



## A 4-Year Plan

### First Year: Self Awareness & Assessment

- Meet and develop relationships with professors, advisors, and career advisors. Turn them into mentors by asking about their career paths and for advice about matching your interests and skills to a major and a career.
- Explore membership in clubs, organizations and other extracurricular activities to develop your “transferable skills”. Participate in lectures, performances, exhibits and other cultural events.
- Consider a volunteer, part-time or summer position to begin acquiring experience in an area that interests you.
- While adjusting to your new environment, assess your study skills and time management habits. Take advantage of campus resources that can help you improve them if they need work.
- Review the undergraduate bulletin for course descriptions and requirements of possible majors. If undecided, seek diversity in courses to identify your areas of interest.
- Talk with upper level students about their majors and career-related experiences and goals.
- Visit the Office of Career Services (GSU 309) if uncertain about academic and/or career areas of interest or if you are interested in exploring career paths directly or indirectly related to your anticipated major.

### Sophomore Year: Continue Major & Career Exploration

- Make a list of your job values (the things that are most important to you in your career) and your strongest academic areas (courses that challenged you, held your interest, and stimulated thinking).
- Continue exploration of different majors and career paths related to interests identified. Take interesting electives to fulfill your own curiosity and to complement your main studies.
- Investigate the possibility of spending your junior year abroad and expand your knowledge of other cultures.
- Take introductory courses in your major or choose exploratory courses with your advisor’s help.
- Use an assigned paper/project as an opportunity to write about and explore a field of interest. If it’s for a history course, your paper might be about a political campaign. If it’s for a communications course, write about how an ad campaign is put together. Interview people who do the jobs you are interested in exploring. Your goal is to get more than a good grade. You want to make career contacts.
- Run for office or chair a committee in your club or organization. Doing so will help you learn the skills of communication, motivation, and conflict resolution.
- Visit the Career Services Office and meet with a career counselor to discuss your skills, interests, and values so you can begin the process of relating your abilities to your choice of a major and future career.
- Participate in career-related experiences - pursue a summer job and/or internship related to your tentative field of interest.
- If you have yet to select a major, make an appointment with a faculty member in each of the schools you have identified as a tentative major for an informational interview. Get to know the professors teaching in your potential area of interest.
- Seek further exploration in a field of interest by spending a day shadowing a professional from a career path you are considering.
- Begin to make yourself more marketable –build problem solving, communication, and critical thinking skills.
- Build or update your resume.

## Junior Year: Solidify Career Choice & Gain Experience

- Devote extra time and effort to coursework related to your chosen field. Try and connect as many of your assigned papers as possible to related careers of interest.
- Get editing advice from your professors and rewrite a paper (even if you get a good grade). This experience will help you learn how to write.
- Join a new club or run for office in a continuing club activity. You'll hone your public speaking and networking skills.
- Participate in services related to job/internship search skills, such as mock interviewing, career etiquette, and job/internship development.
- Research and identify the types of organizations for which you might like to work.
- Attend as many on and off-campus job or career or internship fairs and begin conversations with employers and professionals in fields that you know and don't know.
- Get hands-on experience in your chosen field of study through internships, summer employment or volunteer work.
- Research the job market. Become knowledgeable about labor markets and future employment trends.
- Establish working relationships with faculty, staff and administrators who will later serve as references for you.
- Rewrite your dream job with realistic expectations. Identify the level of education and additional skills necessary to attain your career goals.
- Take elective courses in other areas to broaden your qualifications (foreign language, graphic design, computers, sales & marketing, business writing, public speaking...) – enhancing your learning and career goals.
- Shop for and purchase at least one business professional and one business casual outfit.
- Determine if graduate level education is required or preferred for your career plans. If it is, start researching grad/professional school options and requirements; take appropriate required exams.
- Start networking with professionals in your field of interest through membership in a career-related professional organization.

