The University of Alabama Career Center is pleased to offer the 2018-19 Career Guide, a resource that provides ideas, recommended steps, and examples for your career planning and job-search efforts. Our material is based on research of best practices and is tailored where possible for UA students and alumni. Topics covered can be discussed personally with a Career Center staff member in one of our four offices any weekday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. We look forward to working with you as you plan your career and launch your job search.

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Main Office
3400 Ferguson Student Center • 205-348-5848
career.sl.ua.edu
@UACareerCenter
@UACareerCenter
UA Career Center
University of Alabama Career Center

Career Center at Culverhouse
149 Bidgood Hall • 205-348-2691
culverhouse.ua.edu/career
@CareersCBA
@CareersCBA
CareersCBA

Career Center @ C&IS
103 Reese Phifer Hall • 205-348-5681
cis.ua.edu/current-students/career-center-cis/

ACIPCO Engineering Career Development Center
(Cooperative Education and Engineering)
2004 H.M. Comer Hall • 205-348-6422
coop.eng.ua.edu

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The University of Alabama
Career Center
CAREER GUID

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CAREER ADVISING
A career consultant can provide you information and guidance for selecting a major, exploring careers, preparing to be a competitive job-seeker, etc. Make an appointment in Handshake and get to know your consultant.

ASSESSMENTS
Our career consultants are able to help you assess your interests, preferences, values, and skills and will discuss with you how these personal factors influence your career planning, from your first year onward.

PRESENTATIONS
Our staff welcomes opportunities to speak to classes and student groups about career preparation, graduate school planning, and our services. For scheduling, visit career.sl.ua.edu.

CAREER FAIRS
The fall and spring career fairs are great opportunities to learn more about future employers. For dates and more information, look in Handshake or check the events calendar on career.sl.ua.edu.

EMPLOYER INFO SESSIONS
Before conducting interviews on campus, employers may host information sessions to talk with candidates about their organizations and the positions for which they are interviewing. Info sessions can also be scheduled as standalone campus visits to promote opportunities and provide connections between recruiters and prospective applicants. Handshake and career.sl.ua.edu list upcoming events.

PEER ADVISORS
Undergraduate peer advisors are trained to assist with resumes, cover letters, and interviewing, and are available for individual conversations and group presentations. Find advising drop-in times on career.sl.ua.edu.

ON-CAMPUS INTERVIEWS
Employers from across the country conduct interviews in the main Career Center office (3400 Ferguson Student Center). To research employers and apply for interviews, activate your Handshake account and upload your resume. Employers may conduct an initial screening to select qualified candidates.
WHAT THE CAREER CENTER CAN DO FOR UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA STUDENTS AND ALUMNI

HANDSHAKE

Handshake is The University of Alabama’s online recruiting system that allows students 24/7 access to search jobs and apply for on-campus interviews. Jobs are posted for all UA majors. The criteria for applying vary, and job locations are national and international.

Among the key features Handshake lists for recruiters and its 3.5 million student users:

• Students can quickly build rich profiles, continually personalize career recommendations based on interests and connections, and search 500,000 postings by more than 250,000 companies.

• Employers can use multi-school postings, direct applicant filtering, powerful applicant filtering, and dedicated employer training and support.

FIND JOBS, INTERNSHIPS, AND ON-CAMPUS INTERVIEWS

Along with searching Handshake for job postings, you can apply for job interviews in Handshake as well. Recruiters conduct interviews at UA each fall and spring semester; more than 3,800 interviews were held on campus in the 2017-18 academic year.

SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT

Whether you need help with your resume or want to discuss choosing a major, you can use Handshake to schedule an appointment with a career consultant. Log in and select the Appointment tab on the left, or go to ua.joinhandshake.com/appointments/new. You will be taken through a few simple steps to schedule a time that suits you.

START USING HANDSHAKE

If you’re new to using Handshake, go to career.sl.ua.edu/Handshake and follow the instructions for logging in. An account is created for you soon after you begin classes at UA; you’ll personalize and complete it yourself.

Be sure to complete your profile thoroughly, as it will be viewed by employers in their search for highly qualified candidates.

When you’re ready to browse job postings or sign up for on-campus interviews, you will need to upload a resume. A Career Center staff member will review your resume to make sure you’re set to share it with employers.

If you haven’t written or updated your resume, you might find the information and sample resumes on pages 34-39 helpful. Additional tweaking will give you the polished, tailored document you want. Your resume is important because it may be the first document employers see.

If you have questions about starting your resume or if you would like to have your resume reviewed, make an appointment in Handshake or call the main office at 205-348-5848.

Note: If you are interested in finding a job on campus, visit the UA Human Resources page: careers.ua.edu/jobs.

CAREER CENTER WEBSITE: career.sl.ua.edu

Online services and resources include:

CareerBeam: This virtual career success center helps you clarify your career goals, research careers and industries, develop a networking plan, and implement a targeted job search.

Candid Career: Choose from thousands of informational videos to view on jobs, industry professionals, and related topics.

Virtual mock interviews: Interview Stream is a virtual interviewing system that allows you to record practice interviews privately from your home or in the Career Center. Information on completing a virtual mock interview is on page 50.

We encourage you to become familiar with our website and include it as you plan your career and search for jobs. Take advantage of online resources at your convenience from any location.
Career consultants in the Ferguson Student Center and in satellite offices in Bidgood, H.M. Comer, and Reese Phifer halls are eager to help students champion their career action plans.

The semiannual career fairs at Coleman Coliseum and other career events throughout the academic year represent hard work by students, recruiters, and Career Center staff.

DEVELOPING SKILLS & STRATEGIES
NEW STUDENTS

- Learn more about UA majors. Think of each major in terms of the skills and knowledge you will gain to prepare you for a variety of occupations.
- Browse the Occupational Information Network, onetonline.org, to expand your knowledge of possible careers.
- Meet with someone in the Career Center to discuss any questions you have about career-planning.
- Talk with an academic advisor to plan a course of study related to your interests and career goals.
- Complete an informational interview to gain a professional’s perspective and advice.
- Get to know upperclassmen, faculty members, and administrators who can provide you with information about majors and career options.
- Visit the Center for Service and Leadership (volunteer.ua.edu) to learn about volunteering. Volunteering allows you to serve the community, explore career options, network, and build skills.
- Browse student employment opportunities on and off campus (see uastudentjobs.ua.edu).
- View the Student Organization Directory to identify opportunities for campus involvement.
- Talk about cooperative education in the ACIPCO Engineering Career Development Center (coop.eng.ua.edu) or with internship coordinators in your academic area about experiential education opportunities.
- Begin to develop your resume and meet with the Career Center for feedback and assistance.
- Start your Handshake account and upload your resume. Begin searching for summer jobs or internships.
- Get to know people from different populations through campus and community involvement. Visit the UA Crossroads website, crossroads.ua.edu, for information about intercultural activities.
- Demonstrate professionalism in interactions and email.

JUNIORS AND SENIORS

- Update your profile and resume in Handshake.
- Check Handshake routinely for job application deadlines.
- Visit the Career Center to have your application materials reviewed and to discuss job-search strategies.
- Before your actual interview, use Handshake to schedule a mock interview in the Career Center.
- Take on a role of responsibility in a student organization or community project to develop leadership and time-management skills while building your resume.
- Identify career mentors. Talk with a career consultant for suggestions on identifying mentors.
- Continue developing skills and relationships through student organizations, internships, part-time employment, and volunteer experience.
- Brush up on dining/professional etiquette. This guide’s later sections offer tips and additional resources.
- If interested, research programs and entrance requirements for graduate school. Make plans to take entrance exams. Set up a timeline to apply.
- Talk with professors and supervisors about serving as references and provide them a copy of your resume.
- Explore career options by viewing job descriptions in Handshake and attending employer information sessions held throughout recruiting season.
- Research how social media networking might help in your job search.
- Create a professional LinkedIn profile and begin connecting with others.
- Attend career fairs and employer panels, preparing ahead of time to engage employers in conversation about your qualifications and employment opportunities.
- Identify recruiting opportunities on and off campus. Sign up for on-campus interviews through Handshake, which can be accessed at ua.joinhandshake.com/interview_schedules.
MAKING CAREER DECISIONS

You will make career decisions throughout your life, so there is no such thing as making a single, lifelong career decision while in college. In fact, most people change jobs several times before they retire, so understanding how to adapt and how to make decisions at different stages of your life is an important part of career development.

One of the biggest decisions made by college students is the choice of major. If you’re concerned about choosing a major or the approach you’re taking in making the choice, consider possible challenges you may be facing:

• Do I feel confident in my ability to make a good choice?
• Am I concerned about what others will think of my choice?
• Do I feel the need to conform to others’ expectations?
• Am I putting pressure on myself to make a choice that will stick?
• Am I limiting myself to only the majors (or careers) I know about from family and friends?
• Am I feeling pressure to make this decision quickly?
• Am I hesitant to reach out to professionals to learn more about their careers and how they prepared academically?

UA career consultants talk with hundreds of students each semester about majors and careers, and no two students are alike when it comes to the combination of experiences, backgrounds, interests, values, personalities, and all the other factors related to career decisions. Talking with a career consultant can help you identify decisions you need to make and take steps toward making them.

Begin Exploring Majors and Careers

In addition to talking with a career consultant, you can take some simple steps to begin exploring majors and careers.

Take a look at the complete list of majors offered at The University of Alabama via [catalog.ua.edu/programs](http://catalog.ua.edu/programs). For each major, you will see a brief description and the courses required.

Think about these questions as you read through the majors:

• Which courses will I be most interested in studying?
• Which major appeals most to my learning style? Will the courses be more abstract and theory-based or more application-based?
• Which major suits my academic abilities? Am I committed to doing the work required?
• How might this major contribute to my acquiring the knowledge and skills for career paths that interest me?

You may have to declare a major before you can confidently name careers you would like to pursue. After all, life is filled with unexpected events that can influence career decisions. The best step you can take right now is to research majors and careers that relate to your interests, the skills you would like to strengthen and use, and the knowledge you would like to gain and apply. Remember that involvement on and off campus can expose you to new interests and may reveal strengths you had not previously noticed.

What skills are you most motivated to strengthen and use? Circle any from the following list that appeal to you.

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<td>Lead</td>
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<td>Manage projects</td>
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<td>Organize/Plan</td>
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<td>Set goals</td>
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<td>coordination and/or</td>
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<td>hand dexterity</td>
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<td>Install</td>
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<td>Manage equipment</td>
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<td>Advocate</td>
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<td>Counsel</td>
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<td>sensitivity</td>
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<td>Serve as a liaison</td>
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<td>Facilitate discussion</td>
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<td>Instruct</td>
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<td>Provide care and support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serve clients/ customers</td>
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Career Values

Your motivation to perform your best is influenced by how you feel about what you’re doing and the environment in which you’re working. Identifying work that aligns with your values is one of the ideal outcomes of career exploration.

From the values listed below, select and rank your top 10. The ones you choose today may not be the same you would choose five years from now. As life roles change and events alter our paths, our career priorities may change. Evaluating your career priorities should happen with each career decision.

| Achievements/Accomplishments: Producing results that are significant; completing tasks |
| Competition: Engaging in activities where results are measured frequently and compared with others’ |
| Advancement Potential: Progressive growth through job titles, more responsibility, greater earnings |
| Creativity: Making, inventing, or producing innovative, imaginative, or original things or ideas |
| Autonomy: Ability to choose own projects, set own schedule and work pace, and have minimal supervision |
| Entrepreneurship: Organizing, managing, or starting a business or enterprise |
| Fame: Possessing extreme visibility, a great reputation, being known and renowned |
| Financial Security: Pay and benefits that are satisfactory and predictable |
| Fun: Experiencing pleasure, amusement, and enjoyment |
| Learning: Acquiring knowledge and satisfying curiosity |
| Location: Freedom to choose preferred living area; location not dictated by industry or employer |
| Leadership: Guiding, motivating, or directing others |
| Location: Engagement in activities that rely on your body and physical exertion |
| Physical Activity: Involvement in activities that require accurate attention to detail |
| Safety: Freedom from danger, risk or injury |
| Security: Protection from fear, anxiety, or danger; predictability |
| Self-Expression: Ability to communicate personal ideas, emotions, or feelings |
| Stability: Maintaining a predictable situation |
| Status: Possessing a prestigious position or rank |
| Teamwork: Working closely with others toward common goals; having close working relationships |
| Travel: Opportunities to travel nationally or internationally as employee |
| Variety: Involvement with new and dynamic experiences, perhaps risk |
| Benefits: Insurance, retirement plan, etc. |
| Building/Developing: Creating or establishing a thing or an idea |
| Challenge: Involvement with stimulating or demanding tasks or projects |
| Helping: Giving assistance, support, and aid to others |
| High Income: Income to significantly upgrade or maintain a certain lifestyle |
| Risk-taking: Facing unknown or dangerous challenges or demands |

Being aware of your interests, skills, and values allows you to explore majors and careers with more focus. As you learn about different careers, make note of the ones that appeal to you. How do they match your interests? Will you be able to use the skills you enjoy using? Will you be able solve the types of problems you find intriguing? What connections with your values do you notice?

To learn more about the many career possibilities that exist, visit the Explore tab of the Career Center website at career.sl.ua.edu/explore. Here you will find online resources, including brief videos, with information on diverse career paths.

The Career Center staff would love to talk with you about exploring majors and careers. Schedule an appointment in Handshake by logging in and selecting the Appointment tab, or go straight to ua.joinhandshake.com/appointments/new.
INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS and JOB SHADOWING

An informational interview is a conversation with a contact who can help you learn more about a career, an industry, or even a specific organization. You can get a firsthand account to determine if the career might be a good fit for you.

Job shadowing can be thought of as an extended informational interview. The duration will be decided by you and the person you’re shadowing.

How do I prepare for these experiences? Read about the career or organization of interest so you will have a foundation of knowledge from which to generate questions. Be organized with a list of questions and notepad.

What if I don’t know anyone to interview or shadow? You may be able to identify someone from an organization’s staff directory. Ask family, friends, and acquaintances if they can recommend someone in your targeted profession. A Career Center staff member will also be glad to assist with this.

What’s the best way to request the interview or shadowing experience? When you contact the person by phone or email, introduce yourself and let that person know you are interested in his or her profession and/or organization. Ask if they would be willing to meet with you to discuss their work. Provide a brief statement about yourself (e.g., major, year in school) and let them know what you are hoping to achieve in the meeting. If pursuing an informational interview, you can ask for a period of approximately 30 minutes. If pursuing a job-shadowing experience, you can let them recommend the length of time.

Make an excellent impression. Show respect and professionalism by being on time, dressed appropriately, and aware of the time you’ve been allotted. Write a thank-you note immediately afterward. If the person you interviewed suggested specific actions, report back to let them know the results. If you established good rapport with your interviewee, ask if you might maintain contact as you continue through college and begin your job search. Consider the following when planning questions to ask:

• How would you describe a typical day on the job?
• What do you like most about the job? Least?
• What was your career path? Would you recommend that same path?
• What changes do you anticipate for this industry or profession?
• Do you have any specific advice for me?
• What are your responsibilities in this position?
• What qualifications are most important for this career?
• What are the challenges of this industry or profession?
• What impresses you on resumes of applicants in this field?
• Do you know others in the field with whom I should meet?

Reflect on what you learned from the interview:
• What were the most/least appealing aspects of the job described?
• Does this job seem to be one in which I would like to invest my time?
• What will I need to do to prepare for success in this field?
• What steps am I motivated to take to begin preparing?

BUILDING YOUR CAREER NETWORK

Build a career network by recognizing the connections you have already. Make a list of everyone you know well, beginning with family and friends. Write a second list to include those with whom you have something in common (a shared social group, religious group, etc.). Add a third list to include those whom you see with some regularity (professors, academic advisors, etc.).

Examine your lists and consider what you know about each of your contacts. Is your classmate’s parent in the field you plan to enter?

Does your professor keep in touch with former students who have entered the field of your choice?

Your lists will continue to grow, so organizing your contacts may be necessary. Identify the interactions you plan to have and set a goal for what you hope to accomplish through each. For example, your goal might be to learn if your contact knows anyone in a particular organization in his or her city. It will also help for you to think of the appropriate strategy for communicating with each. You may be able to talk with some in person, while others may need to be reached online or by phone.

