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UCI School of Biological Sciences
Mentor Program Overview

The BioSci Mentor Program serves as the foundation upon which we are building and strengthening the biological sciences community at UC Irvine. This program is simply the first step in bringing together some of our most valuable resources – students, alumni and the community.

Armed with a degree, most college students stand poised – ready to conquer the world. But too many are unprepared for the foibles and unpredictability of the job market or graduate school. Unfortunately, a degree does not ensure clarity of career path nor the best approach to take.

To help college graduates not only survive, but be successful, the School of Biological Sciences has created a Mentor Program. This program pairs alumni and community professionals with students, called mentees, with similar interests. Mentors provide academic and career guidance, networking opportunities, and insights into the working world. They can help mentees answer such questions as: What can I do with my degree? Should I go to graduate or professional school? Where do I see myself in five years?

Mentors also help guide mentees as they map out areas for their personal and professional development, request information about careers and industries, and seek feedback on issues of concern. The BioSci Mentor Program gives our mentees an edge and enables them to distinguish themselves as they pursue graduate school and/or enter the workforce. With the mentors’ invaluable knowledge and experience of the working world, mentees can learn to become confident, proactive, and competitive, which is critical in today’s economy and volatile environment.

The world continues to need biological solutions to overcome the challenges we face in health and well-being, sustainability and biodiversity, food production, and energy, all of which affect our economy and society. Mentoring the next generation of biologists is an important part of the mission of UCI School of Biological Sciences. Partnerships with industry and community members are invaluable in helping us educate mentees to become the world changers of tomorrow.
Mentee Roles and Responsibilities

Roles

The partnership between mentor and mentee is built upon trust, respect, and professionalism. As a mentee, you will have the opportunity to:

- Receive constructive feedback about personal and professional skills.
- Learn about specific jobs, career paths, industries, and organizational cultures.
- Obtain advice about professional conduct.
- Pursue networking opportunities.
- Work with your mentor to achieve specific goals.

Responsibilities

- Initiate and maintain contact with your mentor.
- Communicate clearly your interests and needs, and set realistic goals.
- Set realistic expectations regarding method and frequency of communication with your mentor.
- Be available and maintain consistent contact.
- Listen to your mentor.
- Accept advice and feedback gracefully without becoming defensive.
- Express gratitude to your mentor when given opportunities or invaluable knowledge.
Mentee Do’s, Don’ts and Requirements

Requirements

- Must be in good academic standing with normal progress.
- Must be at least 18 years of age.

Do’s

- Initiate and maintain contact with your mentor.
- Communicate and respond to your mentor in a timely manner.
- Plan an agenda or develop key questions for each meeting to ensure focus.
- Keep appointments with your mentor and be punctual.
- Approach discussions with an open mind.
- Respect confidences.
- Accept constructive feedback gracefully.
- Contact Nereida Martinez (see Contact and Resources) if you are unable to connect with your mentor or fulfill your obligations.

Don’ts

- Ask for or expect a job or internship from your mentor.
- Neglect contacting your mentor to set up meetings.
Events and Activities

Events and Deadlines

1. **Complete Your Mentee Profile** – Register at your earliest opportunity to participate in the program by completing your Mentee Profile Form. **Mentee Registration opens Monday, September 16 and runs through Tuesday, October 15.**

2. **Review Potential Mentors** – Review all posted mentor profiles to become familiar with potential mentors with whom you may be interested in being matched. Check back often, as additional mentors are continually added.

3. **Encouraged to Attend the Mentor Program Kickoff Event** – Mentors and mentees will have an opportunity to meet one another through an interactive speed networking activity. We request that you make a special effort to attend this event and meet mentors with whom you may be interested in being matched. **SAVE THE DATE: Wednesday, October 16 at 5:30PM. You will receive a separate email invitation soon.**

4. **Return Online to Indicate Your Top 3 Choices** – Once you decide your top three choices for your potential mentor, return to your online profile to complete this process by indicating your choices in order of preference. **Top 3 selection opens Thursday, October 17 and runs through Thursday, October 31.**

5. **Contact Your Mentor** – Once a match has been confirmed through the Mentor Program, you will be notified by email with the results. We recommend you then **initiate contact** with your mentor.

6. **Encouraged to Attend Networking Night #1** – This event will give mentees a chance to meet and network with other mentors regardless of being matched with them. It’s all about making connections! **SAVE THE DATE: Thursday, January 16, 2020. You will receive a separate email invitation to this event.**

7. **Encouraged to Attend Networking Night #2 and Wrap-Up Party** – Date and details to come.
Activities

- Invite your mentor to meet you for coffee, breakfast, lunch or dinner.
- Meet your mentor at his/her office or place of work. Ask if you can attend a staff meeting, tour the organization, and meet colleagues.
- Ask your mentor if you can shadow him/her or one of their colleagues to illustrate a “typical day.”
- Ask about the possibility of attending a seminar or professional association meeting with your mentor.
- Ask your mentor to arrange a networking opportunity for you to meet his/her colleagues and other professionals in your field(s) of interest.
- Participate in a fun outing with your mentor.
Suggested Mentee Action Plan

Suggested steps for mentees to take after they are matched with their mentors:

1. Review you mentor’s online profile.
2. Contact your mentor via email or phone to schedule a face-to-face visit (if mentor is local).
4. Network with other mentors and mentees at mentor program events. You will receive separate email invitations, through which you can register to attend.

First Meeting

1. Learn about your mentor’s interests and background.
2. Discuss your expectations, and academic and career goals.
3. Identify specific goals to accomplish by the end of the year.

Subsequent Meetings

1. Review your class schedule/academic plan.
2. Make an effort to contact your mentor at least once a month to keep the partnership on track. Respond to your mentor when they contact you.
3. Have an agenda and focus on specific goals for each meeting.
4. Apply the mentor’s advice outside of meetings for real-world success.
5. Conduct wrap-up meeting with your mentor at the end of the year.
## Quarterly Academic Calendar 2019-20

Note: All times Pacific Time (PT).

