Handbook for Finding Career Development, Internships and Research Opportunities

Patty George
Department of Mathematics
Science, Engineering and Mathematics Division

March 2019

Finding an Internship or Research Opportunity

When should you start? Right away!

If you are interested in finding a summer internship or research opportunity, begin your search in the fall of the year immediately preceding the summer that you are interested in working. Some summer internships have application closing dates in the fall semester.

One of the largest databases for undergraduate STEM students is that from the National Science Foundation. Go to https://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/reu_search.jsp where there is a list of Research Experiences for Undergraduates STEM subjects. Then choose the subjects you are most interested in. After selecting the research topic, you will see a list of institutions offering summer research opportunities. The list is organized in alphabetical order. If you are interested in a particular institution, you can search for it that way. Each institution has its own application process. Identify a faculty member and a career counselor to help you navigate the application process, and then follow the guidelines outlined in **The Application Process** section of this document. Note: All of the NSF programs require participants to be US citizens or permanent residents in order to receive funding; however, if no funding is required, non-citizens or DACA, may be eligible to participate. Each program deals with non- US citizens in a different way. Contact the institution directly if you have questions.

The National Institute of Health has a large number of internships. Go to https://www.training.nih.gov/programs/sip and carefully read the guidelines. Applicants to these programs should be US citizens or permanent residents. For these internships, the applications for Summer 2019 are due on March 1, 2019. But the application process opens in early December, and according to the NIH, "Data for 2017 indicate that applicants who submit their materials in the first two weeks have a success rate almost 3 times greater than those who submit during the 2 weeks just before the deadline" (https://www.training.nih.gov/programs/sip).

Applicants submit the following documents:

- a curriculum vitae or resume,
- a list of coursework and grades,
- a cover letter describing the applicant's research interests and career goals, and
- the names and contact information for two references.

Professional organizations also publish databases of opportunities.

17 Other Great Places to Start Your Search

American Mathematical Society
http://www.ams.org/programs/students/emp-internships
http://www.ams.org/programs/students/emp-reu

Base11
Academic Year-Round Internship Mentorship (Opens in Spring)
https://www.base11.com/academic-year-round-internship-mentorship/
Summer Fellowship (Opens in Fall)
https://www.base11.com/summer/

Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship
https://www.gilmanscholarship.org/

California Institute of Technology
Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship
https://sfp.caltech.edu/programs/surf/program_description

CSULB
Bridges to the Baccalaureate
https://web.csulb.edu/colleges/cnsm/sas/bridges/
BUILD Program
http://www.csulb.edu/build

Department of Energy
Scholarships, Internships and Fellowships
https://www.energy.gov/eere/fuelcells/scholarships-internships-and-fellowships

Disney (Search on undergraduate intern.)
Undergraduate Internships
https://jobs.disneycareers.com/professional-internships

Google
https://careers.google.com/students/

Jet Propulsion Laboratory at the California Institute of Technology
Summer Internship Program
https://www.jpl.nasa.gov/edu/intern/apply/summer-internship-program/

Joint Institute for the Study of the Atmosphere and Oceans
http://www.jisao.washington.edu/education/researchOps

Long Beach Sustainability
http://www.longbeach.gov/sustainability/about-us/internships/

NASA Community College Aerospace Scholars encourages all STEM majors to apply:
https://nas.okstate.edu/ncas/

National Park Service
https://www.nps.gov/subjects/youthprograms/jobs-and-internships.htm

Pathways to Science provides a large database of STEM research opportunities for undergraduates
https://www.pathwaystoscience.org/undergrads.aspx

Smithsonian Science Education Center Internship Program
https://ssec.si.edu/smithsonian-science-education-center-internship-program

Southern California Edison Internships (Search on intern.)
https://www.edisoncareers.com/page/show/early_career/

STEM Undergrads.Science.gov provides a database of federal opportunities
https://stemundergrads.science.gov/

USA Jobs Pathways
https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/working-in-government/unique-hiring-paths/students/

The Application Process

When applying to a STEM career development program, an internship or a summer research program, there are usually a few documents that you will need to prepare and submit with your application. You may be required to scan and email the documents. Alternatively, the organization may require you to fill out an online form and upload documents. Some organizations have you provide hard copies sent by the postal service. In this case, include your email address in your address on the hardcopy.

Analyze the Description of the Career Development Opportunity

Before you apply, analyze the description of the career development opportunity to which you plan to apply.

Here is the description for the Summer 2018 Research Experience for Undergraduates program at Arizona State University in Mathematics and Theoretical Biology. On the left, I have included some of the questions you should ask yourself before applying to a program like this.

Can you submit materials before the due date?

MTBI Summer Program 2018

Accepting Applications: November 15 - January 31

Please read the information below before applying

(*Please do not use Internet Explorer to submit your application*)

Apply

Can you attend all the dates?

