CAREER DEVELOPMENT

HANDBOOK

UMass**Amherst** | **College of Natural Sciences**
Career and Professional
Development Center

Welcome to the CNS Career Center

The College of Natural Sciences Career Center is here to support you. We offer a variety of resources designed to help you clarify and pursue your career goals. We can assist you with:

- Resumes/CVs
- Job/Internship Searching
- Career Fair Prep
- Career Exploration

- Cover Letters
- LinkedIn
- Handshake
- Networking

- Interview Prep
- Grad School Applications
- Personal Statements
- And so much more!

This document provides helpful information on many of these topics, but you can also meet with a member of our staff to discuss them in more detail. Use Handshake to make an appointment with one of our Career Advisors, or drop-in Monday through Friday 10AM – 5PM to meet with one of our Peer Advisors.

Don't miss out on all of the career fairs and workshops we host throughout the year as well. You will receive regular emails throughout the academic year from our staff alerting you to upcoming events, as well as recently posted opportunities like jobs and internships.

Our team is here for you!

Janet Bordwin
Director
jbordwin@umass.edu

Casey Gaw
Assistant Director
cgaw@umass.edu

Jared Kustra
Career Advisor
jkustra@umass.edu

Sean Burke
Assistant Director
seanburke@umass.edu

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Handshake

Handshake is the career platform available to all UMass Amherst students. You can access Handshake using your UMass Amherst Net ID and password. You can use Handshake for a variety of important career-related needs, including making appointments with career advisors, searching for jobs/internships/co-ops/research, and exploring upcoming career fairs and events.

When you login to Handshake, you'll see the menu below on the left side of the screen. You can use it to access everything Handshake has to offer.

Menu	Description
H	
🏠 Home	
▢ Feed New	The Feed is a social media style way for students, employers and the University to feature important content, including upcoming opportunities.
✉ Inbox 125	Your inbox is where you can get messages from others on Handshake. While you may not be interested in every message you get, it is important to stay on top of them so you don't miss any messages you do want, like from employers that you may be interested in who are hiring.
🏢 Jobs	Jobs is where you can search for jobs and internships posted on Handshake by employers. See the job searching section of this handbook for tips on how to effective search.
📅 Events	Events is where you can see upcoming career fairs (including which employers are scheduled for them) as well as upcoming employer events and career workshops.
👤 Employers	Employers is where you can search employers, learn more about them and find out what jobs they've posted. You can also find Employer Collections, list of Employers Good for Your Major.
🎓 Career center	Career center is where you can make appointments with career advisors and explore resources posted by your career center.

When you first start using Handshake, don't forget to set up your profile. Some information will already be uploaded from the University's system, but there's more you can add like experience. Having a completed profile will help you connect with employers and opportunities that interest you. As you start using Handshake, check out the privacy and notifications settings as well.

CNS Top Employers by Major

The lists below of top employers by major have been compiled using a combination of first destination data reported by recent graduates and working knowledge of the CNS Career Center Staff. More extensive lists of perspective employers for many CNS majors can be found [here](#).

Animal Science

  Tufts University
  Franklin Park Zoo
  North County Veterinary Clinic
  Avon Veterinary
  Natera

Astronomy

  NASA
  GE Renewable Energy
  SpacePharma
  Army National Guard
  Cosmic Dawn Center

Biology

  Massachusetts General Hospital
  Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
  Beth Israel
  University of Massachusetts Amherst
  Boston Children's Hospital

BMB

  Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
  University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School
  Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard
  Moderna
  Boston BioProducts
  Boston Children's Hospital
  Massachusetts General Hospital

BCT

  Consigli Construction Co., Inc.
  Whiting-Turner Contracting Company
  Gilbane Building Company
  Shawmut Design and Construction
  Daniel O'Connell's Sons

Chemistry

  Moderna
  Boston Children's Hospital
  Dow Chemical
  Arrakis Therapeutics
  Novartis Institutes

Earth Systems

  US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
  Mass Audubon
  Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
  Triumvirate Environmental
  Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD)

Environmental Science

  Triumvirate Environmental
  MA Audubon Society
  UMass Amherst Environmental Health & Safety
  US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
  US Fish & Wildlife Service

Food Science

  Nestle
  Kraft Heinz Company
  Ocean Spray
  Tender Foods
  Anheuser Busch

Geography

  Clean Energy Design
  Encompass Engineering and Design
  CHA Novara Geo Solutions
  Oracle
  University of Massachusetts

Geology

  CDM Smith
  AECom
  United States Army
  Langan Engineering & Environmental Services
  Environmental Protection Agency

Horticultural Science

  The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts
  Ascend Wellness
  Center for Agriculture, Food & Environment
  Trustees of Reservations
  Green Rivers Farms

Mathematics & Statistics

  Bank of New York Mellon (BNY Mellon)
  John Hancock
  Sun Life
  MassMutual
  Blue Cross Blue Shield

Microbiology

  Boston Children's Hospital
  Dermatology Associates of Concord
  HelixBind, Inc.
  University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School
  Brigham and Women's Hospital

Natural Resources Conservation

  University of Massachusetts Amherst
  US Army Corps of Engineers
  Mass Audubon Society
  US Dept of Energy
  National Oceanographic & Atmospheric Administration

Physics

  University of Massachusetts
  MIT Lincoln Laboratory
  Raytheon
  Los Alamos National Laboratory
  FUJIFILM Electronic Materials

Plant & Soil Sciences

  Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
  University of Massachusetts
  Ascend Wellness
  The Food Project
  Arana Biosciences

Pre-Veterinary

  Florence Animal Clinic
  Hadley Animal Hospital
  Burlington Animal Clinic
  Randolf Animal Hospital
  Marshfield Animal Hospital

Psychology

  University of Massachusetts Amherst
  Boston Children's Hospital
  Massachusetts General Hospital
  McLean Hospital
  Clinical & Support Options Inc.

Sustainable Food and Farming

  Whole Foods Market
  University of Massachusetts
  Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation
  Utah Conservation Corps
  Riverland Farm LLC

Turfgrass Science and Management

  Bayview Country Club
  TruGreen Landscaping
  Bay View Turf Specialists
  Land Surveyors
  Liquid Landscape Designs

Veterinary Technology

  Blue Pearl
  Humane Society
  Riverbend Animal Hospital
  New England Wildlife Center
  Charles River Laboratories

Are you on track? A four-year career development checklist

This document presents a timeline of steps you can take throughout your time at UMass to set yourself up for success in your career. It is important to understand that this is not an exhaustive list of everything you can do, and it is also important to realize that we are not saying you must complete every single task in this document in order to be successful.

FIRST YEAR

- ✓ Identify your skills, interests and passions
- ✓ Explore majors and careers that align with these skills, interests and passions
- ✓ Get familiar with your resources, like the CNS Career Center website, OURS, and Handshake
- ✓ Start getting to know faculty in your major, and talk to upper-class students as well
    - o Faculty connections are especially important when it comes to references/recommendations as well as research opportunities
- ✓ Setup your Handshake account
- ✓ Make an appointment with a career advisor to get your resume started or reviewed
- ✓ Attend a career fair to get comfortable in the setting and practice meeting employers
- ✓ Attend a career development workshop (scheduled workshops can be found in Handshake)
- ✓ Explore clubs and organizations on campus that you can join, as well as other student leadership opportunities
- ✓ Setup your LinkedIn account so you can start using it to build and organize your network
- ✓ Toward the end of your first year, you can start exploring possible research opportunities on campus that you can do during your second year
- ✓ During the summer after your first year, do something to build your resume. This summer is usually a bit early for an internship, but a part-time job or volunteer opportunity can be a great way to build your resume and develop your skills, such leadership, communication and teamwork.

SECOND YEAR

- ✓ Choose a major (if you haven't already)
- ✓ Attend career fairs with the intention of talking to employers about experiential learning opportunities
    - o It is important to start looking for internships well in advance of when you would like to do one. So, if you hope to do an internship during the summer after your second year, you should be attending career fairs and searching for opportunities throughout the year
- ✓ If research interests you, explore REUs
- ✓ Meet with a career advisor about tailoring your resume and cover letter to specific opportunities
- ✓ Continue with one or more club, organization or student leadership role, and look for opportunities to become more active in the group and take on leadership positions
- ✓ Use Handshake and other sites to search experiential learning opportunities
- ✓ Start building your online presence/brand by developing your LinkedIn
- ✓ The summer after your second year is a great time to do an internship, but even if you don't do an internship, spend that time doing something that builds your skills and resume.

THIRD YEAR

- ✓ Start thinking more concretely about next steps in your career. After you graduate, do you want to start graduate school, take a gap year, or jump right into your career?
    - o Meet with a career advisor to have a discussion about this
- ✓ Consider a minor, and think about electives and other opportunities to learn important skills and knowledge for your career
- ✓ Get more active on LinkedIn. Follow employers that interest you, participate in group discussions, reach out to UMass alumni working in your field or any field of interest and recruiters you've met at career fairs
- ✓ Attend career fairs and search for summer experiential learning opportunities throughout the year
- ✓ Maintain and develop connections with faculty
- ✓ Take a leadership position in a student group, and think about connecting with first year students and sharing what you have learned with them
- ✓ The summer after your third year may be the last opportunity you get to do an internship before you graduate. Alternatively, you can also use this summer to start exploring graduate programs, and even visiting campuses for some graduate schools you are considering

FOURTH YEAR

- ✓ Decide if graduate school or a job is the best path forward for you
    - o You can start the year searching for both to keep your options open if that strategy works best for you, but at some point, you will have to decide
- ✓ Create a way to organize your search or searches
    - o Students often have success using an excel file to organize their graduate school and/or job search
- ✓ If you are planning to attend graduate school, make sure you know if the programs you are applying to require a test like the GRE, and if they do, give yourself time to prepare and take the test before you need to apply to the programs
- ✓ Talk to faculty and former supervisors about references/letter of recommendation
    - o Give people plenty of time when asking them to complete a letter of recommendation
- ✓ Attend career fairs and talk to employers about full-time opportunities
    - o Employers will attend career fairs as early as September looking for May graduates
- ✓ Make sure your LinkedIn page is telling perspective employers exactly what you want them to know about you
    - o Meet with a career advisor to review your LinkedIn and get tips
    - o Google yourself to ensure that your online presence isn't working against you
- ✓ Take opportunities to share knowledge with first- and second-year students
- ✓ Speak with your academic advisor early to ensure that you are on track to graduate on time

Doing Research with Faculty

The best way to know if you would enjoy pursuing a career in research, is to conduct research during your collegiate career, to try it out. As a science major at UMass Amherst, a large research-based institution, you are surrounded by faculty and students who are pushing the boundaries of their respective fields. Getting "hired" or participating in a faculty lab or research project on campus is a terrific way to gain real-world experience in your field of interest. Here are some tips to help you find and apply for a research opportunity.

Start with the website for your department or major. Most of these websites have a "Research" link that will provide details on the current research being conducted within that department. It is also helpful to look for the list of department faculty, which often contain summaries of their past and current research interests. In addition, some faculty members have separate websites entirely dedicated to their research labs which provide a lot of detailed information about their research including any published materials they've produced. Continue this process for adjacent majors or any fields that you have a particular interest in pursuing. For instance, Biochemistry majors may benefit from also researching the Biology and Chemistry departments. Please consult with a CNS Career Advisor if you have any questions.