## Senior Year: Plans Beyond Graduation

- Start the process of your job search or applying to graduate school in the beginning of your fall semester.
- Review and update your resume regularly. Prepare a list of references.
- Ask the professors you identified last year to write a letter of reference for you. Be specific and give them a time deadline.
- Strengthen presentation skills in workshops or classes.
- Be able to state clearly why you are interested in working for each preferred employer.
- Continue to work on your interviewing skills – mock interviews are available through Career Services.
- Take qualifying exams for entry into appropriate graduate or professional programs.
- Further investigate career choices and current job market availability. Sign up for on and off-campus interviews.
- Take another internship in your field of interest, it may lead to full-time employment after graduation.
- Meet with a career advisor for more information on career paths, best employers, negotiating salaries, and reviewing resumes and cover letters. Attend job fairs, trade shows, and career conferences.
- Develop a strategy for each prospective industry and/or employer. Approach employers directly and/or via on-campus recruiting events, networking and/or informational interviewing.
- Select and apply to career appropriate employers early. If conducting a job search out-of-state, plan ahead and schedule interviews over Winter or Spring Break with employers in your area of geographic preference.

# Websites To Assist You In Your Occupational Research

**[www.wetfeet.com](http://www.wetfeet.com)**: company interviews and profiles; salary & perks; career, industry, city & real people profiles; feature companies; self-assessment; resume help; interviewing; discussion boards; internship & job search; expert advice on career-related issues.

**[www.collegegrad.com](http://www.collegegrad.com)**: career information; job search advice; resumes; cover letters; employer research; job postings; interview preparation; salaries; job offers; new job; relocation center; MBA center; look into who's hiring; review top entry level employers; search job postings; post resume.

**[www.campuscareercenter.com](http://www.campuscareercenter.com)**: job search (research companies, search jobs); resources (ask the expert, career corner – cover letters, resumes, interviewing, .... intern zone, visa center, next step); tools (resume services, loan consolidation, salary wizard); who's hiring; employer profiles; job searching tips for today's economy.

**[www.about.com/careers](http://www.about.com/careers)**: career planning; job searching; career & industry profiles.

**[www.princetonreview.com](http://www.princetonreview.com)**: career tools (resources to assist you in your search, what careers suit you, research career & internship opportunities); advice on career planning (trying to figure out your career or major plans); career research; internships; job search strategies; recent grad information; find a grad school.

**[www.wsj.com](http://www.wsj.com)**: who's hiring; job search; resume builder; find a grad school; MBA center; salary & hiring information; success at work; global career search; resume database; discussion boards; feature career-related articles; job hunting advice; executive recruiters; relocation; job agent.

**[www.vault.com](http://www.vault.com)**: industry information & profiles; career topics; company & employer search; researching careers (occupational profiles, days in the life, job search survival, workplace surveys); employer profiles; find a job or internship; find a recruiter; MBA & law school information; interview preparation; resume & cover letter writing & reviews.

**[www.jobweb.com](http://www.jobweb.com)**: online career fairs; resources for after college; information on what you need to do to choose a career, get ready for your career, and accept a job; career profiles; on the job survival; tips, samples, and articles on interviews & resumes; information on internship & co-op programs; graduate school information; samples of job-search correspondence; information on workplace culture.

**[www.careervoyages.gov](http://www.careervoyages.gov)**: collaboration between US Dept. of Labor and US Dept. of Education – designed to provide information on high-growth, high-demand occupations along with skills and education needed to attain these jobs.

**[www.rileyguide.com](http://www.rileyguide.com)**: job search preparation; targeting and researching employers; information on networking and interviewing as well as salary guides.

**<http://online.onetcenter.org>**: O\*Net offers a skills search feature allowing you to identify your skills and match them with suggested occupations for further exploration.

**[www.acinet.org](http://www.acinet.org)**: America's Career Information Network: provides you with career information and tools including a resource library and career exploration options.

**[www.bls.gov/oco](http://www.bls.gov/oco)**: Occupational Outlook Handbook provides information on a variety of occupational areas and industries.