

SPS Post-baccalaureate Career Checklist

Post-baccalaureate students are at a variety of career stages, and have diverse professional goals. Wherever you stand in this spectrum, your post-baccalaureate academic program is an ideal time to reflect on who you are and where you want your Northwestern experience to take you. Furthermore, you should maximize your NU experience by exploring all the resources available to you.

The following lists contains things to think about, resources, and action steps that are useful to all SPS students. Work with your SPS Adviser to determine where you stand in your career trajectory, and which of these items are most appropriate to your situation.

Students in shorter term programs (4-5 courses, 2-3 quarters) should talk with their SPS Adviser at least once regarding their career development. Those in longer programs (6-12 courses, up to 8 or more quarters), can maintain an ongoing dialogue with their SPS Adviser throughout their program.

Professional Development

- Meet with your [SPS Adviser](#) to learn about career services and resources.
- Discuss career plans with your [SPS Adviser](#). If you are currently employed, decide if you will remain with your current employer or if you will pursue other options.
- Develop or refine your resume and cover letter.
 - View SPS Webinars: [Resume Fundamentals](#) and [Advanced Resume Writing Strategies](#)
 - View SPS Webinar: [Cover Letters](#)
- Register for [Handshake](#), the Northwestern Career Advancement (NCA) on-line career management resource.
- Create and update your [LinkedIn](#) profile. Identify and join relevant industry, Northwestern University and SPS LinkedIn groups.

Exploring Your Career Options

- Identify professional opportunities that align with your interests, skills, values, and personality.
- Research careers, industries, and employers using [Northwestern career resources](#) such as Career Insider (Vault), Wet Feet and Hoover's.
- Decide if you want to attend graduate/professional school. If applicable, complete and submit graduate/professional school application materials at least one month prior to deadline (personal statement, transcripts, entrance exam scores, recommendations).

Build Your Network

- Have conversations with professors, personal contacts, and employers regarding your career next steps. Use informational interviewing as a way to gather more industry or employer information.
- Develop a method for tracking your networking conversations (Excel is a great option).
- Learn strategies for identifying contacts who work for specific employers.
- View SPS Webinar: [The Networking Advantage](#)
- Identify mentors who support your career goals and professional development.

The Job Search Process

- Learn about recruiting strategies for employers from your industry of interest.
- Craft a sustainable job search routine that you can manage with your busy schedule, including checking websites, researching new employers, networking with new and old contacts, and actively sending out resumes/cover letters.
- Tailor your resumes and cover letters to each job opportunity and employer, ask your [SPS Adviser](#) to do a final check.
- View SPS Webinar: [Interviewing](#)
- Discuss interviewing strategies or set-up a mock interview with your [SPS Adviser](#).
- Identify potential references and obtain permission to use their information in your applications for full-time employment or graduate programs.
- Apply for full-time positions as early as possible.
- View SPS Webinar: [Negotiating](#)