

CCIT Speaks Up

Communication, Culture & Information Technology Alumni Career Panel

March 5, 2008, 6-8pm

Faculty Club, South Building

Sponsored by the UTM Career Centre and the CCIT Club

PANELISTS:

Ariela Levy, Database/Project Coordinator, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

Bilal Jaffery, Business Development Manager for Corporate Relationships, Lotus Foundations Division, IBM

Helene Bahsous, Marketing Coordinator, Burger King Canada

Andy Lee, Business Analyst, Strategy Department, Trapeze

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COMMUNICATIONS: AN OVERVIEW

Individuals in communications careers create messages that aim to inform, to educate, to persuade, or entertain. New careers and specialty areas in communications have developed as newly trained professionals are required to both operate the new technologies and make them work with older technologies.

Communications majors have a plethora of job opportunities available to them, in businesses (both for profit and non-profit) and in the community. The business sector requires communications agents to conduct market research, promote the brand image, market the brand image to increase and maintain sales, or revamp the brand image to target a new consumer audience. Organizations also require communication agents to deliver presentations to share company ideas, draft press releases, and design promotional materials. The community needs communication agents to represent their views in larger political groups, and reach out to the homeless, the unemployed, the emotionally and physically distressed, and the socially disadvantaged through social and public service organizations. The community also needs communication agents to plan and market massive public events.

Skills acquired through a communication degree may apply to a wide array of fields. At the same time students must try to hone those skills with experience in the communication career branch of their interest.

WHO EMPLOYS CCIT GRADUATES?

- Advertising/ Marketing agencies
- Consulting firms
- Corporations
- Educational institutions
- Entertainment Industry
- Government
- Newspapers and Magazines
- Nonprofit associations
- Graphic Design Firms
- Health/Medical/Hospitals
- Labour Unions
- Multimedia firms
- Private Sector (e.g., Public relations)

- Self-employed/ freelance
- and more!

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY CCIT MAJORS INCLUDE:

- Application of theoretical knowledge in practical settings
- Attention to details
- Compare works of Media Art
- Conduct research on IT
- Create multimedia documents
- Create entertaining and persuasive messages
- Create powerful images with sight, sound, motion & words (nonverbal communication)
- Critical analysis of media
- Decision making
- Demonstrate creativity and artistic expression
- Design websites and other media forms
- Develop a portfolio
- Editing skills
- Evaluate ideas and research
- Evaluate information and sources
- Gather information and data
- Graphic prototyping
- Inter-cultural communication skills
- Interpreting cultures
- IT skills – Microsoft office: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Dreamweaver, Flash Basic, Final Cut Pro 4, Photoshop Elements, Adobe: Illustrator, InDesign, Go-Live, iMovie, QuickTime Pro, IDVD, QuickTime VR, BBEEdit
- Practical skills in using camcorder, digital camera, and tripod
- Organize information/materials
- Plan and manage Problem solving
- Production skills for photography
- Present theories/ideas/ specific viewpoints
- Synthesize information
- Work with deadlines
- Work independently
- Work in teams / small groups
- Write for a wide variety of purposes and audiences

CAREER PATHS

There are many different career options available for CCIT graduates. Below is a sample of types of positions that CCIT graduates may go on to. Note: This is not an exhaustive list as there are many other careers available. Many positions require additional education or experience.

Computer/News Services

Columnist
Print Journalist*
Productions Assistant
Reviewer (e.g. Book Reviewer)
Editor

Magazines

Editorial Assistant
Researcher
Copy Editor
Layout Coordinator
Production Assistant
Promotions Specialist

Photography

Director Photography*
Freelance Photographer
News Photographer
Commercial Photographer

Film

Agent*
Cinematographer
Director*: Film, Video, Theatre
Film Editor*
Producer*
Special Effects Technician*

Radio/ Audio

Announcer*
Music Director
News Director
Production Manager

Audiovisual and Multimedia

AV Director
Producer*
AV Technician
AV Writer

Television and Video

Broadcasting Technician*
Film and TV Crew*
Media Coordinator
Operations Manager
Production Assistant
Research Director

Sales Manager
Scriptwriter
Set Designer*

Advertising and Marketing

Advertising Account Executive*
Advertising Copywriter*
Account Manager
Art Director*
Copywriter

Public Relations/Business

Communication

Community Relations Professional
Communications Specialist*
Corporate Trainer*
Fundraiser*
Media Relations Officer
Project Manager*

New Media and Computers

Computer Trainer*
Graphic Designer*
Multimedia Developer*
Web Developer*

Publishing

Assistant Editor
Copywriter
Editorial Assistant
Indexer
Promotion Manager
Proofreader

Communication Science

Audiologist*
Sign Language Interpreter*
Speech-Language Pathologist*
Speech Researcher

Other

Art/ Music Therapist*
Arts Administrator*
Community Worker*
Human Resources Specialist*
Interpreter*
Lawyer*
Lobbyist*

Politician
Technical Writer*
Translator*
Sound Technician*

Technical Director
Writer-Producer
Researcher

Note: career profiles for many of the above jobs are available in the Career Centre. Those marked with an asterisk(*) can be viewed using Career Cruising, a Canadian electronic career guide available in the Centre.

