Parents

At Career Services, we offer opportunity to:

- Select a career path based on interests, skills, and values.
- Explore and research career options based on majors.
- Gain skills through career-related experiences such as internships, co-op, part-time or summer job, volunteer activities and service learning.
- Develop job search materials and a plan to pursue career goals.

Students are *not required* to engage in any activities offered by the Career Services. However, each year students take the initiative and attend workshops, schedule individual career counseling appointments, send resumes for critiquing, and access resources that assist them in achieving their career goals. Help us help your student by encouraging them to access resources and services tailored to them.

The most helpful thing parents can do for first year students’ regarding their futures is to give them the time and space to get used to being at college. Allow their career indecision. Encourage them to discover new interests and abilities by trying new subjects and activities. Let them know you would be willing to discuss career objectives when he or she would like to talk about them. Suggest taking advantage of the career counseling services if your daughter or son shows an interest or is openly concerned about career decisions.

Parents of first year students have some adjusting to do too. It is a transition within your parent-child relationship, and this separation process can have a real push-pull dynamic to it. While your daughter or son may be physically separate, he or she is still likely to look to you for solutions when the going gets tough. Your student is both eager and scared to be independent and will go back and forth (wanting your help and not wanting it) until he or she feels more confident in personal coping skills. Career decisions may be the least of your worries at this time.

**How can I contact you?**
You can call Career Services at 262.243.4401 or e-mail us at career.services@cuw.edu
Freshmen Year

Questions they might ask:

- What major should I choose?
- What is a college education all about?
- How do I find out what I want to do with my life?

Consider this:

Coming to Concordia University Wisconsin is a student's first major career decision. Typically, most of the first year is spent learning how to adjust to that decision. Many first year students are coping with being away from home, new academic pressures, and a new social environment, which takes a good deal of time and energy. To expect a first year student to have clear career goals is unrealistic. Those who say they have already decided on a career path will probably change that direction over the course of their time in college. It is completely normal and often most beneficial for a first year student to be "deciding" about future plans.

Recommendations for Family Members:

- Although it may seem helpful and appropriate, refrain from suggesting or selecting your student’s major for him or her. Instead, ask about likes, dislikes, strengths, and goals.
- Let your student know that they should consider college as a preparation for life. The decisions they make in college will influence their future. Support those decisions.
- Remind them that they don’t have to decide on a major right away, however, encourage them to make a tentative career choice. Know that change is possible.
- Recommend that they start their personal development by joining at least one student organization, helping them develop skills employers’ value.
- Remind them to read the college catalog to become familiar with available majors.
- During summer vacation, encourage them to get a job with opportunities to gain work experience and improve interpersonal communication skills.
- Encourage your student to begin career planning early, and visit Career Services to investigate available programs and services.
Sophomore Year

Questions they might ask:

- Is this the best major for me?
- How do I plan a meaningful and marketable education?
- How can I develop my work related skills?

Consider this:
Your student may want to declare his or her major at this time. By meeting with his/her advisors to discuss available options, your student may be prepared to make a decision.

Recommendations for Family Members:

- Listen to your student's ideas, hopes, and fears, and remain open-minded.
- Suggest that they talk with a career professional and take career inventories to help confirm their choice of major.
- Ask them to explore ways to gain on-target work experience through internships, part-time, and volunteer work.
- Help them choose electives that will give them additional desirable skills.
- Persuade them to participate in resume writing and interviewing activities through career services while beginning to develop a resume.
- Help your student develop decision-making skills. Look at the available options, weigh the benefits and disadvantages, make a tentative decision, and try it out!
Junior Year

Questions they might ask:

- How do I identify specific job possibilities to go with my major?
- When should I start thinking about my job search?
- Is graduate/professional school for me?

Consider this:
Graduation may not be as far off as they think. The junior year is not too early to identify and gather information about companies and/or graduate/professionals school. Students need to know the steps necessary for gaining meaningful employment or for gaining admission to graduate/professional school.

Recommendations for Family Members:

- Support them in joining student and professional organizations related to their majors or careers.
- Help them polish their resume and stress that they have it critiqued by a career professional.
- Emphasize the importance of internships, job shadowing, volunteering, informational interviewing, and part-time and summer employment experiences.
- Discuss the value of networking with people in careers of interest.
- Support their exploration of interests, majors and career paths, even if it is not what you imagined.
- Encourage your student to connect with faculty (make an office visit, ask questions), utilize available campus resources, and become involved in extracurricular activities.
Senior Year

Questions they might ask:

- How do I identify my employable skills?
- Is interview preparation really necessary?
- What exactly is the job search process?
- What am I going to do after graduation?

Consider this:
It’s time to make final decisions about career options. Students should stay in touch with the Career Services Center for both information about job openings and assistance with personal presentation skills.

Recommendations for Family Members:

- Insist that they develop a job search plan complete with strategies that will work for them.
- Assist them in purchasing a professional suit complete with shoes that will be used when attending career fairs, interviews, and graduate/professional schools.
- Help them practice interviewing skills by asking possible questions.
- Encourage them to use the Career services resource library and web site to research companies and regularly check job vacancies.
- Help them develop a network of contacts consisting of family and friends.
FAQs

How can my son/daughter get a job on-campus or in the area?
We highly encourage students to create a profile in Falcon Jobs, our on-line job posting database. Through that website, students will be able to review all of the current, available positions - both for on-campus and in the area. To apply for a position, follow the instructions listed in the job posting. Some may require a resume, others may request a cover letter, others may wish the student to stop in and fill out an application.

Is my student required to have an internship?
For some programs at Concordia University Wisconsin, an internship is required of the student to gain education credits. For those programs where it is not a requirement, it is still highly encouraged! The more related experiences a student gains prior to graduation, the more prepared they will be in an interview setting. They need to contact Career Services and their academic advisor to complete the necessary paperwork in advance.
Connect

CONNECT provides an opportunity for CUW alumni to share their knowledge with current students through a mentor role. Many students come into college undecided or unsure of their career path. As degree holders and professionals, alumni provide a unique resource. Alumni are encouraged to share their knowledge and experience from their education and from their profession. The mentor relationship builds the CUW community, promotes a connection between current students and alumni, and ultimately helps students clarify career goals.

Guidelines:

- Communicate with mentee via a preferred form of communication (e-mail, phone, face to face, or Skype)
- Share insight on your field/major
- Suggest career paths and professional development opportunities
- Educate and guide students in accomplishing their goals
- Other topics decided by the alum and mentee

How do I become a mentor?

To become a mentor contact Ben Rohde. During a phone call or other form of meeting, Ben will collect your information and background. This will help us better match you with the right mentee! You will then be paired with a student based on interest. The mentee is encouraged to make first contact. Upon meeting either virtually or in person, the mentor and mentee will set a plan for the relationship. This mentor-mentee relationship is based on both schedules and frequency of discussion can be up to student and alum. A minimum of 2-3 contacts per semester is recommended. Please contact Ben Rohde via phone (262-243-4491) or email (Benjamin.rohde@cuw.edu) to become a mentor today!