



# Career Planning Guide

2026



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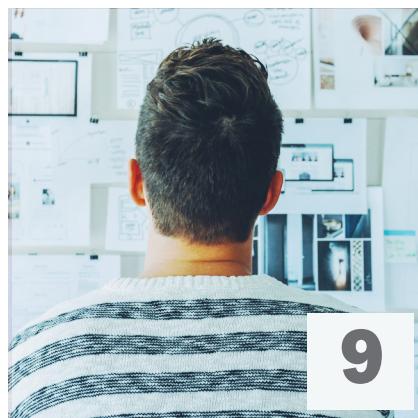
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[CareerStudio.nmsu.edu](http://CareerStudio.nmsu.edu)



# HOW CAN WE HELP YOU MEET YOUR CAREER GOALS?

Learn more about the programming and opportunities provided for current students and alumni.



## DISCOVERING YOUR INNER AGGIE: Self-Assessment Guide

Making plans for your future can be challenging. Starting with the self-assessment process can give you more choices and increase your confidence that you are on the right career path.

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## Experiential Learning: Cooperative Education and Internship Program

Your time at NMSU should include experiential learning to launch your professional journey. After completing a co-op/internship, you will gain new and unique perspectives for your career plan.



16

## CHECKLISTS

- Co-op/Internship
- Job Hunting
- Career Fair
- Resume
- Cover letter
- LinkedIn
- Interview
- Graduate School

# START YOUR JOURNEY WITH AGGIE CAREER STUDIO



## Letter from the Aggie Career Studio Team

Greetings Aggie Nation!

We're excited to share the **2026 Career Planning Guide**—a resource created to support you as you plan, prepare, and pursue your future career. Inside, you'll find best practices, practical tips, and real examples designed to help you grow your confidence, strengthen your professional skills, and take the next steps on your career journey.

At the **Aggie Career Studio**, our mission is to connect your academic experiences with meaningful career opportunities. Through strong employer partnerships, career fairs, and engaging events like information sessions, coffee chats, mock interviews, résumé reviews, and job-search workshops, our team is here to provide the guidance and tools you need to explore options and achieve your goals.

We value your feedback and enjoy collaborating with students to continually enhance the services we provide. As you navigate your path, remember that the Aggie Career Studio team is here to support you every step of the way.

Here's to your success in 2026 and beyond.

Go Aggies!

The Aggie Career Studio Team



## Aggie Career Studio Services

**Aggie Career Studio** (ACS) is here to help you discover what drives you - your curiosities, passions, interests, and skills! From your first day on campus to graduation, **ACS** is your go-to resource for finding on- and off-campus jobs, internships, career exploration tools, advising, and professional development opportunities. Our team will be with you every step of the way, offering tips, guidance, and encouragement to help you reach your goals.

## Job Search Services

- Job search assistance for student employment, internship, and professional positions.
- Employer connections
- Interview with employers
- Employer-led information sessions

## Advising and Professional Development

- Career advising aligned with your career goals
- Resume and Curriculum Vitae (CV) reviews
- Interview coaching
- Information panels (student, industry employers, alumni, faculty)
- Salary information and negotiation strategy resources

## Career Closet

- **Free** professional clothing for job search, interviews, and career fairs/events
- Professional Wear Fashion Couture Fashion Show

## Career Events

- Career Fairs with local and national employers
- Graduate & Professional School Fair
- Aggie Manners Etiquette Dinner

## Professional Development Workshops

Aggie Career Studio offers a variety of professional development workshops designed to help NMSU students build the skills employers value most - preparing you to thrive in the workplace and beyond.

- **Resume Writing**
- **Internship Search Strategies**
- **Salary Negotiation**
- **Career Fair Preparation**
- **Develop an Elevator Pitch**
- **Grad School vs. Workforce**
- **Personal Branding & LinkedIn**
- **Professionalism & Business Etiquette**
- **Emotional Intelligence**

# CHARTING YOUR CAREER PATH

**WHEN** DO I WANT TO ACHIEVE MY GOALS?

**WHERE** DO I WANT TO WORK?

Complete your profile in Handshake.

Identify and explore career options with a Career Advisor.

Identify interests, skills, work values, and personality traits through Vita Navis career assessment.

Talk to faculty and review the NMSU Academic Catalog to research majors.

Explore career choices using LinkedIn and personal contacts.

Join a student organization.

Participate in meaningful experiences (i.e. volunteer, research, job-shadowing)

Meet with Academic Advisors at the Center for Academic Advising and Student Support (CAASS)

Attend career fairs and other career events.

**FRESHMAN  
YEAR**

**SOPHOMORE  
YEAR**

Join a professional association related to your career field.

Contact the Aggie Career Studio for tips and resources on resumes, cover letters, and interviewing.

Upload your resume to Handshake.

Develop a job search strategy for finding work experience in your field of study.

Build connections through interacting with employers, faculty, and university staff.

Start confirming your career choice by gaining career-related work experience through internships and co-ops.

Attend career fairs and other career events.



**“When one door of happiness closes, another opens, but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one that has been opened for us.”**

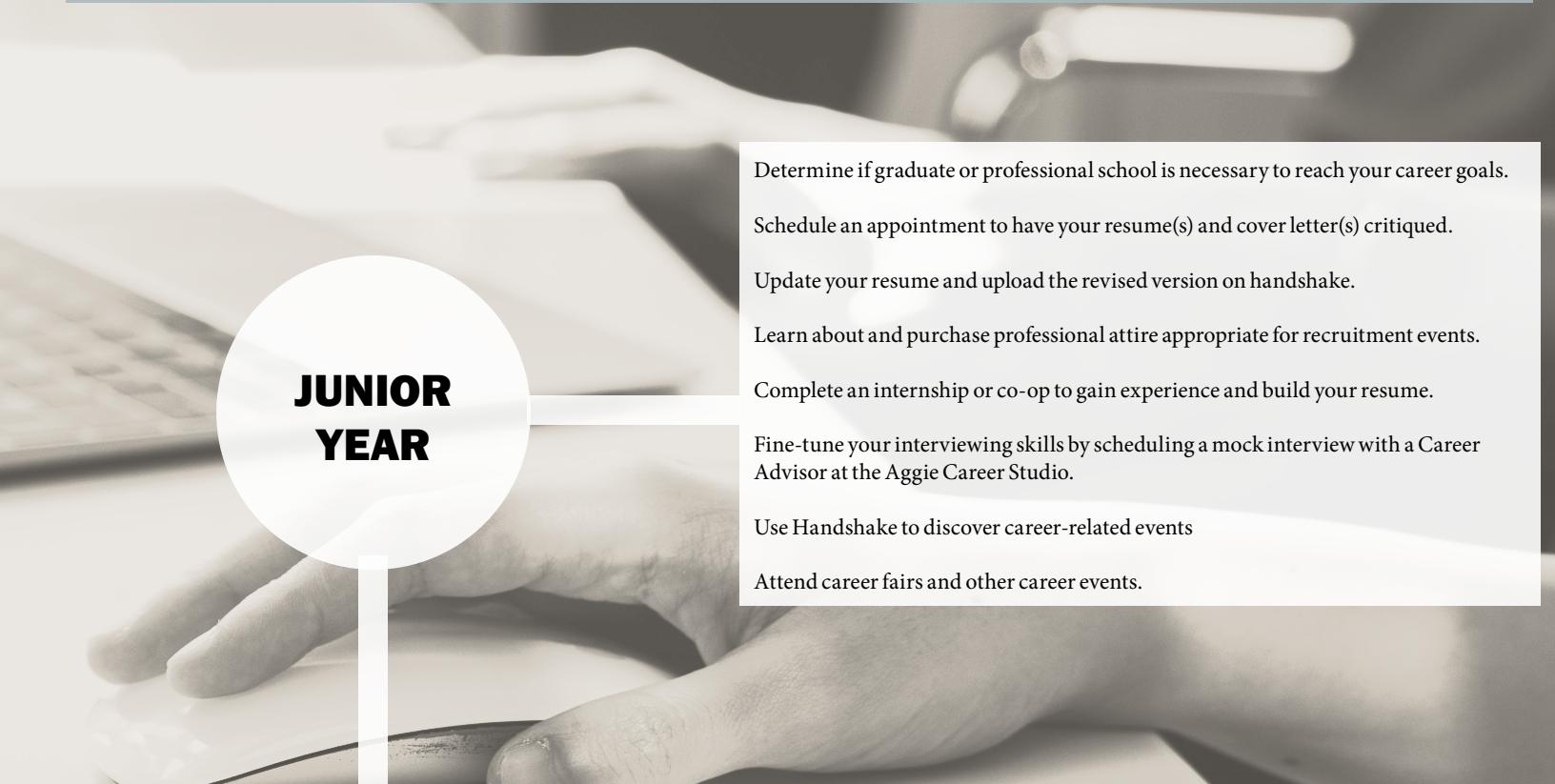
HELEN KELLER

*Career planning is an important strategy to organize and manage your short and long term professional goals.*

Before you can take actionable steps to achieve these goals, you should have a solid understanding what your goals are, an interest in the field, an honest reflection of who you are now, and what areas you need to invest time and effort in.



## JUNIOR YEAR

- 
- Determine if graduate or professional school is necessary to reach your career goals.
  - Schedule an appointment to have your resume(s) and cover letter(s) critiqued.
  - Update your resume and upload the revised version on Handshake.
  - Learn about and purchase professional attire appropriate for recruitment events.
  - Complete an internship or co-op to gain experience and build your resume.
  - Fine-tune your interviewing skills by scheduling a mock interview with a Career Advisor at the Aggie Career Studio.
  - Use Handshake to discover career-related events
  - Attend career fairs and other career events.

Continue to follow the graduate and professional school timeline for entrance exams, if applicable.

Develop your personal statement, polish your resume, and have it critiqued by a Career Advisor.

Identify professionals who are willing to serve as references.

Schedule a mock interview to prepare for potential interviews.

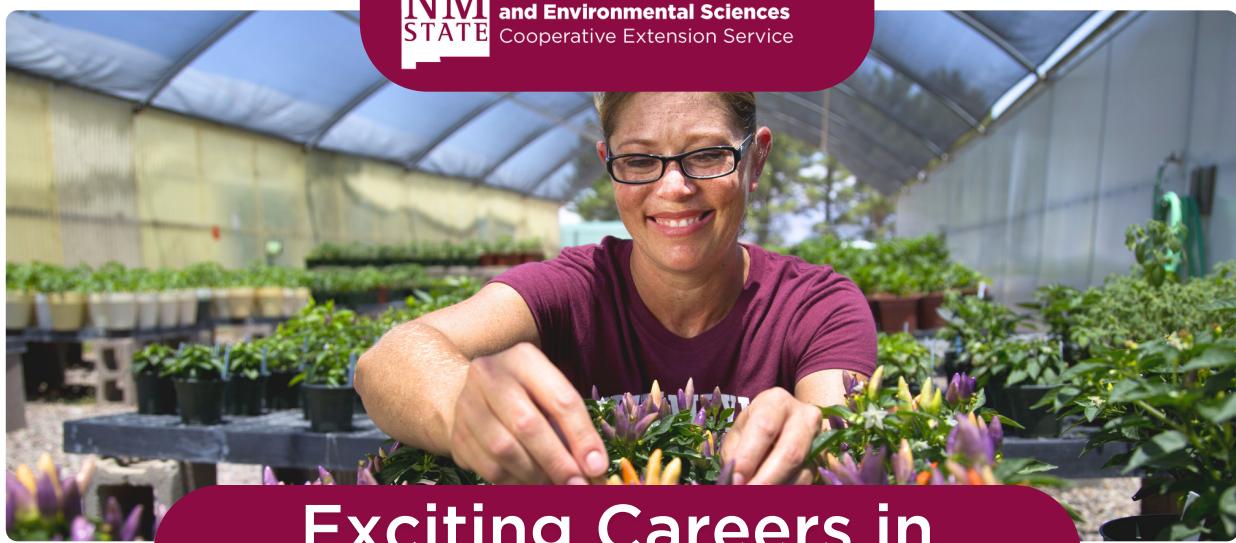
Identify full-time job opportunities (utilize personal network).

