



CAROLINA CAREER READY



Together We Build Gamecock Futures



UNIVERSITY OF
South Carolina

MY STORY



Header image featuring a circular profile picture of Dr. Justin Lawhead and a background image of the Gamecock mascot at the University of South Carolina. A small logo with a palm tree and a blue circle is in the top right corner of the header.

Dr. Justin Lawhead  He/Him

Educator | Student Success | Leadership Training | Career Guidance
Activator | Futuristic | Includer | Developer | Individualization

Columbia, South Carolina, United States · [Contact info](#)

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 University of South Carolina
 The University of Memphis



STUDENT SUCCESS BACKGROUND

- Campus Activities
- Career Services
- Counseling and Wellness
- Disability Resources for Students
- Housing and Residence Life
- Frosh Camp
- Fraternity and Sorority Life
- Service Learning
- Student Conduct
- Student Leadership and Involvement
- Student Outreach and Support
- Veterans and Military Student Services



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THE USC CAREER CENTER A TRUSTED EXPERT



- Internships, Co-ops, Part-time & Full-time Job
- Workshops & Panels
- Employment application guidance
- Peer support/advising
- Career Paths & Estimated Salaries Gamecock

EMBRACING CAREER EVERYWHERE BY BUILDING A CAREER ECOSYSTEM

Embedding career development throughout campus by creating and supporting intentional partnerships.



WHAT IS A CAREER ECOSYSTEM?

An integrated, campus-wide approach to career development where career readiness is embedded throughout the entire student experience, not confined to a single career services office.

This systemic approach builds a culture of career success with the capacity to serve every student. Career development becomes woven into the fabric of the institution, with universal access for all students before graduation.



INTEGRATION ACROSS CAMPUS

Career development is woven throughout the entire campus experience—not isolated in a single office.

Curriculum — Embedded in coursework and academic programs

Co-Curricular — Student organizations, residence life, and activities

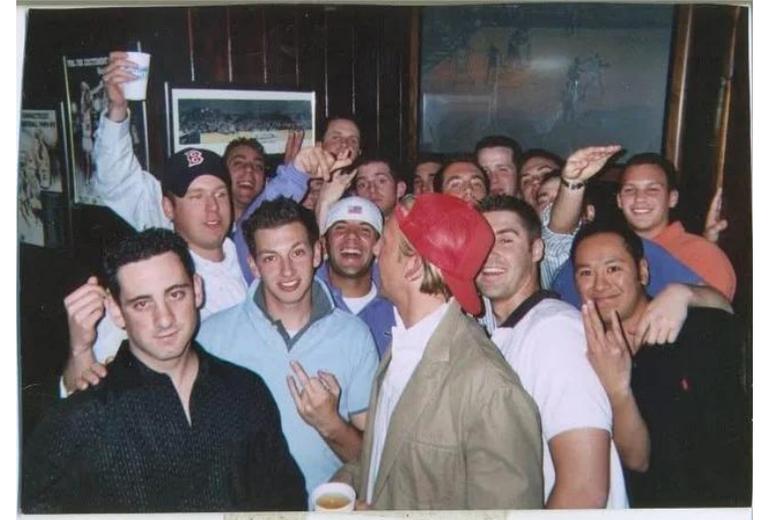
Coaching and Advising— Academic and career guidance at all touchpoints

