The Student Professional Readiness Series (SPuRS) is a co-curricular graduation requirement in the Haworth College of Business at Western Michigan University ensuring that all undergraduate BBA students “earn their spurs” and graduate with the developed interpersonal skills, professional insight, leadership and service attributes that employers look for and that professionals who rise quickly in their careers possess.

SPuRS provides students with the opportunity to:

- Attend a variety of professional development experiences like college-sponsored speaker series’, panel discussions and major-related conferences led by business and community leaders, industry experts, faculty and staff.
- Participate and fully engage in skill-building, interactive activities, such as etiquette dinners, practice interviews, workshops and other training sessions focused on resume-building, communication strategies and work ethic.

Successful completion of the program is a graduation requirement. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure they have met all SPuRS requirements in advance of application for the upper level BBA curriculum and prior to applying for graduation. Students track their engagement by logging into ExperienceWMU through their GoWMU student portal.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The complete SPuRS calendar is posted at the beginning of each semester. Although there are occasionally a small number of additions during the semester, students should plan to complete their SPuRS-approved activities based on a combination of the events found on the posted calendar and self-reported experiences. Students should not assume any additions will be made.

**Activity Tracking**

Students’ event record is available on ExperienceWMU. SPuRS credit will not be awarded retroactively for college-sponsored, scheduled events that have taken place in a previous semester. It is the student’s responsibility to cross-reference their personal account to ensure their SPuRS progress is up-to-date and accurate within the academic semester that the activity took place.
The SPuRS co-curriculum can be accessed via ExperienceWMU, found in the GoWMU student portal. Once logged into ExperienceWMU, students can view their SPuRS co-curriculum in the center of the home page under “Curriculum Progress.”

Students receive SPuRS credit in three distinct ways:

1. **Attendance**: Be sure to swipe your Bronco Identification Card and sign in for these events – this is the formal method for verification that the item is complete.
2. **Department or college reported**: Some activities will be reported to a SPuRS representative by faculty or through departments directly. Please allow time for this communication to take place. Updates will be made to your SPuRS progress as soon as possible.
3. **Self-reported experience**: Some of these opportunities are self-paced – you report your experience via the blue “report experience” button found in ExperienceWMU at the item level. Often this process requires students to provide personal reflection, updated worksheets or other applicable documentation to support item completion.

**Attendance**

Showing up is the first step to success. Students are encouraged to view their timeliness as a performance measure within the SPuRS program and after graduation in their careers. In order to receive credit for activity participation, students must arrive on time. Once a session or workshop has begun, it is disrespectful to the facilitator and other attendees to enter the room. It is the student’s responsibility at each SPuRS event to document and record their attendance for SPuRS credit to be awarded.

SPuRS events begin on-time, every time. For this reason, student should plan to arrive 5-10 minutes early. To receive SPuRS credit for a workshop-like activity, students must stay for the duration of the scheduled event.

Falsifying check-in information or leaving an event before its completion with the intention of receiving SPuRS credit are examples (but not a complete listing) of academic dishonesty in SPuRS and will be reported. **SPuRS adheres to the WMU Student Code of Conduct.**

Events like career fairs, day-long conferences, and networking sessions have a more flexible attendance policy in that students can attend portions of the event as their schedules allow. However, students must inform the event coordinator of your need to attend only a portion of the event. Students will only receive SPuRS credit if they fully communicate with SPuRS staff and establish a mutual agreement regarding event participation.

Please ask the SPuRS Program Manager if you have questions pertaining to the attendance policy.

**Behavior**

Proper business etiquette is often portrayed by behavior and attitude. You are in control of your outlook and ultimately your approach to everyday life. It is an expectation that students demonstrate professional business etiquette at all SPuRS-approved events. Appropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to, timely attendance, active engagement, respect of the facilitator and fellow participants, and approaching the experience in a positive, engaging manner.
“All individuals are expected to conduct themselves in a professional and civil manner. This includes exemplifying academic honesty, integrity, fairness, trustworthiness, personal responsibility, respect for others, and ethical conduct. These attributes are exhibited in the University setting as well as in the community.” - WMU Student Code of Conduct

The event coordinator and SPuRS representatives reserve the right to dismiss students from events when they are being disrespectful and exhibit unprofessional behavior. This demeanor will not be tolerated and is in direct violation of the WMU Student Code of Conduct. If this occurs, the student will forfeit credit for the event and additional disciplinary action may occur.

Audits and Level Completion

Upon completion of the minimum requirements for both the foundational and the advanced level of SPuRS, students must initiate a formal audit through ExperienceWMU. The foundational level audit must be confirmed and verified by a SPuRS representative prior to applying to the Haworth College of Business and the advanced level audit must be confirmed and verified by a SPuRS representative prior to applying for graduation.

PLEASE NOTE: The Academic Advising Office will not process BBA applications or sign off on graduation audits if the applicable SPuRS audit is incomplete. Students typically apply to the college in the fourth semester of school (second semester of sophomore year). Application for graduation tends to take place a semester prior to your expected graduation (first semester of senior year).

Calendar

SPuRS-approved activities are typically college and university sponsored. A calendar of approved activities is compiled at the start of each semester and listed on the Haworth College of Business website:

http://www.wmich.edu/business/academics/spurs

Please note, events may be removed or rescheduled due to cancellation or severe weather or illness. Changes to the schedule are posted as soon as possible. These changes are also communicated through the weekly news article published on ExperienceWMU in the Haworth College of Business organization. Added events are not a guarantee, so students should plan their semesters accordingly to take full advantage of professional development opportunities.

