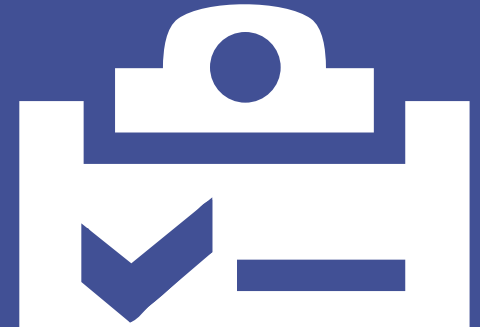




# Pre-Matriculation

## *Institutional Commitment*



### Review transfer equivalencies

If you expect to bring credits to Mason, check transfer equivalencies through the Transfer Credit Search Engine at [www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/how-apply/transfer](http://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/how-apply/transfer). Be sure you understand how any previous courses or exams will be factored into your degree at Mason.



### Register for orientation

The Mason's orientation programs are designed to acclimate and transition new students and their families to the institution, expose new students to the broad educational opportunities at Mason, and integrate new students and their families into the life of the institution. These programs promote student development, academic acclimation and preparation, school spirit, and accountability among Mason students and their families. For details, please visit [orientation.gmu.edu](http://orientation.gmu.edu).



### Seek pre-orientation academic advising

As a newly admitted student, you are encouraged to meet with an academic advisor before you come to orientation to get answers to your questions, discuss degree options, and learn about important Mason policies and procedures. For details, please visit [advising.gmu.edu](http://advising.gmu.edu).



### Consider taking a UNIV 100 or UNIV 220 course

UNIV100 and UNIV220 are transition courses for first-time freshmen and transfer students, respectively. The courses provide valuable information about resources on campus and strategies for success. These courses are also a great way to get to know peers on campus.



#### RECURRING TASKS FOR MASON STUDENTS

- Register for classes
- Add/drop classes
- Review mid-semester grades
- Selective withdrawal period
- Early alert survey
- Apply for financial aid (FAFSA)
- Pay tuition and fees
- Apply for on-campus housing

# First Year

*Exploration and Beginning*



## Meet with an academic advisor

Academic Advising is essential to your academic progress and success at George Mason University. An academic advisor can help you identify your academic and personal goals, develop a long-term academic plan, and connect you with a range of resources on campus. If you have declared a major, you should contact an academic advisor in your major. If you have not declared a major, you should meet with the success coaches in the Mason Care Network. More information at [advising.gmu.edu](http://advising.gmu.edu).



## Identify resources for academic support

There are a number of resources across campus intended to support your academic success. Check with your professors and academic advisors to see what study groups, office hours, and other programs might be available to help you succeed in a given course. Additional support can be found at the Math Tutoring Center, Writing Center, and Learning Services.



## Explore potential majors and careers



Review degree programs and requirements at [admissions.gmu.edu/academics/majors](http://admissions.gmu.edu/academics/majors). Mason has nearly 80 majors, and hundreds of concentrations and minors. Discuss your interests with your academic advisor or make an appointment with a Career Counselor in University Career Services (UCS) to explore how your interests and skills relate to careers. UCS has a range of programs designed to expose you to potential careers and connect you with professionals in those areas. More information on these and other programs can be found at [careers.gmu.edu](http://careers.gmu.edu).



## Consider externship/job shadowing opportunities

Each semester, University Career Services offers Take a Patriot to Work, a one-day site-visit program. We visit several different employers each semester, and space is available on a first-come, first-served basis. You can sign up in Handshake once the event is posted. This is a great way to explore different paths early in your college career. More information at [careers.gmu.edu](http://careers.gmu.edu).



## Join a student organization

Join registered student organizations where you can pursue your personal interests, contribute to campus life, and eventually gain leadership positions that will allow you to develop valuable skills such as budgeting or event planning. Learn more about these organizations at the GetConnected Fair each Fall during Welcome Week. For a full listing of registered student organizations on campus, visit [si.gmu.edu](http://si.gmu.edu).



## Explore Handshake

Handshake is an online database for on-and off-campus jobs, work-study positions, internships, and research opportunities. Login and create your profile at [handshake.gmu.edu](http://handshake.gmu.edu).

# Sophomore Year

*Purpose, Progress, and Planning*



## **Declare (or affirm) your major**

After taking several courses, you can decide if a particular major seems like a good fit for you. Be aware that some majors have an application/admission process. Even if you already declared a major, think again about your academic strengths, and make sure that your current major is still a good fit for you.



## **Develop a long-term academic plan**

Use Degree Works and meet with an academic advisor to plan your courses through graduation. Consider proper sequencing of courses and enrichment opportunities such as study abroad, summer courses, and internships.



## **Build/sustain relationships with faculty**

Building relationships with your professors can benefit you in the classroom and beyond. The best way to build rapport is to be engaged in your classes, ask questions, and visit during office hours. Keep in touch with professors after you have completed their courses. They are often interested in your progress and may know of opportunities for you to engage in research or other activities. Furthermore, graduate programs expect letters of recommendation from professors who taught you and know you personally.



## **Consider additional externship/job shadowing opportunities**

Sign up in Handshake to follow a professional in the area for a day to see what their job entails and if you would enjoy it. Even if you have participated in a job shadowing program before, it can be helpful to shadow different professionals to see if another career is a better fit for you.



