



Grad School Timeline

These guidelines are suggestions for making the most of your time at Truman and setting up a basic framework for planning your career. So even if you are a junior and have not started, you can follow the steps outlined for first-year students and sophomores to begin the process.

First Year

Get to know your Career Center resources...

- Explore your interests and career options.
- Make an appointment with a career advisor to discuss your interests, skills and values.

Summer

- Obtain experience in the form of a summer job, internship, research, and/or volunteering

Sophomore Year

Explore your career possibilities...

- Get a part-time job to help you develop basic work skills and learn more about your work preferences. Your campus job can have many transferable skills.
- Create a professional resume or curriculum vita; have it critiqued at the Career Center.
- Attend Career Week to explore internship options.
- Become more involved with faculty members (ask for advice, visit during office hours, participate in class, join a research team) to cultivate relationships for future letters of recommendation.
- Talk with faculty and students majoring in the field you are considering for graduate studies.
- Attend career-related sessions where professionals share how they entered and advanced in their chosen career, discuss how to prepare résumés and curriculum vitae, give interviewing tips, and provide information about the process of searching for a graduate school.
- Investigate internships, summer jobs, and part-time opportunities.

Summer

- Obtain experience in the form of a summer job, internship, research, and/or volunteering.

Junior Year

Test out career decisions...

- Attend workshops on résumé and curriculum vita writing, interviewing, and graduate school selection.
- Conduct informational interviews with professionals working in careers of your choice.
- Seek career-related summer jobs, part-time jobs, internships, and volunteer experiences.
- Attend Career Week each semester to inquire about internships and summer and fulltime jobs. Talk with admissions representatives from various graduate school programs.
- Focus on increasing/maintaining your GPA.
- Investigate the differences between earning a Master's degree or a Ph.D. and determine the level of education needed for the field you intend to enter after graduation.
- Join a professional organization in your field if possible (perhaps as a student affiliate/member) and/or an honor society in your field.
- Consider becoming a grader or tutor for classes in your major.
- Investigate graduate/professional school opportunities including entrance examination requirements and application deadlines.
- Participate in research and look for opportunities to present your work.
- Attend graduate school fairs and professional conferences. (Even if you do not present your own



Grad School Timeline

research, the professional experience is valuable).

- Sign up for a mock interview to practice your interviewing skills.

Summer

- Gain experience in your field through an internship, summer job, and/or volunteer opportunity.
- Begin thinking about potential candidates to write your letters of recommendation.
- Sign up for and take graduate school entrance exam required for.
- Narrow down your list of graduate schools to roughly 10-15.
- Contact potential faculty advisors at your schools of interest.
- Participate in research and presentation experiences.
- Write a first draft of your statement of purpose (also known as a personal statement).

Senior Year

September

- Meet with faculty members to discuss possible programs.
- Ask for letters of recommendations.

October

- Make an appointment with the University Writing Center and/or Career Center for a critique of your statement of purpose.
- Request applications from programs.

November

- Request transcripts.
- Ask if your records office can send a transcript including your fall term grades in time to meet deadlines of programs to which you are applying.

December

- Type your application forms.
- Give your recommenders the forms to fill out and the addresses to which they should send their forms/letters. Provide them with copies of your statements of purpose or your response to specific questions asked by the programs, along with your resume.

December/January

- Mail applications. (Even if deadlines are later, it is good to get the applications in early.)

February

- Contact programs about the possibility of visiting.
- Make trips if possible.

April

- If you are applying for need-based financial aid programs, you may have to provide a copy of your federal income tax return.

You should begin the application process the summer before your senior year of college or at least a year before you plan to start graduate school. You should study deadlines for specific programs carefully since they may vary significantly depending on the institutions to which you apply.

For help with grad school applications or any other career-related issue, come see us in the Career Center!

SUB 3100
Monday-Friday 8am-5pm
660.785.4353
careers@truman.edu