey. However, we

did ask students for their sex as part of the demographics we were using. Some students were curious as they did not see a reason why we needed to know that. In these instances, we made sure to explain our reasoning and assured them that they did not need to answer any questions they did not feel comfortable answering. Additionally, we put the disclosure for the survey on the front page and always made sure to remind participants to fully read the agreement before starting the survey. Furthermore, this study and the protocol used has been approved by the Research Ethics Board. As such, we ensured that risks related to the research were kept to a minimum especially during the data collection phase.

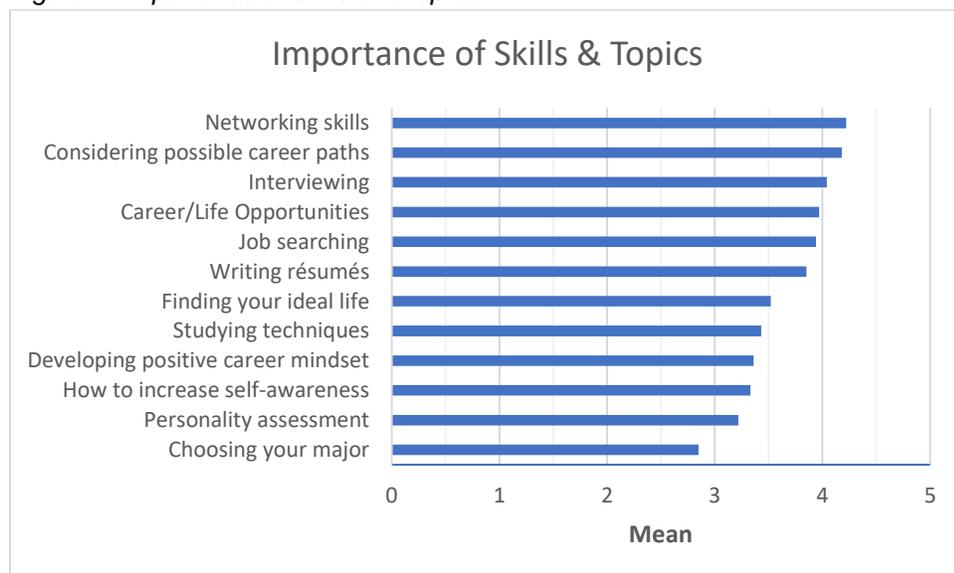
## Analysis and Results

The research we conducted consisted of 126 surveys given to MacEwan University students. The responses to the survey questions are analyzed below in order to answer the research questions identified earlier. Before looking at the results that attempt to answer each question, these are the characteristics of the sample we collected data from.

Research Question #1: What improvements or changes can MacEwan CDEL make to the program to make it more appealing to students and make it more likely for students to complete the program?

This is a question with multiple parts, all of which should be studied and analyzed to come up with the best answer to our question. In order to determine what appeals to students, we presented them with a list of skills and topics that might be interesting to focus on in the course, and asked them to determine their importance on a scale from 1 (not at all important) to 5 (very important). The results from this question in shown in Figure 1, below.