Program Dates: June 6 - July 28 2018

PREPARE FOR THE RIGORS OF GRADUATE SCHOOL:

MTBI is an intensive summer research experience that prepares undergraduate students for the rigors of graduate level research at the interface of mathematics, statistics, and the natural and social sciences. Select students are invited to Arizona State University for eight weeks, where their time is split between classroom instruction on research methods and hands-on research projects.
***MTBI is a research experience for undergraduates (REU); it is not an internship, and students will NOT earn college credit for participation.

Have you looked up information about faculty members, guest speakers or past student participants?

HIGH QUALITY INSTRUCTION FROM RENOWNED SCHOLARS:

Participants receive intensive instruction in dynamical systems, stochastic processes, computational methods and modeling delivered by top scientists and guest speakers from around the world.

Do you work well with others?

STUDENT-DRIVEN COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH:

At MTBI, students don't work alone. Everything, from homework to research, exists in a collaborative environment with fellow participants, graduate students, postdoctoral students, and visiting scholars. Students work in self-selected groups on research problems of their own choosing, while collaborating with experienced faculty and graduate student mentors. At MTBI, students select their own research topics, not faculty. By the end of the summer, students have complete a high-quality technical report and research poster, which are presented at national conferences to an audience of their peers and colleagues.

Have you completed your sophomore year? Are you majoring in math, biology or a related field? Have you completed at least one year of calculus?

ELIGIBILITY:

- Undergraduates who have completed at least their sophomore year
- Majoring in math, biology, or related fields
- At least one year of calculus
- African Americans, Latinos and Native Americans are strongly encouraged to apply.
- International students are accepted, but on a very limited basis.

Can you afford to participate?

AWARDS:

- U.S. citizens/Permanent Resident students: Receive airfare and transportation to Tempe, Arizona (up to $500), room & board and a $4,000 stipend.
- International Students: Receive room & board, but must provide their own transportation to and from Tempe, Arizona. NO stipend awarded.
- Accepted students will be notified of awards by March 20.

Will you be able to submit your materials on time?

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

- All application materials must be submitted by January 31, 2018.
- Late materials will not be accepted.
- Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Do you have time to write a 500 word personal statement?

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

- Completed MTBI Application: Accessible by the link above or by PDF

 mtbi_application_and_check_list.pdf

- **Personal Statement**: In approximately 500 words, double spaced, please describe the following:
    - Why are you applying to the MTBI summer research program?
    - What are your research interests?
    - What are your future career goals and what have you accomplished towards these goals?

*Please Note: a resume is not a personal statement.

Have you ordered an official transcript?

- **College/University Transcripts:** An official copy of your college/university transcript is required. Official transcripts must be sent directly by the college/university. Please send all electronic transcripts to Rebecca.Perlin@asu.edu. Unofficial transcripts will not be accepted. Please mail to the address listed below.

Have you identified a faculty member who can write you a letter of recommendation in the time available?

- **Faculty Letter of Recommendation & Faculty Letter of Recommendation Form:**
    - Applicants complete the top half of the form and give it to their faculty reference.
    - Faculty complete the bottom half of the form and send with the letter of recommendation.

- The faculty letter of recommendation should to be written on their university's letterhead and mailed or emailed from the faculty reference.
- Only one letter of recommendation is required.

Once you have identified programs to which you will apply, prepare yourself like a professional.

About Your Email Address

Have a professional email address that you use solely for your professional interactions. This will make it easier for you to keep track of important mail that is directly related to your career. The three most popular email domains are Gmail, Outlook, and Yahoo. Choose an email address that is professional sounding, not too long, and not too generic.

In his article, "Wait, Your Email Address is What?" Rich DeMatteo points out that email addresses such as kinkyboots420@e-mail.com and BigPimpRich@e-mail.com are examples of the types of email addresses that are unprofessional. An unprofessional sounding email address can cause your application materials to be disregarded before reviewers have seen any of the content. It may signal to the application reviewers that you are not serious about the application, or that you are clueless about how to behave professionally. In her article, "Don't Let Your Email Address Ruin Your Federal Job Opportunities," Camille Roberts notes that email addresses should not be suggestive, flirtatious, generic, silly or funny. Roberts suggests that the email address contain your first and last name. Because your first and last name may have already been taken, consider reversing the order of the names, inserting punctuation between first and last names, or lengthening or shortening part of your name.

You can also use the student email address at Cerritos College that will have the domain extension, *@student.cerritos.edu*. Make sure and double check your newly generated email to make sure it sounds professional. You may find it amusing to look at some of the funny email addresses that have been formulaically generated by educational institutions and employers in the article "Funny Email Addresses" on LaffGaff at http://laffgaff.com/funny-email-addresses.

