



Six Things Seniors Should Be Doing Right Now

In these final months, balance and focus are key

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A CAREER AND INTERNSHIP FAIR AT THE WHITTEMORE CENTER IN 2016

Commencement is May 20, less than 100 days away. This can be a frantic time for soon-to-be graduates, particularly for those who don't already have a plan. So UNH Today talked with Lori Dameron, director of the [St.](#)

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LORI DAMERON

Martin Career Exploration Office

at UNH's College of Life Sciences and Agriculture, for some advice on what all seniors should be doing right now to get ready for the near future. Here's what she had to say.

1. Seek balance

"The biggest challenge for seniors right now is trying to balance their school work with searching for a job or graduate schools. It takes a lot of energy to manage the plethora of demands that are being made on them."

A visit to [University Advising and Career Center](#) can help. Students can go online to make an appointment with an advisor or career counselor to talk about options. Walk-ins are also welcome.

2. Focus on professional development

Dameron says, "This is the time to learn how to transition from student to professional, the time for students to take everything they've done and translate it into job skills. Students need to figure out how to define and communicate the skills they have gleaned to an employer."

The best way to do that, she says, is to "know thyself."

“We ask students to look at the things they’ve done in the work environment, in the classroom, in the community and figure out how to leverage that into transferable skills,” she says. “We tell them, ‘You don’t know what you don’t know.’ It’s coaching them to think in a different way. And that comes down to problem-solving.”

3. Work on career preparation

“Once students have summed up their experience, they should update their résumé and LinkedIn profile, remembering to tailor them both to the job position they are seeking.”

Students should also practice their interviewing skills by attending a workshop, using Interview Stream and/or scheduling a mock interview with a career professional. And they should attend career-related events such as:

- Résumé Review Day with Employers (Feb. 16)
- Dress for Success (Feb. 22)
- UNH Career and Internship Fair (March 1)
- Mock Interview Day with Employers (March 29)

4. Create a strategy

“We encourage seniors to create a strategic plan for themselves. This is the time to put their fingers to the keyboard and find out what’s going on in the industry they plan to enter. It’s crucial that they know the market.”

That means being aware of recruitment cycles: information that can be found online. “Students need to be well-informed about the industry they’re going into. For example, we do our career fairs for accounting jobs in the fall because we know no one is hiring in the spring because they’re too busy.”

This is also the time for seniors to create a list of contacts — who they know who knows someone at the company they hope to work for. LinkedIn is a good resource for this, as are networking

events.

5. Line up references

“It’s critically important to identify professional references. Who is going to speak on your behalf? Students have to reach out to these people and ask if they are willing to be a reference and then make sure they’re well informed. It’s not just a matter of putting down names,” Dameron says.

Students don’t need to tell their references about every job they apply for, only those that result in an interview. Then, they should tell the reference what the position is and send them an updated résumé that speaks to the skills required of the position.

6. Tend to the details

There’s other business that seniors need to take care of before donning their caps and gowns in May:

- File their intent-to-graduate by Feb. 20 to avoid a \$25 late fee or by March 27 with the fee
- Register to walk in the commencement ceremony by May 7
- Check their student account on [Blackboard/MyUNH](#) to make sure no money is due to business services
- Clear out their Cat’s Cache account through UNH.Dining@unh.edu
- Complete [exit counseling](#) if there are outstanding student loans
- Return mailbox keys by May 17 to avoid a \$50 fine

Save the date! The next Career and Internship Fair is coming up on March 1 at the Whittemore Center from noon - 5 p.m.

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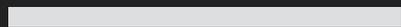
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