Figure 1. Importance of skills and topics



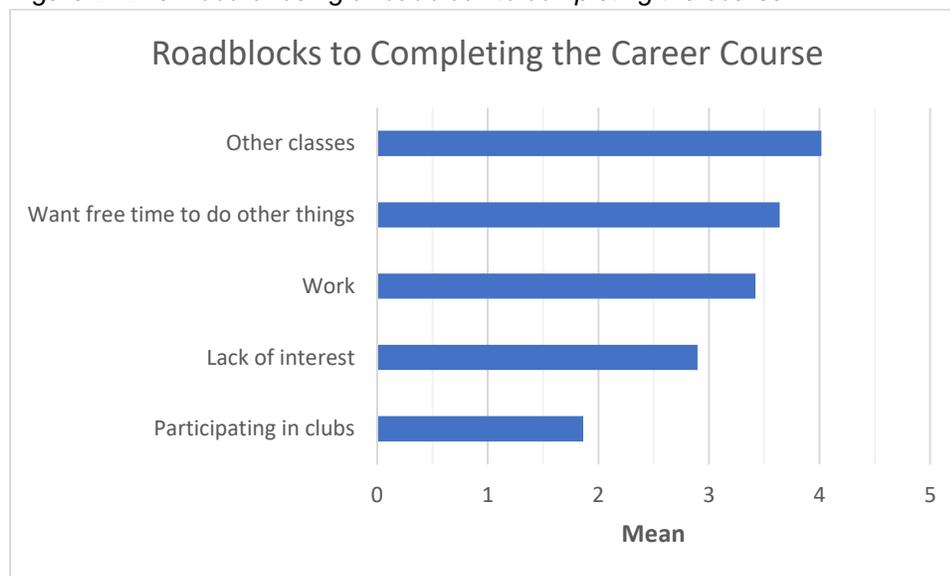
The graph shows the skills and topics in the descending order of importance determined, on average, by the surveyed students. “Networking skills” and “Considering possible career paths” are the two most important skills/topics according to the students, averaging a rating of over 4.

The least important skills/topics are “Personality assessment” and “Choosing your major,” both of which average around 3. According to this assessment of the importance of skills, it would be preferable for CDEL to focus on the skills/topics that have the highest average rating, as these are more likely to attract students to the course.

Using the average importance that students rated the skills/topics (Figure 1) in combination with the correlation calculated between the likelihood of taking the career course and the skills/topics, the research indicates that networking skills are both highly important to students and significantly correlated (positively) to the willingness to take the course. Other skills/topics that are significantly, positively correlated to the likelihood of taking the course are career/life opportunities and developing a positive career mindset. The result is that these skills/topics should be focused on by CDEL as they continue to improve the course.

The second part of the question requires that we determine what the hindrances to completion are for students who have enrolled in the program. The question that was used to determine the possible hindrances allowed students to rate the options given from 1 (Not at all likely to be a barrier) to 5 (Very likely to be a barrier). The results from this question are shown below, in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Likelihood of being a roadblock to completing the course



What the graph is effectively showing is that other (normal, for credit) classes are very likely to take precedence over the career development course, and once people are done with their regular classwork, they are likely to want free time to do other things. A lack of interest is not the largest barrier for CDEL to overcome, as it averages close to 3 (neutral) on the scale.

Lack of interest and wanting free time are both negatively correlated with the likelihood of taking the course, which indicates that students who rate their likelihood of taking the course as higher are less likely to see these variables as a barrier to do so. Perhaps the most interesting variable, however, is other classes. When the course is offered for credits, this variable has no significant correlation with the likelihood of taking the course; when it is offered not for credits though, the correlation is significantly negative. This is reasonable, as the barrier

of other classes is likely to decrease the likelihood of taking the course when offered for no credits, while the course effectively becomes one of the “other classes” when it is offered for credits.

There is a third part to the analysis of this question. It came up in our interviews with the CDEL staff and in our in-depth interviews with students at MacEwan. This third part deals with whether students would be significantly more interested in taking the career development course if it were offered for credits – as a regular course – instead of being a free option without credits being given for its completion. In order to minimize the bias in the responses, we asked the students two questions about their likelihood of taking a career development course. One question asked about a course with credits, while the other asked about a course for no credits. The responses for each question are shown in Figure 3 and Figure 4, below.