Shared Responsibility — Faculty, staff, and advisors partner in career learning



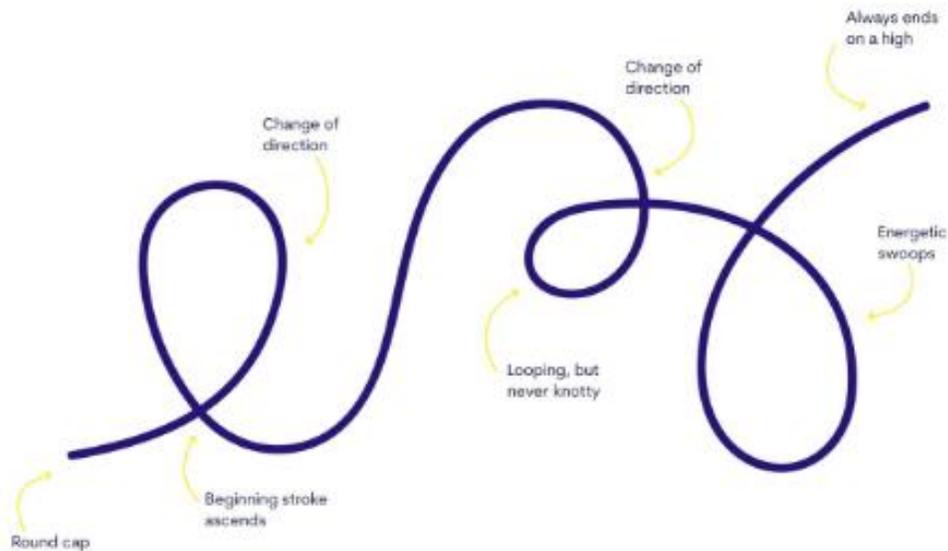
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YOUR HIGHER EDUCATION EXPERIENCE



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REFLECT ON YOUR EXPERIENCE



Draw your *career squiggle* - sketch your professional path

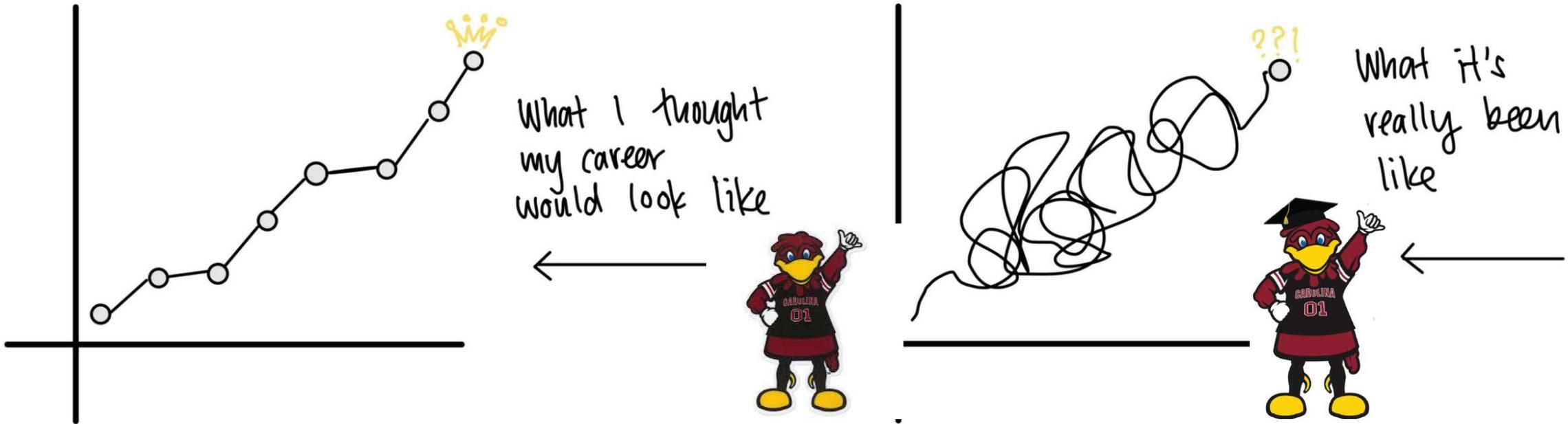
- Start with your first year in college to graduation and first job.
- During college mark transitions, surprises challenges, or moments of growth.
- Then complete to career now.

Questions to consider

- What motivated your shifts or decisions along the way?
- How did those experiences influence your current approach to student success?
- When did uncertainty lead to opportunity?