Read deeply! You're not expected to enter a lab with a 100% understanding of the research or material, but you should have a general understanding of the research projects which you intend to apply and a willingness to learn more. Research positions with faculty rarely have proper job descriptions, but you may be able to discern some of the key skills, concepts, and courses that would make you a notable candidate. Use your finding to customize your resume and write a brief cover letter expressing your interest in the research project you would like to join. Please consult with a CNS Career Advisor if you're having trouble identifying key skills, concepts or customizing your resume and cover letter.

Reach out to faculty member(s) via email or stop by their office hours to express your interest in their research and to ask if they would be willing to accept your resume in a follow-up message. Keep in mind that a lack of receptivity has nothing to do with you. If faculty do not respond or do not respond in a timeframe you deem to be appropriate, it may be because they do not have any availability in their lab. In these cases, it is a good idea to reach out again after about 2 weeks. Many times, labs that do not have current opportunities will have future openings and it is good to already be familiar with the professor or principal investigator to secure an open position when they become available. For help formulating an email to a professor to express interest in their lab, please consult with a CNS Career Advisor.

What Makes a Good Research Assistant According to Faculty?

- Completion of foundational courses – Enough to clearly understand basic concepts of the field and familiarity with basic lab skills.
- Express a willingness to learn and show the ability to learn quickly.
- Demonstrate a specific interest in a lab, beyond a general interest of "getting any lab position".
- Clearly state why you find the professors' work interesting or intriguing as well as how their work aligns with your own research goals or interests.

- Display initiative and motivation to professionally pursue a research position as part of your educational experience, even though it is not a requirement.
- Make a concerted effort to be involved and ensure the professor knows your name and face through your efforts to be noticeable and memorable.

Tips from CNS Professors Who Hire Research Assistants

"I run a popular lab that gets lots of applications every year. The first thing I do is ignore every last one of them. **Then I wait to see which students come back and inquire about their application or otherwise show initiative and interest in having the position. These are the students who really want the job.** So, then I'll go back and read just the resumes of those students. Sometimes students don't understand that the minimal effort needed to follow-up can have maximal effects."

"It's frustrating that I can't remember the names of all my students, especially in large lecture classes. I have to admit—when I get two students applying for a position, **I tend to feel more comfortable hiring the student whose name and face I recognize. A student I don't know might be very talented and deserving, but if they haven't made an effort to get me to learn who they are, I can't help but see them as a potential risk** compared with someone I already know."

"Students who **send me emails that read like texts, with abbreviated words and lack of grammar, are not serious about wanting to become a professional in their field.** Approaching a professor with respect means using their title, getting right to the point, and spending more than 5 minutes figuring out what to write."

"I don't look for A students. High GPA is nice. But a high GPA doesn't always mean that someone understands your particular research. **I look for students that show the capacity to learn and demonstrate a real interest in doing so."**

"Students should read my faculty bio and the entire website for my lab before contacting me. I can really tell whether someone has taken the time to do that or not. And **if you won't take the time to read about my research, why should I take the time to read about you?"**

"The graduate student who works for me often recommends bright and talented undergraduates that she knows because they have asked her about working in my lab.

"Your retail jobs don't necessarily interest me. The thing I want to see most on your resume is an up-to-date list of your lab skills. I can get an idea of these if you list a few completed or current courses related to the work of my lab, but it really comes down to specific lab skills that a student has learned to do at least once, or simply hasn't been exposed to yet. **Tell me what you can do in a lab, and you've got my attention.**

"I'll admit that I sometimes don't respond to student inquiries, especially if I'm busy and I know that my lab is full for the foreseeable future. In this case, my lack of response has absolutely nothing to do with a student's qualifications, and I hope students remember that. **I just don't have room, not even for Einstein. I still encourage students to reach out to me with interest though. When one of my lab assistants does graduate, I'll definitely be calling someone to replace them."**

"A student's well-formulated and informed question about my current research gets me every time. In a single shot you demonstrate your self-motivation, your interest in my work, your scientific aptitude and, as a bonus, you flatter me. Informed flattery will get you everywhere!"

"If I hire a senior, I train them, and they graduate. Gone. **But if I hire a sophomore or junior, they'll likely stick with my lab project for a few semesters.** Occasionally, I've hired a very bright and motivated first year student. This is rare, but it does happen. Taking initiative is key".

<u>**Promoting Research Opportunities for Equity in Learning (PROPEL)**</u>

For all STEM majors, it is crucial to familiarize yourself with PROPEL, a program aiming to ensure equitable access to academic and research opportunities for all undergraduate students at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. PROPEL provides a centralized job board of STEM opportunities that can be found here: https://bua.bio.umass.edu/projects. **PROPEL opens and closes postings four times a year. This is subject to change. You Must be Aware of These dates**. At any time of year, you're able to read short summaries of the many research projects being conducted at UMass Amherst. PROPEL allows you to view the number of applicants for each project and permits you to upload a single resume and cover letter for use in applying for **ONLY** three (3) separate projects. While applications via PROPEL are generally required, many students have already discussed their interest with the professor or principal investigator well in advance of the PROPEL system posting the positions. Students that only apply via PROPEL, without discussing their interest with the professor beforehand, tend to miss out on opportunities. **PROPEL is open to all STEM majors!**

Internships and CO-OPS

An internship is a semester long or summer learning experience in which you gain skills, industry knowledge and contacts in the professional world, while fulfilling a role with a host organization or company. Often, students are later hired at the very same organization or company in which they interned. Approximately three quarters (75%) CNS Students complete an internship, research experience or other field experience during their collegiate career. Employers cite these experiences as one of the most valuable items on students' resumes and within students' applications. Internships may be done for credit, if properly registered through SPIRE. For instance, a student may receive 3 credits for performing 8 hours per week throughout the 15-week semester. Please consult a CNS Career Advisor to discuss appropriate registration of internships to receive credit.   A credited internship always needs a faculty sponsor. This is the person who will assign you the credits, as well as an academic project that goes with the internship. Start thinking about who you would ask to be your faculty sponsor.

Many employers are impressed by the quality of interns (& employees) they hire from UMass Amherst which result in those same companies returning year after year to provide an excellent variety of competitive opportunities for current and future generations of students. Take full advantage of the professional reputation fostered by past generations of UMass students and uphold the university's standards of professionalism and diligence when it is your turn, so that future generations may be privy to the same benefits. Backing out of an internship after accepting an offer can jeopardize your professional reputation and the reputation of UMass students. If you receive an early offer and are not sure what to do, make an appointment to discuss it with a Carere Advisor.

A CO-OP is a temporary leave from classes to work 40 hours per week during semester. Some students will move to other locations such as Boston or New York City to fully immerse themselves in their CO-OP experience. Intensive internships are also available during the Summer or Winter breaks. Consult your major's requirements and your Academic Advisor to determine if you have an internship or CO-OP requirement or if there is a maximum number of credits you may earn via internship or CO-OP. For more information on completing an internship for credit please see the Central Career Services website here: https://www.umass.edu/careers/resources/can-i-do-internship-credit

Most CNS students choose to do a non-credit internship in addition to their for-credit courses, then list their internship experience directly on their resume. This is essentially an agreement made between yourself and the organization or company and does not involve UMass Amherst. As a result, a non-credit internship will not appear on your UMass transcript but that in no way decreases the value of your experience. Your internship experience will continue to serve as valuable work experience that will aid in the advancement of your professional career and be featured prominently on your resume. Please consult a CNS Career Advisor for support in identifying and applying to internship opportunities regardless of the for-credit or not-for-credit status.

Advanced students may want to consider registering for a CO-OP. CO-OPs serve both as a learning experience, and as a temporary professional experience that usually lasts 6-9 months and advances your professional experience, qualifications and professional network.   A CO-OP will appear on your UMass Amherst transcript but does not impact your GPA. By registering for CO-OP status, the university will

hold your spot within the college with the expectation that you will return to classes following the conclusion of your CO-OP experience.

When Should I Get an Internship?

The CNS Career & Professional Development Center advises students to begin looking into internships and other experiential learning opportunities as early as possible in their collegiate career. Due to the nature of internships generally requiring some basic coursework to be completed, we suggest aiming to begin your first experiential learning opportunity as early as the Spring semester of your sophomore year. Although, proper and consistent communication with professors or organizations to express interest in their work may lead to experiential learning opportunities sooner. Students may also complete internships in their Junior and Senior years. Many students will complete internships in various years and semesters to acquire a diversity of experiences in different or similar fields. Employers and graduate schools look very favorably on multiple experiential learning opportunities, though it is important to note that experiential learning is not the only criteria for hiring and graduate school admissions, and if circumstances prevent you from pursuing such opportunities as an undergraduate, you can still pursue graduate school and/or a fulfilling career.

Competitive internships can have early deadlines and will often select their interns nearly a full semester in advance of their start date. For instance, many Spring internships are filled by November the previous calendar year, many summer internships are filled during February and Fall internships are filled starting in May. **Make Sure to be Aware of Deadlines!** Planning ahead is always a good idea, but if you start late there are usually still opportunities available. You only need to find a single opportunity, once you find it and secure it – You're all-set!

Some students feel that an internship or experiential learning is above their skill level. However, internships and research experiences are intended to be learning experiences that serve as steppingstones along your professional career trajectory. Most internships are exclusively available to undergraduate students, and you become ineligible once you graduate. The most important quality to possess as an intern is the desire and eagerness to learn. Parlay that desire into seeking out an experience that you feel will help you reach your professional goals.

Where Do I Find an Internship?

The online Handshake database is updated daily with jobs and internships that can be searched by key word, location, industry, among other criteria. We recommend that you search for opportunities by major and use the employer collections by major to identify appropriate companies. Search for opportunities on Handshake here: https://umass.joinhandshake.com/stu/postings

Another place to search for internships and experiential learning opportunities is the website(s) of your major department and the faculty within that department. These websites may have links such as "Career Development", "Opportunities", "Research" or something similar. Your faculty may also know of opportunities that are not publicly posted or heavily advertised as well as have professional contacts that may have opportunities available. Depending on the faculty member, some may mention opportunities in class while other may only inform motivated students who ask about opportunities.

The CNS Completed Internship, Do-op and Research Database provides student's reviews of completed internships. Search by major to find out where your fellow students have interned, what they did during their internship and learn about their thoughts on the experience. Many internships repeat each semester, so you may directly contact the host organization if you read about a past opportunity that you find intriguing. Explore the CNS Internship Database here:
https://secure.cns.umass.edu/webforms/internships?_gl=1*y5mdaf*_gcl_au*NzM1Nzg0ODQ2LjE3MjA1MzY5NTU.*_ga*ODAxMjEwNDU1LjE2OTI3MzM2NTY.*_ga_21RLS0L7EB*MTcyMjI3NTU1My4zMjcuMC4xNzIyMjc1NTUzLjAuMC4w

Some students may create a new internship opportunity by approaching an organization directly and coming to an agreement with them about parameters for a temporary internship. If there is an organization or company you wish to be a part of, we encourage you to make direct contact with that organization or company to express your interest and discuss possible internship options.

The CNS Career and Professional Development Center can help you search for appropriate internship opportunities and provide links to internship boards organized by profession, industry or scientific discipline. Make an appointment with a Career Advisor on Handshake if you have any questions. https://umass.joinhandshake.com/stu/appointments .

