Students need every advantage possible when it comes to looking for and finding employment upon graduation. The job competition is fierce and students must demonstrate why they are the best choice for the position they are seeking. In an effort to ensure that Price students stand out from those of other business schools across the nation, the Price College of Business this spring began offering a new class titled Business and Professional Basics. This unique initiative is designed to familiarize Price students with the many facets of the corporate world and provide them with a competitive advantage in the job market.

Originally recommended by a professional development task force commissioned by Dean Ken Evans and chaired by Guy Patton, president of the OU Foundation, the course is a collaboration of industry expert recommendations combined with academics. The class covers relevant and timely topics, including office environment and politics, ethics, networking, communication skills, dining and social etiquette, résumé building, interview techniques, body language, professional dress and service learning.

Ron Anderson, renewable term assistant professor, teaches the new course and is assisted by multiple subject matter experts from Price College’s Undergraduate Professional Development Office, the Business Communication Center and OU Career Services. Additionally, faculty and outside industry professionals volunteer their time to make this class a success for the students. “The Price College of Business is increasingly committed to meeting employer expectations regarding our students having those ‘soft skills’ which are important for success in the business environment. Having the opportunity to address these skill sets in a classroom setting is invaluable,” says Anderson.

The course has generated excitement among Price students as more than 160 are enrolled in the inaugural
class. While this course is required of all students entering Price College beginning with the 2010-2011 academic year, many of the students currently enrolled are upperclassmen who did not want to miss this opportunity prior to graduation. “By taking the class, I hope to better myself professionally so that I can be effective and efficient in business. I want to be competitive and develop excellent communication skills in order to enter the business world upon graduation more prepared,” says Brittany Mendez, energy management student.

An increasing number of students are beginning to recognize that there is a right way and a wrong way to navigate the job search and interview process. They understand that graduation is only the beginning of their journey as they transition into their career field. The Business and Professional Basics course serves as a guide for Price College students along the way and helps them avoid pitfalls they may encounter.