

Four-Year Career Planning Guide

Year 1: Exploration and Goals

FOCUS ON:

- **Adjusting to college and getting to know key people on campus such as advisers and career coaches.**
- **Discovering more about who you are, your interests and your goals.**
- **Getting involved to build experience and begin testing out your interests.**
- **If undecided, begin building a list of majors you are considering and your questions.**

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES:

Read or Watch:

- Read about strategies to strengthen your study skills and grades, but know that employers care about experience too.
- Get the facts about various major and career options by visiting the "[Resources for your Major](#)" page on the Strommen Center website.
- Learn how to take care of your health and wellness so that you have enough energy for it all!
- Explore the [Strommen Center website](#) to learn about the full range of services offered through Career & Internship Services.
- Check out the [Career & Internship Services calendar](#) for various workshops offered throughout the year and make note of any you wish to attend.

Talk about It:

- Meet with your faculty and/or staff academic adviser to chat about your questions and goals.
- Some of you may be ready to choose a major during your first year. If so, begin exploring all the career paths open to you as a liberal arts student by meeting with a career coach.
- Discover more about who you are by talking with mentors, career coaches, and other advisers about your values, interests, skills, and personality preferences. Doing this will help you make career choices that will work for you.
- Talk with a faculty member or staff from the Sabo Center about volunteer opportunities that will help you explore your interests and build new skills related to your goals.
- Talk with at least one student in each major you are considering to learn more about your options.
- Come to the Strommen Center for Career Quick Stop hours (15-minute drop-in appointments) to get to know how this office can help you while you are a student at Augsburg.

Try it out:

- Take a course that will help you try out a potential interest area or major.
- Find a part-time job on campus to help you build professional skills. Many are posted on the [Augsburg College Employment website](#).
- Create an initial resume. Your career coach can help you use it as a planning tool too.
- Before you leave campus for summer find a summer job that will help you build experience.
- Consider taking a career assessment or completing a similar activity to help you clarify your goals and interests. Talk to your career coach about the many options available to help you with this.
- Get involved to begin building experience by joining a student club that interests you.
- [Sign up on AugPost](#), the free online job and internship website for Augsburg students.

Year 2: Clarifying Purpose

FOCUS ON:

- Clarifying your sense of purpose – what do you feel called to do? Focus on this as you move closer to declaring your major and identifying career paths.
- Redefining your relationships on campus. Build meaningful connections with friends, faculty and staff members who will provide the support you need to accomplish your goals.
- Linking majors to career paths. A career coach can help you explore connections and options available.
- Finding ways to interact with professionals and prospective employers as you continue to build skills.

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES:

Read or Watch:

- Explore the ways culture, family, and social influences factor in to your career choices.
- Find lots of information about your individual major and career options by visiting the "[Resources for your Major](#)" page on the Strommen Center website.
- Discover how your values, interests, personality and skills apply to the world of work by using [O*NET](#) to do more in-depth research on various occupations with the help of a career coach.

Talk about It:

- Talk with someone in Campus Ministry about how your path is unfolding related to vocation.
- Talk with staff from Career & Internship Services as you consider the connections between your values, interests, personality and skills. What themes emerge? How can you use this information to help you focus your research and exploration?
- Meet with your academic adviser and make a tentative selection of a major.
- Thinking about study abroad? Attend an info session to explore programs that fit your academic goals.
- Which faculty members might you like to call on for references or recommendations in the future? Get to know them and share your goals so they can speak about you in the future.
- Realize that major does not equal career. Talk with a career coach to explore the many ways you can apply your transferable skills in your future career.
- Talk to a career coach for help setting up and using Linked In, a professional networking website.

Try it out:

- Search for internship opportunities that will help you build skills and experience towards your goals.
- Consider deepening your exploration through doing an internship in an area of interest.
- Consider taking "INS 298: Meaningful Work: Linking Education, Vocation and Career Exploration." This course will help you link majors and careers, and prepare for the job search.
- Attend career fairs, career events and workshops to continue gathering information and contacts related to your career choice. View events at: <http://www.augsburg.edu/strommen/>
- Not sure if a particular career is right for you? Try it out by spending the day job shadowing someone with a similar occupation – your career coach can help you learn how to set one up.
- [Conduct informational interviews](#) with alumni, relatives, family, friends, etc., to learn about career areas that interest you.
- Improve your leadership experience by holding a leadership role for a student club, making a deeper commitment to a volunteer role, or building experience with research, among other ideas.
- Create or update your own Linked In profile.
- Enhance your experience by selecting a summer job, internship, research, or volunteer opportunity related to your interests.
- It isn't too late to get involved on campus – try joining a new student club this year.

