# Career Guide 2019-2020

## Career Center Overview

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## Locations

### Career Center at Culverhouse

- 149 Bidgood Hall  | 205-348-2691  
- [culverhouse.ua.edu/career](culverhouse.ua.edu/career)

### Career Center at C&IS

- 103 Reese Phifer Hall  | 205-348-5681  
- [cis.ua.edu/current-students/career-center-cis/](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  
- [ecdc.sa.ua.edu](ecdc.sa.ua.edu)
CAREER CENTER OVERVIEW

How to Use the Career Guide 5
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The University of Alabama Career Center is pleased to present the 2019-20 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 and best practices and is tailored where possible for UA students and alumni.

WHEN TO USE THE CAREER GUIDE
If you plan for your career from the beginning of your time at The University of Alabama, you will have developed the competencies that make you ready for hire by the time you graduate. On page 8 of this guide, you will find a Career Action Plan broken down into recommended steps for you to take while you are a Freshman or Sophomore, and steps to take while you are a Junior or Senior. Throughout the guide, you will find information to help you with each of those steps.

NAVIGATION
Sections of this guide are color-coded to correspond to the table of contents. Each section has its own table of contents to remind you what’s on each page in that section.

PRO TIPS
On many pages, we’ve pulled out the crucial information and/or helpful additions into a “pro tip” box. They look like this:

DON’T JUST READ IT, INTERACT WITH IT
The Career Guide is designed to be an interactive resource to help you in your career planning efforts. Throughout the guide, you will find prompts asking you to answer questions, complete statements, or highlight, circle, or check things from a list. We encourage you to make this guide your own.

Complete activities, write in the margins, dog-ear important pages, and highlight important sections! The more you interact with the Career Guide, the more helpful it will be.

REMEMBER YOU’RE NOT ALONE
We understand that career planning can be overwhelming. Our career consultants are here to help you navigate the process - from choosing a major freshman year to accepting an offer senior year, and everything in between. Set up your Handshake account today so that you can make an appointment to see your consultant whenever you’re ready. (Learn more about Handshake on page 7.)

You can also call our main office front desk at 205-348-5848 if you have questions or would like to make an appointment.

Hi, I’m a pro tip! You’ll want to check me out!

We look forward to working with you! Roll Tide!
CAREER CENTER OVERVIEW

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 can help you assess your interests, values, and skills, and discuss how these factors influence career planning. After you meet with a career consultant, they may recommend an assessment to help you determine the best course of action.

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

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

EMPLOYER INFO SESSIONS
Before conducting interviews on campus, employers may host information sessions to talk with students about their organizations and the positions for which they are interviewing. Info sessions can also be scheduled as stand-alone campus visits to promote opportunities and provide connections between recruiters and prospective applicants. You can find upcoming employer info sessions on Handshake and career.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.

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 walk-in hours on career.ua.edu.
MEET HANDSHAKE

Handshake is The University of Alabama’s online recruiting system that allows students 24/7 access to search for jobs and apply for on-campus interviews. Students of all majors can use Handshake to search for and apply for jobs inside the United States and abroad!

Handshake allows students to build rich profiles, continually personalize career recommendations based on interests and connections, and search 500,000 postings by more than 250,000 companies.

START USING HANDSHAKE

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

Be sure to complete your profile thoroughly because it may be viewed by potential employers.

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. Once your resume is approved, be sure to make it visible to employers.

For more information about creating a resume, visit pages 27-29. If you have questions about starting your resume or if you would like to have your resume reviewed, check our website for resume walk-in hours, or call the main office at 205-348-5848.

SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT

Whether you need help with your resume, want to discuss choosing a major, or any career services in-between, you can use Handshake to schedule an appointment with a career consultant.

To schedule an appointment, log in and select “Career Center” and then “Appointments.” You will be taken through a few simple steps. If you need assistance scheduling an appointment, please call the main office at 205-348-5848.

FIND JOBS, INTERNSHIPS, AND ON-CAMPUS INTERVIEWS

Along with searching Handshake for job postings, you can apply for on-campus job interviews in Handshake. Many recruiters conduct on-campus interviews each fall and spring semester around the time of the career fairs. Handshake also offers a free app so you can access your job search at your fingertips.

Please note: Student jobs on campus are not posted in Handshake. If you are interested in finding a job on campus, visit uastudentjobs.edu.

We encourage you to become familiar with our website and follow us on social media. Helpful information you can find on our website includes:

- Resume walk-in hours
- Upcoming events
- Major exploration
- Career Center resources
- External career resources

Through the Career Center website, UA students have access to services that may help you with your career planning. Some of these services include:

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

Candid Career: Choose from thousands of informational videos on jobs, industries, or careers.

Interview Stream: This online virtual interviewing system allows you to practice interview skills.

More information on completing a virtual mock interview on page 51.
The following is a Career Action Plan that provides recommended steps to help you reach your career goals. In order to make informed choices about majors and careers, first evaluate your values, interests, personality traits, and skills (see pages 12-14). Once you have chosen an intended career path, check in on the next steps below and revisit steps as needed, in an order that makes sense for you to progress toward your career goals. If you need assistance with any of the steps, our career consultants will be happy to help you.

### CAREER CENTER OVERVIEW

The following is a Career Action Plan that provides recommended steps to help you reach your career goals. In order to make informed choices about majors and careers, first evaluate your values, interests, personality traits, and skills (see pages 12-14). Once you have chosen an intended career path, check in on the next steps below and revisit steps as needed, in an order that makes sense for you to progress toward your career goals. If you need assistance with any of the steps, our career consultants will be happy to help you.

### FRESHMEN, SOPHOMORES, & TRANSFERS

- Learn more about UA majors. Think of each major in terms of the skills and knowledge you will gain.
- Talk with an academic advisor to plan a course of study related to your interests and career goals.
- Browse the Occupational Information Network (onetonline.org) to expand your knowledge of possible careers.
- Meet with a career consultant to discuss any questions you have about career planning.
- Get to know upperclassmen, faculty, and staff who can provide you with information about career options.
- Complete an informational interview to gain a professional’s perspective and advice. See page 15.
- Visit the Center for Service and Leadership (volunteer.ua.edu) to learn about volunteer opportunities. Volunteering allows you to explore career options, network, and build skills.
- Visit the Learning in Action website (learninginaction.ua.edu) for experiential learning opportunities that may provide real-world experience.
- Browse local and on-campus student employment opportunities (uastudentjobs.ua.edu).
- Visit thesource.ua.edu to view the student organization directory to identify opportunities for campus involvement.
- Explore cooperative (co-op) education at ecchc.sa.ua.edu or in the ACIPCO Engineering Career Development Center. Or, talk with internship coordinators in your academic area about experiential learning opportunities. See page 16.
- Create your Handshake account and upload your resume. Begin searching for summer jobs or internships.
- Begin to develop your resume and meet with the Career Center for feedback and assistance.
- Meet people from different backgrounds. Visit the UA Crossroads website (crossroads.ua.edu) for information about intercultural activities.

### JUNIORS & SENIORS

- Update your profile and resume in Handshake.
- Take on a role of responsibility in a student organization or community project to develop leadership and time-management skills while building your resume.
- Attend career fairs and employer panels, preparing ahead of time to engage employers in conversation about your qualifications and employment opportunities.
- Explore career options by viewing job descriptions in Handshake and attending employer information sessions held throughout recruiting season.
- Visit the Career Center to have your application materials reviewed and to discuss job-search strategies.
- Identify career mentors. Talk with a career consultant for suggestions on how to identify mentors.
- Continue developing skills and relationships through student organizations and experiential learning opportunities such as, internships, part-time employment, and volunteering.
- Check Handshake routinely for job application deadlines.
- Identify recruiting opportunities on and off campus. Sign up for on-campus interviews through Handshake at ua.joinhandshake.com/interview_schedules.
- Before you begin interviews, use Handshake to schedule a mock interview in the Career Center.
- Brush up on dining/professional etiquette. See pages 60-63.
- If planning for graduate or professional school, research programs and requirements, entrance exams, and application deadlines. See page 64-65.
- Talk with professors and supervisors about serving as references and provide them with a copy of your resume. See page 43.
- Research how social media networking might help in your job search. See pages 18-19.
- Create a professional LinkedIn profile and begin connecting with others.
**BECOMING CAREER READY**

Employers expect college graduates to be career ready. The National Association of Colleges and Employers has developed eight key competencies that define career-readiness (below).

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<tr>
<th>CRITICAL THINKING</th>
<th>I can analyze and solve problems on my own.</th>
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<tr>
<td>COMMUNICATION</td>
<td>I can communicate effectively verbally and in writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TEAMWORK</td>
<td>I can negotiate and manage conflict and work effectively with others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY</td>
<td>I can select and leverage technologies based on the tasks I have to accomplish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEADERSHIP</td>
<td>I can guide, motivate, and develop others, and manage emotions in the workplace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROFESSIONALISM</td>
<td>I can demonstrate a strong work ethic, manage my time and workload, and maintain a professional image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAREER MANAGEMENT</td>
<td>I can describe my skills, experiences, and professional growth to advocate for advancement opportunities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLOBAL/INTERCULTURAL FLUENCY</td>
<td>I can interact respectfully with all people and I value diverse cultures.</td>
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Through your campus involvement, leadership roles, and academic work, you can develop skills in these areas. Once you’ve developed these essential skills, it’s critical that you are able to communicate them to potential employers.

