**Northwestern Career Advancement - Career Development Timeline for Masters Students**

*Varies by Discipline and length of program*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Summer</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Development</strong></td>
<td><strong>Professional Development</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| • Expand skills and experience through:  
  - Teaching and research assistanceships  
  - Internships, volunteer work, part-time or summer employment  
  - Campus clubs and organizations  
  - Departmental or campus committees  
  - Workshops and courses outside your department  
  - Develop presentation skills through oral and poster presentations  
  - Take on a leadership role relevant to your career interests  
  - Review and follow timeline for degree completion established by TGS and/or your program  
  - Write resume and update quarterly  
  - Assess skills you need to develop for potential career paths  
  - Create and update your LinkedIn profile  
  - Meet with NCA to clarify career goals | • Continue suggestions in bold from Year 1  
• Reflect on experiences in the first year of your program and how they may have influenced your career direction and interests  
• Gain experience relevant to your career goals through volunteer work, internships, part-time or summer employment | • Continue suggestions in bold from Year 1 and summer  
• Research starting salaries for positions of interest  
• Review strategies for negotiating a job offer |
| **Explore Career Options** | **Explore Career Options** | **Activate Your Network** |
| • Conduct online research and informational interviews to learn about career paths within your field of study  
• Attend employer information sessions to learn about opportunities  
• Shadow NU alumni through the NEXT program to learn more about a specific field | • Continue suggestions in bold from Year 1  
• Develop a list of desired positions and employers based upon your online research and informational interviews | • Continue suggestions in bold from Year 1 and summer  
• Inform your networking contacts about your job search and availability |
| **Build Your Network** | **Continue Job Search Process** | **For International Students** |
| • Attend a workshop on networking strategies hosted by NCA  
• Attend networking events hosted by professional organizations and alumni groups  
• Meet and network with current and former graduate students in your department and around campus  
• Keep in touch with networking contacts developed prior to graduate school  
• Identify mentors who support your career goals and professional development | • Continue suggestions in bold from Year 1  
• Prepare responses for common interview questions  
• Develop an elevator speech for use at career fairs and networking events  
• Schedule a practice interview with NCA  
• Draft application materials for the job search (resume, cover letter, etc.) and have them critiqued by NCA and your mentors  
• Identify at least three potential references who can speak positively about your abilities as a potential employee  
• Update your references on your progress and career plans | Begin these activities Year 1 & continue:  
• Research job search differences between the US and your home country  
• If English is your second language, seek out opportunities to practice and improve your speaking skills  
• Participate in immersion programs that will allow you to experience US culture  
• Develop a job search plan for positions in the US and your home country  
• Use resources like GoingGlobal and Uniworld to identify potential employers  
• Meet with the International Office to learn about the application process for CPT and OPT  
• Develop networking relationships with:  
  - Contacts from home country who are employed in the US  
  - Former NU international students who found jobs in the US  
  - International companies operating in the US  
  - Contacts from home country who are potential employers  
  - US Employers that hire international students  
  - Your home country consulate |

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**Professional Development**  
**Explore Career Options**  
**Build Your Network**  
**Start Job Search process**  
**For International Students**  
**NCA NORTHWESTERN CAREER ADVANCEMENT NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY northwestern.edu/careers**

Adapted from document created by Lydia Soleil, PhD, and Christine Kelly, PhD, UC Irvine Career Center