Figure 3. Likelihood of taking the course if offered for credits

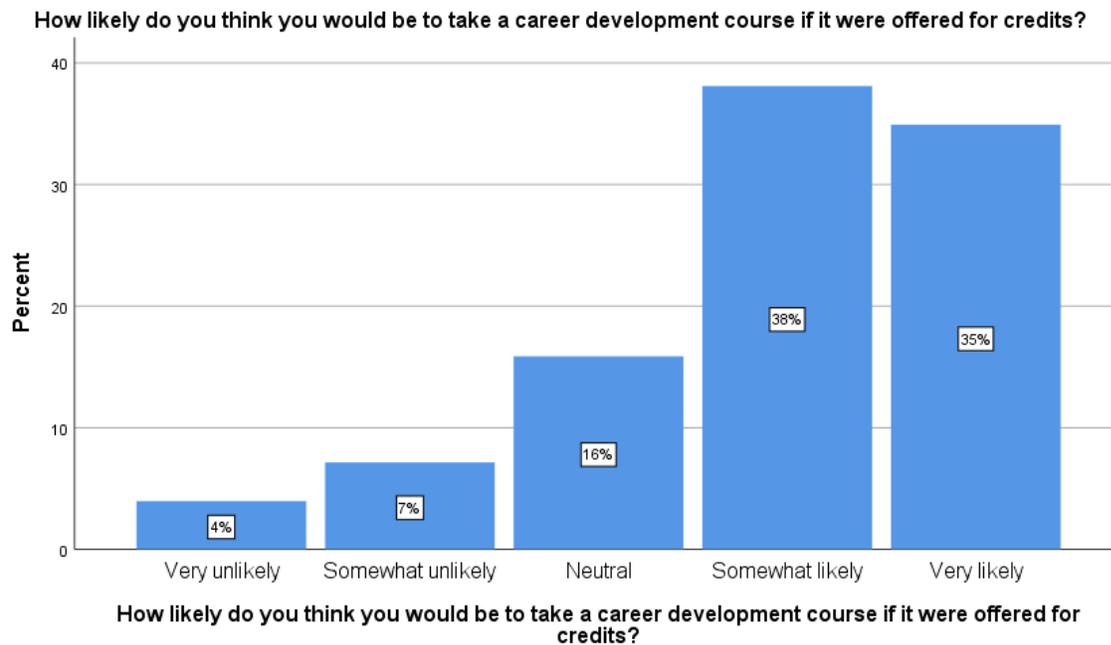
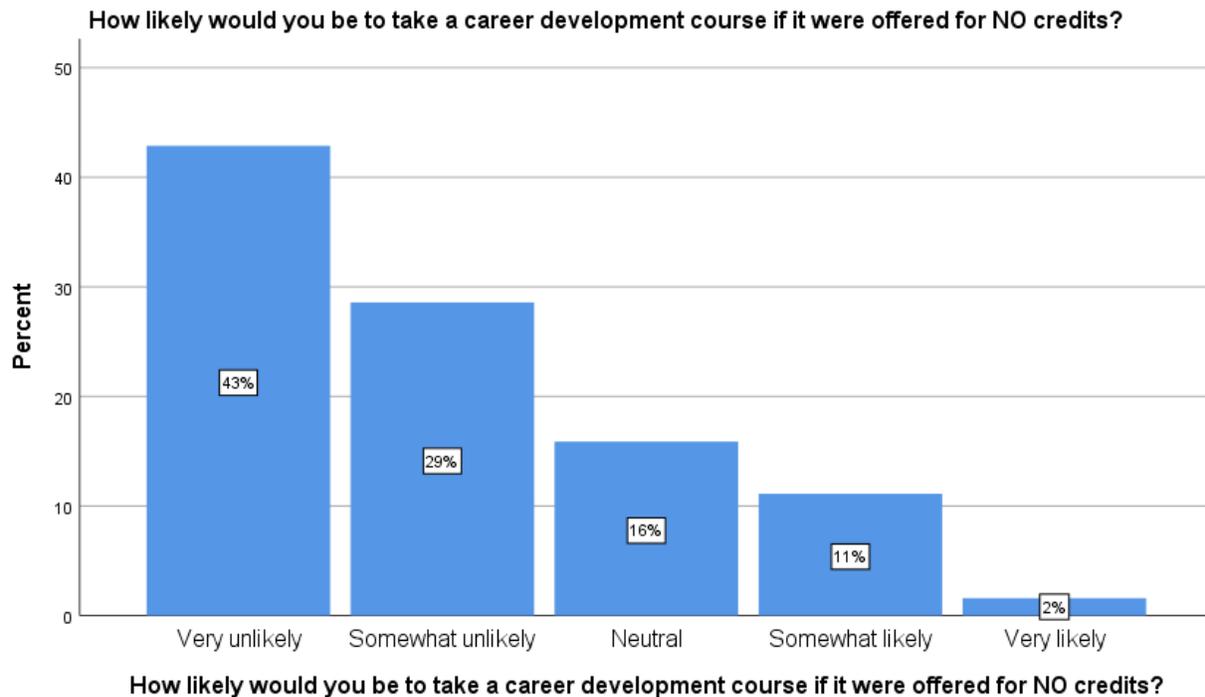


