

CAREER & LIFE READINESS GUIDE

Inspiring lifelong career growth and professional success.



Saint Xavier
UNIVERSITY

SXU.EDU | KEYWORD: CAREER DEVELOPMENT

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CAREER AND LIFE READINESS

INSPIRING LIFELONG CAREER GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.

Saint Xavier University's Career and Life Readiness framework prepares students for professional success and personal fulfillment. Grounded in NACE Career Readiness Competencies, SXU's mission, and Mercy values, the framework integrates ethical leadership, service, and a commitment to the common good across ten core competencies. These competencies help students develop the knowledge, experiences, and transferable skills to thrive in their careers, relationships, communities, and personal lives.

When students graduate from SXU, they leave with more than a diploma—they have experiences and skills that demonstrate the following:



1. Career and Self-Development

Students reflect on their strengths, identities, and goals, grounded in SXU's Mercy values, so they can thoughtfully explore, plan, and manage their college, career, and life pathways as part of Learning for Life.

2. Communication

Students communicate clearly, ethically, and persuasively across written, oral, visual, digital, interpersonal, and professional contexts in ways that respect the dignity of every person.

3. Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making

Students analyze information, evaluate evidence, and search for truth as they solve problems, make ethically informed decisions, and respond effectively to complex situations in ways that serve the common good.

4. Equity, Inclusion, Intercultural Fluency, and Community Engagement

Students understand the social, cultural, ethical, and systemic dimensions of work and life, engage respectfully across differences, and help build inclusive communities while honoring the dignity of every person.

5. Leadership, Collaboration, and Teamwork

Students work effectively with others, build trust, manage conflict, contribute to shared goals, and exercise ethical leadership with or without formal authority in ways that advance the genuine well-being of the community.

6. Professionalism, Work Ethic, and Accountability

Students demonstrate reliability, ethical judgment, initiative, preparation, follow-through, adaptability, and respect for workplace and professional norms through a commitment to Excellence.

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7. Technology, Digital Fluency, Data Literacy, and AI Readiness

Students use digital tools, data, emerging technologies, and artificial intelligence responsibly, ethically, and strategically to learn, communicate, solve problems, and contribute to the common good.

8. Research, Inquiry, Information Literacy, and Evidence-Based Practice

Students locate, evaluate, generate, and apply information ethically to answer questions, solve problems, and advance knowledge or practice.

9. Well-Being, Resilience, Purpose, and Life Design

Students develop self-awareness, resilience, wellness strategies, purpose, adaptability, and the ability to design meaningful lives and careers through reflection, experimentation, and revision.

10. Experiential Learning, Networking, and Career Mobility

Students build confidence, professional connections, applied experience, and evidence of readiness through internships, clinicals, research, service learning, student employment, fieldwork, leadership, mentoring, and community-engaged experiences.



Saint Xavier University, a Catholic institution inspired by the heritage of the Sisters of Mercy, educates persons to search for truth, to think critically, to communicate effectively, and to serve wisely and compassionately in support of human dignity and the common good.

FOUR-YEAR SUCCESS PLAN

INSPIRING LIFELONG CAREER GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.

First Year: Explore Interests

Start strong by getting connected—download and log in to Navigate, meet with your academic advisor, and learn how to register for classes using Student Planning. Begin exploring majors through virtual career tools and take career assessments to better understand your interests, values, and strengths. Build effective study habits, meet with learning support staff, and get involved on campus. Set up your Handshake profile, attend the College-to-Career Expo, and schedule a first meeting with a career advisor.

Second Year: Choose a Path

Clarify your direction—declare a major if you haven't already, and connect your interests and strengths with potential career goals. Conduct informational interviews, build your resume, and explore internships or volunteer opportunities. Take advantage of tutoring, leadership roles, and workshops. Begin networking, create a LinkedIn profile, and practice your elevator pitch.

Third Year: Enhance Professional Skills

Deepen your experience and prepare for the next step. Apply for internships, update your resume, and participate in mock interviews. Network with professionals in your field, explore graduate or professional school options, and clean up your digital presence. Attend career expos, consider tutoring in your major, and continue engaging with career resources.

Fourth Year: Prepare for Next Steps

Finish strong—meet with your advisor to finalize your academic plan and begin your job search early. Polish your resume and cover letters, attend job fairs, and apply for full-time roles through Handshake. Identify references, complete graduate school applications, and research employers. Use your network, update LinkedIn and Handshake, and visit writing consultants for help with graduate statements or senior projects.

Summers

Use each summer to gain real-world experience—whether it's internships, volunteer work, or pre-professional opportunities. Every experience builds your skills, strengthens your resume, and helps you stand out to future employers.



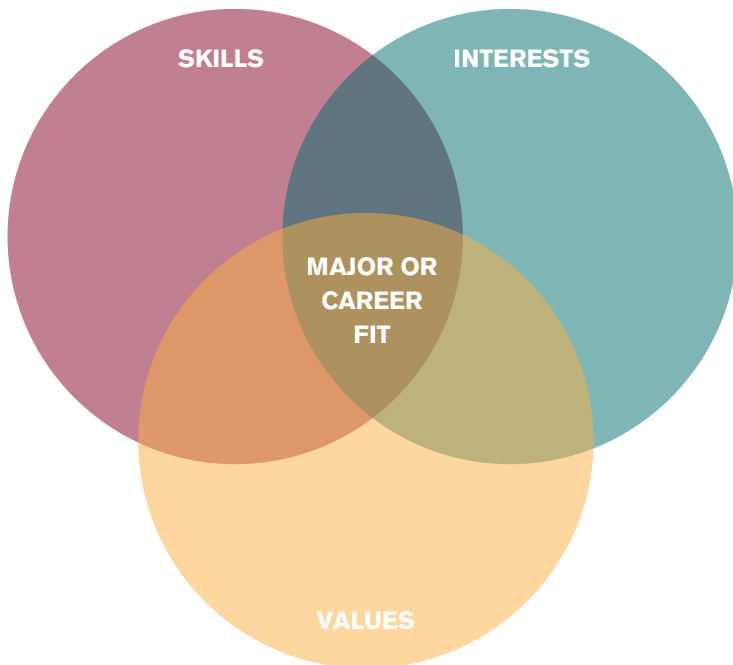
FOR A MORE DETAILED PLAN, VISIT WWW.SXU.EDU, KEYWORD: FOUR-YEAR SUCCESS PLAN.

