



**Career Readiness Resources**

**Backpack to Briefcase  
Professional Development Program**

Courtesy of Villanova University



VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY  
VILLANOVA SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

THE CLAY CENTER AT VSB

Charlotte and James V. O'Donnell

CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



# BACKPACK *to* BRIEFCASE



*Professional Development  
in the Curriculum*

**Backpack to Briefcase** (B2B) is an innovative initiative, integrating professional development into the core business curriculum throughout a student's four-year academic program. B2B supplements students' participation in traditional academic courses, providing holistic preparation for success as business professionals. Integrating career and professional development concepts into the VSB curriculum fosters a thoughtful approach to preparing for life after graduation. Each year of the B2B program, students are presented with opportunities to learn and develop professionally.

# FRESHMAN YEAR

*Assessing the Environment*

## VSB 1000: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

In the fall or spring semester, VSB freshmen enroll in a one-credit online course designed to increase students' ability to utilize spreadsheets as a tool for business decision making. Students are also required to earn *Bloomberg Certification* by completing Bloomberg Market Concepts (BMC), a self-paced e-learning program that provides an introduction to the financial markets.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPONENT

Each semester, students participate in and reflect on professional development activities related to major exploration, college planning, career exploration and professional skill building. Critical written communication techniques are developed. Additionally, each student works with the University Career Center to create a professional resume.

# JUNIOR YEAR

*Gaining a Competitive Edge*

## VSB 3000: BARTLEY BRIEFCASE CHALLENGE

In the fall or spring semester, VSB juniors enroll in a one-credit course that provides preparation for and culminates in an internal case competition. Written and verbal communication skills, analysis, team dynamics and leadership are integrated throughout the course. This course also provides a wide array of networking opportunities; students interact with and are provided feedback from business professionals.

### Previous case studies\* include:

PepsiCo, Profits and Food: The Belt Tightens  
Tesla Motors  
Apple, Inc. in 2015

*\*Harvard Business School Publishing*

# SOPHOMORE YEAR

*Defining & Implementing Your Strategy*

## VSB 2000: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR

In the fall or spring semester, VSB sophomores participate in a one-credit seminar focusing on self-assessment, career decision making, personal branding, internship and job search processes, interviewing skills, networking and using social media. Throughout the semester, students are presented with opportunities to interact with alumni and employers and practice skills critical to success in the career development process.

# SENIOR YEAR

*Capitalizing on Your Investment*

## UNIVERSITY CAREER CENTER & VU SENIORS PROGRAM

VSB partners with the University Career Center and the VU Seniors program to provide a series of social, professional and spiritual activities designed to unify the senior class, while preparing them for life after graduation.

*The Clay Center at VSB*



*The O'Donnell Center for Professional Development*

oversee the Backpack to Briefcase Program

The Clay Center is dedicated to undergraduate student services, including academic advising and curricular planning, and is home to The Charlotte and James V. O'Donnell Center for Professional Development. The O'Donnell Center provides a multitude of professional development activities that serve to enrich students' academic experiences and prepare them for success in their chosen career path.



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