Use Handshake to discover career-related events.

Attend career fairs and other career events.



## SENIOR YEAR



# Exciting Careers in Cooperative Extension



## Diverse Career Paths

Join professionals in agriculture, youth development, family and consumer sciences, and community education.



## Make a Local Impact

Extension professionals work directly with NM communities to solve real-world problems, share research-based knowledge, and empower individuals and families.



## Why NMSU CES?

Enjoy a fulfilling career with competitive benefits, professional development, and the chance to be part of a mission-driven team. At NMSU, your passion meets purpose.

CES offers diverse opportunities in agriculture, youth development, family and consumer sciences, community education, and more. Whether you're passionate about science, communication, or public service, join a team dedicated to empowering individuals and improving lives across the state. Discover how your skills can grow with us!



Contact Us  
575-646-3015



Visit Our Website  
<http://extension.nmsu.edu>



Locations  
All across New Mexico

# You are the future of health care.



**The Pathway Scholars Program at the University of Arizona College of Medicine - Phoenix** is here to help you realize your dream of a career in medicine. We provide academic support, leadership development and a dedicated community to support you along the way.

---

**Applicants must identify as at least one of the following:**

- » First-generation college attendees
- » From rural Arizona
- » Members of federally recognized American Indian tribes
- » Committed to serving populations in Arizona

[LEARN MORE](#)



**Medicine  
Phoenix**

# ARE YOU CAREER READY?

Soft skills are best developed through engaged learning activities.

Employers are increasingly seeking employees  
who have the following soft skills:

## LEADERSHIP

Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals, and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. Assess and manage emotions and those of others. Empathetic skills used to guide and motivate. **Organize, prioritize, & delegate** work.

## TEAMWORK

Build diverse relationships with colleagues and customers. Able to work within a team structure and can negotiate and **manage conflict**. Effectively communicate to define common goals. Able to **Identify & utilize strengths** of each team member.

## PROBLEM SOLVING

Exercise **sound reasoning** to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems. Able to obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, & data. **Original** and **Innovative**.

## COMMUNICATION

**Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively** in written and oral forms to various audiences. Effectively speak to audiences of varying sizes. Create and edit written reports.

## PROFESSIONALISM

Work productively and manage time & workload. Professional work image. Demonstrate **personal accountability, integrity, and ethical behavior**.

## TECHNOLOGY

Demonstrate the ability to **adapt to new & emerging technologies**. Use technology ethically and efficiently to solve problems and accomplish goals. Value **continuous learning**. Responsive to a variety of training formats.

## GLOBAL FLUENCY

Value differences and **implement strategies for inclusion**. Interact effectively with people from diverse backgrounds. **Understand own biases** and use awareness to work to eliminate them.

## CAREER MANAGEMENT

Identify areas for **professional growth**. Knowledge of industry leaders and trends. **Pursue and advocate for opportunities**.

# SELF-ASSESSMENT GUIDE

## PREPARE & DISCOVER YOUR INNER AGGIE

### WHO AM I?

Can you in five minutes or less clearly describe yourself to a stranger? Have you identified your strengths, weaknesses, interests, and special talents? If not, you may find yourself at a distinct disadvantage because your competition may have made this self-analysis.

### WHAT DO I WANT TO DO?

For many people, this is a difficult question. Your answer indicates whether you have given an honest reflection about your past, present, and future. The more thought you give to this question, the more convincing you will communicate your goals. Remember: working is doing something and not just knowing something.

### WHY DO I WANT TO DO THIS?

Have you thoroughly considered what motivated you to make this decision? Are you realistic? Are you interested and enthusiastic about this career field? Are you willing to put forth the time, effort, and commitment to obtain the experience and knowledge required?

### WHERE DO I WANT TO WORK?

Do you have a preference where you want to work? Are you focused on a specific company? Do you have a preference in the size or type (government, non-profit, etc.) of an employer? Is there a specific geographic location where you hope to live and work?

### WHEN DO I WANT TO ACHIEVE MY GOALS?

It is important to realize what steps you can take now and prepare for what you need to do *tomorrow*. Do you need a Masters degree? If so, do you need that degree before you start an entry level position, or would you be better served continuing your education later in life? Are there external forces that will impact your timeline?

*Design Your Career. Define Your Future.*

### ONLINE ASSESSMENT TESTS

New Mexico State University provides enhanced career exploration opportunities for Aggies through the VitaNavis online platform. The platform uses the Super Strong interest assessment to find educational and career pathways for Aggies. For each pathway, the platform links your interests to careers, salaries, career outlooks, skills, and the education you'll need to meet your goals. Completing the Super Strong will provide you with a foundation for planning your educational and career journey.

Visit our website, [careerstudio.nmsu.edu](http://careerstudio.nmsu.edu), to access the [VitaNavis](#) online assessment tests.

The journey to your career success is only a click away. Access VitaNavis using your myNMSU credentials to get started.



## Current Starting Teacher Salary

# \$60,000

## Potential First Year Pay (Sign On)

|                                     |          |
|-------------------------------------|----------|
| Minimum Starting Salary             | \$60,000 |
| Early Commitment Stipend (by May 1) | \$ 3,000 |
| Welcome Home Stipend (PBT Alumni)   | \$ 1,500 |
| Relocation Stipend                  | \$ 1,500 |

**Potential 1st Year Pay  
+ \$7,800.00 insurance =**

**\$66,000  
\$73,800**

\*\*PBTISD offers additional stipends for athletic coaches and relocation stipends for couples hired to the district.\*\*

## Benefits of Being an Eagle

- District annual contribution of \$7,800.00 (\$650.00 per month) toward health and/or other insurance
- Free \$50,000 Life Insurance/AD&D
- Long-Term Disability and Employee Assistance Program
- **Affordable Teacher Housing (\$725, \$925, \$1050-utilities included)**
- Up to 15% Annuity Match - 403(b) or 457(b)
- District Child Care - six weeks to three-year-olds, Pre-K 3, and an after-school program
- Free Pre-K4 program
- Teacher support through mentorship program, coaching, and curriculum support.

Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate against persons because of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, military status, genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by law. Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities and will reasonably accommodate applicants with a disability upon request. Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD will also ensure reasonable accommodation for employees with disabilities.

## Annual Stipend Opportunities

- \$4,000 Math/Science/ELAR (Grades 6-12)
- \$3,000 Special Education
- \$3,000 Bilingual
- \$1,750 ESL
- \$1,500 Advanced Graduate Degree

## PBTISD "Grow Your Own" Program

The **Grow Your Own** program completely **funds your educational advancement!**

- College coursework
- Advanced Certification
- Advanced Degrees



Visit [pbtisd.net](http://pbtisd.net) and click "Careers" to explore!! OR Scan to Apply

**JOIN SCOTTSDALE PD**  
**SEE MORE. DO MORE. BE MORE.**

**SCOTTSDALEPD.COM** @ScottsdalePD

## Kickstart Your Career with FYZICAL!

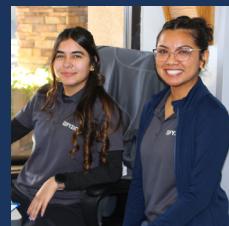
### Internship Opportunities:

- Physical Therapy (PT) & Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Athletic Training (AT)
- Business & Administration
- Marketing & Communications
- Human Resources

Hands-on experience in physical therapy and rehab + Mentorship from licensed professionals + Flexible schedules to fit your college classes!

### Career Tips:

- **Network Early:** Connect with professionals and peers.
- **Apply What You Learn:** Turn classroom knowledge into real-world experience.
- **Ask Questions & Stay Curious:** Show initiative and eagerness to grow.
- **Build Your Skills:** Develop both technical and soft skills.
- **Leverage Opportunities:** Use internships, mentors, and campus resources.



**Ready to Start Your Journey?**

Send us an email and resume!  
**hr@swsportandspine.com**

*Preferred Physical Therapy Providers  
of New Mexico State Aggies!*

**FYZICAL**  
Therapy & Balance Centers  
Northwest El Paso & Las Cruces

# DEVELOPING YOUR PERSONAL BRAND

*A personal brand is more than who you are. Simply put, your brand is the perception of you. From digital to human interactions, what do others think and say about you?*

## CREATE.

*What do you want to be known for?*

If you had to choose just ONE word to describe yourself, what would it be?

Let's add another: choose ONE word or phrase to describe who you want to be or how you hope to impact the world. List them together below:

If you value leadership, perhaps your words are LEADER and EMPOWER.

If you're a creative type, maybe your words are ARTIST and THOUGHT-PROVOKING.

Do the sciences run through your veins? If so, try INNOVATOR and IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE.

Does this sound familiar?

**BE BOLD.** Shape the Future.

Knowing who you are and what you value is the first step. How well you apply and maintain your brand can greatly influence your ability to secure employment.

## MARKET.

*How do you market yourself?*

There are many ways you can apply your brand as you continue along your career path. It impacts your decision of which companies to seek out for employment to the way you describe your experiences. Aesthetically, your brand may also shape the format of your resume and cover letter, as well as how you physically present yourself to others.

Additionally, what does your Online presence say about you? Are you actively engaging in conversations in your field? Are you creating a name for yourself with thoughtful contributions? Create content. Share your ideas. Get involved. Visually project yourself digitally and in print. Don't be afraid to ask for help from a creative or business-minded friend.



**“A dream doesn’t become reality through magic; It takes sweat, determination and hard work”**

Unknown

**WHO AM I?**

**WHAT DO I WANT TO DO?**

**WHY DO I WANT TO DO THIS?**

**PROTECT.**

*Are you really who/what you say you are?*

If you thought creating your brand was tough, wait until you have to protect it. Your public image should be thoughtful and intentional. Even if you're a free spirit, be a free spirit who maintains their brand at all times.

Authenticity is one of, if not the most, important things to consider when developing your brand. It's not enough to say you're organized and responsible, you do have to be those things.

People evolve, as can your brand, but its evolution should be a result of your choice, not due to your failure to maintain it. Unfortunately, we live in a world where others may try to sabotage your attempts to be successful. It's up to you to stay ahead of the curve and respond quickly and appropriately.

*Everyday is an interview.* It's your chance to promote your brand or, worst case, destroy it with a false move. How will you protect your brand?

## **Building Self-Awareness for Career Success**

When exploring career paths, you want to be intentional about identifying the skills and interests that align with your career goals. Engaging in activities on and off-campus is a great starting point.

**Know Yourself to Grow Yourself**

Review information in each column and rate the importance of each from 1 – 5 (1 = most important to 5 = least important).