CAREER AND MAJOR EXPLORATION

INSPIRING LIFELONG CAREER GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.

SELF-AWARENESS

When narrowing down major and career options, consider the skills that you already have or know that you can acquire as well as your interests and values. Use these as a checklist to narrow down your options when debating whether or not various majors, jobs or career paths are for you. Use the following diagram to determine whether or not a major or career is a good fit based on your current skillset or abilities, your interests, and your personal and/or professional values:



In addition to these considerations, the Japanese concept of Ikigai, which means "a reason for being," can help you identify your purpose through four questions:

- What do you love?
- What does the world need?
- What are you good at?
- What can you get paid for?

Use the worksheet on the following page to map out your "reason for being." Feel free to schedule an appointment with a career advisor to review your Ikigai and connect it to possible majors and career paths.

RESOURCES

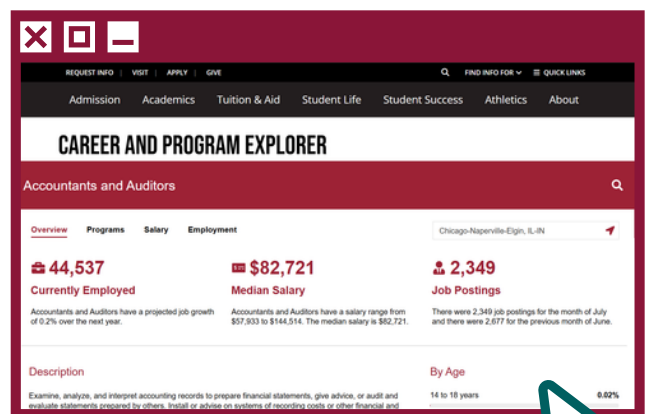
Visit the Career Development Center website to explore various resources for major and career exploration, which include:

- Job and employer information for each major
- State and national labor statistics
- Career planning tool kits
- Occupational outlook and salary information

For information about resources, visit sxu.edu, keyword: Career and Major Exploration.

EXPLORE

With SXU's Career and Program Explorer, you can explore careers that match your interests and goals. You can learn about different occupations, discover related academic programs and majors, and compare career options to help you make informed decisions about your education and future.



Check it out today!
sxu.edu keyword:
career explorer

CAREER AND MAJOR EXPLORATION

INSPIRING LIFELONG CAREER GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.

**WHAT DO YOU
LOVE?**

**WHAT DOES THE
WORLD NEED?**

IKIGAI

**WHAT ARE YOU
GOOD AT?**

**WHAT CAN YOU
GET PAID FOR?**

FORAGE - JOB SIMULATIONS

INSPIRING LIFELONG CAREER GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.

WHAT IS FORAGE?

Forage is a FREE online resource that offer virtual day-in-the-life experience programs designed by leading companies. Develop your skills and gain a better understanding of different roles and sectors by working through these self-paced modules that utilize tasks similar to those you would undertake during a traditional internship.

During the program, you will work through a set of materials and tasks set by leading companies, which are designed to replicate the sort of work that you would undertake while working for that company. All Forage programs are self-paced (taking between 2 to 4 hours to complete) ensuring ultimate flexibility!

THESE PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

- Video instructions and materials created by employees within your chosen organization/field.
- Work that reflects real day-to-day tasks of interns and graduates.

Career Interest All >

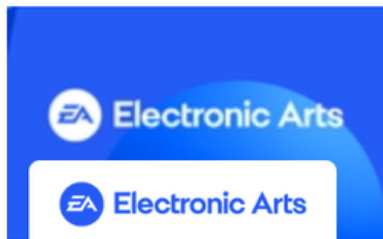
Company All >

☐

Show me new simulations

HIRING NOW

HIRING NOW



Electronic Arts

Product Management

📁 Project Management

● ● ● Introductory ⌚ 1-2 hours



J.P. Morgan

Software Engineering

📁 Software Engineering

⌚ 4-5 hours



KPMG U.S.

**Career Catalyst:
Advisory**

📁 Consulting

● ● ● Intermediate

⌚ 4-5 hours

Forage also includes a number of Career Readiness tools and Micro Workshops, like “How to Get Hired.”

THIS 5-PART SERIES WILL SHOW YOU HOW TO INCREASE YOUR CHANCES OF GETTING HIRED. LEARN HOW TO NETWORK, GET EXPERIENCE WITHOUT EXPERIENCE, BUILD YOUR RESUME AND MORE.



RESUME GUIDELINES

INSPIRING LIFELONG CAREER GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.

NAME

Phone Number | Email Address | LinkedIn or Digital Portfolio URL

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Clear statement of your career goals (for entry-level positions), OR a snapshot of your professional experience (for those with work history).

