



The Four Year Career Planning Guide

This outline is intended to help you in your career planning. Review the suggestions below and then develop your own career path that will help you make the most of your academic, personal and career growth!

Remember that you should begin your career planning early (during freshman year!) and visit the Office of Career Services often to best prepare yourself for a great career after graduation!

Freshman Year – Adjust, Inquiry, Awareness

- Learn about the University and the student resources available on campus.
- Become familiar with the college catalog regarding general studies and requirements for majors.
- Get involved to build skills by participating in college organizations, clubs, and community service (such as WVSU Cares Day); attend special programs and lectures.
- Get to know your faculty, advisors, student affairs counselors, staff, and administrators.
- Visit the Career Services and Co-op Office and meet with a counselor to work on identifying your interests, abilities, values and goals; set –up a **Sigi**³ account.
- Research the various majors and minors.
- Get off to a good start academically - work hard in your classes. Develop strong time management and study skills to help you succeed in the classroom. Take advantage of free tutoring if necessary. Maintain a strong GPA.

Sophomore Year – Self-Awareness, Exploration

- Reassess your interests, skills, values through **Sigi**³ and/or meet with a career counselor to discuss these topics.
- Talk to faculty and current students in the major(s) you are interested in to learn more about the field and academic requirements.
- Conduct informational interviews or follow a professional who is working in field that interests you.
- Choose a major and meet with your new major faculty advisor to set up an academic plan and discuss your goals. Meet with a career counselor to clarify your decision. Get to know faculty in your major.
- Learn your career options available within your major; research employment opportunities and employment statistics (such as rate of growth, salary trends) in your Major.
- Continue to participate in student/community organizations, think about taking a leadership role.
- Begin to review your digital footprint (through all the social media outlets) by googling yourself; clean up your pages and make sure that your photos and photos of you posted by others, as well as your comments and posts, are suitable for viewing by employers and/or other professional entities.
- Attend career related programs such as career fairs, and employer of the week programs; begin to develop a list of potential employer contacts.
- Explore internships, cooperative education, volunteer and work related experiences.



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Junior Year – Explore Options

- Re-explore your interests, personality, values, and life goals through career assessment inventories, as well as develop specific work-related criteria (location, size of business, opportunities for growth, benefits).
- Pursue an internship, volunteer work, research project, and summer or part-time job related to your interests in order to continue to gain experiences; log into Jobweb to search for positions.
- Research potential graduate schools, if you intend to further your education. Now is the time to start preparing. Research admissions policies and requirements. Participate in strategy sessions and practice tests for the appropriate entrance exam.
- Choose your courses carefully to stay on track for graduation. Consider a minor to enroll in classes that will complement your major or career goals; relate course projects and papers to your career field and begin to develop portfolio/brag file (contents include papers and research projects in which you received good grades, any awards, commendations etc.).
- Research potential employers that might interest you and learn about their industry.
- Develop face to face networking skills; attend career related program and job fairs.
- Become knowledgeable about the job search process; develop a resume and practice your interviewing skills.
- Continue to conduct informational interviews with professionals in your field.
- Continue to participate and gain leadership experience through part-time positions, volunteer opportunities, professional associations and student/community organizations.
- Begin to use social media outlets for professional branding purposes and building a professional network; set –up a LinkedIn account, use your Facebook network professionally and use twitter to follow Businesses (of interest) and CEO’s etc.; begin to observe the contents of a professional tweet and other online professional/networking etiquette/practices.
- Continue to attend career related programs such as career fairs, and employer of the week programs; add to a list of potential employer contacts.

Senior Year – Job Search and Graduate School Search

- Begin job search and/or graduate school application process.
- Schedule an appointment with the career counselor to refine your resume and discuss job search strategies.
- Take entrance exams for graduate or professional school early on in Senior year and complete applications (be aware of deadlines!).
- Use social media outlets to network professionally with potential employers and maintain your online professional brand.
- Develop interviewing skills by practicing with a career counselor.
- Continue to attend job fairs and other career related programs; check Jobweb for career openings.
- Continue to participate and gain leadership experience through part-time positions, volunteer opportunities, professional associations and student/community organizations.
- Complete an internship or co-op experience in your proposed field.



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- Network both online and face to face with family, friends, faculty, campus personnel, acquaintances, past employers, and potential employers.
- Talk with individuals (professors, current or previous employers, mentors) who will serve as your references and give them a copy of your resume.
- Research potential employers and review literature from businesses, school districts, and government agencies.
- Apply and interview for positions.

In addition to the steps outlined above, there are a handful of things you should be completing each year:

- Continually update your resume.
- Contact the Office of Career Services to discuss your long-term and short-term career and academic goals.
- Meet with your academic advisor to review your academic program.
- Strive to gain and maintain the strongest GPA possible.
- Gain as much knowledge as you can about your areas of interest through contacts, mentoring, work experience, and volunteer opportunities.
- Develop and maintain positive relationships with your professors, employers, staff and administrators.