



Prepare

Preparing for Career Establishment

Once you have discovered where you want to go, the next step is identifying and mapping the potential paths to get you there. The academic, extra-curricular and career-related opportunities you choose will reinforce your decisions and set your plan in motion. The goal of preparation is knowing what it is that you need to do to ensure your success after you graduate.

Recommendation	Purpose	Path
Work with a Career Services team member to create a career plan with action steps toward your post-graduation goals.	While life happens and plans change, creating a customized personal career plan will provide you with a professional development blueprint for career-related work experiences, student involvement opportunities and academic suggestions to build your qualifications for your chosen career interests.	Schedule an appointment with a Career Services staff member to discuss and identify the best experiences and opportunities for your customized personal career plan.
Continue involvement and pursue leadership opportunities within campus, community or industry-related clubs, organizations and activities.	Participating in student organizations and co-curricular activities provide great opportunities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build professional connections with fellow students, faculty, staff, alumni and other individuals.• Practice professional skills valued by employers, like leadership, teamwork and interpersonal communication.• Practice technical competencies like providing animal care, administering financial resources, advertising events, testing water sources, teaching youth, garnering sales, and more, dependent upon each club’s focus and activities.	Visit OSU’s CampusLink website, campuslink.okstate.edu to explore the more than 400 clubs, organizations and activities throughout the Stillwater campus and learn how to get involved.
Continue to establish and maintain good relationships with faculty members, advisors, peers, alumni and campus staff.	Getting to know the people connected to an academic major and career direction you are pursuing expands your professional network and provides more opportunities for you learn about and connect with additional resources, activities and people able to contribute to your professional success.	Build relationships with your classmates and expand your networks together by sharing contacts. Visit with your professors after class, during their office hours, at campus events, or schedule appointments to discuss their disciplines and career advice. Attend discipline-specific student organization meetings, alumni panel discussions, and other activities. Keep in contact with your network connections, let them know what is happening in your professional development, ask for advice and be willing to help them in return. Remember, developing a relationship takes more than a one-time meeting.

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Set and pursue academic goals for a strong GPA, using tutoring and other academic assistance resources as needed.	<p>While a strong GPA may not be the only qualification to get you in the door of a career opportunity, a less than desirable GPA can certainly limit your career options. Some employers have strict minimum GPA requirements, and others use GPA as an easy and quick way to narrow a large applicant pool.</p> <p>As for graduate and professional schools, most programs have a minimum GPA requirement for consideration and an even higher GPA for admission selection, dependent upon each program’s competitiveness.</p>	Develop effective study habits and use academic support resources to earn the best GPA possible. The CASNR Student Success Center staff can assist you with identifying personal academic success strategies and with connecting to other academic support resources throughout the OSU-Stillwater campus.
Keep your OSU Hire System account active, and your profile and résumé updated.	<p>As you seek to develop the necessary qualifications for your career goals and gain career-related work experience, the OSU Hire System is one resource you can use to read job descriptions for learning about qualifications and to discover and apply for internship and job opportunities.</p> <p>Additionally, employers have the ability to search the OSU Hire System for qualified candidates, and you won’t want to miss out on being considered for an internship or other work experience simply because your account profile and uploaded résumé are not up to date.</p>	Visit the OSU Career Services website, hireOSUgrads.com and go to the “Student & Alumni” section. Select the “Hire System Login” tab on the left-hand navigation menu. Log in to your account. Once inside the Hire System, use the options under “My Profile” in the top navigation to update your profile and upload a current résumé.
Create or update your LinkedIn account, including a professional photograph.	LinkedIn is a social media platform for online professional networking you can use to connect with industry professionals. Many employers also have LinkedIn pages where information about organizational initiatives and opportunities are shared. Using this resource as an information-gathering and personal networking tool can help you stay current on the qualifications you will need to be successful in your chosen career path.	Set up a LinkedIn account at linkedin.com. Varying levels of LinkedIn subscriptions are available, including a free subscription option. LinkedIn also has an app for both Apple and Android products. The site has helpful information about account set up and use under the “Help” menu. Career Services staff also can provide guidance in maximizing your LinkedIn usage.
Create a résumé or update a previous résumé and have it reviewed by a Career Services staff member or trained volunteer.	Résumés are ever-changing documents, transforming with each new experience and with each new intended purpose. Updating your résumé at the end of each semester is recommended to guard against forgetting to include an important qualification you have experienced since your last version. Keeping your résumé current also will help you continue to identify gaps in skills and experiences necessary to achieve your career goals.	If you need assistance deciding how to add new experiences to your current résumé, visit the “how to” resources available online at casnr.okstate.edu/careerservices. Once you have a rough draft developed, bring it by the CASNR Student Success Center, 103 Ag Hall, to have it critiqued and get advice.

