



# Career Planning

A four-year—sometimes more!—process

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185 Student Services Building  
201 North University Street  
Campus Box 2520  
Normal, IL 61790-2520

## **FIRST-YEAR/TRANSFERS**

*(0–30 credit hours)*

### **Start on the right foot**

Develop/refine time-management skills. Understand your “preferred learning style.” Attend seminars presented by the University Center for Learning Assistance (UCLA).

### **Set academic goals—grades are important**

Ask for help EARLY if you need it. Tutors are available through academic departments and UCLA. Use your professors’ office hours to ask questions or communicate with them via e-mail.

### **Take the System of Interactive Guidance and Information (SIGI 3) Assessment Inventory**

SIGI 3 is a series of online interest, values, and abilities assessments that assists students in exploring occupations and careers. It also provides a wealth of detailed information about a wide variety of careers. SIGI 3 may be helpful for any student trying to better define what to do with his or her major. At a more basic level, it certainly could be useful for any student trying to determine what his or her major should be! SIGI 3 is available at [www.CareerCenter.ilstu.edu](http://www.CareerCenter.ilstu.edu) 24 hours a day. You are encouraged to review results with a career counselor.

### **Browse “What Can I Do With This Major?”**

Discover the variety of career options available. View video clips of various career fields/industries on the Career Center Web site at [www.CareerCenter.ilstu.edu](http://www.CareerCenter.ilstu.edu).

### **Start researching careers/majors to focus your academic work**

Employers prefer candidates who are able to articulate short-term goals and, preferably, longer-term goals. This is a process that deserves a lot of thought and consideration.

**Suggestions:** Attend department events and listen to speakers, read professional journals, talk to faculty, take advantage of field trips/tours of the industry, and

attend career fairs. You can also find resources at [www.CareerCenter.ilstu.edu](http://www.CareerCenter.ilstu.edu).

### **Get involved**

Employers are more interested in job candidates who have developed effective interpersonal and communication skills.

**Suggestions:** Check out professional organizations, community service, student government, residence hall government, social organizations, etc.

### **Start your professional portfolio**

Keep track of all your accomplishments inside and outside the classroom.

**Suggestions:** Save any certificates, commendation letters, and special academic projects that document your involvement. Save evidence of other important projects.

## **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 in mind the new university “75-hour” policy.

### **Join a professional organization**

Start to develop a network of faculty and friends. Continue to strengthen interpersonal skills. Begin to consider references when you graduate.

### **Explore careers**

Take advantage of internship or externship programs. Conduct informational interviews with professionals to help you focus on a specific career, or types of jobs within the field.

### **Learn how to build an effective resume**

Contact or visit the Career Center and find out how to put your resume on [eRecruiting.com](http://eRecruiting.com).

**Suggestions:** Use your professional portfolio as a reference and keep updating it.

## **THIRD-YEAR/TRANSFERS**

*(61–90 credit hours)*

### **Meet with your academic advisor**

Track your academic progress.

### **Develop your leadership skills**

Increase your involvement.

**Suggestions:** Run for a position in your student organization, chair a committee, organize an event, or supervise a project, etc.

### **Continue to network**

Seek contact with peers, faculty, and professionals in your field.

**Suggestions:** Attend career fairs and the Professional Etiquette Dinner. Professional organizations often have “mixing” socials with employer representatives.

### **Look for internships or related work experience**

Most departments offer internship opportunities. Each program has an internship and/or clinical or field experience coordinator for you to talk with regarding GPA requirements, course credit, and more. Contact the Career Center for additional internship information at (309) 438-2200 and check eRecruiting.com for available internship opportunities!

**Suggestions:** Employers prefer students who graduate with some related experience. Find an internship related to your field of interest—practice your networking skills, develop a professional resume, and bring several copies to the internship and job fairs. Proactively interact with the employer representatives at these fairs.

### **Learn how to conduct a well-planned job search**

Resources are available in the Career Center, located in 185 Student Services Building, or at [www.CareerCenter.ilstu.edu](http://www.CareerCenter.ilstu.edu). Become familiar with additional Web sites that will assist your job search readiness and/or provide listings in the field(s) you wish to pursue. Attend a Career Night Live! program for tips from employers and from Career Center staff—they are scheduled early in each semester.

### **Ask for a FREE Academic Progress Summary**

These summaries, available for free through the iCampus portal or at the Student Service and Referral Center (SSRC) in Moulton Hall, will help you determine what requirements you still must complete in order to graduate. Discuss your academic progress summary with your academic advisor.

Four-year plan adapted from Illinois State University College of Business and Career Center—“Building Students’ Futures,” *Business Career Planning: A Four-Year Process, 2004–2005*

## **FOURTH-YEAR/TRANSFERS**

*(91–120 credit hours)*

### **Register or update your information with the Career Center’s eRecruiting.com**

Make sure your resume is online at eRecruiting.com. If you want to participate in campus interviews, you must be registered!

### **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 Night Live! program. Mock interviews can be scheduled at the Career Center. Additionally, check eRecruiting.com for job postings and on-campus interview opportunities.

### **Attend job and internship fairs and/or other fairs, depending on your major and job objectives**

Dress professionally and bring several copies of your resume.

### **File your application for graduation**

You can pick up an application for graduation at the Student Service and Referral Center (SSRC) in Moulton Hall. You must pay a \$25 fee at Student Accounts when you submit the form, or you may drop the form and payment in the Student Accounts dropbox at the SSRC.

*Four-year plan adapted from Illinois State University College of Business and Career Center, “Building Students’ Futures,” Business Career Planning: A Four-Year Process, 2004–2005.*

Visit the Career Center Web site at [www.CareerCenter.ilstu.edu](http://www.CareerCenter.ilstu.edu) or call (309) 438-2200.