



The Collegiate Compass

Chart Your Path. Navigate Success.

Year

01

Plan It

Begin exploring your interests, strengths, and values to gain a better understanding of potential career paths that align with your skills and passions.

Year

02

Dive deeper into exploring potential career paths.

Year

03

Work It

Actively develop career goals and plan next steps towards achieving your goals.

Year

04

Live It

Communicate with your network the transition from student to active job seeker.



WKU

ADVISING & CAREER
DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Freshman Year

Career Development

- Begin [exploring](#) your interests, strengths, and values to gain a better understanding of potential career paths that align with your skills and passions.
- Familiarize yourself with WKU's career partner, [Steppingblocks](#). Take a personality assessment and explore a wide variety of career paths.
- Talk with faculty, mentors, family, and friends about majors and occupations.
- If unsure or an exploratory major, meet with a college [Career Coach](#) to discuss career options and potential majors.
- Activate and become familiar with [Handshake](#), the WKU online job portal for internships, part-time on campus jobs, and full-time job opportunities.
- Activate and become familiar with LinkedIn and all the different resources it offers.
- Create a preliminary [resume](#) and [cover letter](#). If needed, seek assistance from the Career Studio or a Career Coach.
- Start creating your professional network by attending at least 1 career fair or employer event – connect with others through student organizations, LinkedIn, and personal meetings with faculty members.
- Become familiar with the [8 career-ready competencies](#) identified by the National Association of Colleges and Employers.
- Begin to consider activities, student organizations, or part-time jobs that will facilitate the development of key transferable skills for future internship or job opportunities.
- Follow [social media](#) accounts for Advising and Career Development to gain career advice and to learn about important events and deadlines on campus.



Freshman Year (cont.)

Academic Development

- Meet with your Academic Advisor to plan your course of study.
- Get to know faculty, staff, and advisors.
- Become aware of support services on campus such as the WKU Learning Center (free academic tutoring) and the WKU Counseling Center (free personal counseling).
- Identify classes that you like and find interesting, as well as those that are less interesting.
- Create good study habits that will help you establish a strong GPA.
- Define your academic goals for each semester and create a plan to achieve them.
- Develop good time management skills, creating schedules, setting priorities, and avoiding procrastination.
- Experiment with different note-taking methods and find one that works best for you.

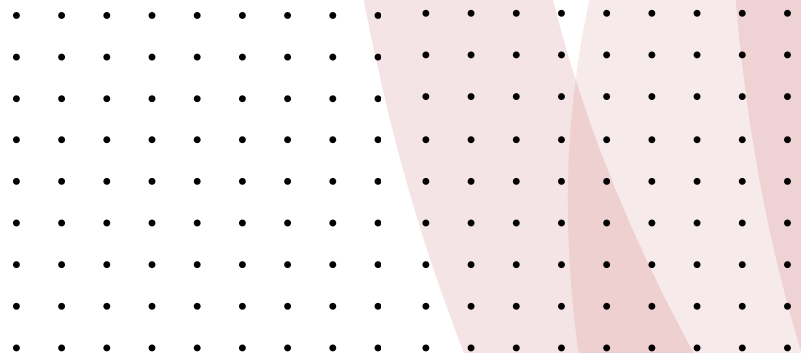
Personal/Social Development

- Attend campus orientations and meet new students.
- Be intentional about your college years. Write down short-term and long-range goals.
- Join a campus club or organization that aligns with your interests.
- Explore campus resources for social engagement, such as athletic or social events.
- Assess your changing relationship with your parents and family.
- Allow time for friends and leisure activities.
- Take care of your physical and mental health by eating nutritious meals, exercising regularly, getting adequate sleep, and seeking support when needed.
- Document your experiences, skills, and accomplishments.