The instructions for getting your Cerritos College email are on the next two pages.

Stay Connected!

New Student Email

Updated

Get Your New Student Google Email
Student email accounts are powered by Google.com

1. Go to MyCerritos.edu to access your new email address
2. Click on **Student ID Look Up**. Enter your 9-digit Social Security Number and Date of Birth for your new email address: (XXX@student.cerritos.edu)
3. If you **don't** have a Social Security Number:
   Login to my.cerritos.edu
   Click " Student Center"
   Click "User Preferences"
   Click "Personal Information"
   Click "Email"
   New email address is listed as "Campus" XXX@student.cerritos.edu
4. Go to Google.com, click on Gmail and type in your entire student email address and your 8-digit password. The password is your 8-digit birthdate (Ex: September 17, 1955 = 09171955)

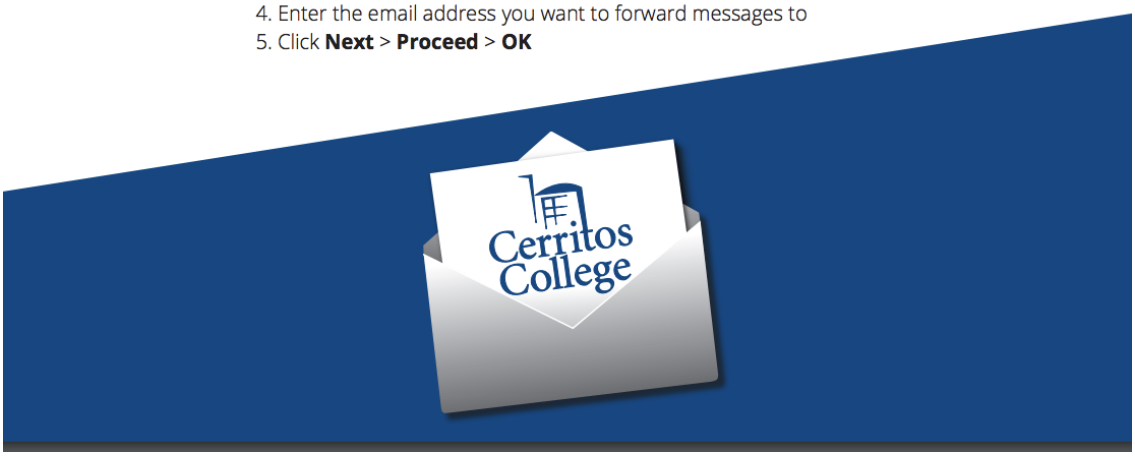
Get Perks with Your Student Email

Looking for a way to get cool discounts on purchases or services? Your newstudent email address is your ticket to discounts on Amazon Prime, mobile phone services, and more. You will also get updates from campus – so stay connected!

Helpful Functions

Forward Email: to automatically forward your student email to another email address:

1. In the top right, click Settings ✱
2. Click the **Forwarding and POP/IMAP** tab
3. In the "Forwarding" section, click **Add a forwarding address**
4. Enter the email address you want to forward messages to
5. Click **Next** > **Proceed** > **OK**



Frequently Asked Questions

Who is Eligible for a Cerritos College Student Email Account?
All current students are eligible for an account. An account will be automatically generated 10 days before the start of the semester.

How Do I Access My Google Email Account?
Watch the video for more details

I am an Undocumented Student. How Do I Access my Google Email Account?
Login to my.cerritos.edu
Click " Student Center"
Click "User Preferences"
Click "Personal Information"
Click "Email"
Your new email address is listed as "Campus" XXX@student.cerritos.edu

I Forgot my Password
If you have forgotten your password you will need to reset it on campus. To reset your password contact studentemailhelp@cerritos.edu

Why can't I use the same applications as my personal Gmail account?
Your Cerritos College Student Email account uses Google Apps for Education. Google outlines how the software works.

Who do I contact about student email questions?
The Office of Admissions can assist you. Contact studentemailhelp@cerritos.edu for more information.

I'd like to use a different email account, what are my options?
The official student e-mail address for students attending Cerritos College is going to be <XXX>@ student.cerritos.edu. Students are responsible for all communication sent to this email address. Google offers an option to "forward" email to another email address.

Commonly Required Documents

While you probably don't need all of the documents listed below for every application, the following list names some commonly required documents:

- a cover letter
- a personal statement
- a statement of purpose
- a resume
- a curriculum vitae
- transcripts
- and letters of recommendation.

Each organization requires different documents, and if one of the documents is missing, the application may never make its way to the search committee, being discarded by preliminary screening. It is a good idea to create a draft of these documents early in your college career and then update them regularly. Some organizations will have you submit a survey, questionnaire, or particular document that is not generally required by other organizations. Keep a file of all of the documents that you submit. You may be able to use them in the future to more quickly prepare application materials.

