Table of Contents

Program Overview
Roles and Responsibilities
Events and Activities
When to meet with your mentor
Suggested Mentee Action Plan
Resources and Contacts
Program Overview

The BioSci Mentor Program serves as the foundation upon which we are building and strengthening the biological sciences community at UCI. This program is vital 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 challenges and unpredictability of the job market or graduate school. Unfortunately, a degree does not ensure clarity of career path or the best approach to take.

To help college graduates not only survive, but be successful, the School of Biological Sciences established the Mentor Program. This program pairs alumni and community professionals with students, called mentees, who share similar interests. Mentors provide academic and career guidance, networking opportunities and insights into the professional environment. 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 will help guide mentees as they map out areas for their personal and professional development, learn more 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, mentees learn to become confident, proactive and competitive individuals.

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 will 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 leaders of tomorrow.
Roles and Responsibilities

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

- Initiate and maintain contact with your mentor
- Clearly communicate interests and needs and set SAVE goals (defined on next page)
- Be available and maintain contact
- Listen to your mentor
- Express gratitude to your mentor when given opportunities
How to write your S-M-A-R-T goal

**S – Specific**

When setting a goal, be specific about what you want to accomplish. Think about this as the mission statement for your goal. This isn’t a detailed list of how you’re going to meet a goal, but it should include an answer to the popular ‘w’ questions:

- **Who** – Consider who needs to be involved to achieve the goal (this is especially important when you’re working on a group project).

- **What** – Think about exactly what you are trying to accomplish and don’t be afraid to get very detailed.

- **When** – You’ll get more specific about this question under the “time-bound” section of defining S.M.A.R.T. goals, but you should at least set a time frame.

- **Where** – This question may not always apply, especially if you’re setting personal goals, but if there’s a location or relevant event, identify it here.

- **Which** – Determine any related obstacles or requirements. This question can be beneficial in deciding if your goal is realistic. For example, if the goal is to open a baking business, but you’ve never baked anything before, that might be an issue. As a result, you may refine the specifics of the goal to be “Learn how to bake in order to open a baking business.”

- **Why** – What is the reason for the goal? When it comes to using this method for employees, the answer will likely be along the lines of company advancement or career development.
M – Measurable

What metrics are you going to use to determine if you meet the goal? This makes a goal more tangible because it provides a way to measure progress. If it’s a project that’s going to take a few months to complete, then set some milestones by considering specific tasks to accomplish. Milestones are a series of steps along the way that when added up will result in the completion of your main goal.

- As the “M” in SMART states, there should be a source of information to measure or determine whether a goal has been achieved.
- The M is a direct (or possibly indirect) indicator of what success for a particular goal will look like.
- Sometimes measurement is difficult and managers and employees will need to work together to identify the most relevant and feasible data sources and collection methods.
- Data collection efforts needed to measure a goal can be included in that goal’s action plan.
- Even if a perfect, direct measurement source is not immediately feasible for a given goal, the discussion about the desired end result (why this goal is important) and what the measurement options are (what success might look like) is an important and valuable part of performance planning.
- Measurement methods can be both quantitative (productivity results, money saved or earned, etc.) and qualitative (client testimonials, surveys, etc.).

A – Achievable

This focuses on how important a goal is to you and what you can do to make it attainable and may require developing new skills and changing attitudes. The goal is meant to inspire motivation, not discouragement. Think about:

- how to accomplish the goal,
- if you have the tools/skills needed,
- if not, consider what it would take to attain them.

R – Relevant

Relevance refers focusing on something that makes sense with the broader business goals. For example, if the goal is to launch a new program or service, it should be something that’s in alignment with the overall business/department objectives. Your team may be able to launch a new program, but if your division is not prioritizing launching that type of new programs, then the goal wouldn’t be relevant.

T – Time-Bound

Anyone can set goals, but if it lacks realistic timing, chances are you’re not going to succeed. Providing a target date for deliverables is imperative. Ask specific questions about the goal deadline and what can be accomplished within that time period. If the goal will take three months to complete, it’s useful to define what should be achieved half-way through the process. Providing time constraints also creates a sense of urgency.
Template for writing a S.M.A.R.T. Goal

Crafting S.M.A.R.T. Goals are designed to help you identify if what you want to achieve is realistic and determine a deadline. When writing S.M.A.R.T. Goals use concise language, but include relevant information. These are designed to help you succeed, so be positive when answering the questions.