### Enrollment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schedule of Classes available</th>
<th>Fall 2019</th>
<th>Winter 2020</th>
<th>Spring 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>View date and time of enrollment window (continuing students)</td>
<td>May 4</td>
<td>Nov 2</td>
<td>Feb 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View date and time of enrollment window (continuing students)</td>
<td>May 13</td>
<td>Nov 11</td>
<td>Feb 17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Enrollment by Window

(7 a.m. start date - 7 p.m. end date)

- **continuing**
  - May 20 - Jun 5
  - Nov 18 - Dec 6
  - Feb 24 - Mar 11

- **new graduate**
  - Jun 10
  - Nov 18 - Dec 6
  - Feb 24 - Mar 11

- **new transfer**
  - Jun 10
  - Nov 18 - Dec 6
  - Feb 24 - Mar 11

- **new freshmen**
  - Aug 28
  - Nov 18 - Dec 6
  - Feb 24 - Mar 11

### Open Enrollment

- **continuing**
  - 7 p.m. start date–5 p.m. end date
    - Jun 5 - Sep 16
    - Dec 6 - Dec 16
    - Mar 11 - Mar 16
  - noon start date–5 p.m. end date
    - Sep 19 - Oct 11
    - Dec 19 - Jan 17
    - Mar 19 - Apr 10

- **new graduate**
  - 7 p.m. start date–5 p.m. end date
    - Jun 10 - Sep 16
    - Dec 6 - Dec 16
    - Mar 11 - Mar 16
  - noon start date–5 p.m. end date
    - Sep 19 - Oct 11
    - Dec 19 - Jan 17
    - Mar 19 - Apr 10

- **new transfer**
  - 7 p.m. start date–5 p.m. end date
    - Jun 10 - Sep 16
    - Dec 6 - Dec 16
    - Mar 11 - Mar 16
  - noon start date–5 p.m. end date
    - Sep 19 - Oct 11
    - Dec 19 - Jan 17
    - Mar 19 - Apr 10

- **new freshmen**
  - 7 p.m. start date–5 p.m. end date
    - Aug 28 - Sep 16
    - Dec 6 - Dec 16
    - Mar 11 - Mar 16
  - noon start date–5 p.m. end date
    - Sep 19 - Oct 11
    - Dec 19 - Jan 17
    - Mar 19 - Apr 10

### Waitlist release (5 p.m. - 8 p.m.)

- Sep 18
- Dec 18
- Mar 18

### 18-unit enrollment limit (undergraduate) lifted (noon)

- Sep 3
- Dec 19
- Mar 19

### Last day to:

- Enroll in units to have fees paid by financial or graduate aid without $50 late payment charge. (5:00 p.m.)
  - Sep 16
  - Dec 16
  - Mar 16

- Enroll in units without a $50 late enrollment charge. (5:00 p.m.)
  - Oct 11
  - Jan 17
  - Apr 10

- Enroll in units to avoid loss of student status. (5:00 p.m.)
  - Oct 18
  - Jan 24
  - Apr 17

* May be later based on advising with an academic counselor.
** May be earlier if attending Student Parent Orientation Program (SPOP).
### Fee Payment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Fall 2019</th>
<th>Winter 2020</th>
<th>Spring 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>View ZOTBill</td>
<td>Aug 16</td>
<td>Nov 20</td>
<td>Feb 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last day to:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit UCSHIP waiver</td>
<td>Sep 9</td>
<td>Dec 9</td>
<td>Mar 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay fees without $50 late payment charge and</td>
<td>Sep 16</td>
<td>Dec 16</td>
<td>Mar 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>classes being dropped. (Fee Payment Deadline)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay fees to avoid loss of student status.*</td>
<td>Oct 18</td>
<td>Jan 24</td>
<td>Apr 17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Must be completed prior to close of business day. If paying at Central Cashier: 4:00 p.m. PT. If paying online: 5:00 p.m. PT.

### Quarter Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Fall 2019</th>
<th>Winter 2020</th>
<th>Spring 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quarter Begins</td>
<td>Sep 23</td>
<td>Jan 2</td>
<td>Mar 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction Begins</td>
<td>Sep 26</td>
<td>Jan 6</td>
<td>Mar 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50 late enrollment charge applies if enrolled in 0 units after this date. (5 p.m.)</td>
<td>Oct 11</td>
<td>Jan 17</td>
<td>Apr 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waitlists deactivated. (5 p.m.)</td>
<td>Oct 11</td>
<td>Jan 17</td>
<td>Apr 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last day to:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add a course without deans’ approval and without $3 service charge. (5 p.m.)</td>
<td>Oct 11</td>
<td>Jan 17</td>
<td>Apr 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop a course without deans’ approval and without $3 service charge. (5 p.m.)</td>
<td>Oct 11</td>
<td>Jan 17</td>
<td>Apr 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change the grading option or variable units of a course without dean’s approval and without $3 service charge. (5 p.m.)</td>
<td>Oct 11</td>
<td>Jan 17</td>
<td>Apr 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit part-time fees petition to Graduate Division for graduate students. (12:00 noon)</td>
<td>Oct 16</td>
<td>Jan 22</td>
<td>Apr 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay fees late and/or enroll late. (4:00 p.m.)</td>
<td>Oct 18</td>
<td>Jan 24</td>
<td>Apr 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit part-time fees petition to Registrar for undergraduate students. (5 p.m.)</td>
<td>Oct 18</td>
<td>Jan 24</td>
<td>Apr 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop a course without receiving a W grade; both deans’ approval and $3 service charge required. (5 p.m.)</td>
<td>Nov 8</td>
<td>Feb 14</td>
<td>May 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change the grading option or variable units of a course; both dean’s approval and $3 service charge required. (5 p.m.)</td>
<td>Nov 8</td>
<td>Feb 14</td>
<td>May 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdraw from a course; W grade assigned; both deans’ approval and $3 service charge required. (5 p.m.)</td>
<td>Dec 6</td>
<td>Mar 13</td>
<td>Jun 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdraw from the term. Readmission to the University required for future term. (5 p.m.)</td>
<td>Dec 6</td>
<td>Mar 13</td>
<td>Jun 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction Ends</td>
<td>Dec 6</td>
<td>Mar 13</td>
<td>Jun 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Examinations *</td>
<td>Dec 7 - 13</td>
<td>Mar 14 - 20</td>
<td>Jun 6 - 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarter Ends</td>
<td>Dec 13</td>
<td>Mar 20</td>
<td>Jun 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline to submit final grades. (5 p.m.)</td>
<td>Dec 19</td>
<td>Mar 26</td>
<td>Jun 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades available in StudentAccess. (8 p.m.)</td>
<td>Dec 20</td>
<td>Mar 27</td>
<td>Jun 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official transcripts available</td>
<td>Dec 23</td>
<td>Mar 30</td>
<td>Jun 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees post to transcripts</td>
<td>Feb 7, 2020</td>
<td>May 1, 2020</td>
<td>Jul 24, 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* See information regarding Religious Accommodation and Religious Observance.
### Holidays **, Recesses, Breaks, and Special Ceremonies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic and Administrative Holidays</th>
<th>Fall 2019</th>
<th>Winter 2020</th>
<th>Spring 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Veterans Day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanksgiving holiday</td>
<td>Nov 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidents' Day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidents' Day</td>
<td>Nov 28 - 29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cesar Chavez Day</td>
<td>Jan 20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorial Day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mar 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Break</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dec 17 - Jan 1</td>
<td>Jan 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Administrative Recess</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>campus offices closed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Administrative Recess</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dec 24 - Jan 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mar 23 - 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commencement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jun 12 - 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Hooding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jun 13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Additional information regarding holidays can be found on our webpage on Religious Accommodation and Religious Observance.

