Stack-up the Skills that Employers Want

**A “candidate’s demonstrated capacity to think critically, communicate clearly, and solve complex problems is more important than their undergraduate major.”**

Of course your major is important, but re-read the quotation above, which was taken from a 2013 report prepared by Hart Research Associates for the American Association of Colleges and Universities. They found that 93% of surveyed employers value a potential employee’s critical thinking and communications skills more than their specific college major field of study.

How do you develop these skills and showcase them for a potential employer?

You’ve taken an important first step by coming to Roanoke College. Our curriculum and whole approach to education is structured to help students develop the skills that will make the most difference in their lives after college, including their work lives.

To make the most of this, you need to recognize and value assignments and opportunities-both inside and outside your major-that push you to do the often uncomfortable work of thinking critically, and working creatively and analytically with others to solve problems, and then communicate your ideas effectively both in writing and orally.

Where can you find the courses that help you build these skills? They are at all levels in your major, and in the Intellectual Inquiry Curriculum. INQ 110 helps you work on critical thinking and writing. INQ 120 focuses on ethical reasoning and oral skills. INQ 240 shows you how data can be used in decision-making. The other 200-level INQ courses focus on using the methodologies of the disciplines to ask and answer questions because no single discipline has all the answers when the problems are truly complicated. In your Global course, you analyze issues in terms of global interconnections or cultural perspectives.

And finally in INQ 300 Contemporary Issues, you work collaboratively to solve a real problem by employing all of the skills developed in your major and the other INQ courses. In other words, you demonstrate the skills that employers want in their potential employees.

Make sure that future employers or graduate schools know about your skills by highlighting how you have demonstrated them in your resume or application materials. Draw examples from INQ and major courses, but also from applications in research projects, internships, and organization leadership.

Want to know more about what employers say they look for in recent college graduates? Check out the full report of the Hart Research Associates at <https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/LEAP/2013_EmployerSurvey.pdf>.   
And you can find more information on the Intellectual Inquiry Curriculum at <http://www.roanoke.edu/inside/a-z_index/intellectual_inquiry>.



**INQ 300 Contemporary Issues**

Work collaboratively to solve a real problem using all the skills developed in INQ and your major

**INQ 110 Intellectual Inquiry**

Critical thinking, writing, research

**INQ 120 Living an Examined Life**

Ethical reasoning, speaking skills

**INQ 250 Scientific Reasoning**

Reasoning of natural science to understand problems & draw conclusions

**INQ 240 Statistical Reasoning**

Use data to make decisions

**INQ 260 Social Scientific Reasoning**

Social science methodologies to understand problems & draw conclusions

**INQ 270/271 Human Heritage**

Skills of analysis and contextualization to understand problems & draw conclusions

**Global Requirement**

Analyze issues using global connections or cultural perspectives

**Major Requirements**

Depth of knowledge and skills  
 in one discipline

Stack

Up

Your

Skills