Grad School: To Go or Not to Go

Adapted from National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE)

Should you go on to graduate school? Is it the right move for you at this point in your career? Give your decision careful consideration, weighing all the factors, including:

Your career path

What do you truly want to do? What excites you more than anything? If it’s a profession you absolutely, positively must pursue, and it requires advanced education, then you’re probably an excellent candidate for further education.

“You go to graduate school to become an expert in a certain area or to be a professional in certain industries, like law, medicine, or engineering,” explains Cindy Parnell, director of career services at Arizona State University.

Investment of time, money, and energy

Graduate students find out very quickly that their days of frat parties, general education courses, and hanging out with friends are over—graduate school is, well, about school.

Are you ready to commit?

Also consider your post-undergraduate life plans. Are marriage and family in your immediate future? Graduate school can put a huge financial strain on a young couple already facing student loan debt, not to mention the burden of the time you’ll be spending studying. Be sure you—and your family—are ready for the added responsibility of a few more years of schooling.

Your marketability to an employer

Not every profession requires an advanced degree, so do some research on potential career opportunities before committing to more education.

“Students run the risk of thinking today that grad school might be the answer. Depending on the program, you want to have the fieldwork experience as well as grad school. If you go on to grad school without having any fieldwork experience, you run the risk of being over-educated [and under-experienced],” says Shayne Bernstein, associate director, career development services, at Hunter College.

Don’t go if you’re not passionate about something,” Berstein suggests “Don’t go for the sake of going to graduate school. Go because you’re passionate and you want to develop your skill set in a certain area.”

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Employers focused on hiring new college grads are optimistic about the job market for Class of 2014 grads; overall, they say the job market looks good for 2014 grads. In fact, they expect to hire 7.8 percent more Class of 2014 grads for their U.S. operations than they hired from the Class of 2013. (When opportunities at international operations for new grads are factored in, the hiring outlook is ever better, with an overall increase in hiring of 12 percent.) To review the full document ‘The Job Outlook for The Class of 2014’ go to: http://ow.ly/rf8NU.

Attributes employers look for on a candidate’s resume:
  ⇒ Communication skills (written)
  ⇒ Leadership
  ⇒ Analytical/ quantitative skills
  ⇒ Strong work ethic
  ⇒ Ability to work in a team
  ⇒ Problem solving skills
  ⇒ Communication skills (verbal)
    ⇒ Initiative
    ⇒ Detail-oriented
    ⇒ Computer skills

Opportunities within the field

If you do plan to work before going back for that advanced degree, will more education help you move up the ranks at your company? Have you landed a job in your undergraduate area of study, and now you’re thinking you want to enhance what you’ve learned, or pursue a totally new field? Depending on your professional career path, advanced education may help you reach your career goals.

Your motivation

Can’t think of what else to do next? Don’t think of graduate school as a way to hide from the job search. You face wasting a lot of resources.

Bernstein suggests giving careful consideration to your decision to pursue graduate school.

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For more information on National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) go to: http://www.naceweb.org.
Student Spotlight: Alayna Shamy

Alayna is a Senior Communication major with a double specialization in public relations/advertising and journalism with a minor in marketing

Home town: New Brunswick, NJ

Involvement on campus: PRSSA president, Copy chief of The Greyhound

How did you decide on your major? After my first introduction to public relations course, I discovered that it was right for me. I never knew much about public relations. Once I figured out the whole world of communications, I knew it was something I wanted to be a part of.

How many internships have you held during your time at Loyola? Two.

How did you find the positions? My first internship I found through PRSSA. My other internship I came across on HireLOYOLA.

What was the location and positions? My first internship was in New York City with More Magazine where I worked in the fashion department. My second internship was in New Brunswick, NJ, with Johnson & Johnson where I worked in corporate external communications and in the marketing department.

What did you learn from these experiences? I learned what I want to do in the communication field. I also learned valuable skills that I will take with me throughout my career. I was exposed to many things and I realized what I like and dislike to do. I also learned a lot about myself and my strengths and weaknesses.

What advice would you give to your fellow peers seeking an internship? You HAVE to intern! If you don’t intern you will never find any direction and will not gain the valuable knowledge which can’t be learned in a classroom. Also, don’t give up. If you don’t get an internship you want, keep searching. Put yourself out there but also know that it is okay to turn down an internship and say “no.”

What resources at Loyola have helped you? The Career Center helped me so much. They are the best! They always offered great advice and helped prepare me to apply to internships.

What do you plan to do following Loyola? I plan on going to graduate school to earn a masters degree in corporate communications.

What advice would you give to students in the job search process? Be patient. Use all of your resources and make valuable connections at your internships because that may very well be the thing that lands you a job.

The Career Center is excited to offer our new LinkedIn workshop! The goals of this workshop are for students to understand what is LinkedIn, how to set up LinkedIn effectively, and how to use LinkedIn to assist with career development. The first workshop will be held on Wednesday, February 12th at 6pm. Sign up in The Career Center.
Mark your calendar!

January

6-17  Road Trips to the Real World
13  Welcome Back
15  Walk-In Resume Critique
21  Walk-In Career Advising
22  Walk-In Resume Critique
24  Wings and Workshops
28-30  Practice Interview Program
29  Walk-In Resume Critique

February

3  Spring Career Fair
5  Walk-In Resume Critiques
7  MCC Career Fair at Towson University
11  Walk-In Career Advising
12  LinkedIn Workshop
12  Walk-In Resume Critique
19  Walk-In Resume Critique
26  Walk-In Resume Critique

March

3  Walk-In Resume Critique
12  LinkedIn Workshop
12  Walk-In Resume Critique
17  Walk-In Career Advising
19  Walk-In Resume Critique
26  Walk-In Resume Critique

Practice Interview Program (PIP)

is a great opportunity to practice your interviewing skills with employers and Loyola alumni. Sign up on HireLOYOLA for a 30-minute interview and 15-minute feedback session!

Resume Critique

Wednesdays

Come into The Career Center Wednesdays between 2-4pm and have a Career Advisor critique your resume or assist you in developing a resume. Critiques can cover resumes or cover letters. No appointment necessary.

Spring Career Fair

The spring Career Fair is an opportunity for employers in all industries to interact with all types of Loyola students and candidates.

Reitz Arena | 11am–2pm

91%

of LU 2012 graduates utilized the services of The Career Center (TCC)

2012 Undergraduate Follow Up Survey

The Career Center at Loyola University Maryland
DeChiaro College Center  ●  Ground Floor, West Wing
www.loyola.edu/thecareercenter   ●  410-617-2232   ●  thecareercenter@loyola.edu

The mission of The Career Center at Loyola University Maryland is to assist undergraduate and graduate students and Loyola alumni in the total career development process. This process is an ongoing, lifetime activity and addresses various needs, such as: Choosing or changing a major, clarifying interests, obtaining part-time and summer job and internship experiences, planning and conducting a professional job search, obtaining full-time employment, selecting and being admitted to graduate school, and changing careers. The Career Center offers many services to assist in this process, and continuously strives to educate and promote partnerships with students, alumni, faculty, employers, and members of the Loyola community.