



**CDC'S 20TH ANNUAL  
CAREER FAIR**  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2015  
O'NEILL CENTER  
1-4:30 PM

ACADEMIC PEER MENTORS— YOUR ARM HAS A **HANDOUT** FOR YOU!



IN THIS ISSUE

## Is Graduate School for You?

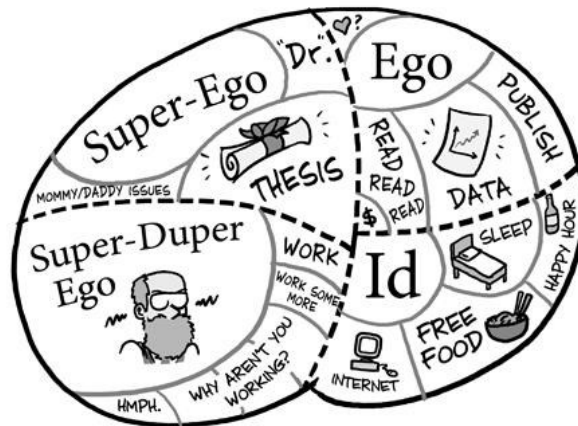
by **Alex Saraceno, Pinney ARM**

Graduate school is a critical stage for career development, but not every profession requires a Master's degree or a PhD. Some master's programs prepare graduates for specific professions while others refine and enhance proficiency in a specific field. Doctoral programs prepare students to become experts in a particular field, and with that level of knowledge one can teach at the university-level or continue to research.

Choosing to attend graduate school involves thorough research on programs, schools, and degree options. Certain programs may require a specific examination, such as the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), GRE Subject Tests, the Law School Admission Test (LSAT), the Medical School Admissions Test (MCAT), or the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT). While letters of recommendation, essays, work samples, and interviews also impact your application's strength, test scores are considered crucial for certain programs and schools. To prepare for any of these exams there are classes held all-year long both in person and face-to-face through resources like The Princeton Review, Kaplan, and more.

It's never too early, or too late, to begin the application process. Your hard work in researching and visiting schools as well as communicating with prospective professors will lead you to finding the perfect program and school.

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The Grad Student Brain

WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM

- 1 Is Graduate School for You?
- 2 Major Decisions:
  - *Deciding on a Major if You're Undecided*
  - *Choosing a Major*
- 3 Feeling Overwhelmed Post-Spring Break?
- 4 Find a Job
- 5 Proud to be a Colonial
- 5 My Road to Western
- 6 Preparing for Room Selection
- 6 HRL & Campus Reminders



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## Deciding on a Major if You're Undecided

Deciding on a major can be a pretty daunting task. Some start off their freshman year thinking they know exactly what they want to major in,

and what they want to do after graduation. Others have no clue where to begin or what they want to do after they graduate. Whichever place you find yourself, it can be helpful to receive tips on how to decide on the right major. Here are a few ideas that may help you decide on a major.

- **Go to the Career Development Center-** At the Career Development Center you are able to meet with someone who is able to advise you on what direction you should take regarding your academic decisions. They also have tools that can help you determine which career you would best fit in based on your interests and strengths.
- **Speak with your advisor-** Meeting with an advisor can help you sort out what classes you should take while you are deciding on a major. They may also help you narrow down your options so you can decide between two or three majors.
- **Ask your friends and family-** Our friends and family are the people who know us the best, sometimes they may have insight into what our strengths are and they are able to give us advice when we are unsure on which direction to take. It may be helpful to ask them what they think we should major in or what direction they can see us taking academically.
- **Take a variety of classes-** A great way to decide on a major is by taking classes across the board from all different departments. When you do this you are able to determine which classes you enjoyed, and which ones you don't care much for. This process can help you to narrow down what area of study you should focus on.

It is important to remember that although deciding on a major is an important decision, many people end up having careers in areas completely different from what they studied in college. Try not to stress out and remember that you can always talk to your ARM!