EDUCATION

Name of School, City, State

Title of Degree, Expected Graduation Date

Include Major, Minor, and or Concentration

GPA: X.X/4.0 (if above a 3.0)

RELEVANT COURSEWORK (OPTIONAL)

- List 4-8 advanced courses in column format to save space

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

Job Title, Company, City, State

Month Year - Month Year

- Include 3-5 bullets describing your responsibilities
- Start bullets with action verbs (e.g., maintain, assist, coordinate)

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

- Job Title, Company, City, State, Month Year - Month Year

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

- Follow formatting guidelines for General Work Experience

AWARDS, HONORS, and/or ACHIEVEMENTS

- Name of award, organization received from, Month Year - Month Year

MEMBERSHIPS

- Title, Organization Name, Affiliation, Month Year - Month Year

CERTIFICATIONS or LICENSES

- Name of certification or license, organization, date received or expiration

SKILLS or ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Computer, lab and special equipment skills
- Foreign language (include fluency)
- Leadership skills
- International experience or travel
- Conferences, presentations or relevant projects
- Honors or awards if not creating a full category
- Military experience

HEADING: To prevent bias and ensure safety, do not include a street address, city, state or ZIP code in your contact information.

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY: Brief, concise paragraph referencing your relevant qualifications, skills, experiences and notable achievements.

EDUCATION: List your GPA (if above a 3.0) if you are a current student or recent undergraduate alum.

EXPERIENCE: All experiences should be in reverse-chronological order, meaning most recent to least recent.

Use the appropriate verb tense. If a position is in the past use the past-tense (e.g., "maintained, assisted, coordinated").



RESUME CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Traditional font (10-12 pt)
- ☐ Consistent format and spacing
- ☐ Margins are 0.5-1 inch around
- ☐ Professional Summary is optional
- ☐ Includes dates for all experiences
- ☐ Does not exceed 1-2 pages
- ☐ Does not include references
- ☐ No personal pronouns (I, Me, My)
- ☐ Verb tense matches dates
- ☐ Reverse-chronological order
- ☐ Free of typos and errors
- ☐ Reviewed by a career advisor

RESUME TEMPLATES

INSPIRING LIFELONG CAREER GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.

RESUME TEMPLATES

Creating a strong resume is an essential step toward launching your career. To help you get started, we've provided a collection of editable resume templates tailored to different levels of experience and academic majors. Follow the steps below to access and use them effectively.

STEP 1: LOCATE THE RESUME TEMPLATES

All resume templates are available via the link or QR code below. Choose the template that best fits your current situation.

New to the Workforce / No Work Experience:

If you are just beginning your career and have no work or volunteer experience, consider using this resume format.

Entry Level / Some Work Experience:

If you have some work experience, which may or may not apply to the position you're seeking, try one of these.

Standard Experience-based Resume:

For most applicants with two or more work experiences, these options should prove as good starting points.

Major Specific Resume Templates:

Some majors have specific needs/layout elements that should be considered. We have provided some major-specific templates to use.



First and Last Name	
Phone Number Email LinkedIn Profile (hyperlinked)	
PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY (optional) A snapshot of your skills, experience and qualifications for a specific job.	
EDUCATION Saint Xavier University, Chicago, Illinois Bachelor of Science, Major and Minor August 20XX GPA: (optional) Expected Graduation Date:	
RELEVANT COURSEWORK (optional) • Name of course and code. Advanced classes only (3-4).	
SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES Create a bullet point list or categorized section of your top skills relevant to your career. Example: • Leadership and Team Management • Customer Service and Client Relations • Data Analysis and Reporting • Technical Proficiency (Software/Tools)	
WORK EXPERIENCE Job Title, Company Name, City and State • 3-5 of your most relevant job responsibilities. • Use action verbs. August 20XX – January 20XX	
WORK/VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE • Job Title, Company Name, City and State August 20XX – January 20XX	
CERTIFICATIONS or LICENSES Name of Certification (include organization received from) Month, Year August 20XX	
HONORS, ACHIEVEMENTS AND AWARDS (if applicable) • Name of Honor, Company/School August 20XX	
MEMBERSHIPS (academic or professional - if applicable) • Title, Name of Organization, School/Company August 20XX – January 20XX	

STEP 2: CUSTOMIZE YOUR RESUME

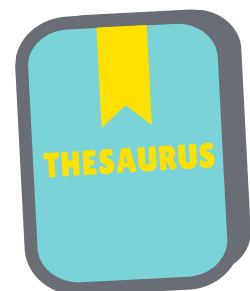
1. Download the .docx file by clicking on the link.
2. Open the file using Microsoft Word.
3. Replace placeholder content with your personal information, including your:
 - Name and contact info
 - Education details
 - Relevant experience (work, volunteer, internships)
 - Skills, certifications, or honors
4. Tailor your resume to match the job description you're applying for.
5. Save your updated resume with a professional file name (e.g., Firstname_Lastname_Resume.docx).

For additional help with editing or tailoring your resume, consider scheduling an appointment with one of our career staff. You can also scan the QR code to access the resume, cover letter, and references templates.

ACTION VERBS

INSPIRING LIFELONG CAREER GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.

