The 4-Year Plan
Career Planning & Preparation
For Baylor Undergraduates

Freshman Year

Learn
- Strive to meet your best GPA potential. Seek help when you need it through Academic Support Programs with academic mentoring and supplemental instruction. Many academic departments offer tutoring, so check with yours.
- Learn time management, organizational, and study skills. Think about specific technical skills that you may need after college and begin to acquire those, too.

Explore
- Familiarize yourself with campus resources including Career & Professional Development (CPD), Spiritual Life, the Counseling Center, and the Student Life Center (SLC).
- Meet with a career counselor to assess your interests, values, personality type, strengths, and skills. They can help you clarify your career goals and narrow down major options if you are unsure.
- Meet with your academic advisor to learn about degree requirements, prerequisite courses, and to plan out next semester’s academic schedule.
- Join one (or more) of the 270+ student organizations on campus. Take an active role in your organization in order to develop leadership and team-building skills.

Seek
- Identify individuals who work in a field that interests you. Set up informational interviews with those individuals and shadow them at work if possible.
- If you need help adjusting academically, request an upperclassman mentor through Academic Support Programs.
- Continue to look for scholarships to help pay for your degree.

Sophomore Year

Narrow
- If you have not done so, choose a major that suits your interests and strengths.
- Look through the “What Can I do with this Major?” series on the CPD website to explore potential career opportunities for your major.
- Visit with your academic advisor to plan the next steps of your degree path.

Build
- Attend a resume workshop or visit CPD to create your resume.
- Join a professional student organization or association related to your field.
- Consider adding a minor to your degree plan and/or studying abroad.
- Begin a portfolio of your writing samples, class projects, and other successes.
- Take on a leadership role in one of your student organizations.

Connect
- Create your account in HireABear. Use LinkedIn to seek out Baylor alumni who can give you insight to your chosen field. Conduct informational interviews with them and inquire about job shadowing if they are nearby.
- Attend a CPD workshop on internships to learn how to secure an internship in a field of interest to you. If unable to find an internship, work part-time or volunteer over the summer in an area related to your interests.
- Attend the Internship & Career Fair to become familiar with companies recruiting on campus. Learn about their expectations, jobs, and internships.
- Get to know faculty in your chosen field. They can be very helpful in finding internships, connecting you with colleagues, providing research collaboration opportunities, and eventually serving as a reference for you!
- Create an account in LinkedIn to keep in touch with contacts and join groups relevant to your chosen field.
Junior Year

Plan
- If you still have questions about the direction in which you are heading, meet with your academic advisor and a career counselor.
- Check out the CPD Premium Resources such as BizLink and Going Global to learn about all of the career development information available to you as you plan for your career.
- Consider doing research with a faculty member or a research institute.
- Grad school next? Check out the graduate school resources offered by CPD and begin prepping for your entrance exams. (GRE, GMAT, LSAT, MCAT, DAT)

Update
- Update your resume and create a cover letter. Have both of them reviewed by CPD. Then upload your revised resume to HireABear and make sure your online profile is complete.
- Add quality materials to your portfolio.

Continue To...
- Research careers of interest to you. Use the Career Resource Library (in the CPD Office) and the Career Insider and WetFeet career guides.
- Attend workshops, career fairs, and events, such as the etiquette dinner, hosted by CPD throughout the year.
- Obtain related experience in your field through part-time employment, internships, a practicum, fieldwork, or volunteering.
- Pursue involvement, leadership, and service opportunities through student organizations.
- Build a strong GPA.

Senior Year

Prepare
- Make an appointment with CPD and refer to The Bear Facts to develop a job search strategy.
- Begin researching employers and work settings as soon as senior year begins.
- Continue to attend career fairs and workshops, such as the “Transitioning from College to your Career” workshop, offered by CPD.
- If you are applying to graduate school:
  - Make an application timeline for yourself. Different schools have different requirements and due dates.
  - Create your personal statement and have it reviewed by CPD and the Writing Center.
- Select several faculty and staff members to serve as your references. Be sure to ask them before giving their names to employers.
- Practice your interviewing skills by participating in a mock interview, or use the online resource, InterviewStream, to practice from home.
- Put the final touches on your resume and portfolio.
- Watch 3-minute CareerSpots videos to learn about developing an elevator pitch, what to wear to an interview, and much more.
- Groom your online identity to ensure that it is clean and appropriate.

Search
- Identify full-time job opportunities by locating employers through HireABear, career fairs, networking, websites, and direct contact. Network with faculty, professionals, and alumni in your field to discover career opportunities.
- Sign up for on-campus recruiting opportunities through HireABear.
- Research and learn about the companies to which you are applying.

Apply
- Tailor your cover letter, resume, and references for each position you apply to.
- Write letters of inquiry, send follow-up emails, and make phone calls to potential employers. Keep a spreadsheet of your applications and inquiries.
- Send thank you notes to each employer with whom you interview.
- Invest time in your job search each day. It can take months to secure a job.