







## International Student Services

### CAREER GUIDE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

This guide is designed to assist international students with the job search process, given the unique challenge presented by your immigration status. This guide is only meant to be a brief overview to get you started on the job search process. In addition, you should also visit the

## TIMELINE AND ACTION PLAN

Self-exploration : Career exploration : Professional Preparation : Application

1. First-year: Explore your different areas of interest to find out about your personality, interests, skills and values, start forming your career and academic decisions, by involving with various extracurricular/co-curricular activities, talking with upperclassmen and professors, and trying your best on academics.

For the summer, look out for volunteer programs, internships, study abroad, summer camps, or anything that may or may not relate to your interest. Even if they are unpaid positions, give them a try! If you do a great job in the position, they/other employers will more likely to offer you new, paid positions. In order to do a paid work, you must declare your major.

2. Sophomore: Research the internet for work, connect majors to career options and consider graduate school to facilitate career decision. Do not have a specific answer at this stage, but do narrow down to a few options. Talk to alumni, faculty, and upperclassmen to get advice to plan the next couple of years.

to your area of interest. This is also a good time to plan and discuss with family plans to

## OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

### 1. U.S Citizenship and Immigration Services Regulations (USCIS)

Current U.S immigration laws permit international students to be employed in the U.S during and after a course of study. It is crucial that you understand these regulations, eligibilities, timelines, etc. surrounding the visa status you hold and the visa status you are trying to obtain.

- Visa requirements for internship/work off campus generally, to conduct any sort of internship or work off campus, you must have an internship as part of your curriculum and your immigration documents (I-20) must be updated to show Curricular Practical Training (CPT) or Optional Practical Training (OPT). Have a good understanding of CPT and OPT. If you are not sure what CPT and/or OPT entail, please meet with International Student Services staff to develop a better understanding of CPT and/or OPT.
- Non-immigrant Temporary Work Visa: some F-1 and very occasionally J-1 visa holders

networking events. Lastly, international students should get into the habit of getting your correspondence critiqued before sending it out.

### 3. Cost

Cost to hire international candidates can get up to \$6000 per candidate to petition for an H-1B visa. The company also invests in training the employee and ingraining them in the company. Total costs considerably more than \$6000.

\$6000 per candidate is approximately the same as a signing bonus and is often budgeted into the Human Resources hiring plan and budget for the year. Smaller companies and non-profits often do not offer to pay, it is illegal for candidates to pay government fees.

### 4. Employment Restrictions

As an international candidate, you cannot work f





## COMMON CULTURAL BARRIERS IN THE U.S. JOB SEARCH

International students face a lot of challenges conducting a job search in the U.S. because they are competing in an environment very different from the one in which they were raised. Not only verbal and written skills present challenges when job searching, but business cultures, organizational structures, customs and expectations vary greatly in different countries. This may result in some difficulties international students face while looking for jobs in the U.S. Below you will find a table that details a contrast between the expectations in the U.S. with values in a different country or culture.

	Expectations in the US	Possible Conflicting Values of Another Culture
Self-Promotion	<p>Assertiveness, openly discussing accomplishments</p> <p>Follow-up with employers (telephone inquiries, thank you notes, etc.)</p>	<p>Unless presented as part of a group activity, citing achieved goals, accomplishments and skills is viewed as boastful, self-serving, and too individualistic</p> <p>Asking employers directly about the status of the application may be viewed as rude.</p>
Directness in Communication	<p>Open and direct responses to questions</p> <p>Eye contact with the interviewer, relaxed posture</p> <p>Discussion of salary and benefits only when initiated by the interviewer or at time of the job offer</p> <p>Candidates ask questions at the end of the job interview</p>	<p>Eye contact, especially with persons of higher status (e.g., employer/interviewer) is considered disrespectful</p> <p>Appearance of criticism must be avoided to save face</p> <p>Asking open-ended questions about the job may be seen as rude and inappropriately direct</p>



Race, sex and age are  
legally not supposed to

Individual Equality

## ILLEGAL EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES/QUESTIONS

What Employers can and cannot ask prior to a job offer:

	An employer can ask:	An employer cannot ask:
National Origin	What languages can you speak, read, or write? (if foreign language ability is relevant to the job)	What is your nationality, lineage, ancestry, national origin, or place of birth? (or those of your parents or spouse)  What is your native language or the language you most often speak?  How did you acquire your foreign language ability?

	name, changed name, or nickname necessary to enable a check on your work and educational record	
Age	Are you 18 years or older? If not, what is your age?	(before hiring): -age* -birth date (determines age)
Color and Race	Nothing	Race or Color Questions regarding the color of your skin, eyes, or hair
Sex, marital status	Name and address of parent or guardian, if you are a minor  Names of relatives already employed by the employer	Questions that would indicate your sex  Questions that would indicate your marital status  Number and /or ages of children or dependents  Questions regarding pregnancy, childbearing, or birth control  Name or address of relatives, spouse, or children, if you are not a minor
Religion	Nothing	Questions related to your religion or faith
Physical Description and Abilities	Height and weight, but only commensurate with specific job requirements	A photograph, either required or optional, at any time before any offer is made

Disability	Whether you can perform the essential functions of the job, either with or without accommodation	If you have a disability, if you have been treated for any specific diseases, whether you have, or ever had a drug or alcohol problem
Arrest Record	If you have been convicted of a crime	Whether you have ever been arrested
Membership in Organizations	Membership in organization(s) that you may consider relevant to your ability to perform your job	List all organization(s), societies, and club(s) to which you belong (determines religious groups, or political beliefs, or national origins.
Military Service	Questions regarding relevant skills acquired during military service	Questions regarding service in foreign military to determine national origin
Miscellaneous	Questions regarding long term plans Describe yourself Elevator Speech Sharing strengths and weaknesses	Questions about financial credit, union membership, financial status, naturalization papers, type of visa you have, citizenship status of your parents or spouse

\*Unless the position requires serving alcohol, then they may ask if you are 21

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## HOW TO HANDLE INAPPROPRIATE/ILLEGAL QUESTIONS

There might be some instances where you are asked inappropriate/illegal questions. It is important to know when you are being asked these questions. The table above will help you determine when inappropriate/illegal questions are being asked. Here are some ways you can handle these questions:

- ¾ Deflect the question. Simply state why you are a good candidate for the job and a good fit for the company/organization.
  
- ¾ You can give an honest, assertive, but not contentious reply. For example, if the interviewer asks you if your spouse would mind if y





not mislead the employer about your status as an international student. If some companies feel misled they might eliminate you from the candidate pool or terminate your employment.

4. What can I do to make myself a more attractive candidate?

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