### Summer Session 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SS I</th>
<th>SS 10WK</th>
<th>SS II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schedule of Classes available</td>
<td>Mar 1</td>
<td>Mar 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction begins</td>
<td>Jun 22</td>
<td>Jun 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence Day observed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor Day Day observed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction ends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Examinations *</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline to submit final grades</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades available in StudentAccess</td>
<td></td>
<td>Oct 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official transcripts available</td>
<td>Oct 23</td>
<td>Oct 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees post to transcripts (degree awarded date: Sep 9, 2020)</td>
<td>Oct 23</td>
<td>Oct 23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* See information regarding Religious Accommodation and Religious Observance.
Networking is establishing and maintaining mutually-beneficial connections with people in your field of interest. It is often cited as the #1 way to land a job or internship. Networking is not something done once and then forgotten. It is an ongoing process that will occur whenever the opportunity presents itself and it is a lifelong skill that will serve you in whatever occupation you choose.

Tips for Beginners

- Practice conversation starters with people you already know
- Bring a friend along to help you get started
- Request an informational interview with one person at a time
- Attend events with a clear theme or premise for meeting new people
- Set a goal before you enter a networking situation, such as starting three conversations, or making one strong connection

Ready to take it to the next level?

- Reach out to those who may appear reserved; they will often welcome your help
- Take on a leadership role in clubs or classes and help others learn from your success
- Volunteer for a committee with a networking group or help plan a future event
- Be sure to let others know that you will value their guidance and advice
- Don’t forget to follow-up with your new contacts

School Settings & Meetings

Handshakes

- Always shake hands at the beginning and end of the conversation
- A firm grip is best. Avoid being too relaxed but do not overdo it by squeezing too hard
- If you get nervous easily, carry a tissue to wipe your hand

During

- Always be on time for meetings. For social settings, do not arrive later than 30 minutes after the start time on the invitation
- Avoid interruptions of conversation, brainstorming, or presentations if possible. Wait for an appropriate time to interject
- Avoid drinking alcohol in front of your coworkers, recruiters, or clients if they are not drinking. You should never feel pressured to drink, but if you do choose to join others and you are 21 or older, limit yourself to one drink

Introductions

- Name tags are always placed on your outermost piece of clothing on the right side. When shaking your hand, the other person will have direct sight of your name
- If you forget someone’s name, you can sometimes “cover” by introducing a person you do know first; maybe the other person will say their name. Otherwise apologize and ask politely, before introducing the person to someone else
“Hello, my name is Peter Anteater. It’s nice to meet you. What brings you to this event? I’m in the Aerospace Engineering Ph.D. program at the University of California, Irvine. I’m working with Boeing on my current project to develop advanced control techniques to control rotocraft vibrations so we can reduce the vibration helicopters typically experience. I hope to do a flight test soon!”

WRITE YOUR OWN
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

“Dear __________,
It was a pleasure meeting you at the __________ event / conference. I enjoyed your discussion concerning __________. I hope to correspond with you in the future regarding our shared interest and scholarship and look forward to seeing you again at the next event / conference.”

WRITE YOUR OWN
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Ways the Division of Career Pathways can Help You Network:
- Career panels bring professionals from various industries to campus
- Career fairs and employer information sessions bring professionals from various industries to campus
- Workshops (see Handshake for most up-to-date listings)
Informational Interviews

One of the best ways to gather information on a career is by talking with professionals who are already working in the field. Conducting an informational interview is learning about a job and seeing if it fits your interests, skills, and personality. An informational interview is not asking for a job, rather it is gaining information about a career.

**FIND PROFESSIONALS TO INTERVIEW**
How do you find people to interview? The easiest way to start is to ask people you already know. Family members, friends, neighbors, teachers, or past coworkers may work in the occupation you want to explore, or they may know people who do. Career centers, alumni offices, professional associations, and religious organizations are other places to find potential people to interview. Utilize social media sites, such as LinkedIn, to identify individuals who are working in your field of interest.

**CONNECT WITH CONTACTS**
After finding people to consult, you are ready to arrange interviews. Contact the people you hope to meet by email, making it clear that you want information and not a job. Start with an email contact first and follow up with a phone call. This gives the professional advanced notice of your intentions before you put them on the spot during your phone call. You should also mention how you found the person’s name and if someone suggested you contact them.

**PREPARE TO INTERVIEW**
Now that you have an appointment, the next step is to get ready for the interview by researching the occupation and the organization, creating a resume, and developing questions.

**RESEARCH**
Knowing something about the occupation and the company will help you develop specific questions, show your enthusiasm for the job, and help you look more professional.

**RESUME**
Bring a copy of your resume to demonstrate seriousness and professionalism. You can also ask the people you interview to give you feedback on your resume; this may help you gain relevant advice to be more competitive for a certain field.

**DEVELOP QUESTIONS**
The most critical part of preparing for an informational interview is to decide which questions will help you evaluate whether the career is a good fit for you. You want to gain information to help you imagine yourself in the job and to see whether you would enjoy it. See the next page for some suggested questions.
Informational Interviews

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS

1. How did you get into this field?
2. What do you like the most / the least about your job?
3. What is a typical day like?
4. What are your job responsibilities?
5. Are these duties the same for everyone with this job title?
6. What kind of individual (in terms of talent and personality) would be best suited to this position?
7. What are the prospects for someone entering your field today?
8. What advice would you give someone entering your field today?
9. What advice would you give on applying for and finding a job in this field?
10. Are there any other sources of information you might suggest to learn more about this field?
11. What function or services does your office provide?
12. Are there any other jobs that are similar to yours but with different job titles?
13. Do you have any contacts I might benefit talking with?

