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# Four Year Plan

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**Rat/4<sup>th</sup> Class Year:** During your first year at VMI, you will start to build the foundation for a successful college experience.

- Establish a successful academic foundation by completing course work with a quality grade point average (GPA). Most employers and graduate programs are looking for a 3.0 GPA minimum.
- Explore your academic major and consider a minor or concentration area.
- Actively engage at least one faculty or staff member in knowing you well and becoming a resource for you.
- Create a time management plan to balance the academic, leadership, wellness, and spiritual aspects of your life.
- Save noteworthy projects, papers, and assignments to include in a portfolio.
- Visit the Career Services website, blog, and office to learn about services and resources available.
- Commit to at least one VMI-sponsored activity or organization.
- Broaden your perspective by attending VMI sponsored academic and cultural events.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Class Year:** Avoid the “academic ratline” by expanding your self-awareness and involvement in programs and activities. This is a time to explore opportunities to maximize career experiences and networking.

- Maintain and seek to increase your cumulative GPA; aim for a 3.0 GPA or higher.
- Adjust your time management plan to incorporate new responsibilities.
- Begin exploring potential career paths by using resources available through the Office of Career Services.
- Discuss career/ graduate school plans with your academic/ career advisor; develop a career action plan.
- Develop your college resume/ cover letter during the fall semester to prepare for application to internships, research experiences, and summer jobs; update these documents at the end of each semester.
- Register on [Handshake](#); upload resume, employer connections, on-post interviews, and career events.
- Research and apply for opportunities to study abroad or participate in a summer internship.
- Build your online network i.e. LinkedIn account.
- Continue to save noteworthy projects, papers, and assignments to include in your portfolio.
- Commit to activities and leadership experiences related to your major and academic interests.
- Consider an internship/ community service project at the end of your 3<sup>rd</sup> class year.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Class Year:** This will be a critical year in your academic program and related activities – a time to evaluate your decisions and recommit to future goals.

- ❑ Seek to be named to the Dean's List and work for at least a 3.0 GPA each semester.
- ❑ Consult with your academic advisor and faculty members about your post-graduation plans.
- ❑ Organize a timeline for applying to graduate/professional school or seeking full-time employment.
- ❑ Start studying for standardized tests and researching admission requirements for graduate school, if applicable.
- ❑ Prepare your portfolio of documents for applying to summer internship, research, or work opportunities.
- ❑ Consider mock interviews to refine your interview skills and consider an internship.
- ❑ Attend career fairs and connect with employers.
- ❑ Consider a cadet leadership role on-post.

**1<sup>st</sup> Class Year:** Your 1<sup>st</sup> class year at VMI is as significant a time of transition. Your focused goals are now very specific, bound by time, and cumulative. This is a time to prepare for the transition to your first career.

- ❑ Maintain/improve your GPA and confirm your graduation date.
- ❑ Continue involvement in co-curricular, service, and leadership activities.
- ❑ Request letters of recommendation from faculty and previous supervisors for your portfolio.
- ❑ Network with alumni and employers through career fairs, networking events, and socials.
- ❑ Review your social media presence and your voicemail for potential employer contact.
- ❑ Request official copies of your transcript from the Registrar's Office.
- ❑ Share your employment and post-graduation plans with the Office of Career Services.

## **HOW THIS OFFICE ASSISTS CADETS: CAREER COACHING AND TESTING FOR DECISION-MAKING**

You can meet one-on-one with a professional staff member to discuss your academic and career options and explore your career-related values, interests, and abilities. Career Services' counselors are professionally trained and are aware of the concerns that you face in exploring your future.