DISABILITY RESOURCES AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

CAREER SERVICES 4 YEAR PLAN

1st Year – Goal: Start thinking about your personal brand and get involved on campus.
- Explore interests, skills, and values, and take a variety of classes in subjects that interest you
- Attend major and career development events
- Visit DRES Career Services for a career assessment and individualized appointment while also viewing the DRES Career Newsletter
- Work towards and establish a strong GPA
- Learn how to write an impressive resume and cover letter
- Research and apply for short-term jobs, internships, and job shadows during breaks
- Schedule an Assistive Technology (AT) evaluation and learn more about options for computer programs and equipment to accommodate your disability for both academics and eventually internships/employment
- Know where to obtain and purchase equipment and computer programs
- Purchase, train, and become proficient in using programs and devices for personal use

2nd Year – Goal: Begin career search process, further develop personal brand, and get more involved.
- Discuss and rehearse how to advocate for your needs
- Research and understand how federal legislation protects your rights as both a college student and as a prospective and current employee with a disability
- Join a department, college, or campus Honor’s or Leadership program
- Meet with DRES Career Development Specialist to explore occupations related to your major
- Conduct informational interviews with professionals in your field of interest
- Develop and start to solidify your personal brand
- Update your resume each semester and have it reviewed by the DRES Career Development Specialist
- Check out Handshake @ Illinois for internship and job postings
- Submit applications for career-related summer internship opportunities – remember to apply early!
- Get to know felculty and staff that you can build relationships with who can serve as future references
- Join or chair committees in RSOs, groups, clubs, etc.

3rd Year – Goal: Obtain a summer and/or semester-long internship.
- Understand your options for disclosing disability to employers and what your personal and professional approach will be
- If you receive financial support through state/federal funds, schedule a meeting with your Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor to discuss options for funding during internships
- Invest in your professional wardrobe for interviews and formal occasions
- Schedule a mock interview with DRES Career Services to practice interview skills
- Explore current job openings by industry and major using Handshake @ Illinois
- Network with friends, family, and employers to sell personal brand and learn about professional opportunities
- Keep your resume up-to-date with current experiences
- Gain a leadership position in a student organization
- Attend Career Fairs to learn about internship opportunities
- ***IF NEEDED*** Request and advocate for AT for any internship or work-related experiences

4th Year – Goal: Obtain a full-time position.
- Be prepared to advocate for your needs as you transition into the workforce or graduate school
- Understand your rights as an employee with a disability in relation to federal laws
- If you receive financial support through state/federal funds, schedule a meeting with your Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor to determine how funding and benefits are impacted when transitioning into employment/graduate school
- Start the job search and application process early; use DRES Career Services to help!
- Update your resume
- Think about where you want to live after graduation
- Contact college graduates you know who have disabilities and talk with them about their transition experience from college to career
- Continue to network with friends, family, employers, alumni, and Career Development Specialist at DRES
- Attend career fairs and information sessions to talk with employers about specific opportunities
- ***IF NEEDED*** Have a plan of action in place for requesting AT if offered an entry-level position or accepting a graduate assistantship

www.disability.illinois.edu/academic-accommodations-and-supports/career-services