

Four-Year Career Action Plan



Career Center

BGSU



DREAM IT. EXPERIENCE IT. GET IT!

Four-Year Career Action Plan

FIRST YEAR: Self-Awareness

Academic Planning

- Begin building a support network of faculty, advisors, administrators and staff members to whom you can turn for guidance and advice.
- Get acquainted with offices on campus that provide academic support services for advising, study skills, writing, and math and statistics.
- Meet with your faculty or academic advisor to develop your tentative degree plan outlining the major courses and electives you should take each semester.
- Review course descriptions with your academic advisor.

Campus & Community Involvement

- Attend the Student Organization Fair to identify campus and community organizations that mesh with your interests. Attend a few meetings to meet people and get a sense of the group's mission and activities.
- Join and become an active member in your first semester, preferably with an organization related to your major or career interests. (Check out the list of registered student organizations at <http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/getinvolved/page12173.html>.)
- Begin to develop a network of colleagues in your field.
- Participate in volunteer and service learning projects.

Personal Growth

- Learn how to establish goals and action plans to achieve them.
- Attend programs on study skills, time and stress management, and personal wellness.
- Find a part-time and/or summer job to gain work experience, develop confidence and good work habits, and earn money for tuition and other college expenses.
- Generate a list of at least four skills employers want and plan to acquire these skills before graduation.

Career & Life Development

- If you are “undecided” about a major or uncertain what you can do with your major, complete the various assessments on FOCUS. A computer-assisted career guidance program available through MyBGSU, FOCUS can help you learn more about your values, interests, skills, personality and occupations.
- Meet with a career consultant to discuss the results of your FOCUS assessments and occupational research. You may be asked to take standardized assessments such as the Strong Interest Inventory, Self-Directed Search, and/or Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. (Contact the Career Center 419-372-2356 for an appointment.)



- Visit the Career Center Library to view a diverse collection of career planning resources, including the Occupational Outlook Handbook, Encyclopedia of Careers and Vocational Guidance, Enhanced Guide for Occupational Exploration, and books on specific industries and career fields.
- Access O*Net OnLine at <http://onetcenter.org/> to research occupations by keywords, job families and O*Net Descriptors (e.g., knowledge, skills and abilities). Links to other helpful career development resources can be found on the front page of the Career Center website at hire.bgsu.edu.
- Attend career information panels and job fairs to gather information about occupations, career paths and potential employers.
- Begin or update your resume and have it critiqued by a Career Center consultant. Remember, your resume is a “living” document. It will change as you acquire new knowledge, build your leadership skills, and complete co-ops, internships and other applied learning experiences.
- Register on WorkNet, the Career Center’s online job posting system within the MyBGSU Web Portal under Misc Services - WorkNet (Jobs & Internships). Apply for part-time and summer jobs, internships, co-ops, undergraduate research projects, and volunteer and service learning opportunities.

SOPHOMORE: Career Exploration

Academic Planning

- Meet with your faculty or college advisor regularly to obtain timely, accurate information about the University’s academic policies, registration procedures, general education offerings, required and elective courses in your major or specialization, and degree requirements.
- Learn to navigate the “ins and outs” of earning a college degree and various academic routes for achieving your educational, career and personal goals.
- Complete introductory courses in your major or specialization, and take electives that mesh with your interests.
- Get to know your major professors well; they are critical to your success.

Campus & Community Involvement

- Continue to enhance your skill development and clarify your professional and personal goals by taking advantage of various applied learning experiences (e.g., leadership roles, part-time jobs, internships, co-ops, undergraduate research and service learning projects, and study abroad experiences).
- Participate in the Leadership Certificate Program, sponsored by the Office of Campus Activities. This self-paced, comprehensive leadership program is designed to augment and build your leadership skills.

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SOPHOMORE: Career Exploration

CONTINUED

Personal Growth

- Be able to explain to yourself and others why you are leaning toward, or have chosen, a particular major or career direction.
- Continue to think about who you are and where you want to go. Reassess how well your program of study aligns with your professional and personal goals.

Career & Life Development

- Participate in field visits to employers that are sponsored by student organizations.
- Spend a day “job shadowing” a professional in your chosen occupation to gather inside information about the nature of the work, working conditions, required knowledge and skills, and employment and advancement opportunities.
- Identify the positive and negative features of your chosen occupation and think about the lifestyle and tradeoffs associated with your choice.
- Read trade publications and industry reports to learn about new developments and emerging trends in your field.
- If you are still “undecided” about a major or uncertain what you can do with your major, meet with a career consultant at the Career Center and use FOCUS, O*Net and other online occupational information resources to identify occupational and educational options.
- Update your resume and WorkNet profile within the MyBGSU Web Portal under Misc Services - WorkNet (Jobs & Internships). Apply for relevant on- and off-campus jobs, internships and co-ops that interest you.
- Attend the Fall and Spring EXPO Job and Internship Fairs to network with employers and schedule interviews for internships and co-ops.
- Participate in an internship or co-op experience to boost self-confidence, gain practical experience, and apply your classroom learning to real-world projects. Realize your strengths and weaknesses, develop new skills, work with people from diverse backgrounds and age groups, practice ethical behavior, and learn about career paths related to your major.
- Register your co-op or internship with your academic department or the University’s Cooperative Education and Internship Program to receive a “COOP 50” notation on your college transcript.
- Set measureable goals and develop an action plan to maximize your on-the-job learning.



