Career Development Cycle

for International Students

Reflect

Get to know yourself. Who you are, what you value, and what you have to offer are important clues to finding meaningful opportunities.

- Consider your previous jobs, internships, and volunteer or extracurricular activities. What did you like? What didn’t you like? Was it a good fit for you? Why or why not?
- Meet with a career advisor to explore your skills, interests, and values.
- Attend a Self-Exploration for Career Planning workshop, offered once a semester.
- Get feedback from family, friends, professors, or previous employers to help assess your strengths.
- Do a family and culture assessment, found on our website.
- Meet with a career advisor to complete the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) personality assessment.
- Use Career Beam tools to do other self-assessments online.
- Create an initial resume that reflects your experiences thus far.

Explore

Gather information. The more you know about a variety of career fields, the more likely you are to find an internship, job, fellowship, or volunteer opportunity that is a good fit.

- Read the weekly e-newsletter “Career Columns” to stay informed about career related opportunities.
- Attend information sessions hosted by employers, alumni, and professors about topics or career fields that you are curious about.
- Attend a workshop or speak with a career advisor about networking effectively, and then practice with your family, friends, professors, or previous teachers and employers.
- Familiarize yourself with the Alumni Directory, and reach out to alumni who have careers that you would like to learn more about. If you want to search for international alumni specifically, use the Career Affinity Network pick list to search for Alumni Network International Students.
- Conduct informational interviews with alumni or others in your network in order to explore specific jobs or industries.
- Join the Amherst College Pathways program to develop relationships with alumni mentors.
- Read about a variety of jobs, industries, and career fields through books at the Career Center’s library and through resources on the website, such as Spotlight on Careers, Vault Career Insider, and O*NET.
- Learn about what types of employers hire international students through Going Global, the Alumni Directory, or LinkedIn.
- Monitor job and internship postings on Quest and other online sites.
- Learn about Optional Practical Training (OPT) and how it allows you to intern and/or work in the U.S.
- Use school breaks to job shadow a person who has a job of interest.
- Get involved in at least one campus group, team, or activity that allows you to explore your interests.
Experiment
Try out your ideas. Take the information you’ve gathered about yourself and the wide world of work and test out your options.

- Identify transferable skills that will make you more marketable and develop them through courses, extracurricular activities, and internships.
- Peruse the internship sites on the Career Center website, such as Quest, Liberal Arts Career Network (LACN), Nationwide Internships Consortium (NIC) (accessed through LACN, and InternshipsUSA.
- Participate in the Amherst Select Internship Program (ASIP) to gain access to internships hosted by Amherst College alumni, parents and friends of the College.
- Learn about the funding available through the College for unpaid summer internships.
- Visit the Center for Community Engagement (CCE) to explore options for engaging in the local community and additional public service internships.
- Create an opportunity to volunteer or intern while studying abroad.
- Learn how to target your resume and cover letter for a specific opportunity.
- Assume leadership roles on campus and in the local community.

Act
Pursue your dreams. Based on all that you have learned through reflection, exploration, and experimentation, you can now decide which job or graduate school opportunities you would like to pursue first and take steps to get there.

- Build time into your schedule every week to engage in the job search or graduate school application process.
- Research graduate schools that meet your needs and interests and learn about the application process.
- Learn about opportunities for national fellowships and how to apply.
- Review opportunities for on-campus recruiting offered by employers seeking Amherst College students.
- Familiarize yourself with the deadlines for the opportunities you are considering.
- Research organizations and companies thoroughly to target your job search and prepare for interviews.
- Create a professional profile on LinkedIn and learn to use the site effectively.
- Review your online presence on all social media sites from the perspective of an employer. Is it appropriate? Is it professional? Will it encourage them to hire you if they see it?
- Network with individuals who work in targeted fields or companies and organizations.
- Do a mock interview with a career advisor.
- Meet with Nancy Condon to learn the details of applying for OPT.
- Learn about the H-1B temporary work visa and other options for ongoing work authorization in the U.S.
- Practice explaining your work authorization status to prospective employers and highlighting the positive aspects of your “internationalism.”
- Search for job opportunities through online resources like Quest, Liberal Arts Career Network (LACN), and Career Shift.
- Attend career and graduate school fairs at Amherst College and the other Five Colleges.
- Develop a “Plan B” in case your first choice does not work out...yet.