



Grinnell College

Center for Careers, Life,
and Service



MY JOURNEY

A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

Extraordinary
journeys seldom begin
in obvious places.

My journey continues at Grinnell...

Your career is not simply the series of jobs that you hold over the course of your lifetime. Rather, Grinnell's Center for Careers, Life, and Service (CLS) contends that your career is a blend of your professional, civic, and personal aspirations.

This holistic perspective informs the ways in which the CLS will help you prepare for a lifelong journey of living, learning, and working with meaning and purpose.

The following framework illustrates how the CLS staff approaches career development, structures resources and programs, and supports you as you explore what living a life of meaning and purpose means for you. Have no doubt, this is a dynamic process that requires your sustained and active involvement; no one else is able to determine your path, your career goals, or your journey. However, the CLS is here to assist you, and the services we offer will be an integral part of your Grinnell experience.

During your time at Grinnell you will always have a designated CLS adviser. (You might even choose to have more than one!) This individual, together with the broader CLS team, will help you:

- Discover your values, strengths, and interests.
- Acquire insight and experience.
- Articulate your individual career goals.
- Make relevant connections and broaden your network.
- Share your story effectively with others.
- Develop the tools to lead an ethical, socially responsible, and professionally respectful life of meaning and purpose.

The journey is yours, but we — the entire CLS team — make exceptionally good company.

My Story: Your story, your pre-collegiate experiences and insights, are the foundation of your journey at Grinnell. What you have learned from your friends

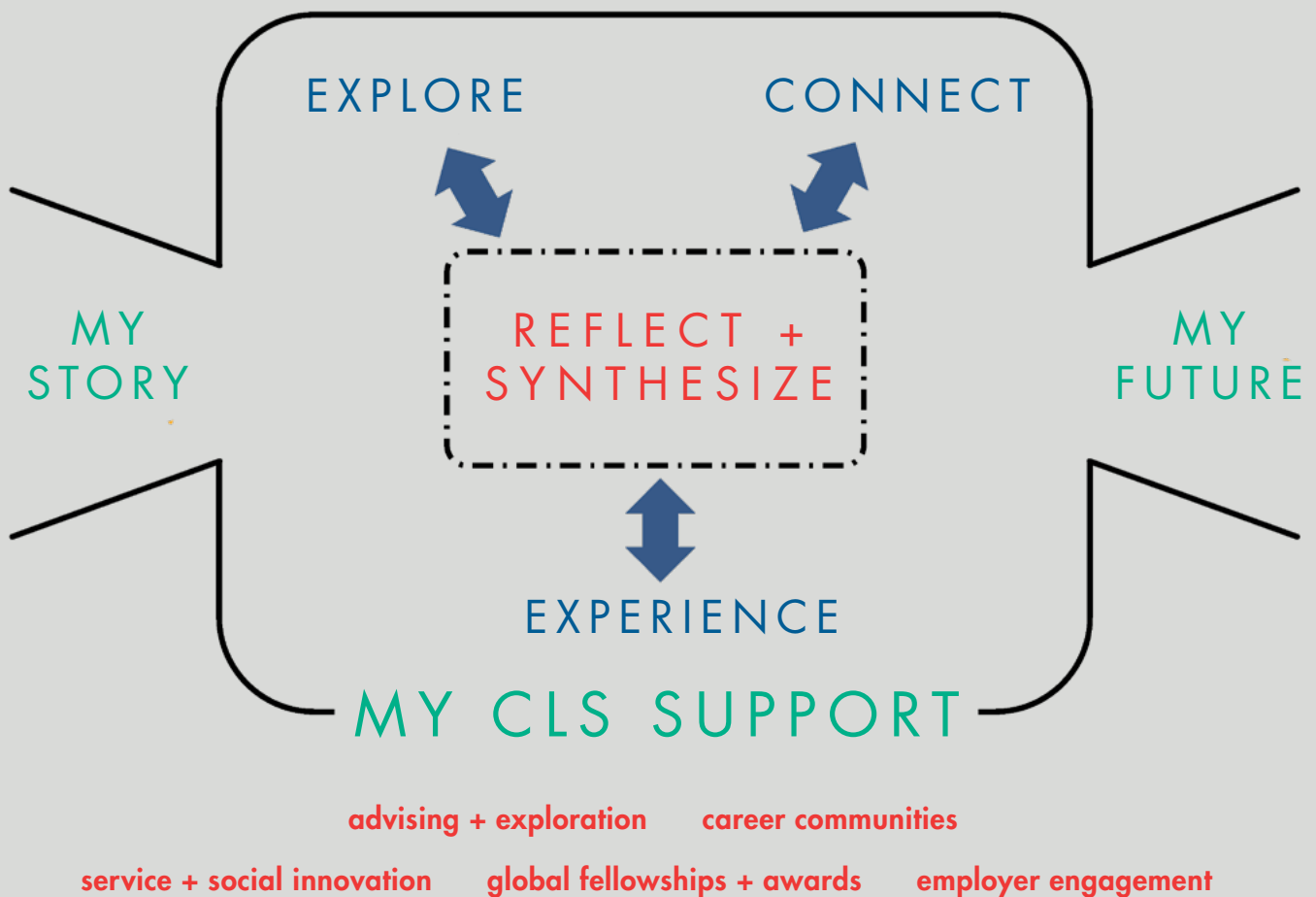
and family, support systems, academic experiences, jobs, and cocurricular activities have influenced you in myriad ways. Your story will continue here at Grinnell and the CLS will help you reflect upon it, build upon it, and share it with others as you continue your journey here at Grinnell.

