

Start Planning Your Tomorrow, Today!

Helping Your Child Succeed

The Parent's Crash Course in Career Planning

This brochure has been developed in response to the increasing interest among parents in helping their college-age children plan for their career. Believe it or not, the number one influence on college freshmen and sophomores in choosing a major/career field is their parents. Many of today's parents realize that the job market has changed significantly from when they entered the work force, and they feel ill-prepared to advise their children. We will review the "Five Steps To Career Development" which will hopefully help in your understanding of the goals of the Office of Career Planning & Placement while also guiding you, as parents, in helping your child reach his or her full potential. As your child enters college, he or she will be faced with many decisions and challenges. Parents who ask the appropriate questions and are aware of the resources available to their child at King's College will be better able to be supportive and encouraging while their child is making important life decisions regarding major and career.

Staff

Christopher C. Sutzko, M.S., C.R.C.,
C.S.S.C., L.P.C.
Director

Anne Bramblett, M.A.
Employer/Corporate
Relations Coordinator

Kelly Lettieri M.Ed.
Career Development
Specialist

Theresa M. Kinney
Administrative Assistant

The Office of Career Planning and
Placement is located in the
Lower Level of the
Administration Building
570-208-5874

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208-5874 • theresakinney@kings.edu

The Five Steps to Career Planning

1. Self-Assessment

Parents

In helping your student choose a major, it is important for you to listen when he or she talks about this often “touchy” subject. Some students openly talk about this decision making process, while others never say a word. Be encouraging and supportive in discussing this issue without applying pressure. Ask questions or express concerns in a nonjudgmental way. Raise issues related to why they want to pursue a specific major and what they would like to accomplish by choosing it. Discuss issues related to course options and requirements, academic demands, and relevance to career goals.

Major selection can be very anxiety provoking for students! Assure your child that choosing a major is not irrevocable. The key is that they do not procrastinate about exploring the issue and gathering information to make the best informed decision

for themselves.

Your child should assess her/his:

- **Interests** - feelings of curiosity or concern about something
- **Skills** - proficiency; expertness
- **Abilities** - the quality of being able to do something
- **Values** - to regard highly

Career Planning

We have a variety of tools to specifically help students in understanding their interests, skills, abilities, and values. Examples include interest and skill assessments such as the Myers Briggs and Strong Interest Inventory.

Two one credit courses are offered in career planning:

- CARP 211 for freshman and sophomore students is an introduction to the elements of the decision-making process.
- CARP 412 for juniors and seniors assists in refining career decisions and developing effective job search skills.



Helping Your Child

Parents should:

- Encourage open communication about major and career selection
- Not be judgmental about the student’s choices
- Be patient and supportive, but raise important questions and issues

2. Research and Exploration

Parents

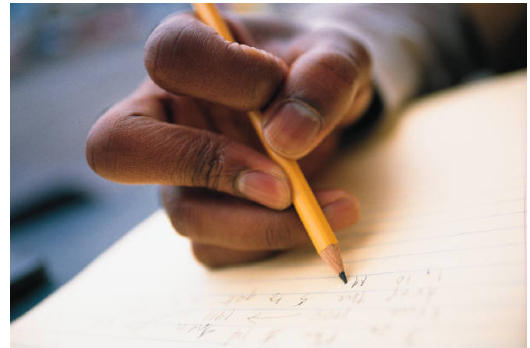
Encourage your child to read about careers in which they are interested. Have your child talk to those practicing or who have first hand knowledge about the career and exposure to the actual working environment. Some of the greatest influences in students choosing a career field are relatives and family members, along with the personal experiences of the individual student.

Help facilitate discussions with your child about major and career options with family and friends. Help them to think about important topics which only you know about your child...like do they have a problem getting up in the morning? (Timeliness) Is their room consistently a mess? (Organization) Do they get easily frustrated? (Flexibility) Are they involved with readings at church? (Public speaking/Communication).

These types of questions will encourage your child to see if his or her career choice fits with skills they have been practicing.

Career Planning

Our office has a wide variety of reference material both hard copy and technology based. We help your student develop the skills, build the confidence, learn about flexibility, give him or her needed experience and provide a four-year "laboratory" to try out new things in a supportive environment. Through counseling, core courses, ethics education and internships, King's College undergraduates are provided with the tools and technology they need to help them achieve their goals.



Helping Your Child

Parents should encourage open discussions:

- Which services does your career office offer to help students select a major or make career decisions?
- Let's talk about people we know (such as neighbors or relatives) in the fields which interest you so you can set up informational interviews with them.
- Have you sought help from the career office in developing a career plan?

3. Gaining Experience

Parents

Is your daughter/son as involved in college as they were in high school? What activities are they participating in? Numerous opportunities exist on campus for students to become involved in at least one or two extracurricular activities. Such activities provide opportunity to network with upperclassmen, develop leadership skills, and socialize with faculty and staff.

Encourage your student to visit the Office of Experiential Learning to learn more about internship opportunities. King's offers juniors and seniors with a minimum GPA level to participate in an internship for credit experience.

Students and parents often overlook summer opportunities. The summer break provides student the opportunity to learn about specific career areas through part-time work, without making any major commitments. Even if a summer job related to a career interest does not pay as much as others, the long-term benefits will be far greater for the students in the future.

Career Planning

The Office of Career Planning and Placement offers workshops and a Professional Development Seminar Series to further enhance the skills and experience of the students. We offer seminars in the following areas: executive etiquette, professional attire, interview skills, wealth management, and job search skills. The knowledge acquired in these workshops will continue to enhance the students' professional skills for years to come.