CONDUCT THE INTERVIEW

Informational interviews are more casual than job interviews, but you should still make a positive and professional first impression. On the day of the interview, you should dress like you are going to an interview. Arrive early and be polite to everyone you meet. You are leading the interview so start by thanking the professional for his or her time. You should also monitor the time and end the interview within the specified time. Thank them for spending time with you and for the information they provided. After the interview, show your gratitude by writing a thank you note within 24 hours.

EVALUATE THE CAREER INFORMATION

Hopefully you’ll leave every informational interview with new insights about the career you want. Take a moment to reflect on the following: What did you like? Did you uncover any new concerns about or advantages to the occupation? Did you discover another occupation you might want to learn about? Do you think you would be happy in this type of job or in this type of organization? It is important not to base decisions on the opinions of one individual or company environment. Try to conduct a few interviews in an occupation and confirm the information you learn through other sources. You can further test an occupation through a job shadowing experience or an internship to gain more knowledge before you choose a career.
Applying for the Job

Job Search Strategies

A successful job or internship search will utilize several of these five strategies:

1. Networking
   - Discuss career goals with people you know
   - Discuss career goals with faculty
   - Conduct informational interviews
   - Attend panels at the Division of Career Pathways
   - Join professional organizations
   - Inquire directly with employers
   - Join and actively use LinkedIn

   Recommended Resources: UCI Division of Career Pathways LinkedIn Group, OC Networking Directory (ocnetworkingdirectory.com), Campus Organizations (campusorgs.uci.edu)

2. Internships
   - Attend “How to Get an Internship” and “Internship 101 workshops
   - Search for internships on Handshake
   - Visit the Internship Coordinator at the Division of Career Pathways

   Recommended Resources: UCI Division of Career Pathways LinkedIn Group, OC Networking Directory (ocnetworkingdirectory.com), Campus Organizations (campusorgs.uci.edu)

3. Internet Postings
   - Search Handshake
   - Review company and employment postings
   - Search job boards specific to your field

   Recommended Resources: Handshake (uci.joinhandshake.com)

4. On Campus Recruiting
   - Participate in the On-Campus Interview Program (OCI)
   - Attend employer information sessions

   Recommended Resources: Handshake (uci.joinhandshake.com)

5. Career Fairs
   - Attend career fairs
     - The Division of Career Pathways holds fairs in fall, winter, and spring quarters
     - Check out fairs in the community

   Recommended Resources: Career Fairs, Events
Applying for the Job

Job Search Strategies

Additional considerations:

Do

- Start early
- Tailor your resume / cover letter
- Exhaust all of your resources
- Research employers
- Keep track of your correspondence

- Dress professionally
- Consider employment agencies
- Be open to small companies
- Wait to discuss salary with the offer

For more advice, stop by Drop-In Advising or make an appointment with a career counselor

Job Preparation

DETERMINE WHAT KIND OF WORK YOU ARE LOOKING FOR:

1. Industries
2. Functions
3. Job Titles

IDENTIFY WHERE YOU WANT TO WORK:

1. Company
2. Work Setting
3. Location

PREPARE YOUR RESUME:

1. Attend a resume workshops at the UCI Division of Career Pathways (register on Handshake at uci.joinhandshake.com)
2. Have your resume reviewed during Drop-In Advising hours (Mon – Fri, 11 AM – 3 PM)

RESEARCH THE JOB MARKET:

1. www.bls.gov/ooh | online.onetcenter.org
2. Research the employment outlooks
3. Determine the salary range (salary.com)

Keep in Mind...

- The average job search takes about six months!
- Only 10 – 20% of jobs are ever published, which means 80 – 90% of jobs remain hidden in the job market
- Using multiple job search strategies will yield better results.
- Obtaining a job is a process. Don’t get discouraged if you don’t get an interview for every application.

For more...

- Attend a Job Search Strategies workshop at the Division of Career Pathways (check Handshake for times and details)
- Make an appointment with a career counselor – they will have resources pertaining specifically to your area of interest!
Internships

Take the fast lane toward your career goals with internships!

Reasons to Get an Internship

- Test drive different career options
- Gain hands on experience
- Apply your coursework knowledge to the “real world”
- Build a professional network
- Increase your marketability for future jobs and grad school

How to Land an Internship

- **Research your career interests.** Narrow your career interests before you begin your internship search in order to target internships based on your major or career goals. There are a multitude of internships and they vary greatly for every career field.

- **Seek internship advice.** Stop by the UCI Division of Career Pathways during Drop-In Advising hours (Monday – Friday, 11 AM – 3 PM during the academic year) or make an individual appointment with a counselor to discuss your personal career goals, ask specific internship questions, and develop an action plan to start your internship search.

- **Begin the internship search.** Utilize a variety of methods and resources to help you with your internship search.

- **Prepare to apply.** Research the requirements and the application process for every internship you want to apply for because these may vary. You will most likely need to create a tailored resume and cover letter.

- **Practice your interviewing skills.** Participate in a one-on-one practice interview and receive feedback from a trained professional to help you improve your chances of landing the internship.

Internship Questions?

If you have internship questions, schedule an appointment with our internship coordinator or a career counselor on Handshake.

Internship Search

- Handshake Job & Internship Listings
- On-Campus Interview (OCI) Program
- Career Fairs
- Networking
- Company Websites
- Internship Search Engines
- Division of Career Pathways Internships
- UCI Internship Programs

Maximize Your Internship

Make sure the internship is project-based and you are obtaining meaningful work experience. Deliver high quality work and strive to exceed expectations. Develop mentor relationships with professionals across the organization. Take the initiative to seek additional responsibilities when you have completed your work. Maintain your network after the internship is over for future referrals and letters of recommendation.
**Evaluating an Internship**

1. Does the internship have a defined beginning and end?  
   - Yes _____  
   - No _____
2. Is the supervisor experienced in the area in which you are working?  
   - Yes _____  
   - No _____
3. Is there a clear learning component(s) to the internship?  
   - Yes _____  
   - No _____
4. Are the skills you will gain applicable to future employment?  
   - Yes _____  
   - No _____
5. Will the resources necessary for the internship be provided by the organization?  
   - Yes _____  
   - No _____
6. Is there a feedback / evaluation process?  
   - Yes _____  
   - No _____
7. Is the internship paid?  
   - Yes _____  
   - No _____
8. If unpaid, does the company have at least one person in a full-time role similar to your internship?  
   - Yes _____  
   - No _____

*If you answered no to any of the questions above, take a moment to think about how valuable this component is to you. If you are unsure, internship advising is a good place to get additional information and insights.*

**Division of Career Pathways Internship Programs**

**UCDC Internship Program** - A summer internship program that allows you to live, learn, and intern in our nation’s capital. Learn more at [http://www.ucdc.uci.edu](http://www.ucdc.uci.edu).