Be prepared to take initiative and present yourself professionally when an opportunity arises. Networking is most effective when you see it as establishing a mutually beneficial connection. If you plan to ask your contacts for advice or information, then think of what you might offer them. Remember that a sincere offer of assistance in the future is better than neglecting their interests altogether.
Transferable functional skills are those you can apply in a variety of situations. Recognizing skills you possess and identifying ones you would like to develop help your career-planning in several ways. You can research professions that will allow you to use your skills in a rewarding way, create a plan for developing desired skills, and tell networking contacts and potential employers how your skills will fit with your target profession and organization.

Listed below are activities that represent a wide range of abilities. Put a check by the skills you currently possess, circle those you would like to use routinely in your profession, and highlight those you would like to develop. Consider avenues for developing or strengthening skills such as volunteering, working, actively participating in a student organization, and interning.
**SELF-MANAGEMENT SKILLS**

Self-management skills relate to how you respond to life situations, how you interact with others, how you relate to your environment, etc. Some may come so naturally to you that they seem more like traits than skills. The fact is, they all require practice. They are transferable because they can be developed and demonstrated in all areas of life. In cases where task-oriented skills can be refined on the job, employers will prioritize candidates with proven self-management skills that fit the job and organization.

Below are examples. Circle ones that you can claim based on your typical behavior. If you have a specific example of when you have recently demonstrated the skill, put a check by it. In an interview, you may be asked to provide examples of demonstrating these skills.

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Note: Job-seekers who are able to connect their skills to the target position leave a much better impression on employers. Research your target job, organization, and industry and identify how your functional and self-management skills apply.
Employers are looking for new graduates to be Career Ready — they know how to use their talents, strengths and interests. The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) has identified eight key competencies for career-readiness. Through your campus involvement, leadership positions, and academic work, you can develop skills in these key areas that will prepare you for transition into the workplace.

**CAREER-READINESS COMPETENCIES**

**Career Management**  
Identify and articulate skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences; navigate career options and pursue these opportunities.  
Ex. The student is able to navigate and explore job options that relate to his/her skills and goals, takes the steps necessary to pursue opportunities, and understands how to self-promote in the workplace.

**Oral/Written Communication**  
Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively to a variety of audiences; demonstrate public speaking skills.  
Ex. The student has public speaking skills; is able to express ideas to others; can write/edit memos, letters, email, and reports clearly and effectively.

**Professionalism/Work Ethic**  
Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits: punctuality, working productively with others, time management, understanding the importance of a professional work image, and demonstrating integrity.  
Ex. The student demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and is able to learn from his/her mistakes.

**Teamwork/Collaboration**  
Build collaborative relationships representing diverse cultures, races, ages, gender, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints; work within team structure; negotiate/manage conflicts.  
Ex. The student is able to work within a team structure and can negotiate and manage conflict.

**Leadership**  
Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals; organize, prioritize, and delegate work; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate.  
Ex. The student is able to assess and manage his/her emotions and those of others, and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others.

**Critical Thinking/Problem-Solving**  
Exercise sound reasoning and analytical thinking: use knowledge, facts, and data to solve problems and make decisions.  
Ex. The student is able to obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data in this process and may demonstrate originality and inventiveness.

**Application and Information Technology**  
Select and utilize technology to solve problems and accomplish goals.  
Ex. Apply computer skills to accomplish a given task and adapt to changing technology.

**Global/Intercultural Fluency**  
Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions.  
Ex. The student demonstrates openness, inclusiveness, sensitivity, and the ability to interact respectfully with all people and understand individuals’ differences.

**PRO TIP**  
Hear our campus partners’ advice on these competencies in our video series on career.sl.ua.edu.
CAREER EXPLORATION

Internships, Cooperative Education, and Professional Practice

In addition to providing opportunities to develop skills sought by employers, gaining career-related experience before graduation enables you to try out your career of interest and confirm or redirect your goals. Participating in the day-to-day work and observing the culture and environment are the best ways to research a career.

INTERNSHIPS

Internships are opportunities to learn through practical experience and can be found in most fields. Internships may be paid or unpaid and may be full-time or part-time. Most positions are for one semester, though some are designed for longer periods. **All internships should have the common goal of providing students a chance to learn while they contribute to an organization’s daily operations.** In some cases, academic credit may be awarded for internship completion. Check with your academic advisor to determine if this is a possibility for you.

It’s never too early to begin researching opportunities. Some employers specify juniors and seniors, while others hire freshmen and sophomores. Check with your academic department regarding internship requirements that may exist and be sure to note deadlines for internships. If you get started early, you may be able to do more than one internship during your college career. To find an internship:

- Use your Handshake account to view internship postings. Access Handshake through `ua.joinhandshake.com`.
- Explore internship databases for your industry and check internship postings on employers’ websites.
- Network and learn about companies’ openings by attending career fairs.
- Meet with a career consultant to discuss possibilities, including creating an internship.
- Talk with your departmental internship coordinator.

COOPERATIVE EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Gaining relevant professional experience during college greatly enhances students’ employment prospects upon graduation. **Cooperative Education** is an academic program in which students gain three semesters of relevant, paid experience, alternating semesters of full-time study with semesters of full-time employment. Over the three required work semesters, students take on more responsibilities within one department or vary their experiences by working in other departments. Co-op students are supervised by professionals in their field and can interact with other employees, strengthening communication and collaboration skills. While at work, co-op students maintain full-time student status and have priority registration each semester through graduation. Rotation typically begins the summer or fall semester after freshman year. Visit `coop.eng.ua.edu` or call 205-348-6422.

The **Professional Practice** program allows qualifying students to work full-time during a fall or spring semester and maintain their status as a full-time student. To qualify, students must secure approval from their academic department and then submit an application to the ACIPCO Engineering Career Development Center, located in 2004 H.M. Comer. Work experiences associated with PP must be related to the student’s field or provide a distinctive opportunity not offered by an established internship program. Visit `coop.eng.ua.edu` or call 205-348-6422.

EDUCATION ABROAD

Making Your Dreams of Overseas Study a Reality

*Spending time in another country has many benefits, including learning about a culture firsthand and developing language skills through daily conversation.* The following skills and qualifications are among many you can acquire through your experience abroad: adaptability, self-confidence, independence, analytical skills, language skills, global perspective, cultural intelligence, and cross-cultural communication skills. Contact a staff member in the Capstone International Center (B.B. Comer) to learn more about studying abroad.

USEFUL WEBSITES

The University of Alabama Capstone International: `international.ua.edu`
U.S. Department of State, passport information: `travel.state.gov`
The Student Study Abroad Handbook: `studentsabroad.com`
Transitions Abroad (Work, Study, Travel): `transitionsabroad.com`
Go Abroad (Work, Study, Travel): `goabroad.com`

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA CAREER CENTER
## GET INVOLVED ON CAMPUS AND IN THE COMMUNITY

### STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Find an organization on campus that fits your interests and goals and simply get involved! Offer to head a committee or lead a project if you do not wish to run for an office. Employers will want to know how you have demonstrated leadership skills and you can do that without having a specific title.

### VOLUNTEERING

As you work with other volunteers and take on assignments that may be new to you, you are networking and expanding your skills. The Center for Service and Leadership identifies meaningful service opportunities and places students in volunteer projects throughout Tuscaloosa and West Alabama. Learn more about volunteering locally by visiting [volunteer.ua.edu](http://volunteer.ua.edu). Students interested in volunteering in different locations throughout the world can research volunteer positions and read strategies for getting internships and full-time jobs in the nonprofit sector at [idealist.org](http://idealist.org).

### DEVELOPING SKILLS

Among the skills students develop through campus involvement and volunteering are organizing, persuading, promoting, brainstorming, communicating (speaking and writing), budgeting, planning, leading, coordinating, fundraising, recruiting, instructing, tutoring, coaching, creating, and time management. What skills do you need to obtain to be successful in your future career?

### LEARNING ABOUT CAREERS

If you can volunteer with an organization closely associated with your career interests, then you may be able to gain valuable insight into the field. For example, if you want to work with a large nonprofit associated with health care, then working with any large nonprofit with a health care focus can be educational. Remember, though, that no two organizations are exactly alike, and your perspective as a volunteer will be different from the perspective of an employee. Observe the activities of the staff, but also ask for informational interviews to get a more comprehensive understanding.

### BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

When you volunteer or become involved in campus organizations, you have the chance to get to know people from other places who may have life experiences different from your own. Conversations in such settings can be as educational as those in the classroom and can introduce you to ideas that may influence your world view and career-planning.

## REFLECTING ON EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Think about what you learned and contributed through your involvement. This can help you identify the types of experiences you would like to have as you move forward. This will also help you organize your thoughts for describing your experience to others, including prospective employers. The following prompts may help you get started.

- I chose to participate in this experience because...
- My initial contributions were...
- My contributions grew to include...
- The activity I enjoyed most was...
- The skills I applied were...
- This experience influenced my thinking on...
- I learned that I can...
- The people I met were...
- I became more aware of...
- As a result of this experience, I would like to...

To learn more about making the most of your experiential learning opportunity (ELO), visit [www.learninginaction.ua.edu](http://www.learninginaction.ua.edu). You can also see examples of what other students have done to gain knowledge and skills outside the classroom.
NETWORKING

The Most Effective Job-Search Strategy

Studies reveal that at least 75 percent of jobs are acquired through networking. Networking may strike you as a formal process, but it is often nothing more than a conversation with daily contacts.

YOUR NETWORKING INTRODUCTION

An introduction developed for networking situations may also be suitable as a response to the popular interview request “Tell me about yourself.” Remember that the goal is to be conversational and less formal, so practice your introduction until it flows naturally.

**Introduction Example**

“I’m a ________ at The University of Alabama, majoring in ___________. I chose (major) because ____________ ____________. Recently I have been (involved in, worked at, volunteered at, etc.), allowing me to strengthen my skills in ______________________________. Through classes and projects, I’ve learned ____________ ____________ and I believe I can contribute to the ____________ of an organization. I’m eager to take the next step in my career and I appreciate having this opportunity to talk with you.”

EXAMPLE OF NETWORKING WITH EMPLOYERS

1. Introducing yourself to the employer: “Hi, Mr. Gates, I’m Jamie Student. Thank you for taking time to come to UA to speak with us.”

2. Show your interest in the field or organization: “I am very interested in learning more about the internship program you mentioned. Is there an internship coordinator in your organization with whom I might speak?”

3. Get the contact information and, if appropriate, a recommendation: “May I say that you referred me to her?”

4. Express your gratitude: “Thank you very much, Mr. Gates. And again, thank you for taking time to speak with us.”

EXAMPLE OF NETWORKING WITH DAILY CONTACTS

1. Contact a professor: “Hi, Dr. Lecture, this is Jamie Student – I’m in your modern art class.”

2. Ask for help: “I need some assistance and thought you might be able to help.”

3. Specify what you are seeking: “I’m looking for a summer internship with an art museum or gallery.”

4. Ask if the professor knows of any possibilities or contacts: “Do you know of any museums that have hired interns from UA?”

5. Get the contact information OR ask if the professor will keep you in mind: “Is there a specific person you suggest I contact?”

6. Express your gratitude: “I appreciate your time and help. I will let you know how things go.”

WHERE TO NETWORK

- Career fairs in fall and spring
- Employer information sessions
- Employer panels or guest speakers in classes
- Job-shadowing and informational interviewing
- Employer information tables on campus
- College tailgating activities

YOUR NETWORKING INTRODUCTION

Casual conversations can lead to sharing information about job opportunities around the world. You may hope to move to San Francisco, and a peer who prefers another city may have leads on jobs in that part of California. It’s also good to keep in mind that your classmate today may be in a position tomorrow to hire you. The student organization you’re involved in may be full of potential employers or references.

EXAMPLE OF NETWORKING WITH PEERS

Casual conversations can lead to sharing information about job opportunities around the world. You may hope to move to San Francisco, and a peer who prefers another city may have leads on jobs in that part of California. It’s also good to keep in mind that your classmate today may be in a position tomorrow to hire you. The student organization you’re involved in may be full of potential employers or references.

**Introduction Example**

“I’m a ________ at The University of Alabama, majoring in ___________. I chose (major) because ____________ ____________. Recently I have been (involved in, worked at, volunteered at, etc.), allowing me to strengthen my skills in ______________________________. Through classes and projects, I’ve learned ____________ ____________ and I believe I can contribute to the ____________ of an organization. I’m eager to take the next step in my career and I appreciate having this opportunity to talk with you.”

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA CAREER CENTER
While networking with prospective employers or professional contacts, it is not always appropriate or convenient to offer your resume. A recommended alternative is offering a business card that may also serve as a “mini-resume.”

You can choose from a variety of formats, so research your targeted profession or industry to know which styles might work best. Our career consultants will be glad to offer suggestions; University Printing Services (printing.ua.edu) offers students business card ordering. No matter the style you choose, your card should be printed on quality card stock.

The following are items that might be included on a student’s business card:

**Front**
- Name
- Phone, email
- Graduation date
- Degree, major, minor
- The University of Alabama
- URL of online resume or LinkedIn profile
- Interest area (e.g. public relations)

**Back**
- Internships at _________ (way to show relevant experience)
- Skills (a few relevant to the field you’re targeting)
- Languages (refer to skill level to clarify)
- Certifications or licensures
  (Note: If you are open to working in any location, then add that.)

### PROFESSIONAL HEADSHOTS

For job-seekers who utilize LinkedIn and other social networks in their searches, or for those whose applications require them, a well-made headshot is an important tool to have.

Suggested attire for headshots is business professional; business casual is also acceptable in many cases. In general, photos depict subjects from the waist or chest up and use a background that is either neutral, like a solid-color sheet or wall, or is otherwise not too distracting or busy; an outdoor scene with a shallow depth of field, for instance, could be used behind the subject. The face should be well lit and in focus, displaying a confident, professional expression.

Students and alumni can have professional headshots made for free in the Career Center. To schedule an appointment, log into Handshake. For those needing appropriate attire, contact the Career Center about its Crimson Career Closet, which lends professional clothing for free.

**PRO TIP**
To take a photo to be used for professional purposes, stand with your feet firmly planted about shoulder-width apart, make your spine straight, and bring your shoulders back.
YOUR PERSONAL BRAND

Your personal brand is created through your actions, appearance, and words. When interacting in person and online, think about the image you’re presenting. Employers look for people who demonstrate professionalism, including respect for others and themselves. Your brand also includes your unique talents, skills, values, interests, and the contributions you would like to make as a student and professional.

The following questions provide a starting point for you to assess and, if need be, improve your brand. This is not simply an exercise about marketing yourself, but a way to reflect on who you are and the value you can add to society.

What are your natural abilities? How are you viewed by your peers? Faculty? Supervisors?
What skills have you developed into strengths? What do your social media/online activities say about you?
What are you eager to accomplish or are interested in doing? What does your body language say about you? What does your verbal communication say about you?
What are your top values? How do you demonstrate respect for yourself and others?
How do you demonstrate respect for yourself and others?

EFFECTIVE ONLINE NETWORKING

The following sites are among those recommended for developing your online presence and social networking strategies.

**LINKEDIN**
(linkedin.com)
Get started by creating your professional profile. Include what you can from the following:

- **Photo** (professional attire, plain background)
- **Headline** (What is your field? What do you want to do?)
- **Summary** (overview of skills and professional interests)
- **Experience** (jobs and accomplishments)
- **Education**

The LinkedIn site provides a Help Center with information on features and best practices.

**TWITTER and FACEBOOK**
(twitter.com, facebook.com)

Online networking opportunities have increased, but essential elements of networking have not changed.

- **Engage** in networking activities often (weekly Twitter chats, discussion boards, etc.)
- **Follow up.** This can make or break the relationship, and social networking platforms provide convenient opportunities.
- **Keep it from being all about you.** Offer to assist someone with a project or provide him or her with useful information.
- **Commit** to continuing your networking activities even during stretches that seem unproductive.

Follow those recognized as leaders in your field and/or companies that tweet job postings, and post appropriate updates about your job search. Visit the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) social jobs partnership at facebook.com/socialjobs.

**INSTAGRAM and PINTEREST**
(mobile app or instagram.com, pinterest.com)

NACE’s advice for leveraging Pinterest and similar platforms encourages job-seekers to consider their visual identities, showcase their brands, and highlight organizations and individuals of interest.