CAREERS ARE SQUIGGLY LINES NOT LINEAR PATHS



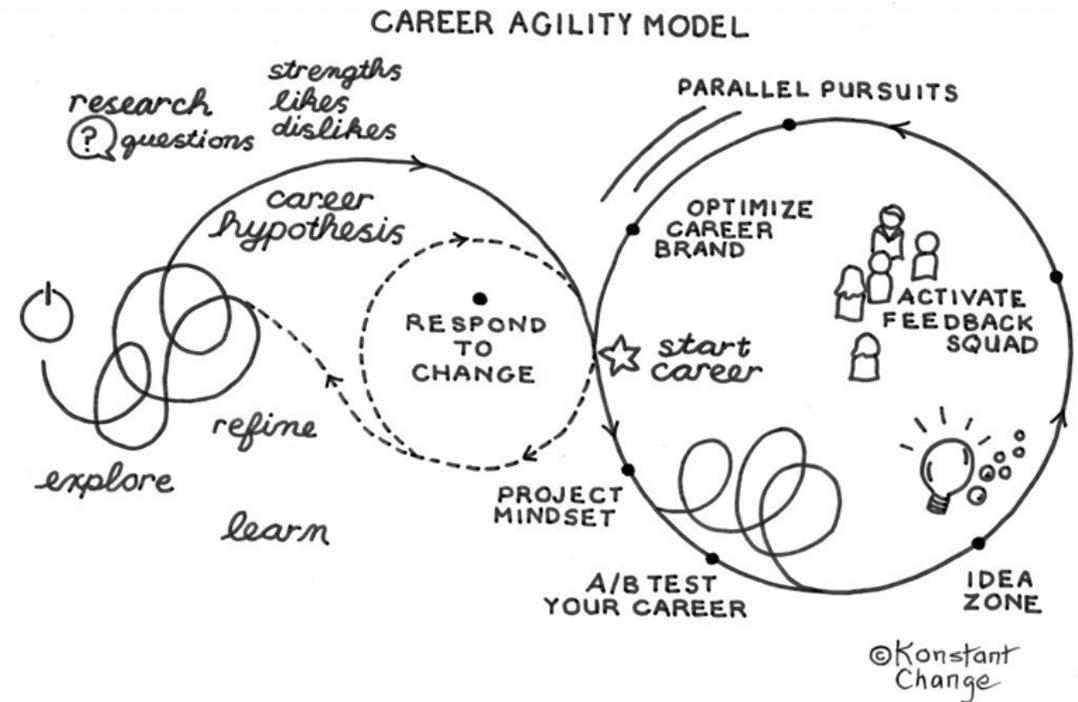
Career Center

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Key characteristics of squiggly careers include change, uncertainty, and possibility.

AGILITY AND CAROLINA CAREER READY CAREER

- Self-Discovery and Awareness.
- Career Coaching.
- Skill Development.
- Network Building.
- Readiness preparation.



COMPETENCIES TO UNDERSTAND & DEVELOP

Career & Self Development

- Goal setting & leadership reflection
 - Receiving feedback from advisors and peers
 - Mentoring and coaching new members

Communication

- Facilitating chapter meetings & peer interactions and needs
 - Recruitment conversations and execution
 - Professional emails and presentations
 - Potentially difficult conversations with MANY peers

Critical Thinking

- Problem-solving chapter challenges
 - Risk assessment and management
 - Evaluating outcomes and improving processes

Leadership

- Holding elected leadership roles
 - Delegating responsibilities
 - Decision-making with real consequences

Professionalism

- Representing the chapter publicly
 - Time management and responsibility
 - Ethical decision-making
 - Communication with nationals

Teamwork

- Collaboration chapter leadership, nationals etc.
 - Conflict management & shared outcome accountability
 - Liaison to bring all stakeholders together & collab
 - Navigating a LARGE amount of women
 - Engaging diverse women and perspectives

Technology

- Budget tracking, spreadsheets & presentations
 - Chapter management systems
 - Social media and marketing tools
 - Presenting to chapter or others with visuals





GAMECOCKS AND SQUIGGLY CAREERS ARE FRIENDS



USC Carolina Experience

Students are Learning

How It Prepares them for a Squiggly Career

Exploring Academics

Students test out majors, dive into new subjects, and make connections across disciplines.

