

School's out! Congratulations on finishing the semester; we're so proud of all that you've accomplished! Summer and winter breaks are a time to recharge, reflect, and gain skills and experience that will support your short-term and long-term goals. Be sure to take some time to think about what skills you may have gained this semester, and use that to update your resume — but that's just the tip of the iceberg. The real key to maximize your summer or winter break is to develop clear goals, and boost your capacity to achieve them. No matter where you choose to focus your energy, be it working, learning, or “upskilling”, be clear about your rationale and your objectives. And most importantly, take a step back and look at the big picture: what do *you* want out of this time?

Explore Career Options & Develop Relevant Skills

- ◆ Analyze the job descriptions for positions you might be interested in pursuing and identify the skills and qualifications the employer is seeking. Use the time you have over this break to enhance your development in these areas. How can you maximize your strengths? Improve potential weaknesses?
- ◆ Take advantage of free online webinars, courses, certifications, etc. to continue building your marketability, such as:
[Skill Share](#) | [LinkedIn Learning](#) | [EdX](#) | [Coursera](#)
- ◆ Work on a project such as building a website or creating your own podcast or blog. Your project can help you develop new skills, as well as provide an opportunity to showcase the skills you already have!
- ◆ Pursue informational interviews and/or networking opportunities to not only learn more about the career paths in which you may be interested but to also query alumni about how to make the best use of your break (ie. what skill sets you should focus on developing to be marketable in your career field?). Check out our [online guide to informational interviewing](#).
- ◆ Listen to podcasts about careers/ industries in which you are interested. Several great ones are outlined on the following sites: [Career Builder](#) | [Glassdoor](#) | [Feedspot](#) | [Player FM](#)
- ◆ Explore a variety of online exploration resources to discover more about the career(s) in which you are interested. Check out our long list of [Career Exploration Resources](#).
- ◆ Try a “[virtual work experience](#)” (a simulation of the work done in that field)
- ◆ Attend one or more of our Dickinson Career Immersion Treks.

Gain Relevant Experience

- ◆ Search for job and internship opportunities. Employers have told us that many office-based positions they fill may likely involve remote components now, which could help expand your search. However, you'll likely get better results if you have a "pivot" strategy that will allow you to locate opportunities in sectors that are hiring. Check out [Handshake](#) and [Indeed](#) for more.
- ◆ If you're in an internship right now, inquire about the possibility of extending it through the break.
- ◆ Look for volunteer experience – you can contribute to the greater good and develop important professional skills at the same time. [Dickinson's Center for Civic Learning and Action](#) can help you connect to local, regional, national, and international opportunities and has posted good resources. You can also search for volunteer opportunities on sites like [Idealist](#) and, [Volunteer Match](#). The latter has added features to help you connect with virtual positions.
- ◆ Apply for a micro-project/micro-internship through [Dickinson's partnership with Parker-Dewey](#). These are paid, short-term, remote projects that give you the chance to hone and demonstrate your skills – not least your ability to handle remote work.
- ◆ Participate in a "[virtual job shadow](#)" experience with a Dickinsonian. Reach out to alumni through [Alumni Fire](#) to explore the possibility of an externship or job shadow opportunity.

Prepare for Graduate School

- ◆ Use the time to immerse yourself in full-time study for a graduate or professional

school exam. There are lots of self-study options/books, fee-based [prep course organizations](#) (many of whom also offer free practice exams) and plenty of free online test-prep resources as well, such as [Khan Academy](#).

- ◆ Research graduate programs and professional schools: [GRE](#) | [LSAT](#) | [MCAT](#)

Continue Your Education

- ◆ Take an 8 to 10 week boot camp course
- ◆ Start developing your senior thesis project
- ◆ Continue developing your language skills, or learn a new language

Get Ready for the "Real World"

- ◆ Take an online professional etiquette course
- ◆ Explore the cost of living in the geographic region in which you want to live
- ◆ Lean into the practical dimensions of "life after launch." It's never too early. Utilize [Dickinson iGrad](#) to begin exploring:
 - Budgeting
 - Credit Cards
 - Lease vs. finance
 - Loan deferment
 - Taxes
 - Home buying

Take Care of Yourself!

Your well being is always important. No matter what your circumstances, do your best to support your physical and mental health. Dickinson's Wellness Center has shared [resources and recommendations](#).

Center for Advising ,Internships & Lifelong Career Development

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