**Sacramento Internship Program** - A summer internship program that offers career-related internship opportunities in public service, while providing a UCI presence in the state capital. For more information, go to [http://www.statecap.uci.edu](http://www.statecap.uci.edu).

**Peer Consultant Internship Program** – An academic year long internship program where students help fellow students with their career, resume, interviewing, job search, academic major, and graduate school concerns through one-on-one drop-in advising. For more information, go to [http://career.uci.edu](http://career.uci.edu).

**UCI Internship Programs**

You can learn more about the internship programs available at UCI by visiting [http://career.uci.edu/students/undergraduate/find-an-internship/uci-internship-programs/](http://career.uci.edu/students/undergraduate/find-an-internship/uci-internship-programs/).
First Paragraph
• **Mention:**
  - Why you are writing (include which position you are applying for)
  - How you learned of the position
  - Your current status (student or employed)
  - If you have completed your degree or when you expect to graduate
• Make a preliminary assertion as to your strength as a candidate
• Tailor to specific organization / company
• Explain your interest in the company

Middle Paragraph
• Present specific examples of how your background, experience, achievements, and/or qualifications meet the needs of the position description, department, and/or organization
• Discuss your knowledge of and interest in some of the specific characteristics of the job, organization, and/or department
• Address if your profile differs from the job description
• Mention why you decided to pursue that field

Final Paragraph
• Offer to provide additional material, information, or a URL for a professional web page / portfolio (if applicable)
• **Indicate:**
  - How you can best be reached
  - What is enclosed / attached with the letter
  - Your availability for, and interest in, an interview
  - Follow up action on your part
• Thank the reader for his or her consideration

Keep in mind...
A cover letter is your opportunity to tell the employer what you are applying for and why you are a good match for the position and the organization.
You should submit a tailored, well-written cover letter with every resume, whether for an internship or job.
While a resume provides a summary of your skills and experience, a cover letter takes it a step further by allowing you to highlight your specific qualifications.

Structure and Details
• Appropriately address the salutation to a specific person, not job title (spell their name correctly)
• Avoid saying “To Whom it May Concern” if no name is provided. For example, you can use “Dear Hiring Manager” or “Dear Selection Committee”
• Check for any spelling or grammar errors
• Use a font type and size that match your resume
• Include contact information in the letter
• Write in the tone of a confident (but not arrogant) professional
• If you are submitting your resume to an email address, your cover letter may be in the body of the email

For more help, visit the UCI Division of Career Pathways to have your cover letter reviewed!

Evan Lee
12345 Stanford Avenue
Irvine, CA 92617
March 7, 20XX
Karen Packard
Recruiting Manager
Enterprise Rent-A-Car
987 Corporation Drive
Irvine, CA 92602

Dear Ms. Packard:

I would like to join the Enterprise Rent-A-Car team as an Entry-level Management Trainee. After reviewing the job description on Handshake and the Enterprise website, I know this position is an excellent match for my interest in sales and management. I was also excited to learn more about the core values at Enterprise such as service, hard work, community, and fun as these fit with my own work values.

I am a senior majoring in Psychology and Social Behavior at the University of California, Irvine, and look forward to applying my strong communication and leadership skills in a management training program. Last year as a Resident Assistant, I worked on a team of 8 members to foster the academic, social, and cultural programming in the residence hall. We also worked together to help students adjust to college and to provide an enriching residential atmosphere. In this role I was responsible for the well-being of 50 first-year students which helped me develop and refine my management skills. It was through this experience that I became aware of my passion for leadership and teamwork and where I learned the importance of effective interpersonal communication. I will use these skills as a successful Management Trainee at Enterprise.

I would like the opportunity to meet with you and discuss my qualifications in greater detail. I will follow up with you in two weeks to check on the status of my application. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Evan Lee
Resume Help

How to Develop a Resume

1. **Review the job description for skills and abilities required.** Analyze the description and highlight the required skills, attributes and qualifications.

2. **Create a list of accomplishments.** Include education / training, volunteer experience, jobs, internships, projects, research, and group / team activities. Describe in detail what you did, why you did it, who you did it with, what equipment you used and the results / outcomes. Quantify your results, if possible, and use commonly understood terminology.

3. **Analyze your accomplishments and experiences for relevant skills.** Reflect upon your past and current experiences to identify your skills.

4. **Write descriptive phrases.** Using action verbs, write short phrases to describe what you did. Be specific yet concise. Arrange the descriptive phrases in order of relevance to the position for which you are applying.

5. **Organize your experiences.** List all experiences in reverse chronological order – starting with the most recent. In each experience, remember to highlight the skills, knowledge and abilities that are relevant to the job.

**Q: What is a CV?**

**A:** CV stands for *curriculum vitae* and is a document used to apply for positions in an academic setting. You can adapt your current resume into a CV by adding three sections:

1. **Research Experience**
2. **Teaching / Mentoring Experience**
3. **Publications or Poster Presentations**

A CV also includes a list of your references with their job title and contact information.

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Keep in mind...
The average employer takes about 6 seconds to scan a resume.