Accelerated	Centralized	Disclosed	Hosted	Narrated	Reduced	Staffed
Accompanied	Challenged	Discovered	Identified	Negotiated	Referred	Standardized
Accomplished	Chaired	Displayed	Illustrated	Observed	Refined	Strengthened
Achieved	Circulated	Distinguished	Implemented	Obtained	Regained	Stressed
Acquired	Clarified	Distributed	Improved	Offered	Regulated	Structured
Acted	Classified	Diversified	Improvised	Offset	Rehabilitated	Submitted
Activated	Cleared	Documented	Increased	Opened	Reinforced	Suggested
Adapted	Closed	Doubled	Influenced	Operated	Rejected	Summarized
Added	Collaborated	Drafted	Informed	Ordered	Remodeled	Supervised
Addressed	Collected	Earned	Initiated	Organized	Reorganized	Supplied
Adhered	Combined	Edited	Innovated	Overhauled	Replaced	Supported
Adjusted	Committed	Elected	Inquired	Oversaw	Repaired	Surpassed
Administered	Compared	Eliminated	Inspected	Participated	Reported	Surveyed
Admitted	Compiled	Enabled	Inspired	Passed	Represented	Targeted
Adopted	Completed	Enforced	Installed	Performed	Requested	Taught
Advanced	Composed	Engaged	Instilled	Permitted	Researched	Tested
Advertised	Computed	Engineered	Instituted	Persuaded	Resolved	Traded
Advised	Concluded	Enriched	Instructed	Planned	Responded	Trained
Aided	Condensed	Established	Insured	Prepared	Restored	Transferred
Allocated	Conducted	Estimated	Interfaced	Presented	Restructured	Transformed
Altered	Conferred	Evaluated	Interpreted	Preserved	Retrieved	Translated
Amplified	Consolidated	Examined	Interviewed	Prevented	Revamped	Transported
Analyzed	Constructed	Exchanged	Introduced	Prioritized	Revealed	Treated
Anticipated	Consulted	Executed	Invented	Processed	Reviewed	Uncovered
Appointed	Contracted	Expanded	Invested	Produced	Revised	Unified
Appraised	Contributed	Expedited	Investigated	Profiled	Rewarded	United
Approached	Controlled	Explained	Invited	Programmed	Scheduled	Updated
Arranged	Converted	Extended	Issued	Promoted	Secured	Upgraded
Asked	Convinced	Extracted	Joined	Prompted	Selected	Used
Assembled	Coordinated	Facilitated	Launched	Proposed	Separated	Utilized
Assumed	Corrected	Familiarized	Lectured	Proved	Served	Validated
Assessed	Counseled	Focused	Led	Provided	Settled	Verified
Assisted	Counted	Formalized	Located	Publicized	Signed	Visited
Attained	Created	Formed	Maintained	Published	Solved	Viewed
Attracted	Critiqued	Formulated	Managed	Purchased	Specified	Weighed
Audited	Decided	Found	Marketed	Pursued	Speculated	Welcomed
Authored	Decreased	Founded	Maximized	Quoted	Spread	Worked
Authorized	Defined	Framed	Measured	Raised	Stabilized	Yielded
Automated	Delegated	Fulfilled	Merchandised	Ranked		
Balanced	Delivered	Gained	Merged	Rated		
Bargained	Demonstrated	Gathered	Minimized	Sold		
Borrowed	Described	Generated	Modeled	Reacted		
Bought	Designed	Granted	Modified	Received		
Budgeted	Determined	Grouped	Monitored	Reconciled		
Built	Developed	Guided	Motivated	Recorded		
Calculated	Devised	Handled	Moved	Recovered		
Captured	Directed	Hired	Multiplied	Recruited		



WRITING A COVER LETTER

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NAME

Phone Number | Email Address | LinkedIn or Digital Portfolio URL

Date

Name of Contact Person

His/Her Title

Organization Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Dear [Insert Name of Person],

OPENING PARAGRAPH

Explain why you are writing; identify the position and your source of information. Indicate in summary form your strongest qualifications for the position using a series of phrases.

BODY PARAGRAPHS (2)

Outline your strongest qualifications in more detail and show how they match the position requirements. As much as possible, provide evidence of your related work, extracurricular, and academic experiences and accomplishments. Refer to your enclosed resume.

Convince the employer that you have the personal qualities and motivation to succeed. Relate your interests and qualities to your knowledge of the company.

CLOSING PARAGRAPH

Reiterate your interest and an opportunity to discuss your qualifications further in an interview. Indicate how you can be contacted, including phone number and email address, and thank the reader for his/her consideration.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Use the same header as your resume.

Avoid cliché phrases such as "To Whom It May Concern." Instead, use "Dear Hiring Manager/Committee."



COVER LETTER CHECKLIST:

- ☐ Traditional font (10-12 pt)
- ☐ Consistent format and spacing
- ☐ Include dates for all experiences
- ☐ Do not exceed 1 page
- ☐ Highlights 2-3 qualifications
- ☐ Do not overuse the pronoun "I"
- ☐ Customized for the job/employer
- ☐ Free of typos and errors
- ☐ Reviewed by a career advisor

REFERENCES

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NAME

Phone Number | Email Address | LinkedIn or Digital Portfolio URL

Use the same header as your resume.

REFERENCES

Name
Job Title
Company Name
City, State
Email
Phone Number

Name
Job Title
Company Name
City, State
Email
Phone Number

Name
Job Title
Company Name
City, State
Email
Phone Number

Name
Job Title
Company Name
City, State
Email
Phone Number

Name
Job Title
Company Name
City, State
Email
Phone Number



Include 3-5 professional references; do not include family or friends. Let your references know that you are listing them as a career reference.

JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES

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PREPARATION

Before you conduct a job search, you will need to make sure you are prepared; this preparation can begin as early as your first year of college:

- Develop relevant skills through jobs and internships.
- Prepare your resume and cover letter.
- Identify areas of interest and use available career resources.
- Create a LinkedIn profile and build your network.
- Perfect your elevator speech and practice it at events.
- Attend networking events and the College-to-Career Expo.

For preparation suggestions by year, please review the Four-Year Success Plan.

WAYS TO SEARCH

There are a variety of ways to search for positions, including browsing general and major-specific job search websites, attending professional events (networking nights and job fairs), joining professional organizations, and networking both in person and online.

For internship and job search resources, including resources by major, please visit sxu.edu, keyword: Internship and Job Search.