Specially Funded Internship Opportunities in Science

The National Science Foundation (NSF) offers competitive and prestigious summer research programs that serve as excellent field experiences for students interested in pursuing careers in scientific and academic research. NSF sponsors these **Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU's)** at universities across the country. Most accepted applicants receive a stipend of $4,000-$6,000 for a summer spent at another university campus, doing intensive research under the supervision of the local principal investigator (PI) and university faculty. Application deadlines differ by project but are often as early as December through February. Funding is reserved for U.S. citizens and permanent residents. NSF opportunities can be searched by academic discipline here:
https://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/reu_search.jsp

The **Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC)** is funded by the state to continue building Massachusetts as a major life sciences hub. To create a pipeline of talented life science professionals, MLSC runs an internship matching website for science internships, as well as data science internships. All students who would like an internship at a life sciences company can apply.   While there are plenty of opportunities for those students studying Biology, Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, Chemistry, and Microbiology, there are also internships for those studying Math and Psychology as well. Students are encouraged to upload their resume and a cover letter stating your interests within your major(s), your experience, and your range of lab skills. More than 600 science companies, all based in Massachusetts, browse student resumes and make direct offers of internship opportunities to selected students. If selected, you are paid up to $17/hour (can change) for 12 weeks of full-time work at a Massachusetts life science company. Many of these companies are small biotech and medical device startup companies, offering experience in a variety of professional roles. These program benefits are only available to applicants attending a college inside Massachusetts! You are encouraged to have your resume and cover letter reviewed at the CNS Career Center before you upload them to MLSC. Unlike with many internship programs, you remain eligible for MLSC internships for a full 12 months after you graduate. International

student applications are welcomed. Read more about the MLSC Internship Challenge here: www.masslifesciences.com/programs/internship

The **Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC)** is the first state-funded organization dedicated to the promotion of renewable energy and associated green industries. Since 2011, our state has spent $5 million to subsidize over 2,000 paid internship positions at over 300 clean energy companies in Massachusetts. Through funding from MassCEC, these companies can pay their interns up to $16/hour for up to 12 weeks of full- or part-time work. These program benefits are only available to applicants attending a college inside Massachusetts. MassCEC offers a job board of available opportunities. International students are eligible. This program is especially helpful for CNS students in the **Building & Construction Technology**, **Natural Resource Conservation**, and **Environmental Science** majors. Read more about it here: https://www.masscec.com/workforce/job-seekers-students

The **Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MassTech)** provides eligible Massachusetts digital technology companies with funding for an intern's salary up to a maximum total of $6,400. These program benefits are only available to applicants attending a college inside Massachusetts! These internships may be of particular interest to Math, Astronomy and Physics majors, any science majors with interests in data analysis and digital health, and Psychology majors with an interest in human resources. Students create a profile at The Tech Gen but can also browse companies and apply to them directly. Such startup companies, needing interns with talents in data analysis and/or human resources, can be found here: https://masstech.org/intern

The **Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection** offers several internships with the state agency responsible for ensuring clean air and water, the safe management of toxics and hazards, the recycling of solid and hazardous wastes, the timely cleanup of hazardous waste sites and spills, the preservation of wetlands and coastal resources, and to be the guarantor of the people's right to clean air and water. Internships may be appropriate for Environmental Science, Natural Resource Conservation, and some Biology students. International and graduate students are encouraged to apply. While unpaid, these internships offer valuable experiences serving the local environs of Massachusetts and New England. Search for available opportunities here: https://massanf.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobsearch.ftl?f=ORGANIZATION%2810900120189%29&a=null&multiline=true

Project Onramp is a consortium of Life Sciences and Biotech companies through Life Sciences Cares in Boston. These companies set aside summer internships for undergraduate students who have a Pell Grant in their Financial Aid package. Internship descriptions arrive to the CNS Career Center between December – April. Sign up for the program in November when there is an Info Session. All info is posted in Handshake, or you can see a CNS Career Advisor for more information.

Tailoring your Resume and Cover Letter to Job Descriptions

A REAL JOB DESCRIPTION

Job title & Employer

Research Technician I, Massachusetts General Hospital Cancer Center

Job description

A position is open for a full time Research Technician I at the MGH Cancer Center in the Maus Lab. We are looking for an experienced, **highly motivated**, and **organized** individual to support the research endeavors of this group.

Research Technician I is a full-time position that serves to assist Principal Investigators in a research laboratory. Primary responsibilities are to assist in experiments for research projects under supervision of the project head and the PI of the laboratory. This includes **collection of and accurate recording of procedures and results**, **maintenance of databases used in the lab**, **ordering necessary reagents to conduct experiments**, and **participation in joint upkeep of the lab**. This position requires a person who has **Bachelor of Science degree in molecular/cell biology or a related field**, **pays attention to details**, is **capable of working independently** after training, **possesses good verbal and written communication skills**, and **works well as part of a team**.

PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Principal duties are to assist in preparation of and assist with experiments for research projects under supervision of the project head and the PI of the laboratory. Specifically, the lab is part of the MGH Cancer Center and the focus of the Maus lab is CAR-T cell therapies. The applicant will be expected to become proficient in **molecular biology and immunology techniques (cloning, PCR, western blot, cell culture, flow cytometry)** and be involved with **processing and culture of human blood samples**. The applicant will **maintain all data generated in a laboratory notebook, analyze data through a variety of computer programs (Excel, Prism, FlowJo), and participate in weekly lab meetings**.

***Executes protocols** of non-routine experiments.
***Develop, modify and improve** routine protocols.
***Calculates, transcribes and analyzes data**.
***Participates as a presenter in weekly journal club**.
***Organizes and summarizes acquired data, using scientific and statistical techniques.**
***Participates in the design of experiments and benchwork** under the supervision of a post-doctoral fellow.
***Process donor blood for leukocytes**.
*Highly involved with **tissue culture and viral transduction**

SKILLS/ABILITIES/COMPETENCIES REQUIRED:
* **Ability to work independently and as team member**
* **Analytical skills** and **ability to resolve technical problems**
* **Ability to interpret acceptability of data results**
* **Working knowledge of data management programs with a high degree of computer literacy**.
***Demonstrated competence in research techniques and methodologies**.
*Careful **attention to detail**
*Must be **self-motivated**
***Excellent verbal and written communication skills**

What you see on the previous page is from a real job description posted on Handshake. The **bold and underlined** parts are all indicative of knowledge, skills and abilities that this employer is looking for when hiring for this position. When applying for any job or internship, you can go through the job description like this and pull out everything that indicates what they are looking for in a candidate. This is important because it helps you understand what they are looking for and because many employers use software to review resumes (called Applicant Tracking Systems, ATS), and will likely use language from the posted job description in telling the software what to look for. By using this language to make adjustments to your resume and write your cover letter, you can give yourself a better chance of getting an interview.

Notice the mix of concrete technical skills (cloning, PCR, western blot, cell culture, flow cytometry) and other skills that might be referred to as "soft" skills or "transferable" skills. The concrete skills can be reflected both in the Skills section of your resume and in how you describe your related experiences. For example, someone applying to the job above could write a bullet point describing how they worked with cell cultures in a research lab, or lab class, and how they processed human blood samples at an internship. Don't assume that the skills listed in the job description are the only skills of interest. Your Skills section and job descriptions should also feature related and similar concrete skills that you have.

While the concrete technical skills related to your field are very important, don't ignore the transferrable skills (skills you gain at most jobs like teamwork, communication and empathy). If they take the time to put them in the job description, that indicates an interest in those skills as well. Some of these transferrable skills will also be part of the experience you have that is directly related to your field, like working as part of a team in a lab if you are a Biology major. However, this is also a great opportunity to utilize the work experience you have that is less related to your field.

Let's say you're applying for the job above as a Biology major, and you also have experience as a server at a restaurant and as an office assistant at UMass. When you describe those experiences on your resume, don't just try to generically explain those jobs. Focus on the skills the job description is talking about. As a server you:

- Worked as part of a team to provide efficient service to customers.
- Took orders accurately and with great attention to detail.

As an office assistant, you may have:

- Used Excel to help compile data for the office which is used to track alumni.
- Worked independently to collect and compile detailed student data over a 10-year period.

By focusing on elements of those jobs that directly relate to skills mentioned in the job description, you are further helping them understand that you are the kind of candidate they should want to interview.

For cover letters, the concept is similar. If you did an internship, for example, that can be a very broad experience, and it can be difficult to figure out how to boil it down to one paragraph in a three or four paragraph cover letter. By using the job description as a guide, you can make informed decisions about what is best to focus on as you relay details of your experience.

Sample resumes for CNS majors can be found [here](). It is important to note that while it is appropriate for many CNS majors to have lab skills on their resume, your resume should reflect the technical skills related to your field, whatever they may be. If you need help tailoring a resume or cover letter to a specific job description, you can make an appointment with a career advisor and we can help.

Headings for a Curriculum Vitae (CV) in the Sciences

When applying for a job, internship, research opportunity or graduate/professional school, you will usually be asked for a resume or a CV. Some people will use these terms interchangeably, but they are not the same thing. Graduate programs (doctoral programs especially) and research opportunities (like REUs) are more likely to request a CV as opposed to a resume. Make sure you read job posts carefully so that you are sending what they ask for. Some will also give you the option of sending one or the other. In that case, it is usually advisable to use whichever document you have the most confidence in, but if you are applying to something that is research-based, using your CV is worth considering.

A CV is similar to a resume (you can use the same layout) but usually longer and more focused on academic pursuits and research experience. That isn't to say that your work experience shouldn't be represented on your CV, but it will be less of a focus than it usually is on a resume. Crucially, while your resume, as an undergraduate, should generally be one page long, your CV can be two or more pages long, depending on how much relevant content you have.

Below are some sample headings for CVs in the sciences, as suggested by the National Institute of Health (NIH). As an undergraduate, you may not have content for each of these possible sections, but you may be able to brainstorm similar work that you have done that can help add important substance and skills to your CV. For example, you may not yet have publications, but you may have some poster or conference presentations, and you probably have some presentations stemming from final projects in your classes. These would be listed in bibliographic style, citing the title of the presentation, where it was given, and when (month/year). If you are applying to graduate school, add headings to your CV to show future intent, even if you only have one item to place under each heading today:

Section Headings on a CV

Contact Information	Assistantships/Fellowships
Professional Profile	Professional Memberships
Summary	Skills (including Lab, Software, Language)
Education	Community Service
Publications	Volunteer Experience
Lab/Research Experience	Honors and Awards
Teaching Experience	Professional References
Additional Work Experience	Grants Written/Received
Publications	Certifications and Trainings

Science Resume Action Verbs -- By Category

Use some verbs from the job description first, then supplement from this list. Avoid using the same verb twice. Use present tense only for current positions.