Throughout this guide, you’ll find tips on developing and communicating these competencies. Look for these icons throughout the guide and refer back to this page as needed.
DEVELOPING SKILLS & STRATEGIES

Choosing a Major  11  Employer Research  20
Exploring Career Values  12  Career Fair Success  21
Transferable Functional Skills  13  Business Cards  22
Self-Management Skills  14  Professional Headshots  22
Informational Interviews  15  Your Personal Brand  23
Experiential Learning  16-17  Additional Job-Search Strategies  24
Networking  18-19  Your Best Work Environment  25
WHERE TO START

If you’re concerned about choosing a major or the approach you’re taking in making the choice, ask yourself the following questions:

- 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 through 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?

Our career consultants understand the pressure you may feel to make the “right” decision. Talking with a career consultant can help you work through these questions and identify steps toward making a decision about your major.

Make an appointment to see a career consultant through Handshake at ua.joinhandshake.com.

EXPLORING CAREERS AND RELATED MAJORS

In addition to talking with a career consultant, you can take the following simple steps to begin exploring majors and careers:

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

2) 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?
   - 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?

3) 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? Highlight any from the list to the right that appeal to you.

CAREER-RELATED SKILLS

<table>
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<th>ANALYTICAL</th>
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<td>Analyzing</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgeting</td>
<td>Forecasting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computing</td>
<td>Researching</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CREATIVE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Composing</td>
<td>Integrating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptualizing</td>
<td>Performing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing</td>
<td>Visualizing</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>COMMUNICATION</th>
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<td>Interviewing</td>
<td>Promoting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>Selling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiating</td>
<td>Speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuading</td>
<td>Writing</td>
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<td>Leading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinating</td>
<td>Managing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Envisioning</td>
<td>Organizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementing</td>
<td>Setting goals</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHYSICAL/TECHNICAL</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrating dexterity</td>
<td>Installing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building</td>
<td>Operating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspecting</td>
<td>Repairing</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RELATIONSHIP</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Instructing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborating</td>
<td>Providing care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling</td>
<td>and support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrating sensitivity</td>
<td>Serving clients/ customers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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, highlight your top ten, and rank them.

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

As you learn about different careers, make note of the ones that appeal to you. Ask yourself:

- How does this career match my interests?
- Would I be able to use the skills I enjoy using in this career?
- What connections does this career have with my values?

Our career consultants are trained to help you decide what type of career to pursue, and help you find experience. Make an appointment through Handshake today to get started. You can also check out CareerBeam on our website. This virtual career success center helps you clarify career goals, research careers and industries, and implement a targeted job search.
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.**

| LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT |  |
|---------------------------|  |
| Making decisions          |  |
| Delegating responsibilities |  |
| Raising funds             |  |
| Mediating between people  |  |
| Training others           |  |
| Conducting meetings       |  |
| Supervising employees     |  |
| Developing plans          |  |
| Building teams            |  |
| Seeing the big picture    |  |
| Evaluating performance    |  |
| Identifying potential in others |  |

| ACTIVE/ORGANIZATION |  |
|---------------------|  |
| Compiling statistics |  |
| Comprehending ideas  |  |
| Coordinating schedules |  |
| Gathering information |  |
| Following the stock market |  |
| Improving efficiency  |  |
| Finding markets for new products |  |
| Writing reports       |  |
| Thinking in a logical manner |  |
| Using scientific rules/methods |  |
| Following up on details |  |
| Prioritizing tasks    |  |
| Interpreting information |  |
| Investigating problems |  |
| Drafting reports      |  |

| COMMUNICATION |  |
|---------------|  |
| Maintaining accurate records |  |
| Analyzing problems          |  |
| Summarizing information    |  |
| Drafting budgets           |  |
| Following detailed instructions |  |
| Evaluating costs/benefits  |  |
| Meeting tight deadlines    |  |
| Using math to solve problems |  |
| Synthesizing data          |  |

| PHYSICAL/TECHNICAL |  |
|--------------------|  |
| Repairing electronics |  |
| Operating equipment  |  |
| Competing physically |  |
| Estimating physical space |  |

| CREATIVE |  |
|----------|  |
| Inventing new ideas |  |
| Brainstorming |  |
| Taking photos |  |
| Arranging furniture |  |
| Preparing food |  |
| Drawing/painting/graphic design |  |
| Designing flyers/ads |  |
| Entertaining people |  |
| Writing creatively |  |
| Writing speeches |  |
| Performing music |  |
| Planning social events |  |
| Designing websites |  |
| Designing clothes |  |

| RELATIONAL |  |
|------------|  |
| Interacting with people |  |
| Working with children |  |
| Listening actively |  |
| Making others feel comfortable |  |
| Persuading others |  |
| Confronting others |  |
| Motivating others |  |
| Understanding other cultures |  |
| Resolving conflicts |  |

Consider avenues for developing or strengthening skills such as volunteering, working, actively participating in a student organization, and interning. **See pages 16-17 on experiential learning.**
Self-management skills relate to how you respond to situations, how you interact with others, and how you relate to your environment. They are transferable because they can be developed and demonstrated in all areas of life. Employers will prioritize candidates with proven self-management skills that fit the job and organization.

Circle skills 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adaptability</th>
<th>Empathy</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Poise</th>
<th>Responsiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambition</td>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>Positivity</td>
<td>Sensitivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>Enthusiasm</td>
<td>Intelligence</td>
<td>Practicality</td>
<td>Sincerity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attentiveness</td>
<td>Expressiveness</td>
<td>Intentionality</td>
<td>Precision</td>
<td>Stability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Composure</td>
<td>Fairness</td>
<td>Kindness</td>
<td>Proactivity</td>
<td>Tact</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consistency</td>
<td>Flexibility</td>
<td>Logic</td>
<td>Professionalism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooperation</td>
<td>Friendliness</td>
<td>Loyalty</td>
<td>Proficiency</td>
<td>Thoughtfulness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Courageousness</td>
<td>Frugality</td>
<td>Maturity</td>
<td>Productivity</td>
<td>Tolerance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Courteousness</td>
<td>Generosity</td>
<td>Open-mindedness</td>
<td>Punctuality</td>
<td>Toughness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>Gentleness</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curiosity</td>
<td>Helpfulness</td>
<td>Originality</td>
<td>Quickness</td>
<td>Understanding</td>
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<td>Decisiveness</td>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>Patience</td>
<td>Rationality</td>
<td>Versatility</td>
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<td>Determination</td>
<td>Imagination</td>
<td>Perception</td>
<td>Reflectiveness</td>
<td>Warmth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>Persistence</td>
<td>Reliability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Efficiency</td>
<td>Industriousness</td>
<td>Persuasiveness</td>
<td>Responsibility</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In an interview, you may be asked to provide examples of demonstrating these skills. From the list above, take the skills that you have recently demonstrated (those that you marked with a check) and use the space below to write down examples of times when you demonstrated them below. See the STAR method on page 50.

---

**PRO TIP**

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.
INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

WHAT IS AN INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW?

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. A firsthand account can help you determine if a career might be a good fit for you.

How to identify someone to interview: Ask family, friends, and acquaintances if they can recommend someone in your targeted profession. You may also be able to identify someone from an organization’s staff directory. Career consultants can assist with this.

How to request the interview: 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. Ask for a meeting of around 30 minutes.

How to prepare for the interview: 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.

How to make a great impression: Show respect and professionalism by being on time, dressed appropriately, and aware of the time you’ve been allotted.

Great questions to ask during an informational interview:

- How would you describe a typical day on the job?
- What are your responsibilities in this position?
- 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?
- What qualifications are most important for this career?
- What are the challenges of this industry or profession?
- What impresses you on resumes?
- Do you know others in the field who I should meet?
- Do you have any specific advice for me?

How to follow up: 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.

How to reflect on what you learned: After an informational interview, it is important to take time to reflect on what you learned during the interview. The following questions may help guide your reflection:

- 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?

PRO TIP

Job shadowing can be thought of as an extended informational interview and is an effective form of job training for certain jobs. If you think a job shadowing experience might be helpful for you, a career consultant can help you explore this option. Make an appointment at ua.joinhandshake.com.
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 or during the summer, though some are designed for longer periods. All internships have the common goal of providing students a chance to learn while they contribute to an organization’s daily operations. In some cases, you may be able to enroll for academic credit for an internship. Check with your academic advisor to determine if this is a good option for you.

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.

Professional Practice is a program that 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.

Work experiences associated with Professional Practice must be related to the student’s field or provide a distinctive opportunity not offered by an established internship program.

Visit ecdc.sa.ua.edu or call 205-348-6422 to learn more about Professional Practice.
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

VOLUNTEERING, STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS, AND STUDY ABROAD

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS
Student organizations are a great place to start getting involved. They also offer many positions that can help you build your leadership skills. Even if you don’t want to run for an official leadership position within a student organization, you can offer to head a committee or lead a project. Employers will want to know how you have demonstrated leadership skills and you can do that without having a specific title.

