

# Planning Your Career

## *The Step-By-Step Process*

Career Planning

130 Sisson Hall

315-267-2344

Office Hours: Monday- Friday

Academic Year: 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

Summer Hours: 8:00 am – 4:00 pm

Walk-In Hours: Tues./Wed. 1:00-4:00 p.m. during the academic year

[www.potsdam.edu/career](http://www.potsdam.edu/career)

[career@potsdam.edu](mailto:career@potsdam.edu)

**This guide contains a checklist of activities for you to complete each year.**

**It's the minimum list- many students do more.**

### **Freshman Checklist- Fall Semester**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Visit the Career Planning Office to learn what is in our career library. Check out the additional resources we have available, such as our student computers, resources for career and major selection, and job listings (summer, part-time, full-time).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Review the Career Planning Webpage to become familiar with the information and resources available to you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make an appointment with one of the career counselors. They can assist you with selecting a major, minor and career field.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Watch Career videos on-line.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Obtain a work reference letter from your summer and previous employers. Ask for a "To Whom It May Concern" letter on their own letterhead. Begin a "Reference Letter File" with Career Planning and store your letters in this file.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Watch our bulletin boards in Sisson, Barrington Student Union, and Carson or log onto BearTracker, Facebook, or on our website to get details on our programs, workshops, and events. Begin attending career workshops now. We can assist you with developing a summer job resume and looking for summer employment.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attend "A Major Affair".

### **Freshman - Spring Semester**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Select extra-curricular activities and ask student leaders how to become involved. These will be very important for your resume. Pick up the handout "Interviewing Career Professionals."
- \_\_\_\_\_ Become familiar with jobs and internships and mentors on BearTracker ([www.potsdam.edu/career](http://www.potsdam.edu/career))
- \_\_\_\_\_ If you have not selected a major or career area, let Career Planning help you assess your interests, values and skills as they relate to possible career fields.

## **Sophomore Checklist-Fall Semester**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Obtain work reference letters from previous employers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ This is the time to begin selecting your career! Visit the Career Planning Office and utilize our resources to help you with your decision-making. Our career resources are extensive (career books, self-assessment software, career worksheets, etc.).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attend “A Major Affair” to obtain major and career selection advice. Watch our bulletin boards in Sisson and Carson lobbies and the Barrington Student Union for the schedule.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Learn how to network and let us assist you on how to interview with career professionals. Use the career directories and alumni mentors on Bear Tracker to develop contact names. Pick up the “Informational Interview Guide.”
- \_\_\_\_\_ Write a summer job resume and begin looking for summer employment. Attend our workshops or make an appointment with Career Planning staff members. The best time to search for a summer job or career-related experience is during winter and spring breaks.

## **Sophomore-Spring Semester**

- \_\_\_\_\_ If you still have questions about choosing a major and applying a major to careers, now is the time to attend a workshop or make an appointment with Career Planning Staff member.
- \_\_\_\_\_ If you haven't become involved in extra-curricular activities, do so now. Ask student leaders or your advisor how you can get involved. If you need information on activities and volunteer opportunities, visit the SGA Office. Your involvement will help you develop skills and enhance your resume.
- \_\_\_\_\_ If you intend to complete an internship, now is the time to begin planning. Visit the Experiential Education Office. Check out BearTracker for internship opportunities.

## Junior Checklist-Fall Semester

- \_\_\_\_\_ Continue to add reference letters your “Reference Letter File” with Career Planning and review our services.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Continue to network with career professionals. Develop an employer contact network. Use our career directories and alumni printouts to develop contact names and Alumni Mentors on BearTracker.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Plan a career-related summer job, part-time job or internship experience. We can help you locate opportunities. Attend our workshops. Make an appointment with a Career Planning staff member. Plan on looking for opportunities over winter and spring breaks.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Are you considering graduate school? Pick up our “Applying to Graduate School” handout. See our Career Planning web site for helpful graduate school information ([www.potsdam.edu/career](http://www.potsdam.edu/career)).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attend our Graduate School Fair.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Take a Graduate School Mock Exam online.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pick up our “Graduate School Guide.”

## Junior-Spring Semester

- \_\_\_\_\_ You should write your resume now, if you haven’t already. Pick up the guidelines in our office or on our web site and attend a workshop.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Be sure to begin obtaining references from faculty/staff and employers, especially if you won’t be taking another course from that professor or you don’t plan on returning to the same employer. Forms are available in our office and on our web site for faculty/staff recommendations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Read the interviewing handout. Practice with Interview Stream (<https://sunypotsdam.interviewstream.com/>). Schedule a mock interview. Preparation is important.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Begin your portfolio preparations. Pick up our hand out on “ Preparing a Portfolio.”
- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete a Self-Marketing Brochure. Samples and preparation information are available at Career Planning.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attend SUNY Potsdam’s career and networking events.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Develop your “elevator pitch.” Engage in Informational Interviewing, Career Planning can help.

## Senior and Graduate Checklist- Fall Semester

- \_\_\_\_\_ These activities should be completed by this semester if you have not already done so.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Establish a reference file
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Obtain references
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Prepare resume/cover letter
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Prepare for an interview
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Design a Self-Marketing Brochure
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Create a portfolio of your best work reflecting your skills and accomplishments
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Job-hunting should be NOW! Check our job search resources on our web page and BearTracker at least once a week for job vacancies and employer recruiter announcements and events
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make sure your Reference File is complete. It should contain at least three references- be sure to get faculty references now.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pick up a copy of the “Job Search Guide” in the Career Planning Office and attend a Job Search Workshop.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attend our Graduate School Fair, if you are interested in continuing your education.

## Senior and Graduate- Spring Semester

- \_\_\_\_\_ Attend Teacher Recruitment Days and/or SUNY Potsdam’s Schmooze-A-Palooza. Information will be available on these events in early February.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Continue to check our job vacancy listings and recruiter announcements on BearTracker.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Upload your resume on BearTracker. We will send your resume to prospective employers (that post full-time vacancies with us) in your field of choice.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attend the workshops and make an appointment with our office before graduation to be sure you have all the materials you need and the knowledge of how to use these to your best advantage! The only career action you will get after graduation is the action you initiate.
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attend SUNY Potsdam’s Schmooze-A-Palooza to practice your “Elevator Pitch” and build your network of contacts.

*Plan for Tomorrow by Visiting Us Today!*