**Formatting Tips**

- Limit your resume to one page
- Include your contact information (with a professional email address)
- Use a professional font (e.g. Times New Roman, Arial, Helvetica, Georgia, Calibri, Tahoma)
- Use font sizes 10 - 12
- Use bolding to make key information stand out (e.g. bold all of your job titles)
- List your GPA (if 3.0 or higher)

**Do**

- Begin phrases with action verbs such as “developed”
- Be specific in your objective statement, if you choose to have one
- Emphasize outcomes, significant achievements and recognition from others
- Quantify accomplishments when possible and highlight specific examples
- Be truthful about your accomplishments
- Have a career counselor review your resume
- Avoid using personal pronoun such as “I” or “my”
- Write phrases as opposed to complete sentences
- Avoid including personal information such as marital status, age, Social Security number or picture
- Keep your resume more traditional and not use flashy graphics or colored paper
- Be cautious when mentioning controversial activities or associations
- Write out acronyms such as “SPOP” or “ASUCI”
### Resume Help

**Resume Components**

**CONTACT INFORMATION**
Name, address, email address, and phone number should be at the top of the page

**EDUCATION**
Name of school, major, degree received, and graduation (or projected graduation date)

**EXPERIENCE**
Paid, volunteer, or internships. Emphasize duties, responsibilities, skills, abilities, and accomplishments. Include the job title, employing organization, location of job, and dates of employment

**ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES**
You may want to include skills (technical, language, etc.), activities (school, volunteer, and community), leadership, honors and awards, and research experience

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**David Parker**  
Email: dparker@uci.edu  
Phone: 714-614-0000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campus:</th>
<th>Home:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>212 Wilson Dr.</td>
<td>2566 S. Mitchell St.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costa Mesa, CA 92704</td>
<td>San Bernardino, CA 92885</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EDUCATION**
Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art  
University of California, Irvine  
June 20XX  
GPA: 3.42  
Dean’s Honor List, 4 quarters

**Relevant Coursework**
- Interdisciplinary Digital Arts
- History of Intermedia
- Projects in Public Art Advanced Drawing
- Advanced Color Photography

**EXPERIENCE**
Claire Trevor School of the Arts; University of California, Irvine  October 20XX-Present
Peer Advisor  
- Assist students with scheduling upcoming courses and resolve current scheduling conflicts
- Attend monthly meetings for information related to academic counseling services
- Perform office duties including answering phones, filing, making copies and faxes
- Enhance interpersonal skills through individual contact with students and administration

**ACTIVITIES**
Photographers’ Society; University of California, Irvine  January 20XX-Present
Member  
- Participate in meetings and discussions related to the methods, arts and equipment for photography

Circle K; University of California, Irvine  September 20XX-Present
Member  
- Attended a Circle K conference focusing on leadership training
- Participate in various service events around the local community working with children and at-risk youth

**SKILLS**
**Computer:** Flash 5, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Premiere, Corel Draw, Quirk, Microsoft Publisher, Microsoft Word, PowerPoint  
**Language:** Conversational French

Put your email address as a means to contact you, but make it as basic as possible, containing only your name. Leave off the “BballStud@gmail.com” and use something like your UCI email address. A basic name looks more professional and employers will take your interest in the job more seriously.

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For more resume help...  
- RSVP for resume workshops on Handshake
- Get your resume reviewed during Drop-In Advising hours  
(Monday – Friday, 11 AM – 3 PM)
Dress for an Interview

Interview Tips

• Arrive early – you’ll be on time and have a chance to collect your thoughts. Try to check in 10 – 15 minutes early
• Treat all staff members with respect as everyone is a potential co-worker
• Silence your cell phone and dispose of any gum
• Make sure your hair and outfit are neat and refrain from using any heavy fragrances (your interviewer may be allergic)
• Keep bags and satchels on the floor, close to your seat
• Alert references that they may be contacted soon and send each a copy of the job description and your resume

Try these stores:
• Macy’s
• Nordstrom
• Nordstrom Rack
• JCPenney
• Men’s Wearhouse
• The Limited
• Ann Taylor Loft
• Banana Republic
• Marshall’s
• TJ Maxx
• Working Wardrobes

A Final Check

Make sure you have...
• Neatly trimmed hair
• Conservative makeup
• No runs in your stockings
• Close-toed shoes (polished)
• No excessive jewelry
• No missing buttons, crooked ties, or lint
• Clean hands and trimmed fingernails

FAQs

About Dressing for an Interview

How do I find out what the proper attire is for an upcoming interview?
You can contact the human resources department of the company and ask them what is appropriate. Keep in mind that some technical companies encourage their applicants to dress more casually. Ask for clarification as to what is acceptable. Is it khakis and a polo shirt? Slacks and a button-down shirt?

I have an interview scheduled and they told me that I can dress business casual. What should I wear?
Even though an employer tells you that you can wear business casual attire, it is highly recommended that you dress in formal attire. It demonstrates professionalism and maturity

Suits are too expensive for me and I know I have to wear one for interviews. What should I do?
There are many stores available that sell quality suits at discounted prices. Some students will borrow their friend’s suit if they have an interview coming up and are not able to go shopping, but your friend’s suit may fit you differently. Working Wardrobes offers a package deal for UCI students (see details at career.uci.edu)

What if the recruiters or company employees dress casually during career fairs or on-campus interviews?
Employers want to see if you are able to represent yourself professionally. Therefore it is recommended that you wear formal attire to the interview

Can I wear a shirt and a tie without a jacket?
Wearing a shirt and tie without a jacket would be considered business casual and is not appropriate for interviews

Should I wear a skirt suit or a pants suit?
Either a matching skirt or pants suit is acceptable to wear. Make sure that you are comfortable in whichever suit you choose to wear
1. **RESEARCH THE ORGANIZATION:**
Demonstrate knowledge of the company by including information from your research in your answers. The organization’s website and LinkedIn are great places to start.

2. **MAKE A STRONG FIRST IMPRESSION:**
Get the interview off to a good start by being on time and greeting the interviewer with a smile and a confident handshake.

3. **KEEP YOUR RESPONSES FOCUSED:**
Your answers should be between 30 seconds and 2 minutes long.

4. **USE STRONG EXAMPLES AND QUANTIFY WHEN POSSIBLE:**
Show the interviewer that you have certain qualities and skills, rather than telling them, by providing specific examples. Including measurable information gives you greater credibility.

5. **REPEAT YOUR STRENGTHS:**
Know your top three strengths as they relate to the position, and reiterate them throughout the interview. Remember to include strong examples of your strengths.

6. **PREPARE SUCCESS STORIES:**
Fully developed examples from previous experiences can help you respond to any behavioral interview question an employer may ask.

7. **PUT YOURSELF ON THEIR TEAM:**
Show that you are a good fit by positioning yourself as a member of the team. Use organization-specific language and refer to products and services.