Figure 4. Likelihood of taking the course if offered for NO credits



The responses to each question are very different. When the course was offered for credits, 73% of the students answered that they were somewhat or very likely to take the course. However, when it was offered for no credits, 72% of students said they were somewhat or very unlikely to take it, while only 2% were very likely to take it. These results fit nicely with the results in Figure 2, where students indicate that regular courses take precedence – and if the career development course were offered for credits, it would constitute a regular course.

The correlation between the likelihood of taking the course for credits and for no credits is, not surprisingly, significant and positive. This indicates that people who are more likely to take the course without credits are also more likely to take it when offered for credits. It is also not surprising that the correlation is not equal to 1, as there are more people who are willing to take the course when offered for credits than without.

Going back to the research question, the analysis of the collected data seems to indicate that CDEL can improve the appeal of the course by focusing mainly on the topics/skills with the highest average rating and significant positive correlation, as these topics/skills are what students are the most interested in learning. In order to increase the completion rate of the course, the most effective change to the course would be making it large and comprehensive enough to warrant it being offered for credits, as students focus mainly on courses that contribute to their degrees.

Research Question #2: What changes does MacEwan CDEL need to make to its marketing strategy to better reach its target market? How can MacEwan CDEL increase the number of students enrolled in the program?

To answer the first question, one of the questions on our questionnaire asked students where they hear about events/opportunities at school.

Table 2. How do you learn about events/opportunities at MacEwan?

	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	Percent	
Fellow students	56	19.7%	54.9%
Posters	66	23.2%	64.7%
Facebook	37	13.0%	36.3%
Information tables	19	6.7%	18.6%
Instagram	8	2.8%	7.8%
Snapchat	5	1.8%	4.9%
Blackboard	45	15.8%	44.1%
MyMacEwan website	47	16.5%	46.1%
The Griff	1	0.4%	1.0%
Total	284	100.0%	278.4%

Of the 126 respondents, only 102 students answered this question, giving a total of 284 responses. This means that the average student gets information from 2.78 sources. Four sources were each used by at least 44% of the students that answered. These are – in descending order – posters, friends, the MyMacEwan website, and Blackboard. This indicates that these are the mediums that CDEL should focus on when marketing their course to students, as they have the largest reach.

As the course involves a bit more complexity than most events or opportunities, another consideration to keep in mind is where students get advice about career and educational choices. The results from this question are shown in Table 3, below.

Table 3. Where do you go to get advice about career and educational choices?

	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	Percent	
Parents	72	19.9%	57.6%
Friends	91	25.1%	72.8%
Academic advisor	45	12.4%	36.0%
Books	23	6.4%	18.4%
Online forums	64	17.7%	51.2%
Professors	54	14.9%	43.2%
Other	13	3.6%	10.4%
Total	362	100.0%	289.6%

The response rate for this question was better, with 125 students providing answers. A total of 362 responses means that each student uses on average 2.9 sources to get advice about their futures. The top four responses – with more than 43% of students using each – are

(in descending order) friends, parents, online forums, and professors. This means that CDEL should focus on creating awareness of the course in these groups and try to get people in the relevant groups to promote the course. As friends are the top source of advice, creating word-of-mouth at the university about the course could potentially have an enormously positive effect on the awareness of and enrollment in the course.

