

Student Loan Game Plan

Four-Year College Career Planning Checklist

Freshman Year

Fall Semester

- Visit your school's career development/services office.
- Use career self-assessment tools to help identify your values, interests and abilities.
- Discuss your career goals with a career counselor.
- Discuss your career goals with your academic adviser.
- Take exploratory courses that will help you determine your academic major and career.
- Identify and take advantage of career development workshops that you can attend throughout the year.
- Find and attend career fairs for part-time employment and internships.
- Research future careers by talking with a career counselor.
- Create a draft of your resume.
- Create your "professional portfolio" that will contain examples of your academic and service projects and highlights of your honors and accomplishments.
- Inquire about professional externship (job-shadowing) opportunities.
- Ask about the availability of career information interviews and other career programs sponsored by the alumni association.
- Determine what professional organizations are available on your campus and take steps to join.
- Identify and join clubs or groups and look for leadership roles in those organizations.
- Periodically check your social media pages and your outgoing voice mail message to make sure the content is appropriate if a potential employer should view them or try to contact you.

Spring Semester

- Take elective courses that complement your major or career ambition, and explore getting a minor or double major.
- Develop your resume — try to not include too much from your high school career.
- Meet with older students and faculty members if you are undecided about your targeted career and major.
- Participate in professional externship (job-shadowing) opportunities and informational interviews with professionals in areas of your career interests.
- Attend summer job and internship fairs to identify potential summer employers.
- Update your professional portfolio.

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Sophomore Year

Fall Semester

- Identify and take advantage of career development workshops that you can attend throughout the year.
- Practice your interviewing skills.
- Participate in professional externship (job-shadowing) opportunities and informational interviews with professionals in areas of career interest.
- Find and attend career fairs for part-time employment and internships.
- Identify and join clubs or groups and look for leadership roles in those organizations.
- Review, revise, reassess and reaffirm your career values, interests and abilities.
- Research future careers by talking with a career counselor.
- Identify internship opportunities for your junior year.
- Update your professional portfolio.
- Think about graduate school opportunities.
- Periodically check your social media pages and your outgoing voice mail message to make sure the content is appropriate if a potential employer should view them or try to contact you.

Spring Semester

- Update your resume.
- Participate in professional externship (job-shadowing) opportunities and informational interviews with professionals in areas of your career interests.
- Attend summer job and internship fairs to identify potential summer employers.
- Update your professional portfolio.
- Start buying clothes for your interview wardrobe.

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Junior Year

Fall Semester

- Identify and take advantage of career development workshops that you can attend throughout the year.
- Find and attend career fairs for part-time employment and internships.
- Identify and join clubs or groups and look for leadership roles in those organizations.
- Research future careers by talking with a career counselor.
- Participate in professional externship (job-shadowing) opportunities and informational interviews with professionals in areas of your career interests.
- Start to line up professors and others who are willing to give you professional references.
- Review, revise, reassess and reaffirm your career values, interests and abilities.
- Update your professional portfolio.
- Apply for internships for next summer.
- Periodically check your social media pages and your outgoing voice mail message to make sure the content is appropriate if a potential employer should view them or try to contact you.

Spring Semester

- Update your resume.
- Talk to people working in your chosen career field about what they do and the opportunities that exist for you.
- Update your professional portfolio.
- Begin preparation for graduate school if applicable.
 - Research graduate schools.
 - Attend graduate school fairs.
 - Identify admission application processes and timelines.
 - Identify graduate and research assistantship, scholarship and grant opportunities.
 - Take free online practice graduate admission exams and complete exam prep courses as needed.
 - Register for appropriate graduate admission exams.
 - Plan to take graduate admission exams in the summer.
- Attend summer job and internship fair to identify potential summer employers.



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Senior Year

Fall Semester

- Review, revise, reassess and reaffirm your career values, interests and abilities.
- Determine the schedule for on-campus job interviews.
- Develop your job search plan and timeline.
- Research possible companies and organizations for employment.
- Cold-call a company you are interested in working for to see what positions are available now or will be after you graduate.
- Identify and take advantage of career development workshops that you can attend throughout the year.
- Prepare for interviews by participating in mock interviews.
- Find and attend career fairs.
- Identify and join clubs or groups and look for leadership roles in those organizations.
- Have others review your resume and give you suggestions.
- Volunteer to review other people's resumes to get ideas for your own.
- Update your resume.
- See if your school offers a post-graduate planning class — if so, take it.
- Develop cover letter templates.
- Update your professional portfolio.
- Apply to graduate school if applicable.
- Apply for graduate school assistantships if applicable.
- Periodically check your social media pages and your outgoing voice mail message to make sure the content is appropriate if a potential employer should view them or try to contact you.

Spring Semester

- Finalize your resume and cover letters.
- Update your professional portfolio.
- Practice interviewing.
- Apply and interview for jobs.