- **Build** a professional brand for yourself with content related to your pursuits; rebuild to keep your brand fresh.
- **Interact with or learn about an organization by liking, commenting, or sharing content.**
- **Post a traditional or creative resume on Pinterest.**

**EFFECTS OF BREAKING THE LAW**

A criminal record can have a negative effect on your career. Certain offenses may make you ineligible for teacher certification, security clearances, a job in a medical field, or a job requiring travel. Consequences for violations vary, but you don’t want to give an employer a reason to question your character or judgment.
The Career Center hosts several career fairs during the fall and spring semesters. These events offer opportunities for students and alumni to network with employers from a wide range of industries. Descriptions and dates for the Career Center’s different fairs are listed on career.sl.ua.edu. Prepare by following these tips:

I. DRESS FOR SUCCESS

- The serious job-seeker should wear a suit that would be appropriate for an interview (refer to pages 56-57).
- Business casual (refer to page 56) is the expected attire if an interview suit is not worn.
- Wear minimal or no jewelry and do not wear cologne or perfume. Some recruiters may be allergic or sensitive to scents.
- Place your name tag on your right side. When the recruiter shakes your hand, your name will be in his or her line of vision.

II. PREPARE TO IMPRESS

- Check the list of employers attending and identify those of interest to you. Research their websites.
- Make brief keyword notes about what you want to discuss with each employer.
- Consider having business cards printed with your contact information, degree, graduation date, major, university, and targeted occupational areas.
- Practice giving a brief statement of what you are seeking in a job or career. This is called an elevator pitch. Employers evaluate candidates on their ability to communicate qualifications, interests, and goals. Be prepared to share how you see yourself fitting into that organization.

III. DEMONSTRATE YOUR BEST

- Walk and stand with an upright posture that reflects confidence. Wait patiently if a recruiter is speaking with another student.
- Make eye contact when introducing yourself and while talking. Don’t forget to smile!
- Speak clearly. You want the recruiter to be able to hear and understand you.
- Offer a firm handshake. Your handshake is a part of the initial impression you make.
- Know in advance the main points you would like to cover. You don’t want to take too much of a recruiter’s time.
- If the recruiter has items to give away, wait until one is offered before taking it.
- Ask how you should follow up regarding the hiring process.
- Send a personalized thank-you note to each recruiter with whom you spoke.
ADDITIONAL JOB-SEARCH STRATEGIES

Though networking is the most effective job-search strategy and should be done routinely, other strategies can be implemented as well. Research using LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+, Pinterest, and other professional social media sites, and incorporate strategies listed below that are relevant to your desired field.

RESPOND TO OPENINGS IN PRINT AND ONLINE

- **Handshake:** Activate your account through the Career Center website, career.sl.ua.edu, or directly via ua.joinhandshake.com
- **On-campus interviews:** Sign up through Handshake
- **Websites of professional associations** (e.g., American Psychological Association, American Marketing Association)
- **Employment services and agencies** run by government and for-profit businesses
- **Organization websites:** Check for “Career” or “Employment” tabs
- **Job databases** created for specific industries or locations

CONTACT EMPLOYERS DIRECTLY

Contact managers in organizations to request an appointment. During your appointment, emphasize your knowledge and interest in their organization. Many job-seekers have used informational interviewing to create new positions by identifying organizational needs (through the interview, research, etc.) and proposing filling these needs with their own skills.

INTERVIEW THROUGH THE CAREER CENTER

During fall and spring semesters, recruiters from a variety of industries come to campus to interview candidates for full-time jobs and internships. Create an account in Handshake to view interview schedules and identify positions for which you qualify.

POSTING YOUR RESUME ON JOB BOARDS

If you choose to add this strategy to your job search, consider the following:

- Make sure your resume is error-free and in the format you like before posting it. After posting your resume on multiple sites, you don’t want the task of going back to each one to make edits.
- Review the resume after posting to see how it appears to employers. You may need to edit the format.
- Do not post your references. When you are contacted about a job, the employer can ask for those contacts.
- Include keywords in your resume that accurately reflect your qualifications. Organizations may search on keywords from the industry.
- Never post your Social Security number online.
- Find out if the site has an automatic purging date. You may need to update if you have not found a position and still wish to use job boards.

FOLLOW-UP AND RECORD-KEEPING

Follow-up and record-keeping are important for success. Keep records of all interviews, thank-you notes sent, referrals made, and follow-up actions taken. Research recommendations for your field regarding when to follow up after an initial contact or interview.

BE VISIBLE (PROFESSIONALLY) TO EMPLOYERS

Create professional profiles online and engage in social networking appropriately and often. Updating your sites and staying active in discussions shows that you are committed to contributing and not just receiving information. If you frequently update your networking sites, you improve your search-engine advantage.

BE SMART IN YOUR SEARCH

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, employers rely first on internal networks when looking for job applicants. It makes sense that they would turn to those they trust when needing to find new employees. No matter which job-search strategies you use, always ask yourself if there is anyone in your network who might have even a remote connection to the organization you’re targeting. Having someone on the inside mention your name as the resumes are being scanned can be the difference between being noticed and being overlooked.

PRO TIP

Be sure to utilize Handshake for all of your career needs — it can not only connect you with job and internship opportunities, but Handshake also allows you to schedule your own appointments for Career Center services. Try it now at ua.joinhandshake.com.
If you want to create a great resume and ace your interview, you will need to know the prospective employer. Learning details about the organization allows you to identify its needs and market yourself accordingly. Knowledge gained from employer research also enables you to conduct a more focused, effective job search and confirm that the work environment will be a good fit.

**WHY SHOULD I RESEARCH EMPLOYERS?**

Researching a company gives you valuable information before you interview and even before you send out your resume. Once you know about an organization, you can shape your resume and cover letter to reflect your abilities and knowledge that will benefit the company. During the interview, the knowledge gained from your research will enable you to carry on a productive conversation.

**WHERE CAN I FIND INFORMATION ABOUT EMPLOYERS?**

It is best to use a variety of resources to obtain a broader range of information. Most organizations have websites with mission, history, services, etc. Using search engines and social media sites will give you current information. If you find negative information, be sure to check it against other credible sources before making assumptions. Talk with those who know the organization. Be positive in your comments and neutral in your response to negative comments. You are gathering information, not sharing your opinions.

- Company website
- Social media sites (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, et al.)
- Chambers of Commerce
- Government offices — local, state, and federal
- Better Business Bureau
- Campus career fairs
- UA alumni events
- Professional associations
- Trade shows
- Annual reports
- Stock reports
- Former employees
- News websites
- Business publications
- In-house publications
- Competitors and suppliers
- Civic and professional organizations
- Reference USA (referenceusa.com; free access on UA campus)

**TIPS FOR CONDUCTING EMPLOYER RESEARCH**

- Use a variety of sources and approaches to get a more comprehensive view.
- Research other organizations in the same field to make comparisons.
- Attend career fairs and employer information sessions on campus.
- Request a copy of the in-house newsletter or magazine for info on the organization’s operations.
- Speak to former employees if you know any, but realize that one person’s view may not represent the majority.

**EMPLOYER CREDIBILITY**

If you learn of a hiring organization that sounds questionable to you for whatever reason, it is worth your time to contact the Better Business Bureau to confirm the employer’s identity. Avoid jobs that require you to pay money up front, and never provide your Social Security number, driver’s license number, or date of birth until you have confirmed the legitimacy of the employer and the job offer.
EMPLOYER RESEARCH WORKSHEET

Current Contact Information

ORGANIZATION _______________________________ WEBSITE _______________________________
ADDRESS _______________________________ PHONE/FAX _______________________________
CITY, STATE, ZIP _______________________________ EMAIL _______________________________
OTHER OFFICE LOCATIONS _______________________________

Learning About the Organization

HISTORY _______________________________

PRODUCTS/SERVICES PROVIDED _______________________________

ORGANIZATION TYPE: PUBLIC / PRIVATE / NONPROFIT SUBSIDIARIES _______________________________
PARENT ORGANIZATION _______________________________ UNIONIZED: YES / NO

INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY _______________________________

RECENT ACTIVITIES (Has latest news coverage been good or bad?) _______________________________

NEW PRODUCTS _______________________________ JOINT VENTURES _______________________________

ACQUISITIONS _______________________________ INNOVATIONS _______________________________

SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY _______________________________

Learning About the People Within the Organization

CEO/President (Titles of key personnel vary by industry) _______________________________

VICE PRESIDENTS _______________________________

OFFICERS/BOARD MEMBERS _______________________________

MANAGERS/DIRECTORS _______________________________ HUMAN RESOURCES _______________________________

ORGANIZATIONAL PHILOSOPHY _______________________________

Note: Depending on your field, you may have different categories to research. For example, prospective teachers researching school systems will want to find out about class sizes, community and parent involvement, student achievement, and district goals and resources. Learn what is important for your field and make sure you gather information relevant to your search and employment. Conclude if an organization you’re researching meets your requirements for a good match and determine how you can tailor your application materials and interview discussion to show them why you’re the candidate they need.
In order to feel satisfied that you have made a wise career decision, you want to find an organization that shares your values and offers you the work environment and benefits you desire.

**IDENTIFY YOUR CAREER AND WORKPLACE VALUES**

Consider what is most important to you when evaluating the benefits, work environment, and opportunities. Examples include:

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<td>On-site health services</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Financial gain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabbaticals</td>
<td>Variety</td>
<td>Recognition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RESEARCH TO FIND THE RIGHT FIT**

- Research the organization’s website, looking for signs of what you value in the workplace. Read the mission statement, vision statement, and company newsletter. You might also find information from LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter.
- Review the benefits and policies of the organization. If you want to work for an organization that values diversity, see if it has nondiscrimination policies. Does it appear that there are others like you working in the organization? Are they in management?
- Search beyond the employer’s website for news (good or bad) about the organization.
- Try to talk with current employees to assess their satisfaction.

**MAKING A POSITIVE SOCIAL OR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

Often referred to as “impact careers,” careers of service are found in all fields. Avenues for making a difference range from being directly involved with projects to investing in organizations that oversee the work. The following resources have a wealth of information to help you learn more about aligning your professional interests with social, economic, and environmental needs:

**Impact Careers Resources**

- NET IMPACT: netimpact.org
- Idealist Careers: idealist.org

**NEED HELP IDENTIFYING YOUR WORKPLACE VALUES?**

You may have a clear idea of your workplace values, but many job-seekers focus only on their interests and abilities and neglect to spend time reflecting on what they truly value. The Career Center offers resources that guide you through the process of ranking your workplace priorities. CareerBeam is among the resources offered that include exercises designed to help you identify what you value in a job and organization. Visit career.sl.ua.edu and click the Resources tab.
Reviewing (or starting) a resume with the help of a career consultant or peer advisor can help your documents stand out from the rest.

On-campus interviews happen every fall and spring and are hosted by the Career Center. Mock interviews can help you prepare for the real deal.

RESUMES, LETTERS, AND INTERVIEWS

Writing an Effective Resume  27-28
Action Verbs for Your Resume  28
Highlighting Skills and Competencies  29
Special Resumes  30-32
Resume Summary Section  33
Creating a Scanner-Friendly Resume  33
Resume Samples  34-39
Preparing a Curriculum Vitae (CV)  40
References  41
Cover Letters  42-43
Other Letters  44-46
Portfolio Preparation Tips  45
Interview Success  48-52
Negotiating Salary  53
WRITING AN EFFECTIVE RESUME

Begin by creating a comprehensive document, then tailor it for each job.

1. **MAKE A LIST OF YOUR EXPERIENCES:** Generate a list of everything you have done or accomplished in college relating to jobs, campus activities, class projects, travel abroad, sports, volunteer activities, awards, honors, etc.

2. **MAKE A LIST OF YOUR SKILLS:** Generate a list of your skills including foreign language, technical skills, and any skills you can accurately claim. Decide if these skills closely align with specific experiences you’ve had. If that’s the case, you might incorporate them into the bullet points for that particular experience. Example: Demonstrate excellent interpersonal skills working with diverse clients. Otherwise, you might include them in a Skills or Core Competencies section.

3. **WRITE SECTION HEADINGS:** Determine your section headings based on the content you have to share. Do not simply use headings you’ve seen on sample resumes unless you have the content to fit. Place your Education heading after your contact information, then select the headings that apply to you. Examples:
   - Education Abroad
   - Relevant Experience (Paid or unpaid experience relevant to the target position/audience)
   - Cooperative Education (This can be its own heading or go under Relevant Experience)
   - Internship (This can be its own heading go under Relevant Experience)
   - Additional Experience (Experience that may not be directly related but still shows skills and work ethic)
   - Leadership (This can be a separate section if you have several leadership roles; otherwise, you can list Leadership with the appropriate involvement heading)
   - Undergraduate Research
   - Campus Involvement
   - Community Involvement
   - Awards/Honors

4. **WRITE BULLET POINTS:** Employers want to see accomplishments on your resume, not just tasks. Use this formula writing your bullet points:
   
   ![Formula]
   
   Example: Organized three fundraisers resulting in donations of more than $5,000.

   If you cannot name a specific result of your actions, you can highlight the skill demonstrated. Example: Demonstrated respect and professionalism in working with all customers and staff.

   Adverbs like “independently” and “successfully” may also add meaning to a bullet point.

**Bullet Points That Show Results**

Here are examples of weak bullet points from various jobs that are made stronger by including action verbs and results:

**WEAK:** Assisted with promotions  
**STRONG:** Managed social media accounts generating increase in traffic to website and participation in contests

**WEAK:** Duties included customer service  
**STRONG:** Provided excellent customer service during each shift, garnering positive feedback from clients and manager

**WEAK:** Serve as treasurer  
**STRONG:** Oversee budget of $30,000, tracking all spending and monitoring adherence to policies

**WEAK:** Responsible for taking care of children  
**STRONG:** Maintain safe, pleasant environment for three children, ages 2-7 years

**WEAK:** Ran lawn service  
**STRONG:** Generated new business for personal lawn service by prioritizing customer satisfaction

**WEAK:** Assisted as tutor  
**STRONG:** Tailored strategies to student’s learning style, resulting in improvement from C- to A-
The following action verbs may help you as you write your bullet points.

**GENERAL LIST**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accomplished</th>
<th>Recognized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dealt</td>
<td>Calculated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved</td>
<td>Earned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projected</td>
<td>Interviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieved</td>
<td>Recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debated</td>
<td>Closed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Included</td>
<td>Edited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoted</td>
<td>Introduced</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advised</td>
<td>Recorded</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decided</td>
<td>Coached</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increased</td>
<td>Educated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purchased</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appraised</td>
<td>Renovated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defined</td>
<td>Combined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicated</td>
<td>Ensured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified</td>
<td>Launched</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assured</td>
<td>Streamlined</td>
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<tr>
<td>Delivered</td>
<td>Communicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructed</td>
<td>Entertained</td>
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<tr>
<td>Questioned</td>
<td>Located</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brieved</td>
<td>Summarized</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrated</td>
<td>Computed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insured</td>
<td>Examined</td>
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<td>Rated</td>
<td>Mediated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Budgeted</td>
<td>Sketched</td>
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<td>Dispensed</td>
<td>Conceived</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpreted</td>
<td>Excelled</td>
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**PLANNING-BASED ACTION WORDS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administered</th>
<th>Forecast</th>
<th>Researched</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Formulated</td>
<td>Revised</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commissioned</td>
<td>Identified</td>
<td>Strategized</td>
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<tr>
<td>Determined</td>
<td>Observed</td>
<td>Studied</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developed</td>
<td>Planned</td>
<td>Tailored</td>
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<tr>
<td>Devised</td>
<td>Prepared</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluated</td>
<td>Prioritized</td>
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**ORGANIZATIONAL ACTION WORDS**

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<tr>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Activated</td>
<td>Committed</td>
<td>Instituted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjusted</td>
<td>Confirmed</td>
<td>Obtained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allocated</td>
<td>Contracted</td>
<td>Ordered</td>
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<tr>
<td>Altered</td>
<td>Coordinated</td>
<td>Procured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointed</td>
<td>Customized</td>
<td>Recruited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arranged</td>
<td>Delegated</td>
<td>Rectified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assembled</td>
<td>Designated</td>
<td>Selected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cataloged</td>
<td>Designed</td>
<td>Secured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centralized</td>
<td>Established</td>
<td>Simplified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charked</td>
<td>Facilitated</td>
<td>Suggested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>Implemented</td>
<td>Tracked</td>
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</table>

**EXECUTING ACTION WORDS**

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cared Out</td>
<td>Distributed</td>
<td>Produced</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collected</td>
<td>Installed</td>
<td>Proofed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed</td>
<td>Operated</td>
<td>Sold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conducted</td>
<td>Performed</td>
<td>Transacted</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**LEADING ACTION WORDS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assumed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chaired</td>
<td>Led</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conducted</td>
<td>Managed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Directed</td>
<td>Motivated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elect</td>
<td>Mentored</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>Pioneered</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empowered</td>
<td>Promoted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encouraged</td>
<td>Raised</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enlisted</td>
<td>Set</td>
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<tr>
<td>Envisioned</td>
<td>Spearheaded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostered</td>
<td>Stimulated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Founded</td>
<td>Strengthened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided</td>
<td>Supervised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hired</td>
<td>Trained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced</td>
<td>Visualized</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUPERVISING ACTION WORDS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjusted</th>
<th>Measured</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analyzed</td>
<td>Modified</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apportioned</td>
<td>Officiated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessed</td>
<td>Oversaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compared</td>
<td>Reviewed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlled</td>
<td>Revised</td>
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<tr>
<td>Corrected</td>
<td>Screened</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discovered</td>
<td>Set</td>
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<tr>
<td>Established</td>
<td>Scrutinized</td>
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<tr>
<td>Graded</td>
<td>Supervised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspected</td>
<td>Ugraded</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Words You’ll Use**

Which terms listed do you think you might use on your resume? What other power words are you considering? Write your favorites here.

| Write your favorites here. | Write your favorites here. | Write your favorites here. | Write your favorites here. | Write your favorites here. |

---

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA CAREER CENTER**
HIGHLIGHTING SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES

With each job you’re pursuing, you need to tailor your resume to show that you meet the requirements. Look at all the skills listed in the job posting and make sure your resume includes all those you possess.

Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) are used by some employers to scan for keywords, including skills required. Whether your resume is being reviewed by a software program or an actual person, it needs to have language that matches the job posting.

DO YOU NEED A SEPARATE SKILLS SECTION?

If you have applied skills in specific roles, you can incorporate them into bullet points for those positions. Examples of bullet points can be found on page 27.

If you have applied skills or developed competencies in a variety of settings, you can create a separate section to highlight them. Be sure you can provide examples of how you have demonstrated each as you might be asked to do that in an interview.

SPECIAL RESUMES

Chronological and Functional Formats

The resume format most often used by students pursuing internships, co-ops, or entry-level positions, is the chronological resume. Chronological resumes focus on experiences and the skills and results associated with each. These experiences are divided by categories (ex. Relevant Experience, Campus Involvement) and are listed in reverse chronological order.

The functional resume shows accomplishments under areas of expertise. This format may work well for some career changers with experience in areas outside the new profession. For example, a veteran with military experience may choose a functional resume as a way of showing how experiences and skills translate to civilian jobs.

Not all employers like functional resumes because they prefer to see the details of accomplishments with each position held. Talk with your career consultant if you are trying to decide which format to use. A combination of the chronological and functional formats (referred to as a combination or hybrid resume) may suit your needs.
Military experience provides opportunities to develop a range of skills, many of which transfer to civilian jobs. When you review the list of skills on page 10, you may quickly identify specific responsibilities in the military that allowed you to learn or strengthen those skills.

Once you begin targeting jobs, you’ll want to write a resume that includes your military experience described in terms readily understood by someone without a military background. Avoid using military jargon, abbreviations, and acronyms.

The following are resources that can help you translate your military experience and job titles into terms familiar to civilian employers:

- VA for Vets online Career Center: vaforvets.va.gov
- Veterans’ Employment & Training Service Transition Assistance Program: dol.gov/vets/programs

Applying for a job with the federal government is different from applying for a position in the private sector. For more information about applying for federal government jobs, go to the Resource Center at usajobs.gov.

Talking with peers about your career interests can lead to learning about opportunities and/or connections in your chosen field. You may also learn how others have effectively promoted their military experience to civilian employers. The Center for Veteran and Military Affairs (vets.ua.edu) provides opportunities for student veterans to meet and build relationships.

**PRO TIP**

Focus on the skills you developed in leadership, communication, teamwork, management, supervision, training, translating, coordinating, planning, monitoring, and organizing. They are among the many transferable skills gained through military experience.
Resumes for Federal Jobs

Resumes for federal jobs include more details than those written for jobs in other sectors. Begin building this resume as you would any other by listing experiences, campus involvement, etc. What makes the federal resume different is the details you will need to provide.

**Target Job Information:** Announcement number, title, series, and grade of job you’re pursuing

**Personal Information:** Full name, mailing address with zip code, phone number(s), Social Security number, country of citizenship, veteran’s preference, reinstatement eligibility, highest federal civilian grade held

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example of Contact Information Details:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Denny Doe (full name required)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>123 Roll Tide Drive (street address required for federal job resumes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuscaloosa, AL 35487 US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile: 205-348-5848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:john.d.doe@fake.com">john.d.doe@fake.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Education:** High school: name and location; date awarded diploma or GED. Colleges/universities: name and location; major(s); type of degree and date awarded

**Job-Related Training:** Seminars, certifications, licenses, or trainings completed that relate to your professional development and the position description

**Language Skills:** Language experience/knowledge and level(s) of proficiency

**Skills:** Skills you have acquired that relate to the target job or to your ability to contribute in any work environment

**Work Experience:** Job title, duties and accomplishments; employer’s name and address; supervisor’s name and phone number; starting and ending dates; hours worked per week; salary; indication of whether or not current supervisor may be contacted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example of Work Experience Details:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Corps Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/2018-8/2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham, AL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$382/week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Level: NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 hours/week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intern Supervisor: Alice Gorgas (205-348-5848)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bullet points that show duties, accomplishments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Professional Affiliations:** Professional associations, societies, clubs, or other organizations. Highlight positions held within these and list any volunteer experience associated with these organizations if related to the target job description.

**Additional Information:** There may be other information that relates to the job you’re seeking or that generally shows your professionalism and work ethic. This might include class projects, honors, awards, publications, memberships in professional associations, leadership activities, community involvement, etc.

---

**PRO TIP**

Be sure to visit [usajobs.gov](http://usajobs.gov) and use the Resume Builder to create a resume that meets all requirements.
# SPECIAL RESUMES

## Resumes for Graduate or Professional School

A resume written for graduate school or professional school (law, medical, dental, etc.) should enhance your application and provide the admissions committee a glimpse into your academic accomplishments and experiences as an undergraduate student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
<th>EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION/RELEVANT EXPERIENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic information is a focal point of this resume. Highlight accomplishments in the following areas as subheadings under Education or as unique categories:</td>
<td>Focus on experiences related to your educational or career goals:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Internships/Co-ops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferences</td>
<td>Class Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honors/Awards</td>
<td>Shadowing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publications/Presentations</td>
<td>Work or Volunteer Experience in Field</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION/RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Focus on experiences related to your educational or career goals:

- Internships/Co-ops
- Class Projects
- Shadowing
- Work or Volunteer Experience in Field

## CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Include campus or community activities that developed your leadership, communication, time-management, and other skills that can lead to success in post-graduate study.

## ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES

Depending on your experiences and accomplishments, you may have additional categories to include. If you are uncertain about this, talk with a career consultant and explore the free advice offered on accepted.com.

---

### Example of Formatting Undergraduate Research on a Resume

**Research**

Research Assistant, Social Cognitive Emotive Neuroscience (SCEN) Lab, August 2017-May 2018
The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL

*Here, briefly describe the research and results, and specifics about your role. Be sure to say if the research was published and/or presented.*

### Example of Formatting Shadowing Experience on a Resume

**Shadowing**

Something Hospital, Somewhere, AL May 2018-August 2018

- Shadowed cardiologists for total of 50 hours
- Observed interactions with patients from ages 18 to 90
- Gained understanding of teamwork required in hospital setting
Check each of these items before submitting your resume:

**FORMATTING**
- Contact information is current. Street address is omitted.
- The font size is adequate (at least 11 point) and margins are at least ½ to 1 inch all around.
- Spacing and punctuations are consistent, and sections are evenly aligned on the page.
- Dates are provided for graduation, jobs, leadership positions, etc., and are presented in same format throughout resume (i.e., not December 2018 followed by 9/2/18).
- If used, abbreviations are accurate and consistent throughout resume.
- Names of organizations are written out (ex. Delta Epsilon Iota versus DEI).

**CONTENT**
- All content is accurate and tailored for the target employer. This includes highlighting relevant experience before other experiences and incorporating words from the job posting.
- Your degree is worded accurately. Check the UA Catalog to be sure.
- There are no spelling and no grammatical errors. Proofread very carefully.
- Content under each heading is presented in reverse chronological order (most recent first).
- Locations (towns and states only) are included for each experience.
- The words “I,” “me,” or “my” are not used in any part of the resume.

**BULLET POINTS**
- Bullet points focus on results accomplished in a role as opposed to tasks assigned to a position.
- Bullet points are written in phrases that begin with action verbs or descriptive adverbs like independently or successfully. (Action verb examples can be found on page 28.)
- Some bullet points include numbers to quantify achievements. Example: “Led group of volunteers” becomes “Organized and led 12 volunteers resulting in successful renovation of playground.”
- Bullets points do not begin with “Responsible for” or “Duties included…”
- The appropriate verb tense is used throughout (first person, present tense for current positions, first person, past tense for previous positions). Correct: “Manage” or “Managed” (present or past tense). Incorrect: “Manages” or “Managing” (no “s” or “ing” endings).

Is there a format or style that all employers prefer? There is no “one size fits all” with resumes. One employer may want to see unique hobbies and the next employer may consider that a waste of resume space. Research your industry and, when possible, the employer you’re targeting. You may not find answers to your specific questions, but you will likely learn about the culture of the organization. You can use that knowledge as a guide in creating your resume for that job. Remember that your resume is not the only way to share your information. Your cover letter, Handshake profile, and LinkedIn profile are among the avenues for giving employers additional insight into your qualifications and personality.

**CREATING A RESUME WITH SCANNER-FRIENDLY TEXT**

Organizations receiving a high volume of applications may use an applicant tracking system (ATS) to scan resumes for keywords associated with their requirements. To ensure that your resume makes it through the scanning process, be sure to check the following:

- Check the items on the Resume Checklist.
- As you tailor your resume, incorporate language from the job posting into your resume. Include the keywords appropriately by making them part of your bullet points or by having a separate skills section.
- Do not copy/paste the job posting as the ATS may be capable of detecting “keyword stuffing.” Your resume also needs to appeal to humans.
- Spell out each organization, title, certification, etc., but also provide the acronym. That way you’re covered no matter which version the scanner recognizes.
- As you should with every resume, proofread very carefully. Misspelled words will not be recognized.
MARY WASHINGTON
www.linkedin.com/in/marywashington | 205.555.5555 | mwash@gmail.com

EDUCATION
Bachelor of Science in Commerce and Business Administration, May 20XX
The University of Alabama, Culverhouse College of Business, Tuscaloosa, AL
Major: Marketing Specialization: Services Marketing
GPA: 3.4/4.0 Major GPA: 3.8/4.0 (for GPA of Business)
Dean’s List

RELEVANT COURSE WORK
• Baccalaurate Psychology (Spring 20XX), Strategic Marketing (Fall 20XX), Principles of Social Media (Fall 20XX)

STUDY ABROAD
• American Institute for Foreign Studies, Barcelona, Spain
  • Engaged in collaborative learning with international counterparts through projects, seminars, and coursework

PROJECT WORK
• Organizational Theory and Behavior (GBA 300) Spring 20XX
  Class Project, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
  • Researched four companies’ 10K reports to determine profitability and marketability
  • Collaborated with six team members to compose final report and recommendations utilizing Excel and PowerPoint
  • Strengthened public speaking skills by presenting material in a business environment

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE
Marketing and Sales Intern, April 20XX – Present
Chick-fil-A, Tuscaloosa, AL
  • Foster client relations through needs-based promotional activities, events, and creative advertising designs
  • Create flyers and marketing documents through InDesign to be used in promotions to students
  • Connect client orders to local stores and assist with catering while maintaining accurate billing and invoicing records

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE
Recruitment Chair, January 20XX – Present
The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
  • Serve as the direct contact for all recruitment events, two per week for 6 weeks
  • Supervise 10 committee members and assign responsibilities as necessary
  • Contact approximately 200 recruits per day through cold-calling

HONORS & ACTIVITIES
Recipient of President’s Scholarship and 2 additional academic scholarships
Member of National Society of Collegiate Scholars and 2 additional honor societies
American Marketing Association
Culverhouse Connections

VOLUNTEER SERVICE
Impact Alabama
Al’s Pals

COMPUTER SKILLS
Microsoft Office Suite, Adobe InDesign, Illustrator

PRO TIPS
Remember to tailor your resume to the job for which you are applying. Remember to highlight transferable skills that are relevant to the job. Write your degree correctly at all possible. Make bullet points quantifiable if possible. Write your resume to emphasize relevant skills which you are applying.
Sean L. Wareham
(205) 555-4444 swareham@crimson.ua.edu

EDUCATION
Bachelor of Science in Commerce & Business Administration
The University of Alabama, Culverhouse College of Business, Tuscaloosa, AL, May 2019
Major: Accounting
Specialization: Professional Accounting
Minor: Computer Technology and Applications
Overall GPA: 3.50/4.0

Computer Skills: Experience with QuickBooks and Microsoft Excel.

Languages: Fluent in Spanish and intermediate knowledge of Italian.

Study Abroad, Art History in Italy, The University of Alabama, June 2015
• Traveled throughout Italy, immersed in its culture and society.
• Completed a four-week study in the Art Patronage of Florence.

WORK EXPERIENCE
Internal Audit Intern, HealthSouth Corporation, Birmingham, AL, May-August 2015
• Audited cash for HealthSouth rehabilitation facilities with minimal supervision.
• Tested and documented 90X controls for HealthSouth internal audit department.
• Assisted in the implementation of a new Accounts Payable system.

Assistant Kitchen Manager, Artie’s Pizza, Gordo, AL, January 2014-May 2015
• Supervised up to eight employees while also cooking food and serving customers.
• Developed and maintained work schedules for up to 10 employees.
• Completed bookkeeping and filing tasks.
• Computed payroll, worked with payroll service, and prepared payroll check.
• Performed inventory control, maintained an inventory of wells, and prepared purchase orders.

Sales and Accounting Staff, Bailey’s Clothing, Athens, AL, January 2012-December 2013
• Involved in all aspects of the business and highly proficient in Point of Sale Software.
• Completed bookkeeping and filing tasks.
• Computed payroll, worked with payroll service, and prepared payroll check.

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE
Treasurer, Delta Phi Alpha Fraternity, Tuscaloosa, AL, August 2014-Present
• Prepare and monitor the chapter’s $500,000 budget.
• Maintain chapter accounts, perform reconciliations, and prepare financial reports.
• Deposit and withdraw funds required to assure the chapter’s financial stability.

Chief Justice, University of Alabama Academic Honors Council, May 2014-May 2015
• Served as student voice on Culverhouse College of Commerce academic integrity issues.
• Collaborated with other council members to create feelz ways to foster the school’s standard on academic integrity and reinstate Code of Conduct.
• Led planning for 1st Annual “Night with the Dean”.

Head Counselor, Red Retreat Camp, Prattville, AL, May 2013-July 2013
• Trained, supervised, and evaluated 19 counselors and staff members.
• Monitored and assisted in day-to-day operations of camp.
• Reported directly to camp managers.