NAVIGATING JOB FAIRS

Navigating a job fair for the first time can be intimidating, but following these tips will help you make sure you do it right:

- Develop a plan and research the companies ahead of time.
- Bring copies of your resume with you to hand out.
- Dress and act professionally.
- Use a prepared elevator speech to introduce yourself.
- Be mindful of body language (e.g., eye contact, hand shake, etc.).
- Collect business cards and connect with employers after.

Think outside of the box when talking to employers at job fairs. Many employers hire for all majors, and you never know when an employer might have an opportunity for you!

PART-TIME JOBS

Finding part-time work while in school can help you pay for the cost of school as well as allow you to develop skills necessary for employment after graduation. Here are some tips to get started with a part-time job search:

- Consider the skills you will need to develop.
- Determine the number of hours you can work.
- Identify your transportation needs.
- Explore popular part-time job search websites.
- Check the bulletin boards around campus.

Federal Work Study-eligible students may find on-campus positions through the Federal Work Study Program. For more information about this program, visit sxu.edu, keyword: Student Employment.

RESOURCES

- indeed.com
- careerbuilder.com
- internjobs.com
- internships.com
- internshipprograms.com
- volunteermatch.org
- care.com
- linkedin.com
- glassdoor.com



Remember to use Handshake to search for part-time and full-time jobs, internships and volunteer opportunities: sxu.joinhandshake.com.

UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS

INSPIRING LIFELONG CAREER GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.

WE SUPPORT YOU!

At Saint Xavier University, Career Development is committed to supporting undocumented students as they explore and pursue meaningful career pathways. Rooted in our Mercy mission, we strive to provide a welcoming and inclusive environment where all students are treated with dignity, supported with compassion, and empowered to achieve their personal and professional goals.

We recognize that undocumented students may navigate unique considerations throughout the career development process. Whether you are preparing application materials, exploring opportunities, or making decisions about your next steps, our team is here to offer guidance, resources, and individualized support.

QUICK FACTS

- If you have Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), you are legally authorized to work in the United States
- Employers should not ask how you obtained your work authorization
- You are not required to disclose your immigration status on a resume or cover letter
- An Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) may be used for certain types of work, regardless of immigration status
- Students may also consider alternative pathways, including independent contracting, freelancing, or entrepreneurship.
- Career Development staff are available to help you navigate applications, interviews, and next steps

WORK AUTHORIZATION

Many job and internship applications ask, "Are you legally authorized to work in the United States?" Understanding how to approach this question can help you move forward with confidence.

If you have DACA, you may answer "yes" to this question and continue through the hiring process. If you do not currently have work authorization, there are still meaningful ways to build experience and move toward your goals. These may include internships (when eligible), fellowships, entrepreneurship, or independent contract work.

Our team can help you explore pathways that align with your circumstances and aspirations.

PATHWAYS TO WORK

Students may also consider alternative pathways, including independent contracting, freelancing, or entrepreneurship. These opportunities can allow you to build experience, develop professional skills, and generate income. In some cases, individuals use an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) for certain types of work. To learn more about entrepreneurship and independent work, visit Immigrants Rising for guides and training resources designed specifically for undocumented individuals.

For more information about work authorization, employment rights, and tax identification numbers, visit the National Immigrant Law Center.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

At Saint Xavier University, we are committed to fostering a community where all students are supported in their growth and success. Your experiences, perspectives, and contributions matter. We are here to walk alongside you as you take the next steps in your career journey. Please visit our website for more information, or feel free to schedule an appointment for career coaching with one of our professional career staff.



INTERNSHIPS

INSPIRING LIFELONG CAREER GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.

WHAT IS AN INTERNSHIP?

An internship is a professional learning experience that offers meaningful, practical work related to a student's field of study or career interest. An internship gives a student the opportunity for career exploration and development and to learn new skills. It offers the employer the opportunity to bring new ideas and energy into the workplace, develop talent, and potentially build a pipeline for future full-time employees.

QUALITY INTERNSHIP

- Consists of a part-time or full-time work schedule that includes no more than 25 percent clerical or administrative duties.
- Provides a clear job/project description for the work experience.
- Orients the student to the organization, its culture, and proposed work assignment(s).
- Helps the student develop and achieve learning goals.
- Offers regular feedback to the student intern.

In addition, internships allow you to:

- Increase your marketability and value to employers after graduation.
- Possibly earn money to offset educational expenses.
- Affirm your interest in your major or academic work.
- Identify interests and talents and explore options within your field.
- Build a professional network needed for an effective job search.
- Possibly earn academic credit outside the classroom.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INTERNSHIP AND RESEARCH

Internships are supervised, structured learning experiences in a professional setting that allow you to gain valuable work experience in your chosen field of study. Internships require a minimum of 120 hours (typically, at least 10 hours per week during the fall and spring and either part-time or full-time during the summer).

Research opportunities are available both on and off campus. These experiences offer a unique way to better understand a student's academic interests and consider how graduate school may play a role in future paths. Funding may be available for these experiences through organizations like the National Science Foundation (NSF).

PRE-PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

There are a number of ways for you to gain experience toward a career field of interest during your time at Saint Xavier University, including participating in internships, joining a registered student organization, studying abroad, finding an on-campus position, participating in leadership initiatives, conducting research, or volunteering.

Gaining pre-professional experience allows you to:

- Explore potential occupations that interest you.
- Develop experience and skill sets that are desired by employers.
- Work on your weaknesses before entering your profession.
- Develop a professional network.
- Increase your marketability to employers after graduation.



MICRO-INTERNSHIPS

INSPIRING LIFELONG CAREER GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.

WHAT IS IT?

Micro-internships are short-term, paid, professional assignments that are similar to those given to new hires or interns. These projects enable students to demonstrate skills, explore career paths and build their networks as they seek the right full-time role.

