



This document will help you process and connect what you are learning in your courses, clubs, community engagement, internships and more! It is a guide for self-reflection and decision-making for your four years at Clark. Use this tool with your faculty adviser, Career Connections Center staff, or your First Year Success Adviser. We've also created a worksheet for your first year featuring the essential questions for you to complete as part of the advising process.



Explore and navigate Clark curriculum

Your first step is to start exploring the Clark Core Courses and academic fields of interest. Later, you will declare a major and increase your depth of study as you work towards completing a capstone.



Connect and engage with communities

Think of all the opportunities to network with communities on and off campus — including clubs, academic supports, and leadership opportunities that relate to your interests and career paths.



Discover and pursue your passions

Engage in opportunities to discover and pursue your passions through courses, independent research with faculty, internships, student employment, study abroad or away, and other immersive activities.



Develop professional skills

How can you develop career-relevant skills and build a resume through experiential learning opportunities? Career development staff in the Career Connections Center can provide you with direction and guidance.



Reflect, design, and plan

Take a moment to ensure that your plans align with your broader goals. Campus advisers can help you plan and prepare for each stage along your career journey.



YOUR CLARK JOURNEY

DESIGN YOUR JOURNEY



Explore and navigate Clark curriculum



Connect and engage with communities



Discover and pursue your passions



Develop professional skills



Reflect, design, and plan

YEAR 1

YEAR 2



Explore academic departments.

- Read through the list of majors and identify potential academic fields of interest.
- Review introductory course descriptions in your majors of interest.



Identify potential Clark Core courses with the support of an adviser.

- Identify three core courses that you'd like to take in the upcoming year.



Learn about campus resources.

- Who and what have helped you become settled on campus?
- What other resources might help you be successful in and out of the classroom?



Get connected.

- What groups, clubs, or organizations are you interested in joining?



Explore off campus.

- What places, institutions, or organizations in Worcester are you interested in connecting with?



Explore D&I, Commons, and PoP courses with your adviser.

- What courses might help you gain experience and apply what you've learned in the classroom to the real world?



Take steps to explore your career interests.

- Visit the Career Connections Center website to learn more about available resources, like "What Can I Do With This Major" to create a list of potential career paths.
- Learn more about your career interests by attending career fairs, treks, and alumni panels.
- Use Handshake to schedule an appointment with a career adviser - It's never too early!
- Visit the Career Lab to update your résumé to apply for student employment positions.



Reflect on what sparks your interest.

- What experiences have piqued your interest most this year? What will you try next?
- What would you like to learn more about?



Dig into the major and define your interests.

- What courses do you need to take to strengthen your foundation within a particular field of study?



Declare your major.

- Collect the form from the Registrar's office and submit it by the end of your sophomore year.



Prepare for undergraduate research or an independent project.

- Explore Clark's Opportunity Funding website to find an award to support a summer project, internship, or research.
- Attend ClarkFest to see examples of independent research and projects.



Start networking.

- Start building a network of people who can support your career journey.
- Create ClarkConnect and LinkedIn profiles to connect with alumni with similar interests.



Stay engaged!

- Identify what new opportunities you might take advantage of, whether on campus or in the local community, in line with your potential career interests.



Pursue another point of view.

- Look into study abroad or away options or explore how to participate in service learning in the local Worcester community.



Start planning for ways to gain more skills and experience.

- Identify skills and experiences employers will be looking for by reading entry-level job descriptions.
- Look for summer opportunities through Handshake.



Look back — and look ahead.

- Discuss your future plans with your advisers and set goals for the year ahead.
- Look into Clark's Accelerated Degree Programs (ADP) or an honor's thesis.

YEAR 3



Become a researcher.

- Consider applying for a research position with a faculty member or through one of Clark's undergraduate research programs.



Plan for senior year and beyond.

- Discuss your plans to complete a capstone or honor's thesis with your adviser.
- Can you enter your desired career field with an undergraduate degree, or do you need to attend graduate school?
- Are you preparing to apply for the Accelerated Degree Program (ADP) or graduate school? If so, be sure to attend information sessions or visit a Career Adviser.



Engage and strengthen your networks, both on and off campus.

- Research companies/organizations of interest, then deepen your connections through career conversations.
- Identify people who can provide a recommendation for job or graduate school applications.



Get out of here.

- Find an opportunity to put your learning into practice through research, an internship, or study abroad/away experience - Handshake & ClarkConnect are great places to start!



Take a Problems of Practice course to blend theory and practice.



Take action to gain experience.

- Secure an internship — for credit or experience.
- Earn course credit for your internship through the Academic Internship program.
- Participate in a job shadowing program.
- Secure an on-campus position to develop skills that will be valuable for your future career interests.



Get ready for next year.

- Update your résumé to include new experiences and meet with a Career Adviser to plan how to maximize your remaining time at Clark.

YEAR 4



Pull it together with your Capstone.

- Make a schedule leading up to your capstone completion — this is not something you want to rush through!



What's next?

- Ask people to provide letters of recommendation or to serve as a reference in advance of application deadlines.
- If you're unsure about your "life after Clark" plans, speak with a Career Adviser to discuss career paths that align with your skills, values, and passions.



Connect with alumni.

- Be strategic about who you connect with! Who can help you reach your goals?
- Reach out to alumni through ClarkConnect in fields or organizations of interest to receive advice or support on your career search.



Share what you've learned.

- Don't hoard your knowledge! Consider presenting what you've learned at ClarkFest or through the Scholarly Undergraduate Research Journal.
- Consider serving as a student leader or peer learning assistant.



Get ready for your post-Clark career search.

- The Career Lab can teach you how to tailor your résumé, cover letters, and LinkedIn profile.
- Schedule mock interviews with a Career Adviser who can help you improve your interview skills.
- Set up a system to organize and track your job search process.



Answer the "big" questions.

- Reflect on your time at Clark and on your next steps.
- Complete any unfinished classes, tasks, and other aspects of your Clark experience.



Check out where graduates in your majors go.

- Speak with faculty and Career Connections Center staff to learn more about the careers of people who graduated with your degree.

First-Year Guide: Use this worksheet to document your reflections and action steps for your first year — and beyond!

 **Explore and navigate the Clark curriculum**

I know what major I'd like to declare: _____

I have little-to-no idea of what I'd like to study, but I'm interested in: _____

I am interested in taking the following Clark Core courses:

I am interested in exploring a field of study through the following courses:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

 **Connect and engage with different communities**

Who (or what) has helped you become settled on campus?


What other resources might help you be successful in and out of the classroom?

What groups, clubs, or organizations are you interested in becoming involved with?

 **Discover and pursue your passions**

What places, institutions, or organizations in Worcester are you interested in connecting with?

What courses might offer you an opportunity to gain experience and apply what you've learned in the classroom to the real world?

 **Develop professional skills:** Identify potential steps to learn more about your career interests

Potential Career Destination 1: _____

Steps to learn more about this career path or experience:

Step 1: _____ Step 2: _____ Step 3: _____

Potential Career Destination 2: _____

Steps to learn more about this career path or experience:

Step 1: _____ Step 2: _____ Step 3: _____

Potential Career Destination 3: _____

Steps to learn more about this career path or experience:

Step 1: _____ Step 2: _____ Step 3: _____

 **Reflect, design, and plan**

What experiences — in and out of the classroom — piqued your interest most this year? _____

What would you like to learn more about? _____