### **Elevate Your Skills**

- Practice your communication by working on campus
- Gain leadership skills by joining a student organization
- Gain experience helping others
- Gain confidence in your abilities by being involved on campus
- Practice networking by attending career fairs and events

### **Career Exploration**

- Decide what type of work environment is your best fit
- Get advice from experienced students with similar career goals
- Get advice from professionals or alumni
- Apply knowledge you've learned in school through an internship or part-time job

### **Personal & Professional Development**

- Attend workshops
- Attend career fairs
- Study Abroad
- Secure an internship(s)
- Serve your community through volunteering

**Turn your self-awareness into action by using campus resources to develop new skills, gain hands-on experience, and build a strong professional network.**

1. **Student organizations** - [studentlife.nmsu.edu](http://studentlife.nmsu.edu)
2. **Student employment** - <https://nmsu.joinhandshake.com/edu>
3. **Volunteering** - <https://nmsu.joinhandshake.com/edu>
4. **Research** - <https://provost.nmsu.edu/initiatives/ug-research.html>
5. **Internships & Co-ops** - <https://nmsu.joinhandshake.com/edu>
6. **Study Abroad** - <https://educationabroad.nmsu.edu>

# EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

## START YOUR JOURNEY TODAY

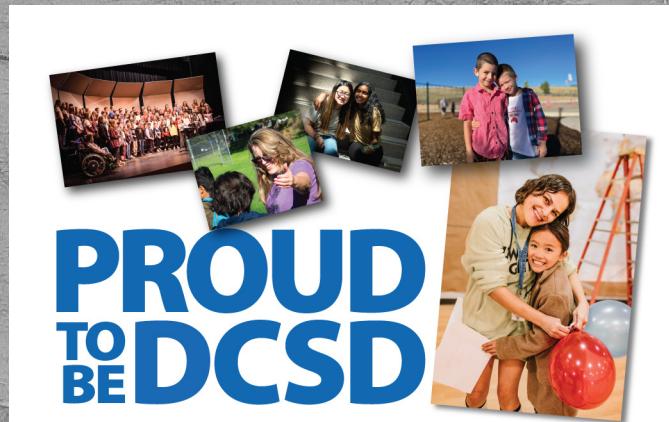
***Experiential Learning is the process through which students develop KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, and VALUABLE WORK EXPERIENCE from direct experiences outside the traditional academic setting.***

### EXAMPLES OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

**Co-ops.**  
**Internships.**  
**Apprenticeships.**  
**Practicums.**  
**Student Teaching.**  
**Clinicals.**  
**Fieldwork.**  
**Job Shadowing.**  
**Mentorships.**  
**Externships.**  
**Fellowships**  
**Senior Projects.**  
**Capstones.**  
**Research.**  
**Simulations.**  
**Lab Courses.**  
**Micro-Internships.**  
**Service Learning.**  
**Community Groups.**  
**Community Theater.**  
**Athletics.**  
**Performing.**  
**Volunteering.**  
**Military Service.**  
**Student Employment.**  
**Student Leadership.**

Today's employers are seeking candidates with a unique combination of both technical and soft skills such as collaboration, communication, and critical thinking. As you explore what your industry recommends, consider participating in co-curricular engagement experiences to apply your knowledge and reflect on your growth in your field of interest. These projects help build your resume and demonstrate your skills and professionalism when applying for jobs.

Well planned, supervised, and assessed experiential learning programs can stimulate academic inquiry by promoting interdisciplinary learning, civic engagement, career development, cultural awareness, leadership, and other professional skills.



**PROUD  
TO BE  
DCSD**

Douglas County offers everything from mountain views to open plains; as well as small-town quiet and suburban amenities. It's also home to the #1 scoring school district in the Denver/Metro Area.

**Find Out Why  
Teachers Love It Here**

 [www.dcsdk12.org/benefits](http://www.dcsdk12.org/benefits)  
**Douglas County** School District

**"I never lose. Either I win or learn."**

Nelson Mandela



## AGGIE CAREER STUDIO IS AVAILABLE TO ASSIST WITH:

- Job Search
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Internship/ Co-op Opportunities
- Resume Review
- Mock Interviews
- Career Exploration
- Workshops

### WAYS TO ENGAGE:

Getting involved on campus and in the community is a great way to learn and gain experience.

#### NEED IDEAS?

- Get an on- or off-campus job
- Join a student organization
- Volunteer in the community
- Conduct a research project
- Gain in-demand skills
- Participate in a leadership program
- Shadow a professional
- Test your entrepreneurial skills and join Studio G

# TRACKING EXPERIENCES

# COOP & INTERNSHIP

## EXPERIENCE. LEARN. LEAD

### Internships: Your First Step Toward a Career



Internships are one of the best ways to explore your interests and gain real-world experience while you're still in college. They give you the chance to apply what you've learned in class, develop professional skills, and learn what it's really like to work in your field.

Beyond building your resume, internships help you discover what kind of work environment and career path fit you best. You'll also make connections with professionals who can offer guidance, mentorship, and even future job opportunities. Many students find that internships open doors to full-time positions after graduation.

Whether paid or unpaid, in-person or virtual, every internship helps you grow your confidence, clarify your goals, and take meaningful steps toward your career success.

### TIP: MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR INTERNSHIP

Be curious, ask questions, and take initiative! Keep track of your accomplishments, update your résumé regularly, and don't forget to thank your supervisors and mentors. Building strong professional relationships can lead to valuable references and future opportunities.

### Need help finding an internship?

Visit the Aggie Career Studio in Garcia Center Room 224 or go to [careerstudio.nmsu.edu](http://careerstudio.nmsu.edu) to explore opportunities, get résumé help, and connect with career advisors who can guide you every step of the way.



Co-op and Internship experiences must be approved at the **BEGINNING** of **EVERY** semester

# PROGRAM

200+

AGGIES

on Work Assignments  
each academic year

## Join the 1,800+ Aggies Gaining Real-World Experience!

Over **1,849 NMSU students** took part in experiential learning opportunities last year — from internships and co-ops to research and service-learning projects. These experiences help you apply classroom knowledge, build professional skills, and discover your career path. Don't just learn it — **live it** through hands-on learning at NMSU!

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS:

International students must comply with US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) regulations at all times to maintain their lawful student status.

### HOW DO I GET STARTED?

1. Consult with the Office of International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) to meet Curricular Practical Training (CPT) eligibility
2. Obtain a signed CPT request form
3. Submit a completed CPT form to the Cooperative Education & Internship Program

**“Nothing ever  
becomes  
real till it is  
experienced.”**

JOHN KEATS

## Cooperative Education and Internship Program

NMSU's **Cooperative Education and Internship Program** gives students the chance to gain real-world experience while earning academic recognition. This program allows you to participate in an internship or co-op without the pressure of a full course load. Through placeholder courses, you can stay connected to the university while gaining valuable hands-on skills in your field.

In just a few easy steps, you can explore how your classroom learning connects to your future career—and even earn a formal notation on your official transcript to highlight your experience. The program is a great way to grow professionally, strengthen your résumé, and build confidence as you prepare for life after graduation.

## Interested in learning more?

Visit the Aggie Career Studio to find out how to get started with the Cooperative Education and Internship Program.

# THE JOB SEARCH: EXPLORING THE

## FIND YOUR NEXT OPPORTUNITY ON HANDSHAKE.

7000+ companies, including Fortune 500 companies and local businesses, recruit Aggies like you on Handshake.

### PUT HANDSHAKE TO WORK FOR YOU!

Handshake is **YOUR** job and internship platform.

Log in with your NMSU credentials at [nmsu.joinhandshake.com](http://nmsu.joinhandshake.com) or through **myNMSU**.

#### Optimize your Handshake profile.

- Upload your current resume.
- Strengthen your profile by adding a professional photo, skills, student organizations or extracurricular activities, and coursework.

#### Add relevant interest, desired industry, job function, and city. Use filters to fine-tune your search.

Handshake will give you suggestions of jobs and events tailored to **YOU** based on your profile and career interests.

**Find career events.** You can find career events on campus like employer information sessions, career fairs, and networking opportunities. Join the event and favorite employers to receive updates.

**Make your profile public to employers and the NMSU campus.** Handshake will help you appear in relevant searches conducted by employers and enable you to connect with other NMSU students.

Chronicle of Higher Education: [jobs.chronicle.com](http://jobs.chronicle.com). Academic and university positions.

Handshake: [nmsu.joinhandshake.com](http://nmsu.joinhandshake.com). Job and internship search platform designed for college students.

Idealist: [idealista.org](http://idealista.org). Jobs with nonprofit organization.

Indeed: [indeed.com](http://indeed.com). Employment opportunities in many industries.

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com](http://linkedin.com). Job search and suggested jobs based on your profile.

State of New Mexico: [www.spo.state.nm.us/](http://www.spo.state.nm.us/). Jobs in New Mexico, State government agencies. Each state, county and city has its own.

Federal Government: [usajobs.gov](http://usajobs.gov). Federal jobs and internships are collected on this website

**DOWNLOAD THE APP**

 **handshake**



# MARKET

## Getting a job takes **TIME & PATIENCE:**

Average time from  
**job posting** to an  
**interview:**

**38  
DAYS**

Average time from  
**interview** to an  
**offer:**

**24  
DAYS**

## RESEARCHING A COMPANY:

Choosing a company to work for should not be taken lightly. Recall your self-assessment. Prioritize a company's location, corporate culture, ethics, reputation, and offered salaries.

### WHERE DO I LOOK?

**LinkedIn** offers insights in hiring trends and growth, information about current and former employees, and the opportunity to follow, connect, and engage.

**Glassdoor** provides reviews from current and former employees and salary information.

And always, Always, ALWAYS: visit the company's **website**, follow them on **social media**, and search for **news articles**.

**"Surround  
yourself with  
people who are  
smarter than  
you."**

RUSSELL SIMMONS

## JOB HUNTING CHECKLIST: **ASSESS GOALS**

- Narrow down type(s) of positions & companies
- Identify regions/locations of interest.
- Create a budget to identify salary requirements

### ONLINE PRESENCE

- Google yourself to get an inventory of your digital footprint
- Clean up public social media accounts
- Boost or increase your industry specific posts
- Create or update your website or portfolio

### CAREER RESOURCES

- Update and tailor your resume.
  - Save copies on a cloud for mobile/remote access
- Compose an original cover letter for each position
- Update your LinkedIn profile
  - Sign up for a FREE trial of Premiere for additional company insights
  - Avoid sending connection requests to those you haven't met in person without an introductory message
  - Follow industry and interesting hashtags
- Practice answering interview questions
- Send THANK YOU notes
- Secure References

### NETWORK

- Visit the ACS office at NMSU
- Meet with company recruiters on campus
- Attend Career Fairs
- Attend Information Sessions
- Meet with headhunters/recruiters in your industry
- Attend industry conferences
- Join industry associations
- Read industry publications
- Join social media groups

# ON-CAMPUS RECRUITING: CAREER FAIRS

## CAREER CONNECTIONS

February 3 & 4, 2026 • 9 AM to 2 PM

## EMPLOYMENT EXTRAVAGANZA

March 4, 2026 • 9 AM to 2 PM

## EDUCATORS' JOB FAIR

April 21, 2026 • 1 PM to 6 PM

## STUDENT EMPLOYMENT FAIR

August 25, 2026 • 10 AM to 1 PM

## CAREER EXPO

September 15-16, 2026 • 9 AM to 2 PM

## ENGINEERING, SCIENCE, & TECHNOLOGY FAIR

September 16, 2026 • 9 AM to 2 PM

## GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL FAIR

October 7, 2026 • 10 AM to 2 PM

## HEALTH PROFESSIONS CAREER FAIR

November 4, 2026 • 2 PM to 5 PM

**ALL FAIRS WILL BE IN  
CORBETT CENTER.**

## COME PREPARED. LEAVE WITH A JOB.

### 1 WEEK BEFORE THE FAIR:

- Study the list of companies/schools who will be at the fair. Start to pair down a list of those you're interested in.
- Research companies.** Visit their websites to see what positions are available. Search for them in the news. Follow them on social media.
- Draft your **resume**, highlighting the skills and experiences that the companies desire. Have your resume reviewed.
- Set up or update your **LinkedIn** profile and portfolio. Attend a **Getting LinkedIn Workshop**. Clean up your public social media accounts.
- Browse **EVENTS** in Handshake for **Info Sessions, Networking Opportunities, and Tabling** for more opportunities to connect with **recruiters**.
- Schedule an appointment for a **Mock Interview**.
- Prepare and practice your Elevator Pitch. Come up with questions that will help you learn more about available positions.
- Attend the **Career Fair Prep Workshop** on the Monday before the fair for a crash course of "Who's who" and "What's what."
- Make arrangements with work or class schedules to allow for time to attend.
- Prepare your professional wardrobe visit the Career Closet in CCSU

**“Television is not real life. In real life people actually have to leave the coffee shop and go get jobs.”**

*BILL GATES*

### **DAY OF THE FAIR**

- Dress for success
- Ask Questions that demonstrate your research and knowledge about the employer
- Focus on what you can offer
- Ask for the recruiter's contact information (Business Card or LinkedIn)
- Stand in the Superman pose at least a minute before you arrive- hands on hips, feet slightly further apart than usual, chin uplifted.
- Arrive early.
- Bring multiple copies of your resume.