JUNIOR: Reality Test Your Choices

Academic Planning

- Continue to consult with your faculty advisor to select courses that match your career goals and fulfill specific degree requirements.
- Begin taking advanced courses in your academic major or specialization.
- Use research assignments, group projects and field experiences to expand your knowledge of the field and professional skills.
- Select elective courses that will broaden your general knowledge and strengthen your qualifications.
- Obtain at least three strong references from your professors and/or supervisors who know your work and/or scholarly abilities.
- Maintain excellence in your academic work.

Campus & Community Involvement

- Assume leadership roles and contribute your talents to an organization by serving as an officer, chairing a committee, and/or organizing a major project or event.
- Participate in the Leadership Certificate Program or Student Leaders Retreat to increase your skills and network with other students. Find more information about Leadership Programs at www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/getinvolved/leadership.

Career & Life Development

- Continue testing, evaluating and confirming your occupational decisions. Use campus/community activities and career-related experiences to sharpen your professional skills and determine your strengths and weaknesses. (By the end of the year, you should have a good idea of your motivated skills and should be focused on a specific career direction.)
- Become familiar with the Career Center's website, educational programs, publications, job search services, and on-campus interviewing policies and procedures.
- Make an appointment with a Career Center consultant to tailor your internship search plan.
- If you are considering graduate school, consult your faculty advisor to discuss the feasibility of your admission.
- Research institutions that offer programs of interest and request application materials.
- Take appropriate entrance exams (e.g., GRE, LSAT, GMAT, and MCAT) and submit your applications and required documents by the published deadlines.
- Have your resume and cover letter critiqued by a Career Center consultant.
- Update your resume and WorkNet profile. Learn to use the advanced search features, save searches, apply for jobs, schedule interviews, and upload resumes into resume books. Apply for internships, co-ops, and career-related summer and part-time positions.
- Practice your interviewing skills and increase your self-confidence by attending an interview simulation or mock interview program.
- Begin to build your professional wardrobe.

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JUNIOR: Reality Test Your Choices

CONTINUED

- Continue to attend the Fall and Spring EXPO Job and Internship Fairs, job search workshops, career panels and employer information sessions.
- Create or expand your professional network by contacting BGSU alumni, using professional association membership lists, and asking family members, friends, advisors, and professors about their contacts.
- Continue to interview until you receive and accept a job offer.
- Register your internship or co-op with your academic department or the University's Cooperative Education and Internship Program to receive a "COOP 50" notation on your college transcript.

SENIOR: Career Implementation

Academic Planning

- Meet with your faculty advisor to review your Degree Audit Report at the beginning of the year to make sure you are on track to fulfill all academic requirements for graduation.
- Make choices during your final year (regarding courses, activities, and experiences) to enhance your understanding of the field and strengthen your marketability.

Campus & Community Involvement

- Continue to serve in leadership roles in campus and community organizations related to your career field.
- Become a Peer Leadership Consultant, an experienced student leader who is trained to help members of student organizations achieve their goals and foster healthy, highly-engaged group dynamics.

Career & Life Development

- Make an appointment with a Career Center consultant to discuss your career goals and create a job search plan.
- Stop by the Career Center to pick up a free copy of the B!G Job Search Guide, Job Search Handbook for Educators, Job Choices, or B!G Graduate School Guide.
- Strengthen your job search skills by attending workshops and seminars offered by the Career Center during the fall and spring semesters.
- Become familiar with the Career Center's website at hire.bgsu.edu, educational programs, publications, job search services, and interviewing policies and procedures.



- Have your resume and cover letter critiqued by a Career Center consultant.
- Update your resume and WorkNet profile. Learn to use the advanced search features, save searches, apply for jobs, schedule interviews, and upload resumes into resume books.
- Practice your interviewing skills and increase your self-confidence by attending an interview simulation or mock interview program.
- Learn strategies “to work a job fair” and write your “one-minute commercial” to introduce yourself to recruiters.
- Update your professional portfolio with artifacts and examples of your accomplishments from student teaching, internships, part-time and summer jobs, class projects, community and campus involvement, and academic endeavors.
- Attend the Fall and Spring EXPO Job and Internship Fairs, Teacher Job Fair, and other recruiting events offered by the Career Center, school districts, chambers of commerce, and student groups to meet recruiters and schedule interviews.
- Continue to expand your professional network.
- Check WorkNet for the schedule of employers conducting campus interviews to determine which organizations offer training programs and positions that match your career interests. Sign-up for interviews online.
- Devise a system for tracking the status of your applications.
- Tailor your cover letter, stating clearly why you are interested in working for the organization. Submit your resume and complete an employment application if required.
- Follow up with employers to request a job interview. After each campus or on-site interview, send a thank you letter or e-mail expressing your appreciation for the recruiter’s time and reiterating your interest in the organization.
- Continue to interview until you receive job offers. Evaluate them and accept one. Report any job offers and acceptances to the Career Center and your academic department.
- Complete pre-employment requirements (e.g., criminal history checks, professional exams).

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