While study abroad may seem like a break from your “real” life, it can be a valuable part of your career exploration and development. Whether or not you hope to work abroad in the future, being able to articulate your international competencies can be extremely valuable to a potential employer. During your sophomore year, we encourage you to work with a Career Center advisor to prepare for making the most of your upcoming experience. Below are some things you can do to enhance your career development.

**Before you leave Colby**

- During the semester before you are away, meet with a Career Center advisor to identify and clarify your career goals, discuss future plans (e.g., internships, jobs, graduate school) and review and discuss your resume and cover letter.
- Students who will be away for all or part of their junior year, particularly in the spring, should plan ahead for graduate school, internship, and employment application procedures and timelines so that they don’t miss any important deadlines and will be fully prepared for senior year.
- Network with personal and family contacts, alumni and other professionals in your field of interest, and search and establish contact with any individuals living where you will be studying.
- Talk with students who are back from your study site. Did they do an internship while there? Was it during the semester or after? How did they arrange it?
- Explore opportunities for interning, working, or volunteering in the country where you will be studying during your term abroad or for the summer or JanPlan before or after. Going Global, linked from CareerLink, is a great place to start.

**While you are abroad**

- Make career awareness part of your experience. Conduct informational interviews and explore other career resources. Talk with local faculty members and get suggestions for other potential contacts in the community.
- If you are going abroad: talk to alumni living and working in this part of the world. What do you observe about the cultural aspects of work habits, business attire and supervisor-employee relationships? What appears to be most “valued” in the business community? What can you observe about gender-based aspects of the working environment, job assignments and corporate culture?
- If you are studying in another U.S. location: talk to alumni living and working in this community. Explore the local economy. Which businesses/industries are dominant in the area? What are some local concerns of employees? What are the cost of living and the average salary? If this is an area you would consider relocating to, what are the resources available and the lifestyle issues you want to consider?
- Establish contacts in your new location as networking resources and to obtain internships for the following summer (or January Term), or to search from abroad for an internship in the U.S.
- Contact any alumni that are living or working where you are, and maintain a record of all interesting professionals you meet. Get business cards, email addresses. In addition to alumni, other references could be a professor from the country you studied in, a host family member, or a supervisor where you volunteered, worked or interned.
- Explore opportunities for post study experiences in the country, including assessing the local economy and cost of living.
- Ensure you have not disabled emails from the Career Center. You may receive emails not relevant to your current situation away; however, you do not want to miss any important announcements, including sessions via WebEx.
- Continue to maintain contact with the Career Center. Despite the distance, a career advisor will assist you with resumes, cover letters, interviews and job and internship searches, and can talk with you via WebEx.

**When you return to Colby**

- Attend the “Marketing your Study Abroad Experiences” workshop offered by OCS and Career Center in September or February.
- Meet with a Career Center advisor to discuss your study-abroad experience, how it has impacted your career direction, and how you can communicate the value of the experience in your written and verbal communications.
- Update your resume summarizing your experience abroad, and plan ahead for senior year and your life after graduation.
- Make plans for an internship or independent study off-campus in the summer or JanPlan, including taking advantage of the contacts you made abroad. Be sure to keep in touch with new contacts on a regular basis.
- You can access lots of great employment, cultural, work permit information and much more on Going Global via CareerLink.

Visit the Career Center for more information.