Unlike traditional internships, micro-internships can take place year-round, typically range from 5 to 40 hours of work, and are due between one week and one month after kick-off. Micro-internships are used by companies ranging from those in the Fortune 100 to emerging start-ups and go across departments, including sales, marketing, technology, HR and finance.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Saint Xavier University partnered with Parker Dewey to provide micro-internship opportunities to students. To create an account and apply for micro-internships, visit the SXU Parker Dewey landing page:



[HTTP://INFO.PARKERDEWEY.COM/SXU](http://info.parkerdewey.com/sxu)

1) EMPLOYERS POST
POSITIONS ON THE
PARKER DEWEY WEBSITE



2) STUDENTS
APPLY FOR MICRO-
INTERNSHIPS



3) EMPLOYERS
CHOOSE A
CANDIDATE THAT
FITS THEIR NEEDS



4) STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE
THEIR SKILLS AND GAIN
EXPERIENCE



NETWORKING 101

INSPIRING LIFELONG CAREER GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.

WHY NETWORKING?

It is estimated that more than half of positions are found through networking and who you know. Networking is the process of building mutually beneficial relationships with individuals over time to explore potential majors, careers, positions and organizations, as well as gain a list of industry contacts and helpful resources.

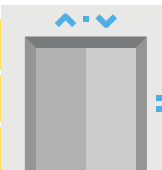
You can network with anyone from family, friends and professors to industry professionals just about anywhere (e.g., weddings, grocery stores, job fairs, conferences or even online).

HOW TO NETWORK

Whether you are looking for a new job or wanting to learn more about an industry, you will need to prepare a game plan and know how to introduce yourself. You can do this through an elevator speech.

An elevator speech is a brief 30-second introduction of yourself that identifies who you are as a professional and what you can offer an employer. Prepare an outline and cast your NETS (Name, Education, Target Job, and Skills):

N:	
E:	
T:	
S:	



Remember to maintain eye contact, sound natural, and remain engaging when delivering your elevator speech. It will be awkward at first, but with practice, you will get better!

If you are looking to learn more about an industry, you can use your elevator speech to introduce yourself to potential contacts and conduct an informational interview. An informational interview is an informal conversation where you ask questions with the intent of learning more about a person's field or position. Informational interviews can take place in person, over the phone, through email or through social media.

There are a variety of questions that you can ask someone during an informational interview, including:

- What was your major in college?
- What was your first job after college?
- What tasks did it entail?
- How did you get your first job in your field?
- What kinds of tasks do you perform?
- What is the most rewarding aspect of your job?
- What are the key experiences or skills needed?
- What college courses would best help me prepare for a career in this field?

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media has expanded how we network and how frequently we engage with others. We have the capability to engage with various audiences and connect with professionals globally. When used correctly and professionally, any social media platform can help expand your network! The most commonly used platform for networking is LinkedIn, which can help you find jobs, make industry contacts, and learn about companies:



KEEP IN MIND

Always present yourself professionally, especially on social media, and continue to network even when not job searching. You never know who might be your next boss or when your next job might present itself. It is always a great idea to connect with people you meet on LinkedIn and follow up with contacts frequently.

MASTERING AN INTERVIEW

INSPIRING LIFELONG CAREER GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.

THE PROCESS

Interviewing can be a stressful process and preparation, and following a few suggestions can alleviate jitters!

BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

- Know yourself, including skills and experience.
- Research the employer and position.
- Prepare your outfit before the interview.
- Print copies of your resume and references to bring.
- Practice common interviewing questions ahead of time.
- Prepare questions for the interviewer.

DURING THE INTERVIEW

- Dress and act professionally.
- Be assertive and confident, but let the employer lead the interview.
- Make eye contact and smile throughout the interview.
- Be mindful of body language (e.g., posture and a firm handshake).
- Make a great first impression and arrive 10-15 minutes early.
- Try to remember names and ask for business cards when possible.
- Do not be the first to ask questions about salary or benefits.
- Ask 3-5 questions to demonstrate genuine interest in the position.

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- Thank the interviewers and shake hands with each person.
- Ask for next steps in the interview process.
- Send a thank you letter to each interviewer within 48 hours.
- Follow up with additional materials requested by the interviewer.

THANK YOU LETTERS

First paragraph: Thank the interviewer for the opportunity and their time.

Second paragraph: Sell yourself again and remind the interviewer why you are qualified for the position. Introduce any information you may have forgotten to discuss in the interview.

Third paragraph: Reiterate your interest in the position and let the interviewer know you look forward to hearing from them in the future.

WHAT TO WEAR

BUSINESS PROFESSIONAL



- Matching suit or skirt
- Solid, dark, or neutral colors
- Light colors underneath
- Closed-toe heels or dress shoes
- Belts should match shoes and attire

WEAR BUSINESS PROFESSIONAL TO AN INTERVIEW IF IN DOUBT

BUSINESS CASUAL

- Pants, slacks, dresses or skirts
- No jeans, shorts, sundresses, flip-flops or athletic wear
- Skirts should be knee-length when standing



DAILY WORK ATTIRE

OTHER TIPS



HAIR AND NAILS SHOULD BE WELL-GROOMED.



MAKEUP, JEWELRY AND FRAGRANCE SHOULD BE MODERATE.



PIERCINGS AND TATTOOS ALIGNED TO COMPANY STANDARDS.



CLOTHES (AND SHOES) SHOULD BE CLEAN, TAILORED AND WRINKLE-FREE.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INSPIRING LIFELONG CAREER GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.

COMMON QUESTIONS

An interview is much like a paper you write for class. There is an introduction, content supported by evidence and a conclusion. Knowing how to approach some of the commonly asked questions will make an interview easier:

Tell me about yourself:

Much like the introduction of a paper, this 1-2 minute response outlines what you will talk about in more detail throughout the interview. This is a snapshot of your education, work experience and extracurricular involvement.

