CAREER DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST

Preparing for your future is an individual process and making wise choices about your career is up to you. Don’t wait until your senior year to begin. Use this guide to help you gauge your progress.

FIRST YEAR

- Visit your campus career center and get to know the staff.
- Meet with a career center counselor to discuss your goals and begin to identify your interests, abilities and values.
- Clarify your interests and skills through classes, student organizations, part-time work and community service.
- Identify potential majors that relate to your interests and abilities; discuss with your academic advisor.
- Take advantage of relevant career workshops, programs and events.
- Keep your grades up and seek help if necessary through the Center for Academic Success (CAS).
- Establish relationships with faculty members, career center counselors and administrators who will assist you.
- Start your own career folder/file or electronic portfolio and maintain it with relevant information throughout your college years.
- Pick up relevant handouts from the career center or from the Web site. Write your résumé and cover letter and conduct a summer internship campaign.
- Register with JobSpace on the career center’s Web site: www.css.edu/career.xml.

SOPHOMORE YEAR

- Narrow down your choices for a major; meet with faculty to get some clarification.
- Attend career center workshops/programs.
- Conduct informational interviews regarding your choice of major or career.
- Obtain relevant work experience through an internship, summer job or volunteer position.
- Begin to identify the three to five values that are most important to you in your career.
- Develop some short-term and long-term educational goals by meeting with a career counselor each semester.
- Complete self-assessment exercises, e.g., the Campbell Interest & Skill Survey.

JUNIOR YEAR

- Relate your values, interests and abilities to two or three tentative career choices.
- Develop your career goals by meeting at least once a semester with a career center counselor.
- Research more thoroughly the occupations which you are considering.
- Visit the career center library and online resources.
- Interview three to five people involved in careers that interest you.
- Continue to increase your skills through meaningful extracurricular activities, internships, study abroad and work.
- Begin to research programs and entrance requirements if graduate school is in your future.
• Seek a summer position that will give you direct experience in a field you wish to pursue after graduation.
• Update relevant experiences and activities on your résumé and have it reviewed by a career center counselor.
• Attend career center workshops, programs, career panels and job/career fairs to further explore your options.
• Build relationships with faculty and professionals who will serve as references.
• Consult with your faculty advisor to ensure you are on track for graduation.
• Read three recommended career books over the summer to get better prepared for the fall of your senior year.
• Study for graduate school entrance exams. Visit the career center library or Web site for resources on graduate schools.

**Senior Year**

• Sharpen your job search skills early in the fall with career center workshops/programs.
• Apply to graduate school and take required entrance exam(s).
• Identify various funding sources for graduate and professional school.
• Have your graduate school essay critiqued by both your faculty and career counselors.
• Buy interview clothes and bring to campus.
• Improve your interview skills with a recorded mock interview.
• Take advantage of on-campus and off-campus recruitment programs.
• Research employer Web sites and watch career videos.
• Network with alumni and other professionals about your job search and career opportunities.
• Write cover letters, visit employers, send follow-up letters, make phone calls and set up interviews.
• Take advantage of one or two internships or part-time work experiences that can help build your résumé.
• Gain additional relevant experience through volunteering or community service.
• Attend any career fairs or forums to learn more about various career fields.
• Post your résumé on JobSpace and use the Web for researching employers and job opportunities.
• Continue to meet monthly with your career center counselor. Call ahead for an appointment.
• Consider joining a professional association that is related to your major or career field.
• Use a variety of job search techniques such as classified ads, online resources, job fairs, informational interviews, networking and job search clubs as part of your overall job search strategy.