

Comprehensive Action Plan (CAP)

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Comprehensive Action Plan (CAP)?

- Your [Comprehensive Action Plan](#) combines both the Plan of Study (the academic component) and the Professional Development Action Plan (career component) to create a thorough planning tool for students, while providing academic and professional context to advisors. Upon submission, the CAP will be reviewed by your program director, academic advisor and a career coach.
- This visual tool serves as a representation of your intentions to complete the requirements for your academic program and your career aspirations. It is designed to assist you in mapping out your courses and extracurricular activities while at the Elliott School. It is a working document, not a contract.

What does a completed Plan of Study look like?

- Check out the sample plan of study on the GSS website on the [Forms and Applications page](#).
- When completing your plan, please fill it out in its entirety. Each required field is important. Be sure to include your personal information at the top of the form, including your GWID, and the total number of credits listed to ensure you reach the required number of credits for your degree:
 - 40 credits for MA students and 27 credits for MIPP students
- When listing your coursework, please include the course code (ex. IAFF 6101); course title (ex. International Affairs Cornerstone); your intended semester of completion (Fall, Spring, Summer); the intended year; and the number of course credits in the parentheses.

Do I have to submit a Comprehensive Action Plan?

- Yes, all students are required to submit an initial Comprehensive Action Plan in their first semester.
- If your Comprehensive Action Plan is not received by the set due date, your Academic Advisor will place a hold on your account. Having a hold will prevent you from registering for the next term.
- It is a working document, not a contract so it's alright if slight changes are made throughout your time here at Elliott.

How do I get started filling out my plan?

- The best place to start is to review the online curriculum for your specific program contained within the [University Bulletin](#). Classes included in the online curriculum have been pre-approved by your program and Program Director to meet specific requirements.
- It is recommended you use the [Schedule of Classes](#) to determine course availability in the current or previous semesters.

What if I want to take a class that isn't included in the online curriculum?

- You will need to obtain permission from your Program Director to count unlisted courses towards your major field or specific area of specialization.

My plan is filled out. Now what?

- To submit your Comprehensive Action Plan, go to the [Forms and Applications](#) page and, under the Comprehensive Action Plan Submission tab, select your program.

- Once you've completed all required fields and attached your Plan of Study and Professional Development Plan, a submit button will appear. Upon clicking the submit button it will be sent to your Program Director, your Academic Advisor, and a Career Coach.
- When the form has been approved by all parties, you will receive an electronic copy for your records.

Do I need to schedule an appointment with my Program Director and/or Academic Advisor for their signature?

- You do not need to meet with your Program Director or your Academic Advisor to receive signatures. Some programs require that you meet with your Program Director to go over your initial academic plans, and contact students directly to schedule (ex. Security Policy Studies).

What if I have questions about completing my plan?

- If you have questions best answered by a content expert in your field of study, you can request an appointment with your Program Director.
- If you have program requirement questions or questions about academic policies, you may book an appointment online via Handshake (gwu.joinhandshake.com) to meet with your Academic Advisor.
- If you have questions about career resources or professional planning, you may book an appointment online via Handshake (gwu.joinhandshake.com) to meet with a Career Coach.

Do I have to fill out a new plan for every change?

- You should submit an updated Comprehensive Action Plan if you change your major field/area of specialization/concentration OR if you make significant changes to your overall plan. Some programs will also require you to submit a Final Comprehensive Action Plan. This is recommended as it can help the graduation clearance process run smoothly.