Explore: Exploration is both an internal and external exercise. Through internal exploration (self-exploration), you will identify your personal, academic, professional, and civic values and assess your strengths and interests. Whether through reflective conversations with your advisers, the CLS self-assessment tools, or participating in contemplative or creative exercises, you will gain insight into yourself. Through external exploration (actively engaging with sources of information you gather from others), you will acquire knowledge, perspectives, and insights that inform and perhaps test what you already know about yourself. Whether through informational interviews, observation, or online research, you may gain additional insight about yourself in a larger context.

Experience: Experience is the act of doing. Participating in a wide range of activities while at Grinnell will result in greater wisdom, clarity of purpose, enhanced skills, and meaningful connections. In addition to your academic studies, your on-campus experiences may include additional research experiences, wellness activities, or involvement with student groups, athletic teams, or residence halls. Off-campus experiences might include your participation in internships, externships, service in the community, political activism, or off-campus study or research. Whether near or far, you will be challenged, supported, and, at times, nudged to pursue an array of experiences as part of your journey.

Connect: Connections — networks — are key to your career. Your CLS adviser(s) will be an important part of your network, as will your faculty, friends, family members, coaches, and others. A central part of your journey will involve meeting and networking with others (alumni, industry professionals, community members, peers, faculty, and staff). Your network will ultimately be your support in all aspects of your career. While it may seem strange to you now, please know there are more than 20,000 Grinnell alumni who are eager to meet you! The CLS can help you make these connections.

MY JOURNEY



Reflect and Synthesize: Your CLS advisers will help you process your experiences and use them to live, learn, work, and serve with meaning and purpose. Your advisers will help you reflect upon your particular journey and experiences through observation and serious consideration. They will also help you synthesize or draw connections between your new observations and what you previously understood or knew. In this way, CLS staff will assist you in focusing on the “what” and “so what” of your experiences and intentionally considering the related “now what” of your journey.

My CLS Support: Integrated support for your journey will come from members of five specialized CLS teams:

- Advising and Exploration
- Career Communities
- Service and Social Innovation
- Global Fellowships and Awards
- Employer Engagement

My Future: Your active engagement with the CLS throughout your four years at Grinnell will position you to pursue a meaningful and purposeful career that reflects your own particular blend of personal, professional, and civic aspirations.

My CLS Support

Advising and Exploration Team: Each incoming student is assigned an exploratory adviser from the Advising and Exploration Team. This adviser will help you explore, discern, and articulate your values, strengths, and interests. Through individualized advising sessions you will create, test, validate, and, at times, refine your preliminary personal, academic, civic, and professional goals.

Career Communities Team: Each student has the opportunity to join one or two of the CLS career communities. The Career Community Team provides individualized advising and specialized programming as you focus and connect your values, strengths, and interests to specific postgraduate goals and ambitions. Your exploratory adviser can help you decide which career community(ies) to join and when. Then, you will transition from your exploratory adviser to work more closely with the director of the career community(ies) you joined.

The seven career communities are:

1. Arts, Media, and Communication
2. Business and Finance
3. Education Professions
4. Government and Social Service
5. Health Professions
6. Law
7. STEM

The value of joining a career community includes:

- Access to specialized advising to prepare you for applying, interviewing, and securing internships and jobs.
- Industry-focused treks to various locations to meet with professionals and alumni in your career interest areas.
- Mentorship and guidance from alumni pursuing careers in fields related to your professional goals.
- Advice and assistance with the application process for graduate and professional school programs.
- Collaboration and camaraderie with peers with similar professional, personal, and civic interests, passions, and goals.
- Invitations to field-specific, skill-building workshops and speakers.

Service and Social Innovation: As part of preparing for a holistic career, you are encouraged to explore how you may become civically engaged and serve the community in a manner that is consistent with your values. The



Service and Social Innovation Team offers advising for civic exploration as well as support for service and social innovation experiences such as volunteering, Service Learning Work-Study, Alternative Break service projects, and local social innovation projects and workshops. The team also works with faculty members to help facilitate classes that use course material to serve the community. Participating in service and social innovation experiences creates an avenue for you to discern how you may integrate your unique service and social justice interests with your professional, civic, and personal goals.

