To: Dr. Erika Paterson

From: Yifan Wang, ENGL 301

Date: Oct 11, 2021

Subject: Prepare UBC CS students for job market better by starting career-focused club

**Introduction**

The Computer Science department of the University of British Columbia has ranked well among other Computer Science faculties around the world. However, for students, most of the courses they take focus on CS fundamentals. While having a solid foundation is important, a lot of students lacks preparation for finding Co-op or full-time jobs.

**Statement of Problem**

The lack of preparation is reflected in multiple aspects. First, the courses students take at school does not adequately prepare them for behavioral and technical interviews. Although the CS Co-op office does provide mock behavioral interview to students, it is usually not in enough depth, and most of the time they are unable to provide mock technical interviews to students. As a result, students do not have chance to practice before going to the real interviews and always performs poorly in their first few interviews. However, these “first few interviews” might be all the interviews they could get in their job seeking term. Second, school does not teach students most of the tools and frameworks to be used at work. The best way to make a resume stand out is to have personal projects on it. However, students might get overwhelmed by the wide-array of technologies to choose from. Third, most students do not know what companies do, and sometimes may not know what to expect in their daily work. Hence, knowledge sharing is important between people in the industry and students.

As a research university, UBC focuses more on theoretical Computer Science and teaches Computer Science fundamentals, and this is totally understandable. It would too much of a burden for UBC CS to fully undertake the responsibility of preparing students for job market, so this has to be done by student organizations.

**Proposed Solution**

The proposed solution is starting an AMS sponsored career-focused club, and this club can have its own website. The club may offer three kinds of resources: regularly updated guides on the website, in-person mock interview and personal project workshops, and Q&A session with UBC CS alumni working in different industries.

**Scope**

To evaluate the feasibility of starting a club, there are few questions to be answered by UBC CS students:

1. How many students feel that there is a disconnection between CS education and actual job
2. How badly does the disconnection affect their first job seeking
3. What kind of activities should the club provide to bridge the gap
4. In what format should some of the activities be?

**Methods**

One of the primary sources would be interviews with current CS students to better understand what exactly the differences are between school and work. Also, I will use surveys to gauge the interest in joining such club and activities people expect to participate in.

**Qualification**

I am doing my second degree in Computer Science at UBC. Recently, I have completed two Co-ops, and is looking for a full-time job. I have experienced such disconnection between education and actual work and noticed that there are also people struggling in preparing for job seeking.

**Conclusion**

While UBC’s CS department offer students high quality education in Computer Science fundamentals, a solid foundation does not always translate to a good job offer. The disconnection between education and real job market hinders a lot of students from getting their first job, and this is better to be addressed by a student organization.