Sophomore Year

Career Development

- If unsure or undecided about a major, meet with a college Career Coach to discuss options and to select one before the start of the second semester.
- Dive deeper into exploring potential career paths by conducting informational interviews and/or job shadowing to gain practical insights into different industries.
- Seek professional advice from a college Career Coach about your resume, cover letter, LinkedIn account, and/or the basics of interviewing.
- Keep your resume and profile updated on Handshake.
- Attend networking events such as career fairs and other professional development events throughout the year.
- Continue to develop a professional network by building relationships with faculty members, employers, family, friends, and LinkedIn connections.
- Seek out a professional mentor.
- Become more familiar with Handshake, LinkedIn, and other online portals to research internship/job opportunities.
- Consider your social media presence from the perspective of an employer. Take the necessary steps to ensure your brand is professional.
- Develop key transferable competencies by seeking opportunities that complement your major – volunteer, student organizations, part-time jobs, and/or a relevant internship.
- Start building your professional wardrobe.



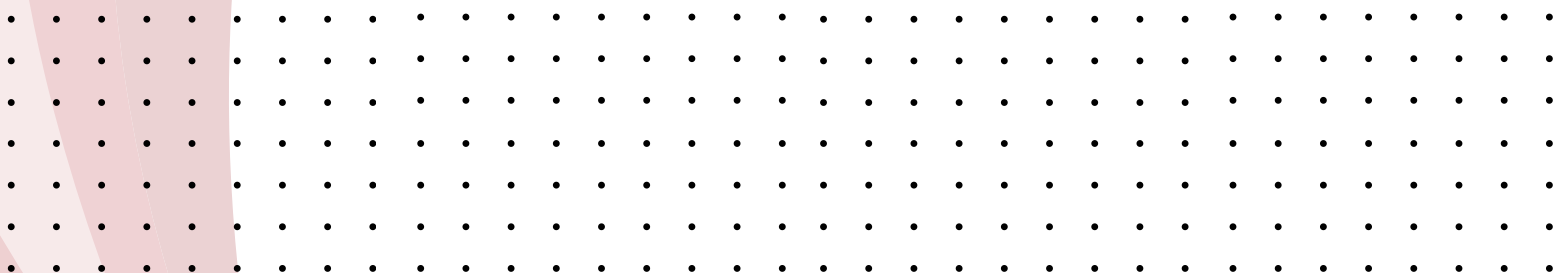
Sophomore Year (cont.)

Academic Development

- Meet with your Academic Advisor to review core and major requirements.
- Continue involvement in campus and community activities.
- Target course electives that will enhance your marketability to employers.
- Make a special effort to get to know your professors.
- Reflect on your academic progress and adjust your goals if necessary.
- Strengthen your ability to work effectively in group settings, including team projects and discussions.
- Proactively seek academic assistance as needed.
- Strive for a healthy work-life balance by scheduling time for studying, socializing, self-care, and leisure activities.

Personal/Social Development

- Join at least 1 student organization to develop leadership and networking skills.
- Attend campus events and workshops that align with your personal and professional development goals.
- Take advantage of mental health resources and seek support if needed.
- Volunteer or work a part-time job.
- Document your experiences, skills, and accomplishments.



Junior Year

Career Development

- Update and fine tune your resume and cover letter. Translate your strengths into marketable skills.
- Research the application timeline and general processes if you are thinking about graduate school or a pre-health field (i.e., pre-med, pre-PT, etc.).
- Gain career-related experience through an internship, research, or volunteer opportunity.
- Actively develop career goals and plan next steps towards achieving your goals.
- Continue to build your professional wardrobe – attend the local JCPenney Suit-Up event.
- Evaluate and make any necessary changes to your online presence.
- Attend all career-related events to network, seek, and acquire an internship position.
- Expand the use of LinkedIn to build a professional network; contribute to discussions in fields of interest and become active in online groups.
- Seek and acquire an internship through online job portals (Handshake, etc.), direct contact, professional networks, and/or through other sources.
- Expand your research and networking skills by conducting informational interviews with key contacts from career events and/or targeted companies.
- Schedule a meeting with a college Career Coach to discuss job/internship search strategies, interviewing, and/or to update your resume or cover letter.
- Articulate the 8 career-ready competencies while networking or in interviews to demonstrate the key transferable skills employers are seeking.
- Identify 10–15 companies or organizations that interest you; follow on social media and identify key people to network with for future opportunities.
- Continue to build your professional wardrobe.