Here are descriptions of documents you may need when applying to a STEM career development opportunity, internship or undergraduate research position. At the end of this section, I have provided a checklist.

Cover Letter

First of all, a cover letter is often sent with an application. The cover letter introduces the applicant to the search committee. It should highlight qualifications mentioned in the resume or curriculum vitae, providing details that are relevant to the particular position and organization, but which may not have been elucidated in the other documents.

Before you write the cover letter, research the opportunity so that you are knowledgeable about the position for which you are applying. For example, Kurt Regner from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, recommends that students applying to the UNLV program, "Research Experiences for Undergraduates: Mechanisms of Evolution" use Google Scholar (https://scholar.google.com/) to look up articles written by faculty associated with the program. Then the applicant should use this information to focus the content of the application materials. Critically read the description of the opportunity, and make a list of the required qualifications. Let the organization know why you are applying for the position and why you are a good candidate. You will be better equipped to do this if you know concrete details about the program, the people working in the program, and the expectations the program will have of you.

In the body of the cover letter, make sure to address each of the qualifications, and how you satisfy the requirements for the position. Highlight your strengths. By thanking a scholarship program, mentor, teacher or friend who has helped you, you may be able to diffuse the feeling that you are bragging while at the same time mentioning an asset. Since a cover letter is typically brief, don't elaborate. Find a way to focus the letter on STEM related accomplishments that complement the position to which you are applying. If the opportunity requires lab work, make sure to mention your experiences in lab. If the opportunity requires specific computer skills, describe your related skills.

Cover letters are typically short. Emphasize your enthusiasm and interests related to the position. Explicitly list your qualifications for the position. Don't forget to include qualities like your ability to work well in groups, your problem solving skills and your communication skills. Being a cooperative member of a team is an important aspect of most STEM careers. Be prepared to provide concrete examples of your skills. Being diligent and hardworking are also important, but be aware of the type of position for which you are applying. Some words may carry an implicit bias. T.L. Wagener mentions in his Quora response to the question, "What is the difference in meaning and usage between diligent vs. industrious?" that using a word like **diligent** may imply that the person "follows directions well, is punctual and checks details." Whereas using the word **industrious** may indicate that a person has initiative and creativity … the person has the potential to be an entrepreneur, a boss, a leader (https://www.quora.com/What-is-the-difference-in-meaning-and-usage-between-diligent-vs-industrious).

You should also mention what you can contribute to the organization. If you have previous experience working in the target area or if you have volunteered working in the area, briefly refer to these in the cover letter. For some organizations, it will be important that you have some research experience or have specific skills. However, with other organizations, the particular career development opportunity may be funded to support an applicant who is new to the field or who has not yet had the opportunity to learn a skill or work with equipment important to developing a career in that field. Evaluate the description of the position so that you know what the organization is looking for.

According to Julia Gaynor at *Monster.com*, "Recruiters take six seconds to decide whether or not to toss your resume, so the right font makes a big difference." While the six second rule has been debated, there is still a good argument for the advice to use a professional font. Gaynor's top five fonts are Calibri, Times New Roman, Arial, Verdana and Cambria. Alison Doyle of *The Balance* recommends using Arial, Courier New, Calibri, Verdana, or Times New Roman. I personally prefer Times New Roman. Science Magazine suggests authors use Times or Times New Roman. However, it is probably safe to use the same font used in the description of the position to which you are applying as long as it is fairly conventional.

Once you have written the rough draft of the cover letter, focus on editing and format. The letter should be positive, confident, well written, and formatted in a professional way. If your letter is sloppy, has bad grammar, or seems negative, your application may never make it past initial screening. Once you choose a font, use this same font in all of your materials. It is also common practice to use a 12 point size font and one inch margins.

Microsoft Word has templates for cover letters, resumes, and curriculum vitae. When you open a new Microsoft Word document under the File tab, choose the option ***New from Template***. Search on the phrase cover letter and some options will come up. Google Docs (https://docs.google.com/document/) also has templates for cover letters, resumes, and curriculum vitae. I recommend using templates from one of these as opposed to using an online resume generator. Online resume generators can collect your personal data. Beware of scare tactic ads that require you to download a virus scanner. Once you have chosen a template, convert the template to the font that is compatible with the font you have chosen for the resume and other documents. When possible, address the letter to the specific contact person. Otherwise, address the letter "To Whom It May Concern," or "To the Search Committee." End the letter with a closing such as "Sincerely," or "Respectfully," followed by your full name.

Have your friends, colleagues, counselors at the career center, or recommending professors help you edit your work. When possible, address the letter to the specific contact person. Otherwise, address the letter "To Whom It May Concern," or "To the Search Committee."

