Four-Year Career Plan Checklist

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This is an overview of how to plan for life after Wabash. As with most things, there are no guarantees of success if you follow this plan, but your opportunities for achievement greatly improve if you do. And as with most plans, it cannot be one-size-fits-all. Visit us at the Schroeder Center for Career Development to help you customize your plan and make the most of your time at Wabash.

All Years

- ☐ Visit Career Services for a consultation
- ☐ Keep a journal of your career-building activities, accomplishments, goals, and dreams
- ☐ Keep going through this cycle until you hit upon the right path—then enact the plan!
  - Reflect and explore
    - Do intensive self-reflection and evaluation to discover interests, values, and skills; take personality inventories; talk to those you know and trust
    - Mine your experience for activities and accomplishments in which you have felt at your best; evaluate what these experiences suggest for a career path
    - Research possible careers with an open mind
    - Build relationships with alumni, faculty, and staff; seek advice
  - Prepare and experiment
    - Get your application materials in order (resume, cover letter, personal statement)
    - Experiment with career paths through externships and internships
  - Evaluate and plan
    - Critically assess your experiments to extract every bit of learning from them
    - Develop plans for the most promising careers

Freshman Year

Imagine. Explore. Experiment.

PRIORITIES

- [ ] Visit Career Services for a consultation
  - Explore Career Services resources and WabashWorks
  - Take an interest inventory to help explore career options
  - Talk through your four-your plan
- [ ] Read the Career Services Career Guide
- [ ] Draft a resume and revise with a Peer Career Advisor (see the Career Guide)
- [ ] Attend two Career Services Events (Check WabashWorks and the Career Services calendar)
- [ ] Create a LinkedIn profile and connect to Career Services
- [ ] Get a freshman externship

RECOMMENDED

- [ ] Understand how your GPA can affect your career; earn high grades (Academic Support)
- [ ] Get to know your professors and advisors well; go to office hours
- [ ] Become familiar with funding opportunities for internships and externships
- [ ] Get involved in organizations on campus and off-campus
  - Experiment with several organizations and diverse interests freshman year
  - By the end of the year, focus on one or two organizations and aim for leadership
- [ ] Participate in alumni/employer networking events
- [ ] Apply for any summer internships/jobs/experiences related to your career goals
- [ ] Participate in a mock interview (see the Career Guide)
- [ ] Take a variety of courses to explore different majors and careers

DO NOT

- [ ] Let extracurriculars affect your grades
- [ ] Avoid Career Services, just because it is on the other side of Wabash Avenue
- [ ] Let your Facebook and Twitter accounts look like a party
  - To understand good and bad uses of social media, read this
  - Learn how to protect yourself here

Sophomore Year

Research. Apply. Experience.

PRIORITIES

- ☐ Visit Career Services to research more specific career paths
- ☐ Update your resume with your new involvement/major/experience (Resume Guide)
- ☐ Explore possible graduate school programs and admission tests that go with them; ask
- ☐ Get an internship
  - Research internship/field work/volunteer possibilities for summer break
  - Learn about sources of funding
  - Connect with alumni through the WabashWorks Mentor Network
  - Perfect all your application materials and apply
- ☐ Attend at least three Career Services events: one networking (e.g. NYC trip); one skill-building (e.g. etiquette dinner); and one more as you like
- ☐ Participate in a mock interview

RECOMMENDED

- ☐ Attend more campus and Career Services Events
  - For the campus events, click here
  - For the Career Services Events, login to WabashWorks
- ☐ Take an active leadership role in a select few on- and off- campus organizations, or start an organization of your own
  - For a list of organizations, click here
  - If you a leader, actually lead (!)—accomplish something; if you do not know how, seek advice
- ☐ Explore the possibilities of the immersion and study abroad programs
- ☐ Get an externship
- ☐ Update your LinkedIn account with your clubs/job experience/internships
- ☐ Volunteer with some organizations

DO NOT

- ☐ Waste your summer by not getting any valuable experience (internships/volunteering)
- ☐ Sit in your room all semester playing Xbox 360 (get involved on-campus); be part of the student life at Wabash College; if you must play video games, start a new organization for it

Junior Year

Plan. Assess. Refine.

PRIORITIES

- ☐ Meet with Career Services to narrow down your interests and make concrete plans
- ☐ Begin identifying fellowships and merit awards for postgraduate experiences
  - To begin looking, click here
- ☐ Broaden your network with alumni/professors/employers
  - Participate in networking trips
  - Get externships with employers and alumni
  - Participate in research with a professor
- ☐ Graduate school? If you plan on going to graduate school, then
  - Study for and take entrance exams and standard tests
  - For law school, take the LSAT boot camp offered twice a year
  - Participate in prep workshops and practice tests
- ☐ Attend three more Career Services events; look for recruiting events to see what employers are looking for

RECOMMENDED

- ☐ Identify personal and professional references
- ☐ Attend campus and Career Services Events
  - For the campus events, click here
  - For the Career Services Events, login to WabashWorks
- ☐ Get a summer internship that you find particularly interesting
- ☐ Acquire good suit attire for interviews and networking events (and use the Suit Room at the Schroeder Center)
- ☐ Volunteer with some organizations
- ☐ Utilize CareerSearch and Vault programs in *WabashWorks* to research employers
- ☐ Collect writing samples to help you update your resume and cover letter
  - Create a portfolio in WabashWorks
- ☐ Ask your senior friends about their job-search experience; emulate their success and learn from their mistakes

DO NOT

- ☐ Procrastinate in taking placement tests to get into graduate school
- ☐ Wait for the job to come to you. Go get the job yourself
- ☐ Avoid Career Services, just because it is on the other side of Wabash Avenue

Senior Year

Enact. Achieve. Reflect.

PRIORITIES

- ☐ Visit Career Services to chart your last steps
- ☐ Check out WabashWorks for organizations coming on campus to interview
- ☐ Start the professional job search early (many organizations hire in the fall)
- ☐ Update your resume or CV with all of your involvements and experiences
- ☐ Apply for fellowships and merit awards for postgraduate experiences
  - To begin looking, click here
- ☐ Make your voice mails/email address/ websites professional
  - To understand good and bad uses of social media, read this
  - Learn how to protect yourself here
- ☐ Post your resume in the WabashWorks Resume Books
- ☐ Polish your interview and negotiation skills for jobs and graduate school; learn to select the best among opportunities
- ☐ Ask for letters of reference from professors and employers; be certain the letters will be positive

RECOMMENDED

- ☐ Participate in career events and fairs; share your experience with others
- ☐ Continue to broaden your network through networking events
  - Participate in the New York networking event
  - Participate in the Chicago networking event
- ☐ Research geographic areas you are interested in after graduation and contact alumni
  - Use WabashWorks mentoring system to locate alumni around the globe
- ☐ Participate in the *Welcome To The Real World* seminar

DO NOT

- ☐ Go into the school year without a plan
- ☐ Slack off on your studies