

THE PURPOSE OF THIS PROGRAM IS TO HELP YOU DEVELOP THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND EXPERIENCE TO SECURE AN EXCITING AND HIGH-PAYING POSITION UPON GRADUATION OR GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL. THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT CURRICULUM ALSO IDENTIFIES KEY ACTIONS IN PREPARATION FOR GRADUATE SCHOOL.

FRESHMEN: DEVELOP A PLAN/ Assess and Engage

In your first year, learn about Career Development services and resources, how to conduct a self-assessment and begin constructing a personal portfolio, and how regular or Federal Work Study part-time jobs, volunteer activities, residential and other experiences during your first year at WSSU will contribute to your overall career development.

SOPHOMORE: BUILD A FOUNDATION/ Explore and Refine

This year, explore career-related student groups, organizations, and employers and begin to articulate skills, interests, values and goals; research industries and workplace environments to explore career and major interests and to test professional and work assumptions. Learn how the Career Development Center can help you develop and implement a successful plan to obtain major-related internships, part-time jobs, co-ops, and other experiences.

JUNIOR: EVALUATE YOUR PROGRESS/ Experience and Enhance

In the year before your final year at WSSU, learn to demonstrate an understanding of career development and job-search skills and strategies that will effectively link career goals to professional realities upon your graduation. Learn how the Career Development Center can help you this year to clarify your occupational choices, improve your career-development and job-search skills, and develop and expand your career network.

SENIOR: DECIDE AND COMMIT/ Reflect and Transition

In your final year, learn to synthesize your experiences in academics, service, leadership, internship and experiential learning, and articulate plans for post-WSSU success and lifelong career development. The Career Development Center can help you develop a self-marketing campaign with resources such as on-campus recruiting, resume-writing and interviewing workshops and career fairs.

FRESHMAN

DEVELOP A PLAN

Acclimate and Explore

Goal: Acclimate to college life and begin preliminary career exploration.

Career Development

- Begin with self-assessment by identifying your interests, abilities and values.
- Visit the Career Development Center. Learn how more about careers, make decisions, and set goals, and use the Career Resource Library to learn.
- Browse RAMTrak, electronic online system.
- Be intentional about your college years. Write down short-term/and long-range career goals.
- Attend workshops and events: Majors Fairs, Resumes and Cover Letter Writing Workshops.
- Create a preliminary resume and cover letter.
- Join a mentoring program: Career Development Services/WSSU National Alumni Association.
- Build employment skills through a wide variety of experiences on and off campus.
- Conduct an Informational Interview

Academic Development

- Get to know faculty, staff and counselors.
- Practice speaking up in class, become a leader in discussions.
- Try out classes that you like and find interesting.
- Maintain a personal academic file with grades, reports, projects, honors and activities.
- Establish a strong GPA.
- Meet with your academic advisor to plan your curriculum.
- Meet with a Career Advisor to connect your FOCUS 2 results and your choice of majors.

Personal/Social Development

- Join a campus club or organization to acquire skills.
- Assess your changing relationship with your parents and family.
- Allow time for friends and leisure activities.
- Attend the Student Organizational Fair to learn about organizations & clubs on campus.
- Get to know Resident Assistant in your residence hall.
- Involve yourself in team-related activities.

SOPHOMORE

BUILD A FOUNDATION

Assess & Explore

Goal: Assess your skills, interests and values

Career Development

- Take on leadership roles in clubs, activities.
- Participate in an informational interview with someone in your field of study.
- Decide on a major, if you have not already done so.
- Draft a resume.
- Visit the Career Development Center and your major department to gather information on internships, volunteer experiences and/or independent research related to your area of interest or chosen career field.
- Contact professional associations in your career field or area of interest that may allow student membership.
- Begin networking for references and letters of recommendation.
- Attend Career Fairs, Employer Information Sessions, workshops, and other career events.
- Evaluate your career goals & objectives in connection with your strengths, knowledge, skills, and values.

Academic Development

- Meet with academic advisor to review core and major requirements.
- Continue involvement in campus and community by partnerships with the Coordinator of Community Service
- Target course electives that will enhance your marketability to employers.
- Consider a Global Perspectives experience that will enhance your career development with a semester abroad.
- Meet with your academic advisor about declaring a major (if you haven't done so already).
- Make a special effort to get to know some professors.
- Work towards a good GPA; seek assistance from the Academic Support Center, if needed.
- Increase your computer literacy and language skills – these are good skills for all majors.

Personal/Social Development

- Participate in a field experience, or practicum.
- Join student organizations to develop leadership skills and networking experience.
- Work on a team project in your residence hall or sorority/fraternity.
- Join an intramural sports team.
- Volunteer through the Office of Career Services/Project GIVE Program.
- Make an effort to meet students from other countries.

