

Contact: Rachel Boon

**PRESENTATION FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA: UNI BUSINESS  
PROFESSIONAL READINESS PROGRAM: GETTING STUDENTS READY FOR BUSINESS**

**Action Requested:** Receive the presentation from the University of Northern Iowa

**Executive Summary:**

Success in today's global business environment requires more than academic preparation. A successful business professional must navigate organizational dynamics, write clearly and concisely, speak with confidence, and develop a career vision and strategy. Unfortunately, young graduates who are not trained on these "soft skills" are at risk of missing out on major career opportunities. The Professional Readiness Program® (PRP) was designed to give UNIBusiness students an edge on the competition by arming them with the skills to be career ready on day one. The program includes mentorship from industry professionals, lessons on how to nail a job interview, and practice giving an elevator pitch. Employers and the AACSB® have recognized the PRP for its excellence in producing employees who are productive, knowledgeable, and ahead of the curve.

**Presenters:**

Katie Hillyer is the Professional Readiness and Community Relations Manager in the College of Business Administration. She directs the Professional Readiness Program, manages corporate and community relations for the College of Business Administration, and advises the Women in Business student organization. A native of Cascade, Iowa, Katie graduated from UNI with a marketing degree and worked for Hellman Advertising Agency in Waterloo before returning to her alma mater. She also earned an MBA from the University of Iowa.

Katie Nissen is a Tactical Quality Engineer at John Deere in Waterloo. A native of Cedar Falls, Katie is the first in her family to earn a college degree. She graduated in May 2018 with a major in Supply Chain Management and minor in Spanish. During her time at UNI, Katie studied abroad in Puerto Rico, was a member of the Supply Chain Management Association (SCMA) and Refugees and Immigrants Support and Empowerment (RISE), interned with Alliant Energy Transportation, and completed all four levels of the Professional Readiness Program.