### **AFTER THE FAIR**

- Follow-up with the recruiters you met via email or **LinkedIn** connection request. Remind them who you are, what you discussed, & reinforce your interest.
- Check **Handshake** for info sessions. You are more likely to make an impact if you meet with a recruiter multiple times.
- Send thank you note(s)
- Apply to jobs or internships you discovered at the event

### **ELEVATOR PITCH**

Prepping an elevator pitch means that you're prepared when you need to introduce yourself. And it's a great way to answer the common interview question, "tell me about yourself." Although practicing your pitch is helpful, remember that it's not a canned speech - it's a starting point for a two-way conversation. Make sure to ask questions and listen.

- Include your name. Major and year in school.
- State what you are seeking (job or internship) and in what field,
- List one or two experiences (job, Internship, volunteer service) that have strengthened two or three of your skills.
- State what you know about the organization, such as open positions ongoing projects or organizational values.
- End by stating how interested you are to learn more about the organization.

### **SAMPLE ELEVATOR PITCH**

“Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I'm completing a \_\_\_\_\_ degree at New Mexico State University.

I'm interested in a (career/internship) in the \_\_\_\_\_ field/industry.

I've been involved in \_\_\_\_\_ and have developed skills in \_\_\_\_\_.

I have also worked as a \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ and discovered that I really enjoy \_\_\_\_\_.

Could you tell me more about \_\_\_\_\_?”

# CRAFTING & TAILORING YOUR RESUME

An effective resume enables you to stand out and be competitive so you can get an interview. Hiring managers want to know what your skills are and what your responsibilities have been.

## APPLICANT TRACKING SYSTEMS:

Many organizations use an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) in their candidate search. ATS software scans resumes for certain keywords and evaluates each candidate's skills and strengths in relation to the job description. An ATS is likely to read your resume before it reaches a recruiter.

### Identify and use KEYWORDS often

It is important that the language of your resume match the language of the job description to avoid being sorted out of contention.

**TYPES OF RESUMES:**  
Chronological  
Functional  
Combination  
Creative  
Federal  
... and more!



## bigresume

Big Résumé is an interactive online tool that guides students through creating strong, professional résumés. It offers customizable templates, step-by-step coaching, and real-time feedback to help users highlight their skills, experience, and achievements effectively.

## FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

### LEADERSHIP

Administered  
Appointed  
Delegated  
Directed  
Guided  
Implemented  
Led  
Managed  
Oversaw  
Recommended  
Scheduled  
Supervised

### INSTRUCTION

Advised  
Clarified  
Cultivated  
Educated  
Enabled  
Facilitated  
Instructed  
Simulated  
Specified  
Taught  
Trained  
Tutored

### ORGANIZATION

Built  
Cataloged  
Categorized  
Charted  
Compiled  
Formalized  
Organized  
Prepared  
Recorded  
Registered  
Restructured  
Simplified

### ANALYTICAL

Accounted  
Allocated  
Analyzed  
Appraised  
Balanced  
Budgeted  
Calculated  
Forecast  
Optimized  
Maximized  
Reduced  
Recovered

**“One of the lessons that I grew up with was to always stay true to yourself and never let what somebody else says distract you from your goals.”**

Michelle Obama

Your resume should be more than a simple listing of job duties. Additionally, it shouldn't be treated as your complete job history.

Include relevant experiences highlighting your qualifications for the position you are applying for. Use the **CAR Method** to communicate your experiences in a concise and impactful manner.

**CONTEXT.** What was a task you were given?

**ACTION.** How did you complete the task?

**RESULT.** What was the result? Use numbers where possible.

**EXAMPLE:**

**Task:** Rejuvenate the corporate brand by increasing Gen Z customers.

**How was task completed:** Adopted a fresh, authentic voice while creating 3 US trending hashtags on X.

**Result:** Increased followers and Gen Z leads from Twitter by 500% in 2 months.

- Created an X campaign to increase Gen Z followers and leads by 500% in 2 months by initiating 3 US trending hashtags.

**DESIGN**

Adapted  
Assembled  
Built  
Constructed  
Created  
Developed  
Designed  
Initiated  
Interpreted  
Introduced  
Mapped  
Produced

**RESEARCH**

Assessed  
Collected  
Compared  
Diagnosed  
Evaluated  
Examined  
Explored  
Formulated  
Measured  
Studied  
Surveyed  
Tested

**TEAM WORK**

Collaborated  
Coauthored  
Co-presented  
Counseled  
Critiqued  
Influenced  
Interacted  
Partnered  
Participated  
Mediated  
Moderated  
Motivated

**COMMUNICATION**

Addressed  
Advertised  
Articulated  
Communicated  
Composed  
Documented  
Edited  
Lobbied  
Persuaded  
Presented  
Translated  
Wrote

# HELPFUL RESUME

# TEMPLATES

## Engineer Aggie

(575) 555-0000 • [student@nmsu.edu](mailto:student@nmsu.edu) • [linkedin.com/in/student](https://linkedin.com/in/student)

### CAREER OBJECTIVE

Seeking an electrical engineering position. Experienced in AC/DC motors devices, high voltage cabling, and preliminary electrical designs. In-depth knowledge of control and power delivery systems.

### EDUCATION

New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM  
Candidate for Master of Science in Electrical Engineering

New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM  
Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering

GPA: 3.6  
December 2023

GPA: 3.87  
December 2021

### RELATED COURSE WORK

Computer Architecture Design CMOS & VLSI Design  
Hierarchical Digital Design Analog & Mixed Signal IC Design  
Electron Devices Linear Integrated Circuits  
Microwave Devices and Circuits Numerical Methods for Engineers

### TECHNICAL SKILLS

- Scripting/Programming Languages: C, Perl, HTML, Matlab
- Engineering Tools: Xilinx ISE, L Edit
- Tools/Packages: Synopsys VCS, ModelSim, Pspice 9.1, MS Office, AutoCAD
- Platforms/Environments: DOS, Windows (Me, 2k, XP, Vista), MS-DOS, UNIX, Linux

### RELATED PROJECTS

Circuit Data Analysis, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM  
Fall 2021  
• Built different Op-Amp using the TI LM741 chip and compare to ideal result provided in datasheets  
• Designed the unity gain, non-inverting and inverting ideal Op-Amp circuit in LTSpice and ran simulation  
• Constructed the circuit using real components on a breadboard using an oscilloscope to read results  
• Produced in real circuit with percent error of less than 3% when compared to ideal results

Digital to Analog Converter, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM  
Spring 2019  
• Designed, verified and documented Pulse Width Modulated (PWM) Digital to Analog Converter  
• Determined filter type, ordered filter, and implemented filter design using Python and LTSpice  
• Produced Butterworth Filter of a 3rd order with ability to read in as much as 10 bits

### EXPERIENCE

Computer Lab Assistant, ICT, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM  
January 2019 - Present  
• Applied technical knowledge and excellent customer service while assisting student lab users  
• Perform routine and preventive maintenance of computer lab and classroom equipment  
• Troubleshoot malfunctions of hardware and software applications for the purpose of determining appropriate actions to maintain computer lab operations

Electrical Assistant Intern, Northrop Grumman, Linthicum, MD  
May 2021-July 2022  
• Monitored and controlled pressure, temperature and volume of fluids using an automated system.  
• Provided support to the lead Electrical Engineers in tasks such as part and assembly drawing/design or classification, engineering analysis and testing

ACTIONS  
Ambassador, College of Engineering, New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM  
August 2018 - May 2021  
• Conducted campus tours for prospective students and new students  
• Developed relationships within the community to recruit future NMSU Engineers

## Teacher Aggie

123 Education Lane, Las Cruces, NM 88003  
[teacher@nmsu.edu](mailto:teacher@nmsu.edu)  
575-555-5555

### ELEMENTARY EDUCATION TEACHER

Dependable and accomplished new professional with experience in delivering instruction, evaluating performance, developing procedural strategies, implementing plans and managing multiple projects simultaneously. Proven adaptability and able to flourish in high-pressure and fast-paced environments.

### AREAS OF KNOWLEDGE

Planning and Preparation: In-depth Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy | Select Instructional Goals | Design Coherent Instruction | Assess Student Learning | Knowledge of Resources

Instruction: Communicate Clear and Accurate Instruction | Use Questioning and Discussion Techniques | Engage Students in Learning | Provide Feedback to Students | Demonstrate Flexibility and Responsiveness

Classroom Environment: Create an Environment of Respect and Rapport | Establish a Culture of Learning | Manage Classroom Procedures | Manage Student Behavior | Organize Physical Space | Supervise Students

### EDUCATION

Master of Arts in Education, Concentration: Curriculum and Instruction, Expected: December 2023  
New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM, GPA: 3.67

Bachelor of Science in Education, Major: Elementary Education, May 2021  
New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM, GPA: 4.0

### CERTIFICATION & LICENSES

Level Three K-12 Teacher Licensure, NM (Pending)  
Level One K-8 Teacher Licensure, NM

### TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teacher, University Hills Elementary School, Las Cruces, NM  
June 2021 - Present

• Manage Classroom of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students, establishing clear objectives for all lessons, units and projects.  
• Exceed state requirements by achieving advanced test scores through the utilization of technology and volunteers.  
• Selected as "model classroom" by administration for emphasis on dynamic, hands-on learning environment.  
• Design lesson plans specifically for students with special needs to ensure classroom participation, positive self-image.

### Student Teacher

Mesilla Park Elementary School, Las Cruces, NM  
January 2021 – May 2021  
• Directed students through a writing activity, "I Wish I Were", that resulted in a class book.  
• Co-managed classroom of 25 students including 6 with IEPs.  
• Assisted with developing and evaluating tutoring material and services for students.

## COMPUTER-SCIENCE AGGIE

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/in/j.smith](https://linkedin.com/in/in/j.smith) WWW: [smithj.com](http://smithj.com) Github: [github.com/jsmith](https://github.com/jsmith)

### Contact

PO Box 30001  
Las Cruces, NM 88003  
(575) 646-0000  
Jsmith005@nmsu.edu

### Education

B.S. Computer Science  
New Mexico State University  
Las Cruces, NM  
Expected: December 2023  
GPA 4.0

### Achievements

Crimson Scholar (2020-2022)  
1888 Society (2019)  
Dean's List (2020-2021)

### Technical Skills

JavaScript (Angular)  
HTML/CSS  
Python (Django)  
SQL (PostgreSQL, Oracle)  
REST APIs  
Git

### WEB DEVELOPER

Skilled in developing databases, creating user interfaces, writing and testing codes, troubleshooting simple and complex issues. Seeking a role to grow and learn from experienced team members while drawing on project experience already successfully executed.

