

## **Career**

Being an international student in the US career wise is hard to navigate. There are many obstacles that you will face and you should know all your options. Building the right sets of skills during your 4 years at St. Olaf is important. The harder task will be getting a job after you graduate from the Hill as laws and regulations in the US make it harder for companies to hire internationally. Thus, you should be braced for all situations.

## **First Year**

### **Fall**

- Connect with upperclassmen, start with your international student counsellor. They are a great resource who can guide you themselves or point you to other resources.
  - Upperclassmen- They will be a good guide from their experiences within their college career. This could be choosing their major for a career path they want to pursue and how they are navigating this. (Classes, internships, campus work)
- Learn about the Piper Center! This is a great resource and can be a great tool for success. In fall it is a good idea just to get a feel of what the Piper Center is. What are Piper Center Coaches, Peer Advisors.
  - Learn what Handshake is.
- Talk to your professors that seem interesting! They always have great stories on their careers and might have advice for you.
- This is still an early stage so if you have no idea what you want to do do not panic just learn what resources are available on campus.

### **Interim**

- Once you have learned a bit about the Piper Center if you have not visited it this is a great time to start. It is good to go just to start networking and getting to know the people that work there. It is a benefit as you can go there not knowing what career path you want to take!
  - Make a Handshake profile. Visit the Piper Center in Tomson Hall, meet a student peer advisor to help create a profile and learn how to use Handshake. This is where you can make appointments with Piper Center Coaches.
    - Peer Advisors are great for that initial start to guiding you and helping with advice, resumes, cover letters and much more. They have been trained and have been through where you are now.
    - A Piper Center Coach are Coaches that work in specific career fields. However, they are a perfect starting point for a conversation about careers. They are helpful even if you are not sure what you want to be doing.
- Start thinking about summer
  - Have a conversation with the Piper Center, your advisor, international student counselor to decide or think about how you want to spend your summer.
    - Will you go back home?- Is a good option as you get a chance to reconnect with family and friends.
    - Going home with a job or internship is good too! Talk to the Piper Center if you are considering this option.
    - Work on campus?- Campus provides job opportunities.

- Do an internship or research?- Tricky as a first year and being an international student, as you may not have enough experience in classes or other work. Still viable though.
- As an international student and being a first year student can be challenging. Think carefully about what you want to do.

### **Spring**

- In spring, thinking about your career can help choose your academic classes.
- Early spring, this would be a great time to start deciding what you want to do for summer. This would give you time to start communicating with the Piper Center, using the job posting site.
  - You can even use your regular employment job on campus to ask if there are summer opportunities to work with them.
- Visit the on campus career fair. This is a useful event which showcases most jobs on campus for the next year and summer. It is a great way to see hidden jobs that you did not know of.
- Networking is very important.
  - It allows for hidden opportunities to be accessed. E.g. talking with your campus employer you can learn about other different jobs or upgrading your position.
  - Getting to know your professors which can put you in a position to gain research opportunities.

### **Sophomores Career**

### **fall**

- If you have not been to the Piper Center now is the time. You should be starting to think about your near and far future.
  - Near future would be the experience that you would want to get while in college. This could be on campus experience. Should I get a different job that better suits my major/career? Does my current job have a student supervisor position?
  - Schedule an appointment to meet with a Coach to see where your career may be headed.
  - Work with a Peer Advisor to create/improve your resume and general cover letter.
- Sign up to go on the Quo Vadis Trip for Career building.- This is a great opportunity organized by the Piper Center for sophomores to help them navigate their major and career. It is great for international students to go as there will be other international students who may be in the same boat as you and feeling the same way you do. Maybe not knowing what major they want to do or career. This is a great time to meet new people and discuss different but serious topics.
- What do you want to do for the summer? Now would be a good time to start thinking about summer as internship applications start opening up and research opportunities. Visit the Piper Center to learn more about them and to understand what CPT is and eventually OPT. Learning about how international students are able to work off campus is very important. There are lots of small details that are missed when looking for internships or research opportunities.
  - What I can and cannot work.
  - Paperwork I need to get or fill in.

### **Interim**

- Start applying for internships that interest you if those applications are open.

- If you are planning to work on campus start asking your current bosses for summer opportunities that they might have.
- The same can go for research, look at the CURI website to see what resources are available and which professor to contact. By doing this early you will be able to see what experience they are looking for and for them to just get to know you.