Builds curiosity and flexibility — skills that help you navigate change and see new possibilities.

Getting Involved on Campus

Students join student organizations, leadership programs, and community projects.

Develops teamwork, confidence, and initiative — qualities that make you adaptable in any environment.

Gaining Experience Beyond the Classroom

Students complete internships, part-time jobs, research, or service experiences.

Helps you experiment with career paths, apply classroom learning, and discover what energizes you.

Building Gamecock Connections

Students connect with faculty, alumni, mentors, and peers who share insights and opportunities.

Expands your network — creating pathways for internships, jobs, and lifelong support.

Reflecting and Reassessing

Students pause to ask: What am I learning about myself? What do I want next?

Encourages self-awareness and intentional decision-making throughout your career journey.

Embracing Change

Students shift directions — maybe change majors, explore new goals, or take an unexpected opportunity.

Builds resilience and confidence to navigate your own path with purpose and openness.



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Career Carolina Career Ready

Preparing Gamecocks for Lifelong Success



- Integrating career readiness into the student experience
- Building partnerships across campus and industry
- Creating a holistic, inclusive pathway from classroom to career



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STRATEGIC COLLEGE PARTNERSHIPS

- Dedicated career teams for each academic college.
- Career Coaches deliver personalized, discipline-based guidance.
- Employer Relations Specialists aligned to key industry sectors.
- Consistent, early engagement throughout the student lifecycle.
- Faculty Career Champions trained and equipped with toolkits.
- Embedding career readiness into course design and culture.



IMPORTANCE/PRIORITY



Did you know? GEN Z's are expected to have **18 JOBS IN THEIR LIFETIME.**

For someone that starts work at 18 and finishes up at 70, that's an average of 1 new job every 3 years.



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FIGURE 1: STUDENT AND EMPLOYER RATINGS OF IMPORTANCE OF AND STUDENT PROFICIENCY IN CAREER READINESS COMPETENCIES, BY PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS.

COMPETENCY	NEW GRADUATES		EMPLOYERS	
	IMPORTANCE	PROFICIENCY	IMPORTANCE	PROFICIENCY
Communication	96.3%	78.1%	96.1%	53.5%
Critical Thinking	94.0%	80.8%	96.1%	55.9%
Teamwork	90.5%	83.5%	93.9%	81.5%
Career & Self-Development	87.8%	61.5%	65.6%	43.2%
Professionalism	88.9%	79.7%	89.4%	50.3%
Leadership	84.6%	66.0%	45.0%	31.0%
Technology	77.9%	60.5%	71.7%	72.0%
Equity & Inclusion	78.3%	79.5%	70.0%	63.3%

