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STEPS FOR SUCCESS . . . A FOUR-YEAR PLAN

Enhance your college experience! Balance academics, career planning, personal relationships and social activities.

Freshman Year . . . Explore Your Options

Academics:
- Meet with your academic advisor to plan your curriculum.
- Attend sessions offered by your Learning Assistants and the Advising Learning Assistance Center to develop good study skills.
- Try to involve yourself in team-related projects and/or research.

Career:
- Register with the Career Development Center at www.cdc.rpi.edu.
- Talk with faculty and upper class students about different majors and careers.
- Attend CDC workshops and the campus Career Fairs.
- Create a resume and learn to write a winning cover letter.
- Begin to research part-time and summer job opportunities.
- Attend a co-op orientation meeting.

Personal/Social:
- Realize the importance of keeping your family involved in your college life.
- Allow time for friends and leisure activities.
- Join a mentoring program; mentors can help you cultivate new friendships.
- Attend the Activities Fair to learn about organizations & clubs on campus.

Sophomore Year . . . Collect More Information

Academics:
- Obtain information about declaring a major (if you haven’t done so already).
- Make a special effort to get to know some professors.
- Work towards a good GPA; seek assistance from the Advising & Learning Assistance Center, if needed.
- Continue to meet with your academic advisor to seek advice on your curriculum and co-op.

Career:
- Meet with a Career Counselor to evaluate your career goals & objectives.
- Shadow a Rensselaer Alumnus/a through the CDC’s Pathways Program or a mentor through MentorNet.
- Attend an interview techniques workshop to prepare for co-op or a summer internship.
- Update your resume as needed.
- Apply to the Co-op Program at least one semester before planning an assignment.
- Consider applying for an Undergraduate Research Project.

Personal/Social:
- Join or start a club, get involved! Employers like to see evidence of extracurricular activities.
- Work on a team project in your residence hall or sorority/fraternity.
- Join an intramural sports team.
- Make an effort to meet students from other countries.
- Consider applying for the Professional Leadership Program through the Archer Center.

Over
Junior Year . . . Gain Experience

Academics:
- Attend seminars sponsored by your department.
- Add a double major, minor or concentration in another field to expand your career options.
- Become a student member or leader in your professional association.

Careers:
- Meet with a counselor to identify your values, interests, and goals related to post-graduate options.
- Continue to participate in the Pathways Program.
- Practice writing cover letters; visit the Writing Center for a critique.
- Schedule a mock interview to prepare for Career Fairs and campus interviews.
- Obtain experience in your field of interest (co-op, summer job).
- Check dates for graduate school admission tests.
- Begin planning for graduate school application process.

Personal/Social:
- Seek leadership opportunities; run for an elected office.
- Consider applying for a Resident Advisor position.
- Explore community service activities.
- Begin to develop a list of professional & academic references.

Senior Year . . . Make Decisions

Academics:
- Finalize course selections and be sure you meet graduation requirements.
- Send out graduate school applications and complete appropriate financial aid forms on time.
- Develop a senior project.

Career:
- Analyze and summarize all of your experiences in the past four years to assess your career- related strengths and skills.
- Examine your career- related values.
- Update your resume & CDC registration.
- Monitor and sign up for on-campus interviews through the CDC.
- Check the CDC Calendar for relevant workshops and special seminars.
- Network with professors, on-campus speakers, family and friends to develop prospective contacts.
- Continue to develop your interviewing skills.
- Close out your CDC file once you’ve decided on your after graduation plans.

Personal/Social:
- Continually evaluate your lifestyle interests and values to determine your post-graduation plans.
- Periodically review your career and life goals.
- Continue to identify and build mentoring partnerships.