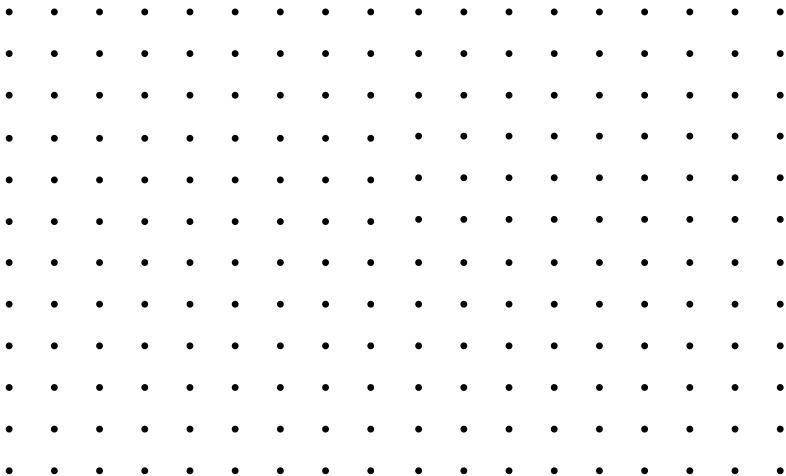
Junior Year (cont.)

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 and academic references.
- Consider earning a certificate to expand your career options.

Personal/Social Development

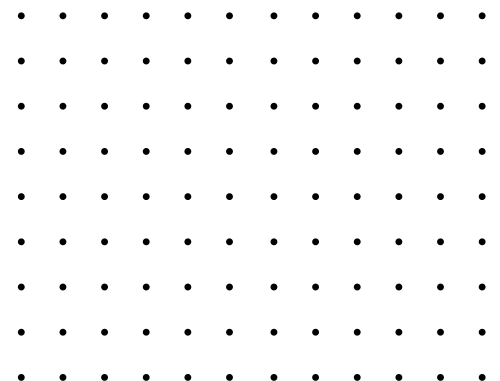
- Prioritize self-care and stress management as you balance academic and career preparations.
- Take on leadership roles in clubs or organizations to enhance your leadership skills.
- Collaborate with classmates on group projects or research initiatives.
- Continue to document your experiences, skills, and accomplishments.



Senior Year

Career Development

- Continue to add to your network through career and networking events, as well as through LinkedIn connections and online groups.
- Contact faculty, previous employers, and/or other professionals to use as professional references.
- Identify your key values in the job search process, including target locations and target companies.
- Purchase professional attire and portfolio for interviews. Plan to attend the local JCPenney Suit-Up event.
- Have all professional documents (resume, cover letter, references, online portfolio, etc.) prepared, up-to-date, and reviewed by a Career Coach or other professional. Ensure these documents are updated on all job portals.
- Starting at least 6 months in advance, create a plan of action to search for jobs and to actively track and monitor your applications and progress.
- Communicate with your network the transition from student to active job seeker – be brief, specific, and positive in asking for leads and/or assistance in the process.
- Effectively articulate your diverse experiences and career-ready competencies, leveraging them in interviews and/or networking events.
- Start applying to full-time positions at least 4 months in advance of your graduation.
- Secure a full-time position and update professional references and key people in your network of your new status.



Senior Year (cont.)

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.
- Finalize course selections to ensure you meet graduation requirements.

Personal/Social Development

- Network with friends, family, alumni, faculty, and acquaintances to enhance job prospects.
- Take on leadership roles in organizations to leave a lasting impact before graduating.
- Celebrate your college journey by attending senior events and graduation-related activities.
- Develop a budget and evaluate financial responsibilities.
- Reflect on your college experience and prepare for the transition to post-graduate life.





The Collegiate Compass

CONNECT WITH US
ON SOCIAL MEDIA



<https://linktr.ee/wkuacdc>



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