Getting ready for year three: A checklist for parents of juniors

The Junior Year: Month-by-Month

- Every year: Discuss academic plans with an academic advisor
- Every year (March-April): Register for fall classes
- Every year (October-November): Register for spring classes
- Every year (March-April): Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online at http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/
- Every year (Jan-Feb): Complete the application to live on campus. Visit the Office of Residence Life website for information at http://reslife.cofc.edu/housing-and-rates/index.php

August

- Finish any General Education classes still needed this year
- Complete a degree audit http://registrar.cofc.edu/graduation/degree-audit.php
- Make sure you have a meal plan in place – commuter plans are available http://www.campusdish.com/en-US/CSSE/Charleston/MealPlans/
- Get involved on campus - start checking out clubs and organizations to join http://studentlife.cofc.edu/clubs-and-organizations/index.php
- Find on campus or off campus jobs by using Cistern Online http://cisternonline.experience.com/er/security/login.jsp
- Keep up with important deadlines http://registrar.cofc.edu/calendars/index.php
- Check out the Fitness Facilities http://campusrec.cofc.edu/open-recreation/facility/facilities.php
- East Shore Athletic Club provides additional fitness options to students http://campusrec.cofc.edu/open-recreation/facility/esac.php

September

- Student should build a relationship with professors in their major
- Students should make an effort to get to know their academic advisor – once a major is declared a faculty advisor is assigned as the student’s primary academic advisor
Attend Career Center workshops on topics such as choosing a major, resume writing, and interviewing [http://careercenter.cofc.edu/](http://careercenter.cofc.edu/)

Collect recommendations and necessary materials needed for internships, part time jobs, or graduate school applications

Participate in on campus interviews and keep up to date with employers coming on campus

Attend fall semester workshops offered by the Center for Student Learning [http://csl.cofc.edu/study-skills/seminars/index.php](http://csl.cofc.edu/study-skills/seminars/index.php)

Participate in intramural sports [http://campusrec.cofc.edu/intramural-sports/index.php](http://campusrec.cofc.edu/intramural-sports/index.php)

Students who need help may want to request a tutor from the Center for Student Learning [http://csl.cofc.edu/request/index.php](http://csl.cofc.edu/request/index.php)

October

- Attend the Career Fair sponsored by the Career Center
- Think about faculty, staff, and employers that may be contacted to write recommendation letters. Many graduate schools and potential employers will require recommendations.
- Withdraw from any fall coursework by the withdrawal deadline [http://registrar.cofc.edu/](http://registrar.cofc.edu/)
- Attend Career Center workshops on topics such as choosing a major, resume writing, and interviewing [http://careercenter.cofc.edu/](http://careercenter.cofc.edu/)
- Start thinking about applying for a summer internship and visit the Career Center before the end of the fall semester [http://careercenter.cofc.edu/students/index.php](http://careercenter.cofc.edu/students/index.php)

December

- The Career Center website provides links which may help students think about how their interests and skills translate into possible majors and careers
- Fall grades post - use the GPA calculators to set academic goals for spring [http://undergrad.cofc.edu/academic-resources/gpa-calculators.php](http://undergrad.cofc.edu/academic-resources/gpa-calculators.php)
- Discuss the first semester and set goals for the spring semester
- Students who are interested in applying for a Resident Assistant or Orientation Intern position should seek out information regarding application deadlines from the Career Center, Office of Residence Life, or the Office of New Student Programs

January

- Students should start looking for summer job or internship possibilities
- Consider sending a care package or gift certificate to local stores or restaurants to perk up your student's week
- Participation by an undergraduate in a challenging, scholarly project can be the single most important experience that a student will have in college. Check for the deadline to apply for undergraduate research activities [http://urca.cofc.edu/](http://urca.cofc.edu/)

February
- Students should be on the look-out for upcoming deadlines related to study abroad and summer internships [http://careercenter.cofc.edu/students/getexperience.php](http://careercenter.cofc.edu/students/getexperience.php)

**March**

- Be sure to withdraw from any spring class by the withdrawal deadline [http://registrar.cofc.edu/](http://registrar.cofc.edu/)
- Consider Maymester or summer school classes [http://summer.cofc.edu/index.php](http://summer.cofc.edu/index.php)
- Students should complete the Coursework Elsewhere Form found on the Office of the Registrar website if they plan to take classes at another institution to transfer back to the College of Charleston. Find this in the FORMS link at [http://registrar.cofc.edu/](http://registrar.cofc.edu/)
- Keep copies of cover letters, resumes, and recommendation letters
- Students planning to live off-campus next year, they should start deciding where they want to live and with whom. Sometimes students may need to sign their lease before leaving the area for the summer. Off campus housing information can be found at [http://reslife.cofc.edu/off-campus/index.php](http://reslife.cofc.edu/off-campus/index.php)