THE WHY

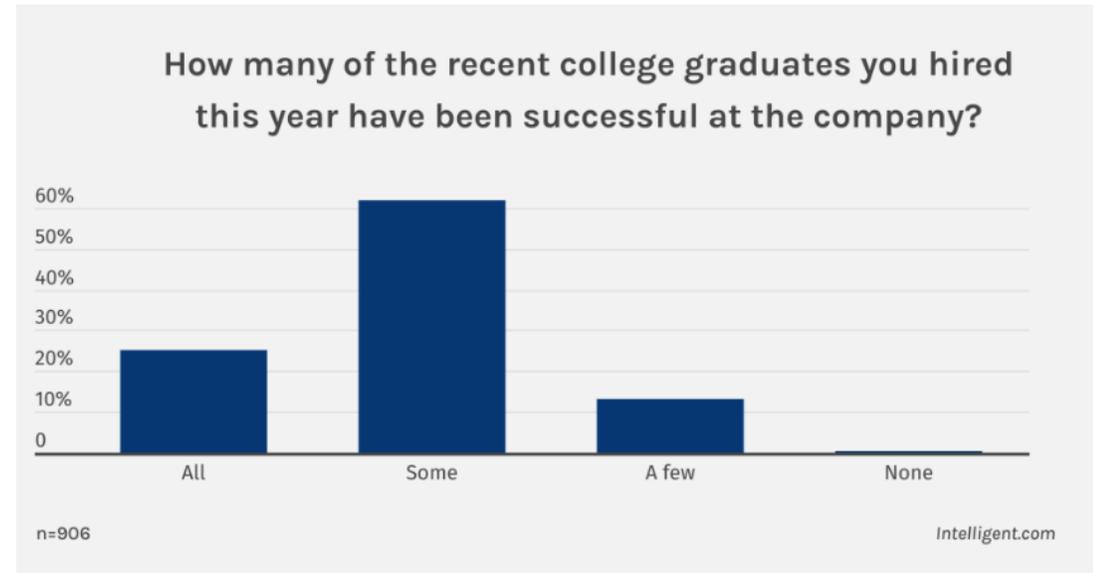
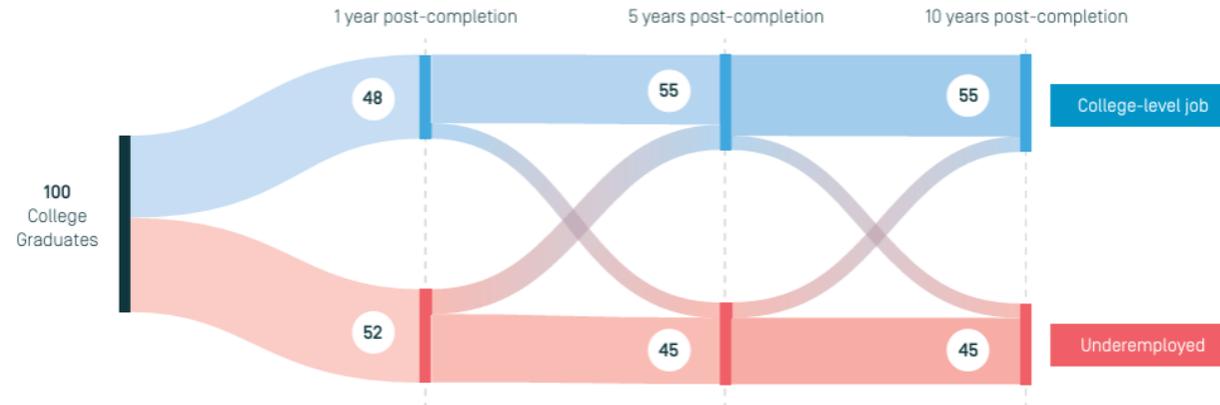


Figure 1.1 Employment outcomes by years after graduation



Source: Burning Glass Institute analysis of Lightcast Career Histories Database, 2022. Calculated for workers with a terminal bachelor's degree.

CAROLINA CAREER READY

- **Everyone helps:** Faculty, staff, alumni, and peers into career supporter and create more opportunities than one office ever could.
- **Make it natural:** Weave career conversations into classes, residence halls, clubs, and everyday interactions where students already spend their time.
- **Work smarter, not harder:** Provide partners with career tools and training to enhance their current impact.
- **Change the career center's role:** Instead of doing everything, focus on teaching others how to guide and becoming the training hub that empowers everyone else.
- **Multiply the results:** When the whole campus helps with careers, students get more support, better connections, and real opportunities.



ACADEMIC ADVISORS AS CAREER ALLIES

01 Encourage Exploration

Suggest students attend career fairs, info sessions, and networking events—even if they're 'just curious.' Early exposure builds confidence.

02 Normalize the Process

Remind students that most people don't have it all figured out. Career development is ongoing, not a one-time decision.

03 Ask About Interests

When discussing course selection, also ask: 'What energizes you?' Help students identify patterns in what they enjoy.

04 Share the Big Picture

Explain how general education requirements and electives can become career differentiators. Every class has potential value.

05 Partner with Us

Join the Career Champions network. Invite a career coach to your college's advising sessions. Co-create touchpoints that serve every student.



Thank
you!



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