### RELATED EXPERIENCE

Web Developer Intern - Spectrum Technologies  
January 2021-Present, El Paso, TX  
• Designed and established user-friendly website, including optimized check-out page, resulting in 35% increase in user clicks  
• Manage website design/development projects from concept to completion  
• Collaborate with end client about design and aesthetic changes needed before launch  
• Partner with 3 interns and senior developer to brainstorm and implement ideas and feedback for application development  
• Selected as the top performing intern by the technology team

### PROJECTS

Social Media Scheduler • Creator • May 2021-Present

- Built responsive app using Django and Node that allowed users to schedule social media posts across Instagram and Twitter
  - Develop features using scikit-learn in Python that learned the time of day of maximum engagement with social media posts, which increased overall engagement rate by 23% for users
  - Released an app for free for New Mexico State University students and it quickly grew to over 500 monthly active users
  - Featured across 7 local newspapers, radio stations, and news networks with focus around use of Twitter and Instagram APIs
- Social Media Scheduler • Co-founder • April 2019- April 2021
- Presented a need for a computer science club to ASNMSU student government, obtained club approval, and secured club advisor
  - Co-founded the computer science club at New Mexico State University to encourage exchanges among CS students surrounding new concepts and technical problems
  - Led club members to spend 2 hours a week pair programming with another member to share learnings
  - Partnered with journalism majors to attract 35 active members to the club in first year, using web and TV campaigns

## BUSINESS AGGIE

Phone Number

Email Address

### EDUCATION

Bachelor of Business Administration, Major: Management  
New Mexico State University, Las Cruces, NM

Expected: May 2024  
GPA: 3.87

### HONORS & AWARDS

Dean's List, 2021-Present  
Crimson Scholar, 2022  
Daniels Fund Ethics Case Competition, 1<sup>st</sup> Place, 2022

### RELEVANT SKILLS/COURSEWORK

- Interpersonal and Organizational Behavior
- Human Resource Management
- Team Building and Leadership
- Labor and Employment Law
- Employee Relations
- Training, Compensation, and Safety

### EXPERIENCE

Assistant Store Manager, Hot Topic, Las Cruces, NM

Sept. 2019-Present

- Train and supervise over 5 staff members per work shift
- Evaluate competition by researching competing stores and gathering information such as style, quality, and prices of competitive merchandise
- Promote sales by demonstrating merchandise and products to customers
- Assist customers by providing information, answering questions, obtaining merchandise requested, completing payment transactions and preparing merchandise for delivery
- Maintain and order new inventory by checking inventory levels on merchandise

### INTERNSHIP

Executive Team Leader Intern, Target, Phoenix, AZ

May 2022-Aug. 2022

- Assisted in the administration of new hires, terminations, compensation, performance management and benefits programs
- Ensured availability of merchandise and services by approving contracts and maintaining inventories
- Formulated pricing policies by reviewing merchandising activities; determining additional needed sales promotion; authorizing clearance sales and studying trends
- Worked closely with regional managers to coordinate and determine the most cost-effective marketing strategies
- Ensured great service by interacting with guests and team members

### PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Delta Sigma Pi, 2020-Present
- Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), 2022

### VOLUNTEER WORK

- Keep State Great, October 2021; October 2022
- Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA), April 2021

# YOUR SKILLS + THEIR NEEDS = CONNECTION

## RESUME CHECKLIST: FORMATTING & APPEARANCE

- Stick to one page. Avoid using templates
- Margins between .7 & 1"
- Font Size
  - Body: 10.5-12
  - Headers: 12-14
  - Name: 14-16
- Fonts: sans-serif are often preferred
  - Sans Serif: Calibri, Arial, Helvetica, Avenir, Gotham
  - Serif: Garamond, Georgia
- Differentiate sections with Headings and organize in order of relevance
- Use adequate white space to avoid over crowding
- Consistency with spacing, alignment, and punctuation.
- Emphasize titles/organizations with bold or italics. Avoid more than 2 types of emphasis
- Keep bullet points to one line or nearly complete second line
- Organize degrees and experiences in reverse chronological order
- Save as PDF to preserve formatting

## CONTENT, PUNCTUATION, & GRAMMAR

- Spell check
- Writing is clear, concise, and tailored to keywords in job descriptions
- Remove personal pronouns I & my
- Remove references; create a separate Reference List
- Avoid passive phrases: "worked with" or "responsible for"
- Avoid repetition; offer something new when describing similar experiences
- Unless necessary, avoid text boxes, shading, photos, and graphs

## CONTACT INFORMATION

- Preferred professional name
- Phone Number
- Professional email address
- Street Address is optional (remove on resumes posted publicly)
- City, State is optional
- LinkedIn URL if you're active
- Link to your website/portfolio when necessary

## EDUCATION

- Formal name of the Institution
- City, State
- Full Degree name
- Major/minor
- Graduation month/year
- Optional:
  - Courses that focus on your knowledge and skills
  - Projects & Research
  - Thesis/Dissertation Titles
  - GPA: 3.0+
  - Affiliations, trainings, certifications
  - Conferences
- Remove High School after 1st year

## EXPERIENCE

- Employer name/organization and your Title & City, State
- Dates of employment: month & year
- Create strong bullet points using the CAR approach
- Where possible, measure achievements with numbers, percentages, and results
- Ensure tenses reflect experiences-current in present / previous in past
- Strongest bullet points should be first
- 3-5 bullet points for each experience

OPTIONAL ADDITIONS ON NEXT PAGE

# CATEGORIES AND HEADERS: CUSTOMIZING YOUR

*Not all resumes are created equally. Everyone has different backgrounds, experiences, interests, and goals. Additionally, each field has its own set of priorities.*

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>JOB TARGET.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Type of position, interest or category of employment desired</li><li>• Serves as a guide for the resume to focus experiences on the targeted goal</li></ul>   | <b>VALUE STATEMENT.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• List of your exceptional qualifications for the job</li><li>• Express how you add value to the bottom line of the job target</li><li>• Your Personal Brand + Job Target + Exceptional Skills + Benefit to Employer</li></ul> | <b>SKILLS.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Categorize relevant skills (e.g., Computer, Lab, Code)</li><li>• List only the skills you can perform with little to no supervision</li><li>• State your proficiency with languages and programs (fluent, advanced, etc.)</li></ul> |
| <b>RELEVANT COURSES/PROJECTS.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• List course titles (not numbers) of courses in order of relevance. If a Lab, include (Lab) after title</li><li>• May be listed separately or as a subsection under EDUCATION</li></ul> | <b>HONORS &amp; AWARDS.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students and recent grads can include academic honors, awards, and scholarships</li><li>• May be listed separately or as a subsection under EDUCATION</li><li>• Include date or # of semesters received</li></ul>        | <b>CREATE YOUR OWN TARGETED HEADING.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Instead of a general EXPERIENCE section, consider creating headings to highlight targeted competencies: Management, Writing, Marketing, Engineering, Lab, etc.</li></ul>                                  |
| <b>RESEARCH.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• List the research project, department/lab/organization name, dates, and description of the project, methods, and findings</li><li>• Use the same format as the EXPERIENCE section</li></ul>             | <b>PUBLICATIONS.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cite publications using the correct format for your discipline (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.)</li><li>• Bold your name</li><li>• Identify if still in submitted status</li><li>• Indicate if peer-reviewed</li></ul>                 | <b>LEADERSHIP.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• List office(s) held, organization, dates, and a brief description of accomplishments</li><li>• Use the same format as EXPERIENCE</li></ul>  |
| <b>ACTIVITIES/VOLUNTEER.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• List of membership in any clubs, sports, or community service experiences</li><li>• May not include a description, depending upon the depth of involvement</li></ul>                        | <b>INTERESTS.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• List outside hobbies, interests, and talents</li><li>• Only include those that are unique, specific, and/or require skill/ dedication.</li></ul>   | <b>CERTIFICATIONS/LICENSES.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• List if applicable to the position or field</li></ul>  |

## Developing a Curriculum Vitae (CV)

A **Curriculum Vitae (CV)** is a comprehensive document that details your **academic background, research, teaching, publications, presentations, and professional experiences**. While a resume is typically one to two pages and tailored for specific job applications, a CV is more detailed and commonly used when applying to **graduate school, academic positions, research roles, or fellowships**.

Your CV tells the story of your academic and professional journey. It highlights not just what you've done, but how your experiences demonstrate your growth, expertise, and readiness for advanced study or professional work.

# RESUME OR CV

## POTENTIAL CV CATEGORIES.

- Academic Preparation
- Academic Interests
- Academic Awards
- Activities & Distinctions
- Affiliations
- Areas of Experience
- Areas of Knowledge
- Committee Leadership
- Conferences Attended
- Dissertation & Thesis
- Titles
- Educational Highlights
- Fellowships
- Graduate Fieldwork
- Honors & Distinctions
- Internships
- Languages
- Licensure
- Presentations
- Professional Certifications
- Professional Interests
- Professional Memberships
- Proficiencies
- Programs & Workshops
- Publications
- Related Experience
- Research
- Research Assistantships
- Scholarships
- Special Honors
- Special Training
- Study Abroad
- Teaching Assistantships
- Teaching Experience

## Key Sections to Include

Although the format may vary by field, most CV's include the following sections:

### 1. Contact Information

- Name, phone number, professional email, LinkedIn profile, and address (optional)

### 2. Education

- List degrees in reverse chronological order (Most recent first).
- Including institution, location, degree, major, and graduation date (or expected date).

### 3. Research Experience

- Describe research projects, lab work, or Scholarly studies.
- Include titles, supervisors, and a brief Description of methods or findings.

### 4. Teaching or Academic Experience

- List roles such as teaching assistant, tutor, or workshop leader.
- Note courses taught and relevance responsibilities.

### 5. Publications and Presentations

- Include research papers, articles, conference Posters, or talks using proper citation format.

### 6. Professional Experience

- Summarize relevant work experience, internships, or assistantships emphasizing skills and Achievements

### 7. Honors and Awards

- Include scholarships, fellowship, or academic Recognitions.

### 8. Professional Memberships or Affiliations

- Note organizations, societies, or associations you belong to.

### 9. Skills and Certifications

- Include technical, research, or language skills, as well as certifications relevant to your field.

### 10. Community or Campus Involvement

- Highlight leadership, volunteer experience, and Service activities.

### Tips for Writing an Effective CV

- Keep it organized: Use clear section headings, consistent formatting, and bullet points
- Be complete but concise: Include all relevant information, but avoid unnecessary detail.
- Use action verbs: Start bullet points with strong verbs like developed, analyzed, presented, collaborated, etc.
- Tailor your CV: Adjust the emphasis depending on whether you're applying to graduate programs, research roles, or teaching positions.
- Include dates: Always provide timelines for education and experience.
- Update regularly: Add new experiences and achievements as they occur.
- Proofread carefully: Spelling or formatting errors can distract from your accomplishments.

A strong CV grows with you. Begin developing it early - by your junior year - and update it often. Use it as both a record of your experiences and roadmap for identifying gaps or goals in your academic and professional journey.

# COMPOSING YOUR COVER LETTERS

## Cover letters:

### Your Personalized Introduction

What is a Cover Letter?

A cover letter is your opportunity to introduce yourself to an employer and highlight why you are a strong fit for a specific position. It complements your resume by showing your personality, enthusiasm, and communication skills. While your resume lists your qualifications, your cover letter connects the dots between your experience and the needs of the employer.

Think of your cover letter as your personal sales pitch. It should demonstrate:

- Your understanding of the organization and role
- How your experiences align with the position requirements
- Why you are motivated to contribute to their mission or team

**Each cover letter should be tailored to the specific job or internship - avoid using the same letter for every opportunity.**

### Things to Remember

When writing your cover letter, keep these key points in mind:

- **Address it to a specific person** when possible. Use professional titles (e.g., Dear Ms. Lopez) If unsure, "Dear Hiring Committee" is acceptable.
  - **Keep it to one page** - concise, focused, and free of spelling or grammatical errors.
  - **Show enthusiasm and professionalism.** Your tone should reflect genuine interest while remaining polished.
  - **Use the same header and style** as your resume for a consistent, branded look.
  - **Use clear structure:**
1. **Introduction:** State the position, how you learned about it, and compelling reason for your interest.
  2. **Body:** Highlight relevant skills, experiences, and achievements that match the job description. Provide examples that show results or impact.
  3. **Closing:** Reiterate your enthusiasm and request an opportunity to discuss your application further
- Pro tip:** Read your letter out loud before sending - it should sound natural and confident.

### Making Connections Through Networking

A great cover letter often grows from strong professional connections. Networking can help you understand what employers value and tailor your message more effectively.

- Start with people you know - professors, supervisors, mentors, classmates, or alumni
- Attend career fairs, workshops, and employer information sessions hosted by the Aggie Career Studio.
- Use LinkedIn and NMSU Alumni platforms to reach out to professionals in your field.
- When you connect, ask questions about their career paths, company culture, and hiring process - not just about open positions.
- Reference your conversation or shared experience in your cover letter to show genuine engagement. For Example:

"After speaking with NMSU alumni Maria Torres at the Career Connections Fair, I was inspired by the innovative projects your team leads in renewable energy."

Networking not only strengthens your cover letters but also builds relationships that can open doors to future opportunities



**“Life is what we make it, always has been, always will be.”**

GRANDMA MOSES

Your Present Address  
City, State, ZIP Code

Date

Person's Name  
Title  
Company  
Street Address  
City, State, ZIP Code

Dear [NAME]:

**First Section:** State the reason for the letter, name the specific position or type of work for which you are applying, and if relevant, indicate from which resource (Handshake, newspaper, job announcement) you learned of the opening. If an employee of the company has suggested you apply, you should give the name, title, and department where that person is employed. Briefly describe why this particular company interests you, and what relevant knowledge, skills or abilities you bring to the position.

