Career preparation for student-athletes is similar to that of all college students. Some unique circumstances exist, however, that are specific to student-athletes. The CDC recognizes these scenarios and provides the following assistance to student-athletes to aid in career preparation.

**ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION & ITS INFLUENCE ON CAREER PREPARATION**

- Student-athletes dedicate many hours to their athletic participation on a weekly basis; therefore, student-athletes often have less time available to participate in work experiences, volunteer opportunities, and co-curricular activities in comparison to other students.
- The NCAA prohibits scholarship student-athletes from working for pay; this prevents student-athletes from obtaining paid work experiences while on campus.
- Athletic participation assists student-athletes in developing many skills transferable to the world of work; the challenge for student-athletes is to learn strategies for “marketing” these skills on paper and in person to different employers.

**EMPLOYERS & JOB CHARACTERISTICS**

- According to the NACE 2011 Job Outlook Survey, employers seek the following personal characteristics in job candidates:
  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication Skills</th>
<th>Strong Work Ethic</th>
<th>Teamwork Skills</th>
<th>Analytical Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiative</td>
<td>Problem-Solving Skills</td>
<td>Interpersonal Skills</td>
<td>Computer Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility/Adaptability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Through athletic participation, student-athletes develop the following skills, which are transferable to the world of work:
  
  | Time Management | Teamwork | Goal-Oriented | Competitiveness |
  | Confidence      | Persistence/Endurance | Leadership | Loyalty |
  | Discipline      | Taking Criticism | Coping with Setbacks | Flexibility/Adaptability |
  | Performance under Pressure | | | |

- Employers evaluate candidates based on these types of skills, which can be developed through one’s education, work experiences, co-curricular activities, and volunteer opportunities. Student-athletes benefit from finding ways to develop these skills while competing in athletics as well as being involved in other experiences during college.

**DEVELOPING TRANSFERABLE SKILLS DURING COLLEGE – SETTINGS OUTSIDE OF PRACTICE/COMPETITION**

- Student-athletes can develop transferable skills through the following opportunities:
  
  - Athletics – SAAC, Team Events
  - Student Organizations – [http://www.bucknell.edu/x622.xml](http://www.bucknell.edu/x622.xml)
  - Volunteer Opportunities/Community Service
  - Externships – [http://my.bucknell.edu/x54042.html](http://my.bucknell.edu/x54042.html)
  - Internships – [http://my.bucknell.edu/x54052.html](http://my.bucknell.edu/x54052.html)
  - Employment - [http://my.bucknell.edu/x54113.html](http://my.bucknell.edu/x54113.html)
  - Networking - [http://my.bucknell.edu/x54047.html](http://my.bucknell.edu/x54047.html)

- Athletics, Student Organizations, and Volunteer Opportunities/Community Service allow student-athletes to hone leadership skills, communication skills, and interpersonal skills. Taking on a leadership role is one way to deepen one’s involvement, but serving as a member and participating in opportunities whenever possible also provides various opportunities for growth.

- Externships, Internships, and Employment allow student-athletes to learn about particular careers, organizations, and industries. Externships are 1-2 day shadowing experiences while Internships/Work Experience are long-term; the amount of hands-on experience depends on the particular scenario. Each type of experience can provide valuable learning opportunities.

- Networking is the art of establishing and maintaining relationships with people engaged in activities that are of interest. Student-athletes have numerous opportunities to network with family, friends, coaches, trainers, athletic department staff, former employers/supervisors, and Bucknell alumni. It never hurts to speak to people about what they do!

- Student-athletes have limited time to invest in these opportunities; however, it is advised to find ways to develop career-related skills through these types of experiences whenever possible. Short-term experiences provide valuable learning opportunities.
HIGHLIGHT ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION ON JOB SEARCH TOOLS AND IN INTERVIEWS

The general format for resumes, cover letters, and reference lists is the same for student-athletes as compared to other students. Student-athletes are advised to learn how to “market” their athletic participation on these documents, particularly if there is limited work experience or limited volunteer experience. Student-athletes also want to learn how to “market” their athletic participation during an interview.

- **Resumes** (http://my.bucknell.edu/x54129.html)
  - Visit the CDC’s website for general information on resume writing.
  - Some additional points to consider:
    - Add a **Summary of Qualifications** section – summarizes commitment to athletics
    - List **Relevant Courses** under Education if applicable – highlight academic skills that are transferable
    - List **Public Speaking** opportunities under Experience if applicable
    - List **Coaching, Training** opportunities under Experience if applicable
    - List **Captain, Co-Captain** if applicable – demonstrates leadership, maturity, responsibility
    - List **Athletic Awards** if applicable
  - Get feedback on your resume – visit the CDC for assistance!

- **Cover Letters** (http://my.bucknell.edu/x54123.html)
  - Visit the CDC’s website for general information on cover letter writing.
  - Some additional points to consider as it relates to one’s athletic participation:
    - Tailor the cover letter to the position
    - Research the company/Reference how you would be a good fit at the company
    - Highlight skills gained through athletic experiences – discuss skills like time management, leadership, teamwork, adaptability, and discipline – give specific examples on how you developed these skills
  - Get feedback on your cover letter – visit the CDC for assistance!

- **References**
  - List 3 professional references on a page separate from your resume and cover letter – do not list family or friends.
  - Professional references can include employers, professors, and athletic department staff including coaches, trainers or administrators.
  - References should speak positively about your character, work ethic, responsibility, and maturity.

- **Interviews** (http://my.bucknell.edu/x54117.html)
  - Visit the CDC’s website for general information on interviewing.
  - Interviews provide an opportunity to demonstrate skills to employers. Student-athletes benefit from discussing the skills developed through athletic participation. Student-athletes want to give insight on time commitment to athletics, which explains why there may be less direct work experience as compared to a non-athlete peer.
  - Practice interviewing with a career consultant in the CDC – sign up for a mock interview.

UTILIZE YOUR RESOURCES AT THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER

- Schedule one-on-one appointments with a career consultant.
- Visit Quick Questions daily from 1:30-3:30pm for immediate answers to general questions.
- Get feedback on resumes, cover letters, and interviewing skills.
- Participate in the Externship Program.
Receive assistance with an internship search or job search.
Meet with the pre-law or pre-health advisor.
Participate in career fairs, networking events, and additional programs.