

Career Exploration

Many students think of a career as a one-time decision. But in reality, finding your career path is an ongoing process. Making good career decisions is all about learning. The more you know, the better decisions you will make.

The three main steps to career planning are:

1. **Understanding Yourself**- Take time to explore your interests, skills, personality, and values. Learn more about your strengths and interests by taking a self-assessment at www.myplan.com
2. **Exploring options**- After you have taken the MyPlan.com assessments and have identified several possible career fields, the next step is to explore those careers by going to [Occupational Outlook Handbook](#) . This will help you understand the skills, education, and training necessary for different careers.
3. **Building experience**- Gaining experience helps you in two important ways: First, you confirm your career choice, and secondly you begin to develop the skills and experience you will need in your future career. For opportunities to gain hands-on experience, visit www.collegecentral.com/warner.

The single biggest mistake students make is not getting enough experience before trying to land their first job after graduation. Employers want experience, so get it BEFORE you graduate!

Internships-An internship is a work-related learning opportunity designed to help students develop hands-on experience in a related field.

Part-time Jobs- A part-time job can expose you to the dynamics of the workplace and help you sharpen skills such as teamwork, customer service, leadership, and negotiation. It also allows you the opportunity to meet professionals in their place of employment and give insight into the business world. To find a part-time job, visit www.collegecentral.com/warner

Volunteer Opportunities- Volunteering provides you with experience, training, and knowledge in your field, as well as an opportunity to make a difference. Volunteering helps you gain valuable skills in real-life situations that can be transferable to your career.

Haven't decided on a major? Make an appointment to see Mrs. Autumn Moyer, Director of Career Counseling at Warner University, to create a career and major plan that works for you.

Other Important Tips:

Making connections- Networking is crucial. The National Association of Colleges and Employers reports that 61 percent of college students get their first jobs through networking.

Expanding your social boundaries- Networking is sometimes a scary word for students, yet you practice it every day with your friends and family. Networking is about building relationships and learning from others. When you meet alumni, employers, and admissions counselors from graduate programs and sincerely ask them about their jobs or their institution, you are building relationships! Making good contacts can become an excellent resource for many aspects of your career and your life.

How to increase your contact base-

- Attend career counseling events.
- Meet with the individuals involved; whether they are alumni, employers, or graduate school representatives.
- Take advantage of these opportunities to learn more about different fields of work, practice your communication skills, and learn to be a better listener.

Conduct informational interviews- This is an opportunity to meet individuals in your field and gain information and advice about your area of interest.

JOB SEARCHING- Six basic steps to finding a job:

1. Make an appointment with Mrs. Autumn Moyer, Director of Career Counseling. She will assist you in creating a *plan of action* for your job search.
2. Keep your job search focused. Determine what type of job you are looking for and tailor your résumé to the job.
3. Identify opportunities. Take advantage of www.collegecentral.com/warner , our online job board, to post your résumé and see what jobs are available.

4. Target your résumé and cover letter. Producing an excellent résumé and cover letter are the basic requirements for a successful job search. Review the handouts on résumé and cover letter writing on the career counseling page on WU's website. Have a Career Counselor critique your résumé and cover letter to offer helpful suggestions.
5. Know how to interview and follow up. The résumé might get you the interview, but it is the interview that will get you the job! Take advantage of the mock interviews or make an appointment with a Career Counselor to do a mock interview. Thank-you notes are essential. There is a right way to follow up.
6. Accepting an offer. Getting a job offer is very exciting! If you have questions about this process, make an appointment with a career counselor, who will assist you with the intricacies of accepting an offer.

GRADUATE SCHOOL- Deciding to go to graduate school requires research, planning, and preparation. The summer before your senior year is the optimal time to begin the process. Go to www.petersonsguide.com or www.graduateguide.com for more information on graduate schools. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Is graduate school right for me?
- How do I go about choosing the right graduate school?
- How do I get ready to apply to graduate school?

Once you have decided to go to graduate school, you must prepare by:

- Obtaining letters of recommendation
- Writing a personal statement
- Securing official transcript(s)
- Submitting standardized test scores
- Completing an application
- Preparing a graduate school résumé

It is best to plan early to allow enough time to gather the required documentation and to get help writing your personal statement and résumé.