

# Advising Syllabus

The following are some guidelines for your academic career. You are encouraged to discuss these with your advisor.

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## First-Year

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- **Talk with your advisor and identify your goals for your college career.** You will have three required advising meetings during your first year at NU, but you can also make an appointment with your advisor whenever you wish.
- **Take the required first-year courses for your major.**
- **Take courses in WCAS and other schools** that are interesting to you and that may meet distribution requirements. Distribution courses are courses outside the School of Communication that expand your knowledge more broadly into the liberal arts and sciences.
- **Select a foreign language** (especially if necessary for major requirements, or if interested in study abroad)
- **Learn about the SoC modules** and consider which module(s) you might want to join. Modules are programs of study that combine a series of related courses with co-curricular and off-campus experiences to allow in-depth study of particular areas in communication. Learn more at <https://society.northwestern.edu>, or talk to your advisor for more information.
- **Get to know a faculty member.** Go to office hours, enroll in a freshman seminar and take advantage of department programs offered to help you meet faculty. Developing a relationship with a faculty member can support your learning and academic growth—not to mention help you get a recommendation letter when you need one!
- **Keep a good balance between your coursework, co-curricular activities and/or part-time work;** try not to get overcommitted--it's easy to do.

*The [Katz Enrichment Fund](https://www.northwestern.edu/enrichment/resources-programs/katz-enrichment-fund/index.html) can provide money to help support participation in student activities (<https://www.northwestern.edu/enrichment/resources-programs/katz-enrichment-fund/index.html>)*

- **Take advantage of programs offered through SoC's Office of External Programs, Internships, and Career Services (EPICS),** especially industry panels and Leadership Journeys. Learn more at [www.communication.northwestern.edu/EPICS](http://www.communication.northwestern.edu/EPICS).

- **Work, volunteer or travel** in the summer following your first year, talk with your advisor about your summer plans.

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## Sophomore Year

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- **Meet with your advisor in the fall or early in winter quarter for your first of two required sophomore meetings.** Talk with your advisor about how things are going for you at NU so far, both things that are going well and any difficulties you may be having. Also talk to your advisor if you are thinking about pursuing a second major, minor, certificate program or module.
- **If you are interested in studying abroad, visit the Study Abroad Office website at <http://www.northwestern.edu/studyabroad/index.html>** for information and talk to your advisor in the fall or very early in winter quarter to make a plan.

Information on **study abroad financial aid** can be found on the study abroad website at <http://www.northwestern.edu/studyabroad/guide/money-matters/financial-aid/need-based-financial-aid.html> and on the Undergraduate Financial Aid Office site at <https://undergradaid.northwestern.edu/programs-policies/study-abroad.html>.

There is a special study abroad financial aid advisor, Krista Bethel, Assistant Director of Study Abroad Financial Services, who can help navigate financial aid for study abroad. She can be reached at [Krysta@northwestern.edu](mailto:Krysta@northwestern.edu).

**The deadline for fall and academic year study abroad programs is early in February, and the deadline for spring study abroad is in May.**

- **Consider registering for a SoC module (<https://society.northwestern.edu/>).** Modules are programs of study that combine a series of related courses with co-curricular and off-campus experiences to allow in-depth study of particular areas in communication. Talk to your academic advisor for more information.
- **Begin taking more advanced (200 and 300 level) courses** in your major and for distribution requirements. Select courses based on what they can contribute to your intellectual or creative development.
- **Develop a relationship with a faculty member** if you have not already. Go to office hours, take a second course with a faculty member you like, or get involved in a faculty member's research. There are paid opportunities to work in many of our faculty's research labs. Email the faculty member you are interested in working with to inquire about available positions. Work-study jobs in academic departments are also <http://undergradaid.northwestern.edu/work-study/how-to/index.html> a great way to

get to know faculty. Check the [Work Study Website](http://undergradaid.northwestern.edu/work-study/how-to/index.html) (<http://undergradaid.northwestern.edu/work-study/how-to/index.html>) for available positions. Your academic advisor can help you identify appropriate faculty and research opportunities for your interests.

- **Continue involvement in your co-curricular activities; but still be mindful not to overcommit yourself.**

*The [Katz Enrichment Fund](https://www.northwestern.edu/enrichment/resources-programs/katz-enrichment-fund/index.html) can provide money to help support participation in student activities (<https://www.northwestern.edu/enrichment/resources-programs/katz-enrichment-fund/index.html>).*

- **Increase your awareness and involvement with the career development programs** offered through EPICS, including Leadership Journeys, industry panels, the career fair, and more. Be sure to read the EPICS newsletter that comes to your NU email account.
- **Consider work or an internship** in the summer following your sophomore year.