Here is an example of a sample cover letter published by the University of Pennsylvania for a summer internship program.

Sample Cover Letter for a Mechanical Engineering Summer Internship from the University of Pennsylvania

3718 Locust Walk, Suite 20 Philadelphia, PA 19104

January 20, 2015

Mr. David Jones, Recruiter (address letter to an individual if a name is available)

Consumer Products Company
123 Pennsylvania Avenue
Big City, PA 00000

Dear Mr. Jones:

I am writing to apply for the *R&D Product Development Summer Intern* position, found on the University of Pennsylvania's PennLink system. I am a junior pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Engineering, and majoring in Mechanical Engineering & Applied Mechanics at UPenn. With my engineering coursework and project experience, my innovative mindset and affinity for problem solving, and my history of successful team projects, I believe I am a strong candidate for this role.

As an undergraduate, I have balanced a rigorous course load and a number of extracurricular activities that have allowed me to enhance my skills relevant to this role. Specific to engineering, through my academic project work I have developed abilities in 3-D design and modeling, an understanding of materials, and have practiced different manufacturing technologies. For example, in my Machine Design and Manufacturing course, I along with two teammates created mechanical drawings and designs in SolidWorks. We then modeled, machined and assembled the parts of a working Stirling engine, meeting or exceeding all requirements and deadlines. I have also developed the strong interpersonal and communication skills required to succeed as the R&D Product Development intern; in addition to academic team projects that require collaboration and strong writing and presentation skills, I have been selected by my peers for a leadership role within Penn's Formula SAE team this year, and am an active member of our ASME chapter. Throughout all of my experiences, I have used my dedication to efficient and creative problem solving and my ability to prioritize and manage competing demands to positive ends. I am eager to apply my engineering knowledge and skills at the Consumer Products Company.

I am very interested in interviewing for this opportunity and look forward to learning more about your requirements. Attached, please find my resume for your consideration; it contains not only a further description of my Stirling Engine project, but a more in-depth review of other related projects and experiences that I would be glad to discuss with you. Please feel free to contact me at (215) 000-0000 or by email at student@upenn.edu. Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sarah Student Attachment (1)

https://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/files/ENG_SampleCL_Internship_2014.pdf

Sample Cover Letter for a Scientific Research Summer Internship published by The Balance

Joseph Q. Applicant
123 Main Street, Anytown, CA 12345 · 555-212-1234 · josephq@email.com

September 1, 2018

Jane Smith
Director, Human Resources
BC Labs
123 Business Rd.
Business City, CA 54321

Dear Ms. Smith,

I am writing to apply for the scientific research summer internship position that was listed in the Anytown University Career Services Office. I believe my research and conservation experience make me an ideal candidate.

I have had a great deal of research experience in chemistry, biology, and geology, both in the lab and in the field. Most of my experience is in environmental field studies. I am currently conducting research in our school's outdoor laboratory to assess the water quality of a nearby pond. I know water quality assessment is a component of this internship, and I know my previous experience makes me a prime candidate for this.

Last summer, I worked as a conservation assistant at the National Trust's Clumber Park. Along with trail maintenance and building, I also served as a research assistant for the research organization at the park. I conducted an analysis of soil samples, and input data from various research projects. I received a special commendation from the director of the research organization for my attention to detail and dedication to research.

I believe that I would be an asset to your program. This internship would provide me with the ideal opportunity to assist your organization and to expand my research skills.
I will call next week to see if you agree that my qualifications seem to be a match for the position. If so, I hope to schedule an interview at a mutually convenient time. I look forward to speaking with you.
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Joseph Q. Applicant

https://files.thebalance.com/cover+letters/TheBalance_Internship-cover-letter-2060231.docx?_ga=2.159152765.693350816.1543180468-1340985951.1543180468

A Personal Statement or A Statement of Purpose

A personal statement and a statement of purpose are different. However, some organizations use these phrases interchangeably. An organization may request one or the other of these documents – usually not both. Each of these documents is one or two pages long. If an organization requires a personal statement that means that the organization is looking for personal qualities that support the goals of the program. In this case, you can feel comfortable writing about yourself and the qualities that you bring to the organization. For a statement of purpose, focus on the STEM career. Describe what you have done and what you will do to develop this career. For both types of documents, demonstrate how your qualifications mesh with the required and desired qualifications of the position.

In a personal statement, you may want to begin by describing an experience, a book, an article, a movie or a person, who led you to your interest. Remember to focus on your interest in a STEM subject, and since STEM subjects are an important part of our cultural and social organization, you may want to illustrate that in your personal statement. For example, having been raised in an area with poor sewage systems may have led you to study hydrology or sanitation. Having had a relative with a debilitating disease may have led you to study the disease. Going to a space shuttle launch may have sparked your desire to study aerodynamics. Participating in a robotics competition may have stimulated your interest in robotics or engineering.