## **Find an on-campus job or internship**

Working on campus or as an intern is a great way to build additional professional skills (e.g. customer service, time management) and add experience to your resume. Internships can provide knowledge and hands-on experience in a particular career field or organization within a specified time-frame. To see a wide variety of student employment and internship postings, visit [handshake.gmu.edu](http://handshake.gmu.edu). Be sure to speak with your academic advisor to see if you can get credit for internship experiences within your major.



## **Begin to build your professional network**

Keep a record of people you meet through student organizations, service opportunities, work, and internships. Learn about their work and interests, and try to keep in touch during your time at Mason. Online networking sites like LinkedIn can help you keep in touch. When you begin your job search, you can ask people in your network for insights about positions and opportunities that might be of interest to you.

# Junior Year

*Engagement and Action*



## Update your academic plan

Make sure your academic plan accurately reflects the courses you have completed. Meet with an academic advisor to review your plans through graduation.



## Explore undergraduate research opportunities

Gaining research experience alongside faculty members is another way to build relationships with faculty and solidify your academic and career related interests. Research opportunities can also support your career-related goals. For more information on research opportunities at Mason, visit [oscar.gmu.edu](http://oscar.gmu.edu).



## Apply for internships

Internships provide you with knowledge and hands-on experience in a particular career field or organization. They are a great way to learn whether or not the career field is a good fit for the future. To see a wide variety of internship postings, visit Handshake at [handshake.gmu.edu](http://handshake.gmu.edu). Check with your academic advisor and the course catalog to see if you can get academic credit for your internship experience within your major.



## Explore study abroad opportunities

Year, semester or summer-long study abroad experiences provide unique opportunities for cultural immersion and language acquisition from an extended stay in a foreign country. There are many opportunities to study abroad at the same cost as tuition at Mason. For more information, visit [studyabroad.gmu.edu](http://studyabroad.gmu.edu).



## Attend a career fair

Mason's largest Career Fairs occur in October and February. Get comfortable speaking to prospective employers about your skills and experience, and learn what employers are seeking in new hires. Visit [careers.gmu.edu](http://careers.gmu.edu) for more information.



## Seek leadership opportunities

Gain leadership experience within student organizations on campus. Through leadership roles, you can acquire additional transferable skills to stand out and make an impact.



## Visit University Career Services

Make an appointment with a Career Services staff member to discuss your job/internship search strategy including your resume, building your professional network, and interviewing tips. More information at [careers.gmu.edu](http://careers.gmu.edu).



## Identify/plan for applicable graduate school entrance exams

If you plan to apply to graduate programs, check to see what entrance exams are required, and when you should take them.

# Senior Year

*Shaping the Future*



## **Complete a graduation check with an academic advisor**

Before your meeting, you can run Degree Evaluation on Patriot Web to see if you are missing any requirements.



## **Apply for graduation on Patriot Web**

You must apply for graduation for your degree to be conferred. Completing the graduation application notifies the University that you intend to complete your studies. It also enables you to check your university accounts, check the spelling of your name for your diploma, and determine where your degree should be sent after graduation.



## **Meet with Career Services**

Industry Advisors in Career Services can help you develop a customized job search strategy to break into your industry of interest, create tailored resumes and cover letters, and conduct practice interviews. If you haven't already, attend the Career Fairs to meet potential employers in person.

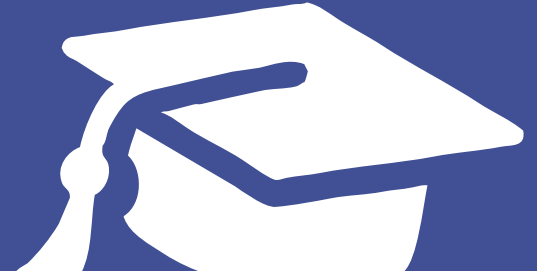


## **Apply for jobs and/or graduate programs**

Begin taking formal steps to prepare for life after graduation. Apply for graduate programs and jobs early. Many graduate programs have rolling admissions or priority application deadlines in the fall. Employers may take several months after a position is posted to actually make a hire, so plan to apply before you graduate. On-Campus Interviewing (OCI) is an easy way to interview for full-time, professional jobs without having to leave campus. For more information, visit [careers.gmu.edu](http://careers.gmu.edu) or [handshake.gmu.edu](http://handshake.gmu.edu) for additional postings.

# Graduation and Beyond

*The Mason Graduate*



## **Complete Exit and Career Plans Surveys**

Share information about your experience at Mason, as well as your post-graduation plans. Your feedback is valuable to the University, and will be used to help shape the experiences of future students.



## **Apply learning to your career and/or graduate program**

The Mason graduate is “an engaged citizen, a well-rounded scholar, and prepared to act.” It’s time to use what you learned in classes and co-curricular activities to pursue your passions and make a difference!



## **Stay involved with Mason**

You can serve as a mentor for current students, volunteer on-campus, or make financial contributions. To get started:

1. Become Part of the Mason Alumni Network ([alumni.gmu.edu](http://alumni.gmu.edu)).
2. Update your LinkedIn account