Capacity

Workshop and other training session capacity is limited to the restrictions of the designated room. This policy aligns with university safety concerns and allows event coordinators to manage size constraints for specific events. Students are encouraged to plan ahead and earn SPuRS credit before the end of the semester. Remember, early arrival for SPuRS events helps to guarantee your “seat” for the scheduled activity. Event capacity can become a concern at any point throughout the academic year, but events taking place at the end of a semester tend to reach capacity quickly.

It is the facilitators discretion to close registration or sign-in if the event capacity is reached.
Event Registration

SPuRS representatives will scan student Bronco Identification Cards at specific events to track attendance and manage event registration. This documentation is also used to award credit for attendance-based experiences. Students are strongly encouraged to carry their Bronco Identification Cards with them at all times and it is the student’s responsibility to take appropriate steps at each SPuRS event to have their attendance documented in order to receive SPuRS credit. On occasion attendance may be collected with a manual sign-in sheet.

It is recommended that you collect and save any handouts, agendas and applicable materials available to you at SPuRS events. If there is a question in regard to your attendance, you may be asked to provide proof of your attendance and these items would help confirm your participation.

Newsletter and Updates

The SPuRS Program Manager will publish a weekly news article on ExperienceWMU informing students of upcoming events, any applicable changes and recent updates. Students are strongly encouraged to join the Haworth College of Business organization in ExperienceWMU and regularly check for these news articles.

Professional Attire

It is recommended that students dress in business casual for SPuRS-approved activities and events. In situations where employers are present, it is strongly encouraged that students dress in business professional attire. When in doubt, err on the formal and conservative side. It is better to be overdressed than underdressed.

PLEASE NOTE: If you are not appropriately dressed, you may be asked to leave the event and you will not receive SPuRS credit. Keep in mind that professional dress is only ONE component of your professional image.

Repeating Events

Students should feel welcome to attend SPuRS activities and events more than once for continued learning and growth. However, students will not receive additional credit for attending a repeat event, unless the experience is distinctively altered. For example, Entrepreneurship Forum invites a new speaker for each event in the series, so repeat attendance for the Haworth College of Business Speaker Series is recognized in the SPuRS framework.

As a general rule of thumb, SPuRS completion requires 12 unique SPuRS-approved activities.

Requirements

Students are expected to complete a minimum of 6 foundational level SPuRS-approved activities prior to applying to the Haworth College of Business and formally declaring their chosen business major(s). An official SPuRS audit must be initiated by the student in ExperienceWMU before a SPuRS representative can confirm level completion and update the student’s Degree Works. This update in Degree Works confirms the student’s eligibility, from the SPuRS perspective, to process a BBA application with the Office of Academic Advising and Admission into the Haworth College of Business.

Transfer students are strongly encouraged to take Business Preparation for Transfer Students (BUS 3000) in place of the required BUS 1000 course in the pre-business curriculum. This course is taught by dedicated Zhang Career Center staff.
and covers much of the content found in the foundational level of SPuRS. For this reason, if passed with a “C” or better, BUS 3000 will satisfy the foundational level of SPuRS.

To complete the advanced level of SPuRS, students are required to complete a minimum of 6 advanced level SPuRS-approved activities prior to applying to graduate. Similarly, students must initiate a second level audit in ExperienceWMU before a SPuRS representative can confirm level completion and update Degree Works.

Students are encouraged to view SPuRS as an opportunity to invest in their own career readiness and not simply another graduation requirement. With that in mind, students have the opportunity in the advanced level of the program to receive designation based on their level of engagement with advanced experiences.

- 6 advanced level SPuRS-approved experiences: Bronze SPuR
- 8 advanced level SPuRS-approved experiences: Silver SPuR
- 10+ advanced level SPuRS-approved experiences: Gold SPuR

This designation is recognized with a lapel pin that will be awarded during a pinning ceremony as part of the SPuRS capstone course, BUS 4000, Business Professionalism.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Business students who attend WMU as part of an international partnership agreement with catalog year 2017 and earlier will not be required to complete SPuRS as a graduation requirement (this is true for 2+2 and 3+1 partnerships). Effective catalog year 2018, 3+1 partnership students will not be required to complete the SPuRS program, but 2+2 partnership students will be required to complete the advanced level of the program like all domestic transfer students.

**Reservations (RSVP)**

Some SPuRS events require pre-registration and may also require an official RSVP to reserve your personal space for experiences like Practice Interview Day or Resume Critique Day. These events are marked with an “*” on the published SPuRS calendar of events. Specific event details can be found in ExperienceWMU and will always re-direct students to the official registration process or point of contact for additional questions.

If you have questions, please be sure to connect with a SPuRS representative prior to the event to provide adequate time for the formal RSVP and event registration process.

**Self-Reported Experiences**

Some SPuRS-approved experiences are student initiated and can be completed at any time throughout the students’ undergraduate journey. Examples of these experiences include, but are not limited to: informational interviews, FOCUS assessment reflections, internship experiences and interview reflections.

Students are strongly encouraged to inform themselves of what is expected in terms of activity verification in advance of completing the activity. SPuRS credit will not be awarded if all verification materials are not provided in the self-reported experience tool in ExperienceWMU. Examples of verification materials include, but are not limited to: reflection worksheets, preparation and follow up worksheets documenting the process, contact information for support of completion and a screenshot of any follow up email communication with the third party.

**Unique Opportunities**

On occasion the SPuRS Program Manager may approve unique, one-time offered experiences to count as SPuRS credit. This approval is at the discretion of the SPuRS Program Manager and Implementation Team. Students who are engaging in co-curricular development experiences that are not formally represented in the SPuRS framework are strongly encouraged to connect directly with the SPuRS Program Manager to discuss how the experience is growing you professionally and supporting your career progression.