Communication Skills

Addressed	Corresponded	Incorporated	Promoted
Advertised	Counseled	Influenced	Proposed
Advocated	Critiqued	Informed	Publicized
Answered	Defended	Inquired	Quantified
Authored	Demonstrated	Interacted (with)	Questioned
Briefed	Described	Interfaced (with)	Reached (out)
Built (relationships)	Detailed	Interviewed	Recommended
Canvassed	Discussed	Introduced	Reported
Characterized	Displayed	Involved	Represented
Clarified	Disseminated	Listened	Responded (to)
Co-authored	Drafted	Marketed	Solicited
Collaborated	Edited	Mediated	Spoke
Communicated	Elicited	Memorized	Suggested
Composed	Engaged	Motivated	Summarized
Connected	Enlisted	Negotiated	Synthesized
Consulted	Exhibited	Networked	Transcribed
Contacted	Explained	Notified	Translated
Contrasted	Expressed	Oriented	Transmitted
Conversed (with)	Formulated	Outlined	Urged
Conveyed	Fostered (relationship)	Persuaded	Voiced
Coordinated	Furnished	Pioneered	Wrote
	Implemented	Presented	

Leadership Skills

Adapted	Directed	Implemented	Pioneered
Began	Enacted	Inaugurated (program)	Proposed
Combined	Established	Initiated	Pursued
Composed	Fabricated	Instituted	Revised
Conceptualized	Fashioned	Integrated	Set (up)
Conducted	Forged	Introduced	Shaped
Crafted	Formed	Invented	Solved
Created	Formulated	Launched	Spearheaded
Customized	Founded	Mobilized	Started
Designed	Fundraised	Opened	Undertook
Developed	Generated	Originated	
Devised	Grew	Piloted	
	Illustrated	Planned	

Quantitative Skills

Accounted (for)	Balanced	Determined	Prepared
Ascertained	Budgeted	Estimated	Programmed
Adjusted	Calculated	Extrapolated	Projected
Allocated	Capitalized (on)	Forecasted	Quantified
Analyzed	Computed	Gauged	Reconciled
Appraised	Converted	Increased	Reduced
Assessed	Corrected	Interpolated	Tabulated
Audited	Decreased	Measured	
	Depreciated	Netted	

Helping Skills

Accelerated	Counseled	Intervened	Secured
Accommodated	Delivered	Monitored	Served
Adapted	Demonstrated	Nurtured	Simplified
Advanced (goal)	Diagnosed	Offered	Stabilized
Aided	Educated	Partnered	Staffed
Alleviated	Employed (skills)	Performed	Strengthened
Arranged	Enabled	Prepared	Suggested
Assessed	Encouraged	Prevented	Supplemented
Assured	Enhanced	Problem-solved	Supplied
Bolstered	Ensured	Provided	Supported
Cared (for)	Expedited	Referred	Teamed (with)
Coached	Facilitated	Rehabilitated	Transported
Collaborated	Familiarized	Reinforced	Treated
Comforted	Fulfilled	Represented	Volunteered
Conferred	Furthered	Resolved	
Contributed	Guided	Retrieved	
Cooperated	Helped	Safeguarded	
	Incorporated	Searched	

Managing Skills

Acquired	Decreased	Increased	Reorganized
Adhered	Delegated	Led	Restored
Adjusted	Deployed	Leveraged	Reviewed
Administered	Developed	Managed	Satisfied (req's)
Analyzed	Directed	Met (requirements)	Scheduled
Anticipated	Drove (results)	Motivated	Secured
Applied	Elected	Navigated	Selected
Appointed	Eliminated	Obtained	Set (goals)
Approved	Enforced	Orchestrated	Shaped
Assigned	Enlisted	Organized	Solved
Authorized	Executed	Overhauled	Strategized
Balanced	Focused (on)	Oversaw	Streamlined
Chaired	Galvanized	Planned	Strengthened
Contracted	Generated	Presided (over)	Supervised
Controlled	Handled	Prioritized	Trained
Coordinated	Headed	Produced	Transformed
Cut (budget, time)	Hired	Ran	Upheld (regulations)
Decided	Hosted	Recommended	Utilized
	Implemented	Recruited	

Organizational Skills

Accumulated	Collected	Filed	Maintained
Aligned	Compared	Finalized	Maximized
Arranged	Compiled	Formalized	Mentored
Augmented	Confirmed	Generated (data)	Merged
Automated	Consolidated	Grouped	Minimized
Balanced	Coordinated	Implemented	Monitored
Bridged	Corrected	Included	Navigated
Broadened	Customized	Indexed	Obtained
Cataloged	Decentralized	Input (data)	Optimized
Categorized	Diagrammed	Integrated	Ordered
Centralized	Displayed	Inspected	Organized
Charted	Distributed	Integrated	Outlined
Classified	Documented	Inventoried	Planned
Coded	Excluded	Juggled	Prepared
	Expedited	Linked	Prioritized

Processed	Registered	Selected	Targeted
Proofread	Replaced	Set (goals)	Tracked
Provided	Resolved	Sorted	Transcribed
Purchased	Restored	Streamlined	Unified
Qualified	Reviewed	Structured	Updated
Queried (database)	Revised	Submitted	Upgraded
Ranked	Routed	Standardized	Verified
Recorded	Scheduled	Synthesized	
Referenced	Screened	Systemized	
Refined	Searched	Tailored	

Teaching Skills

Adapted	Corrected	Graded	Motivated
Advised	Critiqued	Guided	Persuaded
Assessed	Developed	Illustrated	Taught
Coached	Educated	Individualized	Tested
Communicated	Evaluated	Informed	Trained
Conducted	Explained	Instilled	Transmitted
Coordinated	Facilitated	Instructed	Tutored
	Focused	Mentored	

Research Skills

Adapted	Discovered	Modeled	Scored
Analyzed	Documented	Modified	Screened
Assessed	Drew (conclusions)	Observed	Searched
Benchmarked	Evaluated	Performed (procedure)	Simulated
Checked	Examined	Pinpointed	Simplified
Coded	Experimented	Predicted	Solved
Collected	Explored	Prescreened	Standardized
Compared	Extrapolated	Proposed	Studied
Conducted	Focused	Proved	Submitted
Confirmed	Formalized	Published	Substantiated
Considered	Formulated	Qualified	Substituted
Controlled (for)	Gathered	Quantified	Summarized
Correlated	Hypothesized	Ranked	Surveyed
Corroborated	Identified	Recorded	Synthesized
Critiqued	Inferred	Refined (process)	Systematized
Decoded	Inspected	Replicated	Targeted
Deduced	Interpolated	Reported	Tested
Defined	Interpreted	Reproduced	Theorized
Delivered	Intervened	Researched	Traced
Designed	Investigated	Resolved	Tracked
Detected	Kept (records)	Restructured	Troubleshot
Determined	Located	Revealed	Uncovered
Devised	Logged	Reviewed	Validated
Diagnosed	Manipulated	Revised	Verified
	Measured	Sampled	

Technical Skills

Activated	Automated	Cleaned	Coded
Actuated	Benchmarked	Collected	Cultivated
Adjusted	Blended	Combined	Debugged
Altered	Blocked	Concentrated	Decoded
Amplified	Built	Condensed	Defined
Approximated	Calibrated	Conserved	Designed
Articulated	Captured	Constructed	Detected
Assembled	Checked	Converted	Determined
Augmented	Circulated	Corrected	Developed
	Classified	Crystallized	Differentiated

Dispensed	Inspected	Probed	Specialized
Dissected	Installed	Processed	Specified
Dissembled	Introduced	Programmed	Stabilized
Distributed	Isolated	Purified	Standardized
Duplicated	Labelled	Rated	Stimulated
Eliminated	Liquefied	Recognized	Studied
Engineered	Manufactured	Recorded	Suppressed
Enriched	Mapped	Rectified	Surveyed
Evaporated	Matched	Refined (solution)	Suspended
Exchanged	Measured	Regulated	Synchronized
Extracted	Modeled	Remediated	Tallied
Fabricated	Modified	Remodeled	Tied
Fine-tuned	Mounted	Removed	Tightened
Fixed	Neutralized	Repaired	Transferred
Gasified	Operated	Restored	Translated
Gauged	Overhauled	Reversed	Transmitted
Generated	Performed (procedure)	Scanned	Trimmed
Identified	Permeated	Scraped	Troubleshot
Illuminated	Photographed	Segmented	Upgraded
Immobilized	Plotted (data)	Separated	Utilized
Implemented	Prepared	Simulated	Weighed
Induced	Preserved	Solidified	

Accomplishment Verbs

Accelerated	Discovered	Minimized	Selected
Accomplished	Doubled, Tripled	Modernized	Shortened
Acquired	Entrusted (with, to)	Nullified	Solved
Achieved	Exceeded	Optimized	Streamlined
Adapted	Expedited	Organized	Strengthened
Advanced	Honed (skills)	Overcame	Succeeded
Appointed	Increased	Oversaw	Surpassed
Attained	Improved	Perfected	Topped
Awarded	Initiated	Persuaded	Transformed
Boosted	Innovated	Pioneered	Transitioned
Broadened	Introduced	Planned	Trusted (to)
Built	Launched	Raised	Upgraded
Challenged	Led	Recognized (for)	Won
Completed	Leveraged	Redesigned	Yielded
Convinced	Managed	Reduced (time, costs)	
Decreased (costs, time)	Mastered	Rejuvenated	
	Maximized	Revitalized	

Networking: It's Awkward…That's Normal but It Works!

It Really Does Matter Who You Know!
Today, around 80% of those hired say that networking was involved in their application process. Networking is about making connections by freely exchanging information between you and a person in your field of interest. Networking is consciously introducing yourself to people and opening a line of communication that may provide benefit to your professional development right now or in the future. You are deciding to be outgoing with the goal of advancing your professional career. For some this comes naturally and for others, it requires some practice and adjustment. Networking can be the difference between successfully finding an opportunity or passively waiting for an opportunity that may or may not find you. Practice networking with our Career Advisors in the CNS Career Center.

Yes, It's Awkward…
Awkward and unpleasant does not mean off-limits or impossible. There are plenty of examples in life that illustrate what may be best for us, may not be the most desirable thing to do. Networking is no different; initiating a conversation with someone you don't know is awkward by its very nature. But that's all it is. It isn't a barrier unless you allow it to be a barrier. Networking is something you can do and should do. It will require effort and potentially navigating some awkward interactions, but the rewards can be great and can contribute to you achieving your professional goals. Remember, networking isn't about asking for a job or internship. Networking is more about learning how someone got to where they are, learning more about a company, and learning how you can move forward in your career.

That's Normal…
The professional world has been churning for millennia at this point in time, with many people having either reached out to meet someone or have had someone reach out to them with a question or a request for advice. In professional circles, meeting a stranger in your field is more normal than it may be in your current social circles. When you reach out to someone, the worst-case scenario is being ignored. **There is very little significant downside & lots of potential upside – low risk, high reward!**

It Does Work!
Networking is the practice of promoting oneself through social interaction. Begin by doing this consciously and not being afraid to reveal your skills and interests. Consider that from a recruiter's perspective, it's more comfortable to hire someone you know even just a little, than to take a risk on someone you don't know at all. People only know what you choose to tell them about yourself. If you don't make yourself visible, you remain unknown. Today you also have the benefit of professional networking social media sites, like LinkedIn and ConnectUMass, which greatly enhance your visibility and give you the ability to see what connections you may have in common with others in your network.

Who Should Be in My Professional Network?
Potentially everyone you meet, but you must make a concerted effort to include individuals beyond your friends. Others to consider include recruiters visiting campus, faculty and staff, co-workers at an internship, lab or job, fellow students in your major or a related major, graduate students, research and teaching assistants, and people you meet at professional conferences. Your family, friends, neighbors and acquaintances are all possible sources of information, and can potentially carry your information forward to one of their connections.

What Do I Say When I'm Networking?

It's natural to feel shy or out-of-place at a networking event. It helps to remember that almost everyone else there is in the same boat as you, even if they seem more polished. This is why practicing now while you are a student is helpful. Preparing some key details about yourself can help you to feel more confident. Use "Develop Your 30-Second Elevator Pitch (pages 37-38)" to formulate an informative introduction of your professional self. You should decide in advance 3 key words you would like people to easily associate with you after meeting you. Your elevator pitch will help define you as a candidate and distinguish you from others in your major and others applying to similar positions.

After you offer an introduction, someone may ask you a question or offer a tip such as "do you know about this company?" or "what are your professional goals?" Alternatively, you can ask them about their job or professional interest. Always be prepared to ask questions. Ask follow-up questions about what a typical day on the job looks like for them, or how long they have been in the field, or what they wish they had known in college before graduating that would have better prepared them for their career. Continue the conversation by offering a summary of your most recent or current school projects or internships or you may talk about a course that particularly interests you. The stories you tell can demonstrate your skills in leadership, initiative, communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and more. Your passion and enthusiasm are also on display when you speak freely about things you love.

