

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 a series of professional interest questions to create a thorough planning tool for students, while providing academic and professional context to advisors. Upon submission, the CAP will be reviewed for approval by your program director and academic advisor.
- 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 in the context of your professional goals 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 [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 completed (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 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, a submit button will appear. Upon clicking the submit button it will be sent to your Program Director and Academic Advisor.
- 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 are not required to meet with your Academic Advisor to receive signatures. *Some* programs require that you meet with your Program Director to go over your initial academic plans, but they will 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, questions about academic policies, or just want to brainstorm a plan, book an [appointment](#) to meet with your Academic Advisor. Your advisor can also guide you to the best person or resource to help with any question they can't answer.

- 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 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.