To fully answer this research question, it is useful to consider whether there are any significant differences between the demographic traits of students and consider what makes a student more likely to have a positive attitude about taking a career development course. Table 4, below, shows the results of this analysis, taking into account whether or not the course is offered for credits.

Table 4. Differences in demographics

<b>Demographic</b>	<b>Likelihood of taking the career development course if offered for credits.</b>	<b>Likelihood of taking the career development course if offered for NO credits.</b>
Sex	Mean female > Mean male	No group differences.
Age	Mean 22-25 > Mean 26 or older	No group differences.
Year of Study at MacEwan*	No group differences.	Mean 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> year > Mean for rest**
Ever used CDEL services	No group differences.	No group differences.
International Student	No group differences.	No group differences.
How concerned about life path post-graduation***	Mean moderate to extremely concerned > Mean not concerned	Mean very and extremely concerned > Mean not concerned to moderately concerned
<p>*This variable was also recoded to include only two categories (third year or less, and fourth year or higher), but there were no significant differences between the two groups.  **The mean for 1<sup>st</sup> year students was 5, but with only one respondent in this group, it is not statistically significant.</p>		

The ANOVA results that are shown in Table 4 indicate that there are differences in the demographics that are dependent upon whether or not the course is offered for credits. When the course is offered for credits, females who are 22 to 25 years of age and who rate themselves as moderately to extremely concerned are the most likely to be willing to take the course. When the course is offered for no credit, there are no significant differences due to gender. However, students who rate themselves as very or extremely concerned are more likely to take the class. For unknown reasons, it also seems that 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> years (or older) are more likely to enroll in the course when it is not offered for credits.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The research we conducted for this project was intended to explore how CDEL can make their career development course more appealing to students, how they can increase the completion rate of students that enroll, and how they can create more awareness of the course. We attempted to solve these problems by surveying the students at MacEwan University in order to determine what they would like to learn from a career development course, where they learn about events/opportunities at school, and why they might not be able to complete such a course. We found that there are huge differences in students' attitudes toward a course that is offered for no credits (though it is free) and a course that is offered for credits. When the career development course is offered for no credits, 72% of students say that they are somewhat or very unlikely to take the course and only 13% say they are at least somewhat likely to take the course. However, when offered for credits, the course was at somewhat or very appealing to 73% of students, and only 11% said they were unlikely to take it. Students also said that "other classes" was the most likely reason they would not be able to complete such a course. When the course is offered for credits, however, it contributes toward their degree and students see it as one of those "other courses."

We also found – to no surprise – that people who are more concerned about their future after graduating are more likely to be willing to take the course, regardless of whether or not it is offered for credits. There were other demographical differences too (see Table 4), but this was the only one that was present whether or not the course was offered for credits.

After analysing the data that was gathered, we recommend that CDEL take the following courses of action in order to solve the problems they have been facing with the course:

1. Focus on teaching the skills/topics of "developing positive career mindset," "career/life opportunities," and "networking skills," as these are the variables that we found to be most highly correlated to the likelihood of taking the course.
2. Focus marketing efforts on posters, Blackboard, the MyMacEwan website, and word-of-mouth between students, as these are the mediums that students rely on the most for getting information about event/opportunities at school. Though not a part of our questionnaire (and therefore not statistically significant), several students said that they had not seen the course on Blackboard – it is there but hidden away in a folder. It may be interesting to place it on the front page and see how enrollment changes.
3. Develop a course that deals with career development extensively enough to warrant it being offered for credits. This is the best way for CDEL to get students interested in the course and willing to enroll in and complete it. There is already a willingness to take the course, but students' lack of time means that non-credit courses are not prioritized.

## Limitations

One of the limitations we faced while conducting the research was that we did not have the time, nor the authority, to administer the questionnaire to a wide variety of students. Thus, most of the surveyed students were part of the Bachelor of Commerce program and may not be a fully representative sample of the greater student population at MacEwan. If the duration of the project was longer, we could have collected more data from a larger, more representative sample, which would improve the accuracy of our findings.