Show a genuine interest in hearing from others and don't hesitate to offer any relevant knowledge you may have up front. "Do you know so-and-so who works in that area?" By offering information first, you will be seen as generous and helpful to others, which should encourage others to help you in return. A good networking introduction today can yield a successful job offer or an introduction to a key player, anytime from right now to several years down the road. The CNS Career Center, and Central Career Services, each offer workshops to provide you with networking practice in advance of big events like career fairs. To review the workshops each semester, consult the Events section of Handshake here: https://umass.joinhandshake.com/edu/events

Illustrate your Personal Brand!

Successfully marketing any product requires branding – the consistent communication of a few key words that individuals begin to associate with a specific product. For example, Coca-Cola's branding consists of advertising their products as "cold, refreshing, friendship, camaraderie, the famous red can & being iconically American". Coca-Cola is very calculated to ensure when you see their products or an advertisement these are the qualities that come to mind – that is not by accident! Successfully branding yourself has a similar impact. If you're able to consistently display certain skills or traits, employers, recruiters and co-workers begin to associate those skills and qualities with you.

According to Amazon founder, Jeff Bezos, "Your personal brand is what people say about you after you leave the room." While this is true, you as an individual possess the power to shape that image by actively advertising yourself and consistently displaying skills and traits that you determine are reflective of your identity. Take an active role in your personal branding!

For example, you may want a recruiter to remember these things about you after engaging with them at an on-campus Career Fair:

- You are passionate about being involved in the cure for MS
- You have excellent lab skills

- You have taken CURE courses in biology and learned basic lab skills
- You have gotten involved in a research lab studying…
- You love playing club field hockey
- And you work every summer on Cape Cod in the same restaurant for the past 8 years.

Where and How Should I Network Online?

1. Connect to over 195,000 UMass Amherst alumni who are on LinkedIn:
   https://www.linkedin.com/school/umassamherst/people/
2. **Join the UMass Amherst College of Natural Sciences LinkedIn Group:**
   https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12549638/
3. **Follow the CNS Career & Professional Development Center on LinkedIn:**
   https://www.linkedin.com/company/cnscareercenter/?viewAsMember=true
4. **Join ConnectUMass**
   https://www.umassalumni.com/s/1640/rd17/leftCol.aspx?pgid=6803&gid=2:

Introduce yourself as a student in the same major/department that they were in at UMass. Asking alumni to answer some questions about their job puts them in the position of being an expert. Many alumni are flattered by the chance to assist students up the ladder of success and many times are reciprocating support they received from an alumnus during their collegiate career.

Also see the subsequent sections on how to create and populate a LinkedIn profile for information on how to join groups focused on your areas of interest. For instance, a marine biology student may connect with marine conservation biologists from around the country and globe to acquire insight into strong experiences to pursue, tips on how to navigate the professional world of marine biology or even identify a specific opportunity. Joining a group lets you see the profiles of all other members, as well as mutual connections. LinkedIn groups often have their own jobs tab, which may feature job opportunities specific to the focus area of the group.

The **UMass Amherst Alumni Association** provides resources to alumni including networking and job searching support. To Access the Alumni Association services, go to their website here:
https://www.umassalumni.com/s/1640/rd17/leftCol.aspx?sid=1640&gid=2&pgid=8616

Facebook also offers several groups focused on different UMass majors. Talk to your faculty and advisors about them. The students in these groups tend to be more active networkers and have greater access to information such as career fairs or job and internship opportunities. Joining and sharing information with your fellow students helps to create a professional network that may last your entire life. Don't pass up the opportunity to convert fellow students to members of your professional network.

Some key items to keep in mind throughout your networking process, whether online or offline, it is better to focus on **quality over quantity**. It is much more helpful to know 10 people in your area of professional interest, than to know 100 people who aren't related to your professional interests. If someone you don't know asks to connect with you on LinkedIn, you don't have to accept their request just to be polite.

Building an Effective LinkedIn Profile

To See a Great Example of a LinkedIn Profile, Check out Gabriella Rizzo's profile - Our former CNS Career Center Peer Advisor & Employer Assistant: https://www.linkedin.com/in/gabriellarizzo/

STARTING TIP: Avoid "Add Personal Contacts" This feature scours the address book on your device and auto-sends LinkedIn connection invitations to everyone contained within. This feature presents two clear issues. Such invitations are impersonal, usually not received favorably and this may include individuals who are personal friends or acquaintances but not someone that should be included in your professional network. Choose who you want to invite to your professional network and do so with a personalized note.

1. **Professional Looking Photo**
   First impressions matter. Dress as you would for an interview or an important day at work. Have someone else take the picture. Try to avoid selfies and be the only person in the picture. Try to show only your head and shoulders. Avoid using your high school yearbook picture and try to find an image that is more recent. Think about being professional, likable, and smart. Eye contact and a smile will have positive effects on how viewers will perceive you. This is an opportunity for you to put your face with your name, so you are no longer simply a name on an application.

2. **Custom Headline**
   Change this to market your skills as they apply to your future field. Use 10-15 industry-specific key words so that you appear in any search results of those terms, e.g. "Psychology and Brain Science Major; Research Assistant for Sleep Cognition Lab."

3. **Geographic Location & Industry**
   Browse the full list of industries provided and select your closest future industry(s). Use popular search terms to describe the industry to which you aspire. These are key filters for recruiters seeking candidates. By zip code, list your present location or the area to which you hope to work.

4. **Summary**
A few paragraphs describing your personal brand— what distinguishes you from others in your major. Your summary must be dynamic and make recruiters want to read more. Confidently introduce yourself, your skills, your achievements, and your goals, using compelling language and industry key words. Use first person tense here ("I am…"). If you are seeking a job, say so and name the industry. On your page, only the first 2 lines are visible to others, so revise them to contain enough interesting key words that someone will click "See More…" to reveal your full summary. This is also where you can show some personality and talk about other interests.

4

About

I am a recent UMass Amherst microbiology graduate who is passionate about exploring the mysteries of the cosmos and the potential for life beyond Earth. My current interests entail discovering traces of ancient microbial life in the Martian subsurface, understanding early life on Earth, and investigating the potential habitability of our icy moons.

My current research is with Dr. James Holden at UMass Amherst, researching a novel thermophilic methanogen, Methanothermococcus strain Ax23, isolated from a deep-sea hydrothermal vent (Marker 113) at Axial Seamount in the northeast Pacific Ocean. The organism will be used to model life in the subseafloor and its implications for modern marine environments, life on the early Earth, and potential life on other ocean worlds in our solar system, such as Europa and Enceladus, where microbial life may exist.

Outside the lab and beyond academic pursuits, I'm committed to promoting science outreach and education through my nonprofit organization — Agnostic Life Finding Association, Inc. — as well as NASA NOW-FLOW, and the Astrobiology SciComm Guild. I firmly believe that inspiring the next generation of scientists is essential to the future of astrobiology and space exploration. I am also an avid reader, hiker and darts player.

I believe that we often fail to see what is right in front of us because we have such a fixed understanding of what we should be looking for. I am striving to be on the other side of this by optimizing processes that we are familiar with, and comparing our extreme habitats on Earth to those in outer space.
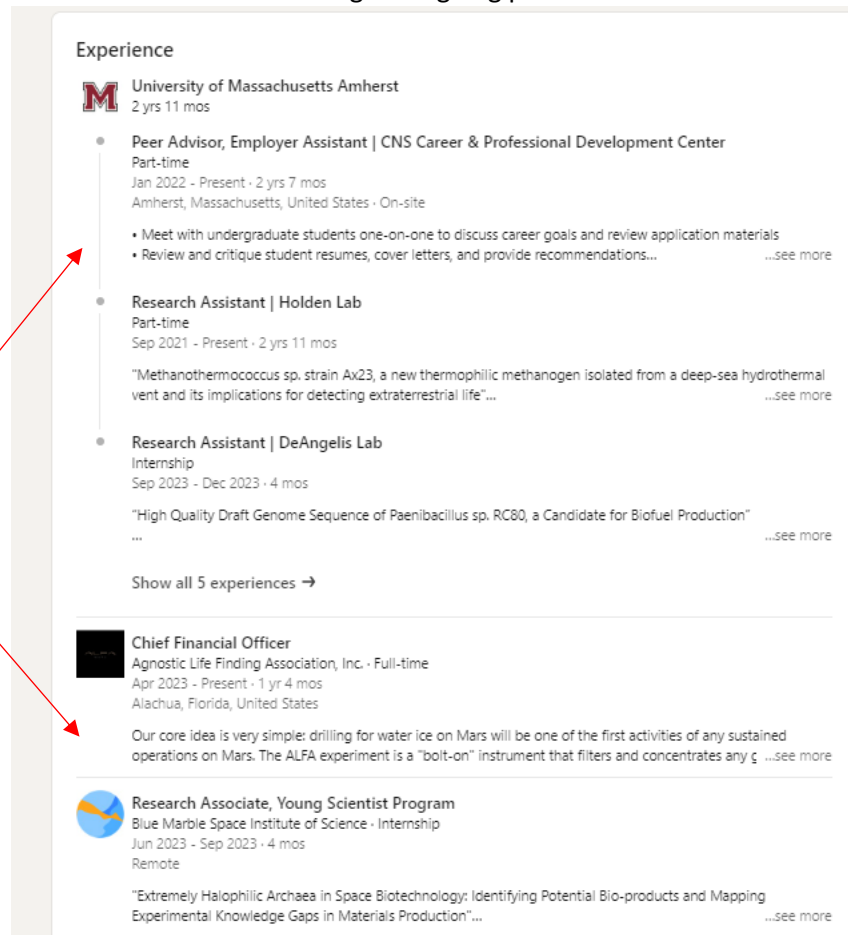
5. **Experience — Both Paid and Unpaid**
Include jobs, internships, research with faculty, teaching assistantships, volunteer work, and freelance work. But don't just paste a resume entry into this space. Instead, think about the job future you want to have. Re-describe your experience to highlight transferable skills that could apply to a job in your future field. If you are aiming to work as a lab assistant, re-describe your summer camp counselor job to emphasize skills such as teamwork, communication and adherence to safety regulations, rather than just arts & crafts, swimming, and soccer. **Important: When using the Add Experience box, set and keep the switch at the bottom to "No, don't update my network."** Your connections don't need to be notified every time you edit your page.

6. **Detail, Tone, and Phrasing on LinkedIn**
Unlike your resume, LinkedIn provides space to elaborate on your experiences but how much detail should you include? Imagine you need your secret twin to cover your job the next day. Explain what you do/did with that much detail. Your reader knows only what you tell them! Writing in your own professional voice can help readers see you as a human being, not just a resume or list of skills. Communicate, in detail, the passion you have for what you do and the goals you wish to pursue. Express what is rewarding, exciting, or challenging about your past and

present experiences. State your on-the-job accomplishments. Use first-person tense and aim to keep paragraphs short and concise. Use past tense when describing an experience that has ended. Use current tense when describing an ongoing position.

7. **Add Media**
   Don't just say it, display it! Upload samples of your writing, research, PowerPoints, presentations and include links to your lab or internship website. Most file formats are accepted. **Be sure NOT to post confidential or proprietary research data** – if you have a question about what's appropriate to post and what is not, consult a CNS Career Advisor or supervisor at your organization/company. Do NOT post your resume here as your reader likely came to your page after reading your resume. A good way to think about your LinkedIn profile is your digital presence and a portal to expand on your resume.