Once you have described your motivation for desiring a STEM career in your personal statement, describe what you have done to pursue this goal. Describe jobs, volunteer work, participation in clubs and organizations, presentations, and awards related to this career. Then describe what you plan to do with this career in the future.

In your conclusion, describe how your career will then better support the organization to which you are applying, your family or your community.

In a statement of purpose, focus on the STEM career. Typically, you will want to include these elements: 1) Describe your preparation and background; 2) Clearly state your area of interest; 3) Describe your aspirations; 4) Describe the reasons that you are interested in participating in this career development opportunity, internship or research program; 5) Illustrate how your participation can benefit you and how you can contribute to the program. You can mention the reasons, but focus on things you have read, conferences, professional organizations, work you have done, skills that you have attained, relevant coursework that you have taken. Explain why you have chosen this career and how you plan to develop it. Focus on qualities that make you a good applicant for the position.

Resume or Curriculum Vitae

In the US, a resume is commonly used in an application to a career development opportunity, an internship or a research program. The resume is typically one page long with bulleted points. A curriculum vitae is usually one or two pages long and focuses on a list of publications or projects. In the US and internationally when applying for academic positions, a curriculum vitae is commonly used. Usually, one document or the other is required. Microsoft Word and Google have templates for both of these forms.

Here is a description of points you can include in a resume designed for an application to a STEM related career development opportunity, an internship or a research program.

Applicant's First and Last Name
Street Address
City, State and ZIP
Email address
Phone number

Objectives:
Briefly describe your career objectives as are related to the position. This should be one or two sentences.

Education:
List education in reverse order.
Current student at Cerritos College majoring in XXX

Work Experience:
List jobs and employers and include a brief description of your duties. Since you are an undergraduate student, you may not have work experience. If this is the case, leave this section out, and concentrate on relevant coursework or skills.

Relevant Coursework, Skills, Awards, Languages or Certifications:
List special coursework, skills, awards, languages or certifications that may be valuable for this position.

Volunteer Work:
List and describe volunteer work that you have done. Even if the work is not directly related to the position to which you are applying, it will give the program to which you are applying an idea of values and work ethic.

Personal Interests or Hobbies:
If you have a personal interest or hobby that you are passionate about, list it here. Even if the hobby is not directly related to the position, a committee may find qualities here that illustrate how you would be a good team member.

Transcripts

For many internships, official transcripts are not required to apply, but may be required once you are accepted to the program. You have access to your unofficial transcript via the MyCerritos portal. An official transcript is ordered through Admissions and Records. There are three ways to order records. Go to https://www.cerritos.edu/admissions-and-records/transcripts/how-to-order-a-transcript.htm for the description of the process. It takes about seven days to process the request.

Letters of Recommendation

Don't wait until you have found an internship or research experience to ask for letters of recommendation. Start to build professional relationships with your professors, lab assistants, tutors, supervisors, coworkers and administrators as soon as possible. Identify those who you think will write a good letter of recommendation.

Most students will need to ask teachers and professors for letters of recommendation at some point in their academic career. At Cerritos College, go to your professor's office hours early in the semester, and ask content questions about the course you are taking or ask about the subject interests of the professor. Let the professor know about your academic and career interests.

Once you get to know the professor, make a request for a letter of recommendation. You may want to make the request via email first and then offer to drop by the office to be interviewed. Make sure your email request is formal, polite and specific. Offer to send a resume, curriculum vita, personal statement or statement of purpose when you ask for the letter of recommendation. It is appropriate to ask for a general letter prior to identifying a specific opportunity to which to apply, but let the professor know your intention. The professor will probably keep an electronic copy of the letter on file and then modify it to fit the specific internship, research, job or scholarship letter in the future.

Do not be afraid to ask for a letter. You may feel like you don't know your professors in college as well as you knew your high school teachers when you graduated. However, faculty are aware of this. We want Cerritos College students to be able to take advantage of the many career development, internship and research opportunities available, and know that it may be difficult do this without our letters of recommendation. If the professor does not agree to write a letter, don't take it personally. Letters of recommendation often take a long time to prepare. I often ask students to sit in my office so that I can interview the student while I write the first draft, and, in my case, that interview usually takes about an hour.

When you ask for a letter for a specific opportunity, make sure and know whether the letter will be submitted electronically, whether it is supposed to be a confidential letter, and let the professor know how the letter will be submitted. Sometimes the letter will be uploaded to a server. At other times, it is emailed to a specific person. In some cases, letters of

recommendation must be sent by the US Postal Service. Be prepared to let your professor know which of these will be used, and, if necessary, the specific mailing address.