**Initial Goal** (Write the goal you have in mind):

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

1. **Specific** (What do you want to accomplish? Who needs to be included? When do you want to do this? Why is this a goal?):

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

2. **Measurable** (How can you measure progress and know if you’ve successfully met your goal?):

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

3. **Achievable** (Do you have the skills required to achieve the goal? If not, can you obtain them? What is the motivation for this goal? Is the amount of effort required on par with what the goal will achieve?):

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

4. **Relevant** (Why am I setting this goal now? Is it aligned with overall objectives?):

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

5. **Time-bound** (What’s the deadline and is it realistic?):

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

**S.M.A.R.T. Goal** (Review what you have written, and craft a new goal statement based on what the answers to the questions above have revealed):

__________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Must be in good academic standing with normal progress

Must be at least 18 years of age at start of program.

**Do**

- Respond to your mentor in a timely manner
- Plan an agenda or develop KEY questions for each 1:1 meeting
- Keep appointments with your mentor and be punctual
- Approach discussions confidently
- Contact **Tori Aquino, Development Coordinator**, if unable to connect with your mentor

**Don't**

- Ask for or expect a job/internship from your mentor
- Neglect contact with your mentor
## EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete Mentee Profile</td>
<td>Registration opens 9.19.22 and closes 10.14.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Potential Mentors</td>
<td>By Kickoff Zoom Event in late October. Check your email frequently for a coming invitation with registration details for this event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive Mentor Match</td>
<td>Early November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact Mentor</td>
<td>As soon as you are matched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend Mentor Program Events</td>
<td>Held throughout academic year. Dates &amp; details to come!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## WHEN TO MEET WITH YOUR MENTOR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quarter</th>
<th>Schedule Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fall Quarter</strong></td>
<td>Schedule to meet at least 4 times throughout the quarter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>January 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>February 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Winter Quarter</strong></td>
<td>January 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>February 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spring Quarter</strong></td>
<td>April 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Closing Event Celebration (TBD)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note* We want to emphasize that during winter and spring, mentors and mentees can certainly meet more frequently if desired.
**EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

*In light of the pandemic, we ask that you refer to local and state guidance for in person meetings and masking. Alternatively, see below for alternative ways to connect.*

### Activities

- Hold your intro meeting on video conferencing platform such as Zoom
- Once you establish your goals, share resources and information that you discover and ask for their input (internship/job listings, grad programs)
- Hold a mock interview with your mentor
- Ask your mentor to review application and career materials and provide suggestions if applying for a position or graduate program
- Ask your mentor to arrange a virtual networking opportunity for you to meet their colleagues and other field professionals
- Build a life/career plan with your mentor to keep goals measurable and realistic
Suggested Mentee Action Plan

Once Matched:

1. Review mentor's online profile
2. Contact mentor via email or phone and schedule a conversation
3. Set expectations of preferred communications and response time
4. Be open to networking with other mentors and fellow mentees

First Meeting:

1. Learn about mentor's interests and background
2. Discuss your expectations and academic and career goals
3. Identify specific goals to accomplish by end of 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
3. Have an agenda and focus on specific goals for each meeting
4. Conduct a wrap-up meeting at the end of the year
5. Try to stay in contact with your mentor beyond the academic year!
## ENROLLMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schedule of Classes available</th>
<th>Fall 2022</th>
<th>Winter 2023</th>
<th>Spring 2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Apr 30</td>
<td>Oct 29</td>
<td>Feb 11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**View date and time of enrollment window** (continuing students)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>May 9</th>
<th>Nov 7</th>
<th>Feb 20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Enrollment by window** (7 a.m. start date—7 p.m. end date)

- **continuing**
  - May 16–Jun 1
  - Jun 6
  - Aug 24
- **new graduate**
  - Jun 6
- **new transfer** *
  - Jun 6
- **new freshmen** **
  - Aug 24

**Open Enrollment**

- **continuing**
  - Jul 1–Sep 15
  - Sep 20–Oct 7
- **new graduate**
  - Jun 6–Sep 15
  - Sep 20–Oct 7
- **new transfer**
  - Jun 6–Sep 15
  - Sep 20–Oct 7
- **new freshmen**
  - Aug 24–Sep 15
  - Sep 20–Oct 7