INVOLVEMENT AND HONORS
Beta Alpha Psi Accounting Honor Society, Culverhouse Connections, President’s and Dean’s Lists, Omicron Delta Kappa, Institute of Management Accountants, ABC Term Accounting Scholarship, Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, Habitat for Humanity

Lynsey Chambers
somerson@crimson.ua.edu

EDUCATION
Candidate for Bachelor of Science in Commerce and Business Administration,
The University of Alabama, Culverhouse College of Business
Graduation Date: Month, Year
Major: Management Information Systems
Minor: French
GPA: 3.10/4.0

Lynsey Chambers, Tuscaloosa, AL 35404
(205) 333-3333
www.linkedin.com/in/lctudent

PRO TIPS
Remember to tailor your resume to highlight your transferable skills that are relevant to the job for which you are applying. Make bullet points quantifiable if possible. Write your PRO TIPS.
George L. Washington
GMawson3@gmail.com
205-555-1234

EDUCATION
Bachelor of Science in Commerce and Business Administration, May 20xx
The University of Alabama, College of Business, Tuscaloosa, AL
Major: Operations Management
Minor: XXX
Specialization: XXX
GPA: 3.8/4.0
Dean’s List, President’s List, University Honors College

COMPUTER SKILLS
Statistical/Production Software: Minitab, Profiler, STORM, LEXIS, MICROSOFT Solver.
Business Tools: Microsoft Office Suite and Outlook
Languages: Visual Basic, C++, Excel, Fortran, HTML, Java

PROJECT WORK
Spring 20xx
Production Planning and Control (GM 321)
Proper Management, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
• Utilized Microsoft Project to map project requirements
• Reviewed continuous improvement principles involved in the production of goods and services
• Demonstrated technologies in scheduling, in disallowing resources, in speeding up a project, and in dealing with risk

RELEVANT COURSEWORK
Introduction to Management Science Spring 20xx; Production Planning and Control, Spring 20xx; SCHEDULING, FALL 20xx

STUDY AbROAD
American Institute for Swedish Studies (AIFS), Barcelona, Spain
• Engaged in collaborative learning with international counterparts through projects, seminars, and coursework

ADDITIONAL WORK EXP.
Student Worker
August 20xx-March 20xx
Material Management Office, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
• Learned quality control techniques such as SPC and QC
• Dispatched work orders to appropriate personnel

LEADERSHIP
January 20xx-Present
Reps, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
• Serve as the director for all recruitment events, 2 per week for 6 weeks
• Supervise 20-30 members and assign responsibilities as necessary
• Contact approximately 2000 recruits per day through cold-calling

ACTIVITIES
Society of Operations Management Students - Member, January 20xx-Present
National Association of Manufacturers - Member, August 20xx-Present
National Association of Industrial Technology - Member, August 20xx-Present

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
Tuscaloosa Tomato Relief, May 20xx
• Habitat for Humanity, December 20xx

HONORS/AWARDS
Recipient of academic scholarships
Or list individual scholarships/honor society if less than 6
**SAMPLE RESUMES**

**Engineering**

Tyler R. "Ty" Thompson  
Mentor, Mentor UPP (Undergraduate Peer Partnering), 2016-Present  
Society of Women Engineers, 2016-Present  
Volunteer, Women's and Gender Resource Center, 2016-Present  

PRO TIP for ENGINEERING STUDENTS  
Include your GPA on your resume and, if you’ve reached that point, your senior project.

**Education**

Maria Martinez  
Mmartinez7@crimson.ua.edu  
205-348-4839  
LinkedIn.com/mariamartinez  

PRO TIP for EDUCATION STUDENTS  
By the time you’re a senior and have experiences from multiple placements, you may have a resume longer than one page. List your most relevant experience first and use bullet points to show accomplishments and tasks that are valuable to employers.
HEATHER HIBBLETON  
Tuscaloosa, AL  
jennifer.jareau@gmail.com  
205-348-5848

EDUCATION  
Bachelor of Science in Human Environmental Sciences, August 2019  
The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL  
Major: Human Development and Family Studies  
Concentration: Adolescent and Youth Development  
GPA: 3.9/4.0

INTERNSHIP  
Program Development Intern, May-August 2018  
Youth Rising Campaign, Washington, D.C.  
• Developed and presented civic engagement programs for teens  
• Co-authored the “Rise” brochure for nationwide distribution  
• Introduced incentives on social media sites, recruiting 275 followers in two weeks and increasing program attendance

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE  
Volunteer Coordinator, January 2018-Present  
Tuscaloosa, AL  
• Coordinate 50 plus volunteers in food preparation  
• Partner with churches and social services agencies for financial and personnel support  
• Receive satisfaction rating of 4.9/5.0 consistently on volunteer feedback surveys

Volunteer, February-November 2017  
Williams Health Services, Northport, AL  
• Contributed ideas used in adventure programs for younger teens  
• Organized library inventory by recommending and utilizing cataloging app  
• Independently handled various office tasks demonstrating professionalism and knowledge of services

WORK EXPERIENCE  
Catering Assistant, September 2015-Present  
Kristin’s Cakes and Catering, Tuscaloosa, AL  
• Handle routine store operations in absence of manager  
• Create theme parties for birthdays according to client’s budget  
• Earned the “Precisely Right” award three consecutive years based on customer feedback

CROSSROADS COMMUNITY CENTER, January-September 2016  
• Provided meals, assistance, and support to individuals in need

AL’S PALS (Mentoring Program), September-December 2015  
• Serve as a mentor to at-risk youth, providing guidance and support

PRO TIP for NURSING STUDENTS  
By the time you’re a senior and have experiences from multiple placements, you may have a resume longer than one page. Make sure you list your most relevant experiences first and show bullet points that are valuable to the targeted employer.

EDUCATION  
Bachelor of Science in Nursing, May 2019  
Capstone College of Nursing, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL  
Minor 1: Biology  
Minor 2: Psychology  
GPA: 3.9/4.0

CERTIFICATION/LICENSE  
Alabama Board of Nursing  
Eligible to take the National Council of Licensure Exam (NCLEX)

EXPERIENCE  
Preceptorship, January 2019-Present  
UAB SICU, Birmingham, AL (225 hours)  
• Monitor patient progress immediately following surgical procedures  
• Coordinate discharge procedures with patients

Nursing Student, January 2017-December 2018  
The Tuscaloosa Health Department, Tuscaloosa, AL  
• Performed injections, skin tests and vision/hearing screenings  
• Recorded all activity with patients

COMPUTER SKILLS  
Meditech, Electronic Medication Administration Record, Microsoft Office Suite

HONORS/ACTIVITIES  
Sigma Theta Tau (Honor Society of Nursing)  
Capstone College of Nursing Association of Nursing Students  
Alabama Association of Nursing Students
Kendra King
507-A Umbridge Street
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401
205-348-5848
kendra.king@gmail.com
linkedin.com/kendraking

EDUCATION
Bachelor of Social Work, May 2019
The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
GPA: 3.62/4.0
Dean's List: five semesters

SKILLS
Conversational Spanish, Interpersonal Communication
Researching, Networking, Writing, Facilitating

FIELD PLACEMENT
Residence Counselor, January 2019-Present
Raeford Village, Montgomery, AL
• Co-facilitate group sessions for male teenagers
• Interview low-risk juveniles and perform initial assessments
• Observe residents' interactions to chart behavior
• Demonstrate clinical skills in drawing conclusions from testing and observing

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE
Para Educator, June-December 2018
Barnes & Noble Children's Center, Tuscaloosa, AL
• Guided clients in performing daily living skills demonstrating competence in behavior management
• Transferred clients to medical appointments
• Wrote shift summaries for treatment team

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE
Sales Associate, October 2017-May 2018
Great Outdoors, Tuscaloosa, AL
Worked 25 hours per week to help finance education

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE
National Association of Social Workers, 2016-Present
Sigma Phi Alpha Sorority, Philanthropy Chair, 2016-17

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES
Meals on Wheels, 2017-Present
Soup Kitchen, 2016-17
West Circle Community Council, 2016
Temporary Emergency Services, 2016

Francesca Freshman
FrancescaFreshman@gmail.com
205-348-5848

EDUCATION
Bachelor of Arts in Communication and Information Sciences, May 2022
The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
Major: Communication Studies
Minor: Spanish
East High School, Mytown, California, June 2018
GPA: 3.8/4.0

WORK EXPERIENCE
Sales Associate, Big Mart, Mytown, CA, June 2017-August 2018
• Maintained detailed knowledge of inventory to provide customers with best solutions
• Demonstrated adaptability and teamwork in assisting as needed in different departments
• Earned employee-of-the-month award twice in 12 months

Child Care Provider, Mytown, CA, May 2013-August 2018
• Cared for three children, ages 5 to 9
• Created fun, educational activities prioritizing safety and age-appropriateness

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE
Participant, Alabama Action, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL, August 2018
• Worked closely with team of 15 fellow freshmen to rebuild school playground
• Gained understanding of challenges faced by communities with minimal resources

Volunteer, Soup Kitchen, Mytown, CA, September 2016-May 2017
• Worked 10 hours each week stocking supplies and serving food

Volunteer, Sycamore Place, Mytown, CA, June-August 2017
• Promoted fundraisers through social media resulting in more contributions than previous years

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE
Team Captain, Varsity Soccer East High School, Mytown, CA, January-May 2018
• Directed team play according to coach’s strategy
• Mediated conflicts and encouraged positive behavior in all situations
• Received Coach’s Award for leadership and overall performance

Vice President, Spanish Club, Great High School, Mytown, CA, September 2016-May 2017
• Organized Spanish Trivia Night promoting interaction among 75-plus club members
• Successfully coordinated and facilitated several meetings including officer elections for coming year

PRO TIP
The resume used during your freshman year may have a mix of high school and college activities and achievements. Change any references to grade levels to actual years.

PRO TIP for SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS
By the time you’re a senior and have experiences from multiple placements, you may have a resume longer than one page. Make sure you list your most relevant experience first and use bullet points to show accomplishments and show the targeted employer what you’ve accomplished. If you have multiple placements from your last years, you may have a resume longer than one page. Make sure you list your most relevant experience first and use bullet points to show accomplishments and show the targeted employer what you’ve accomplished.
PREPARING A CURRICULUM VITAE

The curriculum vitae is a comprehensive biographical statement, typically three or more pages, emphasizing professional qualifications and activities. Below are tips to help you begin preparing your CV.

IS THE CV FOR YOU?

The curriculum vitae (also referred to as CV or vita) is a detailed and structured listing of education, publications, projects, awards, and work history. The CV works best for job-seekers applying for positions in academics or research. The CV may also work well for graduate school applicants required to elaborate on research experience and/or research interests.

The CV is far more detailed (typically 3-8 pages or more) than a resume (1-2 pages). The CV can include educational and work achievements, research experience, languages, skills, grants/fellowships/scholarships, classes, licenses or certifications, professional associations, and other relevant information. A resume is a shorter, concise document that highlights aspects of your background that relate to the position for which you are applying. Unless the prospective employer specifically requests a CV, it is safest to send a resume. Graduate students seeking employment outside academia will want to create a traditional resume instead of a CV.

Visit the Career Center main office for resources on sample CVs.

CV HEADINGS

CV headings may include some or all of the following:

- Personal and Contact Information
- Applicant Information
- Professional, Vocational, or Research Objective
- Education
- Relevant Course Work
- Awards, Honors, and Patents
- Research Experience
- Teaching Experience
- Relevant Experience
- Publications
- Related Skills (including technical)
- Presentations
- Conferences Attended
- Professional Licenses/Certifications
- Memberships and Associations
- Institutional Service
- Community Service

Sample CV

Cynthia Chinn
205-456-6859
Cynthia_chinn@gmail.com

EDUCATION
Master of Social Work
The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
Concentration: Children, Adolescents and their Families
Bachelor of Arts in Psychology
Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA

FIELD PLACEMENT
Medical Social Work Intern
Hospital for Children, Sometown, AL
- Lead weekly parent support groups, successfully engaging participants
- Provide emotional support for families
- Complete assessments and discharge plans for patients in TSICU

Graduate Social Work Intern
Family Service Center, Someplace, AL
- Completed intakes and assessed needs of emotionally disturbed youth with severe learning challenges
- Provided individual, group, and family therapy
- Maintained knowledge of community resources and made referrals as appropriate
- Served as mentor and tutor to at-risk adolescents

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE
Research Assistant
Dr. Faculty, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
- Performed multiple statistical tests using SPSS
- Analyzed data and drafted reports

Research Assistant
El Centro: National Latino Research Center on Domestic Violence
Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA
- Conducted evidence-based review for intervention evaluation
- Collected data through interviews with families
- Demonstrated competence using SPSS

GLOBAL EXPERIENCE
Erasmus
Complutense University of Madrid, Spain
- Experienced cultural immersion in Spanish literature, conversations in Spain

TRAINING
Spane, Portugal, Argentina, Costa Rica
- Mission Work
- Volunteer for Human Rights in Haiti
- Medical internship in Colombia

CONFERENCE ATTENDED
NASW, Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
APHA Regional Conference, Atlanta, GA

PUBLICATIONS and PRESENTATIONS

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA CAREER CENTER
PREPARING REFERENCES

Reference List

Some employers will ask you to provide a list of references from individuals who will be able to tell about your skills, work habits, and other qualifications. Generally, you will be asked to give a minimum of three. Consider supervisors, faculty members and advisors of organizations with which you are involved when identifying potential references. Employers want to hear from people who know your work habits and can talk about your performance.

Ask your selected contacts if they are willing to serve in this role before you list them. Provide them a copy of your resume so they have an idea of your experiences and the skills you are presenting to employers. You may also want to give them a brief overview of the job and requirements. Occasionally, employers will ask you to provide letters of recommendation.

Be sure to give your references all the accurate contact information and ample time (two weeks, if possible) to write a letter and send it by the deadline.

PRO TIP

A similar message can be used to ask for a letter of recommendation for graduate school.

Subject: [Your Name] Reference Request

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Jones:

I am writing to ask if you would be comfortable serving as a reference for me as I begin my job search. In [month], I will complete my undergraduate degree in [major], and I am exploring several opportunities in [field(s)].

Having [worked for you, been in your class, etc.], I believe you would provide potential employers valuable information related to my skills in [include relevant skills]. I have attached an updated copy of my resume and would be glad to provide additional information.

Thank you very much for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Your Name
The purpose of a cover letter is to entice the prospective employer to review your resume. A well-written, tailored cover letter and a resume targeting the specific job can be the winning combination that results in a call from the employer.

### Should I always send a cover letter?

If you have an opportunity to upload or send a cover letter along with your resume, do it! A cover letter is another marketing tool. Research the employer and craft your letter to demonstrate your knowledge of the organization and how you can contribute to its success.

### Format

You can use the standard business letter format (on 8½-by-11-inch paper). Some students choose to use the same heading that appears on their resume to create the appearance of a personal letterhead. For most job-seekers, a one-page cover letter is appropriate.

### Greeting

Try to identify a specific person involved in the hiring process; use “Dear Human Resources Manager:” or “Dear Hiring Manager:” if that is not possible. Do not use “Dear Sir or Madam:” or “To Whom It May Concern:” as those are considered outdated. Use a colon instead of a comma after the greeting.

### Emailing your cover letter

If you are going to email your resume, then the content of your cover letter can serve as the body of the email. If the employer requests that you attach both cover letter and resume, then your email will be a brief but professional message indicating that the requested documents are attached. Check to make sure they are attached before sending. Type the targeted position title in the subject line of the email. After sending your initial email, send a follow-up message asking if the attached documents were received.

### First paragraph

Refer to the position and how you learned about the opening. Include some piece of information to make the reader want to keep reading. If you have a mutual acquaintance whose name will get attention, this is the place to use it. If the job for which you are applying requires creative writing skills, then research how to write creatively while promoting your qualifications.

### Middle paragraph(s)

Draw a connection between your qualifications and experiences and the employer’s requirements and needs. Researching the organization will help you tailor this section and keep the reader’s attention. Use examples of how you have demonstrated skills they need.

### Closing paragraph

In closing the letter, establish your next step. Taking a proactive approach and stating that you will call within the next week or two to inquire about an interview is often an effective way to express your interest and initiative. If employers clearly state that they do not want phone calls, then do not say you will contact them by phone.
Sophia Spencer
sophia_spencer@gmail.com
123 Hire Street Tuscaloosa, AL 35405

September 21, 2018
Mr. Michael Morris
Human Resources Manager
Northwest Health Services
P.O. Box 1011
Seattle, WA 98101

Dear Mr. Morris:

I am writing to express my interest in the position of program manager with Northwest Health Services posted in The University of Alabama recruiting database, Handshake. With experience coordinating and implementing community programs, I have developed qualifications directly related to your needs.

Your initiatives in community partnerships are impressive and I would like to contribute my skills in strategic planning and assessment to the growth of these efforts. In my current position with Community Service Programs of West Alabama, I evaluate and promote supportive services including Meals on Wheels and Project SHARE. As the demand for services increases, I am challenged with implementing effective recruitment strategies while being fiscally responsible. Based on data collected, I designed a social media campaign resulting in a 45 percent increase in active volunteers.

Handling these responsibilities successfully while being a full-time college student requires the ability to manage time and priorities while also being flexible. Working well with people from diverse backgrounds and generations comes naturally to me, and I establish positive relationships with both long-term and prospective partners. In all responsibilities, I hold myself accountable, knowing that my role as an individual affects services provided to others.

The experiences and examples of initiative highlighted on my resume show my commitment to improving services to the community and individual clients. With skills that match those you require, I am confident that I can offer immediate assistance with your programs and marketing operations. Next week, I will contact you to discuss the possibility of meeting. In the meantime, you may reach me at 205-348-5848 or by email at sophia_spencer@gmail.com. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Signature may be placed here

Sophia Spencer
Networking is the most effective job-search strategy, and pursuing leads through letters is one way to expand your network and possibly obtain a job. A networking letter may be sent via traditional mail or email. An updated resume should accompany the letter.