Global Fellowships and Awards: The Global Fellowships and Awards Team coaches and advises you through the reflection, application, and nomination processes for highly selective awards including the Watson, Truman, Fulbright, and other postgraduate awards and scholarships. The reflection that you do through these processes is invaluable in drawing connections between the various aspects of your career aspirations.

Employer Engagement: The Employer Engagement Team cultivates, develops, and sustains mutually beneficial recruiting relationships with a broad array of organizations seeking to recruit students for internships, full-time employment, and related postgraduate opportunities. This team also manages both the summer funding and Grinnellink (alumni-affiliated) internship programs.

Steps in My Journey

There are many ways to further your professional, personal, and civic development. Here are a few action steps you can pursue with your CLS support:

EXPLORE

- Complete the values card sort activity to identify your top five values and how they impact decision-making.
- Take the Strong Interest Inventory to develop insights into your interests, and begin exploring possible professional pathways.
- Take the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) to understand your psychological preferences in how you interact with people and the world around you.
- Use your wandering map to explore patterns in your experience, skills, and interests.
- Participate in the externship job-shadowing program with an alumnus/a over spring break.
- Prepare for and conduct informational interviews to learn more about specific industries including types of positions, ethical challenges, or work/life balance considerations.
- Conduct online research about the required skills, job responsibilities, salary ranges, and related demographic details in an area of professional interest.

EXPERIENCE

- Secure a part-time or full-time summer job by tailoring your résumé and cover letters for specific positions.
- Secure a part-time job on or off campus during the academic year.
- Take a community-based learning course that applies what you are learning to serve the community.
- Join a student organization to develop your interests in specific areas while also developing transferrable skills (e.g., time management, communication, leadership, interpersonal skills, decision-making, project management).
- Participate in the Alternative Break service program or secure a Service Learning Work-Study position.
- Conduct research on campus through a Mentored Advanced Project (MAP) or through an off-campus research experience for undergraduates (REU).
- Pursue an off-campus study (OCS) program with an internship or service learning component.
- Participate in the CLS's externship shadowing program over spring break or arrange a job shadow experience separately.
- Volunteer with a community organization.

CONNECT

- Use online networking resources, including Grinnell Connect and LinkedIn to connect with peers, alumni, professionals, and speakers who visit campus.
- Attend campus events, workshops, and receptions to build in-person connections.
- Join a civic organization or get involved in activism.
- Explore various majors, concentrations, and job fields by talking with upper-class students, faculty members, and alumni who pursued specific professions.
- Build relationships by visiting your professors and other faculty members during their office hours to discuss their research and how your interests might be related.
- Create a strategy for assembling a group of mentors (i.e., your personal advisory board) to consult with as you make important decisions about your career goals.

REFLECT AND SYNTHESIZE

- Discuss how your five top values guide your decision-making process personally, civically, and professionally.
- Set goals and share them with others, including your CLS adviser.
- Identify transferrable skills gained in previous academic, civic, professional, and personal experiences.
- Identify gaps in your skill set and brainstorm ways to gain experience to develop those skills.
- Revisit your goals as you acquire new insights, experiences, and perspectives.
- Create a personal mission statement to drive your goal-setting.



CLS Learning Goals

As an actively engaged student — and by fully utilizing the resources of the CLS — you will be able to do the following by the time you graduate:

- **Understand your values:** Engage in self-reflection to develop a sophisticated understanding of your values, strengths, and interests.
- **Translate values into goals:** Develop the ability to distill and use your observations and discoveries to refine and guide your goals.
- **Develop skills to pursue goals:** Acquire the experiences, knowledge, and skills to clarify and pursue meaningful postgraduate pathways.
- **Present yourself well:** Learn to present yourself effectively and persuasively — including your values, strengths, and qualifications — to an array of audiences.
- **Develop a network:** Learn how to identify — and cultivate relationships with — individuals who can support your professional, personal, and civic development.
- **Be ethical, just, and professional:** Develop the ability to conduct yourself in an ethical, socially responsible, and professionally respectful manner as you live, learn, work, and serve.

Using My Time Intentionally

As many Grinnell alumni have shared, your four years will go by quickly. Use the following chart to sketch out what you hope to accomplish during the upcoming semesters and breaks. Suggestion: Use a pencil as your goals and ambitions will likely evolve. Work with your CLS adviser and other mentors to set and revisit your goals. Graduation will be here before you know it, so be sure to use your time intentionally.

	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Senior Year
Fall Semester				
Fall Break				
Winter Break				
Spring Semester				
Spring Break				
Summer Break				



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