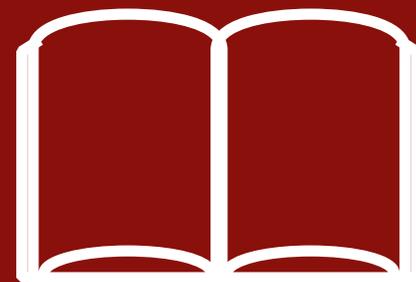


Career Development Plan



Charting Your Career Journey

The Boston College Career Center's **Career Development Plan (CDP)** is a form of an individual development plan in which, over time, you:

Assess and develop your skills, interests, and values
Create a plan to achieve your career goals
Communicate with mentors in your academic department and beyond

The CDP is broken down into four main steps in which you are prompted to assess your skills, interests, and values; set short-term, medium-term, and long-term S.M.A.R.T. career development goals; connect and discuss your plan with your mentors; and put your plan into action.

Career Center Resources to Get Started

As you work on your CDP, we encourage you to use a number of resources, including Career Center resources, to assist you in your reflection and exploration. To get the most out of your plan, please make sure that you're signed up for the following:

Handshake

Handshake is the BC Career Center's career portal. On Handshake, you can indicate your career interests to receive tailored information, schedule appointments with career coaches, view and register to events, and apply to jobs and internships.

bc.edu/handshake

EAGLE X CHANGE

Eagle Exchange is BC's global alum-student mentoring platform. On Eagle Exchange, you can connect and network with alums working across hundreds of industries. This is a great way to explore a range of career options.

eagleexchange.bc.edu



BOSTON COLLEGE
Career Center

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

BC.EDU/GRADCAREERS

I. Self Assessments

Taking time to identify and reflect on your interests, skills, and values is an essential part of your crafting your career development plan. Please utilize the resource below to complete your self assessments and reflect on your results.

IMAGINE PHD

ImaginePhD is a free career exploration platform for all graduate students, regardless of your degree program. To begin your self assessments, navigate to [imaginephd.com](https://www.imaginephd.com) to create your free account. Each assessment takes about 10 minutes to complete.

Step 1: Interests Assessment

In ImaginePhD, complete the interests assessment (<https://www.imaginephd.com/interest-assessment/new>). This assessment will help you identify tasks that you most and least enjoy doing on a daily basis and then produce a list of “job families” that correspond to your top interests.

List your results in the space below. What are your takeaways?

Step 2: Skills Assessment

In ImaginePhD, complete the skills assessment ([imaginephd.com/skill-assessment/new](https://www.imaginephd.com/skill-assessment/new)). Note: Before completing the skills assessment, you will be prompted to select “job families” of interest, each of which represents different industry areas. This will allow the platform to assess your skills based on these areas of interest.

List your results in the space below. What are your takeaways?

Step 3: Values Assessment

In ImaginePhD, complete the values assessment (<https://www.imaginephd.com/value-assessment/new>). This assessment will help you identify and reflect on your values in a work environment.

List your results in the space below. What are your takeaways?

Suggested Next Steps:

- Use the assessments to explore different job families on ImaginePhD:
 - Which job families did you explore?
 - Were you surprised by any of the suggested occupations?
 - What aspects of the sample job descriptions stood out to you? What is intriguing?
 - What do you want to learn more about?
- Utilize other assessments to continue reflecting on your skills, interests, and values: Focus2 (complete the form and enter access code Eagles); myIDP (for STEM graduate students)
- Compare the skills assessment results to career readiness competencies. In which areas are you strongest? In which areas do you need to develop?
- Schedule an appointment with a career coach and RSVP for programs on Handshake to explore your interests further.

II. Set S.M.A.R.T. Goals

Next, set your goals. The goals that you set for yourself are ideally based on the strengths, interests, and values that you identified in the previous step. Below, you will be asked to set three goals for yourself: a short-term goal, medium-term goal, and long-term goal.

Break down your three goals into objectives and specific actions that you can complete in order to achieve your goals. A key way to formulate your goals is to ensure that they are S.M.A.R.T. goals. Below is an example of short-term career-related S.M.A.R.T. goal to use as a guidance. You can learn more about drafting S.M.A.R.T. goals [here](#).

Short-Term S.M.A.R.T. Goal - EXAMPLE

Specific

What do you want to accomplish?
What is the purpose or benefit of accomplishing this goal?

I will explore federal government careers with a specific focus on environmental policy and governance and gain an understanding of opportunities and necessary qualifications and experiences of these positions.

Measurable

How can you measure progress and know if you've successfully met your goal?

I will begin by researching two resources on the Government, Law, and Public Policy website (USAJobs and Partnership for Public Service) and then schedule an appointment mid-way through the semester with the cluster coach to track progress and identify other resources, with a focus on opportunities for candidates with graduate degrees.

Achievable

Do you have the skills, resources, and time to achieve this goal? If not, how can you obtain them?

The goal is realistic, as I have set aside time after my classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays to do research and explore the relevant websites. If I am lost or unsure of next steps, I will email the cluster coach with my questions.

