

Discover Your *Dream*, Your *Calling*...

Customizable *4 - Year Plan*



wittenberg
UNIVERSITY

Career Services



Discover Your *Dream, Your Calling...* Customizable *4 - Year Plan*



STUDENT GUIDE

Career Services

Is your calling to be a teacher? A pianist? How about a lawyer, historian, physician, or an accountant? Are you still discerning what your career pathway might be? Let this resources guide help you plan your next steps, regardless of where you are.

No student's journey to a career is the same. Use the worksheet below to identify the steps you need to take to reach your goals and then plot those steps out on the timeline. This is merely a guide – your path may change multiple times during your college journey!

Your 4-Year Career Planning Guide

Purpose:

This guide helps you plan career exploration and experiential learning throughout your college experience. Each year includes a few Your Starting Point actions and a short menu of additional ways to Explore & Grow. Choose activities that fit your interests, major, and timeline.

How to Use This Guide:

1. Begin with the Your Starting Point items for your class year.
2. Select 2–3 additional actions from Explore & Grow that match your interests and goals.
3. Add your own goals or experiences that support your academic and career development.
4. Plan to meet with Career Engagement at least once per year to review your progress and discuss next steps.

Year 1 — Discover

Goal: Learn about yourself and begin exploring majors and career paths.

Your Starting Point

Meet with Career Engagement

- Meet with a Career Engagement team member to start exploring your interests, strengths, and potential career paths.
- Learn about career resources available on campus and how the career team can support you throughout college.

Activate Handshake

- Log in to Handshake to activate your profile and gain access to campus jobs, internships, and other opportunities posted specifically for students.
- Complete your profile so employers and campus partners can learn about your interests and skills.
- Check Handshake regularly to explore opportunities and stay informed about career events and resources.

Explore & Grow (choose 2–3)

□ Take Personality & Career Assessments

- These tools can help you begin learning about yourself, and they give you a conversation partner when exploring potential pathways. Career Services offers multiple testing options via PathwayU.

□ Research Majors & Career Areas

- Begin exploring potential majors that interest you.
- Research major requirements and learn about where alumni from those programs landed after graduation.

□ Campus Employment & Work Study

- Finding a job on campus is a great way to start building experience for your resume while earning extra money. These positions exist across campus, and you can apply for them on Handshake.

□ Start a running resume

- Begin a resume document that you can update each semester throughout your college experience.
- Keeping a running list will make it easier to build a polished resume when applying for internships, jobs, or graduate school. Career Services can assist you with workshops, resources, and individual advising appointments.

□ Draft a simple career goal for the year

- Write down one or two simple career exploration goals for the year.
- Focus on exploration rather than having everything figured out.
- Examples: “Explore three potential majors,” “Attend two career events,” or “Talk to someone working in a career I’m curious about.”

□ Add Your Own

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Year 2 — Practice

Goal: Start trying things: refine interests, build your network, and prepare for internships.

Your Starting Point

□ Meet with Career Engagement

- Meet with a Career Engagement team member to discuss your developing interests and possible career directions.
- Get feedback on your resume and learn strategies for networking and finding internships or experiential opportunities.

□ Create a LinkedIn profile

- Recruiting is increasingly moving online. Developing a LinkedIn profile early can help you get noticed and provide helpful ways to connect with faculty, staff, peers, alumni and employers that you meet along the way.

Explore & Grow (choose 2–3)

□ Declare your Major

- Complete the Registrar’s paperwork to declare your areas of study. Speak with your faculty advisor about department-specific career requirements (internship requirements, clinical experiences, etc.)

□ **Start a Network**

- Organize all the professional contacts you have through family/friends, as well as those that you are making in college (faculty, internship colleagues, alumni, etc.).
- Update regularly and use LinkedIn to facilitate these connections.

□ **Learn about Cover Letter Writing**

- Attend a workshop, review digital resources, or meet with Career Services to learn about the basics of a cover letter. Each one is unique, so it's helpful to be ready to write one by learning the framework.

