Chapter 8
Choosing a College Major and a Career
(Supplement to Chapter 12 in Staley text)

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

During the Career Module you will learn about career development including identification of interests, skills, values, personality preferences and strengths. You will get a brief exposure to assessments during class so that you can continue to use them to assist you with your career choice. You also will discover resources for researching majors and careers. In addition, the importance of networking, interning and taking an active approach to career development will be thoroughly discussed in class and throughout the Constance Staley text, *Focus on College Success*.

Learning Objectives:

- Career Assessment: Gain an understanding of the role of career assessments in identifying a career direction
- Career Decisions: Learn how to examine and evaluate major and career options through a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis
- Career Research: Learn how to research majors and careers through a variety of resources
- Career Center Services: Become aware of the Career Center services available to you as a student

The Career Module is taught by Career Center staff members who will help you become familiar with the services they provide. These services will assist you throughout your college education and as you transition into your career. The Career Center can help you choose a major/career, write a resume, find a job/internship, research graduate schools, practice your interview skills, and much more.

In order to fully participate in the class activities and to complete the assignments for the career module, download and print the career worksheets required by your career instructor. They can be found on the Career Center website at [www.csusm.edu/careers](http://www.csusm.edu/careers), and clicking on the GEL Students link. These worksheets and forms are needed during the entire career module portion of the GEL class. Be sure to bring them to each class.
CAREER CENTER SERVICES

Career Assessments
A variety of self-assessments are offered to identify career-related interests, skills, values, personality preferences and strengths. Work with a career counselor to determine which assessments will best assist you in exploring career options that are right for you.

Career, Job and Internship Listings
All currently enrolled CSUSM students and Alumni Association members have access to CougarJOBS, the Career Center’s online job listing service. Professional full time, part time, temporary, seasonal, and student assistant and internship positions are accessible 24 hours a day via the Career Center website. Log on to CougarJOBS: www.csusm.edu/careers

Career Resource Lab
Our lab in Craven 1400 provides access to networked computers, business directories, books, periodicals and business journals.

Graduate and Professional School
Career counselors provide support and advising on selecting and applying to graduate and professional schools (law, medical, dental, pharmacy, etc). Resources to research options are also available.

On Campus Recruiting
Interview with prospective employers from business, industry, social services and government agencies. Check out CougarJOBS for listings of upcoming interview dates.

Professional Career Counseling
Major and career options, mock interviews, job search coaching and general career information are provided. Schedule an appointment by calling or stopping by.

Resume and Cover Letter Reviews
Stop by during Drop-In Hours; drop off or email your resume or cover letter for a critique: careers@csusm.edu

Craven Hall 1400
760-750-4900
www.csusm.edu/careers

Office Hours: Monday–Thursday 8:00 am–5:00 pm
Friday 8:00 am–12:00 pm

Drop-in Hours: Check with the Career Center for this semester’s drop-in times
SEVEN STEPS TO TAKE IN COLLEGE
TO LAND A JOB OR GO TO GRAD SCHOOL

Freshman Year

Get to Know Yourself and Your Environment
1. Take self-assessments to identify majors and careers that match your interests, skills, values, personality preferences and strengths.
2. Read about majors and occupations of interest on websites and databases. Visit the Career Center for assistance.
3. Take a class that interests you to determine if you want to major in this subject.
4. Join student organizations to develop interpersonal and leadership skills and gain experience interacting with diverse groups of people.
5. Meet with an academic advisor to plan your classes or with a career counselor to discuss major options.
6. Register for CougarJOBS, the Career Center’s online job listings, at the Career Center website: <www.csusm.edu/careers>

Summer After Freshman Year
7. Volunteer or get a summer job (if you're not already working) to gain experience.

Sophomore Year

Start to Focus on Your Major and Career
1. Read books and articles about industries and occupations of interest.
2. Conduct informational interviews with people whose occupations interest you.
3. Take additional classes in subjects of interest to decide on a major before junior year.
4. Create a resume and cover letter. Attend a resume workshop through the Career Center for assistance and have your resume reviewed by a career counselor.
5. Join clubs and organizations on and off campus.

Summer After Sophomore Year
6. Get a summer job to continue gaining work experience and exposure to different occupations.
7. Develop job-related skills at your work site – communication, teamwork, technology, and writing skills.
SEVEN STEPS TO TAKE IN COLLEGE
TO LAND A JOB OR GO TO GRAD SCHOOL
(continued)

Junior Year

Test the Waters

1. Meet with a career counselor to clarify your career direction and formulate your career
action plan.
2. If graduate or professional school is in your future, research programs and entrance
requirements.
3. Establish and maintain professional relationships with faculty, counselors, and
employers. Network! Develop your personal network to create job leads and serve as a
reference for graduate school.
4. Review and update your resume and job search correspondence. Attend seminars and
workshops on resume writing, cover letters, and effective interviewing techniques.
5. Seek out internship experiences to gain practical skills and to check for fit within that
career.

Summer After Junior Year

6. Get a summer job or internship in your chosen field …or both!
7. Start preparing your graduate school applications.

Senior Year

Prepare for Graduation – Look for a Job or Apply to Graduate School

1. Rev up your job search campaign. Network, network, and network some more.
2. Take a leadership role in clubs and organizations on or off campus.
3. Meet with a career counselor for job search assistance and learn how to tap into the
“hidden job market.” Use the internet to thoroughly research employers.
4. Check the Career Center website often for CougarJOBS listings and information about
upcoming events.
5. Have your resume critiqued by the Career Center and schedule a mock interview. Learn
professional etiquette by attending the etiquette dinner.
6. Apply to graduate and/or professional school if that is part of your plan. Take any
required entrance exams – GRE, GMAT, LSAT or others.
7. Consider any job offers or graduate school acceptances and accept the one that best fits
your career needs. Career counselors can help you negotiate multiple offers.

Upon Graduation, join the CSUSM Alumni Association for continued access to Career Center
services.