8. **ASK QUESTIONS:**
By asking questions, you convey interest and enthusiasm to the interviewer. Avoid questions regarding salary and benefits.

9. **FOLLOW UP:**
Send a thank you note within 24 hours to the interviewer restating your interest and thanking them for their time.

10. **EVALUATE THE INTERVIEW:**
Reflect on your experience and review your performance. What did you do well and what can you improve upon for next time?

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**What to Bring**
- Padfolio, notebook and pen
- Copies of your resume
- Transcripts / portfolio (if requested)
- Questions for the employer
- Calendar
- List of references
- Directions
- Examples of your work

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**Before the Interview**
- Explore your strengths, weaknesses, interests, and career goals
- Research the employer
- Review the job description
- Prepare for commonly asked interview questions and potential questions to ask the interviewer
- Practice aloud
- Review your resume

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**During the Interview**
- Arrive early – approximately 10 – 15 minutes before the interview
- Greet the employer and/or associates with a smile, firm handshake and confidence
- When responding to questions, organize your thoughts and then answer
  - Give examples using BART (Background, Action, Result, Tie it back to the position)
  - Answers should be positive and concise
  - Do not identify a weakness essential to the job
- Be aware of non-verbal behaviors – posture, voice, eye contact, and smile
- Relax and enjoy the conversation

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**After the Interview**
- Ask questions – have 3 – 5 prepared
- Thank the interviewer and determine next steps
- Reaffirm your interest in the position
- Ask for a business card and send a thank you letter or email within 24 hours
- Re-evaluate interview questions and your responses – reflect on your performance and take notes for future reference
Interview Techniques

WHAT TO RESEARCH:
- History of the organization
- Products and services
- Culture
- Management style
- Organizational structure
- Financial conditions
- Major competitors
- Plans for growth
- Job responsibilities
- Opportunities for advancement
- Locations

WHERE TO RESEARCH:
- Company website
career.uci.edu
hoovers.com
wetfeet.com
Google
- Online newspapers
Orange County Business Journal
LinkedIn
glassdoor.com
Current and former employees, interns, alumni

 Typical Interview Questions

PERSONAL:
- Tell me about yourself
- What are your major strengths and weaknesses?
- What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
- What achievements from your past work experience are you most proud of?

SCHOOL BACKGROUND:
- How does your college education experience relate to this job?
- What extracurricular activities did you participate in and what did you learn from those experiences?
- What was the most difficult course you took? How did you handle it?

WORK EXPERIENCE:
- What prior work experience have you had and how does it relate to this job?
- How would your past supervisors describe you?
- What were your most significant accomplishments in your prior work experience?
- What did you enjoy most about your previous work experience? Least?

EMPLOYER KNOWLEDGE:
- Why are you interested in this position?
- Why are you interested in this particular company?
- What attracts you to this particular industry?

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:
- Please describe your ideal work setting
- What major accomplishment would you like to achieve in your life and why?
- What are your career interests?

BEHAVIORAL QUESTIONS – USE BART (BACKGROUND, ACTION, RESULT, TIE IT BACK):
- Tell me about a conflict situation and how you resolved it
- Describe a situation when you had multiple tasks to complete under very tight time constraints
- Describe a time when you sold your colleague / supervisor on an idea
- Tell me about a time when you worked on a project as part of a team. What role did you play?
- Describe a time when you failed at something. What would you have done differently?
- Give me an example of a situation when you took a leadership role

Sample Questions to Ask
- How is job performance measured?
- What are the biggest challenges associated with this position?
- What would a typical project / assignment be like?
- How would you describe an ideal employee?
- What additional qualities does the job require that we haven’t discussed?
- How does the current or former occupant’s background and experience differ from mine?
APPLYING TO GRAD SCHOOL

Considering Grad School

Research Your Prospective

- **TALK WITH** professors, graduate students, or other UCI staff
- **MEET WITH** people working in that industry or studying in that field
- **CHECK OUT** the Occupational Outlook Handbook by visiting [www.bls.gov/ooh/](http://www.bls.gov/ooh/)
- **IDENTIFY** prospective schools and seek information on their programs. Check out the Peterson’s Guide to Graduate and Professional Schools online at [www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com)

Evaluate the Various Graduate

- **DEPARTMENT**
  Certain institutions are known for particular programs. Check out the U.S. News & World Report Best Graduate Schools online
- **FACULTY**
  Research the reputation and areas of specialization of the faculty
- **PROGRAM**
  Each school has a different curriculum and philosophy. Make sure they meet your educational goals
- **FACILITIES**
  Find out about the libraries, laboratories, and research facilities. What is the depth of the library collection in your particular field of interest?
- **SIZE**
  There are advantages and disadvantages to both small and large universities
- **PLACEMENT**
  Where do graduates go after completing the program?
- **DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**
  List all requirements such as residency, unit requirements, language requirements, examinations, candidacy, and thesis or dissertation

Prepare for the Admissions Process

- **COMPLETE YOUR BACHELOR’S DEGREE**
- **AIM FOR A MINIMUM 3.0 GPA**
  Some schools average your last two years of school, or the courses in your field of concentration
- **2-3 LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION**
  Choose individuals who know you academically and/or professionally and will give you the best recommendation. The job title or status of that person does not usually matter; however, at least one reference should be a professor. Before asking for a recommendation, meet with your reference to discuss your career goals and inform them about the program(s)
- **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**
  State why you are the most qualified to be in that particular program. This is a qualitative way to show your eligibility, not quantitative like GRE scores, transcripts, and grades
- **ADMISSION TESTS**
  In most cases, the Graduate Records Exam (GRE) will be required. Check with each school to identify the appropriate exam
- **APPLICATION**
  Read instructions carefully and meet all requirements and deadlines

Finance Your Education

- **FELLOWSHIPS** - Given to students with the expectation that they will maintain and achieve good standing
- **LOANS** - Explore school, private, and government options. Repayment of loans can vary
- **ASSISTANTSHIPS** - You receive a monthly stipend for which you perform services related to your field
- **GRANTS** – Like fellowships, these are gifts to graduate students that do not have to be repaid
- **WORK-STUDY** - This type of financial aid assists graduate students by providing job opportunities within the institution or in a public or non-profit agency for up to 20 hours per week
**Sample Timeline**

**Junior Year and Senior Year**
- Determine which type of graduate program best fits your career goals
- Research specific graduate programs of interest. Look at admissions and financial aid applications
- Take required examinations (may also take again in fall quarter)
- Attend the Graduate and Professional School Fair

**Senior Year**

**SEPTEMBER**
- Continue researching graduate programs of interest
- Find out when graduate transcripts must be sent and what other materials are required
- Check applications for specific deadlines
- Register for required entrance exams

**OCTOBER**
- Talk to graduate recruiters visiting the campus or in the area
- If possible, visit the schools in which you are interested. Talk with admissions staff, department faculty, and/or current graduate students
- Request letters of recommendation
- Write personal statement

**NOVEMBER**
- Begin preparing your financial aid application. These are often required at the same time or earlier than admissions applications.