**Second Section:** This is the main section of your letter and should be utilized to draw parallels between your experience, skills and knowledge, and the needs of the employer. Indicate why you are interested in the position, the company, its products or services, and, above all, what you can offer the employer. If you are a recent graduate, explain how your academic background makes you a qualified candidate for the position. If you have some practical work experience, point out your specific achievements or unique qualifications.

Use your knowledge of the company to dig deeper into what sort of person they are looking for; annual and fiscal reports can provide a hint about the employer's goals and needs. **If every other sentence begins with “I” or “My,” this is an indication that you need to refocus on the goals of the employer.**

**Final Section:** Indicate your desire for a personal interview and your flexibility as to the time and place. Repeat your phone number in the letter and offer any assistance to facilitate a timely response. Finally, close your letter with a statement or question to encourage a response. For example, state that you will be in the city where the company is located on a certain date and that you would like to set up an interview. You could also ask if the company will be recruiting in your area, or if additional information or references are needed.

Sincerely,

[Your Signature]

Type your name

# BEST PRACTICES FOR LINKEDIN

## Building Your Professional Brand on Linked in

Think of LinkedIn as your digital first impression - It's where you can show the world who you are, what you're learning, and where your headed next. Whether you're exploring career options, looking for internships, or connecting with alumni, your LinkedIn profile helps you tell your story in a Professional way. This section will walk you through how to create a strong profile, build connections, and use LinkedIn to discover opportunities that fit your goals and interests.

### HEADLINE

- Keep it concise
- Include key terms that make it easy for others to define the industry you are interested in
- Similar to summary statements on a resume just shorter

### SUMMARY

- Share your present and future career ambitions. Evaluate what projects, research, experience, and relevant involvement you want to include to help viewers learn more about you
- Use a first person narrative to tell your professional story

### PHOTO

- Adding a professional headshot can result in 7 times more profile views
- Dress like you would for a job interview
- Photos can show your personality. Know your industry.
- Use the professional headshot photo booth in Corbett Center

### EDUCATION

- This section is essential for gaining access to alumni groups on LinkedIn
- Use the Descriptions and Activities sections to share more about your involvement on campus and academic projects

### EXPERIENCE

- Share your responsibilities, contributions and accomplishments.
- Upload media or link to sites to support your credibility.
- Copy bullets from Word or, on PC, hold alt key -- type 0149 on numpad -- release alt

### SKILLS & OTHER

- Utilize the full range of headings available on LinkedIn to tell your professional story
- Include at least 10 Skills; more is better

**“Things do  
not change;  
we change.”**

HENRY DAVID  
THOREAU

## What You Can Do on LinkedIn to Boost Your Career Development

1. Connect with people
  - > Follow classmates, professors, alumni, and professionals in your Field.
  - > Personalize connection requests with short message (“Hi, I’m also an NMSU student interested in Environmental science - would love to connect!”).
2. Follow Companies and Career Interests
  - > Stay updated on company news, internships, and job openings.
  - > Use the “Follow Feature for industries and Organizations that interest you.
3. Engage with Your Network
  - > Like, Comment on, or share posts about topics related your field.
  - > Post about your own accomplishments, such as Completing a project or attending an event.
4. Use LinkedIn Learning
  - > Access free online courses (many universities, including NMSU, provide access).
  - > Learn skills in areas like communication, Excel, public Speaking, or coding.
5. Research Career Paths
  - > Explore the profiles of alumni who work in roles or Companies that interest you.
  - > See what experiences and skills helped them get there.
6. Search and Apply for Jobs or Internships
  - > Use LinkedIn’s Job search filters to find opportunities that Match your goals.
  - > Save Searches and set alerts so you’re the first to know When new positions are posted.
7. Join Professional and Student Groups
  - > Participate in groups related to your major or industry.
  - > Network, ask questions, and learn from others’ Experiences.
8. Showcase Your Work
  - > Add samples of class projects, presentations, or portfolios
  - > Use Multimedia (photos, documents, or links) to make Your profile stand out.



### NEED A NEW PROFILE PICTURE?

Aggie Career Studio offers a state of the art **Professional** headshot photo booth located at Corbett Center Student Union, across from Pete’s Place Computer lab

Look for **GETTING LINKEDIN Workshops** on Handshake!

# PREPARING FOR YOUR INTERVIEWS

## CONGRATULATIONS!

You have been invited to an interview.

Making it to this phase means that you have the core competencies desired by the employer. It is now time to make a good first impression.

There are several **INTERVIEW FORMATS** including the following:

**On-campus Recruitment:** Recruiters frequently visit campus, but most notably during career fairs

**Screening:** Before the official interview, an employer may screen you with pre-qualifying questions

**Phone Interview:** Typically a screening medium

**Virtual Interview:** Usually for screening purposes, but also useful when relocating

**One-on-one:** one interviewer

**Panel:** 2 or more interviewers

**Group:** You are interviewed alongside other candidates

**Case:** You are given a complex problem and asked to formulate a solution under tight time constraints

**Presentation:** Evaluation of your public speaking & communication skills

**Day/Multi-Day Interviews:** Multiple interview segments with different interviewers and varying formats

**Dining:** If at any point in the pre-hire phase you are invited out for a meal, consider it part of the interview experience.

## Preparing for a Behavioral Interview

Behavioral interviews focus on how you've handled situations in the past to show how you might perform in the future. To prepare, think of specific examples from your experiences—such as class projects, internships, part-time jobs, or student organizations—that demonstrate your skills and problem-solving abilities. Use the **STAR method** (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to structure your answers and clearly explain what you did and what you learned. Practice saying your responses out loud, and be ready to share stories that highlight teamwork, communication, leadership, and adaptability.

### Example (STAR Method):

**Situation:** “In my marketing class, our team had to create a campaign for a local business.”

**Task:** “As the team lead, I was responsible for organizing meetings and keeping us on track.”

**Action:** “I set clear deadlines, divided tasks based on strengths, and checked in regularly to make sure everyone had support.”

**Result:** “We delivered the project early, and the business ended up using parts of our campaign on their social media, which increased engagement by 20%.”

## COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. What is your understanding of the position and why are you interested in it?
3. How have your past experiences prepared you for this position?
4. How does this position align with your long-term and short-term goals?
5. In what significant ways can you contribute to our organization?
6. What are your greatest strengths and weaknesses?
7. Tell us about a time when...
8. Describe an example when you showed...
9. Tell us about one of your greatest accomplishments.
10. What would you do if your colleagues were not doing their share of the work?
11. Describe your decision making process.
12. How do you feel about working in an unstructured environment?
13. Why should we hire you instead of another candidate?
14. Do you have anything else you would like us to know about you?
15. Do you have any questions for us?



**Big Interview** is an online platform that helps students build confidence and master their interviewing skills through guided lessons and realistic practice tools. It offers step-by-step interview training, a library of common and industry-specific questions, and the ability to record and review practice responses to improve performance.



# Interview the Employer - Asking the Right Questions

At the end of an interview, you'll often be asked, "Do you have any questions for us?" - and your answer should always be yes! Asking thoughtful questions shows you're genuinely interested in the position and the organization. It's also your chance to learn more about the company culture, expectations, and growth opportunities to see if it's the right fit for you. Preparing a few well-crafted questions help you stand out as engaged, curious, and career-ready.

## Here are some great questions to ask employers:

- What qualities or skills make someone successful in this order?
- How would you describe the team I'd be working with?
- What are some of the challenges or goals your team is currently focused on?
- How does this position contribute to the organization's mission or goals?
- What opportunities are there for growth of professional development?
- How do you support new employees as they get started?
- What do you enjoy most about working here?
- What are the next steps in the hiring process?

## Know Your Rights in an Interview

Not every question asked during an interview is appropriate-or legal. Employers should focus on your skills and ability to perform the job, not on your personal life or background. Here's a quick guide to help you recognize what's okay to ask, what's not, and how to respond professionally if needed.

### Marital status

- Illegal: "Are you married?" "Do you have a spouse or partner?"
- Legal: Employers may only ask about availability or work schedule.

### Parental Status

- Illegal: "Do you have children?" "Do you plan to start a family?"
- Legal: "Are you able to meet the required work hours or travel expectations?"

### Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity

- Illegal: "Are you gay/straight?" "What pronouns do you use at home?"
- Legal: None related to sexual orientation or gender identity.

### Age

- Illegal: "How old are you?" "When did you Graduate?"
- Legal: "Are you at least 18 years old" (if required for employment)

### Citizenship

- Illegal: "Are you a U.S. citizen?"
- Legal: "Are you legally authorized to work in the United States?"

## Personal/Background

- Illegal: "Where are you from originally?" "What religion do you practice?"
- Legal: "Are you legally authorized to work in the U.S." Can you relocate if needed?"

## Military Service

- Illegal: "Were you honorably discharged?" "Do you have PTSD"
- Legal: "Have you gained skills through your military experience relevant to this position?"

## Disabilities

- Illegal: "Do you have a disability?" "How often do you need medical leave?"
- Legal: "Can you perform the essential job duties with or without reasonable accommodation?"

## Criminal Record

- Illegal: "Have you ever been arrested?"
- Legal: Have you been convicted of a crime relevant to this position? (If allowed by state law)

## Pro Tip:

If you're asked an inappropriate question, stay calm and professional. You can politely redirect the conversation back to your qualifications.

# THANK YOU LETTERS:

After an interview, it is crucial that you send a thank you letter to your interviewer(s). Nearly a third of hiring managers admit to thinking less of candidates who don't.

## WHAT DO I SAY?

There's a lot to choose from!

- If you took notes during the interview, address any topics that needed further attention.
- As you left, did you remember another experience that would impress them?
- Do you have any additional questions?
- Provide any samples of your work that may have come up during the interview.
- And, thank them for sharing their time with you.

Most importantly, **send your thank you note quickly**; same day, same hour is optimal.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## WHAT DOES “DRESS FOR SUCCESS” MEAN TO YOU?

Preparing for an interview doesn't just mean practicing interview questions or researching the company. You have to look the part as well. Your appearance is what your interviewer will notice first and it can go a long way in showing them you're ambitious, professional, and a great fit for the company.

What about tattoos or piercings?

**Just be authentically you, but with a bit of polish.**

People have tattoos, piercings, and various hair types.

It is recommended that you research company dress standards to understand what is acceptable

Do not change yourself beyond recognition unless you plan on maintaining the “new you” indefinitely.

### “What should I wear?”

Consider the culture of the place you're applying to before you pick out your ensemble.

#### BUSINESS CLASSIC:

Suit in dark gray or navy, carrying a briefcase. Dress shoes/basic black pumps. Simple, elegant accessories.

#### BUSINESS CASUAL:

Think what you'd normally wear to work but dressed up a bit. Exchange the suit jacket for a cardigan or blazer.

#### START-UP STYLE:

If normal office wear is jeans and a T-shirt, a suit would be overdressed and a signal that you might not fit in with the company culture. Think dressy casual: dark jeans, a casual dress, or a nice sweater.

#### FASHIONISTA:

Looking for a job in fashion? Pair a traditional business classic piece with items that are fun and trendy.

**When in doubt, default to Business Classic.**

## NEED MORE INSPIRATION TO DRESS FOR SUCCESS?

Join us for the annual **Career Wear Couture Showcase**, held each September ahead of the Career Expo Fair. This fun and informative event highlights a range of professional attire options—**all modeled by fellow Aggies**.

Whether you'd like to **volunteer as a model** or simply enjoy the show, you'll walk away with practical ideas for dressing professionally across different industries and settings.

The Career Wear Couture Showcase proudly partners with the **NMSU Career Closet**, which provides **FREE gently used professional clothing** to NMSU students.

Corbett Center Student Union 2nd floor  
Mon-Fri • 8am to 5pm  
For more information,  
email [salinasnm@nmsu.edu](mailto:salinasnm@nmsu.edu)



Need to give your professional wardrobe a pick-me-up? Look for the **JCPenney SUIT-UP Event** in Handshake.

