PURDUE AGRICULTURE
FOUR YEAR CAREER PLAN

BEGINNER

☐ Identify my interests, abilities, and values.
☐ Research majors that match my interests, skills, and values.
☐ Speak with an Academic Advisor or a Career Services Coordinator to gather information about potential majors/careers.
☐ Meet with a Career Consultant to discuss and create a four-year plan that works for me.
☐ Explore study abroad opportunities.
☐ Use summer experiences to develop transferable skills.
☐ Write my résumé using examples from the Center for Career Opportunities (CCO) handbook (www.cco.purdue.edu). Get it critiqued by a CCO staff member.
☐ Create a LinkedIn account and participate in the CCO virtual LinkedIn Boot Camp.
☐ Get involved with one or two organizations: one within my major, one outside my major.
☐ Visit CCO in Young Hall Room 132 for resources.
☐ Attend a Career Fair.

SOPHOMORE

☐ Review my four-year plan and adjust to stay on track.
☐ Update résumé with my freshman activities—organizations, jobs, internships, research, etc.
☐ Update my profile in myCCO. Profiles become inactive after six months.
  (Reminder: employers cannot see inactive profiles.)
☐ Attend a Career Fair to meet employers and gather information about prospective careers.
☐ Conduct informational interviews with professionals from my field of interest.
☐ Learn how to write a cover letter to accompany a résumé for a specific job opportunity.
☐ Obtain a summer internship/job to help build my job skills.
☐ Get involved in the leadership of a student organization.
☐ Add value to my résumé: learn beyond the classroom.
☐ Update LinkedIn profile.
☐ Network!!!
JUNIOR

☐ Update my résumé, and have it critiqued.
☐ Update my profile in myCCO, and upload at www.cco.purdue.edu.
☐ Reminder: I need to be active in myCCO account at least every six months to keep the account active for employers to view.
☐ Review my Career Action Plan for the next two years.
☐ Search for and apply to internships.
☐ Practice interviewing skills with the online interview program at myCCO.
☐ Participate in mock interviews for practice.
☐ Continue developing leadership skills through organizational and volunteer experiences.
☐ Develop relationships with faculty and employers to use as references.
☐ Attend employer information sessions and job fairs to build my network.
☐ Update my LinkedIN profile.
☐ Attend a Career Fair(s).
☐ Network!!!

JUNIOR – PREPARING FOR PROFESSIONAL/GRADUATE SCHOOL

☐ Identify the discipline that appeals to me.
☐ Work or volunteer in research or lab activities in this discipline.
☐ Consult advisors and professors on graduate school opportunities.
☐ Create a list of programs that I want to apply to.
☐ Determine which standardized test may be required – GRE, GMAT, LSAT, or MCAT.
☐ Take practice standardized tests.
☐ Register ahead of time for the real test, and take it. Test early in case I am not happy with my scores to provide time to retake.
☐ Check application dates – Ph.D. applications are usually due in December, while Master’s are due as early as November or as late as March. Many programs have a rolling application process.
☐ Begin crafting my personal statement and/or statement of purpose. Contact the Purdue Writing Lab for assistance. They are a great resource for creating this statement.
☐ Research financial options. Consider research assistantships, teaching assistantships, government agencies, philanthropic organizations, professional organizations, and honor societies as potential sources and funding.
☐ Attend Purdue’s Graduate School Fair in October.
SENIOR

☐ Update my résumé. Have it critiqued.
☐ Update profile in myCCO.
☐ Reminder: I need to remain active in myCCO for employers to view my profile.
☐ Develop a job-search plan.
☐ Develop my brand by clarifying my interests, abilities, values, and strengths in a unique statement about me.
☐ Polish my cover letter and written thank-you notes skills.
☐ Practice interviewing.
☐ Attend a Career Fair(s).
☐ Update my LinkedIn profile.
☐ Complete CCO’s Post-Graduation Survey. My first way to give back to Purdue!
☐ Network!!!

SENIOR – PREPARING FOR PROFESSIONAL/GRADUATE SCHOOL

☐ Meet with faculty members in my department to discuss my personal statement, program options, and potential funding sources.
☐ Talk to graduate students in these areas for their input.
☐ Identify faculty at schools that are experts in the area of my interested discipline.
☐ Finalize the list of schools I will apply to.
☐ Get organized and create a file for each school. Retain all related application material for my records.
☐ If needed, take my standardized tests again and ensure my scores are sent to the appropriate schools.
☐ Complete my personal statement and have it reviewed by faculty, academic advisors, and staff at the Center for Career Opportunities.
☐ Set up IN-PERSON meetings with faculty to request letters of recommendations. Provide them with a copy of my statement of purpose, résumé/curriculum vitae (CV), and the recommendation letter submission process and deadlines for each school.
☐ Order transcripts from all post-secondary institutions and request copies be sent to the schools I have applied to.
☐ Submit application materials one month before the application deadline. It is recommended I apply before December 1st for best consideration.
☐ Remind my recommenders of when my letters of recommendation must be received.
☐ Follow-up with the schools I have applied to and verify they have received all my application materials.
☐ Consider scheduling campus visits to the schools I’m most interested in, and with the faculty I would like to work with.
☐ Send thank-you notes to my recommenders and update them on my application status.
☐ Complete Purdue’s 1st Destination Survey. My first way to give back to Purdue!