by Jamie Maitland, Newbury ARM



## Choosing a Major

- ◇ **Visit the Career Development Center (CDC):** The CDC has excellent tools and resources to help you choose a major that you like and that you're interested in. You can also talk to the CDC staff about different concerns you may have as far as choosing a major. Maybe you want to find out how realistic it is to get a job in a specific major after you graduate or if you'll be bringing home a stable income. The CDC is located on MT campus in the student center room 207!
- ◇ **Try out Different Resources:** Some of you may not be able to make your way over to the CDC. Therefore, there are different resources online. If you visit the CDC page on the Western website you can see different online resources. One resource in particular is called the SIGI 3. I had my residents take it and they really enjoyed it. If you can you should take it as well. It's very fast and easy and at the end it gives you a list of different career options you may be interested in based off of your answers to the questions.
- ◇ **Make sure that you pick a major that you're interested in:** Some people come to college and say that they're pursuing a particular major that they don't even like—their parents talked them into doing it. If you choose a career that your parents want you to have but you don't want, you're going to be extremely unhappy. Do what you want to do and be proud of whatever you decide to do because it was a decision you made for yourself and your happiness.
- ◇ **Take Different Classes:** If you're thinking about becoming a biology major, don't just take science classes. Make sure that you take a variety of classes so that you can see what you like. You may take one art class, and realize that you want to do something art related as a career. However, you would've never known that if you didn't put yourself out there and get out of your comfort zone.
- ◇ **Don't give up:** If you want to pursue a particular major but people are telling you that you're not smart enough to do it don't listen to them. A lot of people focus on the negative things that people say to them. Focus on the positive. Focus on yourself and pursuing your dreams and not on what others think about you. You determine your future.
- ◇ **Talk to Students in the major you're thinking about pursuing:** If you want to pursue Nursing, it's a good idea to talk to a student who's in the Nursing program. Talk to them about how a typical week is like for them, the different clinical sites, and if they like the program. That way you can get an idea of what you may be going into.

Spring Break is just ending, and if you're like most people, work is the last item to enter your head. Winter's brought many long weeks full of tests, papers, applications for jobs, internships or graduate school and snow: copious amounts of the white frozen stuff that mounds up in our driveways. Regardless of whether you've flown to Florida or stayed home and read a book, Spring Break gave you some down time for a week. So now, why not get ahead and work on those term papers or projects you've got?

Many professors like to assign a term paper or presentation of some sort to be certain that you are retaining the information you've learned over the semester and can apply it. In most cases, these won't seriously be considered and worked on until the last week of classes when students are studying and busy trying to tie a bow on the semester. Why not make it easier on yourself and start working on it now, before the end of semester activities start to overwhelm you? The final product will be better, and you will know whether or not you are struggling with the topic so that you can seek help if you need it, along with relieving much of that nasty stress that builds up like a clogged sewage pipe. All in all, it's worth the time to get ahead on these assignments.

If you've fallen behind on readings during the semester, which is inevitable if you are taking a good amount of classes and having to write essays on a regular basis, don't worry! You can get up on your Tuesday mornings (or the morning of your choice) and skim over a few sections of a text book, then look more closely at sections you don't understand

or need more examples to grasp the theories in it. You shouldn't read every word of the book if you're behind, but rather look for the main topics and read a few paragraphs on them. If you can write the concept in your own words and condense the definition, then you've got a good understanding of it.

Study. Study. Study. Finals are coming up in little over a month now that we've returned from Spring Break, so it would be in your best interest to study what you've learned thus far before you forget it. You don't have to cram and memorize all your notes and the entire book, but briefly read over what you have and refresh the topics in your mind. When it comes to studying, slow and steady over a long period of time is the best way to retain information. Try giving examples of the topic you're studying and explain it to someone not in the course. If you can successfully teach the material to someone else, you're golden. Be sure to continue studying a little bit every week before the exam, even if it's just for ten minutes every few days. Every little bit counts, like pennies accumulating in your wallet over time.

## Feeling Overwhelmed Post-Spring Break?



This is also a great time to start looking at courses offered next semester and setting up a date to talk with your advisor. Courses are up for next semester and though you may not think you have time during the school week to look at these, you've got to plan out the rest of your semester and start thinking of what courses you want to take. It's also a good idea to schedule a meeting time with your advisor since registration begins the week after spring break, so be sure to establish communication with your advisor now. If you've got any questions about your degree requirements, your advisor or even the secretary or chair of your department can guide you if you are unsure of what courses you need to fulfill.

Lastly, have fun! Spring Break was the last real break we had before Summer, and though it can be tempting to ignore our reading assignments as soon as the weather warms up, it's important to stay focused on this and explore the outdoors once you've finished your work. Summer lasts for roughly four months at Western before the fall semester begins, so get a breath of fresh air, work hard and the sun will be there waiting for you in May!

When all the world appears to be in a tumult, and nature itself is feeling the assault of climate change, the seasons retain their essential rhythm. Yes, fall gives us a premonition of winter, but then, winter will be forced to relent, once again, to the new beginnings of soft greens, longer light, and the sweet air of spring.



# FIND a job

by Jeff Fields, Centennial ARM

Thinking about your career can be a very difficult and intimidating process to prepare for. The best way for students to become prepared is to start seeking jobs and internships relating to their field. It may sound like a frightening task, but it really isn't all that difficult. Here are a few tips to get started.