### **Spring**

- Apply for internships, research, or jobs on campus. Apply for those that you would like to do. Whichever would best suit your needs/major/career.
- Internships- Think about how this connects to your major for CPT. What experience I would need, what I would get out of it.
  - Paid or unpaid internships. If unpaid Piper Center has funding.
  - Location of internship- this will help with housing, food and transportation costs.
  - How long is the internship?
  - All of these factors need to be taken into consideration to make the best experience possible as an international student. Being an international student doing an internship off campus will have more work to do before actually doing the internship. As you will have to apply for CPT. Therefore, start early. Keep in contact with Megan Carmes at all times.
- Research- research on campus or CURI is a great way to build research skills. You do not need to be in that field to do research in a different field. However, it is best to do research in your field as you will have some skills which will benefit you more and give you a more likely chance of getting accepted.
- Work on campus- getting jobs on campus is what quite a few international students do as it does not require CPT and is easier to get with a less skill set. Use your network to hear or learn about job opportunities. You can use the human resources page to scroll through and see jobs that will be for the summer.

### **Career**

#### **Fall**

- Work on your resume and keep Handshake updated. Work on your LinkedIn profile so that employers can see who you are.
- This is the time where doing research or doing an internship in your junior year can be significant. Learning those skills is important so it is imperative that you start looking or researching about opportunities now. Go to the Piper Center, network with your professors and staff on campus. They may have hidden opportunities that you did not know of that you may be well suited to.
- Look at the Piper Center Connections Trips. These trips happen during spring break and can give you an opportunity to see what some jobs look like.
- Apply to be a Quo Vadis Leader. This is a great opportunity to give back what you have learned about navigating your major and life here on the Hill. It is great for you as well as it gives you time to reflect on your life and what you would like to do.

#### **Interim**

- Your junior year interim, consider doing an academic internship. This will help develop your skills while still gaining credit for your work.

- Work on your resume and LinkedIn profile. Narrow your search for a summer internship or research on and off campus.
- Think about what you want to do when you graduate. Graduate school, going back home, OPT. By thinking about these things you will develop questions that you want to ask someone or find out more about something.

### **Spring**

- Apply for internships, research opportunities or jobs on campus.
  - If you get an internship or research opportunity off campus apply for CPT and Piper center funding as soon as you have decided what you want to be doing.
  - The Piper Center has funding for those who work for unpaid internships, housing costs, work attire and more internship related costs.
- Think about what you want to do when you graduate. Graduate school, going back home, OPT. By thinking about these things you will develop questions that you want to ask someone or find out more about something.
  - Talk to the Piper Center and your academic advisor.
- This will be your last summer as an undergraduate so make the most out of it!

## **Senior Year**

### **Fall**

- This is going to be the last push in college on the Hill. Career wise start looking if you have not already looking for job opportunities or graduate schools. The Piper Center should be your friend at this point, schedule meetings with coaches to help you look for opportunities. As an international student it will be hard to get companies to take in international students.
  - Open the door to working in more places than the US. Maybe going back home or looking at other countries with opportunities.

### **Interim**

- If you have a free interim left take or look for an internship during this one month period. This will help build your skills and may give you an upper hand in the search for a job after graduation.
- Apply to jobs and work on OPT.

### **Spring**

- Start looking for job opportunities and working on competing you OPT ASAP so that when the window opens you can send it in right away and you can get that completed fast.

## **Tips and tricks**

- On campus employment
  - Working on campus is a great way to boost your resume and working skills.
  - Take every job you do seriously as this is how people start networking. By doing your job well you are showing dedication which can lead to other opportunities either on campus or references when you need them for another job.
  - There are many jobs on campus that can suit your needs.

- Doing a job on campus for four years is seen as a great skill as it shows loyalty and that your employers still want you there. Most times it is better than doing 6 jobs while at St. Olaf.
- Once you start working save some money for emergencies and taxes! Taxes are unpredictable and you could owe taxes during tax season.
- Networking
  - The power of networking is immense. Networking does not just have to be job related it can be networking with professors too!
  - Once you start a conversation with someone or do something for someone you are starting to network.
  - When working a job on or off campus you should always put your best work into anything, being working in food service or as a receptionist. By doing this the people around you will notice and they will want to keep you on recommend you when needed.
  - While attending college as an international student it is also important to understand that we are in the US and thus we should respect and appreciate our time here. It may be difficult for us to respect some of the culture here however, the US is hosting us and we should understand and respect all rules.