Office of Career Development • Pilgrim Library • Office 211/214 • careers@defiance.edu

Jacket Journey Four-Year Career Action Plan

Please use this checklist in conjunction with your advising worksheet to develop your career path!

**First Year: Self Awareness and Assessment**

- Visit the Career Development website and Office of Career Development.
- Visit the Office of Career Development to complete the iStartStrong Inventory if uncertain about academic and/or career areas of interest.
- Develop relationships with professors, advisors, and career development staff. Turn them into mentors by asking about their career paths and for advice about matching your interests and skills to a major and a career.
- Develop your resume by using OptimalResume.
- Register on College Central Network and upload your resume to find internships, part-time and full-time employment.
- Use the O*Net website to explore occupations related to your major.
- Visit the Office of Career Development to complete the iStartStrong Inventory if uncertain about academic and/or career areas of interest.
- Develop relationships with professors, advisors, and career development staff. Turn them into mentors by asking about their career paths and for advice about matching your interests and skills to a major and a career.
- Develop your resume by using OptimalResume.
- Register on College Central Network and upload your resume to find internships, part-time and full-time employment.
- Use the O*Net website to explore occupations related to your major.
- Talk with upper level students about their majors and career-related experiences and goals.
- Attend Career Development programs, seminars and job fairs.
- Explore membership in clubs, organizations and other extracurricular activities to develop your “transferable skills”. Participate in Project 701, musical/theater performances, exhibits and other cultural events.
- Investigate and consider applying to The McMaster School for Advancing Humanity.
- Participate in events and programs related to your major.
- While adjusting to your new environment, take advantage of campus resources that can help you improve your study skills and time management.

**Second Year: Career Exploration and Continue your Major**

- Take interesting electives to fulfill your own curiosity and to help you select a minor or double major.
- Investigate and consider applying to The McMaster School for Advancing Humanity.
- Use the O*Net website to explore occupations related to your major.
- Network with professionals in your career field and begin to develop a list of individuals who would consider writing letters of recommendation.
- Consider running for an office or chair a committee in the club or organization you joined.
- Attend Career Development programs, seminars and job fairs.
- Pursue a summer job and/or internship related to your tentative field of interest.
- If thinking about graduate or professional school schedule the Graduate and Professional School class (GEN300) in the Fall of your third year and take a practice graduate entrance exam.
- Seek leadership roles in Project 701 or major-related organizations.
- Create a LinkedIn account.
- Update your resume on College Central Network.
- Complete a mock interview with a staff member in Career Development, a professor, or a professional in your field of study.
- Complete a check-up on your 4-Year Career Action Plan with a staff member from the Office of Career Development.
- Explore opportunities in your field of study by shadowing a professional from your career path.

“Your Gateway to Career and Professional Success”
Third year: Confirm Major/Minor and Gain Experience

☐ Research and determine if graduate level education is required or preferred for your career plans. If it is, start researching grad/professional school options and requirements; take appropriate required exams. (Take GEN300 Fall semester if pursuing this path and attend the Graduate and Professional School Fair in the Fall)

☐ Research the job market and employers. Become knowledgeable about labor markets and future employment trends.

☐ Investigate and consider applying to The McMaster School for Advancing Humanity.

☐ Attend as many career or internship fairs as possible and begin conversations with employers and professionals in your field.

☐ Complete a mock interview with a staff member in Career Development, a professor, or a professional in your field of study.

☐ Explore professional associations online and consider joining such as the American Marketing Association.

☐ Identify and create a list of professional references for graduate school or employment.

☐ Update your resume on College Central Network.

☐ Update your LinkedIn account.

☐ Create cover letters and have them proofread by a professional.

☐ Consider running for an office or chair a committee in the club or organization you joined.

☐ Pursue a summer job and/or internship related to your tentative field of interest.

☐ Seek leadership roles in Project 701 or major-related organizations.

☐ Strengthen your presentation skills.

☐ Attend Spring networking event with local employers.

☐ Visit the Office of Career Development.

☐ Shop for and purchase at least one business professional and business casual outfit for interviews and networking events. Check out the Opp Shop on campus for an outfit.

Fourth Year: Career Planning and Beyond Graduation

☐ Set-up an appointment early in the semester with a staff member in the Office of Career Development to draft your career search or graduate school plan.

☐ Review and update your resume on College Central Network regularly as well as any other databases.

☐ Secure another internship in your field of interest, it may lead to full-time employment after graduation.

☐ Complete graduate and professional school applications and take appropriate graduate admissions exam.

☐ Update your LinkedIn account.

☐ Explore professional associations online and consider joining such as the American Marketing Association.

☐ Attend as many career fairs as possible and continue conversations with employers and professionals in your field.

☐ Attend the Fall Senior Success Seminar event.

☐ Develop a contingency plan by researching possible employers and consider other options until you reach your goals.

☐ Continue to strengthen your presentation skills.

☐ Complete a mock interview with a staff member in Career Development, a professor, or a professional in your field of study.

☐ Tailor your cover letters to the position.

☐ Complete the First Destination Survey before Commencement.

☐ Notify the Office of Career Development when you accepted an offer for employment or graduate school.

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