## 1) Interview professors in your program

As of now, you may have a good idea of what you enjoy studying and a career that you'd like to pursue. That being said, you may want to start interviewing your professors and inquiring about their career paths, as well as some entry level positions they have held. This can help you gain perspective on the types of positions that you may want to look for at this point in your career. Your professor may also have a few colleagues to whom they could introduce you. Remember that giving advice is part of their job, and that most professors will respect that you reached out to them.

## 2) Reach out to the Career Development Center

Besides your individual professors, the Career Development Center, located in the Midtown Student Center, can be a very helpful resource in finding a job/internship. They'll help you update your resume, and will also point you in the right direction with helpful advice and opportunities that can help you advance your career. Many companies look to recruit students from Universities, and the CDC can help you get in touch with their campus recruiters.

## 3) Utilize the internet

By now, you may have an idea on the type of position you'd like to find. Many companies post job/internship openings online for potential candidates to find. Some post these list-

ings on their own company website, but others will post to exterior sources. Examples of these sources are [www.ineed.com](http://www.ineed.com), [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com), and [www.careerbuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com). It may prove useful to bookmark these pages on your browser and check them periodically.

## 4) Network on and off of Social Media

I'm sure at this point you've been told that networking is a key element in a career. As the internet becomes more and more significant, the social media becomes more prominent. To be more specific, you may want to start considering creating a *linkedin* page. It's a useful resource in job/internship seeking, as it allows you to find professionals in your field, and reach out to them— whether by yourself or through the introduction of a mutual connection. Besides this, prospective employers WILL look you up on the internet if they're considering you as a candidate, and a *linkedin* profile is a professional way to put yourself out there, and become easily available to anyone interested in you.

While online networking is present, it may prove helpful to take the more traditional route. Start off with people you're comfortable around, maybe a parent, friend, or mentor that you feel comfortable reaching out to. You never know how that may help, and they may know someone who can introduce you to an employer.

## 5) Follow through

Once you believe you've found the right

position it'll be time to start the application process. Make sure that your resume is updated with your most significant experiences, and that you write a well-written and effective cover letter to complement it. This is where you make a first impression, and it can be the first step in distinguishing yourself from your competitors. Also - keep in mind that if you've found this position through the help of a current employee, that you ask for any advice that may help your chances at obtaining the position. They may want to submit an employee referral, or introduce you to the interviewer beforehand. Either way, it never hurts to ask.

If you've earned an interview, make sure to practice beforehand and know the points that you'll be trying to get across. If you have the opportunity, research the interviewer and see what you can learn about them. You never know when this type of background check can help, especially in sparking conversation with the employer. Make sure to dress up, and give the best possible first impression. If you don't hear back from them within a couple of weeks, follow up and see where they are in the interview process.

Hopefully with these tips, you have gained some helpful insight on how to pursue a job, or an internship. Remember to learn as much as you can about your major, reach out to professionals close to you, utilize your campus resources and the networks around you. I wish you the best of luck, and hope that your efforts lead to success in advancing your career.





## PROUD TO BE A COLONIAL!

Each semester, WCSU welcomes to its campus new and potential students. In early November, we host our annual Open House, where potential students visit the campus, meet faculty, staff and students, and get to know more about Western and why it might be the right fit for them.

In the spring (April 11th this year), we host Accepted Students on campus—giving them another opportunity to meet people and connect with the university they will be making their home for the next few years.

If you don't work for a specific office or department, you may not think you have much to offer on these days, but nothing could be further from the truth! Your stories about Western and what being a student here has meant to you are incredibly interesting and helpful to students making their decisions.

So, if you're around on the 11th, and you see a campus tour coming by, or notice someone looking lost — why not connect with those potential students and their families. Talk with them about why you picked WCSU. Tell them about your favorite activities (theater, baseball, the new workout facilities in Berkshire). Talk to them about the sorority you joined, or the musical group you heard at coffeehouse last week. Tell them about your favorite professor or a class project that was awesome! Take a little time to let others know why Western holds a special place in your life, and encourage them to join in to see what a difference it can make in their lives, too!



## My Road to Western...

by Colleen Mair , Litchfield ARM

Have you ever wondered how your professor came to teach at WCSU? This semester you all have a unique opportunity to learn about the different paths that have led faculty and professors here. “My Road to Western” is a Housing and Residence Life program that allows students to learn about their professors’ personal journeys. In the past students have been fascinated by the different jobs held by their professor and learned a great deal about their motivations. This event is open to all members of the WCSU community! You are encouraged to attend and get to know your professors. This social setting allows for the kinds of conversations we are unable to have in class while you enjoy some of their favorite treats. This year, you can attend one of these events during a lunch session (12pm) or an evening session (5pm).

The Academic Resource Mentors (ARM) have selected a small but diverse group of professors and administrators to speak. This year, the series is shortened to a few weeks in April, due to wanting to miss snow delays and cancellations which plagued it last spring.