□ **Conduct Informational Interviews**

- These can help you gain firsthand knowledge about industries, organizations, graduate programs, and careers. Learn about informational interviews and utilize them to discover more about your interests.
- Attend LAUNCH / Homecoming Career Conversation Panel to connect and network with alumni.

□ **Research Graduate or Internship Programs**

- Begin researching programs aligning with your goals. Make notes about specific admission requirements and application timelines. Consult your advisor or the Career Services graduate school guide for graduate school specific information.

□ **Add Your Own**

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Year 3 — Develop

Goal: Deepen experience and align your skills with post-grad goals.

Your Starting Point

□ **Meet with Career Engagement**

- Meet with a Career Engagement team member to refine your career goals and connect your experiences to potential career paths.
- Review your internship, research, leadership, or campus involvement and discuss how to highlight these on your resume and in interviews.
- Create a plan for your final year, including job search strategies or graduate/professional school preparation.

□ **Complete an Internship, Research Project, Clinical, or Job Shadow**

- These help you build experience, learn about your career pathway, and apply what you have learned in the classroom.
- Some programs require an internship experience to be completed as a requirement for graduation.

Explore & Grow (choose 2–3)

□ **Study Abroad**

- Study abroad can be a formative experience for discerning your calling and vocation. It can also help you develop intercultural soft skills that are useful to any employer or career track.

- **Prepare for Graduate School Entrance Exams**
 - Preparing early for entrance exams (GRE, MCAT, LSAT, etc.) can be helpful. Admission and financial aid decisions can be linked to these scores. Consult the graduate school guide for additional info.
- **Participate In a Mock Interview**
 - Make sure you are well practiced and prepared for that first interview whether for an internship, graduate school, or employment. Schedule time with Career Services to conduct a mock interview or register for Mock Interview Days each semester.
- **Find Employer Events & Local Fairs**
 - Speaking with recruiters in-person is a great way to get your foot in the door of a company. Check out the on-campus and off-campus employer events and fairs that take place annually.
- **Conduct Faculty-Led Research**
 - If you plan to attend graduate school, conducting research with a faculty member can be a helpful supplement to your application. It can also allow you to dig deeper into your specific interest area.
- **Add Your Own**
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Year 4 — Accomplish

Goal: Execute a focused plan for jobs or graduate/professional school.

Your Starting Point

- **Meet with Career Engagement**
 - Meet with a Career Engagement team member to finalize and execute your post-graduation plan.
 - Review your resume, application materials, and job or graduate school search strategy.
 - Prepare for interviews, evaluate opportunities, and discuss next steps as you transition from college to your career or graduate program.
- **Build A Job/Graduate Program Search Plan**
 - Defining your search parameters is important for having a targeted search. It also helps you to utilize your limited time better. Utilize a template from Career Services to get started with this.

Explore & Grow (choose 2–3)

- **Find A Mentor**
 - Having an alumni mentor can be helpful in your transition from college to career or grad school. Building a relationship and asking for advice can be extremely beneficial in your search process, too.
- **Search & Apply For Opportunities**
 - Defining your search parameters is important for having a targeted search. It also helps you utilize your limited time better. Secure a template from Career Services to start this process.
- **Join Professional Organizations**
 - Becoming a member in professional organizations can be helpful for building a network of contacts in your chosen field. These organizations can also provide industry-specific career resources.
- **Find Employer Events & Local Fairs**
 - Speaking with recruiters in-person is a great way to get your foot in the door of a company. Check

out the on-campus and off-campus employer events and fairs that take place annually.

- Attend senior-targeted workshops and employer fairs.

□ **Participate In a Mock Interview**

- Make sure you are well practiced and prepared for that first interview. Schedule time with Career Services to conduct a mock interview or register for Mock Interview Days each semester.

□ **Add Your Own**

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**Be sure to schedule a meeting to review your plan with Career Services
in the COMPASS: Sweet Success Center!**

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