Helping Your Child

Parents should discuss:

- Which campus clubs or activities do you think would interest you? Which organizations, committees, and offices are related to your career interests? Have you looked into joining them?
- Which summer jobs do you think might be available to someone with your interest or major? Have you checked with the career office about how to obtain them?
- Have you thought about an internship? The Office of Career Planning strongly recommends credit-bearing internships for our students. For more information, please contact the Office of Experiential Learning at 208-5900, ext. 5913.
- What are some ways you could develop samples of your work to show prospective employers?
- Which of your faculty or administrators do you think might be able to serve as references for you? How will you develop a relationship with them?
- Are you planning to attend career programs offered on campus? If not, why? What programs are they offering?

4. Developing Marketable Skills

Parents

In today's market place, majors have become less important! Knowing that students can acquire skills and experience that employers seek through a variety of ways, there is less pressure for students to choose the "right" major. So what are these skills?

- a. Written and oral communication skills
- b. Leadership skills
- c. Technology skills
- d. Creative problem solving skills
- e. Diversity skills
- f. Goal oriented decision-making skills

You may often hear these skills referred to as "soft skills" within the business/employment world. Although organizations and companies are often looking for very specific technically oriented skills, the "soft skills" generally allow the employee to grow, develop, and become successful within their career.

Students who are actively involved in experience gaining activities have the greatest opportunity to practice, develop, and refine these skills.

Helping your child make connections between their activities and focusing on specific skills related to their major/career area will assist in preparing your child to be the best job candidate when they begin their employment search.

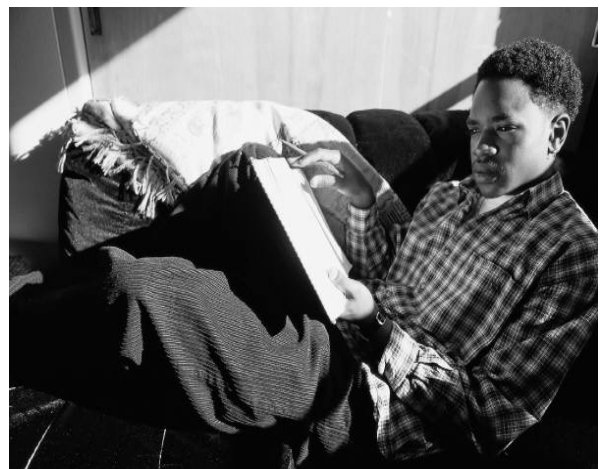


Career Planning

The Office of Career Planning and Placement has designed the On-Campus recruitment program around the skills which employers have repeatedly identified. This program supports students by introducing them to a structured interview process, which is just one tool in learning to manage their life-long professional development.

Our Counselors continue to work with students in:

- Investigating career options and developing goals
- Identifying skills, abilities and values and applying them to a career choice
- Exploring graduate and pre-professional schools
- Conducting an effective job search
- Developing and honing job search skills



5. Learning Job-Seeking Skills

Parents

Learning job-seeking skills should begin in the sophomore and junior years. Once they reach senior year, students should be relatively independent and should be focusing on Employment and/or Graduate School. Your investment of support and encouragement should be evident in your child finding meaningful entry level professional employment or acceptance to graduate and professional school.

Continue your supportive and encouraging guidance. This momentous undertaking of you child's first professional position can be just as anxiety provoking as choosing his or her major. Encourage a variety of job search techniques such as using College Central Network or other college job posting systems, searching the internet and the classifieds, and, finally, networking.



Career Planning

Our office takes great pride in providing comprehensive employment services for our students, including: on-campus recruiting, employment fairs, mock interviews, on-line job bank (College Central Network), resume/cover letter critiques, and individual career counseling appointments.

10 Reasons to Use the Internet in Your Job Search

1. Largest Networking Tool in the World
2. Access to the most current information
3. Growth of the Internet
4. Availability of the Internet as All Hours of the Day/Night/Weekend
5. Free Access to information and resources
6. Unlimited geographic reach
7. Demonstrate leading-edge skill to an employer
8. Find job listing more easily using keywords.
9. Find leads to companies who are hiring
10. Post your resume at no cost

Understanding Adolescent Identity Development

Identity Development: Adolescents begin to attain a sense of identity when they are reasonably sure about their self-concept – which translates into their values, abilities, interests, and beliefs—and when they know what they want for their future.

Identity statuses: diffusion, foreclosure, and moratorium, achievement (Marcia, 1980)

Diffusion – Individuals lack clear direction. They are not committed to values and goals, nor are they actively trying to reach them. They may have never explored alternatives, or they have tried to do so but found the task threatening and overwhelming

Foreclosure – Individuals have committed themselves to values and goals without taking time to explore alternatives. Instead, they accept a ready-made identity that authority figures (usually parents but sometimes teachers, religious leaders, or romantic partners) have chosen for them.

Moratorium – Individuals have not yet made definite commitments. They are in the process of exploration gathering information and trying out activities, with the desire to find values and goals to guide their life.

Achievement – Having already explored alternatives, identity achieved individuals are committed to a clearly formulated set of self-chosen values and goals. They feel a sense of psychological well being, of sameness through time, and of knowing where they are going.

Parents...keep in mind that students differ widely in their readiness to make decisions about their major and career and that most students will change their major at least once. Where do you think your child in their personal development? Identifying where they are at can help is focusing on what approach will best help your child. Overall, a warm, supportive, and nonjudgmental parenting style has been shown to promote autonomy and identity achievement.

Examples: respond to your child's feelings, try to understand why your child may disagree with your opinion, and initiate compromises.