DISABILITY RESOURCES AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
CAREER SERVICES 4 YEAR PLAN

1st Year – Goal: Start thinking about your personal brand and get involved on campus.

- Schedule an Assistive Technology (AT) evaluation and learn more about options for computer programs and equipment to accommodate your disability for both academics and eventually internships/employment.
- Know where to obtain and purchase equipment and computer programs.
- Purchase, train, and become proficient in using programs and devices for personal use.
- Explore interests, skills, and values, and take a variety of classes in subjects that interest you.
- Attend major and career development events.
- Visit DRES Career Services for a career assessment and individualized appointment while also viewing the DRES Career Newsletter.
- Work towards and establish a strong GPA.
- Learn how to write an impressive resume and cover letter.
- Research and apply for short-term jobs, internships, and job shadows during breaks.

2nd Year – Goal: Begin career search process, further develop personal brand, and get more involved.

- Have proficient use of AT.
- Know where to obtain and purchase any new equipment and computer programs needed.
- Be able to explain the role AT has in meeting your academic and work-related needs.
- Rehearse how to advocate for your needs.
- Research and understand how federal legislation protects your rights as both a college student and as a prospective and current employee with a disability.
- Join a department, college, or campus Honor’s or Leadership program.
- Meet with DRES Career Development Specialist to explore occupations related to your major.
- Conduct informational interviews with professionals in your field of interest.
- Develop and start to solidify your personal brand.
- Update your resume each semester and have it reviewed by the DRES Career Development Specialist.
- Check out Handshake @ Illinois for internship and job postings.
- Submit applications for career-related summer internship opportunities – remember to apply early!
- Get to know faculty and staff that you can build relationships with who can serve as future references.
- Join or chair committees in RSOs, groups, clubs, etc.

3rd Year – Goal: Obtain a summer and/or semester-long internship.

- Request and advocate for AT for any internship or work-related experiences.
- Understand your options for disclosing disability to employers and what your personal and professional approach will be.
- If you receive financial support through state/federal funds, schedule a meeting with your Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor to discuss options for funding during internships.
- Invest in your professional wardrobe for interviews and formal occasions.
- Schedule a mock interview with DRES Career Services to practice interview skills.
- Explore current job openings by industry and major using Handshake @ Illinois.
- Network with friends, family, and employers to sell personal brand and learn about professional opportunities.
- Keep your resume up-to-date with current experiences.
- Gain a leadership position in a student organization.
- Attend Career Fairs to learn about internship opportunities.

4th Year – Goal: Obtain a full-time position.

- Have a plan of action in place for requesting AT if offered an entry-level position or accepting a graduate assistantship.
- Be prepared to advocate for your needs as you transition into the workforce or graduate school.
- Understand your rights as an employee with a disability in relation to federal laws.
- If you receive financial support through state/federal funds, schedule a meeting with your Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor to determine how funding and benefits are impacted when transitioning into employment/graduate school.
- Start the job search and application process early; use DRES Career Services to help!
- Update your resume.
- Think about where you want to live after graduation.
- Contact college graduates you know who have disabilities and talk with them about their transition experience from college to career.
- Continue to network with friends, family, employers, alumni, and Career Development Specialist at DRES.
- Attend career fairs and information sessions to talk with employers about specific opportunities.