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From the Buffalo Business First:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/buffalo/news/2021/11/11/colleges-prepare-students-for-evolving-workforce.html>

How WNY colleges are preparing students for evolving workforce

Nov 11, 2021, 6:00am EST

Soft skills, data and technology

Having knowledge of data analytics and technology was crucial before 2020. The pandemic heightened that importance to employers.

Similarly, soft skills such as collaboration and communication were rusty when many workdays turned remote and meetings were held via video conference.

Because job interviews were conducted digitally, institutions such as the University at Buffalo modified how to coach



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The pandemic accelerated some workforce development trends.

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after college. Job interviews have shifted from focusing on an applicant’s skills to asking them to explain how and when they used those skills, Kaukus said.

While UB has embedded the traits of soft skills into its courses, the university now includes references to that knowledge in syllabi, activities and career preparation efforts. This way students are aware of the skills they’re gaining and can speak more confidently about them in a job interview.

Right before the health crisis, Canisius College added a minor in digital information and applications, as well as Ignatian studies, which focuses on critical thinking and communication. Both degrees aim to give students useful skills for the workforce, said [Sara Morris](#), Canisius vice president for academic affairs.

Flexibility and continuing to learn

After the uncertainty of the last year, it’s no surprise flexibility is valued among workers and employers.

The trends of changing jobs more frequently and a rapidly changing workplace mean that educational institutions must train students for careers that don’t currently exist, Morris said.

“That means trying to make sure they have the ability to learn and the ability to adapt as the workplace continues to adapt in ways we don’t even know it will over the next 40 years of their careers,” she added.

Flexibility can mean continuing education or upskilling for those already in the workforce. Mayrose said over the years

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and how to upscale current workers,

Mayrose said. The college's hospitality and tourism department met with industry representatives, compiled a presentation of hard and soft skills and held an eight-week program for the general public over the summer.

Buffalo State will offer the training again multiple times, because it was so well received, he said.

Lian Bunny

Reporter

Buffalo Business First