**DECEMBER**
- Some admissions applications might be due this month
- Check on your transcripts and letters of recommendation to see that they have been sent

**JANUARY**
- Last chance to take the required tests for fall admissions (it may be too late for some schools)
- Check with each school to see that they have received all the materials, including test scores and financial statements

**FEBRUARY** (or after sending off applications)
- Continue researching graduate programs of interest
- Find out when graduate transcripts must be sent and what other materials are required
- Check applications for specific deadlines
- Register for required entrance exams

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**Store Your Letters of Rec Online**
Avoid losing letters or asking professors to write letters to numerous schools by storing your letters online.
Try services like Interfolio (interfolio.com)

**Career Pathways Resources**
The Division of Career Pathways offers one-on-one graduate school advising, workshops detailing the process of applying to graduate or law school, graduate school fairs, and more! Visit career.uci.edu for details.

**If You Don’t Get Accepted**
Talk to a career counselor to discuss some reasons why you were not accepted and decide if you should revisit your goals. Don’t give up! Students are sometimes accepted on their second or third try, or later!
APPLYING TO GRAD SCHOOL

Write a Statement of Purpose

Your grades and test scores will determine whether or not you will be considered for admittance to graduate school. Your personal statement can help determine if you are unique enough from the other applicants to be admitted.

**Before Writing**

**READ THE QUESTION!**
A fantastic essay that does not answer the question the admission committee asks will get you nowhere. Read the question, re-read the question, and then write your personal statement with the questions constantly in mind.

**DEVELOP A THEME**
Graduate school personal statements need a thesis, organization, cohesiveness, and direction. The essay question is usually structured to give leeway to be creative, so take advantage of the writing freedom. Develop a creative theme that answers the essay question and gets across your message. Remember, the admissions committee reads hundreds of essays. Make sure you write one that stands out!

**READ EXAMPLE ADMISSIONS ESSAYS**
Read a few essays and find out what you like and dislike about each!

**When Writing...**

**BE POSITIVE**
You’ve graduated from UC Irvine, you have career goals, and over the past four years you have accomplished a lot. Be proud and positive and try to avoid the negative. If it sounds like you do not have confidence in your own accomplishments, the admissions committee will not have confidence in you.

**GIVE DETAILS**
Anyone can claim to be assertive, intelligent, creative, ambitious, and analytical. You need to prove that you have the skills and characteristics you possess. If you claim you can research well, explain why and give examples. If you cannot backup your talents, then they are not worth mentioning. Avoid words like meaningful, invaluable, rewarding, and explain your feelings instead. This is a “personal” statement. Explain events in detail because they reveal who you are. It is better to have a few great points and stories than a lot of undiscursive generalities.

**SEEK HELP**
The personal statement should never be completed alone. Have friends, family, and advisors give constructive comments and criticism.

*Remember...*
Make yourself stand out!
Showcase what makes you unique!
Get feedback!

*Need help getting started? Think about these questions...*
- What is special, distinctive, unique, or impressive about you or your life story?
- How did you learn about this field?
- What characteristics and skills do you possess that enhance your prospects for success?
- Have you overcome any unusual obstacles?
- Are there any gaps in your academic record that you want to explain? (You may want to explain this in an addendum vs. SOP.)
- What are the most compelling reasons for the admissions committee to be interested in you?
- What career (related to your graduate program) are you interested in pursuing?

For assistance with your writing needs, make an appointment with a Writing Specialist or a Peer Tutor through the UCI Center for Excellence in Writing and Communication: www.writingcenter.uci.edu.
APPLYING TO GRAD SCHOOL

Write a Statement of Purpose

Do

✓ Include information that supports your thesis
✓ Start your essay with an attention grabbing lead. Avoid starting your essay with “I was born in...” or “My parents are from” and be careful with using anecdotes, quotes, questions or engaging descriptions of a scene
✓ Avoid writing an autobiography, itinerary or resume in prose
✓ Start over if the essay just isn’t working or fails to answer the essay question
✓ Use clear, simple vocabulary
✓ Be specific as opposed to providing a collection of generic statements
✓ Avoid giving weak excuses for your GPA or test scores
✓ Be truthful about your accomplishments

Sample Outline

OPENING PARAGRAPH
State your general reasons for pursuing graduate study and introduce yourself to the selection committee in a compelling manner. Make it interesting; the committee members will read many applications so be sure yours gives them a sense of your particular talents and individuality.

BACKGROUND
Describe your community and family background and tell how your interest in and your knowledge of your chosen field developed. Describe any personal attributes and qualities that would help you complete graduate study successfully, such as determination in achieving your goals, initiative and ability in developing ideas, and capacity for working through problems independently.

QUALIFICATIONS
Explain those experiences that will serve as a foundation for your forthcoming graduate work.
Discuss
1. Your expertise and accomplishments in your major field
2. How your undergraduate studies relate to what you intend to do in graduate school
3. Specific learning experiences that demonstrate your motivation and inspiration for continued study
4. Other relevant experiences such as jobs for community activities, including names of organizations and concrete detail

SPECIFIC GOALS
Express the specific training and background that you would like to acquire while in your graduate program. Your specific goals should be consistent with the goals and training objectives of the department to which you are seeking admission.

CLOSING PARAGRAPH
Leave the reader with a strong sense that you are qualified and will be successful in graduate or professional school. Here, as throughout your statement of purpose, try to be as brief but as informative as possible.
Contacts & Resources

Mentor Program: bio.uci.edu/mentor-program

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Student Affairs: bio.uci.edu/undergraduates/

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Division of Career Pathways: career.uci.edu

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Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP): urop.uci.edu

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bio.uci.edu/undergraduates/research