Career Action Plan

UC Irvine
Division of Career Pathways
www.career.uci.edu

STEP 1 PREPARE & DISCOVER

- [ ] **Create Your Handshake Profile**

Build a complete Handshake profile to improve your user experience. Handshake will be a main source of connection for work study and on-campus jobs, recruiting news, professional development opportunities, and professional employment. Add a photo to your online profiles with our DCP Professional Photo Booth.

- [ ] **Become Involved with Student Organizations on Campus**

Student organizations provide an opportunity to network with your peers and develop your professional skills. Join a DCP Club Affiliate or discover 900+ student organizations on Campus Groups and prepare to meet over 100+ at the Anteater Involvement Fair during Week 0.

- [ ] **Explore Your Interests and Identify Strengths**

Employers recruit students who demonstrate career readiness in these 8 areas: Leadership, Communication, Technology, Career Development, Equity and Inclusion, Critical Thinking, Professionalism, and Teamwork. You can build these competencies through involvement in academic/personal projects, UCI Udemy, Toastmasters, community service, part time employment, UROP, ANTrepreneur Center, and other campus resources. Evaluate your career readiness and link your career-relevant personal qualities to UCI majors and careers using Focus2.

STEP 2 CONNECT

- [ ] **Build Your Network**

Create a profile on Handshake and LinkedIn to connect with peers and working professionals. Seek advice and information on your career goals and career development plan. Follow UC Irvine Division of Career Pathways on Instagram @ucicareer and LinkedIn for current events. Sign up for Dinner with Anteaters.

- [ ] **Research Careers, Industries, and Employers**

Identify where UCI Alumni are employed using tools like Steppingblocks and LinkedIn. Visit the Career Research section of UC Irvine Libraries to investigate profiles of careers, industry leaders, and salary information. Identify career pathways and majors using Focus2. Complete job simulations on The Forage to test drive a career.

- [ ] **Visit UCI Division of Career Pathways**

We are here to help educate you on your career options and offer guidance and support through the process. If you aren't sure what your goals are, make an appointment. If you know exactly what you want to do, make an appointment. We have workshops, employer information sessions, career fairs, and resources to help you navigate the path from college to career. Make sure your resume is ready with Big Resume, DCP Resume Resources, and career counseling appointments.

STEP 3 SUCCEED

- [ ] **Make a Great First Impression**

Sharpen your interview skills using the robust Big Interview program offered by UCI Division of Career Pathways. Practice the most common interview questions and the anticipated questions by industry and job function. Attend a workshop before a fair and perfect your Elevator Pitch.

- [ ] **Plan for Graduate or Professional School**

Our Applying to Graduate School fairs and workshops listed in Handshake will provide support and resources as you navigate the graduate school application process. UCI Pre-Health Advising is available to support pre-health pathways. Our pre-law students can meet with a pre-law advisor and consult our curated pre-law resources.

- [ ] **Gain Experience**

Investigate micro-internships, identify a mentor, or apply to an internship on Handshake. If you have an entrepreneurial spirit, visit the ANTrepreneur Center for guidance and support to launch your product or side hustle.

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INTERNSHIP RECRUITMENT: PEAK TIMES

For students, the internship application process is made more complex by the fact that every employer's hiring timeline is different. Although **September and January are the peak months in which employers post internships on Handshake**, smaller employers are more likely to stretch their recruiting season later into the spring, while larger employers tend to concentrate recruiting during the fall and winter peaks. Among larger employers, timing also varies by industry, with employers in technology, professional services, and financial services following a more concentrated recruiting schedule while those in industries such as government and transportation are more likely to distribute intern hiring throughout the year. (Handshake Internship Index, 2025)

CAREER DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES TO EXPLORE

BOOKS

- ***Dare to Lead*** by Brené Brown
- ***Joy at Work*** by Marie Kondo
- ***Talking to Strangers*** by Malcolm Brown
- ***Designing Your Life*** by Bill Burnett & Dale Evans
- ***Strengths Finder 2.0*** by Gallup

INSTAGRAM ACCOUNTS

- ***UC Irvine Division of Career Pathways*** *@ucicareer*
- ***Salary Transparent Street*** *@salarytransparentstreet*

PODCASTS

- ***Work Life*** *with Adam Grant*
- ***How I Built This*** *with Guy Raz*

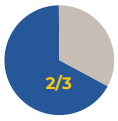
DID YOU KNOW?

INDUSTRY EXPERIENCE

$14K MORE

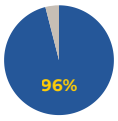
Students that have **industry experience** prior to graduation are offered **$14k more** on average (NACE 2025)

CAREER READINESS SKILLS



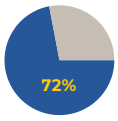
Nearly TWO-THIRDS of employers use **skills-based hiring** practices for new entry level hires (NACE 2024)

#1 SKILL COMMUNICATION



96% of employers rate **communication** as the most important career readiness skill (NACE 2025)

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION



72% of U.S. jobs will **require postsecondary education** and/or training by 2031 (NACE 2025)

PLAN AHEAD

Recruitment for financial services and consulting internships can begin **a year or more in advance** and most full-time roles are filled by extending return offers to summer interns.