**Waitlist release** (5 p.m.–8 p.m.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sep 19</th>
<th>Dec 19</th>
<th>Mar 17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**18-unit enrollment limit (undergrad) lifted (noon)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sep 1</th>
<th>Dec 20</th>
<th>Mar 20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**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 15
  - Dec 15
  - Mar 15
- Enroll in units without a $50 late enrollment charge. (5:00 p.m.)
  - Oct 7
  - Jan 20
  - Apr 14
- Enroll in units to avoid loss of student status. (5:00 p.m.)
  - Oct 14
  - Jan 27
  - Apr 21

---

* May be earlier based on advising with academic counselor.
** May be earlier if attending Orientation.
† Enrollment by Window for Spring 2023 closes at 12 p.m. PT.
‡ Open Enrollment for Spring 2023 opens at 12 p.m. PT.
## FEE PAYMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last day to:</th>
<th>Fall 2022</th>
<th>Winter 2023</th>
<th>Spring 2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Submit UCSHIP waiver to avoid $50 late waiver fee</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay fees without $50 late payment charge and classes being dropped. (Fee Payment Deadline)*</td>
<td>Sep 15</td>
<td>Dec 15</td>
<td>Mar 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay fees to avoid loss of student status.*</td>
<td>Oct 14</td>
<td>Jan 27</td>
<td>Apr 21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* If paying at Central Cashier: 4:00 p.m. PT. If paying online: 5:00 p.m. PT.

## QUARTER ACTIVITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quarter begins</th>
<th>Fall 2022</th>
<th>Winter 2023</th>
<th>Spring 2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instruction begins</td>
<td>Sep 19</td>
<td>Jan 4</td>
<td>Mar 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50 late enrollment charge applies if enrolled in 0 units after this date (5:00 p.m.)</td>
<td>Oct 7</td>
<td>Jan 20</td>
<td>Apr 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waitlists deactivated. (5:00 p.m.)</td>
<td>Oct 7</td>
<td>Jan 20</td>
<td>Apr 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last day to:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add a course without deans' approval. (5:00 p.m.)</td>
<td>Oct 7</td>
<td>Jan 20</td>
<td>Apr 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop a course without deans' approval. (5:00 p.m.)</td>
<td>Oct 7</td>
<td>Jan 20</td>
<td>Apr 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change the grading option or variable units of a course without deans' approval. (5:00 p.m.)</td>
<td>Oct 7</td>
<td>Jan 20</td>
<td>Apr 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit part-time fees petition to Graduate Division for graduate students. (12:00 noon)</td>
<td>Oct 12</td>
<td>Jan 25</td>
<td>Apr 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay fees late and/or enroll late. (4:00 p.m.)</td>
<td>Oct 14</td>
<td>Jan 27</td>
<td>Apr 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submit part-time fees petition to Registrar for undergraduate students. (5:00 p.m.)</td>
<td>Oct 14</td>
<td>Jan 27</td>
<td>Apr 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop a course without receiving a W grade; deans' approval required. (5:00 p.m.)</td>
<td>Nov 4</td>
<td>Feb 17</td>
<td>May 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change variable units of a course; deans' approval required. (5:00 p.m.)</td>
<td>Nov 4</td>
<td>Feb 17</td>
<td>May 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change the grading option of a course; deans' approval required. (5:00 p.m.)</td>
<td>Dec 2</td>
<td>Mar 17</td>
<td>Jun 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdraw from a course; W grade assigned; deans' approval required. (5:00 p.m.)</td>
<td>Dec 2</td>
<td>Mar 17</td>
<td>Jun 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdraw from the term. Readmission to the University required for future term. (5:00 p.m.)</td>
<td>Dec 2</td>
<td>Mar 17</td>
<td>Jun 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction ends</td>
<td>Dec 2</td>
<td>Mar 17</td>
<td>Jun 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final examinations*</td>
<td>Dec 3-9</td>
<td>Mar 18-24</td>
<td>Jun 10-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarter Ends</td>
<td>Dec 9</td>
<td>Mar 24</td>
<td>Jun 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline to submit final grades (5:00 p.m.)</td>
<td>Dec 15</td>
<td>Mar 30</td>
<td>Jun 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades available in StudentAccess (8:00 p.m.)</td>
<td>Dec 16</td>
<td>Mar 31</td>
<td>Jun 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official transcripts available</td>
<td>Dec 19</td>
<td>Apr 3</td>
<td>Jun 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees post to transcripts **</td>
<td>Feb 3, 2023</td>
<td>May 5, 2023</td>
<td>Jul 28, 2023</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* See information regarding Religious Accommodation and Religious Observance.
** Official transcripts with degrees available the following Monday.
### HOLIDAYS *, RECESSES, BREAKS, AND SPECIAL CEREMONIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic and Administrative Holidays</th>
<th>Fall 2022</th>
<th>Winter 2023</th>
<th>Spring 2023</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Veteran's Day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanksgiving</td>
<td>Nov 11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nov 24–25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Luther King, Jr. Day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presidents' Day</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jan 16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cesar Chavez Day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mar 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorial Day</td>
<td></td>
<td>Feb 20</td>
<td>May 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Break</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dec 12–Jan 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Administrative Recess</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>campus offices closed</td>
<td>Dec 23–Jan 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mar 27–31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commencement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jun 16–19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Hooding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jun 17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

