Career Planner  A FOUR-YEAR GUIDE

First-year/transfers (0–30 credit hours)

Start on the right foot
• Develop/refine time-management skills.
• Attend seminars presented by the Julia N. Visor Academic Center to improve your academic skills.

Set academic goals—grades are important
• Ask for academic help early, if you need it.
• Tutors are available through academic departments and the Julia N. Visor Academic Center.
• Attend your professors’ office hours to ask questions or communicate with them via e-mail. It’s important to get to know your professors.

Use one of the career assessment tools to assist you in choosing a major and/or determining your career path
• SIGI 3 (System of Interactive Guidance and Information Assessment Inventory)—is a series of online interest, values, and abilities assessments that assists students in exploring occupations and careers.
• MBTI (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator)—identifies preferences that can impact career choices.

Research potential majors/minors
• Check out www.FindYourMajor.ilstu.edu to investigate all of the Illinois State majors and minors.
• Discover what the academic requirements are for being accepted to a major.

Start researching careers/majors to focus your academic work
• Employers prefer candidates who are able to articulate short- and long-term career goals.
• Attend department events, listen to speakers, read professional journals, talk to faculty, take advantage of field trips/tours of the industry, and attend career fairs.

Get involved
• Develop effective interpersonal and communication skills.

• Check out professional organizations, community service, student government, residence hall government, social organizations, etc., for opportunities to become involved. Go online to www.DeanOfStudents.ilstu.edu/about_us/rso.shtml

Start your professional profile
• Keep track of all your accomplishments inside and outside of the classroom.
• Save any certificates, commendation letters, and special academic projects or other important projects that document your involvement.

Second-year/transfers (31–60 credit hours)

Meet early in the fall with your academic advisor
• Plan your schedule and discuss the best options for your choice of major. Keep the 75-hour policy in mind as you go through the process of applying for a major(s).

Join a professional organization
• Start developing a network of faculty and friends.
• Strengthen interpersonal skills.
• Begin considering who could be on your list of references when you graduate.

Explore careers
• Participate in internship or externship programs.
• Conduct informational interviews with professionals to help you focus on a specific career or types of jobs within a field.

Learn how to build an effective resume
• Design high-impact resumes based on your major and career goals using Optimal Resume. Go to www.CareerCenter.ilstu.edu and click on optimal resume in the top red tool bar.
• Use your professional portfolio as a reference to keep your resume updated.
• Contact or visit the Career Center to have your resume reviewed, and to find out how to upload it onto eRecruiting, Illinois State’s online job posting system.
Third-year/transfers (61–90 credit hours)

Meet with your academic advisor
• Track your academic progress

Develop your leadership skills
• Increase your involvement on and off campus.
• Run for a position in your student organization, chair a committee, organize an event, supervise a project, etc.

Continue to network
• Seek contact with peers, faculty, and professionals in your field.
• Attend career fairs and the Student and Employer Networking Event.

Look for internships or career-related work experience
• Check with your department’s internship coordinator about internships and/or clinical or field experience requirements, course credit, etc.
• Contact your Career Center advisor for additional internship information, or go to www.CareerCenter.ilstu.edu.
• Check eRecruiting for available internship opportunities at http://illinois.experience.com.

Learn how to conduct a well-planned job search
• Become familiar with Web sites that will assist your job search readiness and/or provide listings in the field(s) you wish to pursue.
• Attend Career Week in September in the Career Center for tips from employers and Career Center staff about the job search process. Check dates on the Career Center Web site.
• Additional resources are available in the Career Center, 185 Student Services Building, www.CareerCenter.ilstu.edu, (309) 438-2200.

Regularly check your academic progress summary
• Through your iCampus account, regularly check your academic progress summary, which will help you determine what requirements you still must complete to graduate.
• Discuss your academic progress summary with your academic advisor.

Fourth-year/transfers (91–120 credit hours)

Register or update your information on eRecruiting, the Career Center’s online job listing
• Make sure your resume is uploaded and published online at http://illinois.experience.com.
• Check the eRecruiting calendar for on-campus interview dates, or Meet the Firm events with employers.

Review your graduation plan with your academic advisor
• Polish your job-search skills.
• Keep your resume updated, practice your interviewing skills, strengthen your network of job-search contacts, and ask for letters of recommendation.
• Attend a refresher Career Week event in September. Check dates on the Career Center Web site.
• Schedule a mock interview in the Career Center to hone your interviewing skills.
• Check eRecruiting for job postings and interview opportunities.

Attend job and internship fairs and/or other fairs
• Dress professionally and bring several copies of your resume.

File your application for graduation
• Pick up an application for graduation at the Student Service and Referral Center (SSRC) in Moulton Hall. You must pay $25 fee at Student Accounts when you submit the form, or you may drop the form and payment in the Student Accounts drop box at the SSRC.