

Preparing for your Career Services and Employer Relations (CSER) Appointment

All Individual Appointments: **Update your profile on Handshake prior to your appointment at: <https://framingham.joinhandshake.com/>**

Career development and planning can be an overwhelming process. CSER's career counselors are available to help you:

- Clarify your career search goals and academic major choices/decisions
- Assess skills, abilities, interests, personality, and priorities
- Help you develop important career tools: resume, cover letter, reference sheet, marketing pitch, LinkedIn profile
- Locate career information about your major/minor
- Learn job search techniques
- Discuss the importance of participating in experiential experiences, including internships, student teaching, practicums, etc.
- Develop interview skills and networking strategies
- Conduct a realistic mock interview
- Learn about career events and programs
- Search for graduate school programs and complete applications
- Get information regarding **SUII, The Washington Center**, and other internship programs

What to Expect From Your Career Counselor

Career counselors are trained to listen to you, help formulate goals based on your needs, and assist you in finding the best resources to meet those needs. Formal career assessments are often used to help you create realistic action plans to achieve your goals. The Career Services staff will be respectful of you and are genuinely willing to help. A career counselor can help you:

- Explore your values and interests
- Understand your skills and strengths
- Find answers to your career-related questions
- Explore majors and/or careers that might be a good fit
- Develop decision-making skills
- Research specific career questions
- Expose obstacles which might hinder your career choices
- Develop job-search and interviewing skills
- Write a resume, cover letter, or other correspondence

Questions to Consider

Before meeting with a career counselor, take a few moments to consider the following questions. This will enable you to start thinking about what you would like to accomplish during your sessions. Your counselor can better assist you if you can articulate your career needs.

- What made you decide to visit (virtually or in person) the Career Services and Employer Relations office?
- What do you hope to accomplish during your first visit?
- What are your favorite classes from high school or FSU? Why?
- Why did you choose the classes you have taken?
- Who are the most influential people in your life? How so? and Why?
- What occupations do your friends and family have? Do any of them interest you?
- How do your friends or family feel about their careers?
- What skills are you most proud of having?

Career Meeting Categories & Preparation-Click on the links below for more info:

Sometimes more than one topic may be addressed in one meeting

[Career/Major Counseling appointment](#)

[Job Search appointment](#)

[Graduate School Strategy/Personal Statement appointment](#)

[Networking \(Branding\) appointment](#)

[Internship Search appointment](#)

[Professionalism appointment](#)

[Interview or Salary Negotiation appointment](#)

[Resume/Cover Letter appointment](#)

For ALL appointments, please indicate if your visit is for a class requirement. If it is, ensure that your career counselor is made aware that your appointment is part of a class assignment, so that you may receive "credit" for the appointment via Starfish. You will be asked to update your Handshake account. Appointments are usually 60 minutes, if needed.

Career/Major Counseling appointment: By telephone or video chat, or in person

- Be ready to discuss your current major/career status and your thoughts/feelings about that status.
- Be prepared to discuss your interests and goals for the future.
- It may be decided that an assessment will be helpful for you. If an assessment is involved, the counselor will explain the process.
- Usually a separate follow up appointment will be made to go over your assessment results.
- The counselor often will distribute career related handouts and use on-line resources for supplemental guidance.
- Career counseling is a chance for you to find out about yourself, so come ready to talk with your counselor and be open to questions and suggestions.

The career counselor is NOT your academic advisor and will not assist with course selection or advice on credit requirements or fulfillment. They will NOT tell you what job/major is best for you, but will give you more information to help you decide on your own. All information discussed during an appointment is strictly confidential and will not be shared with anyone unless you give written permission or there is a clear, imminent threat to your health and/or safety or to others. On occasion, students may want to give permission for information to be shared with academic advisors, personal counselors or parents.

Graduate School Exploration and Personal Statement appointment: By telephone or video chat, or in person

- Appointments are approximately 45 - 60 minutes long.
- We can help you explore possible programs that will support your efforts to reach your career goals.
- ***For application and personal statement appointments, please email a copy of your personal statement and resume to the career counselor you have the appointment with, 24 hours prior if possible.***
- Be prepared to talk about the specific program you are applying to, and what the admission requirements are.
- ***If possible, also email a copy of the essay question(s) and guidelines, in advance.***
- Be ready to talk about your experiences and achievements.
- The reviewer will email critiques of your essay and go over it with you.
- ***Your career counselor may email you additional handouts and/or worksheets to supplement critiques.***

Internship Search & Discussion appointment (all internships including information on SUII, THE WASHINGTON CENTER, MA LIFE SCIENCES, Project On Ramp etc.): By telephone or video chat, or in person

- All internship exploration should be discussed with your Academic Advisor **prior to** meeting with our office.
- Appointments are approximately 45 - 60 minutes long.
- ***Email to the career counselor, 24 hours in advance, a copy of your resume and cover letter.***
- If possible, know the specific internship you are applying for and what skills the position requires. ***Email a copy of the internship advertisement in advance, or be prepared to email the online link to the career counselor.***
- If you do not have a specific internship in mind, be prepared to talk about your interests or goals so that the counselor can help you identify internship resources.
- Be ready to talk about your experiences and achievements, and how they may relate to your internship.
- You will be asked about what steps you have already taken, as well as receive guidance regarding what steps to take next.
- Be sure to talk with your **ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT'S** internship coordinator for information about internship credit and approved internship sites.