To learn more about student organizations at UA, visit thesource.ua.edu, or check out Get On Board Day, an event held every spring and fall semester to showcase organizations on campus.

VOLUNTEERING OUTSIDE OF UA
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.

STUDYING ABROAD
Spending time in another country has many benefits, including learning about a culture firsthand and developing language skills through daily conversation. Through your experience abroad, you can build: adaptability, independence, analytical skills, language skills, global perspective, cultural intelligence, and cross-cultural communication skills. Visit international.ua.edu or contact a staff member in the Capstone International Center (B.B. Comer) to learn more about studying abroad.

GLOBAL FLUENCY

TEAMWORK

REFLECTING ON EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

It’s important to reflect on what you’ve learned and contributed through your experiential learning. This can help you identify the types of experiences you would like to have as you move forward. It will also help you organize your thoughts for articulating your experiences to others, including prospective employers, both during interviews and on your resume. Complete the following sentences to help you get started.

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 ______________________________________________
WHY DO I NEED TO BUILD A CAREER NETWORK?

Building your career network is an essential part of your career planning efforts. As many as 75% of jobs are obtained through conversations with acquaintances. Building your career network might sound intimidating, but it starts with a simple step - make three lists.

You can begin your career network lists below. You will likely find that it doesn’t take you long to fill this box!

CAREER NETWORK LISTS

1) Recognize the connections you have already and make a list of everyone you know well, beginning with family and friends.

2) Write a second list to include those with whom you have something in common.

3) Add a third list of professional acquaintances who you see with some regularity (professors, academic advisors, etc.).

NEXT STEPS

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 a given city.

Networking

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 in return. Remember that a sincere offer of assistance in the future is better than neglecting their interests altogether.

PROFESSIONALISM

MY CAREER NETWORK LISTS

1) I KNOW YOU WELL  (Family & Friends)

2) WE HAVE COMMON INTERESTS  (Social & Religious Groups)

3) I KNOW YOU PROFESSIONALLY  (Professors & Academic Advisors)
Networking is one of the most essential parts of career planning. Studies reveal that at least 75% 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 (worked at, volunteered with, 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 this opportunity to talk with you.”

EXAMPLE OF NETWORKING WITH EMPLOYERS

1. **Introduce 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.”

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.
WHY SHOULD I RESEARCH EMPLOYERS?

If you want to make a great impression at a career fair or an 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.

Additionally, once you’re informed about an organization, you can tailor your resume and cover letter to reflect your abilities and knowledge that will benefit the company.

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. Some sources to find information about employers include:

- Company website
- Social media sites (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.)
- 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

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.
- Contact the Better Business Bureau to learn if any complaints have been filed against the organization.

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.

PRO TIP

You can download an employer research worksheet from the Career Center website to guide you in your research efforts. Visit career.ua.edu/employer_research to download a worksheet.
The Career Center hosts 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 the Career Center website (career.ua.edu). Prepare for the fairs with these tips:

### Dress for Success

- The serious job seeker should wear a suit appropriate for an interview (see page 59).
- Business casual is the expected attire if you choose not to wear a suit.
- Wear little or no jewelry and do not wear scented products. Some recruiters may be sensitive to fragrances.
- Place your name tag on your right side. When a recruiter shakes your hand, your name will be in their line of vision.

### Prepare to Impress

- Check the list of employers attending and identify those of interest to you. Research those organizations (see page 20).
- Make brief keyword notes about what you want to discuss with each employer.
- Bring resumes. Also, consider having business cards printed with your contact information, degree, graduation date, major, university, and targeted occupational areas (see page 22).
- Practice giving a brief statement of what you are seeking in a job or career. This is called an elevator pitch or networking introduction (see page 19).

### 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.
- 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 (email is okay) to each recruiter with whom you spoke. Aim to send the note or email within 24 hours.
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 options. 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 [ ] (to show relevant experience)
- Skills (a few relevant to the field you’re targeting)
- Languages (indicate 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, Handshake, 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 general, photos depict subjects from the waist 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 in to Handshake. If you need attire, visit the Crimson Closet (see page 54 for more information.)

**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 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.

Answer the questions below to begin to assess your personal 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 the workplace.

These questions examine how you think about yourself:

What are your natural abilities? ____________________________________________________________
What skills have you developed into strengths? ___________________________________________________
What are you eager to accomplish? ____________________________________________________________
What are your top values? ___________________________________________________________________
How do you demonstrate respect for others? _______________________________________________________

These questions examine your personal brand, or how you present yourself to others:

How are you viewed by your peers? Faculty? Supervisors? _________________________________________
What do your social media activities say about you? ________________________________________________
What does your body language say about you? ______________________________________________________
What does your verbal communication say about you? ________________________________________________
How are you communicating your goals to others? ___________________________________________________

Your online brand

Your social media presence should reflect the personal brand you want to present to employers. To make the most of your social media presence:

1) Build a professional brand for yourself with content related to your pursuits.
2) Interact with or learn about an organization by liking, commenting, or sharing content.
3) Keep it from being all about you. Offer to assist someone with a project or provide useful information.
4) Follow up with professional contacts. Social media provides convenient ways to stay in touch.
5) Create a professional profile on LinkedIn. Keep it current with your professional information and experience. Use it to connect with professional contacts.

Follow the Career Center on social media @UACareerCenter for information on events, career-planning tips, student highlights, and more!
CONTACT EMPLOYERS DIRECTLY
Contact managers in organizations to request an appointment. During your appointment, emphasize your knowledge and interest in their organization.

DETERMINE IF YOU’RE QUALIFIED
When reading a job description, distinguish between the requirements and qualifications versus preferences for the ideal candidate. If you meet most, but not all requirements of a desired position, consider applying if your background is a close match. Work experience, internships, volunteer work, etc. may be substituted for some of the requirements.

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.

POST 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 your preferred format. Convert your resume to PDF before posting it online.
- 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.
- Never post your Social Security number or date of birth online.

RESPOND TO OPENINGS IN PRINT AND ONLINE
- Handshake: Activate your account at ua.joinhandshake.com to search thousands of jobs and internships posted with UA students in mind
- On-campus interviews: Sign up through Handshake
- Websites of professional associations, ex. American Marketing Association
- Employment services and agencies run by government and for-profit businesses
- Organization websites: check “Careers” or “Employment” tabs
- Job databases created for specific industries or locations

BE VISIBLE 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
Employers rely first on internal networks when looking for job applicants. No matter which job-search strategies you use, always ask yourself if there is anyone in your network who might have a connection to the organization.

See also Conducting an Ethical Job Search and Evaluating Job Offers on page 65.

PRO TIP
Thousands of jobs are posted on Handshake every semester. These jobs are all appropriate for new college graduates. Start your search today at ua.joinhandshake.com. If you’re having trouble navigating the jobs, make an appointment to see a career consultant.
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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<th>Sample Benefits</th>
<th>Work Environment</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Aesthetics</td>
<td>Advancement</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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<td>Diversity hiring</td>
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<td>Child care centers</td>
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<td>On-site health services</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Financial gain</td>
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<td>Sabbaticals</td>
<td>Variety</td>
<td>Recognition</td>
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**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, Twitter, and YouTube.

- 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?**

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.ua.edu and click the Explore tab.

**Research Resources**

- Americans with Disabilities Act: ada.gov
- International Student Job Center: internationalstudent.com
- Human Rights Campaign: hrc.org
# RESUMES, LETTERS, & INTERVIEWS

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Your resume is your chance to display your qualifications, skills, and ambitions. It is a tool for communicating your capabilities to a potential employer. Begin by creating a comprehensive document, then tailor it for each job. The following pages will take you through the steps to create an effective resume. You can also find example resumes on pages 30-38.

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:

- Leadership
  Should only be a separate section if you have several leadership roles
- Undergraduate Research
- Campus Involvement
- Community Involvement
- Awards/Honors

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4. WRITE BULLET POINTS

Employers want to see accomplishments on your resume, not just tasks. Write facts and figures to provide a sense of scale and scope. Use this formula to write your bullet points:

action verb (skill) + noun (what/how many) + result

Example: Organized three fundraisers during two semesters, 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.

BULLET POINTS THAT SHOW RESULTS:

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

WEAK: Assisted with promotions

STRONG: Managed social media accounts, generating an increase in website traffic.

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: Served as a Spanish tutor, tailoring strategies to student’s learning style, resulting in improvement from C- to A- within two semesters

ACTION VERBS TO USE IN YOUR BULLET POINTS

Dealt  Improved  Projected  Achieved  Debated  Included  Promoted  Advised  Decided  Increased

Purchased  Appraised  Defined  Indicated  Qualified  Assured  Delivered  Instructed  Questioned  Briefed

Demonstrated  Insured  Rated  Budgeted  Interpreted  Recognized  Earned  Interviewed  Summarized  Closed

Edited  Introduced  Recorded  Coached  Educated  Investigated  Calculated  Combined  Streamlined

Communicated  Entertained  Located  Summarized  Computed  Examined  Mediated  Sketched  Conceived  Excelled

Begin your bullet points below. For more action verb examples, consult a thesaurus or visit career.ua.edu/resumes.
HIGHLIGHTING SKILLS & COMPETENCIES

5. DETERMINE IF YOU NEED A SEPARATE SKILLS SECTION
If you have applied skills in specific roles, you can incorporate them into bullet points for those positions. Alternatively, if you have applied skills or developed competencies in a variety of settings, you can create a separate skills section to highlight them. This is especially relevant if you are applying for a job that requires specific technical skills. Be sure you can provide examples of how you have demonstrated each as you might be asked to do that in an interview.