**TONE**
The tone of a networking letter is professional but not overly formal if you know the individual. If the person is not a close acquaintance, then make the connection for him or her in the first paragraph.

**MESSAGE**
To be effective, your letter needs to provide a brief summary of the skills you can contribute to an employer. You may want to include a brief example of how you have demonstrated these skills.

**BE RESPECTFUL**
Keep the letter brief and positive. You are asking the reader for a favor, and you don’t want to appear negative and frustrated about your job search.

**ASK FOR ASSISTANCE AND DIRECTION**
The purpose of your letter is to get advice and possible job leads. Take initiative to follow up and inquire about other potential contacts.

---

**Sample Networking/Prospecting Letter**

14 Championship Drive
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

October 11, 2018

Mr. Patrick Potter
Director of College Recruiting Patterson Inc.
4694 Murphy Drive
Pasadena, CA 91101

Dear Mr. Potter:

While exploring job possibilities in the marketing field, I read information about Patterson Inc. and wanted to inquire about employment opportunities with your team. My goal is to build a career in marketing and I would like to move to the West Coast after graduation.

My interest in marketing began when I volunteered at The Alabama Sports Festival as a college freshman. While there, I contributed to the promotion of an annual fundraiser, applying my creative thinking abilities and knowledge of the area. I began taking upper-level marketing classes and knew immediately the subject was the perfect fit. My internship with the West Coast League last summer convinced me to pursue a career in marketing and launched my quest to live in a western state.

My resume is enclosed for your consideration. My education and experience match the qualifications of your marketing team, but they do not tell the whole story. Supervisor feedback and comments from co-workers confirm that I have the interpersonal skills and motivation needed to build a successful career in promotions and marketing research.

I understand from researching Patterson Inc. that you maintain a very busy recruiting schedule this time of year. I thought we might be able to talk by phone for just a few minutes during the upcoming week. I will give you a call on October 18 to discuss employment possibilities. In the meantime, if you need to contact me, my number is 205-348-5848 and my email is benbutler@crimson.ua.edu.

Thank you very much for considering my request. I look forward to talking with you.

Sincerely,

Ben Butler
WHY WRITE A THANK-YOU LETTER

A thank-you letter shows thoughtfulness, a characteristic many employers value. Since so few people write a thank-you note, someone who writes one will be remembered and have an edge over other interviewees who do not write letters.

WHEN TO WRITE ONE

Write a letter after receiving information, advice, or a referral from a contact. Write a letter immediately after interviewing for a job, within 24 hours of the interview. If you know the organization will be making a hiring decision right away, then send your thank-you letter as an email.

Sample Thank-You Letter

123 Cypress Drive
Northport, AL 35473
205-348-5848

October 18, 2018

Mr. Chris Cohen
Human Resources Director
HG Consultant
1212 Old Pike Road
Birmingham, AL 35222

Dear Mr. Cohen:

Thank you for the opportunity to interview yesterday for the systems analyst position. I enjoyed meeting with you and learning more about HG Consultants. You have a creative staff and an impressive history.

Your organization appears to be growing in a direction that parallels my interests and career goals. The interview with you and your staff confirmed my initial positive impression of HG Consultants, and I want to reiterate my strong interest in working for you. My prior experience in evaluating proposed systems, along with my training in communication, will enable me to progress steadily through your training program and become a productive member of your team.

Again, thank you for your consideration. If you need additional information, please feel free to contact me by phone or through email at polina.petrovic@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Polina Petrovic

PRO TIP

Type the letter to make it look more professional and to show that you know how to format business letters. If others in the organization assisted with your interview arrangements, then you might send each of them a handwritten note. Thank employers for their time and express your continued interest in the organization with a letter that’s short and to the point.
CONFIRM/DENY ACCEPTANCE OF AN OFFER

ACCEPTING AN OFFER
You will likely receive an offer by phone and, after considering the offer, will in turn make a call to initiate the negotiation process or accept the offer. Though verbal commitments are considered final, written communication serves to officially confirm the agreement. If the offer letter you receive requires your signature, you may choose not to write an acceptance letter. If the offer letter does not require your signature, an acceptance letter can serve as your official acceptance of the position. An acceptance letter typically includes the following:
• Confirmation of employment decision
• Confirmation of start date and any other logistics agreed upon in phone conversations
• Expression of appreciation for the opportunity

DECLINING AN OFFER
If you receive an offer and decide that the job is not a good fit, decline the offer so the organization can move on in the hiring process. Declining an offer in a respectful, timely manner shows that you would like to maintain a good relationship with that organization and that you conduct yourself professionally. If the organization presented the job offer through email, then you can decline through email. If they offered the position by U.S. mail, then send your decline letter the same way.

WITHDRAWING YOUR NAME FROM CONSIDERATION
As soon as you decide to withdraw your name from consideration, you are ethically obligated to let the employer know. Doing so saves the employer from spending additional resources to recruit you and allows other candidates the opportunity to be considered. A phone call to your contact person is the most courteous way to communicate your decision; however, it is also recommended that you follow up with a letter.
• State your decision to withdraw.
• Provide a brief explanation (e.g., accepted a job that seems to be a better fit). Note: Do not state that you received a better job.
• Convey your appreciation for the employer's time and consideration.

Sample Decline Letter

123 Tide Avenue
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487
205-348-5848

March 12, 2018

Mr. Takeshi Tanaka
Senior Manager
Ealing Industries
456 Seventh Street, NW
Sometown, TX 12345

Dear Mr. Tanaka:

Thank you for offering me the position of Project Manager with Ealing Industries. Though I feel very positive about the services and products of the company and appreciate the challenging opportunity you offer, I have had another offer that I believe more closely matches my current career goals and interests. Therefore, after careful thought, I must decline your offer.

I appreciate the courtesy and hospitality extended to me by your office, and I wish you all well in your endeavors.

Best regards,

Robin Romero
WHAT IS A PORTFOLIO?
A portfolio is a showcase of your work and accomplishments for others to view. In today’s competitive market, a creative and informative portfolio could be the key to setting you apart from other candidates. Remember, a portfolio cannot work magic by itself. Don’t rely on it to sell your skills to an interviewer. A good portfolio can help, but ultimately, you have to prove your skills and abilities in person.

WHAT DO I INCLUDE IN A PORTFOLIO?
What you present in your portfolio will vary according to your career field and the type of portfolio created (electronic or traditional). Among the items you might include are:

- Writing Samples
- Evaluations
- Photography
- Fine Arts Samples
- Graphic Design Samples
- Video Clips
- Design Projects
- Web Designs
- Media Campaigns
- Lesson Plans
- Project or Event Budgets
- Certificates
- Project or Event Timetables
- Commendation Letters

WHY SHOULD I HAVE A PORTFOLIO?
Students from all majors can adapt and utilize portfolios as tools to help market themselves to prospective employers. The purpose and content of your portfolio will be determined by your career goal. If you are looking for jobs that require different experiences or skills, you may need to vary the contents.

CREATE A FREE ONLINE PORTFOLIO
With an online portfolio, you can showcase your videos, photographs, sketches, designs, and projects in one location. There are various free and paid options for creating an online portfolio, including the following:

- wix.com
- wordpress.com
- tumblr.com
- visualcv.com
- carbonmade.com
- portfolium.com

Creative Portfolio Display is a professional way to showcase your creative work in your LinkedIn profile. The application is offered through the Behance Network, behance.net, a free online platform.

PRO TIP
You can create a free, lifelong account at ua.portfolium.com using your Crimson email.
INTERVIEWING SUCCESS

Successful interviewing requires that you prepare, perform your best, and follow up afterward. Below are steps you can take before, during, and after an interview that can help catapult you ahead of the competition and ease anxiety and tension.

Before the Interview

It is critical for you to thoroughly research the organization before your interview. Interviewers may ask you what you know about their organization as a way of evaluating your interest in the position. Review the information on page 24 to learn more about conducting employer research.

Know the Position

Consider: What does the description entail? What are the essential functions of the office, company, or organization? To whom will you report? Does the position meet your expectations? Is the position compatible with your professional and personal ethics?

Be Professional

- Give the interviewer a good, firm handshake, accompanied with eye contact.
- Be enthusiastic, confident, and courteous.
- Be aware of your nonverbal behavior.
- Be prepared to think on your feet.
- Ask relevant questions.
- Convey interest and knowledge about the position and company.
- Stress willingness, ability, and compatibility.
- Avoid using filler such as “um,” “you know,” “well,” “yeah,” “whatever,” “you know what I mean,” and “like.”
- Listen to the questions carefully and articulate your thoughts clearly and concisely. Thank the interviewer for his or her time.
- Don’t address the interviewer by his or her first name unless invited to do so.
- Don’t let the employer’s casual approach fool you — maintain your professionalism.
- Don’t dominate the interview.
- Don’t discuss your personal problems.
- Don’t speak or act in a nervous manner.
- Don’t criticize yourself, but don’t be arrogant, either.
- Don’t interrupt when the interviewer is talking.
- Don’t bring up negative information about past jobs, co-workers, or former supervisors.

Dress Professionally

The way you dress has an effect on the interviewer’s initial impression of you. We recommend you take the conservative approach when dressing for an interview. For details on appropriate attire, see pages 56-57.

Arrive at least 10–15 minutes early. Remember, you have only one chance to make a good first impression; being late or not showing at all will not be viewed favorably.

Do not arrive at the interview empty-handed. Consider bringing a portfolio that includes the following: resume, letters of recommendation, writing samples, projects and, if possible, performance evaluations. This gives the potential employer additional information to consider during the selection process.

During the Interview

In the interview, it is your responsibility to convince the interviewer that you are the most qualified applicant for the position. Remember, you only have one chance to make a good first impression, and first impressions are lasting impressions. Listed below are some tips to follow at the beginning and during the interview.

- Give the interviewer a good, firm handshake, accompanied with eye contact.
- Be enthusiastic, confident, and courteous.
- Be aware of your nonverbal behavior.
- Be prepared to think on your feet.
- Ask relevant questions.
- Convey interest and knowledge about the position and company.
- Stress willingness, ability, and compatibility.
- Avoid using filler such as “um,” “you know,” “well,” “yeah,” “whatever,” “you know what I mean,” and “like.”
- Listen to the questions carefully and articulate your thoughts clearly and concisely. Thank the interviewer for his or her time.
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- Don’t criticize yourself, but don’t be arrogant, either.
- Don’t interrupt when the interviewer is talking.
- Don’t bring up negative information about past jobs, co-workers, or former supervisors.
**INTERVIEWING SUCCESS**

### Traveling to an Interview

If the company leaves the planning of the trip to you, be sure to keep receipts of all incurred expenses for possible reimbursement. (Sometimes expenses incurred are not reimbursed.)

After confirming your arrangements with the company either by phone, mail, or email, inquire about your itinerary, directions, and emergency contact numbers.

### Arrival

Plan to arrive the afternoon before the interview; this gives you the opportunity to leisurely check into your hotel, make sure you know how to get to the company site, and practice.

### Observations to Make During an On-Site Interview

- Are the people happy or tense?
- Were you greeted in a warm, sincere manner?
- Is there enthusiasm within the company?
- Do you feel comfortable in the environment?
- Are your questions being answered honestly, or are they being avoided?
- How do the employees interact with one another?
- Is the workplace in line with your preferences?
- Do you have a good feeling about it? Be specific with the “why or why not” when considering this.

### Interactions Before or After the Interview

Companies may arrange for the candidate to meet with employees for a meal. The hosts or hostesses will make note of your social graces, ability to converse, and your ability to mix business with pleasure. It is best not to order alcohol. *(See pages 58-59 for information on dining etiquette.)*

### Good Questions to Ask

Your questions should reflect your curiosity about the position and organization. The following are questions you might consider asking in the first interview if they’re not clearly answered during the course of the interview.

- What will a typical day look like for the person in this role?
- What goals need to be achieved in the first three months?
- How would you describe the ideal candidate for this position?
- How do you see this position evolving over the next few years?
- How will my performance be evaluated?
- How would you describe the organization’s management style?
- How would you describe the organization’s culture?
- What will have been accomplished in the first six months if I am successful in this role?

### What Employers Want to Know

During interviews, employers are seeking to answer these questions:

- *Can you do the job?* (skills, knowledge)
- *Will you do the job?* (work ethic, initiative, commitment, adaptability, teamwork)
- *Are you a fit for the organization?* (professionalism, type of personality)

Go to each interview set to illustrate your abilities.

### Inappropriate Interview Questions and How to Handle Them

Job interviews are tough and nerve-wracking enough, but a hiring manager might accidentally ask an inappropriate question during your interview. Know what these are and how to respond.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 "prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex and national origin." As a job-seeker, you want to be able to spot red flags that could indicate you’re being asked an inappropriate interview question. Read information provided by the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission at [www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov).

If asked an inappropriate question, your options include:

- Briefly answer the question anyway, if you are comfortable doing so.
- Respond to the intent of the question.
- Ignore the question and change the subject.
- Tell the interviewer that the question doesn’t seem to be legal or relevant to the specific requirements of the job.
# INTERVIEWING SUCCESS

## Mock Interviews

The Career Center offers mock interviews, which are scheduled in Handshake, as well as virtual mock interviews through InterviewStream, accessible from career.sl.ua.edu. Students without web cams may call the Career Center at 205-348-5848 and ask about room availability.

## Phone Interviews

Employers interviewing candidates in various locations will often narrow the list through phone interviews before arranging on-site interviews.

Telephone interviews may be conducted by one individual or by a panel. If a phone interview is arranged with an employer in another time zone, be sure to clarify which time zone will be observed.

When anticipating a phone interview, answer the call by stating your name. This professional greeting will prevent the caller from having to ask for you.

Arrange to have a reliable phone in a quiet location where you can limit or avoid distractions. Feel free to contact the Career Center (205-348-5848) and ask about room availability.

Print a copy of your resume, the job description, and questions you plan to ask them. You may also want to have keywords written down that will help you recall examples you would like to share in your responses.

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## Group Interviews

When interviewed by a group, direct your answers to the entire group by making eye contact and addressing each member.

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## Video/Digital Interviews

### Video Interviews:

Applicants for jobs, graduate programs, or professional schools may be asked to do a video interview before or instead of meeting face-to-face.

Preparing for a video interview includes taking the steps recommended for other interviews plus practicing with the technology. Position the camera on your computer at eye level so you are looking directly across from the interviewer. Test the volume and make sure there are no visual or audible distractions in the background.

Sit up straight and avoid reading notes, as that will be detected from your voice and eye movements. Make sure the interviewer has completely finished before speaking.

### Digital Interviews:

Different from video interviews, digital interview questions appear as text on the screen. Candidates are allotted an amount of time to think about their responses and a set time to respond (ex. 30 seconds and 3 minutes).

Once you complete the interview, an email is automatically sent to the hiring manager or committee and your responses are evaluated at their convenience. Sometimes, organizations provide an opportunity to practice with a question or two ahead of time so you can get a feel for the process.

As you should do with every interview, prepare in advance by reviewing the job requirements and listing questions they might ask to determine your ability to meet those requirements. Formulate brief but specific responses to those questions and then practice saying them (not simply thinking them).

## Structured Interviews

In this interviewing strategy, all potential candidates are asked the exact same questions.

## Interviewing with Other Candidates

If you are invited to interview along with other candidates, be mindful of how you interact. Introduce yourself to the others and be sure during the interview to balance contributing your comments with listening. Avoid interrupting and be careful not to dominate the conversation. If another shares a view you planned to share, think of a comment that adds to that one. Make sure you are participating and not simply observing.

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA CAREER CENTER
One-on-One Traditional

This is the most common type of interview. It involves a series of open-ended questions: Tell me about yourself, what are your strengths, what do you know about our company, etc. For these, you should know your resume and yourself; research both the company and the position.

Behavioral and Situational

These types are based on the idea that past behavior and performance predicts future behavior and performance. They focus on experiences, behaviors, knowledge, skills and abilities that are job-related. Employers use this interviewing strategy to evaluate content skills, transferable skills and self-management skills. Use the STAR method.

S.T.A.R.

Talk about a Situation you were in ... ... the Task or problem confronting you ...

... the Action you took, and...

... the Results of your actions.

Before interviewing, write examples of times you’ve demonstrated the skills required by that employer. You want your story to be brief but also specific, as that will make it more credible to the interviewer. Behavioral interview questions often begin with, “Tell me about a time when...” The following are examples of responses to “Tell me about a time when you had to work under pressure to complete class assignments.”

