Whether you will be applying for jobs or graduate school, the success of either process is based on your ability to clearly and concisely communicate your personal qualities and marketable skills to prospective employers and graduate schools. While your degree, major, and grade point average are important, your demonstrated experience in career related activities can also be influential. During your college years you have many opportunities to participate in various activities that may be both currently enjoyable and later useful in your career path. However, so many choices are available that selecting the most appropriate activities may be difficult. Consider the following guidelines:

1. Volunteer for or seek employment for experiences that are directly related to your field or help develop marketable skills in that field.

2. Participate in co-curricular activities that develop and demonstrate desirable qualities (e.g., leadership, creativity, teamwork, ethical standards, productivity, etc.).

3. Get involved in those activities that show identification with and commitment to the field.

4. Build a network of contacts and acquaintances in the field who are familiar with your work. They may be able to provide career information, letters of recommendation, or job leads.

5. Take the opportunity to develop your liberal arts skills (e.g., critical thinking, problem solving, communication, writing, etc.).

You can discover many of these opportunities by actively searching and volunteering for involvement:

- The Student Activities Office coordinates all on campus student organizations and committees and can refer you to chairpersons of such groups.
- Campus Ministry sponsors many community service activities that need volunteers.
- Faculty often conduct research or various projects on which they could use assistance.
- Work study positions (if you are eligible) may be available in various departments in your area of interest.
- Faculty advisors may also be aware of off-campus internship opportunities that afford excellent career related experience.
- Career Services has many resources available to help you find internship and volunteer opportunities.

The key to finding these openings is to search and ask! You will be learning many of the basic inquiring and networking skills that you will later use in your job search.

The second page of this handout lists career related experiences which you might consider pursuing during your College education.
Career Related Experiences to Obtain During College
(Career Related Experiences to Consider)

1. Conduct a thorough research project in a course.
2. Assist an instructor in conducting and publishing a research project.
3. Obtain a leadership position in student government, campus club, or organization.
4. Get involved in a service activity sponsored by a community organization.
5. Volunteer in your field of interest (e.g., make contacts, get exposure experience).
6. Learn to read or speak a foreign language fluently.
7. Write an impressive computer program.
8. Become familiar with a variety of instruments, computers, software packages, or programming languages.
9. Participate in grant writing or fund generation.
10. Work on a student newspaper.
11. Obtain part or full-time employment in your field.
12. Select an internship that will give you the best exposure to the field, build most employable skills, and enable networking.
13. Apply for work study assignments that are related to your field of interest.
14. Coordinate a workshop, conference, or other program.
15. Design and carry out a complex experiment.
17. Display your paintings, photography, or sculpture in a gallery or art show.
18. Write a play for performance or prose or poetry for publication.
19. Conduct a detailed survey, tabulate data, and write a report.
20. Volunteer as a coach, tutor, or teacher.
21. Assist in laboratory work, instrument and equipment testing and maintenance.
22. Work through the Student Activities Office or College Communications in promoting, coordinating, and implementing campus activities.
23. Write authors of articles you read, express your appreciation or questions. See whether you can meet them at conferences.
24. Volunteer to participate as a subject in experiments, surveys, demonstrations, and activities conducted by others.
25. Learn about test scanning, scoring, profiling, and data reporting.
26. Assist in soliciting ads for the school newspaper, layout, and design of newsletters and bulletins.
27. Be exposed to another culture (e.g., Ireland or Mexico Study Program, Native American events, HECUA programs, inner city volunteer).
28. Volunteer for community service (e.g., soup kitchen, inner city volunteer, etc.).
29. Get involved with varsity/intramural sports.
30. Become a resident assistant in the resident halls.

This is certainly not an exhaustive list of all that you can do to gain more experience and knowledge in your field of interest. But you could try some of the activities on this list or brainstorm ideas of your own to pursue. The important point is that you get outside what’s required by your major and prove to the employer or graduate school that you’re involved in and committed to your field of study.