

The Career Planning Milestones: Guide for Faculty

About the Career Planning Milestones Program

Launched in Fall 2015, the Career Planning Milestones program provides all incoming students with a checklist of foundational career development activities that helps them be competitive for internships, scholarships, campus leadership roles, fellowships, full-time jobs, and graduate/professional school. These activities include career assessment exploration, resume/curriculum vitae writing, mock interviews, career planning, and online networking platforms such as LinkedIn and Handshake, Georgia College's job and internship database. The Milestones are one of five transformative experiences that make up GC Journeys.

How Is Career Planning a High-Impact Practice?

Career Planning at Georgia College requires students to be effortful, reflective, open to feedback, and engaged in regards to how they manage their careers (Kuh, 2008). GC students do not wait until the last semester of their senior year and hope for the best. Instead, students learn about the Career Planning Milestones from their first day as a prospective student and actively engage in the program from matriculation to graduation. Through resume writing appointments and workshops, students learn how to connect their skills to those needed by employers while receiving immediate feedback from career advisors. Students continue to practice articulating their skills and reflecting upon their experience through the mock interview process. In addition to receiving feedback on their interviewing skills, students discuss their career plans in the mock interview. By adding a career-planning component to the mock interview, the career advisor uses the mock interview to help the student see how a deepened relationship with the Career Center could be useful as they launch a job, internship, or graduate school search. Through the development of their LinkedIn and Handshake profiles, students have another opportunity to reflect on their experiences and relate them to the needs of future career and graduate school opportunities.

Why Faculty Should Incorporate the Milestones into the Curriculum

Students prioritize their class assignments, but they do not always prioritize career preparation. By adding an out of class assignment such as a resume review or a mock interview, faculty can increase the career readiness of their students when they apply and interview for competitive internships, jobs, fellowships, and graduate programs. Since implementing the Milestones, student use of the Career Center has increased by 87%. The May 2019 graduating class was the first official Milestone class with 42% completing all of the Milestones and at least 95% of completing at least two of the Milestones.

CAREER PLANNING MILESTONES

A four-year career plan for
all undergraduate majors



Strategies for Integrating the Milestones into Your Curriculum

- Use a required gateway or common course to assign a mock interview or resume review as a homework assignment. We recommend early career planning, but these assignments are also good for senior capstone.
- Invite the Career Center into your Senior Seminar to discuss current topics such as *Using LinkedIn in the Job Search* and require students to create and update their profile for a grade.
- Incorporate resume writing and mock interviews with the Career Center into anything you do to promote internships to your students.
- Partner with the Career Center to invite employers or alumni to campus on a specific day to complete mock interviews with your students.
- Require transfer students to complete the Focus 2 Career Assessment and to schedule an appointment with the Career Center during their first semester at GC.
- Incorporate the Career Planning Milestones into any checklists your department uses for graduation and degree completion.

How Students Learn about the Milestones

During summer orientation, the Career Center provides information to all students and parents through handouts and presentations. First-year students will complete the Focus2 Career Assessment, activate their Handshake account, and participate in a group career exploration discussion with the Career Center. Although we present at transfer admission and orientation days, this population may not know as much about the Milestones when they matriculate. We conduct other outreach efforts past the first-year to reach students beyond the classroom. Sophomores, who have not completed their resume writing Milestone are invited to attend Resume Writing for Beginners workshops throughout the fall and spring. The Career Center uses email to invite students to participate in employer mock interview days and the annual Senior Picnic to sign seniors up for their senior year appointment.

Current Academic Engagement with the Milestones

If you are unsure of how your department is currently engaging with the Milestones, please reach out to the Career Center. We're eager to talk with department chairs, deans, and faculty who want to discuss collaboration with the Career Center.

Adding the Milestones to a Course

If you would like to assign a Milestones activities to one or more of your courses, please contact us in the Career Center so we can be prepared for working with your students. We will provide you with syllabus language, which includes instructions on how students should make appointments. Each semester, we have more than 500 students required to use the Career Center as part of a class, so setting deadlines is an important part of the syllabus language. When you use the syllabus language, we also ask that you set a deadline for scheduling an appointment as well as a final date for when appointments should be completed.

Tracking Completion of the Milestones

When you notify us that you are requiring one or more of the Milestones for a specific course, we will use your class list to track those students for you. We send completion lists at the end of each semester prior to exams.

References

Kuh, G. D. (2008). Excerpt from high-impact educational practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter. *Association of American Colleges and Universities*.

Do you have other ideas for implementing the Career Planning Milestones into your courses? Let us know!

Contact us at 478-445-5384 or career.center@gcsu.edu to get started.

We look forward to collaborating with your academic department.