Weak Response

Situation: “I had a few projects due the same week.”

Task: “I had to get them all done to keep my grades up and I also had to work some.”

Action: “Well, in those situations, you just have to pull it together and get it done.”

(What was the specific action?)

Result: No clear result provided. The interviewer has to guess at the outcome.

Stronger Response

Situation: “Toward the end of the semester, I had three big projects due and I was working 20 hours each week along with studying for tests.”

Task: “One of the projects involved meeting with others, so I needed to map out my schedule to let them know times I would be available. I had to be more organized than usual given the amount of work.”

Action: “I created a schedule that included classes, work shifts, and everything else that had to be done at specific times. I sent my available times to group members and proposed that we nail down the first two meetings. I offered to send reminders before each meeting.”

Result: “Mapping out my schedule with time blocks for everything kept me on track. Proposing meeting times right away prompted others to share their availability and that saved time. Getting it all done was still stressful at times, but I accomplished everything on my schedule, including work shifts, and made good grades on the projects and tests.”

Some sites that may help:

- www.careerprofiles.info for case study interview examples
- www.consultingcase101.com
Case study questions are created to determine a candidate’s ability to analyze a situation, identify important factors, generate ideas, and suggest practical solutions. There may not always be a single correct answer, so the process of arriving at an answer is the focus.

Take a breath and think about your answer before responding. Is there critical information missing? Some interviewers may expect you to notice and ask. Conversely, they may want you to answer with only the information provided.

Case study questions can vary across professions and therefore interviewers may be listening for reasoning related to their particular field. For example, someone interviewing for a marketing position may be asked questions about determining the market size for a specific product.

Example: How much coffee is consumed in New York City on Mondays?

If the position requires a high degree of logical thinking, there may be questions designed to evaluate that ability.

Example: In the Chicago subway system there are two escalators going up but only one going down to the subway. Why is that?

You have to answer in a reasonable amount of time, so think of the most logical explanation you can and respond confidently.

Some case study questions relate to general management practices. Researching interviews for your industry and, if possible, for the specific employer, will help you know how to prepare for and respond to these questions. Examples:
• How would you work with a colleague who is underperforming?
• Procedures in your organization are not being followed properly. How would you go about correcting that?
• A Tuscaloosa restaurant is losing business. What suggestions would you have for the owners?

Multiple Mini Interviews: Health Care Case Study Questions

One of your college patients tells you that during midterm week, she became feverish and achy and did not feel up to studying or going to class. She decided to take some over-the-counter medication and rest. Now that midterms are over, she tells you that she needs a note from you in order to receive permission to take two of her exams. With zeros on these two exams, she will likely fail both courses and have to pay to take them again. What do you do?

However you answer these questions, you must be prepared to continually support your decision no matter the challenges presented by the panel/interviewers.

Multiple mini interviews may be conducted by medical, dental, optometry, pharmacy, physical therapy, physician assistant, and veterinary schools. They may also be included in exams for licensures like the National Council Licensure Exam (NCLEX) for nurses.

Research case study questions or multiple mini interviews in your field. Schedule a mock interview with the Career Center (career.sl.ua.edu) and request that case study questions be included.

Personal mock interviews with career consultants or virtual interviews through InterviewStream (http://bama.interviewstream.com) can help you prepare for an upcoming interview for an internship, full-time job, or campus position. Make an appointment in Handshake.

PRO TIP

CHAMPION YOUR CAREER

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA CAREER CENTER
PRACTICING FOR THE INTERVIEW

BEHAVIORAL-BASED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Talk about a time when you demonstrated...

- teamwork
- the ability to work with someone very different
- problem-solving
- the ability to handle multiple tasks at once
- initiative/leadership
- learning from a mistake
- handling an ethical dilemma
- overcoming a challenge
- effective communication skills

Examples of Straightforward Questions:

- Tell me about yourself.
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- Why do you want to work here?
- Why are you interested in this position?
- What do you know about us?
- What motivates you?
- Are you a leader or a follower?
- What would your supervisor say about you?
- What would your coworkers say about you?
- What is one of your greatest accomplishments?

- Walk me through your resume.
- What do you do outside of work?
- Do you work best alone or with others?
- Describe your ideal work environment.
- What challenges do you anticipate in this role?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- Describe the best/worst supervisor you’ve had.
- How do you handle conflict?
- How do you handle pressure?
- What is your work style?
- What do you see as current trends in this field?

- What did you like most/least about your last job?
- What types of decisions are difficult for you?
- What are your long-term professional goals?
- How do you evaluate success?
- How has your experience prepared you for this?
- What can you contribute to our organization?
- Why should we hire you?
- What questions do you have for us?

Note: Always have questions to ask. See pages 48-49.

PITCH YOURSELF TO INTERVIEWERS

Your response to “Tell me about yourself” should mention experiences and qualifications that meet their needs. Adding a bit about your life outside work is fine; just make it brief and not too personal. Think of a hobby or skill you’ve developed that shows discipline or interest in learning.

The following is an example of a drafted response that covers key points. Your answer should not sound too rehearsed; however, no preparation might lead to rambling.

“I am currently a senior at UA, majoring in.... Through my courses, I’ve been involved in projects related to... and have learned.... My most recent experience was an internship with... where I…. In this role, I developed skills in... and became more familiar with.... When I saw the posting for this position and your need for those skills, I thought it would be a great match. Beyond classes and work, I am active in... and have assisted with several.... I like the challenge of learning things outside my field; my current project is learning to.... Wanting to understand and accomplish a variety of things has motivated me throughout school, and I know that will be the case in my career.”

GENERAL TIPS FOR ANSWERING QUESTIONS

- Listen carefully; don’t interrupt.
- Let the interviewer finish the question completely, and then take a second or two before responding. You may have an answer prepared for the question, but do not rush to deliver it as you might interrupt the interviewer.
- Pay attention to what they’re asking to make sure you respond completely and effectively.
- Be specific; let them know that you’ve done your research and that you’re able to connect your qualifications with their needs.
- Responses that are too vague will not give the interviewer a sense of what you can contribute. Adjectives are not as effective as facts and figures.
- Be concise. Being specific does not mean giving lengthy answers. Some responses need more detail to be effective; even so, those should not exceed 2 minutes.
- Support short responses with examples. For instance, if you’re asked to name a strength, then provide the answer along with a brief example of how you’ve demonstrated that strength. Example: “One of my strengths is the ability to prioritize tasks and organize my time. This past year, I began volunteering 15 hours a week at Tuscaloosa’s One Place while continuing my part-time job and maintaining a full course load. I created a weekly schedule and adjusted it as needed to accomplish everything.” Offering an example makes your response more credible.
- Schedule a mock interview in the Career Center through Handshake to practice with these and other questions.
When you begin interviewing for a full-time job, you should also begin researching specific salaries in your field. Having accurate information and knowing how to apply it is essential in successful salary negotiation.

Prepare for salary questions you might get during your interview. Here are examples of appropriate responses, plus how you can prepare.

**Plan For Your Negotiation.** Here are six steps:

1. Know specifically how your qualifications meet the needs of the employer. Identify three or four ways you can bring value to the organization. Think about your accomplishments, relevant experiences, and strengths.

2. Create a budget using the free online budgeting worksheet at nerdwallet.com. This budgeting tool includes your needs, wants, savings, and debt repayments. The goal is for you to allocate 50% of your income for needs, 30% for wants, and 20% for savings and debt repayment.

3. Visit salary.com and find descriptions that closely resemble the job you’re targeting. Select the title that matches best and find the salary range for that title from the 25th to 75th percentile. What is the median?

Your personal target salary should be below, at, or above the median, depending on your qualifications. Be objective about what you have to offer. Do not sell yourself short, but also avoid aiming too high. Make sure you can justify the figure.

4. What target salary did you choose? Using that number as the lowest figure, identify your target salary range. This range should not extend beyond 20% of your lowest figure.

5. Calculate the take-home pay for the target salary using PaycheckCity.com. Identify the lowest salary you’re willing to accept. Think about the salary you would accept if other benefits were offered. For example, you might receive a nice allowance to cover moving expenses that would otherwise have to be paid from your salary.

6. List all benefits you anticipate getting in the compensation package and also any benefits that would make the offer more appealing. You may have an opportunity to negotiate benefits in addition to or instead of negotiating salary. Examples: the date of your next salary review, tuition reimbursement, retirement, stock options, relocation expenses, bonuses, vacation days, etc.

**Practice Your Negotiation Conversation.** As is the case with interviewing, practicing your salary negotiation conversation can help you feel prepared and confident. Below are phrases that may give ideas for getting started.

“Thank you for taking time to talk with me about the offer. In researching salaries for this job in (geographical area), I found that the typical range is $__ to $___. With my ability to ___ and my experience in ___, I believe this is a fair range.”

Imagine responses from the employer and talk through how you would handle them. It’s helpful to have someone respond as the employer when you practice. Examples:

“We think you’d be a great addition, but we can’t offer the salary you’re requesting.”

“We can’t offer that now, but we may be able to review things again in six months or so.”

“That’s more than others here in this same position are making.”

“What is your must-have amount?”

“There may be other benefits we can adjust. What if we added __________?”

**Get it in writing.** If you’re satisfied with the agreement reached, you might say, “This sounds fine and I look forward to reviewing everything you’ve proposed. May I expect to receive something through email for my signature?” Make sure before signing that you understand all terms of the offer.

**Take it or leave it, but stick with your decision.** After evaluating the pros and cons of the job, the organization, and the offer, you will need to make your decision and stick with it. It is considered unprofessional to accept an offer and then back out. Employers invest time and money in recruiting, so you want to be sure before agreeing to their offer. If a contract was signed, there may also be legal consequences to changing your mind.

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA CAREER CENTER
Continuing in the Career Center service lineup is the Crimson Career Closet, a space and service that lends professional clothing to students for free for interviews and other career-related purposes.

Handshake is The University of Alabama’s platform for students to find jobs and internships, sign up for on-campus interviews, and schedule career consulting appointments. It is represented in the Career Center’s main office by yellow and red hand-shaped chairs.

PROFESSIONALISM, ETIQUETTE, AND LIFE AFTER COLLEGE

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PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE

Hearing terms like “business professional” and “business casual” can leave one wondering what to wear to career-related events. Appropriate work attire depends on several factors: the type of job, the industry, your geographical area, and the company culture among them. For a job interview, it’s important to know which style is preferred for your chosen field. When in doubt, assume that business professional is appropriate. Here are some general guidelines for business professional and business casual styles.

Business Professional

- Invest in a conservative suit — black, gray, and navy are safe bets.
- Dress shirts and blouses should be solid or pastel colors and should complement your suit color.
- Closed-toe shoes are appropriate.
- Socks/stockings should match your outfit color scheme or should be neutral.
- If carrying a notebook, portfolio, or padfolio, have one that’s brown or black in color.

Business Casual

- This is a style of clothing that is less formal than business professional, but it is still intended to give a business-like and professional impression.
- Color and pattern are acceptable for shirts and blouses, but shouldn’t be outlandish. Golf shirts or polo shirts may also be appropriate.
- Slacks should be pressed and can be khaki, corduroy, wool, flannel, or linen.
- Sweaters and blazers should fit well and not be too tight, baggy, or low-cut.
- Loafers, flats, and boots are acceptable footwear.
- Denim or blue-jean fabric is not acceptable as business casual.

Accessories and Grooming

- Don’t wear cologne or other strong scents; others may be allergic or sensitive. Deodorant should be neutralizing.
- Nails should be well-manicured and clean.
- Hairstyles should be well-groomed; long hair should be controlled or pulled back in a neat, simple style.
- For jewelry, a wristwatch and one ring per hand are appropriate. Earrings, it is recommended, should be small, as they may be less distracting.
- A Windsor knot is the standard choice for business attire. Learn to perfect this knot with diagrams and videos online.
- Overall, employers’ focus should be on your skills and personality as a candidate, not what you’re wearing.
Professional Styles

Crimson Career Closet

The Crimson Career Closet is a lending service for students and alumni who need professional clothing for career-related events, such as a job interview. Schedule a time to utilize the Closet with an appointment in Handshake.
If invited for a meal interview, remember: In addition to your interviewing skills, your table manners are being observed. Learning proper dining etiquette will serve you well in many business and social settings.

Place Settings Etiquette

BREAD ON THE LEFT, DRINK ON THE RIGHT

It may be difficult to determine which drink is yours when you arrive at the table. Here is a helpful tip from Martha Stewart:

Hold both hands in front of you, palms facing each other. Using the tips of your thumb and forefinger, make circles on each hand. The remaining three fingers in each hand point upward. Your left hand will form a b and your right hand will form a d. Bread (b) is on the left, and drink (d) is on the right.

BREAD PLATE

Bread should be broken (not cut) into bite-sized pieces. Butter only the piece you are preparing to eat. When butter is served, put some on your bread plate and use as needed.

NAPKIN

Place your napkin in your lap. If you need to excuse yourself, place the napkin in your chair. When leaving the table after the meal, place the napkin on the side of the plate, loosely folded.

FORKS

The general rule for silverware is to work from the outside in as the meal progresses. If there are three forks, they are usually salad, fish, and meat, in order of use from outside in. A fourth fork, the cake fork, may be above the plate.

KNIVES AND SPOONS

KNIVES: Your knife is to the right of the plate. Sometimes there are multiple knives, for meat, fish, and salad, in order of use from the outside in — just like the forks. The butter knife will appear placed horizontally on the bread plate (see above).

SPOONS: Your tea spoon will be to the right of the dinner knife; if needed, the soup spoon will be to the right of the tea spoon. The dessert spoon is above your plate.

GLASSES

The water glass is just above the tip of the knife. To the right of the water glass is the red wine glass, and the white wine glass is to the right of that.

PRO TIP: During a job interview or networking function, the general rule is to avoid alcohol.
### Cutting Meats

When holding the meat knife, place your index finger about an inch down the handle to help press down firmly. Hold the fork in your left hand, prongs down. Cut only enough for each mouthful.

### Finger Foods

Raw vegetables, crispy bacon, corn on the cob, artichokes, raw asparagus, and fruits with stems are among foods you may eat with your fingers. French fries may be eaten with your fingers if the other foods served are also finger foods. If the other foods are eaten with a fork, use a fork to eat the fries.

### Table Manners

- If not eating, place your hands in your lap or rest your wrists on the edge of the table. Do not put your elbows on the table.
- Meeting materials should be placed under your chair.
- **Do not begin eating until everyone at the table has been served or until the host asks you to begin.**
- If you need to signal the server about a problem with your food or utensils, do so discreetly. It is recommended that you refrain from sending back food.
- Do not ask to taste someone else’s food, and do not offer a taste of your food to another.
  - Taste your food before seasoning it. Don’t assume it needs seasoning before tasting to see.
- Do not talk or laugh with your mouth full.
- Cut one piece of food at a time. Cut only enough food for the next bite.
  - **Chew with your mouth closed.**
- If soup is too hot to eat, do not blow on it. Let it cool. For soup, dip the spoon into the soup, moving away from you. Fill it only ¾ full to avoid spilling. Sip from the edge of the spoon. Do not slurp!
- Try to finish at the same time as your host or the majority of the group at the table.
- Excuse yourself to visit the restroom if you need to blow your nose.
- If you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth with your napkin.
- Keep your focus on the others at your table even if the restaurant or dining area is noisy and full of distractions.
- **Avoid discussing politics, religion, or any other topic that might be perceived as controversial. Safer topics include recent best-selling books, movies, travel, sports, technological advances, and hobbies.**
  - **Do not ask for a to-go box.** This may be appropriate if you are with close friends in an informal dining situation.
  - **Do not answer a call or text at the table.** If you absolutely must communicate with another party during the meal, excuse yourself politely and be as brief as possible. Diverting your attention from those at your table is considered unprofessional and rude.

### Ordering

Order foods that can be eaten with utensils; avoid food that are difficult to eat.

Do not order the most expensive item on the menu.

A la carte items are ordered and priced separately.

### Serving

Offer a dish to the person on your left, then serve yourself and pass on to your right. If someone to your left asks you to pass a dish, pass to the left. Servers will typically serve food from the left and clear dishes from the right.

Pass the salt and pepper together and set them on the table rather than handing them directly to the person.

Butter, spreads, or dips should be placed on your plate before spreading or eating.