### SUMMER SESSION 2023

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Summer Session I</th>
<th>Summer Session 10WK</th>
<th>Summer Session II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schedule of Classes available</td>
<td>Mar 1</td>
<td>Mar 1</td>
<td>Mar 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juneteenth</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jun 19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction begins</td>
<td>Jun 26</td>
<td>Jun 26</td>
<td>Aug 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence Day</td>
<td></td>
<td>Jul 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor Day</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sep 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction ends</td>
<td>Aug 1</td>
<td>Aug 31</td>
<td>Sep 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Examinations*</td>
<td>Aug 2–3</td>
<td>Sep 1</td>
<td>Sep 12–13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline to submit final grades</td>
<td>Aug 9</td>
<td>Sep 11</td>
<td>Sep 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades available in StudentAccess</td>
<td>Aug 10</td>
<td>Sep 12</td>
<td>Sep 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official transcripts available</td>
<td>Aug 11</td>
<td>Sep 13</td>
<td>Sep 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degrees post to transcripts (degree awarded date: Sep 13, 2023)</td>
<td>Oct 30</td>
<td>Oct 30</td>
<td>Oct 30</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
Networking

QUESTIONS TO ASK

1. What brings you to this event?
2. What do you like about your current job?
3. What are your career goals and interests?
4. How do you spend your free time?
5. Have you seen any movies lately?
6. Do you like to travel? Where have you traveled recently?

SAMPLE INTRODUCTION & 30-SECOND SPEECH

“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

___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________

___________________________________________________________

SAMPLE FOLLOW-UP WITH CONTACT

“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 that 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.

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.
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.
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
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.

**Job Search Strategies**

- HANDSHAKE (online job and internship listings)
- NETWORKING CONTACTS (UCI alumni, former supervisors, professors, family, friends, etc.)
- INTERNET JOB LISTINGS
- CAREER FAIRS
- DIRECT INQUIRY (contact employers you would like to work for)
- TEMPORARY / EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES

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!
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/)
Write a Cover Letter

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
d- Tailor to specific organization / company
e- 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

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

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.

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
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.

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 pronouns 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 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

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

Campus: 212 Wilson Dr. Costa Mesa, CA 92704
Home: 2566 S. Mitchell St. San Bernardino, CA 92885

EDUCATION
Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art
University of California, Irvine
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 facsimiles
• 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, Quark, 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 “EballStud@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.

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

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.

Try these stores:

- Macy’s
- Nordstrorm
- Nordstrorm 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
10 Rules of Interviewing

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?

**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

**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

**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

**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 you 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?
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/
- 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

Evaluate the Various Graduate Programs
- 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

Keep in Mind...
This is a suggested timeline – your individual deadlines may vary depending on your graduate school program.

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!
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!

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?

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 undescructive generalities.

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

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.
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 and Resources

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

**Denise Khaw, Director of Development**
School of Biological Sciences
5120 Natural Sciences II
(949) 824-2734, dkhaw@uci.edu

**Tori Aquino, Development Coordinator**
School of Biological Sciences
5120 Natural Sciences II
(949) 824-4232, vaaquino@uci.edu

**Student Affairs:** undergraduate.bio.uci.edu/student-affairs

**Raven Yoshitomi, Director of Student Affairs**
1330 Biological Sciences III
(949) 824-2874, ryoshito@uci.edu

**Division of Career Pathways:** career.uci.edu

**Karol Johansen, Director - Career Education**
123 Student Services I
(949) 824-4646, karolj@uci.edu
Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP): urop.uci.edu

Sharon Parks, Director
545 Science Library
(949) 824-5456, sparks@uci.edu

EASE (Enhanced Academic Success Experience) Initiative

BioSci Student Council

Biological Sciences 199: bio.uci.edu/undergraduates/research