There are four speakers planned for this spring's programs. Interested in our writing professors? Dr. Donald Gagnon of the English department, who was keynote speaker at last year's academic recognition ceremony,

will be one of the guests. You can learn about the interesting jobs JLA professor Dr. Divya Sharma has performed when she speaks. Ask about Professor Jody Rajcula's journey to the head of the HPX department, including her previous career as head coach of the women's basketball team. Or, you can learn about Dean of Students Dr. Walter Cramer's interests, talents and travels on Tuesday, April 7th.

Events like these are important not only to the community but also to the classroom. While you may know your professor in one capacity, there is an amazing journey that has brought them to this point in time. As we all work through the spring semester and plan for the fall semester, we may face crossroads. You may find that you are no longer interested in your major. Perhaps another location is interesting you. These are the kind of questions and choices your professors have made. Whether they later found that their decision was right or wrong, they can guide you on your own personal journey. “My Road to Western” creates an environment that fosters this conversation; however, it would be beneficial for you to start these conversations

throughout your career at WCSU. You may find that your professors have more to offer you even beyond the classroom. Watch for specific dates to be announced soon!



# PREPARING FOR ROOM SELECTION

You keep getting the emails and walking past the posters, but you still don't know what you need to do to get a room for the fall? Here's a try at making it easy for you. Take a look.

1. Pay your deposit. Many of you paid your deposits by the deadline. If you did, you'll be able to participate in the rest of this process. *If you missed it, go ahead and pay it. We'll be in touch with what you'll need to do next.* If you were late, you **will not** be able to join in with a group in the process we describe below.
2. Anyone who paid a deposit by March 22nd will be sent (to your room or hall mailbox) an **academic year-long housing application & contract**. The form will have your personal information (name, ID, Priority Points totals, etc.) pre-printed. Don't lose this form! You need it for what comes next!
3. Find the friends you want to live with (and who paid their deposits on time, too), and fill out a **group pre-registration form**.
  - You only need to complete 1 (one) **group pre-registration** form for your group, regardless of if you are a group of 1 or a group of 5!
  - Make sure to pick a group leader and secondary leader. Your leader is the person who will choose your room for you!
  - Attach this **form** to ALL of your **application/contracts**. These forms must be turned in at the Newbury Housing & Residence Life offices **no later than 4 pm on Monday, March 30th**.
4. On **Tuesday, March 31st**, every group's leader will get an email that tells your group when it can come to select a room/apartment for next year. Please make sure that your leader checks his or her **WCSU email** to find out the time

of your group's appointment.

5. Groups that are full (have 5 eligible people in them for Pinney Hall, or 4 eligible people in them for Grasso or Centennial Halls) will have a 5-minute appointment at some time on April 6, 7, or 8.
  - **Only** the group's leader should come, or if there is a conflict with class, the secondary leader will attend.
  - If both leaders have a class conflict, the leader may fill out a **proxy form** to have any other group member, other student, or the HRL office be able to select the room or apartment for you.
  - **Do NOT SKIP Classes** for room selection!
6. If your group doesn't have enough members for a full room or apartment, your **partial group** will receive an appointment for April 8 or 9.
  - For partial groups, **every member** of the group must be at selection. This is to ensure that, if there are no spaces that will fit your entire partial group, you can decide how you will split up and select other open spaces.
  - If you can't make the appointment time, again, please complete a **proxy form** to allow someone else to select for you.

Again—**this is the process if you've paid your deposit on time**. If you haven't—don't despair. There will be another way to secure a room before the end of the semester. Watch for signs, emails, carrier pigeons, hall meetings, floating lanterns, white board announcements, and other things to see what you will do if your deposit was late.

We hope this helped clear things up a little!

## IMPORTANT HOUSING REMINDERS

March 22nd was the deadline to pay your housing deposit for the fall and be able to participate in room selection. If you missed the deadline, **DON'T WORRY**—there are still ways you can secure a room for the fall.

Watch for announcements on your email, in the lobby of your building, and on our website and Facebook pages.



## Do you want to work for Housing?

Applications are currently being accepted for those interested in working over the summer for Housing & Residence Life and Facilities Scheduling & Promotions as a summer assistant.

If you are interested, please read more about it on our [Employment Opportunities](#) webpage, or speak to Ed Mulvihill, Assoc. Director for Operations in HRL.



\*\* Don't forget to look for campus events in the **WOW** email each Thursday! \*\*

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?



What do you think? Have something you'd like to share about this newsletter or other housing issues? Want to give a suggestion for a topic you're interested in knowing more about? Let us know. Drop us a line at [housing@wcsu.edu](mailto:housing@wcsu.edu)