What are your strengths?

List 2-3 strengths and use examples from your past experiences to back up the claims you make.

What are your weaknesses?

Admit a minor weakness and explain how you are working to eliminate the weakness or turn it into a strength.

What do you know about our company?

Employers ask this question to determine how much research you have done about a company or position before an interview. Look up information about the company before the interview. This will show genuine interest.

What are your salary expectations?

This is not a salary negotiation; rather, the employer is using this question to determine whether or not you have realistic expectations. Use websites like LinkedIn or Glassdoor to find the average salary for a position based on the city and state and give a range around the average.

What are your short-term and long-term goals?

Employers use this question to evaluate how realistic your goals are and how a position within their company might help you accomplish these goals.

Why should we hire you?

This question is like the concluding paragraph of a paper. It is your last chance to pull everything together and make a final pitch of your qualifications as it relates directly to the job description.



WHEN ASKED TO RELAY A NEGATIVE SITUATION, PUT A POSITIVE SPIN ON IT OR TALK ABOUT HOW YOU TURNED SOMETHING INTO A STRENGTH!



SALARY EXPECTATION EXAMPLE: BASED ON MY RESEARCH, I FOUND THAT THE AVERAGE SALARY FOR THIS POSITION IN CHICAGO IS \$50K. I EXPECT TO MAKE ANYWHERE FROM \$45K-\$55K.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INSPIRING LIFELONG CAREER GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.

BEHAVIORAL-BASED QUESTIONS (BBQs)

Employers use behavioral-based questions to gauge how you responded to something in the past because it is a good indication of how you might respond to something in the future. These questions typically start with phrases such as "Tell me about a time" or "Give me an example of a time when something happened."

The employer is looking for you to be specific and walk them through the situation and how you handled it. To answer these questions, use the acronym SOAR:



First, outline the situation (e.g., was it at work, in the classroom, while part of a student organization? Next, talk about the obstacle or task you faced in detail and explain why it was an obstacle for you or others around you. After the obstacle, describe the specific actions you took to overcome the obstacle.

Finally, what was the end result? Since this question is results-oriented, you will want to place a lot of emphasis on the Action and Results portion of the acronym in your narrative.

Behavioral-based questions typically come from the following categories:

TEAMWORK
PROBLEM-SOLVING
COMMUNICATION
CREATIVITY
FLEXIBILITY
ORGANIZATIONAL SKILLS

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

- Give an example of an occasion when you used logic to solve a problem.
- Give an example of a goal you reached and tell me how you achieved it.
- Have you gone above and beyond the call of duty? If so, how?
- Have you had to convince a team to work on a project they weren't thrilled about? How did you do it?
- Tell me about a time when you worked with a difficult person.
- Tell me about a time when you worked effectively under pressure.

OTHER TIPS

If you are asked a behavioral-based question and you do not have an example, do not make one up! Instead, run through the SOAR method hypothetically. Employers can easily tell when candidates are lying and not presenting factual information.

Before your next interview, write down the acronym SOAR on your notepad and bring it with you. This will help you stay on track when asking these type of questions.

BBQ INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

INSPIRING LIFELONG CAREER GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.



Below a few examples of behavioral-based questions and how these questions map to some of SXU's Career and Life Readiness Competencies:

CAREER AND LIFE READINESS COMPETENCY	BEHAVIORS DEMONSTRATING THE COMPETENCY	EXAMPLE BEHAVIORAL-BASED QUESTIONS (BBQS)
Leadership, Collaboration and Teamwork	Recognize and capitalize on personal and team strengths to achieve organization goals.	Tell me about a time when you delegated tasks to others. How did you decide what to delegate to different individuals?
Professionalism, Work Ethic, and Accountability	Knowing work environments differ greatly, understand and demonstrate effective work habits and act in the interest of the larger community and workplace.	Give an example of a time when you tried to accomplish something and failed. How did you handle the situation?
Equity, Inclusion, Intercultural Fluency, and Community Engagement	Demonstrate the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills required to equitably engage and include people from different local and global cultures. Engage in anti-racist practices that actively challenge the systems, structures, and policies of racism.	Give me an example of a time when you have worked with people who have different beliefs and values than you.
Technology, Digital Fluency, Data Literacy, and AI Readiness	Understand and leverage technologies ethically to enhance efficiencies, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.	Tell me about a time when you sought to develop technical skills with a software or tool. What was your learning process?
Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, and Decision Making	Identify and respond to needs based upon an understanding of situational context and logical analysis of relevant information.	Tell me about a difficult decision you have had to make and the reasoning you used to make the decision.

GRADUATE SCHOOL PREPARATION

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PLANNING

Attending graduate school can help you reach your career goals, including placing you a step above the competition in the job market. Meet with a career advisor to develop an appropriate timeline for the programs you are interested in. If graduate school is right for you, here are some tips to help you prepare:



DO YOUR RESEARCH

DETERMINE YOUR GRADUATE PROGRAM NEEDS AND CONTACT GRADUATE PROGRAMS YOU ARE INTERESTED IN. ASK ADVISING AND CAREER SERVICES AND PROFESSORS FOR GRADUATE SCHOOL RECOMMENDATIONS.



PREPARE FOR YOUR ADMISSIONS TEST

MANY GRADUATE SCHOOLS REQUIRE AN ADMISSIONS TEST SUCH AS THE GRE, GRADUATE RECORD EXAM, LSAT, GMAT OR MCAT. TAKE PRACTICE TESTS ONLINE.



APPLY EARLY

APPLY FOR GRADUATE SCHOOLS EARLY TO INCREASE YOUR ODDS. STARTING EARLY GIVES YOU THE CHANCE TO PREP AND POLISH YOUR APPLICATION.



