Western Carolina University Parent and Family Programs

Planning for Success

First Year Checklist for Students

Academics:

- Go to class!
- Take responsibility for your college experience.
- Use a planner or agenda to keep track of assignments. Use your class syllabus to keep track of important due dates and other information.
- Learn how to study – most college work is done outside of the classroom. The Writing and Learning Commons is a great resource.
- When taking an exam, read each question carefully and answer only what is being asked.
- Visit your professor during office hours.

Career Preparation:

- Make an appointment at Career Services to discuss career and experiential education opportunities within your major.
- Consider ways to learn more about and connect to your prospective career field.
- Meet with your academic advisor to make sure you register for the right classes for the spring semester.
- Attend career fairs to begin networking with potential employers.
- Set up a summer internship or summer job.

Community and Involvement:

- Participate in campus events. Get to know your community and what WCU has to offer.
- Be aware of the options open to you at WCU and find what interests you.
- Stay in touch with family and friends but don’t go home every weekend.
- Don’t forget about your faith community.

Personal Growth:

- Learn how to prioritize – which sometimes means saying no to friends.
- Learn how to budget time, money, etc. Be proactive rather than reactive.
- Challenge yourself and do things outside of your comfort zone.
Sophomore Year Checklist for Students

Academics:

- Meet with your academic advisor to develop an academic plan. Review your academic plan with your faculty mentor and continue to establish relationship with faculty mentor; meet with him/her regularly.
- Consider exploring different academic areas of interest by adding a minor, a certificate program, or even double major.
- Consider studying abroad. If you have already made the decision to study abroad, then complete the planning steps for your study abroad experience.
- Utilize tutoring, writing, and other services that can assist you in your academic plan.

Career Preparation:

- Make an appointment with a career counselor to discuss career and experiential education opportunities within your major.
- Consider ways to learn more and connect to your prospective career field such as informational interviews.
- Create or update your resume and post it to JobCat to have it critiqued by a career counselor.
- Attend career fairs to practice networking with employers.
- Set up a summer internship or summer job.

Community and Involvement:

- Participate in one organization that supports your major/career.
- Participate in one organization that fits your personal interests.
- Consider your service opportunity(ies) for the year; be involved as much as your schedule allows.

Personal Growth:

- Consider your interest and commit to leadership opportunities that support your interests/goals on a deeper level. Leadership involvement could include active membership in organizations or taking on an executive role within the organization. Be careful not to over-extend yourself.
- Reflect on who you are and who you want to be. What is your motivation?
- Look into ways that can assist you with balance in your life. What are your priorities?
- Take time to consider who the role models are in your life. Why are they your role models?
Junior Checklist for Students

Academics:

- Discuss your core curriculum with your academic advisor and faculty mentor and explore how it will assist you in your academic development.
- Look at requirements and timelines for graduate or professional schools, if applicable, and take admission prep courses and tests. Review for MCAT, LSAT, GMAT, or GRE, as appropriate.
- Start discussing with faculty references and letters of recommendation for graduate/professional school, if applicable.
- If applying to graduate or professional school, renew FAFSA by March 1.
- Meet with your academic advisor to communicate a graduation plan; review the plan with your faculty mentor and continue to establish a relationship with faculty mentor; meet with him/her regularly as needed.

Career Preparation:

- Update resume and post it to JobCat and other job search sites as appropriate.
- Make an appointment with Career Services to plan an internship or other hands-on work related experience.
- Visit the Center for Service Learning to gain valuable hands on experience in your field of interest.
- Attend career fairs to network with employers; establish a networking list.
- Research jobs and companies matching your interests, abilities, and values; investigate what employers are looking for in your chosen career field.
- Conduct a mock interview with a career counselor (and consider having it recorded).

Community and Involvement:

- Enhance relationship with faculty mentor and other faculty/staff members.
- Join professional organizations as a student member.
- Participate in on-campus events and activities.
- Consider ways to strengthen your leadership skills.

Personal Growth:

- Think of how you will be accomplishing the goals you have set for yourself
- What do you expect of yourself after you graduate from college?
- What kind of life do you expect for yourself after you graduate?
- How are you your own advocate?
Senior Year Checklist

Academics:

- Be sure to apply for graduation.
- Stay focused and don’t slack off – avoid ‘senioritis’.
- If going to graduate school, take time to visit different universities and possible mentors.
- Prepare for graduate and professional school prep tests such as the GRE, GMAT, LSAT or MCAT, as appropriate.