Relevant

Why am I setting this goal? Is it aligned with my interests, skills, and values?

Based on my self-assessment results, a federal government career focused on the environment aligns with my interests, skills, and values, especially in regards to applying my strong research skills and my desire to strive for social justice. Government careers was one of my suggested job families, and it sounded really exciting based on my interests!

Time-Bound

What's the deadline to meet this goal, and is it realistic?

By the end of this semester, I will aim to have a better understanding of what government careers look like, build a working relationship with the Career Center cluster coach, and identify opportunities to keep track of and to apply to in the final year of my degree.

Your Turn:

Draft your three S.M.A.R.T. goals. You can assign whichever timeframe to your three goals you choose, but we recommend that the short-term be time-bound by a semester; medium-term be time bound by 1-2 years; and long-term be time-bound by 3-4 years.

Short-Term S.M.A.R.T. Goal

Specific

What do you want to accomplish?
What is the purpose or benefit of accomplishing this goal?

Measurable

How can you measure progress and know if you've successfully met your goal?

Achievable

Do you have the skills, resources, and time to achieve this goal? If not, how can you obtain them?

Relevant

Why am I setting this goal? Is it aligned with my interests, skills, and values?

Time-Bound

What's the deadline to meet this goal, and is it realistic?

Review what you have written above, and craft a new goal statement based on your answers:

Medium-Term S.M.A.R.T. Goal

Specific

What do you want to accomplish?
What is the purpose or benefit of
accomplishing this goal?

Measurable

How can you measure progress
and know if you've successfully
met your goal?

Achievable

Do you have the skills, resources,
and time to achieve this goal? If
not, how can you obtain them?

Relevant

Why am I setting this goal? Is it
aligned with my interests, skills,
and values?

Time-Bound

What's the deadline to meet this
goal, and is it realistic?

Review what you have written above, and craft a new goal statement based on your answers:

Long-Term S.M.A.R.T. Goal

Specific

What do you want to accomplish?
What is the purpose or benefit of
accomplishing this goal?

Measurable

How can you measure progress
and know if you've successfully
met your goal?

Achievable

Do you have the skills, resources,
and time to achieve this goal? If
not, how can you obtain them?

Relevant

Why am I setting this goal? Is it
aligned with my interests, skills,
and values?

Time-Bound

What's the deadline to meet this
goal, and is it realistic?

Review what you have written above, and craft a new goal statement based on your answers:

Suggested Next Steps:

- Print out these goals and keep them visible in your home or workspace
- Craft a timeline and due date for each S.M.A.R.T. goal, from specific (for the short-term goal) to general (long-term goal)
- Share your goals with your faculty mentor, family, friends, and/or a career coach

III. Discuss with Mentors

Discuss what you discovered in your ImaginePhD assessments and share your career S.M.A.R.T. goals with mentors. These include your faculty mentors but also other university staff, including coaches at the BC Career Center.

We recommend sharing your assessment results and your goals with your primary mentor in addition to other whom you can approach for advice. The feedback generated by these discussions with multiple people who have a broad range of experiences and perspectives will help you in achieving your career goals. Below are recommendations for three individuals with whom we encourage you to have initial discussions about your plan.

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Faculty Advisor: | Initial Meeting Date: |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Graduate Program Director: | Initial Meeting Date: |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|

In some departments, the Graduate Program Director is also known as the Director of Graduate Studies.

| | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| Career Coach: | Initial Meeting Date: |
|----------------------|------------------------------|

Schedule a thirty-minute coaching appointment with a career coach at the BC Career Center on Handshake: bc.edu/handshake.

Suggested Next Steps:

- Schedule recurring and follow-up meetings with your faculty mentors and with career coaches in order to stay on task and follow through on your career development S.M.A.R.T. goals.
- Connect with alumni on [Eagle Exchange](#) in order to discuss your goals and how you can achieve them in your industry interest.

IV. Put Your Plan Into Action!

Commit to your CDP! Implement your plan and stay organized, keeping in mind the timeframes that you assigned to each of your three main S.M.A.R.T. goals. Remember that you can, and should, modify your plan as both your goals and circumstances change.

There are a number of resources that will help you achieve your career goals as outlined in your CDP. As you implement your plan, we encourage to take advantage of the range of career development resources located on the following websites:

bc.edu/gradcareers

BC's graduate student career hub, where you can find information on resources and programming for graduate students.

Career Clusters

The Career Center has seven career clusters to support the diverse interests of Boston College students. Each cluster will provide you with specialized coaching, services, and resources to support you on your journey. Familiarize yourself with each career cluster and pay attention to industries that are interesting to you. Subscribe to clusters that are interesting to you. There may be more than one, and that is ok!

Trivium

Trivium is a free, self-guided career development program exclusively for BC graduate students that is offered each summer. Click the link above to learn more.

Suggested Next Steps:

- Add CDP deadlines to your calendar.
- Review your CDP with mentors on a regular, agreed-upon schedule. At the very least, we suggest revisiting and discussing the CDP with your mentors annually.
- Celebrate your achievements and successes!