Planning Financially for Post-Graduation

Budgeting
Budgeting is an important part of financial wellness no matter what stage of life you are in, but it is especially important as you make a significant life transition. If you already keep a budget, factor in these added expenses as well as any changes in income that may occur. If you don’t keep a budget yet, use these tips to create and keep one.

Expenses:
1. Building a professional wardrobe
   - Invest in one outfit for the interview/hiring process (make sure you feel comfortable in it)
   - To avoid purchasing expensive new work clothes, you can ask a friend or family member to borrow/gift clothes, keep an eye on sales in-store and online, visit a thrift store, or visit the EMU Sustainability Center
2. Student loan repayment
   - The repayment period begins as soon as your grace period ends, usually six months after you graduate
   - Use this information to learn more about repayment
3. Relocation
   - Use NerdWallet’s cost of living calculator to estimate how your cost of living will change from your current city to your desired city
   - Will you need to buy furniture or pay for movers?

Credit
As large expenses come up, you may need to take out loans or make large purchases on credit. It is important to build credit and understand your current credit status. Find more information on credit on our website. Check your credit score at www.annualcreditreport.com

Credit Score is broken up into 35% payment history, 30% amount owed, 15% length of credit history, 10% new credit, and 10% credit mix.

Great ways to build credit include:
1. Using a secured credit card
   - Collateral is put down as security, this makes you eligible for non-secured credit cards later on.
   - Look up options through your bank.
2. Become an authorized user
   - You are linked to another person’s credit card, which means your score is linked to theirs.
   - Ask a parent or guardian if this is a good idea for both parties.
3. Paying credit card bills and student loan payments on time
   - Payment history is the most important part of building credit. The more payments you make on time, the better your score will be!

Considerations for a new job
As you begin applying and receiving job offers, consider the Total Compensation Package. This package considers what your employer offers you (besides just salary). Some components are:
1. Relocation package
   - Your employer may offer to help pay for some of your relocation costs, like plane trips and even a temporary place to stay while you find a more permanent residence.
2. Flexible work schedule
   - How important is flexibility to you? Especially now, is remote working an option?
3. Bonus
   - Your employment package may include a bonus opportunity. These opportunities may impact the way different salary offers compare.
4. Vacation
• How much vacation will you receive? How important is this to you?
• Even though you may not be traveling much right now, consider how much you may want to travel in the future.

5. Medical insurance
• Insurance is a huge cost, and a good medical package can affect your overall wellbeing. Make sure you know what your employer is offering you in this department.

6. Stock options
• Some employers will give you stock in the company as part of your offer. We hope you find a company you like and trust, which would make stock options a good choice for you.
• Learn more about saving and investing here.

7. Retirement plan
• Your retirement plan is very important. We suggest that you take full advantage of every offer your employer gives you as soon as possible.

8. Professional development
• Does this job give you the opportunity to move up in your desired career field?

Negotiations
You can make negotiations in any of the above categories. For example, if the job requires that you move across the country, you could negotiate a relocation package. However, the most common area of negotiation is salary. As you decide whether or not you would like to pursue a negotiation, as yourself:

1. Do you think you are worth more money?
2. Can you quantify your worth based on experience, other offers, etc?
3. What value will you add to the organization?

A good tool is comparative analysis. This is when you discover how much others in a similar role currently make and how the cost of living impacts your offer, then bring this information to your employer in a negotiation. The UO Career Center can help you answer the above questions, complete comparative analysis, and navigate negotiations.

If you have any questions, schedule an appointment with a Peer Financial Coach, or attend one of our follow-up Workshops in Winter term (more information to come).