Another limitation was the smaller size of our group, as we were only three students and five could have collected more data. The confidentiality agreement that CDEL has with students that use their services also means that we had to send emails through them to get in contact with students who had or were currently completing the course. This meant that we could not actively seek the feedback of these students but had to wait for them to get in contact with us – which did not happen much.

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## Appendices

### *Appendix A: Questions for Decision Maker*

1. Are you more interested in learning if there is a market for a full, accredited course with students?
2. Are you interesting in improving the number of students that use the current Navigating MyCareer Journey or increasing the percentage of students that complete the program once they start?
3. Are there any other ongoing internal projects concerning Navigating MyCareer? Excluding the other Marketing 312 project group.
4. Is there more information you think we might need to help us complete the project?
5. Do you think the product currently has the correct features?
6. What sort of marketing activities have you done so far?

### *Appendix B: Depth Interview Question Guide*

#### Questions for Interview with MyCareer Journey Participant:

- What degree/diploma program are you in? What year are you in?
- Have you thought about switching degrees/diplomas? If so, to/from what?
- Did you complete the program? Or how far did you go?
- How did you hear about the program?
- Why did you complete or not complete the program? (Depends on answer above?)
- How much time did you spend in the program? (estimate per week)
- What was your experience with Navigating MyCareer Journey?
- What did you like? Why?
- What didn't you like? Why?
- How do you think the program could be improved? Why do you think that would help?
- Would offering the course for-credit change your view of the course? (elaborate)
- What are your concerns with graduating? Are you worried about finding employment?
- Have you used any career development resources or books outside of university?

#### Questions for Interview with MyCareer Journey non-participants:

- What degree/diploma program are you in? What year are you in?
- Have you thought about switching degrees/diplomas? If so, to/from what?
- Have you used any services offered by Career Development? If yes, what services?
- Have you heard about Navigating MyCareer Journey? If yes, where? Did you know that it is offered for free?
- Hypothetically, what do you think would stop you come completing an online program like this?
- Is there any particular reason that you have not enrolled yourself in this course?

- What would it take for you to take the course online?
- Would offering the course for-credit change your view of the course? (elaborate)
- What media would you say your most exposed to as a student/where do you find out about school events/programs?
- Are you a member of any clubs on campus?
- What are your concerns with graduating? Are you worried about finding employment?
- Have you used any career development resources or books outside of university?

### *Appendix C: Questionnaire and Consent Sheet*

This questionnaire is part of a research project on increasing the usage and completion of Navigating MyCareer Journey among MacEwan University students. Reading the description and completing the questionnaire indicates that you are giving your informed consent to participate in the study. The consent however does not constitute a waiver of legal rights in the event of research-related harm.

Project Title: Improving Usage of MyCareer Journey for MacEwan Career Development and Experiential Learning

Researchers: Dr. Fernando Angulo-Ruiz, Department of International Business, Marketing and Strategy, MacEwan University. Phone: 780-633-3511; e-mail: [AnguloRuizL@macewan.ca](mailto:AnguloRuizL@macewan.ca).  
Students: Kelly Cartwright, Kai Hesthammer, & Davin Stener.

#### Purpose of the Research:

The focus of the current study is on examining the impact of making the career development course a for-credit option, examine why people do not complete the course, and determining how to most effectively market the course to students.

#### Procedures:

You will be asked to complete a survey concerning career development and related topics. You will also be asked to provide your age, sex, and year of education (post-secondary). This survey will take approximately ten minutes. The data collected will remain anonymous and secure. Your participation is voluntary.

#### Potential Risks:

- Under the minor risk of psychological or emotional discomfort, the questionnaire may raise moderately sensitive questions about the participant's career choices and certainty in them.
- A further risk that should be identified refers to inconvenience in that the time taken to complete this project may be problematic.

