

*You've got this.*

## CARDINAL CAREER COMPASS

Steps to point you in the right direction on your journey from college to career

### Throughout each year:

- Create/update your resume or CV.
- Create/update your LinkedIn and Cards Career Connection powered by Handshake profiles.
- Meet with your Career Coach regularly.
- Attend Career Development Center workshops, career fairs, and events.

### Step 1: Explore Your Options

- Take a career assessment.** Career assessments help you learn more about your interests, personality, and skills, and how those align with your major choice.
- Complete your Cards Career Connection powered by Handshake profile.** Using this system, you can schedule appointments, RSVP for workshops and events, apply for jobs and internships, and see who is coming to our career fairs.
- Take a look at “What Can I Do With This Major.”** This resource is a great place to begin exploring career options for different majors.
- Get experience!** Join student organizations, volunteer, or get a part-time job on- or off-campus.
- Shadow a professional.** Job shadowing a professional in a field you might be interested in is a great way to learn more about the day-to-day in a specific industry or occupation.
- Have a headshot taken.** The Career Development Center provides free headshots for students to use when creating a LinkedIn account.

### Step 2: Find Your Fit

- Declare your major.** If you are still figuring out your major, schedule an appointment with your Career Coach and checkout our major and career exploration resources.
  - Still unsure of your major? Enroll in ECPY 302: Personal and Academic Inquiry.** This small seminar is ideal for students interested in learning more about their major and career options, as well as determining life goals.
- Learn how to write a cover letter.** Every application you submit should be accompanied with a tailored cover letter.
- Conduct an informational interview.** These mini interviews are a great way to learn more about a professional’s educational and career path, and can help you plan yours accordingly.
- Stay engaged on- and off-campus.** Consider taking on leadership roles or projects in your activities and classes. Ask professors about research opportunities. Look into Study Abroad options.

### Step 3: Chart Your Course

- Create your online portfolio or website.** Many industries find value in your personal brand, projects, and accomplishments. Consider developing an online portfolio to showcase who you are. Popular sites include WordPress, Weebly, about.me, and github; portfolio preferences vary by industry and field of study.
- Thinking about graduate school? Start the process now.** Each college/university has different admissions requirements, pre-requisite coursework, and application materials. Depending on the type of program, you may have to take an entrance exam like the GRE, GMAT, MCAT, or LSAT.
  - Begin studying for your entrance exam.** You'll want to leave yourself plenty of time to prepare for your entrance examination.
- Complete a practice interview.** You can schedule an appointment with your Career Coach who will prepare an authentic and professional practice interview. You will leave the appointment with more experience and feedback to enhance your skills. InterviewStream is an online resource to begin practicing your interview skills on your own time.
- Complete an internship, co-op, or practicum.** Meet with our Internship Coordinator to learn more about what opportunities are available and ensure you receive academic credit for your experience.
- Continue expanding your network.** Attend networking events in Louisville, conferences, and career fairs. All of these events are a great way to expand your network and open-up possibilities. Do not forget your faculty members are well-connected in your field and serve as a boundless resource.
- Read for your future—and fun.** Subscribe to newsletters, checkout online blogs, or read books to learn more about career fields of interest and the world of work.

### Step 4: Discover Your Destination

- Join professional associations.** Professional associations related to your major or career provide many networking and educational opportunities to be plugged in at a discounted rate for students.
- Start building your professional wardrobe.** It's never too early to begin collecting items for your professional wardrobe. Shop at discount stores and when items are on sale to ensure you get the best price. Tailor items that are too big or too small to ensure an appropriate fit and pickup a padfolio to use during the interview process.
- Take entrance exams required for graduate or professional programs.** Early in the first semester of your senior year, take the entrance exam necessary for your program. This will allow extra time to retake the exam if need be. Students applying to medical or dental school should start this process junior year.
  - Prepare all other application materials.** Most graduate programs require the submission of a personal statement. The Career Development Center reviews personal statements and can provide feedback on content; visit the Writing Center for help getting started, working on a first draft, revisions, and copyediting.
  - Ask for letters of recommendation.** Graduate programs require positive letters of recommendation. Allow plenty of time for faculty and references to write, proofread, and submit letters on your behalf before the application deadline.
- Learn about the job market.** Salary and cost of living vary significantly depending on where you end up. Be prepared to effectively navigate the salary negotiation process.
- Begin your job search early!** Identify your values in a job and utilize Career Development Center resources to find potential opportunities, including Cards Career Connection powered by Handshake. Use an Excel file or similar program to track all of your applications by including details about the organization, as well as their timeline.

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