

Framework for a FOUR YEAR PLAN

(page 1: get a job, page 2: earn an additional credential)

GRADUATE AND GET A JOB

FIRST YEAR:

- Identify your academic home and staff/faculty members you feel comfortable with
- Find campus and Raleigh area clubs/organizations you think are a good fit for you/your interests. Narrow to 2-3 by May. QUALITY matters over QUANTITY
- Start working on a college resume (*make an appointment at the Career Design Center via WPUConnect*)
- Attend Career Design Center programs and ENCCA Career Fair
- Explore Raleigh, get comfortable with public transportation

Summer ONE NOTE: There are summer internship programs specifically for first year students

SECOND YEAR:

- Begin to volunteer for/get voted into leadership roles in WPU or Raleigh area clubs/organizations
- Sophomore year is a great year for service learning!
- Talk with advisor about if you should enroll in PDS 300 in the spring semester***
- Explore career options – rule out need for additional credentials (could change). Identify qualifications for entry-level roles; figure out what you need to learn to become qualified for those roles.
- Attend Career Design Center programs and ENCCA Career Fair
- KNOW YOUR INDUSTRY – some summer internship programs begin to recruit as early as August

Summer TWO A great summer to start developing skills in your field! Consider an internship or summer campus leadership role (RA/Orientation Leader)!

THIRD YEAR:

- PDS 300/490
- Start a Networking Spreadsheet to keep track of your professional connections (you can use LinkedIn for this as well)
- Attend a professional conference or professional association chapter meeting
- Think about (*topics are covered in PDS 300*):
 - Where you want to live after graduation/what is the job market like there?
 - Top companies/organizations you want to work for
 - Types of jobs you are interested in (research job titles) and where they are posted
- Attend ENCCA Career Fair and Career Design Center programs

LAST SUMMER BEFORE GRADUATION

Look at job qualifications again, what are you missing? What can you learn now in your last summer before you graduate? Consider a summer internship program – many of these programs lead to SPRING job offers!

FOURTH YEAR:

Fall:

- PDS 490 or 491 (Internship)
- Update job application materials (resume/cover letter), make a career counseling appointment to discuss job search strategy
- Organize your job search (electronically? binder?)
- **KNOW YOUR INDUSTRY – some companies recruit in AUGUST for the following MAY!**

Spring:

- Start applying, discuss how to negotiate an offer with a career counselor. KNOW YOUR INDUSTRY
- Attend Career Design Center programs and ENCCA Career Fair

GRADUATE!

GRADUATE AND GET ANOTHER CREDENTIAL

	Master's Degree	Professional School (DVM, DDS, MD)	Doctoral Degree (PhD, JD, DPH)	Certificate Programs	Postbaccalaureate Programs
What is it?	Gain deeper knowledge about one specific topic/ professional area	Completion of program is required to practice in a profession	Highest award student can earn for graduate study	Specialized training for people who (typically) already have a degree	Programs can lead to a certificate or a Master's – often built to improve application to professional school
How long it takes to (typically) complete:	Bachelor's degree + 1-2 years additional schooling	2-4 years in Associate's or Bachelor's program + ~4 years of additional schooling. Can include fellowships/ internships AFTER degree	Bachelor's degree + 3-6+ years of additional schooling	Typically, under 30 academic credits to complete	Depends on program
Exam?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not usually	Depends on program
Financial Concerns:	Scholarships but not a lot of aid	Scholarships but not a lot of aid	Depends on program	Typically, no financial aid	Depends on program

FIRST YEAR: SEE PAGE ONE

SECOND YEAR:

- SEE PAGE ONE AND ADD:
- Explore career options – see what KIND of graduate/professional schooling you might need. What kinds of experiences do admissions counselors want you to have BEFORE you apply? e.g. PhD = research!

Summer TWO start building experiences necessary for you to qualify for grad/professional school

THIRD YEAR:

- PDS 300/490

FALL - start exploring:

- Academic programs, learn who is on faculty/who your advisor might be. Consider what the school is known for? Where do their graduates go? Do you want to live in that city/town/country?
- Brainstorm who you want to write your letters of recommendation (i.e. academic, personal, professional)
- Get organized and start a graduate school application spreadsheet

SPRING

- Consider taking an entrance exam prep class (NOTE: the Career Design Center has books available)
- Build your PARALLEL PLAN - attend ENCCA Career Fair and make an appointment with career center

LAST SUMMER BEFORE GRADUATION –START YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT and take entrance exam (so you have time to retake if necessary). This is a great time to visit programs and meet with potential advisors.

SENIOR YEAR:

FALL (PDS 490/491):

- Finalize application materials. Have personal statement read (and reread) by trusted faculty and mentors. Order transcripts (do early, just in case).
- FORMALLY request letters of recommendation, include updated resume, your personal statement, a letter explaining why you chose this person, a thank you note, submission instructions
- Be hyper aware of deadlines. Typically, EARLIER is better due to "application fatigue"

SPRING

- Attend Career Design Center programs and attend ENCCA Career Fair

GRADUATE!