Career Preparation:

- Continue to network and begin applying for jobs.
- Follow up with the faculty and staff who are writing your letters of recommendation.
- Maintain relationships with people you’ve worked and interned with.
- Attend career fairs to network with employers; use your professional network to find job leads.
- Research jobs and companies matching your interests, abilities, and values; investigate what employers are looking for in your chosen career field.
- Conduct a mock interview with a career counselor (and consider having it recorded).
- If you don’t have a mentor in your intended career field, it’s not too late to seek one out.

Community and Involvement:

- Seek mentoring opportunities as a way to give back to your community, build your resume and hone your leadership skills.
- Attend and present at a professional conference.
- Get involved with the student or professional organization you’ve been meaning to join.

Personal Growth:

- How are you taking time to enjoy your last year in college?
- Reflect on your time in college and consider how you’ve changed over the years. Are you the person you had hoped to be?
- Be open to all of the possibilities that come your way.
- Remember: life is not about finding yourself, it’s about creating yourself.
Action Plan for Success

Current Credits Earned: _______ Academic Year Credits Earned Goal: _______
Current Cumulative GPA: _______ Academic Year Cumulative GPA Goal: _______
Do I need to make any changes in my study habits to ensure that I meet my GPA and Credits Earned goals?
_______________________________________________________________________________

To Consider:
Where and when is the best time for me to study, read, research, work on assignments, meet in groups? Could I benefit from using Writing and/or Tutoring services?

Am I considering a major change? yes ___ no ___ Adding a minor? yes___ no ____
If yes, what are the reasons why this would be a positive decision?
_______________________________________________________________________________

If yes, what requirements do I need to meet to do this?
_______________________________________________________________________________

If no, what can I do to enhance my experience in my chosen field of study?
_______________________________________________________________________________

To Consider:
Have I spoken to my professors outside of class regarding my plans for the future? How can my advisor best help me plan for the semesters ahead?

Is my resume up-to-date? Yes____ No_____
What are my plans for the summer?
_______________________________________________________________________________

How will this experience help me in my future career?
_______________________________________________________________________________

To Consider:
How can I best utilize the resources available through Career Services?

What non-academic goals do I have for this year?
_______________________________________________________________________________

To Consider:
Am I happy and healthy? What skills could I work on improving?
2nd Year Academic Plan

FALL Semester
1. _____________________________________
2. _____________________________________
3. _____________________________________
4. _____________________________________
5. _____________________________________
6. _____________________________________
7. _____________________________________
8. _____________________________________

SPRING Semester
1. _____________________________________
2. _____________________________________
3. _____________________________________
4. _____________________________________
5. _____________________________________
6. _____________________________________
7. _____________________________________
8. _____________________________________

SUMMER Session
1. _____________________________________
2. _____________________________________
3. _____________________________________
4. _____________________________________
5. _____________________________________
6. _____________________________________
7. _____________________________________
8. _____________________________________
3rd Year Academic Plan

FALL Semester
1. ______________________________________
2. ______________________________________
3. ______________________________________
4. ______________________________________
5. ______________________________________
6. ______________________________________
7. ______________________________________
8. ______________________________________

SPRING Semester
1. ______________________________________
2. ______________________________________
3. ______________________________________
4. ______________________________________
5. ______________________________________
6. ______________________________________
7. ______________________________________
8. ______________________________________

SUMMER Session
1. ______________________________________
2. ______________________________________
3. ______________________________________
4. ______________________________________
5. ______________________________________
6. ______________________________________
7. ______________________________________
8. ______________________________________
4th Year Academic Plan FALL Semester
FALL Semester
1. ________________________________
2. ________________________________
3. ________________________________
4. ________________________________
5. ________________________________
6. ________________________________
7. ________________________________
8. ________________________________

SPRING Semester
1. ________________________________
2. ________________________________
3. ________________________________
4. ________________________________
5. ________________________________
6. ________________________________
7. ________________________________
8. ________________________________