CAREER DEVELOPMENT PLAN

FOR NEW STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE SOUTHERN

Purpose

Completing a comprehensive Career Development Plan (CDP) will optimize the success of your experience at the University of Tennessee Southern. A CDP outlines a clear and concise record to establish expectations to keep you on track to meet your goals after graduation.

Recommendations

Review this form and complete the tasks beginning with your first semester on campus. Seek feedback on your progress from the Office of Career Development, your advisor, and your peers. Complete this CDP with intrinsic motivation, imagining your ideal career and what you will need to obtain that position. Following a plan like this allows you to develop confidence and increase your likelihood of success in college.

Your CDP should be revisited at the beginning of each semester for the assessment of progress toward goals. Ask yourself the following questions while completing tasks for your CDP to utilize the opportunities you have been given to reach your professional career goals:

- What do you want to do daily after you graduate?
- When you consider your future, what is important to you?
- What sort of impact do you want your job to have?
- What skills are necessary to be successful in your ideal career?
- Do you need to participate in unique activities to develop interpersonal relationships?
- What type of mentoring do you need?
- How will you develop contacts or network with others in relation to your career goal?

General Timeline

While no two student experiences look the same, this timeline provides you with an idea of the checkpoints you need to keep yourself on track. It is ok to be a little ahead or behind schedule if you have a plan for finishing your degree in a reasonable amount of time.

FRESHMAN YEAR

- ☐ Complete **career development assessments** to identify your interests, values, personality, and preferences.
- ☐ Develop your **résumé** using the resources provided and update it every semester.
- ☐ Activate your **Handshake** profile, make sure all sections are complete, and begin exploring opportunities.
- ☐ **Network** with your peers who have been here longer to learn more about majors and career opportunities.
- ☐ Find at least two **job postings** per semester for careers that interest you and begin identifying areas you must develop before graduation.

Complete the section below upon the conclusion of your first year.

This year, I learned the following about myself:

_____

_____

Looking back, I wish I had spent more time on _____ this year.

_____

_____

To get the kinds of jobs I am interested in after graduation, I now know I will need to work on the following:

_____

_____

_____

SOPHOMORE YEAR

- ☐ Utilize available resources to **explore careers** and begin learning about internships or other experiential learning opportunities related to your career interest(s).
- ☐ Update your résumé and Handshake profile and **draft a cover letter** that communicates your passion and skills.
- ☐ Create **LinkedIn** and **Connect UT** professional profiles and connect with alumni. Make sure you have a professional headshot photo!
- ☐ **Network** with professionals to learn more about their careers. Be sure to send a thank you note afterward!
- ☐ **Identify courses** related to developing skills and experiences that will help you become an ideal candidate for your dream position after graduation.

Complete the section below upon the conclusion of your second year.

This year, I learned the following about myself:

_____

_____

_____

Compared with last year, I now feel more confident about _____.

_____

_____

Now that I'm halfway through, I plan to focus more of my time on:

_____

_____

JUNIOR YEAR

- ☐ **Build a wardrobe** of professional attire for interviews and daily work clothes.
- ☐ Use LinkedIn and/or Connect UT to identify alumni, and **job shadow** at least two individuals.
- ☐ Seek **leadership roles** within student organizations on campus or other leadership opportunities in the community.
- ☐ Begin planning, exploring, and preparing for **life after UT Southern**. Decide whether you plan to seek a job or apply to graduate programs after graduation.
- ☐ Schedule a **mock interview** with the Office of Career Development to practice your interview skills.
- ☐ Update professional profiles, résumé, cover letter, and search for **internship or experiential learning opportunities** in your desired field.

Complete the section below upon the conclusion of your third year.

As I enter my final year, I am still unsure about the following:

_____

_____

_____

If a freshman asked, I would tell them _____ has made the biggest impact on my career development so far.

_____

_____

_____

SENIOR YEAR

- ☐ Make sure you have fulfilled all graduation requirements and contact potential references to gain their blessings as you apply for positions.

- ☐ Identify job openings, meet with the Office of Career Development to prepare your application materials, and **apply for job opportunities**.

- ☐ Prepare to communicate your experiences and develop a strong **elevator pitch** about yourself.

- ☐ Ensure your résumé and cover letter are each **tailored to the job** you're applying for and use verbiage that aligns with the job description.

Complete the section below upon the conclusion of your final year.

I found _____ to be the most valuable in my professional development journey.

_____

_____

As I seek to make the most of my career opportunities after graduation, I plan to _____.

_____

_____

If I was asked about my experiences in a future job interview, I think I would say the following about my time as a UT Southern undergraduate:

_____

_____

_____