

guide to GAP YEAR



IDENTIFYING YOUR GOALS

WHY TAKE A GAP YEAR? Speak to advisors, the MU Career Center, current professionals in your field, faculty, and others. They can help answer important questions, identify programs, pass along what other students have done, and support your applications.

A gap year should be more than just taking a break, and you should consider what benefits it will afford:

DEVELOP YOUR SKILLS

A gap year can be an excellent opportunity to gain experience for a job or grad school. What do you want to gain?
Experience in a specific role?
Developing a certain skillset?
Gaining exposure to a new region or field?

SAVE FOR GRAD SCHOOL

Taking time to pay off loans or earn money for grad school is common. Maintain a connection to your career goals by working in your field, volunteering, shadowing, taking classes, and conducting informational interviews.

OTHER MOTIVATIONS

A gap year may be a break before more schooling, a chance to explore a potential career or a service opportunity, or something else entirely. Dig deep to find connections between your program and your interests.

RESEARCH PAY AND COSTS. Some gap year programs offer stipends, hourly pay, or scholarships; others are entirely self-funded. Understanding your compensation for the role (including benefits) may help you determine whether it is a good opportunity for you.

ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY. If you are preparing for graduate school, make sure that you can take graduate entrance exams and easily apply for your programs while in your gap year. Also, make sure your program is equipped to support your goals! Don't be afraid to ask.

MAXIMIZE YOUR GAP YEAR. Once you've chosen a program, revisit your goals and make a plan for your year. Include experiences you want to pursue and connections you hope to make. Breaking large goals into monthly components may help you keep on track. This may be related to a skill (such as completing a certain project), to post-gap year plans (such as taking the GRE), or to professional development (such as networking in your field). Reflect on your time by journaling, keeping notes, or consulting with mentors help you see how the experience is helping you prepare for the future.

ACADEMIC PREPARATION PROGRAMS

Research opportunities

Students who pursued research as undergraduates or students interested in graduate school may seek opportunities to continue or begin research projects. The Fellowships Office and the Office of Undergraduate Research at MU may be able to assist students in identifying and applying for these kinds of program.

'Bridge' programs

If you are interested in pursuing graduate school, you may consider a bridge program to build important academic skills prior to beginning your studies. To identify a program, you may wish to speak with admissions advisors at the institutions you intend to apply to, and your advisor at Mizzou.



Career Center
University of Missouri

Lower Level
Student Success Center

(573)882-6801
career.missouri.edu
career@missouri.edu



GOVERNMENT AND SERVICE PROGRAMS

AmeriCorps (<https://my.americorps.gov/>) AmeriCorps is a national service program that connects Americans with more than 2,000 nonprofits, public agencies, and faith-based and community organizations that address the nation's needs in education, public safety, health and the environment (usually 9-12 month positions).

Peace Corps (<https://www.peacecorps.gov/>) Peace Corps volunteers serve for two years in one of 74 countries working in a wide variety of areas like health, HIV/AIDS, agriculture, health, IT, youth outreach, business and community development and the environment.

City Year (<https://www.cityyear.org/>) City Year brings together young adults from diverse backgrounds for a year of community service, leadership development, and civic engagement in one of 18 communities in the U.S. and South Africa.

National Health Service Corps (<https://nhsc.hrsa.gov/>) The National Health Service Corps (NHSC) is committed to improving the health of the nation's underserved and students may seek scholarships and clinical experience at an NHSC site.

BUNAC (International) (<https://www.bunac.org/>) BUNAC connects individuals with work and travel experiences. They assist with visas, jobs, internship placements, travel planning, work abroad travel insurance, accommodation, arrival support, 24/7 emergency assistance and more.

Green Corps (<https://greencorps.org/>) The mission of Green Corps is to train organizers, provide field support for today's critical environmental campaigns, and graduate activists who possess the skills, temperament and commitment to fight and win tomorrow's environmental battles.

Student Conservation Association (<https://www.thesca.org/>) The Student Conservation Association (SCA) is America's conservation corps. Their members protect and restore national parks, marine sanctuaries, cultural landmarks and community green spaces in all 50 states.

RELIGIOUS-BASED PROGRAMS

CATHOLIC/CHRISTIAN/ECUMENICAL:

Catholic Network of Volunteer Service (<https://catholicvolunteernetwork.org/>)

- Click "Search Programs" to find a comprehensive list of various programs in the U.S. and abroad

MUSLIM:

Islamic Circle of North America (<https://www.icnarelief.org/>)

Muslim American Society Service Corps (<https://www.muslimamericansociety.org/>)

Muslim Public Service Network (<http://muslimpublicservice.org/>)

JEWISH:

Avodah Jewish Volunteer Corps (<https://avodah.net/>)

American Jewish World Service (<https://ajws.org/>)

Jewish Coalition for Service (<https://werepair.org/>)

GENERAL RESOURCES

GoAbroad.com (<https://www.goabroad.com/>) Site for teaching, volunteer, and internship opportunities, and features a section specifically for gap year programs.

Idealist.org (<https://www.idealist.org/>) Directory of full-time, volunteer, and part-time opportunities for charitable organizations, social service agencies, and non-profit agencies.

next steps:

Talk with a Career Specialist for one-on-one assistance: <https://career.missouri.edu/connect>
Check out more resources at <https://career.missouri.edu> > Resources tab