8. **Add Student-Friendly Profile Sections**
   Click the "Add Profile Section" at the top right of your profile page. There are many options to include sections that reflect all your hard work & experiences. Use these to highlight advanced coursework, projects, honors, awards, language ability, organizational membership (think campus clubs and RSOs), publications, or industry test scores. Showing specific courses can help if you have limited experience in your future field. Be sure to include volunteer experiences, which 1 in 5 hiring managers cite as being highly desirable. However, if your volunteer

experience showcases your best skills for future jobs, you may want to simply include it as an Experience entry to give it proper attention. Unpaid experiences absolutely count.

9. **Add Skills & Endorsements**

First, identify your preferred industry and "core competencies" of that industry. Then add a Skills section and include the phrases you found to add – be truthful and include about 10-12 items. If seeking a research position, you may want to include some lab skills such as PCR. For some majors, it makes sense to list field skills such as GIS, or project estimating. Use the most popular terms, already embedded within LinkedIn, that someone recruiting for your industry might search. Limit your profile to 20 skills - only your top 3 skills will show unless someone clicks to "See More". Your connections can click their agreement to support (endorse) individual skills you list, which enhances your credibility and validates that you do, in fact, possess and display the listed skills. Endorse your connections and they will likely return the favor, or simply ask your connections to get you started with some skill endorsements. Click on a skill to see both people who have it and some jobs it is used in.
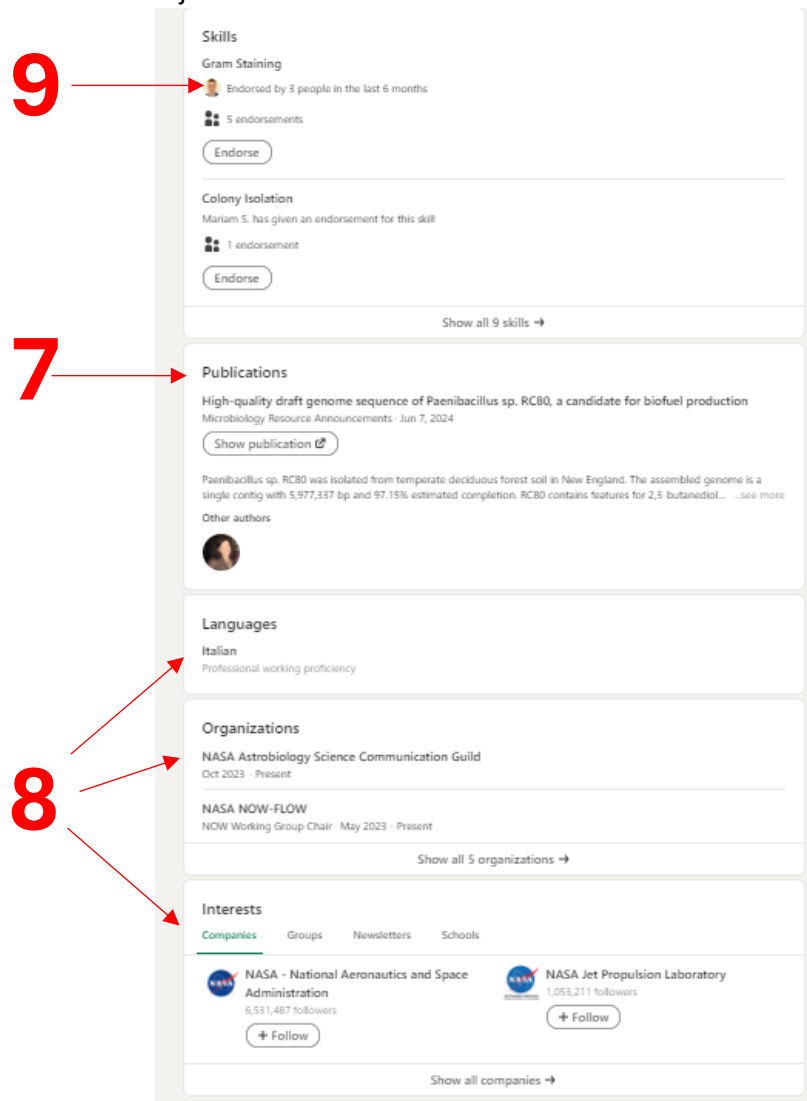
10. **Get Your Custom URL and Make Your Profile Public**

At the top right of your page, click "Public Profile & URL" then click the pencil icon to edit your URL. Remove any auto-generate characters from your LinkedIn URL so it appears to be more professional and polished. If you have a common name, you may need to be a little more creative such as including a dash, underscore, middle name or meaningful numbers.   On the right side, you're able to determine what parts of your profile will be visible to the public. Since the point is to promote yourself and become visible, we strongly suggest making your public profile visible to everyone. You may include your newly customized LinkedIn URL in the top portion of your resume so any readers that are intrigued by your resume can easily access your LinkedIn profile.
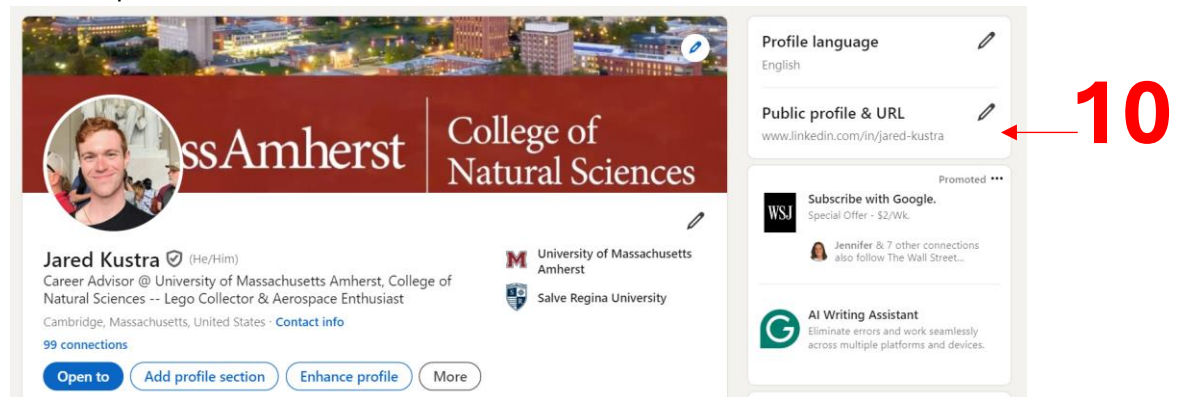
Advanced LinkedIn Tips

Visibility and the LinkedIn-Google Algorithm Without a professional photo, your profile is unlikely to appear in searches. A robust or "All-Star Profile" with most sections completed is **40X** more likely to be seen on LinkedIn.

Proofread Mercilessly Presentation matters. Do not rely on spellcheck. Print and proof-read for absolute perfection! Avoid slang or casual language. You are presenting your professional self – details are of apex importance. It is not uncommon for small spelling and grammar mistakes to reduce the impact your profile has on the reader or potential employer.

Recommendations Ask only people who know your work and your skills to write short recommendations for your profile page. You can ask your boss, internship supervisor, or professors who you have worked with closely. This gives extra credibility to your strengths and skills. You have the option to review the recommendation before either posting it on your page or requesting a slight change from the writer first. You don't need many, so choose wisely to highlight your strengths.

Join Groups and Follow Companies Search for groups built around your field or major as well as sub-field specialties you may be interested in pursuing. Click "Groups" tab following your search to reveal available groups to join, then "Ask to Join", if you would like to be a member. Once admitted, you'll see posts, discussions, and job opportunities — all related to that group. This is much more effective than Indeed.com or conducting only a Google search. Many of the items posted within these groups are curated by other members and directly related to the topic of that group. The same process can be used to identify companies within your field of interest. Instead of clicking the "groups" tab, simply click the

"Companies" tab. You do not need permission to follow companies, simply follow the companies that pique your interest. The posted content of the companies and groups that you follow will populate your homepage when you log on to LinkedIn.

Participate With Purpose Don't connect to everyone you know. Methodically build your professional network with a focus on quality over quantity. Look up those who have contributed to your professional success thus far: students, teachers, employers, internship supervisors, etc. Connect with this core group and build outward. Profiles with 50 or more connections become more visible in search results. Tactfully comment on an article posted in a Group you follow. Others in your field will read it and may click to see your profile. Be a good citizen of your group and participate in ways that encourage people to learn more about you. If you come across an intriguing post in a group reach out to the author to connect and continue building your professional network.

Don't Bother with Premium LinkedIn – All UMass students are able to use the free version & will be able to utilize the platform to enhance their professional network and advance their professional selves without having to pay for the premium version.

Connecting with Alumni on LinkedIn

Our alumni are often eager to re-connect with UMass and assist motivated students to broaden their educational and professional experiences. Many alumni are reciprocating the support they received during their collegiate careers. By seeking out and including carefully selected alumni into your professional network, you create an avenue to acquire key bits of information you can use to guide your professional trajectory. Some common pieces of information you may be able to ascertain are…

- *Who are the successful alumni doing work that you're interested in pursuing?*
- *Are any alumni already working for a company you're interested in working for?*
- *What are the potential paths for graduates with a degree in your major?*
- *What experiences did alumni have on their journey to their current position?*

Steps to Connecting with Alumni on LinkedIn:

1. Search for "UMass Amherst" in the search bar at the top of the page
2. Once at the result page, Select the "Schools" tab
3. Select "University of Massachusetts Amherst" with the Maroon "M" logo to visit the webpage
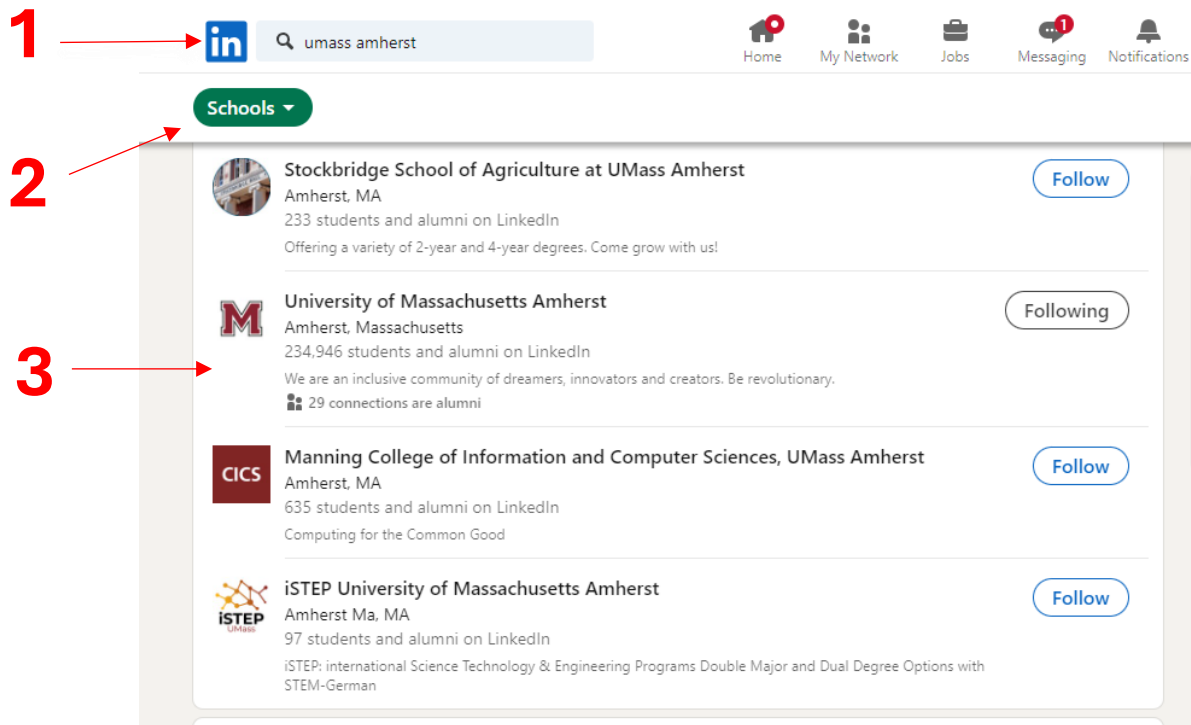
4. Once on the webpage, select the "Alumni" tab
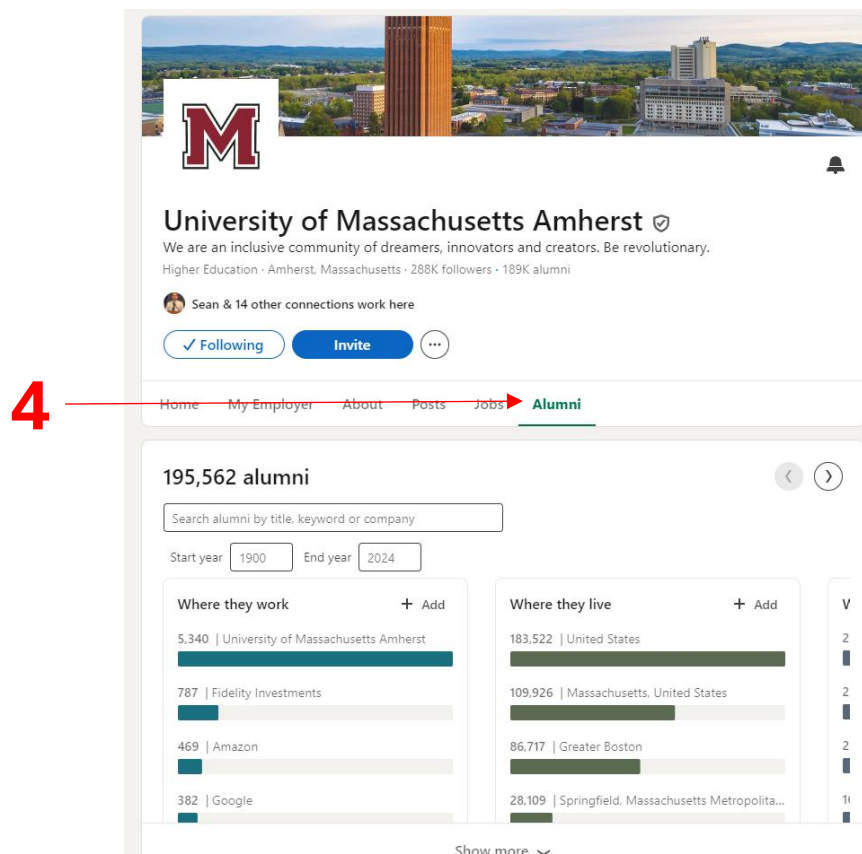
5. Once on this page, you may search all UMass Alumni by keyword, location, company, listed skills, job title and major. You are also able to sort by year to focus on more recent alumni.

Professionally Contacting Alumni on LinkedIn

Once you have found an alumnus that you would like to connect with, it is very important to maintain professionalism throughout your outreach and communication. Begin by going to their profile and requesting to connect with them by clicking the "connect" icon underneath their profile picture, as seen below.

You may also use the "connections" icon to identify any mutual connections between yourself & the alumnus and then ask your mutual connection to make an introduction.

When reaching out to an alumnus to connect and include in your professional network, **ALWAYS** include a message with you connection request (you only get 200 characters, so keep it concise). Messages should have a similar composition to an elevator pitch, intended for a career fair. Some key components to keep in mind when formulating a message are:

- A polite greeting with appropriate credentials or rank (IE: Dr. instead of Ms. Mrs. or Mr., if applicable)
- Reminder of when you met prior to your connection request, if applicable. Or why you are reaching out to this individual, if you have not yet met them
- Clearly state the intent of your message
- Provide flexibility if you are asking for their time to either meet or chat
- Allow them to refuse and gracefully accept a refusal – they may be too busy now but not in the future
- Thank them for their time, even if it is only the time they took to read and respond to your message
- Include a professional sign-off with your full name (First & Last; middle is appropriate to exclude, if applicable)

See an example connection message to our former peer, Gabby, below

> *Hi Gabby, I am a junior at UMass with an interest in Astrobiology. I saw your profile and am very impressed by your work with NASA. If you have the time and are willing, I would love to ask some questions about your work and experiences. Thank you!*

Depending on the alumnus' LinkedIn settings, you may be required to inform them of how you know them – if this is the case, you may click "friend" which will allow you to include a customized message. If you have any questions about creating a LinkedIn profile or how to connect with alumni or formulate a connection message, please visit the CNS Career & Professional Development Center in Morrill II, Suite 321 and meet with a CNS Career Advisor.

Career Fair Preparation

UMass holds several career fairs on campus throughout the year, many of which are specialized to a particular major or industry. Look for career fair information in emails from the CNS Career Center and look on Handshake for the full list of career fairs and dates each semester.

Example Career Fairs:

Amherst Area Employers Internship Fair – early September
Isenberg (Business) Career Fair – late September
Building & Constructions Technology Career Fair – late September
Engineering Career Fair – late September
Civil and Environmental Engineering Career Fair - early October
Tech Jobs & Internships Fair – early October
Actuarial Career Fair – early October
Life Sciences & Biotech Career Fair – early October
Public Health and Health Sciences Graduate School Fair - October
Psychology Career Fair – late November

Why go to a career fair?

- Learn about employers and job/internship/co-op opportunities
- Practice networking and make contacts
- Get comfortable at career fairs

How does a career fair work?

- Employers will be sitting or standing at tables, usually with 2 representatives
- Check-in and get a nametag
- Look at a map, so you know where to find each employer
- Walk around, meet and talk with employers, ask them questions
- Listen to what other people are saying to employers, it's a great way to learn
- Staff is available around the fair to help support you, answer questions, and suggest some employers that might be good fits for you

How to Prepare

- Get your resume reviewed prior to the fair
- Make an appointment with the CNS Career Center, or walk-in and talk to a Peer Advisor
- Tailor it to the jobs/internships you're interested in
- Bring around 10 - 20 copies, depending on how many employers you plan to speak with
- Develop and practice elevator pitch
- Do research on the companies you're interested in
- Know what you want to ask
- Dress professionally

Company Research

- You can see ahead of time which employers are coming to a fair in Handshake
- Some companies have jobs/internships posted on Handshake, while some haven't filled that out on their registration. If they are attending a fair, they are interested in hiring
- Go to the company website and read about their mission and values
- LinkedIn – read some company updates
- Follow the company on LinkedIn and connect with UMASS alumni who work there
- Make notes for each company that you are interested in so you have something to talk with them about

Prepare Questions in Advance

- What do you like most about working for the company?
- What skills can I acquire now that will make me a better candidate?
- Ask a follow-up question about something positive you learned
- What are the biggest challenges someone in this job/internship may see?
- What is a typical day like for an intern in this position?
- What should my next steps be?
- How did you decide to work at this company?

Questions to Avoid

- What does this company do? (You should already know this)
- What positions do you currently have?
- Do you require a background check?
- How much do you pay interns/entry level employees?
- Don't ask anything you could have easily found the answer to on the company website

Dress to Impress

- Dress professionally
- Ensure clothes fit properly
- When in doubt, a little overdressed is better than underdressed
- For virtual career fairs, still wear professional bottoms and shoes, even if they won't be seen

Career Fair Etiquette

- Phones on silent
- Bring 10-20 copies of your resume in a neat folder or padfolio
- Practice your greeting and elevator pitch
- Don't interrupt
- Be ready to initiate conversations
- Be mindful of time, yours and employers
- Take business cards for follow-up so you can write thank you emails
- Keep elevator pitch sincere, natural
- Specifically for Virtual Fairs

- Have a PDF of your resume ready to go
- Camera on
- Try to look them in the eye
- Still be fully professionally dressed

Game Plan

- Do your research
- Know who you want to talk to and what you want to ask them
- You only have so much time, so prioritize the order in which you visit employer tables
- Clean up your social media (if necessary)
- Elevator pitch ready to go

Other Considerations

Arrive early

- Check your big coat or big backpack (or also maybe just don't bring your giant backpack if you have that option)
- You can go to the fair with friends, but you're better off visiting individual employers by yourself
- Get the floor map before you go in
- If you're nervous, you can start with a warm-up employer
- If you arrive at a table and a conversation is already ongoing, don't interrupt, listen
- Don't just drop off a resume without introducing yourself
- For virtual fairs, be mindful of how long the individual session is
- Don't get derailed if you make a mistake
- Get a business card or ask for a way to connect (LinkedIn)
- Be yourself

Follow-Up

- If you were asked to complete an online application, do so by the end of the following day. Recruiters will often flag an online application for special consideration if they know they have talked to you at the career fair, but you'll need to apply on your own through the company website.
- Organize your notes and business cards
- Create a system for yourself so you don't miss anything
- Send a thank you email to every recruiter you spoke with who you are interested in. Remind them of who you are and what you talked about and what you are hoping to accomplish. Attach your resume (even if you already gave it to them) and let them know you are happy to provide any additional information.
- Reference something you discussed
- Add information that might be relevant to that employer, or anything you wish you had mentioned in-person
- Balance being persistent without being annoying. If you don't hear back from them, you could follow-up two weeks later

Develop Your 30-Second Elevator Pitch

An "elevator pitch" is a 30-second spoken statement about you, in your own authentic voice. The term comes from the idea that you could deliver a confident introduction of yourself in the time it takes to ride an elevator with a potential employer. It is a well-prepared answer to the questions "Tell me a little bit about yourself."

Having a great elevator pitch is an essential element of networking and can also help you be more prepared for interviews. Elevator pitches help you: quickly share who you are, establish new relationships, break the ice.

Your Elevator Pitch should be:
- Brief (30 second)
- Concise (focus)
- Interesting (be memorable)
- Information (who you are, what you do, your goal)
- Professional (makes a great first impression)
- Polished (exude confidence)

Elevator Pitch Versatility
A good elevator pitch isn't just useful for career fairs
- Interviews
- LinkedIn
- Employer meet & greets
- Conferences

Elevator Pitch Elements
DO INCLUDE:
- Your Name/Class year/major at UMASS
- Career/industry interests
- Relevant skills and experience
- Something that makes you stand out
- Information you learned about the specific employer
- Conclusion (usually an open-ended question to further discussion)

DON'T INCLUDE:
- Anything negative or anything that isn't true
- Politics or religion
- Salary questions
- Questions you could have easily researched the answer to
- "Can you help me find a job?"
- "Do you have any openings?"

Elevator Pitch Example

Hello. My name is Maxfield Jones, and I am a junior Psychology major here at UMass Amherst

For the last three summers I have worked at a school for kids with autism where I am a para-professional working 1:1 with a student on the spectrum. During the school year, I babysit for a family with a child with special needs.

I know that you recently opened an office in Amherst on University Drive. I would like to talk with you about your summer internship opportunity there. Can you tell me what skills would make someone an excellent candidate for this opportunity?