#### Potential Benefits:

With the findings from this research, the Career Development and Experiential Learning services will be better able to market their course to students and potentially have reason to pursue the development of a for-credit course. CDEL will have the results from this study to guide their future efforts in reaching students.

Confidentiality/Anonymity:

- We will not collect any identifying information in the survey.

Right to withdraw:

- Your participation is voluntary and you can answer only those questions that you are comfortable with.
- You may withdraw from the research project for any reason, at any time without explanation or penalty of any sort.
- Whether you chose to participate or not will have no effect on your class standing or how you will be treated.
- Should you wish to withdraw, there will be no penalties associated with it.

Follow up: If you are interested in the results, please contact [AnguloRuizL@macewan.ca](mailto:AnguloRuizL@macewan.ca) for a copy of the report once it is completed.

Storage of data:

- All data will be stored on the work computer of the principal investigator, which is password protected. Room 5-252E, CCC, MacEwan University.
- When the data is no longer required, the data will be destroyed.

Questions or Concerns about Ethical Conduct:

This project has been approved on ethical grounds by the MacEwan University Research Ethics Board on [date]. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to the Board at 780-633-3274 or [REB@macewan.ca](mailto:REB@macewan.ca).

1. What year of study are you in at MacEwan University?

- First year                       Second year                       Third year  
 Fourth year                       Fifth year or later                       Not a student at MacEwan

2. How satisfied are you with the electives you have chosen?

- Very dissatisfied     Somewhat dissatisfied     Neutral     Somewhat satisfied  
 Very satisfied

3. Have you ever changed your program of study?

- Yes                       No

4. Have you ever used any of the services offered by Career Development and Experiential Learning?

- Yes                       No                       Never heard of them

5. Have you ever thought about taking a course on career development?

- Yes                       No

6. How concerned are you about finding the right career after you graduate university?

- Not at all concerned       Slightly concerned       Moderately concerned  
 Very concerned               Extremely concerned

7. Where do you go to get advice about career and educational choices? (Check all that apply)

- Parents               Friends               Academic advisor       Books  
 Online forums    Professors  
 Other\_\_\_\_\_

8. How likely do you think you would be to take a career development course if it were offered for credits?

- Very unlikely               Somewhat unlikely               Neutral               Somewhat likely  
 Very likely

9. How likely would you be to take a career development course if it were offered for NO credits?

- Very unlikely               Somewhat unlikely               Neutral               Somewhat likely  
 Very likely

10. Hypothetically, what would be your biggest roadblock to completing a free online course? (1=Not at all likely to be a barrier, 5=Very likely to be a barrier)

	1	2	3	4	5
Other classes	<input type="radio"/>				
Work	<input type="radio"/>				
Participating in clubs	<input type="radio"/>				
Lack of interest	<input type="radio"/>				
Want free time to do other things	<input type="radio"/>				

11. If you were to take a course on career development, what skills or topics would you be interested in developing/learning about? (1=Not at all important, 5=Very important)

	1	2	3	4	5
Interviewing	<input type="radio"/>				
Finding your ideal life	<input type="radio"/>				
Job searching	<input type="radio"/>				
Writing résumés	<input type="radio"/>				
Developing positive career mindset	<input type="radio"/>				
Choosing your major	<input type="radio"/>				
Career/Life Opportunities	<input type="radio"/>				
Personality assessment	<input type="radio"/>				
Networking skills	<input type="radio"/>				
Studying techniques	<input type="radio"/>				
How to increase self-awareness	<input type="radio"/>				
Considering possible career paths	<input type="radio"/>				

12. How do you learn about events/opportunities at MacEwan? (Check all that apply)

- Email newsletters
- Facebook
- Snapchat
- Fellow students
- Information tables
- Blackboard
- MyMacEwan website
- Posters
- Instagram
- The Griff

13. Age

- 17 - 19
- 20 - 22
- 23 - 25
- 26 - 28
- 29 - 31
- 32 or older

14. Sex

- Male
- Female

15. Are you an international student?

- Yes
- No