



Office of Career Development Student Plan of Action

This document is a guide designed to recommend various strategies toward career success and achievement. Every college student needs to start their career search while they are beginning their first year. Starting early helps the student weigh their options related to their major and future career. Students need to view this plan as a PROPOSAL toward fulfilling college and reaching their career goals.

FIRST YEAR OF COLLEGE

DETERMINE A PATH OF STUDY (major)

TAKE TIME TO RESEARCH YOUR CHOSEN AREA OF STUDY AND COMPARE IT TO CERTAIN SKILLS, ABILITIES, OR INTERESTS.

INTERNET RESOURCE (www.onetcenter.org)

FIRST SUMMER OF SCHOOL YEAR

VOLUNTEER

- The first year of college is usually a time of new experiences and ideas. Use the summer as a period of rest. Take the lessons learned from your classes and apply them to your local community through volunteerism.
- Volunteering locally is beneficial for the first year student. It exposes them to different experiences, such as office politics, personalities, and customer service. The student can also develop “soft skills,” such as dependability, time management, etc. Local volunteering will also give you the opportunity to network with your area’s most influential community leaders. These leaders definitely have their own level of expertise and connections to influential people that could assist you with a higher level internship or job placement.

SOPHOMORE YEAR

JOIN A PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION RELATED TO STUDENT MAJOR

- After deciding upon a major and potential career, investigate the organization(s) that relate to your chosen path of study. Joining a professional organization allows the student to learn about the “nuts and bolts” of their chosen profession.

SUMMER OF SOPHOMORE YEAR CONTINUE TO VOLUNTEER

- Early preparation into this process might lead to paid opportunities in public service. Community-based programs such as Americorps, City Year, and Freedom Corps provide a stipend for accumulating a certain number of service hours.
- By volunteering for a second year, a student enhances the skills related to leadership, customer service, dependability, and organizational management. Another year of volunteerism should also boost the student's career network and strengthen public speaking skills.

JUNIOR YEAR REVIEW GRADUATE SCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES

- Completing your education is always a noble option, and studies indicate that advancing your education leads to a higher level of income. Log on to www.gradschools.com and select the program and geographic region of interest to you. The website will provide a listing of schools and contact information.

BEGIN REVIEW OF FELLOWSHIP/ASSISTANTSHIPS AND OTHER FINANCIAL AID OPPORTUNITIES.

- A student will more than likely need financial assistance to pay for graduate school. Start early investigating any and all financial aid opportunities. There are numerous resources to access this information, such as www.Fastweb.com. In fact, the professional organization that you hopefully joined probably has a special college scholarship for its student members.

STUDY JOB OPPORTUNITIES RELATED TO CHOSEN MAJOR

- Examine your potential career options and issues such as salary and geographic location. (www.onetcenter.org)

APPLY FOR A HIGH LEVEL INTERNSHIP OR COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

- A high level internship should serve as the capstone of your college career. You should have an intelligent, well informed, view of your proposed profession due to your prior research. Based on your

volunteer experiences, you should have a good idea as to what your superior expects from you.

SUMMER OF JUNIOR YEAR

FIND A MENTOR

- While interning, ask your supervisor to serve as your mentor. Ask questions related to their growth within and devotion to their chosen profession, such as their reasons for pursuing their career, the pros and con's of their career, etc.

KNOW THE DIGNITY OF WORK

- Understand that every job assignment is important. As an intern, you desire projects that will give you the experience to succeed in the workplace. However, your supervisor might ask you to complete trivial tasks such as filing, typing, and answering the phone. Whereas those jobs are not the bulk of your internship, you still have a responsibility to complete the job and complete it professionally.

VISIT POTENTIAL GRADUATE SCHOOLS

- Take this time to visit the graduate schools of interest to you. For example, if your internship is in Washington, DC, then you need to consider visiting Howard, American, and Georgetown Universities. Your professor is an excellent source for providing you information on the graduate schools that have outstanding programs related to your major.
- INTERNET RESOURCE: www.usnews.com (US News and World Report)

SENIOR YEAR

- Begin the application process to graduate schools and to organizations granting fellowships. You should have your applications complete by December 1.
- Prepare a resume highlighting your past accomplishments.
- If at all possible, take your respective graduate school exam (MCAT, GRE, LSAT) by October.
- Begin attending networking events (Chamber, Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.). You should feel comfortable within groups like this due to your prior

experiences as a first and second year student. NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF NETWORKING!!

SPRING OF SENIOR YEAR

- Attend Career Fairs and other job related functions to network
- At these networking functions, have business cards available to promote yourself.
- Be prepared to distribute numerous copies of your resume to employers.
- Begin applying for a few jobs. Understand the fact that you may apply for numerous positions before receiving the right one.

Hopefully the information provided can aid in your academic and career goals. Understand the information given is only a PROPOSAL of options for the college student to consider.