Year 3: Building Experience

FOCUS ON:

- **Building experience that aligns with your values, interests, personality and skills.**
- **Pursuing opportunities to apply what you are learning while you deepen your expertise (internships, research, field work, or other major or career-related community engagement experiences).**
- **Completing at least one internship experience to try out areas of interest.**
- **Finding a mentor and building connections that help you align your experience with professional goals.**
- **Starting to think about plans for after graduation – graduate school applications, job search strategies, resume writing, practice interviews, and more.**

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES:

Read or Watch:

- Find an internship – you can review postings on [Aug Post](#) to start your search.
- Focus on honing your writing, public speaking, teamwork, critical thinking, analytical and specific technological skill by reading about best practices.
- Conduct research to determine the types of entry-level positions for which you might qualify.
- View a tutorial on the basics of Linked In: <http://youtu.be/Ocp1MNPskWs>
- Read about various professional associations that exist in your field and consider membership.
- Research and decide if graduate or professional school is needed to reach your career goals.
- Read about resume and cover letter writing online: <http://www.augsburg.edu/strommen/resumes-and-cover-letters/>
- Review information about interviewing to help you prepare for job or grad school interviews: <http://www.augsburg.edu/strommen/interviewing/>

Talk about It:

- Talk with a career coach about the transferable skills you are building in the classroom and beyond. Many skills are portable – you can apply them in different contexts. Be ready to explain yours to employers.
- Begin planning for an internship and/or study abroad by talking with advisers on campus.
- Complete an informational interview to understand occupations and career fields available.
- Join the [Augsburg group on Linked In](#) to begin your online professional presence – you can start a conversation with alumni about your major and career questions.
- Talk with a Career Coach about how to find a mentor or someone you can job shadow with.
- Build relationships with faculty who can help you explore grad school and serve as references.
- Talk to faculty and the Office of Undergraduate Research and Graduate Opportunity (URGO) on campus to find out how you can participate in research opportunities in your field.
- Have your resume and cover letter critiqued in Career & Internship Services.
- Fine-tune your interview skills by scheduling a mock interview with Career & Internship Services staff.
- Explore barriers to decision-making (internal or external) with help from a career coach.
- If you are still unsure about your major, talk with your academic advisor and visit with staff from Career & Internship Services for help making a decision.

Try it out:

- Complete an internship - internships can be completed for academic credit, or not for credit, and can be paid or unpaid. For support with exploring options visit Career & Internship Services.
- Secure a summer job that will help you build skills in your field of study.
- Find on-campus or part-time work that will help you build skills relevant to your future career.
- Use volunteer and campus leadership experiences to apply your learning.
- Use Linked In to start making connections with professionals you meet, alumni, and others in your field.
- Attend a professional association meeting for your field and mingle with other professionals.
- Interested in a specific career? Try doing a job shadow to see what it is really like.
- Attend the Job Fair in February to see what the process is like and begin meeting employers.
- Conduct an informational interview or job shadow to help you explore and increase your confidence in the professional opportunities available to you.

Year 4: Preparing for What's Next

FOCUS ON:

- Pull the pieces together by fully engaging in your Keystone course and dedicating time to your job or graduate school search process.
- Begin to locate opportunities for meaningful work that fits for you through networking and job searches.
- Practice your self-marketing skills to prepare for the full-time job search: freshen up your resume, cover letter writing, interviewing, and job search skills.
- Who you know matters. Build relationships with alumni, employers, and professional organizations.
- Attend Job Fairs and career events hosted on campus and beyond.

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES:

Read or Watch:

- Review the top skills employers seek in an applicant here: <http://naceweb.org/s10262011/candidate-skills-employer-qualities.aspx?terms=skills>. Be able to convey how your knowledge, skills and experiences will be an asset to the organizations to which you apply.
- Review budget basics online and create a budget for your living expenses after graduation. You may want to talk with the Enrollment Center to understand what your student loan payments will be.
- Read about how to create an "Elevator Pitch" online and work on developing your own 15-second introduction that you can use at career fairs or when speaking with employers. Start here: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2013/02/04/the-perfect-elevator-pitch-to-land-a-job/>
- Remain open to possibilities; be proactive and continue to assess your options.
- Research strategies you can use to stay organized on the job search. Setting specific goals for who you wish to meet, how many emails you plan to write as follow-ups, and how to track your applications will help.

Talk about It:

- Talk with Career & Internship Services about tips for salary negotiations, and research what you can expect in terms of student loan payments. Practice salary negotiation scenarios out loud.
- Reflect on and make connections across your academic, volunteer, and work experiences. Talk with faculty, career coaches, advisers, or other campus contacts for help if needed.
- Talk with family, mentors, friends and other trusted people in your life about the factors that will be important to your definition of "meaningful work". Example: purpose, location, pay, work culture, team, mission, or job.
- Meet with the Career & Internship Services staff to discuss your post-graduation plans.
- Develop your personal statement/elevator speech and practice it with a career coach.
- Identify professionals who are willing to serve as references and write letters of recommendation for you in the job search or grad school search process.
- Use your network to identify opportunities. Let people know what you are seeking.
- Know what your transferable skills are and practice communicating these to help employers see your fit.
- Talk with key people in your life about how companies, organizations and jobs align with your values.

Try it out:

- Continue to fulfill leadership commitments in student organizations and clubs as you prepare for graduation.
- Identify/apply for full-time job opportunities. Start early and tailor your materials for each job.
- If you have not completed at least one internship (paid or unpaid) in your field of interest, do not delay! Investigate the possibilities before you graduate – a career coach can help.
- Schedule a mock interview to strengthen your interview skills and reduce anxiety.
- Send thank you letters to employers with whom you interview and to your references.
- Use your new elevator pitch to introduce yourself to new contacts and professionals.
- Deepen your mentoring relationships and continue to seek out mentors in your life.

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