# Aggie Manners Etiquette Dinner: Dine, Network, and Shine

The **Etiquette Dinner** is a signature networking event designed to help you build confidence in professional dining and conversation settings. Hosted by the Aggie Career Studio, this interactive experience combines a formal meal with guided instruction on dining etiquette, conversation tips, and professional behavior. You'll learn how to make a great impression while connecting with employers, alumni, and community leaders in a relaxed, yet professional environment.

By the end of the evening, you'll walk away with new connections, refined dining skills, and the confidence to navigate any networking or interview dinner with ease.



## ATTEND A CAREER DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP (IN-PERSON OR VIRTUAL)

- Career Fair Preparation
- Internship Search Strategies
- Resume Building 101
- Interview Tips
- LinkedIn Basics
- Job Search Strategies
- Resume and Cover Letter
- Emotional Intelligence
- Graduate School or Workforce?
- Professional and Business etiquette

## Develop Your Career Readiness with the Aggie Career Studio

No matter where you are in your career journey, the **Aggie Career Studio** is here to help you grow with confidence. Whether you want to learn how to network, polish your resume, master interview skills, or decide between graduate school and entering the workforce- we have a workshop designed just for you. Join us to gain practical tools, expert guidance, and the confidence to take your next step toward success

# ACCEPT OR DECLINE:

# EVALUATING THE

## Congratulations on receiving an offer!

Your first inclination might be to immediately accept, but resist that urge. Don't let the length of the job search prompt you to make a hurried decision. Reflection is key for determining if the position is the best fit for you.

Take time to evaluate the offer. Consider factors beyond the salary.

## Negotiating a Job Offer

Landing a job offer is exciting - it's a reflection of your skills, effort, and readiness to begin your Professional journey. But before you say "yes," take time to evaluate and negotiate. Negotiating isn't about confrontation - it's about ensuring your compensation, benefits, and responsibilities match your value and goals

### 1. Understanding the Full Offer

Before entering any negotiation, carefully review the entire offer package. Look Beyond salary to understand all components:

- **Base Salary:** The fixed annual or hourly pay before bonuses or incentives.
- **Benefits:** Health, dental, and vision insurance, retirement plans, tuition reimbursement, and wellness programs.
- **Paid Time Off (PTO):** Vacation, sick leave, and holidays.
- **Professional Development:** Opportunities for conferences, certifications, or continued education.
- **Other Perks:** Relocation assistance, flexible or hybrid work schedules, bonuses, or stock options.

Tip: Sometimes benefits and growth can outweigh a slightly higher salary elsewhere.

### 2. Research and Know Your Value

Negotiation starts with preparation. Research typical salary ranges for your position, industry, And location using trusted resources:

- Bureau of Labor Statistics (bls.gov)
- Glassdoor or Salary.com
- LinkedIn Salary Insights
- NMSU Career Studio resources

Use this information to develop a **data-informed case** for your request.

# OFFER

**“Whatever you decide to do, make sure it makes you happy.”**

Paulo Coelho

## 3. Consider the Whole Picture

Think beyond pay and focus on what matters most to you

- Work-life balance
- Growth and mentor ship
- Job stability and advancement potential
- Location and cost of living

Understanding your priorities will help guide your negotiation decisions.

## 4. Time Your Negotiation Strategically

- **Wait for a written offer** before negotiating.
- **Express excitement first** - enthusiasm builds good will
- **Ask for time** to review details (1-3 business days is typical).

Example:

“I’m really excited about this opportunity with [Company Name]. May I have a couple of days to review the details and get back to you?”

## 5. Communicate Professionally and Positively

Approach the discussion with gratitude and collaboration. Be clear, confident, and courteous. For example: “I’m thrilled about the possibility of joining your team. Based on my research and experience in [specific area], I was hoping we could discuss a salary closer to [desired range].”

If salary isn’t flexible, consider negotiating other elements like a **signing bonus, professional development Funding, or additional vacation days.**

## 6. Prepare for Any Outcome

Be ready for three possible responses:

- **They agree:** Express appreciation and request an updated offer in writing.
- **They decline:** Stay professional - thank them for considering, and determine if you’ll accept or decline
- **They counter:** Review and decide if the new offer aligns with your goals

Remember: Maintaining a positive impression is key, even if you decide not to accept.

## 7. Know When to Accept (or Walk Away)

When you reach an agreement that meets your needs, accept with enthusiasm and confirm in writing. If it’s not the right fit, it’s okay to politely decline - your professionalism will be remembered.

## 8. Practice Makes Perfect

Negotiating can feel uncomfortable at first. The best way to gain confidence is to **practice**. The **Aggie Career Studio** offers coaching sessions and mock negotiations to help you prepare and feel confident entering these conversations.

# Sample Negotiation Conversations

## Expressing Enthusiasm and Asking for Time

“Thank you so much for the offer - I’m very excited about the opportunity to join your team and contribute to [Company name]. May I take a couple of days to review the details and get back to you?”

## Opening the Negotiation

“I’m really excited about the offer and opportunity to join your organization. Based on my research and the market rates for similar positions in this region, I was hoping we could discuss a starting salary closer to \$\_\_\_\_.”

## Countering an Offer with Research

“Thank you again for the offer. After reviewing the position’s responsibilities and researching comparable roles, I’ve found that the market range for this type of position typically falls between \$X and \$Y. Given my internship experience with [specific skills or tools], would there be flexibility to bring the offer closer to that range?”

## Negotiating When Salary is Fixed

“I understand that the starting salary is set. Would there be any flexibility in other areas such as relocation assistance, professional development funding, or additional paid time off?”

## Accepting The Offer After Negotiating

“Thank you so much for working with me on this offer. I’m thrilled to accept the position and look forward to joining the team on [start date]. I really appreciate your consideration and flexibility.”

## Tips for Speaking with Confidence

- **Practice out** loud before your conversation.
- **Smile and use a positive tone** - you’re collaborating, not competing
- **Use facts, not feelings:** say “Based on market data...” Instead of “I feel...”
- **Stay flexible and professional**, even if the answer is no.

## Key Takeaways

- Negotiation is a normal and expected part of the hiring process
- Do your research and come prepared
- Be confident, respectful, and solution- focused.
- Evaluate the entire offer, not just salary.
- Seek support from mentors, career coaches, or the Aggie Career Studio



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# YOU GOT THE JOB!

# ...NOW WHAT?

**GO AGGIES!**

Getting the job is only a small part of your professional journey. Continue to look for training and learning opportunities in your industry. The skills you utilized along the way in your job search will continue to serve you long after.

But for now, **celebrate your win!** You deserve it.

**GRADUATES:** Don't forget to report your employment status. Complete the FIRST DESTINATION SURVEY. Look for it in your email.

## **JOB FIT.**

- Does the role fit with your goals?
- Do you have a firm understanding what your day-to-day duties will be?
- Will you like the work?
- What are your responsibilities?
- Will your work be routine or varied?
- Will you work in a team or on your own?
- What level of stress can you expect with the position?

## **LOCATION.**

- Are you concerned with factors such as the weather, cost of living, or city vs. rural life?
- Will you need to relocate? If so, does the company provide relocation assistance?
- Will you have a long commute?
- Are you able to take public transit or ride a bike?
- Do you have friends or family in the area?

## **COMPANY CULTURE.**

- Can you envision yourself working within the company?
- Do your values align?
- Does the workspace match your needs? (Open concept, cubicle clusters, outdoors, etc.)
- Is there a dress code?
- Is overtime expected?
- Is creativity valued or is it more important to follow protocol?
- Do you like the people who work there?

## **ADVANCEMENT.**

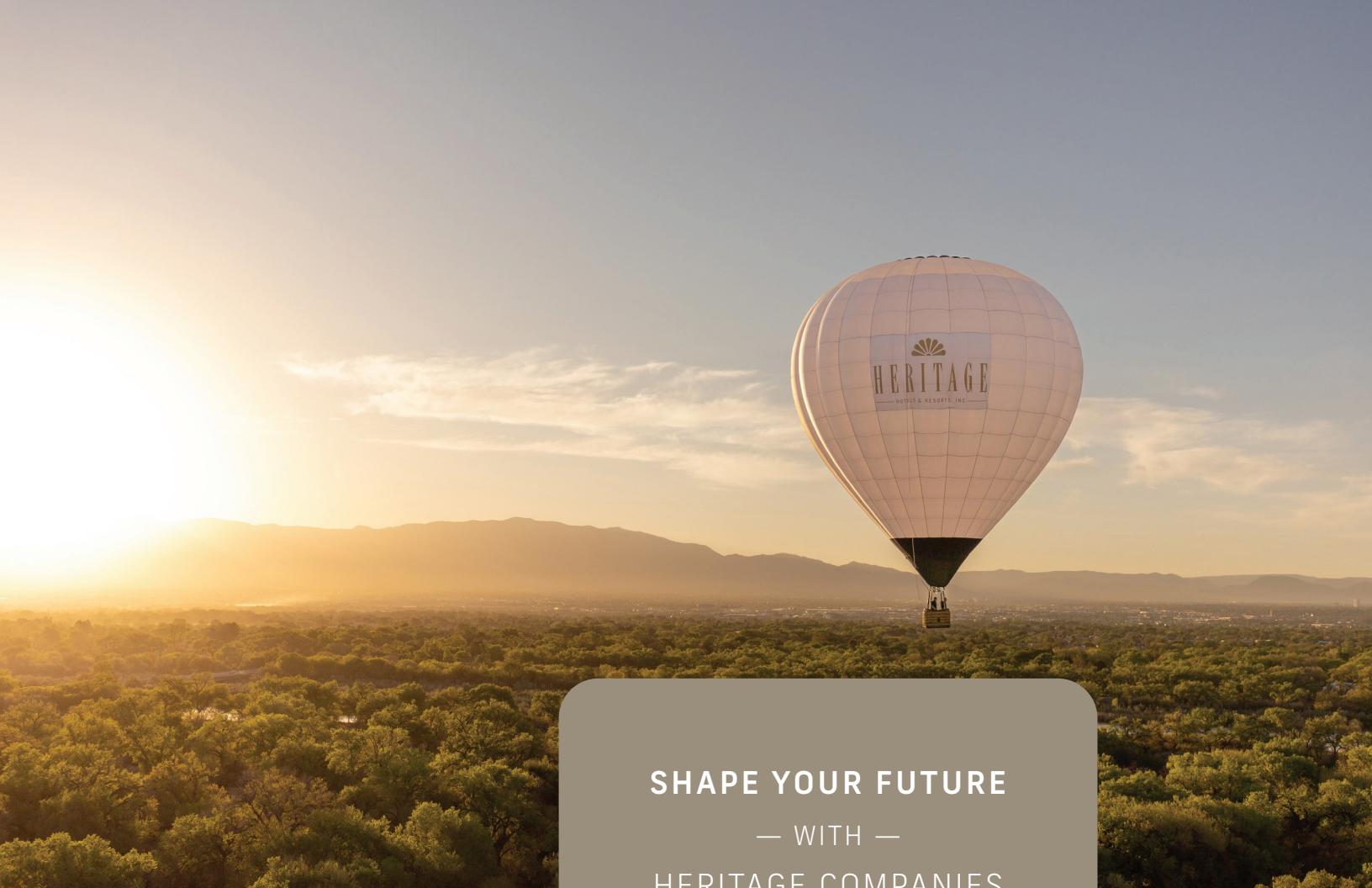
- Will the position challenge you and give you room to grow?
- Will you gain experiences to further your career?
- Is continuing education or professional training provided?
- Is the company successful/profitable?

## **BENEFITS.**

- What benefits does the company provide?
- How much paid vacation and sick leave will you earn annually?
- What are the health insurance benefits?
- Do they offer tuition reimbursement? Some industries fall under Federal Loan Forgiveness programs.
- Do they offer childcare or wellness benefits?
- What are the retirement benefits?

## **SALARY/COMPENSATION.**

- Is the offer competitive for the industry, job level, and location? Do you know where to look to see? (LinkedIn, Glassdoor)
- Will the salary cover your cost of living?
- Will you work on commission or billable hours?
- Do they provide bonuses?
- What are the company's policies on raises?