6. USE 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: incorporate language from the job posting; spell out each organization, title, certification, etc., but also provide the acronym; and proofread very carefully - misspelled words will not be recognized.

FORMATTING
- Resume is no more than one page long. There are a few exceptions to this rule. Check the Special Resumes sections (pages 39-40) for more information.
- Contact information is current. Street address is omitted (city, state is optional).
- 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 employer. This includes relevant experience and words from the job posting.
- Your degree is worded accurately. Check the UA Catalog or the samples on page 40.
- There are no spelling and no grammatical errors.
- Content under each heading is presented in reverse chronological order (most recent first).
- Locations (city and state only) are included for each experience.
- The words “I,” “me,” or “my” are not used in any part of the resume.
- No personal information (age, race, marital status, etc.) is provided.
- Unless required by your profession, your photo is not included.
- Section headings accurately describe the content within the section.

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. Correct: “Manage” or “Managed” (present or past tense). Incorrect: “Manages” or “Managing” (no “s” or “ing” endings).

PRO TIP
For extra help with your resume, the Career Center offers resume walk-in hours during fall and spring semesters. You can find the days/times of walk-in hours on our website. Your career consultant can also help you with your resume if you prefer. To see a Career consultant, make an appointment in Handshake.
TIPS:

☑️ Remember to tailor your resume and highlight transferable skills that are relevant to the job for which you are applying.

☑️ As you are working on your resume, it is fine to save it as a MS Word document so that you can make changes. However, once you are ready to send your resume to a potential employer, make sure to save it as a PDF.

Ally Bama
ally.bama@crimson.ua.edu | 205-867-5309 | www.linkedin.com/in/abama

EDUCATION
Bachelor of Arts, May 2021
The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
Double major: Criminal Justice and Psychology
Minor: French
GPA 3.4/4.0
Dean’s List

STUDY ABROAD
Academic Programs International, Summer 2018 | Université Paris-Sorbonne. Paris, France

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE
Intern, May 2019-Present
Northport Police Department, Northport, AL
• Shadow 5+ officers during multiple shifts to understand law enforcement best practices
• Collaborate with 2 administrators to create detailed Excel spreadsheet of training statuses of 20+ employees

Senior Staff Reporter, September 2017-May 2018
The Crimson White (UA student newspaper), Tuscaloosa, AL
• Investigated 5+ stories each week and utilized information to complete 2 stories per week for publication
• Conducted fact checks regarding up to 15 stories per week, meeting all deadlines

Administrative Assistant, September 2016-September 2017
Jane Doe Private Investigations, LLP, Northport, AL
• Promoted from runner within first 3 months
• Worked 15+ hours per week while enrolled for 18 hours, maintaining a good GPA
• Entrusted with receiving and recording cash payments in excess of $3000

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE
Server, December 2019-Present
DePalma’s Italian Cafe, Tuscaloosa, AL

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE
Mentor, September 2018-May 2019
Al’s Pals Mentorship Program, Tuscaloosa, AL
• Tutored 5th grade students in underserved schools, resulting in noted behavioral improvements

Director of Morale, September 2017-May 2018
The University of Alabama Dance Marathon, Tuscaloosa, AL
• Oversaw morale team of 30+ throughout academic year to create and implement detailed plans for motivating participants throughout 13-hour+ events that raised $300,000+ for Children’s Hospital

SERVICE AND INVOLVEMENT
Habitat for Humanity, French Club, International Festival Host

SKILLS
Microsoft Office Suite (Excel, PowerPoint, Word)
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 (List GPAs if 3.0 or higher)
Dean’s List

RELEVANT COURSEWORK
Buyer Behavior (Spring 20XX), Professional Selling (Spring 20XX), Strategic Marketing (Fall 20XX), Principles of Social Media (Fall 20XX)

STUDY ABROAD
American Institute for Foreign Studies, Summer 20XX
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 4 companies’ 10K reports to determine profitability and marketability
• Collaborated with 6 team members to compose final report and recommendations utilizing Excel and PowerPoint
• Strengthened public speaking skills by presenting material to peers in a business environment

RELEVANT WORK 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

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE
Student Assistant, August 20XX – January 20XX
Office of Student Media, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
• Fielded calls, filed paperwork, and assisted a staff of 7 to ensure office efficiency
• Completed errands for instructors and staff and delivered messages between office and classrooms
• Communicated with students and visitors while scheduling meetings and directing calls to appropriate departments

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE
Recruitment Chair, January 20XX – Present
Ro Ri, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
• Serve as the director for all recruitment events, including recruitment workshops, to inform and discuss with all chapter members issues and procedures pertaining to recruitment
• Create a team-based recruitment structure in order to get more members involved in the recruitment process
• Prepare a “recruitment packet” for every member including calendar, IFC policies, recruit names, and recruitment schedule

HONORS & ACTIVITIES
Recipient of Presidential 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 Pal Mentorship Program

COMPUTER SKILLS
Microsoft Office Suite, Adobe InDesign, Illustrator

PRO TIP
You can find this resume example as a MS Word document template on the Career Center at Culverhouse website: careercenter.culverhouse.ua.edu. You can also find templates for each specialty within the business major on this site.
COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION SCIENCES

Casey Carter

www.portfolium.com/caseycarter
Twitter: @caseycarter
casey.carter@gmail.com

OBJECTIVE
Account Executive position with RTR Public Relations

EDUCATION
Bachelor of Arts in Communication and Information Sciences, May 2020
The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
Major: Public Relations Minor: Spanish
GPA: 3.3/4.0

SKILLS
Adobe InDesign, Photoshop, Microsoft Office Suite
Creating/Curating Social Media Content, Analyzing Data, Public Speaking
Writing Across Platforms, Search Engine Optimization

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE
Public Relations Intern
Webbmont Public Relations, Birmingham, AL
• Work independently on research, data collection, and presentations
• Write and edit press releases for multiple accounts
• Propose hashtags accepted by clients for use with their events
• Introduced practice of virtual meetings with staff through Google Hangouts

Account Executive
Public Relations Campaigns class project, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
• Supervised comprehensive publicity campaign used by Birmingham Convention and Visitors Bureau
• Conducted market research, developed effective strategies within budget, created promotional pieces, and presented proposal to clients

Senior Staff Reporter
The Crimson White student-run publication, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
• Generated ideas and completed 3+ stories per week
• Edited 10 to 15 stories each week, consistently meeting tight deadlines

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE
Sales Associate
Danielle’s Boutique, Tuscaloosa, AL
• Exceeded sales quota each month by more than 15%
• Promoted to training team after two months of employment

LEADERSHIP
Public Relations Student Society of America, Treasurer
ONE Campus Alabama, Social Media Chair
Parent Ambassador
January 2019-Present
February 2019-Present
October 2018-September 2019

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES
Habitat for Humanity
Community Soup Bowl
August 2017-Present
May 2017-Present

TIPS:
☑️ Notice that the bullet points under Additional Experience don’t simply list the tasks associated with the job but reveal accomplishments. If previous work experiences are not directly related to your target job, think of transferable skills or achievements you might emphasize.

☑️ If you are applying for a job in a creative field, it may be appropriate to make your resume more creative. You can find more information about creative resumes on page 39.
# Tyler R. “Ty” Thompson

*tyler_thompson@gmail.com | 205-348-5848*

## EDUCATION

**Bachelor of Science in Education**, May 2020  
The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL  
Major: Elementary Education (B-6), Secondary Education – Social Sciences  
GPA: 3.4/4.0

## CERTIFICATIONS

Class B State of Alabama (Elementary Education, Early Childhood Education, Secondary Education – Social Sciences)  
Passed Praxis II Teaching Reading, PLT: Grade K-6, ELED Multiple Subjects  
Alabama Math Science Technology Initiative: 3rd Grade Math & 5th Grade Science  
edTPA  
CPR/First Aid Certified

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

**Intern**, Central Elementary School (Tuscaloosa City), Spring 2020  
Kindergarten – 570 hours completed  
Title I (96% African American, 2% Asian, 2% Hispanic)

**Practicum Student**, Northridge High School (Tuscaloosa City), Fall 2019  
9th Grade regular and IB world history – 142 hours completed | 250 students  
• Successfully implemented Out of the Grave project where students learned research techniques, term paper prep and presentation skills  
  Note: 88% pass rate with 30% graded as 90%+

**Practicum Student**, Rock Quarry Elementary School (Tuscaloosa City), Spring 2019  
3rd Grade – 120 hours completed

## TEACHING PREPARATION

**Student Observer**, Flatwoods Elementary (Tuscaloosa County), Fall 2018  
1st Grade – 10 hours completed

**Student Observer**, Maxwell Elementary (Tuscaloosa County), Spring 2018  
2nd grade reading – 18 hours completed

## RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

**Camp Counselor**, Camp Mac, Mumford, AL, Summers 2016 – 2018  
Supervised up to 20 girls, ages 8 and 9  
• Enriched peer, parent, and counselor relationships through interactive blogs  
  • Promoted to counselor leader within 4 weeks, based on performance and reliability

