

# How to dress for a career fair

MERUELO FAMILY  
CENTER FOR CAREER  
DEVELOPMENT



UNIVERSITY OF  
NOTRE DAME



**“Dress for the job you want,  
not the job you have.”**

*This is a common phrase you will hear after you graduate.  
You can start working on your professional image by dressing  
confidently at career fairs and networking events on campus.*



Your **first impression** with a recruiter or alum attending a career fair is important.

Employers and the CCD want to create an **inclusive environment** where you can **feel confident** and focus on making connections, not what you are wearing.



**The suggested dress for career fair events is “business casual.”**



For the last few years, career fair attire has become **more relaxed**. While some students will wear full business suits, this is no longer the norm or expectation from employers.

Likewise, employers want to appear approachable. You will find **most employers** in a “**business casual**” attire – collared shirts, khakis, and even dress jeans.

Recruiters wearing company t-shirts is becoming more common, too.

You can **never go wrong** at a career fair with these simple guidelines:

- Collared shirt as a top (long-sleeve or short-sleeve is fine)
- Tuck in your shirt (unless it is tailored to be untucked)
- Slacks, khakis, chinos, dress skirt, etc.
- Wrinkle-free clothing

# EXAMPLES OF “BUSINESS CASUAL” (SUGGESTED CAREER FAIR DRESS)



## WHAT TO AVOID WEARING TO A CAREER FAIR

Creating a professional environment helps all students feel more confident and **focus on relationships**, not clothing.

Make a good first impression, and please **avoid** wearing:

- Distressed jeans (rips, tears, etc.)
- Sweats/joggers/yoga pants/workout clothes
- T-shirts
- Shorts



## NEW NAMETAGS FOR FALL 2023

We don't want your nice clothes to get damaged with a nametag pin or sticky label residue. When you arrive at the career fair registration area, **the CCD will provide** you a simple blue or green nametag lanyard, a plastic nametag holder, and an cardstock insert. The colors help employers identify your interests.

- Green lanyard: Signifies you are looking for a full-time job
- Blue lanyard: Signifies you are looking for an internship

Similarly, when approaching an employer's table, **look for employer nametag ribbons** (attached to their nametag) to know which recruiter would be the best to talk to (green ribbon for full-time, blue ribbon for internships - some employers will have both ribbons).

On your nametag insert (which you will get when you check in), write your:

- First name
- Major or Program
- Class year

## CLOSING ADVICE

In addition to **dressing confidently and professionally**, finish it off by being well-groomed, including:

- Brushing your teeth (and your tongue, where a lot of bacteria grows)
- Combing/brushing your hair
- If you choose to wear perfume/cologne, take it easy and don't wear too much
- Polishing your shoes (if wearing dress shoes)

There are restrooms available at event venues in Duncan Student Center where you can **take a quick look in the mirror**.

Please **avoid chewing gum**. The CCD will provide **complimentary breath mints**.



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