HOW TO GET EXPERIENCE

Start early by seeking relevant summer, part-time and volunteer opportunities that will help you gain experience and develop the skills that employers want. Below is a sample of the types of temporary positions that have recently been posted with the Career Centre. To access the summer, part-time, temporary and volunteer postings, register with the **Career Centre Online** at www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers

Volunteer

Design Editor, Jargon Magazine
Research Intern, Honeycomb Worldwide Inc.
Grant Writer, Habitat for Humanity Brampton

Part-Time Positions

Copy Editor-Writer, Canadian Shareowner
Freelance Article Writer, Metropolitan Drug Awareness Guide
Media Analyst, Ministry of the Cabinet Office
Website Content Editor, Hyperlogic Media

Work Study

Previous postings have included:
Digital Film Editor, UTM Residence
Media Officer, UTM Student Centre
UTM Student Centre Marketing Rep, UTM Student Affairs
Communications Rep, UTM Student Affairs
Electronic Research Assistant, UTM Library
Digital Imaging & Slide Assistant, Dept. Fine Art
Secondary School Liaison, UTM CCIT
Marketing Assistant, UTM Career Centre
Web Page Designer, Dept. of Sociology

Internships

Youth Internship Program
CBC/Radio-Canada
Flare Magazine - internships include editorial, web and marketing/promotions
Maisonneuve Magazine (Montreal) - Summer Internships
Assistant Brand Manager Intern, Proctor & Gamble
Public Affairs Intern, The Jeffery Group Ltd.
Editorial Intern - Toronto Life Magazine
Marketing Intern, Kraft Canada

Featured/Published Work

Have your work featured in different mediums (e.g., print, web, etc.)

Have you thought of writing or submitting photography to the UTM Medium or the Oracle Magazine? It's a great way to have your work published and a piece to add to your future portfolio.

Have your work featured in Adbusters. Adbusters is a global network of artists, activists, writers, pranksters, students, educators and entrepreneurs who want to advance the new social activist movement of the information age. For submission guidelines, see web site.

Join an Association

Interested in Public Relations? Consider joining the Toronto Chapter of the Canadian Public Relations Society (CPRS). Other associations of interest may include the Canadian Magazines Publishers Association or the Canadian Film and Television Production Association but there are many more!

Create a Portfolio

To market your skills and knowledge gained as a CCIT student, select a few research papers, web assignments or group projects to illustrate your technical (i.e., computer) and writing skills. You can make mention of the relevance of your portfolio in your cover letter and consider sharing a significant project you have worked on during an interview.

SAMPLE JOB LISTINGS FOR GRADUATING STUDENTS/RECENT GRADUATES

Below is a sample of the types of positions that have recently been posted with the Career Centre for graduating students or recent graduates. To access full-time opportunities (for up to two years after graduation), you must first attend an orientation.

Communications Writer and Communications Officer, Bluegenesis
Media/Writing Communications Specialist, Toronto Conservation Authority
Public Relations and Communication Manager, Textile Museum of Canada
Assistant Production Editor, Canada Law Book Inc
Graphic Design Artist/Designer, First Media Group, Inc
Program Coordinator, Living Arts Centre
Director of Student Services, Student's Administrative Council, UofT
Writer, Google
Publications Assistant, Canadian Shareowner
Project Coordinator- Artwork/Print, Kik Corporation
Script Writer, IPSOS-ASI Ltd.
Technical Recruiter, Computer Horizons Canada
Online Media Design, YYZ Pictures
Creative Art Director, Cantos Cadre
New Media Programmer, Corus Entertainment
Communications Assistant, Credit Valley Conservation
Policy Analyst, CRTC
Associate Brand Manager, Spin Master Ltd.
Reporter, Fairchild Television Ltd.
Programmer, Toronto International Film Festival Group
New Media Designer, Art Gallery of Ontario

HOW CAN THE CAREER CENTRE HELP?

The Career Centre has a wealth of information, resources and services to help you along your career path.

Library Resources

In the Resource Library, the Career Centre has some great books to help you plan your career. They cover everything from identifying potential career options, writing a great resume and cover letter, preparing for different types of interviews and being prepared to answer some of the tougher interview questions.

Resources include:

- Career Cruising
- Great Jobs for Communication Majors
- Careers for Culture Lovers...
- Careers for Writers...
- Careers for Music Lovers...
- Careers in Culture Series
- Breaking into Film
- Creative Careers in Music
- Careers by Design
- Careers in Marketing
- Career Information Binders

The National Occupational Code binders

The National Occupational Code binders in the Career Resource Library provide very detailed, specific and extensive information relating to hundreds of careers. From general overviews of the job, to working conditions, to sample job postings related to the field and related articles, the binders are sure to provide you with in-depth answers to many of your job-specific questions.