## LEADERSHIP

**Treasurer**, Delta Epsilon Iota Honor Society, Fall 2017 – Present  
**Philanthropy Chair**, Crimson Key, Fall 2016 – Spring 2017

## VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

**After School Tutor**, Holt Elementary School, Tuscaloosa, AL, Fall 2016 – Present  
Engaged students from low-income communities to improve reading skills  
**Home Builder**, Habitat for Humanity, Tuscaloosa, AL, Spring 2016

## ACTIVITIES/HONORS

Alabama Books for the Black Belt Initiative, 2017 – Present  
Education Honor Society, 2016 – Present

## MULTICULTURAL EXPERIENCES

Fluent Spanish speaker; studied 6 months in Cadiz, Spain; communicate and establish rapport with ease with individuals of diverse ethnic backgrounds

## SPECIAL INTERESTS

Cheerleading, track and field

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**PRO TIP - ALTERNATE WAY TO INCLUDE MULTICULTURAL EXPERIENCES**

**GLOBAL EXPERIENCE**

**Travel:** Greece, Italy, Turkey, France, Australia, Fiji Islands  
**Medical Mission Trips:** Cambodia, Spring 2018; Costa Rica, Spring 2017; Haiti, Spring 2016  
**Study Abroad:** Universite Paris-Sorbonne, France, Summer 2017  
Modern European History, College of Edinburgh, Scotland, Spring 2016  
**International Competition:** 2017 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Olympic qualifier for javelin
**Maria Martinez**  
mmartinez7@crimson.ua.edu | 205-348-4839 | www.linkedin.com/in/mmartinez

**Education**  
Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering, May 2020  
The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL  
Minor: Math  
Design Project: Thermal Test Chamber  
Cumulative GPA: 3.52/4.0  
Major GPA: 3.77/4.0  
Honors College

**Computer Skills**  
Matlab, AutoCAD, I-DEAS, SINDA, Filemaker Pro, SolidWorks, CATIA

**Work Experience**  
**Engineering Co-op**  
*Acme Auto Manufacturing*, Charleston, SC  
3rd Term: Quality Analysis – Materials/Metrology Lab, Summer 2019  
- Operated materials analysis equipment including SEM and EDS  
- Led team of UA students on QA test procedures project  
- Designed troubleshooting flow chart for new hires to increase efficiency  
2nd Term: Mass Production – Parts Quality (Line Support), Fall 2018  
- Investigated and resolved problems on the line  
- Demonstrated ability to make decisions in time-limited situations  
- Developed and delivered reports to suppliers  
- Performed closing force testing for hydraulic tailgate dampers  
1st Term: Parts Quality (Body and Chassis Group), Spring 2018  
- Updated and edited inventory data in Microsoft Excel  
- Worked with suppliers to coordinate production process updates

**Student Research Assistant**, January – May 2017  
Department of Mechanical Engineering  
The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL  
- Interacted closely with faculty to test electrical systems  
- Drafted report showing estimated savings using new system

**Other Experience**  
**Digital Tech Sales Associate**, May 2016 – August 2017  
*Best Buy*, Tuscaloosa, AL

**Involvement**  
Mentor, Mentor UPP (Undergraduate Peer Partnering), 2017 – Present  
Society of Women Engineers, 2017 – Present  
Volunteer, Women and Gender Resource Center, 2017 – Present

---

**TIPS:**

☑ Include your GPA on your resume.

☑ If you have reached that point, include your senior project.

☑ If you need assistance with your resume, log in to Handshake and request an appointment with a career consultant in the Engineering Career Development Center.
HEATHER HIBBLETON
heather.hibbleton@gmail.com
www.linkedin.com/in/hibbleton
205-348-5848

EDUCATION
Bachelor of Science in Human Environmental Sciences, August 2020
The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
Major: Human Development and Family Studies
Concentration: Adolescent and Youth Development
GPA: 3.8/4.0

INTERNSHIP
Program Development Intern, May-August 2019
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 2019-Present
Soup Kitchen, Tuscaloosa, AL
- Coordinate 50+ 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 2018
Williams Health Services, Northport, AL
- Contributed ideas used in adventure programs for preteens
- Organized recreational inventory by recommending and utilizing cataloging app
- Independently handled various office tasks, demonstrating professionalism and knowledge of services

WORK EXPERIENCE
Catering Assistant, September 2016-Present
Kristin’s Cakes and Catering, Tuscaloosa, AL
- Handle routine store operations in absence of manager
- Create theme parties for birthdays, adhering to each client’s budget
- Earned the “Precisely Right” award three consecutive years, based on customer feedback

CAMPUS ACTIVITIES
Crimson Student Outreach, January 2017-Present
Safe Sisters Peer Education Program, September 2017-Present
Crossroads Community Center, January-September 2017
AL’s Pals Mentorship Program, September-December 2016
Eric Evans
eric.evans@gmail.com | 205-348-5848 | Tuscaloosa, AL

Education
Bachelor of Science in Nursing, December 2019
Capstone College of Nursing
The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
GPA: 3.89/4.00        Honors College

Certification/Licensure
Colorado Board of Nursing, Alabama Board of Nursing
Eligible to take National Council of Licensure Exam (NCLEX)
Basic Life Support, Cardiac Life Support

Clinicals
Preceptorship, October – December 2019
UAB Hospital, Birmingham, AL
Surgical Intensive Care Unit (SICU)
Total clinical hours: 225

Nursing Student, August 2017 – September 2019
Complex Client Nursing: DCH Regional Medical Center
Pediatric Nursing: Children’s of Alabama, The RISE School
Childbearing Family Nursing: DCH Regional Medical Center/
Tuscaloosa County Health Department
Community Health Nursing: Capstone Village/WellBAMA Employee Health
Mental Health Nursing: Bryce Hospital/Caring Days
    Alzheimer’s day program/Brewer-Porch Children’s Center
Adult Health Nursing: DCH Regional Medical Center Medical Surgery Unit
Fundamentals of Nursing: DCH Regional Medical Center
Total clinical hours: 585

Internship
Student Nurse Intern, Summer 2018
Valor Center for Rehabilitation, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Tuscaloosa, AL
• Attend to 10-12 veterans recovering from recent amputations, brain injuries, or stroke

Work Experience
Child Care Provider, Summers 2016 – present
Smith Household, Atlanta, GA
• Cared for two children, ages 5 and 12, and their adult uncle with Down syndrome
• Tutored children in math and science

Global Experience
Medical Mission Trip to Puerto Rico, Summer 2018
Medical Mission Trip to Haiti, Summer 2017
Kendra King
kendra.king@gmail.com
205-348-5848
www.linkedin.com/in/kendraking

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Social Work, May 2020
The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
University Honors College
Minor: Food and Nutrition
GPA 3.79/4.00 magna cum laude

Worked 25+ hours weekly to help finance education

FIELD PLACEMENT

Resident Counselor, January – May 2020
Raeford Village, Montgomery, AL
• Co-facilitate group sessions for 15 teenaged males
• Interview low-risk juveniles and prepare initial assessments
• Observe residents’ interactions to chart behavior
• Demonstrate clinical skills in drawing conclusions from testing and observing

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Instructional Assistant, June – December 2019
Brewer Porch Children’s Center, Tuscaloosa, AL
• Guided 19 clients in performing daily living skills, demonstrating competence in behavior management
• Transported clients to medical appointments
• Wrote shift summaries for a treatment team of 4

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Sales Associate, January 2018 – Present
Great Outdoors, Tuscaloosa, AL

LEADERSHIP

Sigma Phi Alpha Sorority, Philanthropy Chair, 2017
National Association of Social Workers, President, 2019 – 2020

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCES

Meals on Wheels
Soup Kitchen
West Circle Community Council
Temporary Emergency Services
Fiona Freshman  
fiona.freshman@crimson.ua.edu  
205-348-5848

EDUCATION
Bachelor of Arts, May 2023  
The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL  
Major: English  
East High School, Mytown, CA, June 2019  
GPA: 3.8/4.0

WORK EXPERIENCE
Sales Associate, Aarya’s Boutique, Mytown, CA, June 2018-August 2019  
• Maintained detailed knowledge of inventory to provide customers with best solutions  
• Demonstrated adaptability and teamwork in assisting as needed throughout store  
• Earned employee-of-the-month award twice in 12 months

Child Care Provider, Jones Household, Mytown, CA, May 2014-June 2018  
• Managed schedules and provided care for three children, ages 5 to 9  
• Created fun and educational activities, prioritizing safety and age appropriateness  
• Anticipated daily needs and planned ahead, saving employer time and money

COMMUNITY SERVICE
Participant, Alabama Action, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL, August 2019  
• Rebuilt school playground with a team of 15 fellow freshmen  
• Gained understanding of challenges faced by communities with minimal resources

Volunteer, Sycamore Place, Mytown, CA, June-August 2019  
• Promoted two fundraisers through social media, resulting in an increase of almost $500 in donations from the previous year

Volunteer, Soup Kitchen, Mytown, CA, September 2017-May 2018  
• Stocked supplies and served food to 200+ people for 10 hours each week

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE
Team Captain, Varsity Soccer, East High School, Mytown, CA, January-May 2019  
• Directed team plays 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, East High School, Mytown, CA, September 2017-May 2018  
• Organized Spanish Trivia Night, promoting interaction among 75+ club members  
• Successfully coordinated and facilitated 7 meetings, including officer elections for the coming year

TIP: Once in college, your resume should look different. This example offers a recommended layout. Your goal is to begin replacing your high school content with current content as early as possible. Once you establish a GPA at UA, your high school should be removed from your education section as well. Only include transfer institutions if you earned a degree from there.
SPECIAL RESUMES

Some circumstances require special resume formats. If you have questions about any of these formats, we encourage you to make an appointment with your career consultant.