*Northwestern Career Advancement Career Development Fund can provide funds to help support the purchase of professional attire, travel for interviews and other career-related costs. Information is available at <https://www.northwestern.edu/careers/programs-opportunities/development-fund/index.html>.*

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## Junior Year

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- **Petition to graduate** at your required junior meeting in the spring quarter.
- **Pursue advanced, in-depth learning in your major areas of interest.** Consider registering for a [module](https://society.northwestern.edu/) (<https://society.northwestern.edu/>) if you haven't already. Take multiple courses in a particular sub discipline or area within or outside of your major.
- **Work closely with one or more faculty members.** You might work in a lab, assist with research, complete an independent study or more. Ask your advisor about these opportunities. Research assistantships are often paid, and often can be work-study or non-work study funded.
- **If you are interested in attending graduate school, ask your faculty mentors for recommendations** about programs, courses of study and graduate education in their discipline in general.

Visit the **Office of Fellowships** (<http://www.northwestern.edu/fellowships/>) for information on applying for funding to support graduate study.

- **Take on increasing responsibility in co-curricular activities or at work;** possibly take on a leadership role.

*The **Katz Enrichment Fund** can provide money to help support participation in student activities (<https://www.northwestern.edu/enrichment/resources-programs/katz-enrichment-fund/index.html>).*

- **Develop a portfolio of your learning and achievements.** Most modules require the creation of a portfolio, but even if you aren't enrolled in a module, talk to your advisor about developing a portfolio of your work. Take advantage of opportunities like the Undergraduate Research and Arts Exposition to share your work with the NU community (information at [www.undergradresearch.northwestern.edu](http://www.undergradresearch.northwestern.edu)).
- **Consult with your advisor and other mentors** as you work to conceptualize and articulate a unified picture of your acquired skills and knowledge, along with possible professional applications.

*The NU Alumni Association offers a mentorship program that connects you with NU alumni in your chosen field. Find more information at <https://mentor.northwestern.edu>.*

- **Focus on professional preparation and career exploration.** Read the SoC Undergraduate Blog, Spotlight (<http://comm.soc.northwestern.edu/src-spotlight/>), participate in Leadership Journeys through EPICS (<https://epics.soc.northwestern.edu/gain-experience/>), take a career practicum, and/or talk with faculty about professional opportunities in their fields.

Visit the Northwestern Career Advancement website to learn how to build a resume (<http://www.northwestern.edu/careers/job-intern-prep/resume-building/index.html>).

Log into EPICS SoConnect

(<http://www.communication.northwestern.edu/epics/undergrads>) and read through their resource library for additional career preparation information. Meet with an advisor at Northwestern Career Advancement to develop and refine your resume further.

*\*\*Northwestern Career Advancement can provide funds to help support the purchase of professional attire, travel for interviews and other career-related costs. Contact NCA for more information ([nca@northwestern.edu](mailto:nca@northwestern.edu); 847-491-3700).*

- **Strongly consider doing an internship during your junior year or the following summer.** Internships can help you decide on a career trajectory, build your resume, and make connections. Funding to support unpaid internships is available through the Summer Internship Grant Program (SIGP) (<http://www.northwestern.edu/sigp/>) and EPICS ([http://www.communication.northwestern.edu/epics/undergrad\\_internship\\_awards](http://www.communication.northwestern.edu/epics/undergrad_internship_awards)). Applications for these programs are due in April, so be sure to apply early.

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## Senior Year

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- **Meet with your advisor for your required senior meeting one quarter before your quarter of graduation.** Your advisor will review with you your remaining requirements, and will help you make a plan to complete them in time for your graduation date.
- **Complete advanced, in-depth study in your major areas of interest.** Carry out at least one major academic or creative project as part of an honors thesis, module capstone, multi-quarter sequence, independent study, or research grant.
- **Work closely with one or more faculty members,** either as part of your own project, or by being involved in the faculty member's research.
- **Develop leadership skills at work, an internship, or in co-curricular activities.** The Student Activities Scholarship Fund can provide money to support participation in student activities (<http://www.northwestern.edu/studentaffairs/csi/get-involved/student-activity-scholarship/>).
- **Develop a portfolio of your learning and achievements.** Learn to create a unified picture of your skills, knowledge and talents to others. This is an important step in your professional development.
- **Focus on professional preparation and career exploration.** Use the resources provided by EPICS and Northwestern Career Advancement to prepare your resume and search for job opportunities.

*Northwestern Career Advancement Career Development Fund can provide funds to help support the purchase of professional attire, travel for interviews and other career-related costs. Information is available at <https://www.northwestern.edu/careers/programs-opportunities/development-fund/index.html>.*