Once you have obtained the letter of recommendation, you may want to send a thank you message. Let the professor know the results of the application. Don't be discouraged if you are not hired or accepted to a program. It's good to be prepared to send out many applications to get a position that fits you. Good luck!

References

Anderson, Monica. “Black STEM Employees Perceive a Range of Race-Related Slights and Inequities at Work.” *Pew Research Center*, 10 Jan. 2018, www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/01/10/black-stem-employees-perceive-a-range-of-race-related-slights-and-inequities-at-work/.

Augustine, Amanda. “14 Reasons This Is a Perfect Recent College Grad Resume.” *TopResume*, www.topresume.com/career-advice/excellent-resume-for-recent-grad-05-2016.

Baker, Amanda. “STEM Is Far More Than the Lone Genius.” *Scientific American Blog Network*, © 2018 SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, A DIVISION OF NATURE AMERICA, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED., 11 Apr. 2018, blogs.scientificamerican.com/budding-scientist/stem-is-far-more-than-the-lone-genius/.

Borchardt, John K. “Writing a Winning Cover Letter.” *Science | AAAS*, © 2018 American Association for the Advancement of Science. All Rights Reserved, 10 Dec. 2017, www.sciencemag.org/careers/2014/08/writing-winning-cover-letter.

Bradley, Paul. “Young Immigrants Vow To Fight DACA Dismantling.” *Going All In on Tesla*, 24 Apr. 2017, ccweek.com/article-5573-going-all-in-on-tesla.html.

Brueck, Hilary. “The 4-Step Guide To Scoring A Summer Internship At SpaceX.” *Forbes*, Forbes Magazine, 13 Mar. 2017, www.forbes.com/sites/hilarybrueck/2017/03/11/spacexinterndawnandrews/#1800842a5446.

Buchholz, Kami. “Design Contest Winners Nab Internship at GM.” *Articles*, 12 Jan. 2012, articles.sae.org/10566/.

Cappabianca, Corina. “OCC Partners with Tesla for Auto-Tech Program.” *Spectrumlocalnews.com*, 12 Dec. 2017, spectrumlocalnews.com/nys/central-ny/news/2017/12/12/occ-partners-with-tesla-for-auto-tech-program.

“Community College Students Experience STEM University Program at Caltech.” Base11, 6 Apr. 2017, www.base11.com/community-college-stem-internship/.

Connnolly, Rachel, and Brooke Kinney. “Ten Black Scientists That Science Teachers Should Know About.” *PBS*, Public Broadcasting Service, 21 Feb. 2018, www.pbs.org/education/blog/ten-black-scientists-that-science-teachers-should-know-about-and-free

Cerritos College. 2018. Mission Statement. https://www.cerritos.edu/campus-guide/mission-statement.htm

DeMatteo, Rich. “‘Wait, Your e-Mail Address Is What?".” *Corn on the Job*, 12 Nov. 2009, www.cornonthejob.com/career-advice/e-mail-address/.

Doyle, Alison. “Here Are Some Sample Letters and Email Messages Asking for a Reference.” *The Balance*, 30 Nov. 2017, www.thebalance.com/asking-for-a-reference-2062928.

Doyle, Alison. “Here Are Some Tips on the Best Time to Apply for an Internship.” *The Balance*, 24 Jan. 2018, www.thebalance.com/when-to-apply-for-an-internship-2059852.

Doyle, Alison. “Reference Letter Examples: A - Z.” *The Balance*, 1 Sept. 2017, www.thebalance.com/reference-letter-examples-2062924.

Doyle, Alison. “Tips for Writing Letters of Recommendation for Employment.” *The Balance*, 7 Nov. 2017, www.thebalance.com/how-to-write-a-letter-of-recommendation-2060460.

Doyle, Alison. “Writing an Internship Cover Letter? This Sample Can Help.” *The Balance,* 30 Mar. 2018, www.thebalance.com/internship-cover-letter-sample-and-writing-tips-2060231.

Fraser, Eric. *Create a Custom App in Minutes (Not Weeks).* Filemaker, 5 July 2017, community.filemaker.com/videos/2684.

Ferrette, Candice. “Tesla, New York State College Announce Student Job Training Plan.” *Center for Digital Education & Converge Magazine,* 30 Aug. 2017, www.centerdigitaled.com/higher-ed/Tesla-New-York-State-College-Announce-Student-Job-Training-Plan.html.

Funk, Cary, and Kim Parker. “Women and Men in STEM Often at Odds Over Workplace Equity.” *Pew Research Center's Social & Demographic Trends Project*, 9 Jan. 2018, www.pewsocialtrends.org/2018/01/09/women-and-men-in-stem-often-at-odds-over-workplace-equity/.

Graf, Nikki, et al. “7 Facts about the STEM Workforce.” *Pew Research Center,* 9 Jan. 2018, www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/01/09/7-facts-about-the-stem-workforce/.