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, so that your most recent experiences are first.

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.

FRESHMAN-YEAR RESUMES

High school experience can be included on your freshman resume, but you want to keep the resume to one page. Select the most recent and/or relevant information. An example of a freshman-year resume is on the preceding page.

CREATIVE-FIELD RESUMES

Creative fields such as graphic or interior design typically allow for more creative resume formats. However, no matter how clever the design, a resume will still need to convey to an employer your potential to bring value to the organization. Focus first on the content of your resume. If you are interested in learning how you might add an appropriate touch of creativity to your resume, talk with professionals in your targeted field or meet with your career consultant in the Career Center. Examples of creative resumes are available on a variety of websites, including Canva (www.canva.com).

INTERNATIONAL RESUMES

If you are interested in working in another country, be sure to research guidelines for writing an appropriate resume for your desired location. A resource that may help you is transitionsabroad.com.

MILITARY-TO-CIVILIAN RESUMES

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 11, 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 resources 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

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.

LEADERSHIP

Some circumstances require special resume formats. If you have questions about any of these formats, we encourage you to make an appointment with your career consultant.
RESUMES, LETTERS, & INTERVIEWS

SPECIAL RESUMES

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

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

Ex. Work Experience Details:
Business Corps Inc.
5/2018-8/2018
Birmingham, AL
$382/week
Grade Level: NA
30 hours/week

Intern Supervisor: Alice Gorgas
(205-348-5848)
• Bullet points that show duties, accomplishments

Education:
High school: name and location; date awarded diploma or GED. Colleges/universities: name and location; major(s); type of degree and date awarded. If you are a double major in different colleges, the name of your degree will be indicated by your primary college.

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

EDUCATION SECTION
EXAMPLES FOR UNIQUE ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

STEM Path to the MBA
The University of Alabama,
Tuscaloosa, AL
Master of Business Administration,
May 2020
Bachelor of Science in (discipline),
May 2019
GPA #.#/4.0

New College
Bachelor of Arts,
May 2020
The University of Alabama,
Tuscaloosa, AL
New College, Interdisciplinary Studies
Depth Study: <name of depth study here>

Double Major (same college)
Bachelor of Arts,
May 2020
The University of Alabama,
Tuscaloosa, AL
Double major: German and Psychology

OR

Majors: German, Psychology
Minor: Blount Undergraduate Initiative

Double Major (different colleges)
Bachelor of Science in Human Environmental Sciences,
May 2020
The University of Alabama,
Tuscaloosa, AL
Major: Interior Design
Second Major: Studio Art
Specialization: Digital Media
A resume written for graduate school or professional school should enhance your application and provide the admissions committee a glimpse into your academic accomplishments and experiences as an undergraduate student. Resumes for graduate school may be formatted as one-page resumes or as multiple-page CVs. Graduate school resumes should focus on:

**EDUCATION**
Academic information is a focal point of this resume. Highlight accomplishments in the following areas as subheadings under Education or as unique categories:
- Research
- Conferences
- Awards
- Publications
- Presentations
- International Study
- Senior Project
- Certifications

**EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION/RELEVANT EXPERIENCE**
Focus on experiences related to your educational or career goals:
- Internships
- Co-ops
- Class Projects
- Shadowing
- Volunteer Experience
- Work

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

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

**PREPARING A CURRICULUM VITAE (CV)**

The CV 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 CV 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

A sample CV for graduate school can be found on the next page.
RESUMES, LETTERS, & INTERVIEWS

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, Someplace, AL
• Lead weekly parent support groups, successfully engaging participants
• Provide emotional support for families
• Complete assessments and discharge plans for patients in the Trauma Surgical Intensive Care Unit (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 six adolescents

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE
Youth Recreation Coordinator
Parks and Recreation Association, Northport, AL
• Developed full-day programs for campers, aged 5-9; approximately 60 each day
• Counseled and trained 24 volunteer student leaders for this impactful program
• Sought donations to implement and impact the programs involving equipment

Volunteer Mentor
St. Maria’s Center, Atlanta, GA
• Designed and implemented an after-school program staffed by volunteers
• Provided tutoring and general emotional support for at-risk teens

TIPS:
☑️ The CV should be tailored for its purpose. For example, citations should follow the editorial style guide used in your discipline.

☑️ It used to be protocol to include references in a CV. However, the thinking on this has recently changed. Do not add, “References available upon request.” Instead, create a separate page for references and submit them when asked.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE
Research Assistant
Dr. Faculty, The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL
• Performed multiple tests using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)
• Analyzed data and drafted reports

Research Assistant
El Centro/National Latino Research Center on Domestic Violence
Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA
• Conducted extensive literature reviews for interdisciplinary intervention efforts
• Collected data through interviews with families
• Demonstrated competence using SPSS

GLOBAL EXPERIENCE
Education
Complutense University of Madrid, Spain
August-December 2016
• Experienced courses in Spanish literature, conversational Spanish

Travel
Spain, Portugal, Argentina, Costa Rica
Mission Work
Habitat for Humanity in Haiti
Medical missions in Columbia
December 2016
March 2017

CONFERENCES ATTENDED
National Association of Social Workers (NASW), Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
June 2018
American Public Human Services Association (APhSA) Regional Conference, Atlanta, GA
July 2018

PUBLICATIONS and PRESENTATIONS
Some employers will ask you to provide a list of references from individuals who will be able to talk 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.

### SAMPLE REQUEST FOR SOMEONE TO SERVE AS YOUR REFERENCE

**New Message**

To: instructorname@ua.edu

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. 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. I have attached an updated copy of my resume and would be glad to provide additional information.

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

Sincerely,

Your Name
WHEN TO INCLUDE A COVER LETTER
A cover letter is another opportunity to market yourself to a potential employer. If you have an opportunity to upload or send a cover letter along with your resume, do it! However, a generic cover letter will not increase your favor with a hiring manager. Instead, research the employer and craft your letter to demonstrate your knowledge of the organization and how you can contribute to its success.

FORMAT
Your cover letter should be one page in length. Use the same heading and typeface that appears on your resume, with your name, number, email address, and LinkedIn URL. Throughout the letter, incorporate key words from the job description, and avoid overuse of personal pronouns. The following sections describe the content that should be found in the greeting, first paragraph, middle paragraph(s), and closing paragraph of your cover letter.

Greeting
Try to identify a specific person/name involved in the hiring process. Otherwise, use “Dear Hiring Manager:”. Do not use “Dear Sir or Madam:” or “To Whom It May Concern:” as those are considered outdated. Use a colon after the greeting.

First paragraph
Refer to the position and how you learned about it. Next, include something that will capture the reader’s interest. If you have a mutual acquaintance whose name will get attention, use it.

Middle paragraph(s)
The middle paragraph(s) should describe why you are a good fit for the position and the organization. Draw connections between the skills and qualifications in your background and the employer’s requirements and needs. Researching the organization will help you tailor this section. Use concrete examples of how you have demonstrated skills they need.

Closing paragraph
The closing paragraph is used to summarize the benefits you can offer the employer. Once you’ve summarized, establish your next step. Stating that you will call within the next week or two to inquire about an interview is an effective way to express your interest and initiative. However, if employers clearly state that they do not want phone calls, do not say you will contact them by phone. Another acceptable closing is to encourage the hiring manager to reach out to you if you can provide them with any other information.

EMAILING YOUR COVER LETTER
If you are going to email your resume, 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. Make sure to double check that your documents are attached before sending the email. The title of the targeted position should be included in the subject line of the email.

COVER LETTER HELP
If you are having trouble writing a cover letter, or even if you have a completed cover letter draft that you would like someone else to look over, the Career Center can help. Our resume walk-in hours during the spring and fall semesters are open to students who need assistance with a resume and/or a cover letter. To see the days/times of resume walk-in hours, visit the Career Center website. Additionally, you can make an appointment with a career consultant to review your resume and cover letter.

To request an appointment, log in to your Handshake account. Watch for your appointment request to be “accepted” and notice any “comments” your career consultant may have made regarding your appointment.
Sophia Spencer
sophia_spencer@gmail.com
123 Hire Street Tuscaloosa, AL 35405

September 21, 2020
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
Pursuing networking 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.