**April**

- Start studying for exams early [http://csl.cofc.edu/?referrer=webcluster&](http://csl.cofc.edu/?referrer=webcluster&)

**May**

- Spring grades post – plan academic goals for the fall semester [http://undergrad.cofc.edu/academic-resources/gpa-calculators.php](http://undergrad.cofc.edu/academic-resources/gpa-calculators.php)
- Students planning to apply for summer jobs or internships may want to visit Career Center for assistance with fine-tuning their resume and interviewing tips
- If living on campus, prepare to move out of the residence hall [http://reslife.cofc.edu/](http://reslife.cofc.edu/)

**June-July**

- Part-time work, internships, or volunteering during the summer can be valuable experience to add to a resume
- Create a monthly budget for the upcoming academic year
Junior Planning

Academic Planning:

- Explore study abroad options
- Complete all general education requirements
- Participate in undergraduate research opportunities
- By the junior year students should have decided on a major. Information on declaring a major can be found at [http://advising.cofc.edu/declaring-your-major/index.php](http://advising.cofc.edu/declaring-your-major/index.php)

Academic goals:

- Students may find that they need some academic assistance. Encourage them to utilize the services of the Center for Student Learning ([http://csl.cofc.edu](http://csl.cofc.edu)) as well as their professor’s office hours.
- Start planning senior thesis or final projects that may be required the last year
- Research Graduate Schools, admission requirements, and entrance exams
- Begin collecting resources needed to study for graduate school entrance exams if required

Career Exploration:

- Get an internship
- Network with professionals in career fields
- Be sure to have an error free cover letter and resume
- Explore job search tools like Linked-In or drop box apps that would make the search easier
- Students can utilize the services of the Career Center. Students can also access Cistern Online to find part time employment and internships. View the Career Center website at [http://careercenter.cofc.edu/](http://careercenter.cofc.edu/) for more information.

Financial Aid & Scholarships:

- If your student has declared their major, they may be eligible for department scholarships. [http://finaid.cofc.edu/types-of-financial-aid/scholarships/departmental-scholarships/index.php](http://finaid.cofc.edu/types-of-financial-aid/scholarships/departmental-scholarships/index.php)

Living off campus:

- Students can find information about living off campus using the guide to Charleston which can be found at [http://reslife.cofc.edu/off-campus/guide-to-charleston.php](http://reslife.cofc.edu/off-campus/guide-to-charleston.php)
- Check out tips on being a good neighbor [http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/community/goodneighbor.php](http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/community/goodneighbor.php)
- Have a security survey done [http://publicsafety.cofc.edu/helpfulinfo/crimeprevention.php](http://publicsafety.cofc.edu/helpfulinfo/crimeprevention.php)

Parking & Bus Service:
On Campus Parking Information:  http://parkingservices.cofc.edu/parking/students.php
CARTA express routes http://parkingservices.cofc.edu/information-for/carta-bus-service.php

Student Clubs & Organizations:
- Get involved in clubs and organizations related to an academic major
- Keep connected - all enrolled students receive two to three emails per week with a list of on campus activities. Students who live off campus should stay involved with campus activities. A club and organization fair is held each semester http://studentlife.cofc.edu/

Staying Safe and Healthy:
- All enrolled students can use student health services
- Juniors are not required to have a meal plan but it is a very convenient way to dine. Check out http://www.campusdish.com/en-US/CSSE/Charleston/MealPlans/ for meal plan, block plan and dining dollar options
- If students are feeling overwhelmed their third year, they should utilize the services of the Counseling and Substance Abuse Center. They have counselors, support groups and peer counseling services available. You can find information about hours and services at http://counseling.cofc.edu/index.php

What Can I Do to Help My Junior Student?

A student's third year of college is critical if a student wants to be successful their senior year and after college. By now, a student has a schedule full of upper level courses, co-curricular activities, a job, and a social life to juggle in addition to preparing for life after graduation. However, with planning, a student can stay on track with less stress. Most colleges require your student to choose a major by this time and stake a claim in a future career. Many students change their majors and some do so more than once so don't panic! It doesn't mean that there's anything wrong, just that there are so many choices, making it difficult for a generalist to narrow down the list. Encourage your student to talk with their academic advisor, career counselor, and faculty members for guidance in making this decision.

**Tips on how you can help your student persevere through the junior year**

- Remind your student of all she or he has accomplished and support their decision about a major or internship opportunity.
- If your student is having academic difficulties, encourage them to consult with their academic advisor, Center for Student Learning, and/or with the staff in Counseling & Substance Abuse Services.
- Encourage and support them as they seek to answer questions related to their academic, professional, social and spiritual identities and goals.
• Encourage your student to make use of all that CofC has to offer in terms of academic resources, support services, events, and student clubs and organizations.
• Encourage your student to take care of their physical well-being by getting enough sleep, eating healthy, and becoming involved in intramural sports or working out at the gym.