Panel Packages

Take a look through the packages from previous career panels to learn more about working in a certain field. Over twenty packages are available for your perusal including:

- CCIT Futures: Career Options
- Writing and Communications
- Career Options for Young Entrepreneurs
- Careers in Marketing

Library Videos

Be sure to check out the videos of the panel events as well to hear industry insiders give first-hand accounts of their experiences and offer advice. Videos resources include:

- Careers in Writing and Communications (2004)
- Focus on Publishing (2003)
- Human Resources Panel of Speaker (2002, 2003)

Employer Directories

Looking for potential employers to contact to conduct interviews with or inquire about potential job openings? Take a look out our employer directories to help you find the prospective employers that interest you the most.

Tip Sheets

Do you like information in an easy-to-read, easy-to-digest, take-home format? Take a look at our tipsheets on subjects like Effective Interviewing, Networking, and Preparing for Graduate School.

Career Centre Website

The Career Centre website (www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers) also offers some very helpful resources to help you explore careers. Sign up for the **e-newsletter** to keep you updated about the latest events and resources. Sign up for resume critiques online, or cruise through the online database of jobs. Take a look at our **events calendar** to find out what's coming up in the next couple of weeks and sign up for workshops, employer events and more. Cruise through the careers that interest you the most by accessing **Career Cruising** on one of our computers. Look through **Careers by Major - CCIT** to view a sample of types of positions that CCIT graduates may obtain. Browse through dozens of **profiles of UTM Alumni** to hear more about what they have done since they have graduated. See page 8 for an Alumni Profile of one of today's panelists!

Events

Would you like a chance to interact with prospective employers and expand your networking circle? The Career Centre offers a number of events that help you brush shoulders with professionals and experts from all fields. Attend the **Get Experience Fair, Professional Schools Fair, Career Expo, Summer Job Fair**, or one of the **Networking Breakfasts**. Practice putting those networking skills to use and land yourself a job!

Extern Job Shadowing Program

Are you still curious about what career path is best for you? Would you like a chance to experience working in an industry to find out if it's really the path for you? The Extern Job Shadowing Program can help. This job-shadowing program grants you a one- to five- day placement in a career of your choice during Reading Week or in May. Previous extern placements have included: Translator, Family Counsellor, Teacher, Editor/Writer, and Speech Language Pathologist.

Career Counselling

Are you feeling lost, unsure and overwhelmed with finding out what career path you would like to choose? Or you've decided on a career or the type of job you want, but what are the next steps? Our Career Counsellors are here to help. Book an appointment with one of our professionals who can help

you determine what paths you can take after graduation or how your area of study can relate to a career post-grad.

Job Postings

Are you graduating soon or a recent graduate? Sign up for the **Graduating Students Employment Service (GSES) or the Recent Graduate Employment Service (RGES)**. These services allow you to gain access to full-time job postings while you finish your final year of study or access full-time job postings for up to two years after you graduate.

Please feel free to come and visit us in Room 3094, South Building. We can also be reached by phone at 905-828-5451, or by email at careers@utm.utoronto.ca.

ALUMNI PROFILE

Bilal Jaffery Profile

Degree: BA

Specialist: Digital Enterprise Management

Minor: Economics

Year of Graduation: 2007

Bilal Jaffery is currently the Business Development Manager for IBM's Lotus Foundations.

"My main responsibility is to initiate and finalize corporate business-to-business relationships to expand our channel for our platform delivery," says Bilal, who also earned a post-graduate certificate in Digital Communications from Sheridan College.

In Bilal's line of work, confidence, industry knowledge, people skills, a positive attitude and real world experience have proven essential. "I've definitely been utilizing the skills I learned in school," he says.

Bilal, who has previously worked as a Project Manager for DesiVibe.ca and a Current Accounts Manager for Tech Data Canada, also spent some time as a Marketing and IT Consultant for a youth organization in Mississauga.

"Summer jobs got me started into a non-retail role in my second year at UTM. I have been working throughout my academic studies and I believe that where I am today is due to my four-plus years of work experience before graduation along with strong academics. However, more of the focus has been on work experience while leveraging the skills I obtained through the specialist program at U of T," says Bilal.

"I started my job search long before my graduation. I have always focused on developing my resume as I had learned earlier in my education years that our program is too new for Industry acknowledgement at

the moment. Hence, it was critical to combine the best of both worlds at an earlier stage. I was hired because I was able to leverage my education with my strong work experience. I also have to thank my peers for their support and direction as well."

If he could have done anything differently, Bilal says he would have focused on his passion for Information Technology earlier in his studies instead of going the finance route.

"I've found that specialist programs are tougher than other programs and because of that they build up your character for your whole life. I plan to gain few more years of experience and then work on my MBA," he says.