# The Career & Professional Development Plan

*...A Comprehensive Four-Year Plan for Undergraduates*

## Senior/Fifth Year

**2011—2012**

***Walk-in Hours:***

**Monday** 1—3 pm
**Tuesday** 2—4 pm
**Wednesday** 1—3 pm
**Thursday** 9—11 am
**Friday** 10 am—12 pm


**DCC 209 * 518/276-6234 * www.rpi.edu/dept/cdc/**

The Center
Rensselaer
Center for Career and Professional Development

# Senior/Fifth Year Theme:
# Implement Your Career Decisions

## Welcome!

Full-time Employment? Graduate or Professional School? Professional Work Fellowship? Military Service? Many choices are available to students who have created a strong foundation including a diverse educational background, relevant skills and experience in their field. Career Counseling is available by appointment ~ please make an effort to reach out and discuss your future plans early in your senior year so deadlines and opportunities aren't missed.

Three final career and professional development competencies will be introduced this year. They include: **Embracing Change, Life-long Learning and Work/Life Balance.**

We encourage you to continue to build on the nine competencies highlighted in your Freshman, Sophomore and Junior Years including: Time Management & Prioritizing, Effective Communication Skills, Key Professional Skills, Problem Solving, Teamwork, Personal Integrity & Ethics, Working in Diverse Environments, Critical Thinking and Navigating Across Boundaries.

## Embracing Change

- Assess changing relationships with family and friends and impact on your professional development
- Evaluate your own ability to handle change; seek out help if needed to cultivate an appreciation for the value and necessity of managing change in your life
- Anticipate technical & non-technical skills you need to acquire for future career choices
- Develop/enhance organizational skills to help you conduct a full-time job search or plan to apply to graduate/ professional school
- Articulate your strongest values and how they may impact future career choices and decision-making
- Learn to accept change as a part of your ongoing professional development, especially on teams, at work and in clubs or organizations you belong to
- Become a role model for other students with your ability to manage change and demonstrate flexibility
- Commit to a periodic review of your personal and professional goals to stay on track

## Life-long Learning

- Attend employer-sponsored events on campus to learn about careers & industries and foster networking skills
- Join a professional or honor society to learn more about career choices & get to know others in your field; plan to continue your membership after graduation
- Evaluate the Co-Terminal Program early on and determine application deadlines & requirements if interested
- Commit to reading broadly - make it a point to read outside of your major or field of interest
- Attend **Grad School programs and events** to explore furthering your education after you graduate
- Upon return from any Study or Work Abroad program, seek help to incorporate your new experiences into your resume and portfolio
- Develop life-skills: budgeting, financial planning, relocating, accepting a job offer, salary negotiations and net-working
- Explore licensing requirements in your profession (if appropriate)
- Consider taking graduate entrance exams in your senior year even if you do not plan to attend graduate/ professional school right away
- Update your resume annually - even after you have accepted a full time position to be able to respond to opportu-nities as they may arise

## Work/Life Balance

- Continue to balance your academic, personal and social activities, especially as you firm up your after-graduation plans
- When beginning a new job, give yourself time to adjust to the new environment; ask questions to broaden your knowledge & comfort
- Continue to practice a healthy lifestyle including getting enough rest & and eating well to balance the demands of work & school
- Consider your values when making decisions about your future. Seek the counsel of a broad range of individuals to help you understand your options
- Evaluate your lifestyle and lifelong learning goals when accepting admission to attend graduate/professional school or an considering an employment offer
- Develop a broad range of personal and professional relationships
- Consider developing a new hobby - remember you potentially will have more leisure time after you graduate and join the workforce!
- Enhance your internal locus of control to help with decision-making and goal setting

## Top Career & Professional Development Achievements for Seniors & Fifth Year Students

- ❑ Be able to list at least 10 people in your own network and establish a positive online presence
- ❑ Develop an action plan for your final year: if searching for a full-time job begin your job search two semesters prior to graduation. If applying to graduate/professional school, develop your list early and monitor application and financial aid deadlines for each school
- ❑ **Seeking a full-time job?** Know your resources on and off campus. Log into **JobLink** at least weekly to check for Open Jobs and On-Campus Recruiting interview opportunities
- ❑ Attend Career Fairs and other employer sponsored events to meet hiring managers & explore your career options
- ❑ Register and prepare to take Graduate/Professional School Exams
- ❑ Set new short term professional development goals and evaluate your long-term goals
- ❑ Ask faculty and previous employers to serve as a reference for you in your upcoming job search or when applying to graduate/professional school
- ❑ Evaluate your financial situation and prepare a post graduation budget
- ❑ Be able to identify the top resources for seeking a job in your professional area
- ❑ Going into the Military? Create a resume before you graduate and have it critiqued by a Career Counselor in ***The Center***
- ❑ Accept responsibility for your choices and the decisions you have made

## Senior/Fifth Year "To-Do" List

- ❑ Pick up your copy of ***The Career and Professional Development Guide*** in DCC 209; review & practice strategies to strengthen your job search efforts this year
- ❑ Check your email weekly for ***The Center's e-newsletter*** to find out about ***The Center's*** programs, events, professional development tips, job leads and more!
- ❑ Need help with your job search or evaluating your career options? Use ***The Center's*** **Online Appointment Scheduler** to schedule a meeting with a Career Counselor (this link is found on ***The Center's*** website)
- ❑ Activate your **JobLink** account each fall to gain access full-time job postings; begin your full-time job search early—some employers only recruit in the fall for May graduates.
- ❑ **On-Campus Recruiting:** Participate in on-campus interviews for full-time employment two semesters prior to graduation. The Interview Center is located in DCC 345.
- ❑ Review the online ***Resume Writing WebShop*** to strengthen your knowledge of how to write an effective resume
- ❑ When updating your resume at the beginning of each semester, remember to include your academic leadership and professional development experience. ***NOTE:*** Please do not post a resume in JobLink that has not been critiqued by ***The Center's*** Career Counselor. Upload a critiqued copy of your resume into **JobLink** and give ***The Center*** permission to add it to our online Resume Books.
- ❑ Attend ***Employer Information Sessions & Events;*** expand your network & connect with hiring managers
- ❑ Have your resume professionally critiqued by an employer representative during ***RESUMANIA!*** or by a Career Counselor during the ***The Center's*** **Walk-in Hours**
- ❑ Review the online ***Cover Letter*** Presentation for tips on writing successful cover letters
- ❑ Use the ***The Center's*** website to broaden your research and investigative skills, especially as they relate to your career and professional development
- ❑ Check out the ***The Center's*** ***Career Navigator Handouts*** for tips on a variety of career-related topics (found online and in ***The Center***)
- ❑ View the three-minute ***CareerSpots*** Videos found on the ***The Center's*** website; prepare a 30-second pitch to share with employers at the upcoming career fairs
- ❑ Complete and return the **First Destination Survey** when your future plans are confirmed!

For details on our Programs and Events,
please pick up The Center's Calendar of Events in DCC 209 or visit our website at:

http://www.rpi.edu/dept/cdc/