**Sample Networking/Prospecting Letter**

14 Championship Drive  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487  
October 11, 2020  

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

**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 them 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.
WHY WRITE A THANK-YOU LETTER
A thank-you letter shows thoughtfulness, a characteristic many employers value. Since so few people write thank-you notes, 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, send your thank-you letter as an email.

SAMPLE THANK-YOU LETTER

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

October 18, 2020

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 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 them for their time and express your continued interest in the organization with a letter that’s short and to the point.
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. You should exercise caution with any decision that is dependent upon the offer until written confirmation is completed. 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 best way to communicate your decision; however, it is also recommended that you follow up with an email.

• State your decision to withdraw.
• Provide a brief explanation (e.g., accepted a job that seems to be a better fit). Do not state that you received a “better job,” because this can be seen as unprofessional.
• Convey your appreciation for the employer’s time and consideration.

SAMPLE DECLINE EMAIL

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 career goals and interests. Therefore, after careful thought, I must decline your offer.

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

Best regards,

Robin Romero

[Image of sample email]
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 portfolio offers samples of your work, 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 a portfolio as a tool 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

PRO TIP
Even if you have already sent an online portfolio to a potential employer, it’s a good idea to bring a hard copy to an interview so that you can refer to examples of your work as you are answering questions.
Successful interviewing requires preparation and practice. Below are popular questions you may encounter, tips to help you prepare, and information on how to schedule a mock-interview through the Career Center.

POPULAR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Tell me about yourself:
Your response to “tell me about yourself” should mention experiences and qualifications that meet the employer’s 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. Practice your answer to this question, but don’t memorize it. It should neither sound too rehearsed nor rambling. See page 19 for your networking introduction.

Straightforward Questions:
While you can’t practice answering every single straightforward question you might be asked, the more you practice, the more comfortable you will become. Here are some of the most common straightforward questions you might encounter during an interview:

- What are your strengths/weaknesses?
- Why do you want this job?
- What do you know about us?
- What motivates you?
- Are you a leader or a follower?
- What is one of your greatest accomplishments?
- 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?

Tell me about a time. . .
One of the most popular types of interview questions asks you talk about a time when you demonstrated a skill or behavior that is important to the employer (teamwork, problem-solving, multitasking, etc.). Employers use this interviewing strategy to evaluate content skills, transferable skills, and self-management skills.

Use the STAR method (below) to answer these questions.

The STAR Method

Talk about a Situation you were in,

the Task or problem confronting you,

the Action you took, and

the Results of your actions.

The STAR method can help you plan responses to “tell me about a time...” questions. The following are examples of responses to “Tell me about a time when you had to work under pressure.”

Situation: “I bus tables at a restaurant and one night the other bussers didn’t show up to work.”

Task: “Despite my best efforts to clear and prep tables, I couldn’t keep up with the volume by myself, so patrons were outside waiting in line to be seated; some leaving in frustration.”

Action: “I asked my coworkers for help and assigned them duties to help get the line moving and patrons seated.”

Result: “My initiative helped save the restaurant money they were losing from patrons leaving and taking their business elsewhere.”
INTERVIEW PRACTICE

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, temperament)

GENERAL TIPS FOR ANSWERING QUESTIONS

**Listen carefully and 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.

**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.

**Use examples.** 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 year, I began volunteering 15 hours a week 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.”

**MOCK INTERVIEWS**

Before you begin interviewing for jobs, schedule a mock interview in the Career Center through Handshake to practice with these and other questions. If you’re not comfortable practicing with a career consultant, you can also do a mock interview through InterviewStream, an online virtual interviewing system. Learn more at career.ua.edu.

PRO TIP - INAPPROPRIATE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

During a job interview, a hiring manager might accidentally ask an inappropriate question. 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.

If asked an inappropriate question, your options include:

• Briefly answer the question, if you are comfortable doing so.

• Respond to the intent of the question. For example, if you are asked about your medical history, you could respond that nothing in your personal life would interfere with your work.

• Ignore the question and change the subject.

• Respectfully tell the interviewer that the question doesn’t seem to be legal or relevant to the specific requirements of the job.
RESUMES, LETTERS, & INTERVIEWS

TYPES OF INTERVIEWS

PHONE INTERVIEWS
Employers will often narrow the list through phone interviews before arranging on-site interviews. The following tips will help you with a phone interview:

• Clarify which time zone will be observed if your location differs from that of the employer.
• 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. Contact the Career Center to ask about interview room availability.
• Print a copy of your resume, the job description, and questions you plan to ask them. Have keywords written down that will help you recall examples you would like to share in your responses.
• Remember to smile! Smiling will increase the level of energy in your voice. Sit straight as if you were meeting with the interviewers in person.

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).

GROUP INTERVIEWS (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 balance contributing and 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.

In a structured group interview, multiple candidates are gathered at the same time and are all asked the same questions.

PANEL INTERVIEWS
Being interviewed by a group can be intimidating, but it’s very similar to a one-on-one interview. Before the interview, shake hands with and introduce yourself to every person participating. During the interview, direct your answers to the entire group by making eye contact and addressing each member. Try to remember each person’s name so you can thank them when the interview is completed.

COMMUNICATION
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.

Think first 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. 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.

**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 (MMI):
MMIs may be conducted by medical, dental, optometry, pharmacy, physical therapy, physician assistant, and veterinary schools. They may also be included in exams for licensures, such as the National Council Licensure Exam (NCLEX) for nurses.

**Example Health Care Case Study Question:**
One of your college patients tells you that during mid-term week, she became feverish 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 finished, she tells you that she needs a permission note from you 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 support your decision, no matter the challenges presented by the interviewers.

Research case study questions or MMIs in your field. Schedule a mock interview with the Career Center and request that case study questions be included.

**TECHNICAL INTERVIEWS**

Unlike other types of interviews, technical interviews involve challenges and assignments. They’re more like an exam than a standard question-and-answer interview. A typical technical interview consists of two parts:

1) **Whiteboarding or coding**
Be prepared to explain a solution to a problem in real time.

2) **Knowledge-based Q&A**
Expect questions about theories, etc. to demonstrate your knowledge.

To prepare for a technical interview, research the job to which you are applying. For example, if the job requires JavaScript, stick to that and avoid talking about Python. Additionally, you’ll want to study fundamentals, but be prepared to solve things a different way.

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

You must 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.
EMPLOYER RESEARCH

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 page 20 on 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?

TRAVELING TO AN INTERVIEW

If the company leaves the planning of the trip to you, be sure to keep receipts of all expenses incurred for possible reimbursement. (Sometimes expenses 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

If you are traveling to an interview, plan to arrive the afternoon before. This gives you the opportunity to leisurely check in to your hotel, make sure you know how to get to the company site, and practice your responses.

BE PROFESSIONAL

Being professional encompasses punctuality, attire, hygiene, verbal and nonverbal behavior, and dining etiquette.

Timeliness

If your interview is local, plan to 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.

Portfolio

Do not arrive at the interview empty-handed. Before your interview, put together 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.

Attire

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. It’s important to plan your outfit before the day of the interview to make sure you have everything you need. For details on appropriate attire, see page 59.

NON-OFFICE INTERACTIONS

Companies may arrange for the candidate to meet with employees for a meal before or after an interview. The hosts 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 60-61 for information on dining etiquette.

PRO TIP - CRIMSON CAREER CLOSET

The Crimson Career Closet, located next to the main office in 3400 Ferguson Student Center, houses professional clothing that students and alumni may borrow at no cost for interviews and other job-related purposes. Appointments can be made through Handshake or at 205-348-5578. Walk-in hours are 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
INTERVIEW TIPS

Interviews don’t only serve to see if you are a good fit for a company. They are also an important time for you to determine if a company is a good fit for you. Observe the environment. On the next page, you will find an activity to help you reflect on these observations after your interview is complete.

• Give the interviewer a firm handshake, accompanied with eye contact and a smile.
• It’s OK to be nervous, and employers will understand if you are. Try to contain your nerves by taking deep breaths and reminding yourself that you are qualified and competent.
• Be enthusiastic and courteous.

• Be aware of your nonverbal behavior. Sit up straight, don’t cross your arms, and lean toward the interviewer when they are speaking.
• Convey interest and knowledge about the position and company.
• Emphasize your willingness, ability, and compatibility.
• Avoid using filler such as “um,” “you know,” “well,” “yeah,” and “like.”
• Listen to the questions carefully and articulate your thoughts clearly and concisely. Remember that it’s OK to take a minute to formulate your response to a question.
• Don’t address the interviewer by their first name unless invited to.
• Even if an employer acts casually during an interview, maintain your professionalism.
• Don’t discuss your personal problems.
• 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.
• Ask relevant questions.
• Thank the interviewer for his or her time.

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.

• 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 I accomplish in the first six months if I am successful in this role?

On the next page, you will find an activity to help you reflect on these observations after your interview is complete.
INTERVIEW FOLLOW-UP

After an interview, take the time to write a thank you letter to the employer. 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.

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, send your thank-you letter as an email. Refer to page 47 for a sample thank-you letter.

INTERVIEW OBSERVATIONS & REFLECTION

During your interview, you made observations about the company, the work space, the culture, and the employees you would be working with if you accepted the job. Below are questions to guide your observations. Recording your answers to these questions will help you reflect on whether the company you interviewed with is a good fit for you.