Graf, Nikki, et al. “The Narrowing, but Persistent, Gender Gap in Pay.” *Pew Research Center,* 9 Apr. 2018, www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/04/09/gender-pay-gap-facts/.

Grossman, Susanne J. “Queensborough Community College.” *Website for Queensborough Community College*, www.qcc.cuny.edu/careerServices/oim/11-article1.html.

Heathfield, Susan M. “A Sample Business Casual Dress Code for Workplace Success.” *The Balance,* 19 June 2017, www.thebalance.com/business-casual-dress-code-1919379.

Holodny, Elena. "'It Still Haunts Me': What It's like to Get a Job after Prison in America." Business Insider, Business Insider, 30 July 2017, www.businessinsider.com/finding-job-after-prison-2017-7.

"How to Write Brilliant Personal Statements and Covering Letters: 8 Tips to Get Offers Rolling In." *Oxford Royale Academy*, 10 Apr. 2014, www.oxford-royale.co.uk/articles/write-great-personal-statement-covering-letter.html.

"Internship and Career Center." *Resume vs. Curriculum Vitae: What's the Difference? | Internship and Career Center*, Copyright © The Regents of the University of California, Davis Campus. All Rights Reserved., 14 Sept. 2015, icc.ucdavis.edu/materials/resume/resumecv.htm.

"The Internship Letter of Intent Disssected." *University of California, San Fransisco,* career.ucsf.edu/sites/career.ucsf.edu/files/PDF/pharmacyletterofintentinternship.pdf.

Kennedy, Brian, et al. "Half of Americans Think Young People Don't Pursue STEM Because It Is Too Hard." *Pew Research Center*, 17 Jan. 2018, www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/01/17/half-of-americans-think-young-people-dont-pursue-stem-because-it-is-too-hard/.

Lizaraga, Diana. "The Benefits of an Undergraduate Research Experience." The Benefits of an Undergraduate Research Experience, Pathways to Science, 29 Oct. 2011, www.pathwaystoscience.org/pdf/SummerResearch_BenefitsOf.pdf.

Natalie, Aiza. "Best Places for Minorities & Women to Look for Internships in STEM." Base11, 11 Oct. 2018, www.base11.com/stem-internships-women-minorities/.

"Welcome to the Purdue OWL." *Purdue OWL: Writing the Curriculum Vitae*, Copyright ©1995-2018 by The Writing Lab & The OWL at Purdue and Purdue University. All Rights Reserved, owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/641/01/.

"Pathways To Science." *Pathways To Science*, www.pathwaystoscience.org/.

Pinker, Susan. "Why Aren't There More Women in Science and Technology?" *The Wall Street Journal*, 1 Mar. 2018, www.wsj.com/articles/why-arent-there-more-women-in-science-and-technology-1519918657.

Randolph, Kathryn Knight. "Start Your Summer Internship Search Now." *Start Your Summer Internship Search Now - MonsterCollege™*, 6 Mar. 2017, college.monster.com/education/articles/2155-start-your-summer-internship-search-now.

Roberts, Camille Carboneau. "Don't Let Your Email Address Ruin Federal Job Opportunities." *Job-Hunt.org*, © Copyright NETability, Inc. 1998 - 2018. All Rights Reserved. , www.job-hunt.org/federal-government-job-search/USAJOBS-email-mistakes.shtml.

Singh, Dolly. "Can I Get A Job At SpaceX After Graduating From A Low-Ranked Engineering Program?" *Forbes*, Forbes Magazine, 6 May 2014, www.forbes.com/sites/quora/2014/05/06/can-i-get-a-job-at-spacex-after-graduating-from-a-low-ranked-engineering-program/#7a17ec6d152c.

Stevens, Guy. "Filemaker Pro Basics for Beginners." *YouTube*, YouTube, 5 Mar. 2017, www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnUnJkWIul8.

Tbassett. "Cypress STEM Students Tour SpaceX." *@Cypress*, 5 May 2016, news.cypresscollege.edu/wordpress/2016/05/05/stem-students-visit-spacex/.

Vogt, Peter. "5 Benefits of an Internship from Former Interns." *Monster Career Advice*, www.monster.com/career-advice/article/students-benefits-internships.

Walters, Natalie. “11 Tough Interview Questions You May Have to Answer If You Want to Intern at SpaceX.” *Business Insider*, Business Insider, 14 Oct. 2015, www.businessinsider.com/11-tough-spacex-interview-questions-interns-get-2015-10.

Woodard, Eric. *Smithsonian Internships: Mentor-Based Learning Opportunities*. 26 Dec. 2012, www.smithsonianofi.com/blog/2012/12/26/smithsonian-internships/.