

Career Planning Checklist



Deciding on a career is a process, and it takes time! Use the career checklist below to set your goals and actively plan for your career.

Year 1: Increase Self-Awareness

- ☐ **Identify your points of contact.** Visit the CLA Career Services website to see what services are available and connect with a Career Specialist on how to link your skills, interests, and personality to a career.
- ☐ **Attend CLA Welcome Week Activities.** Start building your “TIGER” community by attending signature events that kick off the Fall semester. Connect with fellow classmates and student organizations in your college and around campus.
- ☐ **Create professional networking profiles.** Handshake is a great tool for building career connections within the Auburn University community. Create your profile and be sure to frequently update your account.
- ☐ **Lean into extracurricular activities.** Extracurricular activities such as volunteering, community service, and joining clubs and organizations will enhance your college experience and provide you with experiences employers are seeking. It is also a great way to build your professional marketing documents.
- ☐ **Transition your high school resume to a college resume.** By the end of your freshman year at Auburn University, all experiences from high school should be removed from your resume. Work with the CLA Career Services team on how to add valuable transferable skills.
- ☐ **Stay updated on CLA Career Events.** This will allow you to take advantage of all opportunities available to connect with future employers.

Year 2: Increase Engagement and Exploration

- ☐ **Conduct an informal interview.** Also spend the day shadowing someone in your field of interest. Reach out to someone in a career that interests you. Gain insight into their day-to-day responsibilities to see if that career path appeals to you. This is a personal way to learn about career options while building a professional network.
- ☐ **Explore relevant work experiences** such as volunteering, part-time jobs, and internships.
- ☐ **Explore study abroad opportunities.** Studying abroad can help enrich your professional opportunities, language and communication skills, and overall perspective of the global community.
- ☐ **Update your resume and cover letter.** Professional documents are a requirement for most internships and part-time jobs. Be sure your resume is current and up to date.
- ☐ **Attend CLA Career Services Engagement events.** Events such as Workshops, Industry Days, Mock Interview Days, Career Fairs and Meet and Greets are examples of opportunities that allow you to explore career possibilities and network with professionals.
- ☐ **Assess your personality, values, skills, and interests.** Work with a Career Counselor to reflect and assess how these traits align with your academic and career plans.
- ☐ **Connect with employers and AU alumni.** Continue networking and building your professional brand. LinkedIn, Handshake, and Careershift are great platforms to use for online professional networking.
- ☐ **Take on a Leadership role.** Joining a student club or organization is a great way to build new skills and gain valuable experiences.

Year 3: Articulation (Putting Your Major to Work)

- ☐ **Develop a professional resume.** At this point in your college career, you should customize your professional marketing documents for each position that interests you. Be sure to connect your experiences and transferable skills needed to be a competitive applicant.
- ☐ **Search and apply for experiences that are related to your future career path.** These experiences continue to increase your skills and awareness. These include internships, research positions, volunteering, shadowing, or other career-related experiences.
- ☐ **Prepare yourself for the application and/or interview process.** Connect with a CLA Career Services Specialist to learn how to discuss the professional experiences you gained during your time at AU and how your coursework and experiences have prepared you for your future career path.
- ☐ **Considering Graduate/Professional School?** Research possible graduate schools and understand admission requirements, timelines, and procedures.
- ☐ **Think about future letters of recommendation and references.** Who can attest to your work experience and skill set? Have you made meaningful connections with faculty, staff, and professionals in your field?
- ☐ **Evaluate your involvement.** Do you want to continue with the same experiences or try something new? How have your current experiences been preparing you for life after graduation? Do you feel like you could take on more responsibility or assume a leadership position within an organization?
- ☐ **Explore professional development opportunities** such as Career Fairs to chat with employers to find out what they are looking for in future applicants. This can also include webinars, workshops, conferences, and CLA career engagement events. These events provide valuable career insight and connections to professionals.
- ☐ **Update LinkedIn profile.** This allows you to continue building and adding to your network while exploring online resources.
- ☐ **Identify career options as you enter your final year.** Revisit your values and reflect on your experiences. Decide which career path works best for you. If considering graduate school, research application deadlines for programs of interest.

Year 4 Satisfaction (Preparing for Life Beyond Auburn University)

- ☐ **Reflect on your experiences, so far.** Would you like to change anything? Are you comfortable and satisfied with your current career plan?
- ☐ **Actively build and maintain professional connections and relationships.** Connect with CLA career services, academic advisors, faculty members, and professionals you have met and networked with in the past. Think of professionals who can speak to your skills and write a strong letter of recommendation. Allow at least 3 weeks for them to prepare letters.
- ☐ **Search and apply for full-time positions at least 6 months prior to graduation.** There are many ways to search for vacant positions. Contact the CLA Career Services team to receive assistance navigating the job search process.
- ☐ **Gather relevant job application materials** such as resume, cover letter, references, and examples of work experiences. Polish your professional resume and cover letter. Review your documents and have them reviewed by CLA Career Services.
- ☐ **Attend Career Fairs and CLA Career Engagement events.** These events are designed to help you network with recruiters and secure positions.
- ☐ **Finalize your career plans and job search.** Have you secured full-time employment? Have you secured a graduate program? Contact CLA Career Services to discuss interview preparation and the job search process.
- ☐ **Strategize your exit from Auburn University.** What will the months after graduation look like for you? Will you relocate? Decide on a plan for what you hope to do after graduation and come up with one or two back up plans.
- ☐ **Apply for Graduation.** Register and take UNIV-4AA0 - University Graduation Course for the semester you intend to graduate.
- ☐ **Celebrate your accomplishments!** Also become a member of the Auburn University Alumni Chapter.