### Resources

- [whatscookingamerica.net](http://whatscookingamerica.net)
- [diningetiquette.org](http://diningetiquette.org)
- [etiquettescholar.com](http://etiquettescholar.com)
Demonstrating professional etiquette can help you secure employment and advance in your career.

**INTRODUCTIONS AND GREETINGS**
When first introduced, stand up to meet the person. If you are introducing other people, introduce the lower-ranked person to the higher-ranked person. For example, “Mr./Ms. Greater Authority, I would like to introduce Mr./Mrs. Lesser Authority.” If you have forgotten someone’s name, ask him or her politely.

**WORK HOURS**
Always be punctual. Pay attention to policies related to breaks and absences. If possible, avoid requesting leave during the first few months on the job. Avoid excessive absenteeism.

**DEADLINES**
Be on time or early on deadlines. Know what and when you need to submit as you begin a project. Be sensitive to others’ schedules when working on team projects.

**NEATNESS**
Management may view neatness as organized and precise. Appear to be neat. Maintain a clutter-free work area especially if you share work space with a colleague.

**CONVERSATIONS**
Listen to others attentively and speak when they have finished speaking. Maintain eye contact and keep a polite tone and appropriate volume. Keep your conversations brief and on track. Do not ask personal questions or offer too much personal information. Be sociable, but avoid gossip.

**TELEPHONE COMMUNICATION**
Turn off your cellphone or switch it to silent mode when you are not on breaks or at lunch. When leaving voicemail messages, speak slowly and clearly. Provide your name and number at the beginning and end of a lengthy message. Always speak politely.

**PERSONAL SPACE**
Try to stand no closer than an arm’s length away from the person with whom you are speaking. Keep your voice at a level appropriate for your work environment during phone calls and face-to-face conversations. Avoid decorating your work space with items that might offend others.

**SHARED SPACE**
Take responsibility for cleaning up after yourself when using counters and appliances shared with others. Avoid strong smells that will travel throughout the office. Wash and return utensils and cups and label items placed in the refrigerator. If using a shared photocopier, make sure the paper tray is full when you leave it.

**MEETINGS**
Arrive several minutes early and ask if you are uncertain about the seating pattern. Turn off your cellphone and give your attention to the speaker. Let the speaker know if you plan to use your phone to enter or search for information during the meeting. Do not interrupt; note what is said and share your points later. If providing a report, be concise and stay on subject. Unless directed otherwise, do not share information discussed in closed meetings.

**SOCIAL AND BUSINESS EVENTS**
Practice the basic rules of social/business events:
- Attend when possible.
- Mingle and meet new people.
- Maintain a professional image.
- Give your attention to those present. Put your phone away unless you are expecting an urgent call.
- Limit alcohol consumption.

**PUBLIC SPEAKING**
Speak in a way that suits the circumstances and the audience and that is authentic to your style. Avoid using offensive language even in casual settings. Be aware of your allotted time and stay on track.

**TEAMWORK**
Be respectful of others and listen to their views. Meet your deadlines when contributing to team projects. Learn your role in decision-making in teams and watch for opportunities to lead when your skills can benefit the group. Encourage others and focus on the overall mission.

**COMMON COURTESIES**
Hold the door open for the person behind you. Put items back where you found them. Return a borrowed item in the same condition. Show appreciation; compliment others. Do what you say you will do. Say “please” and “thank you.” Offer assistance to others. Assume the best unless you have facts to prove otherwise.
While we may be unguarded in our tone when we email friends, in demonstrating professional etiquette, an appropriate tone should be maintained when communicating with employers and other professional contacts.

There are general guidelines that should be followed when emailing cover letters, thank-you notes, and replies to various requests for information. Apply the following advice to every email you write:

- Use a meaningful subject header for your email — one that is appropriate to the topic.
- Always be professional and businesslike. Address the recipient as “Mr.,” “Ms.,” or “Mrs.,” and always verify the correct spelling of the recipient’s name. Etiquette resources recommend using “Ms.” unless you know the recipient prefers “Mrs.” or “Miss.” If unsure if your instructor has a Ph.D. or Ed.D., “Dear Professor ___:” can be used in place of “Dr.” If unsure of how to address the recipient, use the first and last name (“Dear Alex Doe:“).
- Be brief in your communications. Don’t overload the employer with lots of questions in your email. Go through your message before sending to make sure it is concise.
- Sign your email with your full name.
- Avoid using slang and text-message abbreviations, and exclude emoticons. While symbols may go over well with friends and family, do not use them in your email communications with business people.
- Do not use strange fonts, wallpapers, or multicolored backgrounds. A standard font is most appropriate.
- Be sure to proofread and spellcheck your email before sending it. Make sure you capitalize and punctuate correctly. Avoid excessive use of capital letters and exclamation marks.
- Respond to emails promptly.
- Do not assume that professionals who tend to be informal will be tolerant of unprofessional emails.

Examples of Professional and Unprofessional Emails

**UNPROFESSIONAL**

From: 2cute@....com  
To: instructorname@ua.edu  
Subject: hey

so how’s it going? can you tell me what i missed in class bc iv’e had a lot going on and i could not make it and i want an A in this class. also i need a reference for an internship and thought u would be a good one bc i had you last yr too.

**PROFESSIONAL**

From: studentname@crimson.ua.edu  
To: instructorname@ua.edu  
Subject: Reference Request for Internship

Dear Dr. Faculty:

Thank you for taking time recently to talk with me about graduate school. I plan to continue researching programs and opportunities to get experience.

Today, I saw an internship posting and would like to stop by during your office hours to talk with you about being a reference for me. I will give you a call Thursday.

Best regards,

Full Name

PRO TIP

If you would like a faculty member or other potential reference to tell a prospective employer that you demonstrate professionalism, then you need to demonstrate it. Establish habits that will lead others to see you as a professional.
BUSINESS RECEPTION ETIQUETTE

• Dress appropriately. Check if the reception calls for business casual or business professional attire.

• Take business (networking) cards. See page 19 for recommendations.

• Eat beforehand so you can focus on mingling. It’s fine to eat while there, but that shouldn’t be your priority.

• Arrive on time or a little bit early.

• If name tags are provided, place yours on your right side so it’s more visible to people shaking your hand.

• Show confidence through your posture and body language as you move around the room.

• When introducing yourself, offer a firm handshake and make eye contact. Clearly state your name and also theirs: “It’s nice to meet you, Ms. Davis.”

• When looking for people to approach, consider their body language and facial expressions. Are they into a deeper conversation with someone else at the moment? Do they appear instead to be in a lighter conversation and open to others joining them?

• Approach others and ask if you might join them. Introduce yourself and be prepared with a conversation starter. Then listen attentively so you can continue the conversation. Safe examples are, “How has your day been?” “This is a nice venue. Have you been here before?” “What brought you to this event (don’t ask if the answer is obvious)?” Avoid bringing up subjects that might be controversial (e.g., politics, religion, personal matters).

• Be an attentive listener. Do not talk over or interrupt others.

• When accepting a business card, take a few seconds to read it. You might see a detail that leads to a question; reading also shows respect.

• If you visit the buffet, choose foods that are easily eaten while standing and that will not leave your fingers messy.

• Put dip onto your plate before dunking chips, crackers, veggies, etc.

• Avoid holding a plate and drink at the same time, as that will prevent you from shaking hands.

• Do not monopolize another’s time. When there is a natural break in the conversation, you might say, “I’ve enjoyed talking with you, but I’m sure you’d like to meet some others…” If you’ve exchanged cards, you might add that you’ll be in touch.

• Thank the host before leaving.

CONDUCTING AN ETHICAL JOB SEARCH

From the National Association of Colleges and Employers’ Principles for Professional Conduct Committee:

1. Provide accurate information about your academic work and records.

2. Conduct your job search with honesty and integrity. Do not stretch the truth on your resume, applications, or during any part of the interview process.

3. Interview genuinely. Interview only with employers you’re sincerely interested in working for and whose eligibility requirements you meet. “Practice” interviewing is misleading to employers.

4. Adhere to schedules. Appear for all interviews, on campus and elsewhere, unless unforeseeable events prevent you from doing so. If you can’t make the interview because of an unforeseeable event, notify the employer at the earliest possible moment.

5. Don’t keep employers hanging. Communicate your acceptance or refusal of a job offer to employers as promptly as possible, so they can notify other candidates that they are still being considered or that the position is filled.

6. Accept a job offer in good faith. When you accept an offer, you should have every intention of honoring that commitment. Accepting an offer only as a precautionary measure is misleading to the employer and may restrict opportunities for others who are genuinely interested in that employer.

7. Withdraw from recruiting when your job search is completed. Let employers that are actively considering you for a job know that you are now out of the running.

8. Claim fair reimbursement. If an employer has agreed to reimburse you for expenses you incur in its recruitment process, your request should be only for reasonable and legitimate expenses.

9. Obtain the career information you need to make an informed choice about your future. It’s up to you to acquire the information about career opportunities, organizations, and any other information that might influence your decisions.
EVALUATING JOB OFFERS

Your hard work paid off and now you have multiple job offers. How can you be sure you are making the right choice?

Thoroughly evaluating offers includes examining both the nonfinancial features of the job and the financial compensation. Consider first what you value about the job itself, the organization, and the work environment.

### CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO NONFINANCIAL FEATURES OF THE JOB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which job seems to be a better fit?</th>
<th>Which job can you see yourself doing each day for at least 40 hours per week?</th>
<th>Which work environment seems to be a better fit?</th>
<th>Which organizational culture suits you best?</th>
<th>Which location is best suited to your needs?</th>
<th>Which job offers more of what you value in a career?</th>
<th>Which job matches your personality type the most (see pg. 6 for more)?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

It is also important to consider the overall compensation package. A higher salary does not necessarily mean the best offer financially. Consider your needs for health care, tuition reimbursement, relocation assistance, and retirement prep.

### CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO FINANCIAL FEATURES OF THE JOB

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Which employer offers better health insurance for your needs?</th>
<th>Which employer offers better retirement funding?</th>
<th>Is there an option in either organization for profit-sharing?</th>
<th>Which job offers the best compensation package?</th>
<th>Will company-owned work devices be provided?</th>
<th>Is either salary commission-based?</th>
<th>Does either organization have a system in place for promotions?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### PLANNING FOR GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL

**QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK YOURSELF**

- What kind of positions am I qualified for with my undergraduate degree?
- Will a graduate degree be beneficial for better job offers, higher initial starting salaries, and advancement opportunities in my chosen career?
- What types of graduate and professional degree programs exist for my chosen career and where are they?
- Should I look at pursuing a master’s degree or earning another baccalaureate degree?
- How do I feel about taking more tests, writing papers again, and having tons of reading?
- Does the thought of more studying trigger anxiety and stress?
- Which schools offer the field of study I am interested in pursuing?
- Where is the school located geographically?
- What are the application procedures and admission requirements?
- Will the program I choose require a thesis or a dissertation?
- How long do I have to complete the program of study?
- What about cost (i.e., cost of living, out-of-state tuition, rent, on-campus housing, health insurance, and other miscellaneous expenses)?
- Does the department or university offer assistantships to offset the cost of tuition?
- Will I have an internship, practicum, or field experience?
- What is the placement rate into full-time employment?

**RESOURCES**

Talk with professors in the field you plan to study.

U.S. News and World Report ranks institutions and identifies best buys and top-10 programs in specific disciplines.

Visit the Career Center website at career.sl.ua.edu for additional information and links to helpful sites.
PLANNING FOR GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL

CONSIDERATIONS WHEN APPLYING TO GRADUATE/PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL

Admissions criteria are one of the main factors you consider when applying to graduate and professional schools. Entrance criteria and standards vary from institution to institution and are dependent upon the academic discipline, selectivity of the institution, and number of seats available in the program. Criteria for admission typically include:

- Grade Point Average (GPA)
- GRE, MAT, LSAT, MCAT, or GMAT Scores
- Personal Statement
- Experience or Undergraduate Research
- Completion of Prerequisites
- Letters of Recommendation
- Admissions Essay(s)
- Resume or Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Career consultants review personal statements as well as resumes and CVs; feel free to make an appointment when you would like your documents reviewed.

Visit testing.ua.edu for registration info on graduate school admission testing.

FINANCIAL AID AND ASSISTANCE

Each school and lending institution has its own standards for the application process and system of awarding financial assistance; check the website of the school or agency for details.

DOCUMENTS

Most graduate programs or professional schools require one or more of the following documents:

- Statement of Purpose
- Diversity Statement
- Letter of Intent
- Personal Statement
- Goal Statement
- Research Statement

You can find descriptions of these online; however, you need to pay close attention to what each school requires and to any prompt(s) they provide. This is their first impression of how well you follow instructions. If the instructions are vague and you can’t find clarification on what type of document they want, you may contact the department and ask if they will give you a better idea. They may not be able to answer, but it doesn’t hurt to ask about anything not clarified in their information. Some schools have broad prompts (e.g., describe what you hope to gain from this program), but some have very specific, multi-point questions for you to answer.

ESSAYS

The two essays most often associated with applications to graduate school are the statement of purpose and the personal statement. The first is an objective piece describing your career plans.

- Focus more on your interests and experiences as they relate to what you plan to do during and after your time in the program.
- Connect your professional and/or research interests with faculty in each program you’re targeting.

The personal statement is more anecdotal in nature.

- Mention academic/professional interests as they relate to specific program, but share more about your life (e.g., experiences that shaped your character).
- Make sure the personal information you share aligns with the prompt or directions provided.

Typically, there is a page or word count limit (generally no more than two pages single-spaced), so write concisely. Proofread thoroughly. One resource to view sample essays is accepted.com (Note: The Career Center does not recommend paying for any service on this site). Another resource with free advice for preparing your application is gradschool.com. The Career Center can talk you through possible topics and proofread your document once you’ve written it. Also visit the Writing Center at UA for further, detailed proofing.
Making the Transition from School to Life in the Working World

There is a lot to consider as you leave college to enter the workforce. Prepare early for this transition.

**ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR AND OFFICE POLITICS**

- Take time to learn how to work with new managers.
- Learn to listen to others and seek advice; don’t try to prove yourself all the time.
- Consider what others on a team have to say, and work together. Be respectful in all situations.
- If no mentor is set up for you, find one for yourself.
- Be careful what you say about others; protect your image; know who can be trusted and who cannot.
- Adapt to the organization’s style and culture.
- Don’t be afraid to ask questions.
- Volunteer for projects and committees, but don’t line up more work than you can handle.
- Show enthusiasm and take initiative. Offer to help others with projects as time allows.
- Remember that you are in charge of your own career; don’t blame others if it’s not going the way you want.
- If you make a mistake, take responsibility and communicate with management.

**MOVING**

- Know what your needs are in a home or apartment.
- When you look at properties, check to make sure everything works as it should.
- Read leases carefully and discuss any concerns with the leasing agent.
- Complete a condition report so you have a record of any damages already made to the property; if not, you may lose your security deposit for something you didn’t do.
- There are lots of costs to consider: moving expenses, deposits, utilities (there is a charge to hook them up when you move in, and you need to have an idea of how much they’ll cost per month), phone, Internet access, water, cable, trash pickup, insurance, etc.

**OUTSIDE THE WORKPLACE**

- Take an inventory of your strengths and weaknesses and know what you want to achieve.
- Give yourself time to adjust, especially if you’ve moved far from home.
- Get involved in places that allow you to meet people.
- Make a budget and stick to it; keep track of your expenses so you can tell where your money is going.

**FROM STUDENTS TO ALUMNI**

Alumni can contribute significantly to UA’s efforts in recruiting and preparing students for successful employment. The following are among the many possible contributions alumni can make:

- Let the Career Center know about your post-graduation plans (job, school, etc.) when you graduate or soon after with the First Destination survey, administered in Handshake.
- Offer to do an informational interview with a student interested in your field or organization.
- Arrange for a student to shadow you on the job.
- Talk with your organization about posting jobs in Handshake and/or attending UA career fairs.
- Talk with your alumni chapter about networking events you might host for UA students.
Students, Alumni, and Friends of The University of Alabama:

We hope the Career Guide will be a valuable tool in your pursuit of a satisfying career. The job-search process requires individual thought and decision-making, and this guide can serve as a foundation from which to start. The content has been compiled from our own research and excellent resources on career-related topics.

If you have questions about information or tips included in the Career Guide, or would like specialized assistance from one of our career consultants, we hope you will come see us in the main office in the Ferguson Student Center or in one of the satellite offices. Our contact information is on the opening page of this guide and also on our website (career.sl.ua.edu).

We look forward to being of service to you in the future.

Best wishes as you continue along your career path!

— The UA Career Center Staff