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UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI CAREER CENTER

A Guide for Parents

ASSESS YOUR STUDENT'S VIPS

Research has shown that when students' interests align with their work environment, they are more likely to be successful in that career. Therefore, when helping your student choose their career:

1. Help them identify their VIPS (values, interests, personality, and skills)
2. Encourage them to utilize Career Center resources and take career assessments such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and Strong Interest Inventory

RESEARCH AND EXPLORE MAJOR AND CAREER OPTIONS

Many students often waiver in their major or career choice simply because they do not know enough about the subject or field. Before a student chooses a career, we encourage them to:

1. Deeply explore different types of majors and career fields
2. Use Career Center resources such as the Occupational Outlook Handbook or O*Net to explore potential careers
3. Contact and speak with individuals currently working in their field of interest
4. Attend Career Center offers programming, such as career fairs, during each semester to assist students with building knowledge about their careers and gaining connections with professionals.

ENCOURAGE YOUR STUDENT TO GAIN EXPERIENCE

Every employer is looking for their future employee candidates to have "experience." To help your student gain experience, you can encourage them to:

1. Enroll in on-campus organizations and attempt to obtain leadership roles within these organizations
2. Seek out internship, cooperative education, part-time job, and volunteer opportunities
3. Use Career Center tools, such as Handshake and Vault, that can help them locate and obtain internships and other job opportunities

ASSIST WITH ENHANCING MARKETABLE SKILLS

Most employers, in addition to looking at a student's degree and experience, are looking for potential employees to exhibit certain skills, such as computer skills, leadership skills, and communication skills. Students can gain these necessary skills through:

1. Obtaining leadership roles in their organizations and by working part-time jobs or completing internships
2. Relevant coursework, volunteer work, extracurricular activities, or studying abroad experiences.

ASSIST WITH LEARNING HOW TO JOB SEARCH

It is never too early for a student to begin preparing for the job search. To begin honing these skills, your student can:

1. Begin learning to write resumes, search for jobs, and practice interview skills
2. Begin to organize a career plan that includes a list of projected activities, experiences, and skills to develop and an action plan to complete those tasks.

For some ideas, take a look at our Four-Year Career Planning Guide for Parents!

A Four-Year Career Planning Guide for Parents

Freshman Year

- Speak openly with your student about their individual VIPS (Values, Interests, Personality, and Skills)
- Encourage your student to get involved in one to three campus organizations
- Suggest that your student utilize Career Center resources to help them in deciding a major or career
- Assist your student with finding part-time, summer, or volunteer work in order to help them gain experience
- Advise your student to use the Course Catalog and speak with their Academic Advisor to explore majors
- Present any contacts you may have in your student's career field of interest and let them set up informational interviews to explore career options
- Assist your student with developing a career action plan
- Communicate with your student to keep you updated on their progress towards meeting their career goals

Junior Year

- Assist your student with narrowing down their career interests
- Encourage your student to use Career Center resources to research specific careers or graduate schools
- Help your student make networking connections with alumni and professionals that are in their career of interest
- Help your student build marketable skills by making sure they are active members of campus organizations
- Suggest that your student take our *EDHE 301: Career and Life Planning Course*
- Encourage your student to schedule an appointment with a career counselor to review their action plan
- Inspire your student to seek assistance from the Career Center to develop a resume, cover letter, personal statement, or to complete mock interviews
- Recommend that your student use Career Center resources to find career-related work experience through internships, part-time jobs, or shadowing opportunities

Sophomore Year

- If your student is still undecided in their major, encourage them to seek assistance from a Career Center counselor or the Academic Support Center
- Encourage your student to explore their interests and personality by completing career assessments
- Urge your student to become actively involved in organizations of interest to enhance their marketable skills
- Suggest that your student attends employer information sessions and use Career Center links to network with potential employers
- Support your student in them continuing to explore occupations through Career Center resources
- Encourage your student to begin creating a resume and to visit the Career Center's Peer Educator Helpdesk for assistance
- Request that your student attend Career Day so that they can further explore available career options

Senior Year

- Help your student in clarifying their decision about which career to pursue
- Make sure your student has checked to see if they have fulfilled graduation requirements by checking with their Academic Advisor or the Registrar's Office
- Encourage your student to attend an orientation session and complete Career Center registration to participate in On-campus Interviewing
- Suggest your student schedule a mock interview session with a Career Center counselor
- Encourage your student to attend Career Day to make contacts with potential employers and secure job interviews
- Recommend that your student search for jobs regularly through the Career Center or on the Career Center website
- Continue to help your student build connections and increase networking skills even after they receive a job!