Refer to page 65 for help reflecting on your answers to these questions. Remember- it’s OK to decide that you don’t want a job if the environment doesn’t feel like a good fit for you.

Were the people you met or observed in the office happy or tense? ______________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Were you greeted in a warm, sincere manner? __________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Is there enthusiasm within the company? _______________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Did you feel comfortable in the environment? __________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Were your questions answered honestly, or were they avoided? __________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

How did the employees interact with one another? _____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Is the workplace in line with your preferences? __________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Do you have a good feeling about this job? Be specific with why or why not. _______________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

See page 65 for more information about accepting or declining an offer.
SALARY QUESTIONS DURING THE INTERVIEW

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

**Employer:** “Are you willing to accept the posted salary?”

**Applicant:** “I’d like to discuss the job first to be sure it’s a good fit for us both.”

**Employer:** “What would it take for you to accept this job?”

**Applicant:** “If your offer is fair, then I’m sure we can reach an agreement.”

**Employer:** “If you were to receive a job offer from us, would you accept it?”

**Applicant:** “While I am very interested in the job and the organization, I would want to first evaluate the specific offer.”

**PLAN FOR YOUR NEGOTIATION**

Here are six steps to plan for a salary negotiation conversation:

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 careeronestop.org to get salary and wage information from nearly 900 different occupations. 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 an allowance to cover moving expenses.

6. List all benefits you anticipate getting in the compensation package and 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: tuition reimbursement, retirement, stock options, relocation expenses, bonuses, vacation days, etc.

**PRACTICE YOUR NEGOTIATION CONVERSATION**

Practicing your salary negotiation conversation can help you feel prepared and confident. Below is an example.

“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 __________?”

**TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT**

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.

**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?” Before signing, make sure that you understand all terms of the offer.
# PROFESSIONALISM, ETIQUETTE, & NEXT STEPS

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PROFESSIONAL ATTIRE

Appropriate work attire depends on several factors: the type of job, the industry, your geographical area, and the company culture. 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/hosiery should match your outfit color scheme or should be neutral.
- If carrying a notebook, portfolio, or padfolio, select a dark or neutral color.

BUSINESS CASUAL

- Color and pattern are acceptable for shirts and blouses, but shouldn’t be outlandish.
- Golf shirts or polo shirts may be appropriate.
- Pants should be neat; fabrics may include khaki, corduroy, wool, flannel, or linen.
- Suits and blazers should fit well and be too tight, baggy, or low-cut.
- Loafers, flats, and boots are acceptable footwear.
- Denim is generally not considered business casual.

ACCESSORIES AND GROOMING

- Don’t wear fragrances; 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 into a neat, simple style.
- For jewelry, a watch, smart watch, or bracelet and one ring per hand are appropriate. Earrings should be small and unobtrusive.
- For ties, a Windsor knot is the standard choice. Learn to perfect this knot with diagrams and videos online.

Overall, employers’ focus should be on your skills and personality, not what you’re wearing. If you are starting a new job, ask your supervisor about the dress code. The organization may have an official dress code policy they can give you to read over. Otherwise, your supervisor can instruct you on their general attire preferences.
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. Below are general tips on dining etiquette for an interview or professional meeting. On the next page you will find place setting etiquette and diagrams.

**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 half 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 is only 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.

**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**

- whatscouringamerica.net
- diningetiquette.org
- etiquettescholar.com
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.

DINNER PLATE

Between bites, rest your knife diagonally at the top of the plate and your fork nearby with the prongs up. When finished, place your utensils parallel to each other on the side of your plate, knife tip resting in the plate well.

SOUP BOWL

The soup bowl may be placed on top of the dinner plate when the table is initially set. While eating the soup, rest your spoon in the bowl. Do not put it on the plate under the bowl until finished.

CUTTING

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.

MEATS

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. As a general rule, it is best to avoid alcohol during a job interview or networking function.

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.
PROFESSIONALISM, ETIQUETTE & NEXT STEPS

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.

INTRODUCTIONS AND GREETINGS
When first introduced, stand up to meet the person. If you are introducing other people, first offer an introduction to the higher ranked person, addressing them by name. For example, “Dr. Greater Authority, I would like to introduce you to my friend, Taylor Jones.” If you have forgotten someone’s name, ask them 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.

TEAMWORK

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 “Dr.,” and always verify the correct spelling of the recipient’s name. 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.
- There is no need to begin with “my name is.” Simply sign your email at the end with your full name.
- Avoid using slang and text-message abbreviations, and exclude emojis. While symbols may go over well with friends and family, do not use them in your professional communications.
- Do not use strange fonts, wallpapers, or multicolored backgrounds. A standard typeface is most appropriate.
- Be sure to proofread and spell-check your email before sending it. Make sure you capitalize and punctuate correctly. Avoid excessive use of capital letters and exclamation points.
- 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@yahoo.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
PLANNING FOR GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL

QUESTIONS TO 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 starting salaries, and advancement?
- What types of graduate and professional degree programs exist for my chosen career?
- Should I look at pursuing a master’s degree, earning another bachelor’s degree, or pursuing a certification?
- Does the thought of more studying trigger anxiety and stress?
- Which schools offer the field of study I am interested in pursuing?
- 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 (of living, tuition, rent, health insurance, and other miscellaneous expenses)?
- Does the department or university offer assistantships to offset the cost?
- Will I have an internship, practicum, or field experience?

CONSIDERATIONS WHEN APPLYING TO GRADUATE SCHOOL

Admissions criteria are among the main factors you should consider when applying to graduate and professional schools. Criteria for admission typically include:

- Grade Point Average (GPA)
- Scores from a Graduate Record Examination (GRE), Miller Analogies Test (MAT), Law School Admission Test (LSAT), Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), or Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT)
- Personal Statement
- Undergraduate Research
- Letters of Recommendation
- Admissions Essay(s)
- Resume or Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Career consultants review personal statements as well as resumes and CVs by appointment. Visit testing.ua.edu for registration info on graduate school admission testing.

HOW MANY SCHOOLS TO APPLY TO

A common recommendation is to apply to five or six schools, reflecting the following categories:

- One program that is extremely desirable with very competitive admissions standards
- Three programs that are realistic for you in terms of admission standards and that also meet your criteria
- Two programs you are confident in being admitted to that meet your criteria

WHEN TO START SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS

Many graduate programs have deadlines from December to March. However, be aware that each institution has different deadlines. If you would like to be considered for an assistantship, make sure you know when your application needs to be submitted. When deciding who will receive assistantships, departments review the applications of students who have been fully admitted by the deadline.

ESSAYS

The two essays most often associated with applications to graduate school are the statement of purpose and the personal statement.

Statement of Purpose:
Focus 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 or research interests with faculty in each program you’re targeting.

Personal Statement:
Mention academic/professional interests as they relate to the 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, so write concisely and proofread thoroughly. The Career Center can talk you through possible topics and proofread your document once you’ve written it. Additionally, you can visit the Writing Center at UA for further, detailed proofing.

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 program for details.
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.

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, as it may restrict opportunities for others who are genuinely interested in that employer, or damage your reputation with employers.

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 more than one job offer. How can you be sure you are making the right choice? Evaluating offers includes examining both the non-financial features of the job and the financial compensation. Consider first what you value about the job, the organization, and the work environment. It is also important to consider the compensation package. A higher salary does not necessarily mean the best offer.

NON-FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS
Which job seems to be a better fit?
Which job can you see yourself doing each day for at least 40 hours per week?
Which work environment seems to be a better fit?
Which organizational culture suits you best?
Which location is best suited to your needs?
Which job offers more of what you value in a career?
Which job matches your personality type the most? (See page 56.)

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS
Which employer offers better health insurance for your needs?
Which employer offers better retirement funding?
Is there an option in either organization for profit-sharing?
Which job offers the best compensation package?
Will company-owned work devices be provided?
Is either salary commission-based?
Does either organization have a system in place for promotions?
There is a lot to consider as you leave college to enter the workforce. Prepare early for this transition.

ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR AND OFFICE POLITICS

Below are some tips to keep in mind as you enter the workplace for the first time.

- Take time to learn how to work with new managers.
- Learn to listen to others and seek advice.
- 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.
- Don’t gossip about your co-workers.
- 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.
- If you make a mistake, take responsibility and communicate with your manager.

BUSINESS RECEPTION ETIQUETTE

Business receptions or networking events are important opportunities for you to make new professional contacts.

- Dress appropriately. Check if the reception calls for business casual or business professional attire.
- Take business cards.
- 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.”
- Approach others and ask if you might join them.
- Avoid bringing up subjects that might be controversial (e.g., politics, religion, personal matters).
- 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 or clothes messy.
- Put sauces onto your plate before dipping chips, fruit, veggies, etc.
- Avoid holding a plate and drink at the same time, as that will prevent you from shaking hands.
- Thank the host before leaving.

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.

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 (a charge to connect them, and a monthly cost), internet, water, cable, trash pickup, insurance, etc.
FROM STUDENT TO ALUMNUS

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, more 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.

CLOSING THOUGHTS FROM OUR STAFF

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.ua.edu).

We look forward to being of service to you in the future. Best wishes as you continue along your career path!

- Your UA Career Center Staff