JUNIOR

EVALUATE YOUR PROGRESS

Experience and Reflect

Goal: Reflect on collegiate experiences in relation to occupational choices

Career Development

- Attend job fairs-both on campus and in the community to search for internship sources.
- Attend college career fair to search for internship sources.
- 1st semester - Apply for internships
- 2nd semester – Complete an internship.
- Focus on specific career possibilities.
- Update your resume by translating your strengths into marketable skills.
- Identify at least five position titles in career fields that interest you.
- Research 7-10 employers that offer identified positions.
- Participate in a mock interview.
- Actively develop career goals and plan next steps towards achieving your goals.
- Finalize your resume and have it critiqued by the Career Development Services.

Academic Development

- Talk to professors about graduate school options and requirements.
- Contact alumni in your field of interest.
- Begin to develop a list of professional & academic references.
- Select 3 - 5 work or academic references that can highlight your accomplishments.
- Consider a double major, minor or concentration in another field to expand your career options.

Personal/Social Development

- Pursue Leadership positions in Clubs/organizations.
- Consider applying for a Resident Advisor position.
- Explore community service activities from the Office of Career Services/Project GIVE that may compliment your field of study.

SENIOR

DECIDE AND COMMIT

Enhance and Implement

Goal: Search for your dream job.

Career Development

- Plan your job search campaign.
- Participate in On-Campus Interviews! Sign up, show up!
- Write to professional associations to continue network experiences.
- Sharpen interview skills through practice and mock interviews.
- Continue career research by using library and online resources.
- Continue to revise your resume and cover letter on a regular basis.
- Attend college career fair to search for job.
- Participate in On Campus Recruiting prior to graduation.
- Send out resumes and cover letters.
- Confirm 3-5 individuals who will serve as references and write letters of recommendation.
- Examine your career-related values.
- Apply to employers that you have carefully researched.
- Review job offers.
- Accept job that offers “best fit”.
- Translate strengths results into marketable skills.

Academic Development

- Identify top strengths, skills and interests from past academic and work experiences
- Enroll in electives that will further your career and personal goals
- Complete an internship (if you haven’t already done so).
- Finalize course selections and be sure you meet graduation requirements.

Personal/Social Development

- Network with friends, family, alumni, faculty and acquaintances.
- Evaluate your lifestyle interests and values to determine your post-graduation plans.
- Be aware of changing relationships with parents, siblings, friends, and significant others.
- Develop a budget and evaluate financial responsibilities.

GRADUATE SCHOOL ACTION PLAN

Fall or Spring: Eighteen to Twenty-Four Months Prior to Beginning a Graduate Program

- Research areas of interest, institutions, and programs.
- Talk to advisors about application requirements.
- Attend On-Campus Grad School Fair.
- Investigate national scholarships.
- Begin identifying your references.

Summer: Fifteen Months Prior to Beginning a Graduate Program

- Determine if you will be required to take a graduate school admission test.
- Common Exams: GRE (general test), LSAT (for law school), MCAT (for medical school), GMAT (for business school).
- Take required graduate admissions tests. If done early, there will be time to retake.
- Write to the colleges/universities of interest asking for information about the program and application materials.
- If possible, visit schools of interest.
- Write your application essay.
- Adhere to all application deadlines.
- Note that you may need to register with the national application or data assembly service. For medical, dental, osteopathy, podiatry, or law school.

Fall: Twelve Months Prior to Beginning a Graduate Program

- Obtain 3-5 letters of recommendation. Ask primary faculty members and/or other appropriate people if they would be willing to write you a letter of reference for graduate school admission. Please remember to give each recommender a copy of your current resume to use as a guide when writing your letter of recommendation.
- Take graduate tests if you have not done so.
- Send in completed applications. Complete the applications, and be certain to follow the instructions exactly.
- Register for financial aid.
- Make a list of all the graduate schools in the country that offer your program.
- Attend the on-campus Graduate School Fair in October.
- Narrow your choices down to three or four. Keep in mind that the average graduate school application fee is \$50, usually non-refundable.
- Some graduate schools require applicants to write a personal statement as part of the application process, start preparing one now.

Spring: Six to Nine Months Prior to Beginning a Graduate Program

- Check with all institutions before the deadline to make sure that your file is complete.
- Visit institutions that accept you.
- Send a deposit to your school of choice.
- Notify other institutions that accepted you of your decision as soon as possible to allow for others to be offered admission.
- Send thank-you notes to all references and others that may have assisted in your process.
- It is always a good idea to have “Plan B”, so also begin exploring the world or work.