CAPELLA UNIVERSITY LEARNERS

To position yourself as a marketable candidate upon graduation, the Career Center encourages you to begin thinking about your career goals and planning immediately upon entering your degree program. This list of career activities is not intended to be an exhaustive individualized list of recommendations, nor as a guarantee of employment. Please customize it for your own timeline, needs and career progression (for instance, adding check boxes for the activities and groups you are already involved in.) Please note that this checklist does not include academic requirements.

Early in Your Program

Career exploration

☐ Explore the Capella Career Center to learn about the many resources available to help you develop your career management strategy.

☐ Watch the career exploration video series that will guide you through activities to help you to identify your career goals and develop a personalized action plan.

☐ Identify positions of interest within your career field (refer to the job posting sites on the Career Exploration Guides or O*Net as a starting point)
  • Clarify skill gaps by reviewing job postings in which you have an interest; identify the required and preferred skills.
  • Compare this list to the skills you have demonstrated in your experience and education.

Professional affiliation membership and involvement

☐ Start investigating professional associations and industry information resources that are specific to your career goals. Explore the websites and literature you find there.

☐ Join the local chapter of a relevant association.
  • Get active! Regularly attend meetings or events. Volunteer for a committee as a means of gaining professional skills and meeting people.

☐ If you live in an area without a local chapter, seek out opportunities to connect virtually:
  • Participate in discussion groups or blogs.
  • Contact members in your area of interest to engage via phone, email.

Networking

☐ Visit the Connect section of our website to find tips and tools to help you make connections and build your professional network.

☐ Join Capella Connect and begin connecting with other Capella learners and alumni or check out the Career Mentoring program.

☐ Join LinkedIn, including groups associated with your current and past schools (including Capella), employers, and functional and industry specific groups.

☐ Identify networking contacts by accessing the professional association directory, LinkedIn, and understanding how to connect with Capella learners and alumni.

Licensure

☐ If pursuing a career which will require licensure, learn what the requirements are in your state. Capella has created comprehensive licensure resources for the
Experience

- Read Volunteering as a Career Development Strategy to learn more about the value of volunteering.
  - Volunteer for related tasks or stretch assignments in your current organization.
  - Volunteer for positions through www.volunteermatch.org, or present a proposal to a small business or nonprofit organization for conducting pro-bono consulting work.
- Shadow a professional at an organization in which you have an interest and/or connections.
- Seek out internships in your geographic area of interest.
  - The Job Search and Practicum and Internship sections have information on how to conduct your search.
  - Review the learner manual for Practica or Internship if you are enrolled in a program which requires one, to ensure you are on track with timeline and requirements.

Portfolio

- Review the portfolio information on Campus to learn how to create or enhance your own professional portfolio if it is recommended in your field.
- Begin compiling assignments related to your coursework, job, and other relevant experiences such as volunteer work to add to your portfolio.

Mid-Way through Your Program

Professional affiliation membership and involvement

- Volunteer to help with meetings, conferences, or other activities for your chapter.
  - For more information on how to leverage professional associations, refer to the Making the Most out of Your Professional Association Membership resource.

Licensure

- Review and ensure you understand the requirements in your state and that you are moving toward attaining what you need. It is crucial to develop the habit of keeping current.

Application documents

- View the resume rubric or CV rubric to learn how to improve your documents.
  - Incorporate the suggestions while being sure to weave in what you’ve learned in your academic program, network contacts, and new experience.
- Seek feedback on your resume or CV by submitting it to the Career Center team.
  - Incorporate suggestions you deem appropriate.
- Ensure you have incorporated all of your new skills and experiences in your resume, cover letter, and LinkedIn profile.

Networking
Conduct informational interviews and begin narrowing down your areas of interest in terms of industry, employers, and specific job titles.

- First, prepare to talk about yourself as a professional, and how you can apply what you are learning in your program.
- Tailor your questions to find out information about specific types of jobs and organizations in which you have an interest.
- Consider asking, “Based on my experience and education, what else might you suggest I do to better prepare myself for [specific position]?”
- Confirm what you have discovered about licensure requirements, if applicable.

**Job search strategies**

- Review the Effective Job Search Strategies YouTube video series offered by the Career Center.
  - Develop and implement your job search plan that includes multiple methods (applying online at employer websites, connecting with people in industries and companies of interest, working with recruiters, etc.).
- Utilize your record keeping system to write down specific position titles of interest and potential employers based on your research.
  - Reflect back on what you learned in your research and networking conversations. The research toolkit will help you further identify specific employers.

**Gaining experience**

- Assess where any remaining gaps are in terms of experience and education.
  - What skill gaps still exist? How can you address those? The article, Advice for when you have limited experience, outlines possible methods for your reference.

**Portfolio**

- Review the Portfolio content on the Career Center website to determine what type of portfolio is preferred for your functional area and employers of interest. Begin developing the portfolio and continue to update it throughout your program.

**Late in Your Program**

**Job search strategies**

- Identify ways to fit your search into your schedule; mark specific times in your calendar.
- Routinely assess your job search. How are you progressing? Where are potential roadblocks?
  - If you aren’t offered interviews, review your resume based on the Career Center resources. Ask a professional in your field to review the document and offer suggestions. Request a resume review via the Ask a Career Counselor form on Campus.
  - If you aren’t offered interviews, review your job strategy. If it is comprised of mostly online applications, refer to the job search information on the Career Center website and identify what other elements of the multi-pronged job search you can integrate (i.e., networking).
  - If you are interviewing and aren’t receiving offers, refer to the interview...
preparation resources on Campus and conduct a mock interview with a Career Counselor or trusted colleague.

- When offered a job, review and integrate salary negotiation information.

**Record keeping**

- Refer back to your list of positions and employers for your job search. Develop a document that allows you to input information on what jobs you applied for and when, and a reminder of when to follow up.

**Networking**

- Inform your network of your job search plans and goals. Remember not to specifically ask for a job, but ask for information and suggested contacts in your area of interest.

**Interviewing**

- Practice your interviewing skills using Big Interview. Select questions that you will find particularly challenging and practice your responses.

**Ongoing Career Management**

Remember that career management is an ongoing process. As you move forward in your career, EXPLORE the possibilities, CONNECT with others, PREPARE next steps, and ACT on your goals.

**Graduation**

Congratulations! As a graduate of Capella University, you have free access to a wide variety of benefits including access to the Career Center and a variety of other resources at your described on the Alumni Campus. Visit Alumni Campus to discover ways you can continue to be involved with Capella University and proactively manage your career.