Interview appointment: By telephone or video chat, or in person

- Appointments are 30 to 60 minutes.
- Before the appointment, read interview resources and conduct an online practice interview using one of the free interview practice sites at <https://www.framingham.edu/the-fsu-difference/career-services/students/Job-Internship-Strategies/index>.
- If possible, know what job you will be interviewing for and what skills the position requires.
- If you do not have a particular job in mind, be prepared to indicate the type of job or internship you are seeking.
- ***If possible, email 24 hours in advance, a copy of the job advertisement and your resume to the career counselor that you have the appointment with.***

- The interview appointment can be either a telephone appointment, or a video appointment via Microsoft Office Teams. You and the counselor can decide in advance which format to use. The counselor will provide feedback and offer suggestions.
- If you do not wish to conduct an actual practice interview, you can use this time to go over basic interview strategies.
- The counselor may suggest follow-up appointments if needed.
- ***If scheduled for a “MOCK” interview, you are expected to dress professionally, whether it is a telephone or a video interview and treat this appointment as if it were an actual interview, which includes emailing the career counselor 24 hours in advance, a copy of your resume, portfolio, etc.***

Job Search appointment: By telephone or video chat, or in person

- Appointments are approximately 45 - 60 minutes long.
- ***If possible, email a copy of your resume and cover letter to the career counselor 24 hours in advance.***
- Be prepared to discuss your interests and goals for the future.
- Be ready to discuss your current employment status, any steps you have already taken to achieve your career goals, industries that interest you, and the geographic location of your job search.
- The counselor will provide guidance regarding what steps to take next in your job search, and how to take those steps successfully.
- The counselor will provide you with job searching tools, resources and materials.
- Don't worry if you are just beginning your search; the counselor is there to help you, regardless of where you are in the process.

Networking (Branding and Marketing) appointment: By telephone or video chat, or in person

- Appointments are approximately 45 – 60 minutes long.
- Networking helps you make personal and professional progress. Be ready to identify family members, friends, professors, mentors, former employers, community contacts, religious representatives, and volunteer connections to speak with.
- The counselor will provide suggestions for career fairs, conferences, professional associations, lectures, cultural events, community events, volunteer events and more that can offer great networking opportunities.
- The counselor will help you develop your Elevator Pitch; your 30-second answer to the question, “Tell me a little bit about yourself”? The counselor will provide guidance on updating your LinkedIn account; you can use this tool for connecting with alumni and other professionals.
- The counselor will assist you with informational interview resources and follow-up strategies.
- The counselor will go over the soft skills needed for successful networking.

Professionalism (Soft Skills) appointment: By telephone or vide chat, or in person

- Appointments are approximately 45 – 60 minutes long.
- The career counselor will help you identify and assess the personal attributes/soft skills that are your strengths and address any gaps.
- The counselor will provide you with our professionalism handout and workbook for supplemental guidance.
- You may be asked to complete a rubric to assess your soft skills and a follow up appointment may be necessary to discuss how your experiences and achievements support your soft skills.
- The counselor will help you set professional skill development goals.
- The counselor can create an action plan with specific steps to achieve your goals and help you find ways to practice the skills.

Resume or Cover Letter appointment: By telephone or video chat, or in person

- Appointments are 45 - 60 minutes long.
- ***Email to the career counselor that you have an appointment with, a copy of your most resume and cover letter draft, 24 hours prior to the appointment.***
- If possible, know the specific position you are applying for and what skills that position requires.
- If you have not targeted a specific job, be prepared to indicate the type of job or internship you will be seeking.
- ***If possible, email 24 hours in advance, a copy of the job or internship advertisement.***
- Be ready to talk about your experiences and achievements.
- Notify the counselor if the appointment is for a class assignment.
- ***The reviewer will email you critiques of your resume, or cover letter, as well as go over it with you, by phone or by a video chat appointment.***
- ***You may be emailed handouts and/or worksheets to supplement critiques.***

Salary Negotiation: By telephone or video chat, or in person

- Appointments are 45 - 60 minutes long.
- ***Preparation for your counseling appointment would include emailing in advance to the counselor a copy of YOUR budget considerations to determine your financial needs which will help determine your desired salary range.***
- Research the market rate salary ranges for this type of position in this particular industry by reviewing Salary.Com, Glassdoor, O*Net, state and local economic development sites, trade journals, NACE, Bureau of Labor Statistics, etc.
- Work with your counselor to discover your skills and accomplishments, and be prepared to talk about them.
- ***Practice your salary negotiation skills with your career counselor and others prior to the real experience. Ask your counselor to use a phone or video recording feature on the video chat platform to record a practice negotiation and review it for feedback and suggestions.***
- Understand and be realistic: entry-level salaries are less negotiable than salaries for mid-level or executive positions.