GATHER RECOMMENDATION LETTERS

REACH OUT TO PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL CONTACTS TO REQUEST RECOMMENDATION LETTERS TO SUBMIT WITH YOUR APPLICATION. GIVE RECOMMENDERS AMPLE TIME TO WRITE THESE LETTERS.



CONSIDER FINANCE OPTIONS

FILE FOR FAFSA AND EXPLORE GRANTS, LOANS AND SCHOLARSHIPS. ASSISTANTSHIPS AND RESEARCH FELLOWSHIPS MAY INCLUDE TUITION WAIVERS AND STIPENDS.



WRITE YOUR PERSONAL STATEMENT

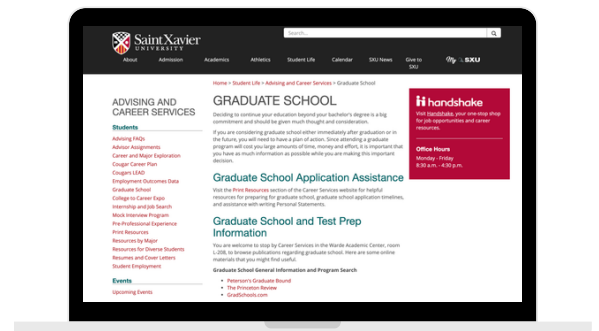
WRITING A PERSONAL STATEMENT CAN SET YOU APART FROM OTHER CANDIDATES APPLYING FOR THE PROGRAM. READ THROUGH THE PERSONAL SUMMARY RESOURCE FOR MORE INFORMATION ON WRITING THIS DOCUMENT.

GRADUATE RESOURCES

- www.gradschools.com
- www.graduateguide.com
- www.princetonreview.com
- www.usnews.com/best-graduate-schools

TEST PREP

- www.ets.org
- www.kaplan.com
- www.testprepreview.com
- www.mba.com (GMAT)
- www.ets.org/gre (GRE),
- www.lsac.org (LSAT)
- www.aamc.org/students/applying/mcat (MCAT)



SXU RESOURCES

For more information about Graduate School Preparation, visit sxu.edu, keyword: Graduate School.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

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WHAT IS IT?

Graduate and professional schools often ask for a written statement as part of the application process. Some programs will provide you with a prompt or ask you to answer specific questions. The overall purpose of the statement is to convince the admissions committee that you are the right choice!

The best way to approach your personal statement for graduate school is to imagine that you have five minutes with someone from the admissions committee. How would you go about making the best case for yourself while holding the listener's interest? What would you include and omit in your story? Figuring out the answer to these questions is critical to successfully preparing an effective statement.

WHAT TO INCLUDE:

Some programs will give you a prompt to follow. Make sure you follow this to answer all of their questions first. If you are not given a prompt or want to add more to your statement, consider talking about the following:

- Education
- Relevant experience
- Honors or awards
- Reason for selecting a major
- Reason for selecting a school
- Knowledge about the program
- Personal story
- Professional goals
- Relevant projects
- Reasons for bad grades or poor test scores (if applicable)
- Reasons you know you will be successful in the program
- Research interests



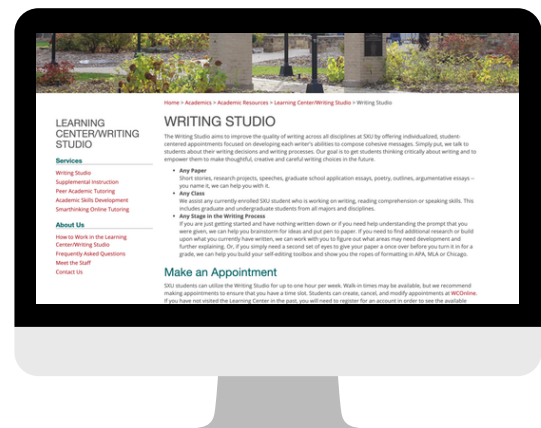
FOR MORE GRADUATE
SCHOOL PREPARATION, VISIT
SXU.EDU, KEYWORD:
GRADUATE SCHOOL.

OTHER TIPS:

- Follow application instructions first.
- Address all questions in the prompt (if any).
- Customize for each school you submit.
- Traditional font (12 pt) unless otherwise noted.
- Ensure statement is free of typos and grammatical errors.
- Include 500-1,000 words, unless otherwise noted.

RESOURCES

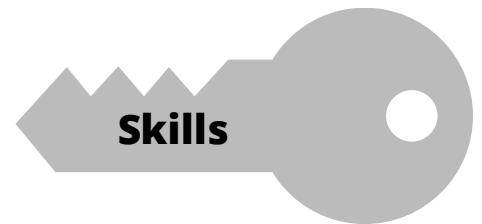
If you need assistance with your personal statement, schedule an appointment with the Center for Learning and Student Support (CLASS) to receive feedback on your document.



UNLOCKING YOUR CAREER

INSPIRING LIFELONG CAREER GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL SUCCESS.

There are three keys to unlocking the door to a successful career. These include your education, the skills you develop in and out of the classroom, and experience. Experience can include pre-professional or internship experience, involvement on campus, and even the connections you make through networking. Every encounter is an opportunity to network, and it is one of the most effective job search techniques you can use. Commit to memorizing the eight NACE Career Readiness Competencies, but more importantly, dedicate yourself to implementing all that you can to unlock the door to your dream career.



QUESTIONS? CONTACT THE CAREER
DEVELOPMENT CENTER AT
CAREERDEVELOPMENT@SXU.EDU OR SCHEDULE
AN APPOINTMENT IN NAVIGATE.