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Purchase appropriate interview attire.	More than half of what an interviewer will remember about a candidate from the interview process will be what he or she sees. Making the right visual first impression is imperative, and students must plan ahead to do so. Deciding early what elements are missing from your professional wardrobe allows you the time to look for bargains and economically build your interview attire. It is difficult to put together a great visual first impression within the right budget in a last-minute time frame, after your internship or job search has already begun.	CASNR Career Services recommends having both business professional and business casual options ready for the interview process. Business professional will typically be appropriate, but in some instances, employers may provide candidates with the opportunity to interview in business casual. Safe definitions of each style are available in the career fair preparation guide online at casnr.okstate.edu/careerservices/attire . Lots of options are available for putting your interview attire together on a budget including sales, discount stores, resale shops, and partnering with peers for mix-and-match options.
Complete a mock interview and/or participate in Mock Interview Day.	Employers can tell a big difference between students who have invested time to practice their interview skills and those who have not. Completing mock interviews will help you improve the quality of your responses and reduce your nervousness, as well as identify any verbal and nonverbal quirks you will want to minimize during your real interviews. Some of these hidden behaviors include using verbal fillers like “ums,” excessively talking with your hands, or playing with your jewelry. Do you know your quirks?	OSU Career Services offers 24-hour online virtual mock interviews through Interview Stream. OSU Career Services also hosts a Mock Interview Day each semester where employers volunteer to facilitate practice interviews with students, and students may also schedule mock interviews with Career Services staff. Information about how to use Interview Stream, how to participate in Mock Interview Day or how to schedule a mock interview with a staff member is available online at hireosugrads.com/StudentsAlumni/Interview-Practice.aspx .
Attend career development workshops, presentations and events.	Both CASNR Career Services and OSU Career Service offer workshops, presentations, and events each semester to assist students with developing professionalism skills, gaining industry insight, preparing for further education, and with connecting with employers to pursue career-related opportunities. Why not take advantage of these resources designed to help you with your career planning and preparation efforts?	Visit the OSU Career Services website, hireOSUgrads.com to find a schedule of campus-wide career events. Stay informed of workshops, presentations and events coordinated by CASNR Career Services by visiting casnr.okstate.edu/events and following CASNR's social media channels.

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Attend career fairs and employer information sessions.	Both career fairs and employer information sessions are perfect chances for students to make personal, face-to-face networking connections with employer representatives and ask questions about how to develop into ideal candidates for their internship and job opportunities.	<p>Visit the OSU Career Services website, hireOSUgrads.com to find a schedule of campus-wide career events including career fairs and employer information sessions.</p> <p>Find out about employer-student connection events coordinated by CASNR Career Services by visiting casnr.okstate.edu/events and following CASNR's social media channels.</p>
Build your career-related work experience through volunteer opportunities, part-time jobs, research experiences and/or internships.	According to a research report released by the Association of Public Land-grant Universities (APLU), the experience most valued by employers among new college graduates is an internship. Additionally, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) reported 65% of college graduates in 2015 had completed an internship experience. Clearly, internships, or career-related work experiences, are an important part of preparing yourself to be a marketable candidate for the workforce or for admission into graduate or professional school upon graduation.	Meet with a Career Services staff member and your faculty advisor to identify potential experiences to support your career path and develop a plan for how to pursue those opportunities. Your academic advisor also can assist you in determining if earning academic credit for an internship experience is necessary or recommended and how to pursue academic credit for the experience.
Begin the information gathering process for graduate and/or professional school options, if applicable to your goals.	Starting early in the graduate and/or professional school information gathering process will provide you with a better perspective of the qualifications you must meet and process you must follow to gain admission to the programs of interest to you.	Visit the websites of different institutions and programs to gather basic information about admissions steps, requirements, testing, timelines and key contacts for the process and your discipline. Write down questions about information you are unable to locate. Call and/or email the key contacts to fill in the holes within your information.