



## Tips for Your First & Second Year

### First Year

Meet with a career advisor to learn more about services available through the Career Services Office.

Explore membership in clubs, organizations and other extracurricular activities to develop your “transferable” skills. Participate in campus activities: attend 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.

Speak with your professors/advisors about subjects or courses that you find interesting.

Review the undergraduate bulletin for course descriptions and requirements of possible majors. Seek diversity in your courses to identify your areas of interest.

Challenge yourself slowly by spreading difficult courses over several semesters. Choose classes that are a good fit.

Talk with upper level students about their majors, career-related experiences and goals.

Take an introductory course in an area or subject that you are interested in.

Dedicate yourself to doing well academically. Keep those grades up! GPA is considered for many jobs and internship opportunities.

Develop the ability to set goals and develop an action plan to achieve them.

### Second Year

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).

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 one of your assigned papers as an opportunity to research a field you wish to enter. 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.

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 (GSU 309) and meet with a career advisor to discuss your skills, interests, and values so you can begin the process of relating your abilities to your choice of major and future career.

Pursue a summer job and/or internships 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.

Begin to make yourself more marketable – build problem solving, communication and critical thinking skills.

Start conducting occupational research – read about occupations, talk to people in fields of interest (informational interviewing, networking) and experience your field of interest for yourself (job shadow, part-time, internship, co-op, summer or volunteer position...).

Begin writing your resume.

## Student Development Tasks During Your First & Second Year

The following is a list of typical student characteristics, needs and concerns expressed during the adjustment and transition process into college and into sophomore year.

### **First Year Students**

Uncertain  
Homesick  
Roommates  
Disappointed  
Overwhelmed  
Separation from family/friends  
Adjustment to academics and increased independence

Things you can do to be successful:

**Grab a map and get to know the campus** and the services available to assist you through the transition process, including the Freshman Success Center, the Center for Reading & Writing, Counseling Services, as well as the many tutoring labs on campus.

**Get involved and get connected** – learn about the many clubs and activities available to support your interest areas as well as opportunities to engage in lectures, theatre productions, art galleries... Getting involved on-campus and trying new things can also help open the door to new friendships, perspectives, experiences and opportunities.

**Explore values, interests and majors** – stop in the Office of Career Services (GSU, 309) to learn more about how career advisors can help you develop a realistic academic plan as well as connect you to opportunities to help build your skills.

### **Sophomore Students**

Lower grades  
Major decisions  
Sophomore slump  
Too many choices  
Loyalty shifts to peers  
Considering transferring  
No longer center of attention  
Questioning of everything; values, parents, self

Things you can do to be successful:

**Set goals** – meet with your faculty advisor or a career advisor to learn how to set realistic and appropriate goals.

**Learn how to manage your time** and balance social, academic and personal activities.

**Become a leader** or start to develop/enhance your leadership skills through in-class projects, managing an active role within a club/organization or team, or volunteering your time as a mentor.

**Explore majors and careers** – continue to explore and research your options as well as learn about opportunities to help build the skills you need to become more marketable after graduation.

**Share concerns and ask questions** – it's important to communicate – there are a lot of people on this campus who have an interest in your success – remember you're not alone.