

## Four Steps to Successful Career Development

### **Freshman Year: Self Assessment**

Self-Assessment provides students with an understanding of the career development process, as well as opportunities to identify personal interests, values, preferences, and skills that will be used to examine career interests.

- Meet with a career services counselor to begin to build an understanding of the career planning process that will be used throughout your life.
- Become aware of the changing future of work as influenced by shifts in the economy and society.
- Work with a career counselor to complete self assessment tools which will help you:
  - Become more aware of individual personality traits and styles, including career implications.
  - Identify specific strengths, skills and abilities
  - Identify values and examine career implications for maintaining a balanced and values-affirming lifestyle.
- Develop criteria based on self-assessment outcomes to use as a framework for your personal career development.

### **Sophomore Year: Career Awareness**

During the sophomore year, students should begin to learn about the realities of the specific careers that interest them. Career counselors can assist students with the process of identifying and researching career options. This process will prepare students for an experiential learning option - which is generally completed during the junior year. Career awareness steps include the following:

- Utilize a variety of tools, including websites, SIGI+, printed materials, mentors and assessment instruments to research careers of interest.
- Identify possible academic majors based on career research outcomes.
- Gain an understanding of the resume development process including the selection of an effective resume format.
- Utilize available technology to produce a professional resume.
- Develop an awareness of effective interviewing techniques
- Apply the self assessment and career awareness components to identify the most appropriate experiential leaning option.

### **Junior Year: Experiential Learning**

Experiential Learning options provide you with an opportunity to “reality test” career options. Aquinas students have several Experiential Learning options:

- Internship for Academic Credit
- Service Learning
- Study Abroad/Cultural Immersion
- Student Teaching

### **Senior Year: Decision Making and Implementation**

Throughout your senior year, you will be preparing to transition to either full-time employment, graduate school or service work. Career Services staff can assist you in the decision making and implementation process that is part of this transition. You have the option of meeting with counselors on an individual basis and/or completing CD 401. Regardless of the option you chose, the following are recommended during your senior year:

- Prepare to transition from college to the world of work, graduate school or service.
- Understand the function of and services provided by the Aquinas College Career and Counseling Services office.
- Create and begin to implement a specific career plan – for both immediate and future use.
- Develop an understanding of how to market skills to employers, graduate schools, and/or service programs.
- Learn how to network and how to use this tool throughout your career.
- Gain an understanding of professionalism and how it relates to your career.