Career Development
Northeastern Illinois University

Career Planning Guide

This action-oriented plan will guide you through the career planning process.

**First Year**
(0 – 29 Hours)

**Goals**
- Learn about Career Development and other NEIU support services
- Register for Handshake
- Begin self-exploration process – assess values & interests
- Make connections between majors and careers
- Develop good writing, communication & study skills

**Career Exploration & Strategy**
- Research careers & majors via MyPlan
- Meet with Career Development staff to discuss major/career options
- Take General Education courses that interest you

**Networking**
- Attend campus programs connected to your major and career interests
- Become involved in student organizations related to goals
- Develop a personal portfolio related to your professional growth

**Pre-Major**
(30 – 59 Hours)

**Goals**
- Explore career possibilities and learn about different jobs
- Start networking – visit Career Development for tips
- Participate in volunteer opportunities to gain experience and learn about different fields
- Decide on a major & complete a Major Declaration Form

**Career Exploration & Strategy**
- Explore Handshake for internships & part-time jobs
- Evaluate your social media presence and remove unprofessional content
- Explore career options through on and off-campus involvement

**Networking**
- Conduct informational interview with professionals and/or alumni working in careers of interest
- Make at least one professional contact

**Continuously update and work on:**

- Meet with faculty, advisors, and career coaches to make connections between majors & careers
- Draft of resume & cover letter
- Transferable skills list

Career Development
(773) 442-4680 • B-119
www.neiu.edu/university-life/career-development
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**Career Planning Guide**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-Declaration (60 – 89 Hours)</th>
<th>Graduation Year (90+ Hours)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Goals</strong></td>
<td><strong>Goals</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop strategies for networking and job search</td>
<td>• Refine networking &amp; job search strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Gain career-related experience via jobs, internships, and volunteer opportunities</td>
<td>• Narrow and finalize career options</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Explore different post-graduation options (i.e., graduate/professional school, service, organizations, etc.)</td>
<td>• Complete an internship relevant to goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Research labor market information</td>
<td>• Research licensing options, professional exams, &amp; certifications</td>
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<tr>
<td>• If headed to graduate/professional school, prepare applications</td>
<td>• If headed to graduate/professional school, submit application(s)</td>
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**Continuously update and work on:**
- Meet with faculty, advisors, and career coaches to make connections between majors & careers
- Draft of resume & cover letter
- Transferable skills list

**Career Exploration & Strategy**
- Create a LinkedIn Profile and join groups
- Meet with Career Development to develop job search plan
- Seek out internships
- Attend career events on & off campus
- Assume leadership roles in student & volunteer organizations

**Networking**
- Attend conference/workshops related to your field of interest
- Join a professional association or student organization connected with your major or field
- Target individuals/organizations for informational interviews

**Career Exploration & Strategy**
- Meet with Career Development to review job search plan
- Start applying to jobs at least 6 months before graduation
- Follow up on all applications & keep records of job application status
- Actively engage in job search

**Networking**
- Discuss the nature of different jobs with faculty, staff, and business contacts
- Make sure everyone knows about your job search!
- Continue to attend career events & recruitment opportunities (on & off campus)

Don’t worry if you haven’t completed all these steps – these suggestions are intended to keep you on track! It’s never too late to start!