

CAREER PLANNING

AT LEWIS UNIVERSITY

OVERVIEW

The career planning process begins early and continues throughout one's college years. Career planning is more than mere job searching; it includes information gathering, decision making, and taking action. We, the faculty and staff of Lewis University, are committed to supporting your personal and professional development throughout your tenure as a student at Lewis. The following principles summarize the steps we will encourage you to follow as you progress toward graduation from Lewis University:

FIRST YEAR: EXPLORATION

- Spend considerable time evaluating your interests, values, skills, personality, and goals.
- Take an interest inventory in Career Services to connect your interests with potential occupations.
- Experience a variety of courses to help you determine your major and career interests.
- Research occupations and conduct informational interviews with professors and professionals in your possible fields of interest.

SECOND YEAR: IDENTIFICATION

- Utilize the career library to collect resources and information on various career paths.
- Develop a file of information about specific career options.
- Meet with an academic advisor to discuss and declare a major.
- Review your options for part-time work and volunteer experience during the school year and summer to enhance your work skills and build your résumé.

THIRD YEAR: PREPARATION

- Ensure that you are maintaining excellent grades.
- Discuss career options with your academic advisor, a trusted professor, or a career counselor.
- Begin to review internship opportunities and requirements within your academic department.
- Begin to research companies and organizations and what opportunities they offer.
- Take on a leadership role in a campus or community organization.

FOURTH YEAR: ACHIEVEMENT

- Meet with your faculty advisor to be certain you are meeting all graduation requirements.
- Participate in an internship experience just prior to or during your fourth year.
- Secure your post graduation plans: professional employment or graduate school.
- Attend workshops on résumé writing, job searching, and interviewing for your first professional job.
- Develop a list of references who can vouch for your character and your competence.
- Participate in a mock interview in the Career Services office.
- Attend professional job fairs to secure your first position following graduation.

DON'T BE OVERWHELMED WITH DECIDING UPON A MAJOR

Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- Contrary to what many people believe, this is not a decision that you have to live with for the rest of your life. On average, people change careers seven times in their lives.
- Try not to let other people influence your decision or make you feel rushed.
- Be patient. Making an important decision like this takes time.
- You don't have to declare a major until the end of your sophomore year. In the meantime, gather more information in the Career Services office or set up a time to meet with one of us to explore your career possibilities.

CONTACT

If you would like to receive additional information about choosing a major, call the Career Services office at (815) 836-5282.

STRONG INTEREST INVENTORY

An assessment that helps with career decision, it empowers you to discover your true interests so you can better identify, understand and often expand your career options. It maps out broad interest patterns to describe your personality and preferred work environment as well as provides more specific information about your areas of interest.

VALUES INVENTORY

The values inventory is a simple checklist of values that are related to careers. It helps students become aware of how their personal values correspond to different careers.

CARD SORT

The card sort is a career assessment instrument used to discover interests, values and skills. The student and counselor work together. The student is provided with a stack of 90 cards describing various careers. The student sorts the cards into stacks, which reflect his/her likes and dislikes. The counselor then assists the student in determining what themes the careers have in common (i.e. the student likes working with children, but not in a teaching atmosphere; the student does not want to travel or work more than 40 hours per week).

“WHAT CAN I DO WITH THIS MAJOR?” LINK

Students may explore career opportunities by major through this helpful feature located on the Career Services main Web page <http://www.lewisu.edu/resources/careerservices>. This link can help students discover areas of expertise within numerous career fields, types of employers, strategies to find specific jobs, and additional links to professional associations and industry-specific news.

CAREER/MAJOR EXPLORATION WORKSHOPS

Our workshops on career/major exploration offer students the tools and career research knowledge to select majors that suit their skills, interests, and values. Participants will learn how these individual qualities translate into a career. During the workshop, participants may have the opportunity to take an interest inventory and have it interpreted by a career counselor. They will also be trained on methods of researching careers and majors, and be introduced to reliable sources of information.

LIBRARY MATERIALS

Our career library contains numerous publications on choosing a major and learning about careers. You can read brief descriptions of every job in the country or detailed information on common careers. Information available includes salary expectations, educational requirements, work environments, and job outlook.

PART-TIME JOBS

Another way to learn about a career field is to get a part-time job within the field. This is a great way to “test the waters” and to help you prepare for your professional career. Visit the Career Services office to view numerous opportunities in Romeoville and neighboring suburbs.

JOBNET

Students and alumni looking for internships or professional employment upon graduation should register on this site. This site is also available for students interested in the mentorship program, career related events on campus, employer visits, and much more. JOBNET is also an online recruitment program that enables employers to easily post job descriptions, and view applicant résumés and cover letters to select suitable candidates to interview (www.lewisujobnet.net).

All students and alumni of Lewis University have access to these assessments/opportunities through one of our career counselors at no charge.