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# CONTINUING EDUCATION: GRADUATE SCHOOL

## Considering Graduate or Professional School

Deciding whether to attend graduate or professional school is a big step in your career journey. For some students, an advanced degree is essential for entering their chosen field. For others, gaining work experience first may be the better path. Taking time to explore your options will help you make a confident, informed decision.

## The Pros of Graduate or Professional School

- Specialized Knowledge:** Deepen your understanding and expertise in a specific area.
- Career Advancement:** Many professional roles (like law, medicine, counseling, and research) require advanced degrees.
- Increased Earning Potential:** Some careers offer higher salaries for those with graduate credentials.
- Networking Opportunities:** Connect with professors, researchers, and peers who share your professional interests

## The Cons to Consider

- Cost:** Tuition and living expenses can add up quickly
- Time Commitment:** Most Programs take 2-7 years, depending on the field
- Opportunity Cost:** You may delay earning a full-time salary or work experience.
- Stress and workload:** Graduate programs often require rigorous academic and research demands.
- Unclear Return on Investment:** Not all advanced degrees lead to significantly higher pay or job opportunities.

## Should you Continue School or Work First

Ask yourself these key questions:

- Does my chosen career require an advanced degree for entry or advancement?
- Would work experience strengthen my future grad school application?
- Am I academically, financially, and emotionally ready to commit to more years of study?
- Do I have a clear goals for what i want to achieve with this degree?

**Tip:** Talking with faculty, career advisor, and alumni in your field can help you determine whether graduate school is the right next step or if gaining professional experience first might be more beneficial.

## Financing Graduate School

Graduate education can be expensive, but there are several ways to manage cost:

- Assistantships: Many universities offer graduate assistantships or teaching positions that provide tuition waivers and stipends.
- Scholarships and Fellowships: Explore funding from universities, foundations, and professional organizations.
- Employers Tuition Assistance: Some companies help pay for advanced education if it's related to your work.
- Federal and Private loans: Apply for financial aid through FAFSA and research loan options carefully.
- Budget Wisely: Consider living expenses, relocation costs, and part-time work opportunities.

## How to Prepare Junior Year

- Begin exploring programs related to your career goals.
- Research admission requirements (GPA, GRE/GMAT/LSAT/ MCAT, prerequisites).
- Talk with professors, mentors, and career advisors about your interests.
- Get involved in research, internship roles to strengthen your resume.



Aggie Career Studio

## Senior Year:

- Finalize your list of schools and note application deadlines.
- Request recommendation letters early from professors or supervisors who know you well.
- Prepare for and complete entrance exams.
- Write and revise your personal statement or statement of purpose.
- Attend graduate school information sessions or virtual fairs.
- Submit applications and follow up on financial aid opportunities.

Graduate or professional school is a major investment of time, energy, and resources. Take the time to evaluate your goals, explore your options, and seek guidance from trusted mentors. Whether you choose to continue your education right away or gain work experience first, the key is to make an intentional choice that supports your long-term career success.

## Writing a Strong Personal Statement

Your personal statement is your opportunity to tell your story - beyond grades and test scores. It helps graduate or professional school committees understand who you are, why you're pursuing this path, and what makes you a strong fit for their program. A thoughtful personal statement highlights your motivation, experiences, and future goals while reflecting your authentic voice and professionalism.

## Questions to Consider When Drafting Your Personal Statement

Use these guiding questions to help you brainstorm and organize your ideas:

- What experiences inspired your interest in this field?
- How have your academic, research, or work experiences prepared you for graduate study?
- What strengths, skills, or perspectives will you bring to the program?
- Why are you drawn to this specific program or institution?
- What are your short-term and long-term career goals?
- Have you faced any challenges or obstacles that shaped your personal or academic growth?
- How does this degree align with your passions and values

## Tips for a Strong Personal Statement

- Start Early: Give yourself plenty of time to reflect, and revise.
- Be Authentic: Use your own voice - committees want to get to know you.
- Show, Don't Just Tell: Use examples or stories that demonstrate your motivation and achievements.
- Be Focused and Specific: Tailor your statement to each program and explain why it's a good fit.
- Stay Positive and Professional: Focus on growth and resilience rather than setbacks.
- Seek Feedback: Ask professors, mentors, or the Aggie Career Studio to review your draft.
- Proofread Carefully: Grammar and clarity matter - read it aloud or have someone else check it for errors.

A compelling personal statement connects your past experiences with your future goals. It should leave the reader confident that you are not only prepared for graduate study but also passionate about contributing to your field.



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**nmsu.joinhandshake.com**



# Aggie Career STUDI

A line drawing of a clapperboard, tilted at an angle. It has a black and white striped top bar and a white bottom section with some text and a small circular logo, which appears to be a camera lens.



# YOU 1ST



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“Hygienists are so much more than clinicians—they’re teachers, motivators, and advocates. You empower patients to care for their smiles and support your teams with incredible skill and heart. Because of you, patients feel valued, understood, and genuinely cared for. We’re proud to celebrate everything you do.”

Cameron Jones, VP of Hygiene Support



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# NUSENDA CENTER FOR FINANCIAL CAPABILITY

## Who We Are:

The Nusenda Center for Financial Capability (NCFC) is a financial outreach and education program at New Mexico State University, proudly sponsored by Nusenda Credit Union as partners in education.

Housed in the **Student Success Center** (Hardman and Jacobs Undergraduate Learning Center, Room 128) and **Campus Tutoring Services** (Corbett Center Student Union, Room 206), the NCFC provides a comprehensive financial wellness program, both in-person and online.

## What We Offer:

Our services are provided by trained and Certified Peer Financial Educators

### Personalized Services

#### 1-on-1 Peer Financial Coaching

Private, judgment-free sessions tailored to your financial goals.

#### Personal Budgeting Assistance

Learn to build a budget that actually works for you.

#### Scholar Dollar\$ & FAFSA Support

Get guidance on completing applications with confidence.

### Workshops and Events

#### Distinguished Lecture Series

Hear from distinguished faculty, business leaders and distinguished members of our community on trending and important financial topics.

#### Financial Literacy Workshop Series

Interactive sessions on credit, saving, budgeting, investing, and more.

#### Annual Spring Financial Wellness Fair

A campus-wide event connecting the NMSU community to free financial literacy education, information and support from local financial institutions, services providers and business partners.

## Additional Resources

#### Free Online Financial Tools & Modules

Access Banzai and Smarter Finance at any time via [ncfc.nmsu.edu](http://ncfc.nmsu.edu) to build your financial knowledge.

#### Customized Workshops for NMSU

#### Groups & Organizations

Bring a financial education session to your class, club, or department.

## Contact Us

[ncfc.nmsu.edu](http://ncfc.nmsu.edu) | Phone: 575-646-6050 | Email: [ncfc@nmsu.edu](mailto:ncfc@nmsu.edu)

# CAMPUS TUTORING SERVICES

CRLA Certified Peer Tutors

In-Person Online via NMSU Zoom

## Hours of Operation

|           |         |
|-----------|---------|
| Monday    | 9am-8pm |
| Tuesday   | 9am-8pm |
| Wednesday | 9am-8pm |
| Thursday  | 9am-8pm |
| Friday    | 9am-5pm |
| Sunday    | 4pm-8pm |

## Schedule Tutoring Appointments on Navigate



[Download on the App Store](#) [GET IT ON Google Play](#)

## Contact Us

Phone: 575-646-6050

Corbett Center Student Union, Room 206

[campustutoring.nmsu.edu](http://campustutoring.nmsu.edu)



# STUDENT SUCCESS CENTER

Helping Aggies Achieve Success

The Student Success Center provides holistic academic support programs within a supportive environment that empowers students to realize their full potential as independent learners and professionals.

The Student Success Center also serves students through TRIO Student Support Services Program, TRIO STEM-H Student Support Services, TRIO Educational Talent Search, and the TRIO Upward Bound Program.

## Learning & Academic Skills

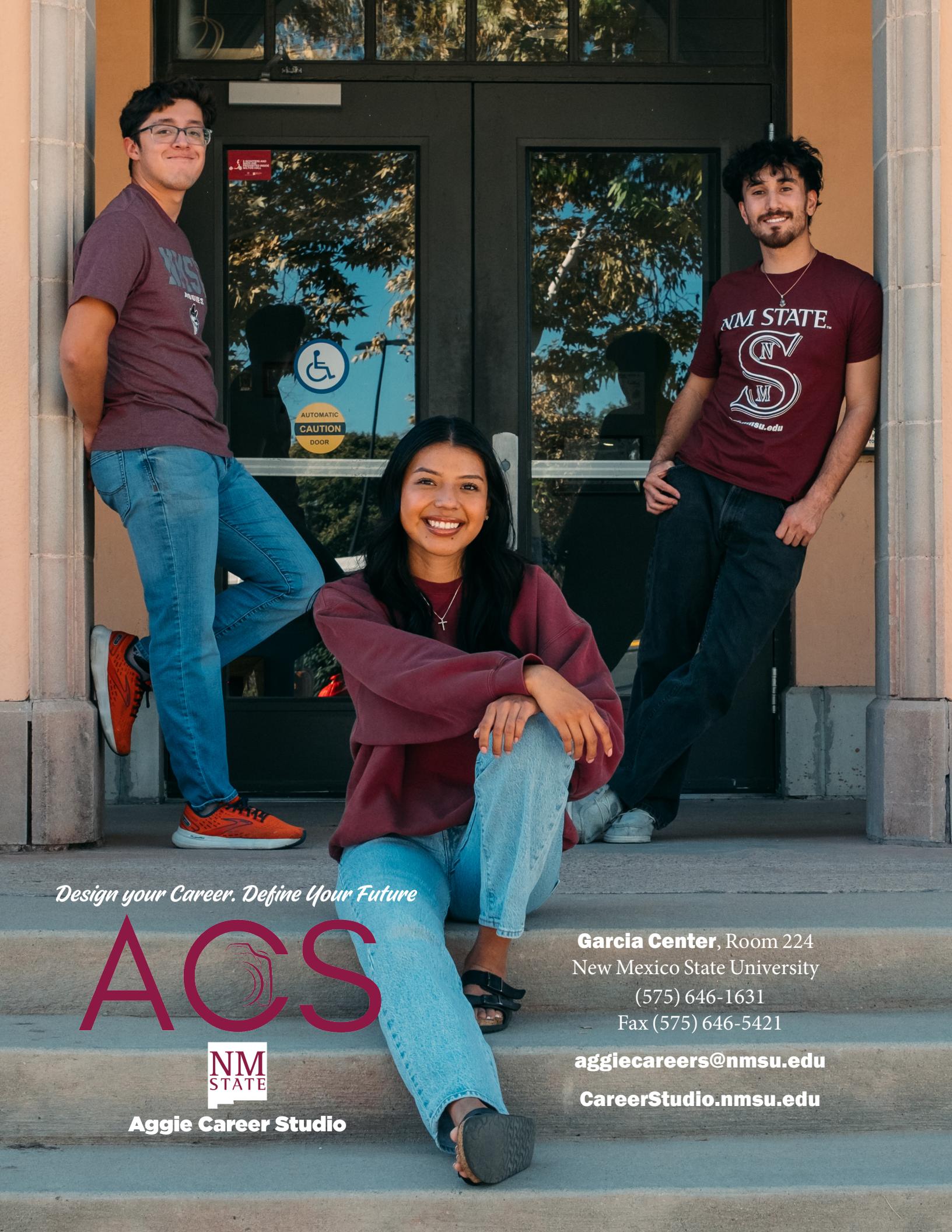
Schedule Individual appointments or attend a workshops to learn about time management, study skills, goal setting, test prep, and more!

## Graduate School Preparation

Individual assistance with preparing for graduate school admission to include program search, application guidance, personal statement review, and professional test preparation.

## Contact Us

Location: HJULC, Room 128 | Phone: 575-646-3136 | Email: [ssc@nmsu.edu](mailto:ssc@nmsu.edu)



*Design your Career. Define Your Future*

**ACS**



**Aggie Career Studio**

**Garcia Center**, Room 224  
New Mexico State University  
(575) 646-1631  
Fax (575) 646-5421

**aggiecareers@nmsu.edu**

**CareerStudio.nmsu.edu**