Another Elevator Pitch Example

Hi. My name Celinda Cortes and I am a sophomore studying Biology here at UMass Amherst with a 3.6 GPA, and I am on the cross-country team where I won the 100m in the State championship. This is my first Career Fair, and I am excited to meet employers as I look to find a summer internship. I have taken Biology CURE classes where we learned basic lab skills, and I know I want to work in bench research going forward.

I saw on Handshake that you have summer internships on the bench. Can I show you my resume and discuss my skills further for this position?

Elevator Pitch Worksheet

Who you are: My name is_____. I am a(n) _____ specializing in_____

For example: "I am a graduating chemistry major specializing in the food sciences," or "I am a Research Assistant on a project specializing in energy-efficient building materials."

What you do:

Write a single sentence that *describes* what you do so the other person can picture what you mean). For example: "I work with…" or "My responsibilities include…"
_____
_____

Why you are the best, unique, talented, or particularly good at doing:

Write a sentence that expresses your best skills and/or strengths and sets you apart from others with your same degree.

For example: "My sales quota consistently exceeds that of my peers," or "My experience speaking to large groups allows me to…"
_____
_____

What contributions are you hoping to make:

Taking the employer's perspective, what problem will you solve for the employer, or for the world?

For example: "One of my goals is to use my skills and experience to maximize your company's…" or "Continuing my research track, I hope to make advances in…"

_____
_____
_____

Tips for Your Elevator Pitch

- Keep in mind that you have many years of varied experiences and interests. Select only the points that you most want your interviewer to know about you to make your pitch as concise as possible.

- The goal of your pitch is to have your interviewer *remember you*, no matter how many people they hear from that day.

- A *positive* core message will enhance your professional presence, boost your self-confidence, and reduce your anxiety. Avoid all negative qualifiers such as "but." Every word of your pitch should be positive.

- Think about what you want them to say about you after you leave. *In what ways* will they see that you stand out from the crowd? Use your pitch to *establish your brand.*

- Your pitch is a great way to start your interview, especially to answer questions like "Tell me about yourself," "What is your current job and how does that prepare you?"

- Your pitch is also a table of contents for your conversation, and easily organizes "who you are," both for you and for your interviewer. Your interviewer may even stop you part way through your pitch to say "tell me more about *thi*s…" at which point you can expound upon the relevant details.

- Write your pitch and practice saying it out loud so you can change the wording to avoid difficult pronunciations. Adjust until it sounds and feels right for you. Practice saying it smoothly, using your friends, pet, shower, mirror, or car. *Keep practicing.*

- Make eye contact and smile. If you feel like you belong in a new position, that will come across and your interview will feel it too. Display as much confidence as possible.

- Your pitch should be revised for each situation. For example, in one interview it will make sense to emphasize your computer programming skills, but in another you will want to emphasize your people skills. Strategically revise your pitch to fit your audience.

- You can use your pitch in many situations, including career fairs, networking events, & informal social settings. It can also serve as the start to a cover letter or as an introduction to a presentation.

- Make an appointment with the CNS Career Center and practice your pitch on us!

Searching for Jobs and Internships

There are a variety of resources students can use to search for currently posted jobs and internships. Many of those resources can be found [here](). Major specific resources can also be found on the Now What documents for each major, found [here](). This section of the Handbook is focused on tips for how to best utilize these resources, with a focus on Handshake. A career advisor can also chat with you about strategies for approaching a job or internship search.

Use Your Filters Wisely

Handshake, along with most other job search sites, give you the ability to filter your search using several criteria. Some of these criteria, like location, will be available on most sites, while others, like Major, will likely only be available on Handshake. Some tips on using filters when you search:

- You're better off starting out with broad search parameters. Searching for jobs using one keyword (i.e.: "Conservation") and a location will usually return a good number of results. Using more narrow filters (multiple keywords, major, job type, pay range) will sometimes not return any results.
- Using multiple keywords will return results that have ALL of those keywords present. For example, typing "Natural Resources Conservation" will only show you jobs that have all three of those words somewhere in the job post. You're generally better off using one keyword at a time.
- Searching by major can be helpful on Handshake, but sometimes you have better luck using your major as a keyword in the search box rather than filtering by major. Majors for jobs are set by the employer when they post the job, and they don't always do it correctly or thoughtfully.
- Once you find a few jobs that interest you, use the information in those job descriptions to inform how you keep searching. This will help refine your search and show you more jobs that interest you.

Handshake Specific Tips

Because Handshake is meant for use by college students, it does provide some specific job search functionality that you won't find on most other job sites:

- When you go into the Jobs tab in Handshake, you will see that it is already populated with jobs that Handshake has identified as matching your major and profile. This can be a great place to start.
- Handshake has collections set up by Career Advisors in the CNS Career Center which highlight employers that we know are relevant to your major and have hired students from your major. For example, you can search "Great for your major" under UMass Collections, and you'll see jobs posted by employers that have been identified as relevant to your major.
- If you are actively searching, make sure you set your notification preferences in Handshake accordingly so that you're not missing anything you want to see.
- Completing your profile in Handshake is a good way to make your career interests known on the platform, which will make it easier for employers to find you.
- You can save searches and follow employers, so you don't have to start fresh every time you use Handshake to search.

- Handshake doesn't offer a specific filter that allows you to only see jobs posted in the last 7 or 14 days, like you see on Indeed, but you can sort the search results by date posted to see recently posted opportunities first.

Other Considerations

- Be consistent with your search. If you know you'll need a job in May, start searching early and set aside a time each week to see what has been posted since the last time you searched. This can help keep you on track and help keep your search manageable. For some majors, September is not too early to start searching for a job for May. This is why there are so many fall career fairs.
- In addition to the job search sites mentioned in this section and in other resources offered by the career center, you can also search for jobs on company websites. If there is a specific employer that has always interested you, you can go their website and look for something that is usually called "Join Our Team" or "Work with Us" or just "Employment". Not every employer is on every job site, so this can be a way to make sure you don't miss anything that really interests you.
- When searching for internships, don't forget to check out the Database of Completed Research, Internships & Co-Ops, found here. This resource lists some of the internship and research opportunities CNS students have had in the past and can provide great ideas on where to look for opportunities. You can search this database by major.
- LinkedIn is a great way to network with recruiters and with UMass alumni. You can, for example, use LinkedIn to connect with UMass alumni who currently worked, or have worked, at an employer that interests you. They can give you great insight into the culture and values of the company, which can help you craft your application materials and prepare for interviews.

WORK RULES FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ON F-1 VISAS

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is proud to include students from over 100 countries. As an international student, there are some additional challenges and work rules which you need to know. Most international students are here on an F-1 student visa and must follow the rules below. If your visa is J-1, or anything other than F-1, then you must follow a different set of rules, available through the International Programs Office (IPO). J-1 visa holders can find information at https://www.umass.edu/ipo/iss/j-1-exchange-visitors/overview.

The rules below for F-1s can be complex, and you are advised to direct all questions to the International Programs Office (IPO) http://www.umass.edu/ipo/iss/f-1-students and to do so as early as possible when any kind of permission or status is required. You are encouraged to attend the monthly CPT and OPT workshops that the IPO offers throughout the academic year, so you fully understand the opportunities and constraints of your own visa. These are listed in the Events section of Handshake.

This information is given here for information purposes only, is based on the US government's rules and regulations, and could change at any time.

How much am I allowed to work on campus while in the U.S.?
As a student on an F-1 visa, you are allowed to work up to 20 hours per week during school, and up to 40 hours per week during Summer and Winter breaks. While working at UMass Amherst or any of the local 5 college consortium (Amherst, Smith, Hampshire, and Mt. Holyoke Colleges), you do not need any special documentation.

How do I find work on campus?
To find general on-campus jobs such as at the library, in academic departments, the Campus Center Hotel, or the PVTA buses, you can search several job boards online:

- https://www.umass.edu/financialaid/student-employment/job-board. International students should filter by "NON Work-Study" jobs.
- Auxiliary Services (i.e. Dining Services) hosts its own job board and hires hundreds of students each year: https://www.umass.edu/ae/human-resources/job-listings.
- Handshake career job board also has some on campus jobs and opportunities: https://umass.joinhandshake.com/edu.

F-1 students do not need special permission and can apply immediately for on-campus jobs.

Am I allowed to work off campus in either a job or an internship?
Before working off campus, you must apply through IPO for Curricular Practical Training (CPT) status. To be eligible for CPT status, you must first complete 2 semesters at the university, have a written job or internship offer, the work must be related to your major, and you must be cleared by IPO to proceed.

To do this, follow these steps: After receiving an internship, or co-op offer, international students should go to their department's program director or faculty sponsor of the experience to determine if the position will be treated as a "for-credit internship," or "for-credit independent study". All experiential learning for international students needs to be for credit, so you remain connected to UMass Amherst,

even when you are off campus. Beginning August 2024, all students will register their [Experiential Learning Request on SPIRE:](#)
- Click on Academics tile
- Under Forms & Academic request, choose Experiential Learning Request
- Click on Create a New Request

This process will take you through the next steps of adding your faculty sponsor (who will help you create the academic part of your experience, for the credits).

Once your faculty sponsor has signed your Experiential Learning Request, you will get a confirmation email. Take that email and use it to submit your CPT request through the IPO Office following their directions: https://www.umass.edu/ipo/iss/curricular-practical-training-cpt.

How long does CPT status allow me to work off campus while I am a student?
CPT status allows you to work off campus for short periods of time, during your academic program, if the work is related to your major. CPT status must be reauthorized for each semester that you want to work. You can have multiple authorizations of your CPT status. CPT is designed so that you could have three summer, major-specific internships without going over the government's 12-month limit. There are significant penalties if you work the equivalent of 12 months full-time under CPT, such as forfeiting your eligibility to apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT) status (see below) and becoming ineligible to work in the U.S. after graduation.

How long can I work in the U.S. after graduation?
Generally, you can work in the U.S. for 12 months after graduation, so long as the work is related to your major and you have been awarded Optional Practical Training (OPT) status through our IPO office. STEM students according to the government, get an additional 2 years of OPT after the initial 1 year. Please note that if you are a Psychology major, you are ineligible for the 2 extra years of OPT unless you are on the neuroscience track. In that case, you need to notify the IPO office as soon as you can that you are on the neuroscience track, and you will be allowed the 3 full years of OPT, should you choose to use them.

What is Optional Practical Training (OPT) status and how do I get it?
OPT status is what allows you to work after graduation, or after your CPT status ends. Because it takes 90 days to receive your EAD (Employment Authorization Document) work card showing OPT status, you must apply early through IPO. The timing of the EAD application is tricky though, if you don't have a job offer yet. Follow [these guidelines](#) from the IPO to decide when to apply for OPT. If awarded OPT status you may work full-time (40 hours per week) in the United States for 12 months immediately after graduation.

Because your eligibility for off-campus research opportunities
is limited, you are strongly encouraged to seek on-campus
research opportunities helping with ongoing projects

What is an H-1B visa? Do I need one?
The H-1B visa permits university graduates to work for a particular employer for 3-6 years, usually with the intent to apply for Permanent Resident or U.S. Citizen status in the future. H-1B visas are limited in number and awarded by lottery through a complex process from the government. However, you are unlikely to need an H-1B visa until after you have fully exhausted your OPT status.

Are there any other rules or limits I need to know about now?

If you are an international student seeking a paid competitive research experience in the sciences, you need to be aware that many opportunities funded by the U.S. federal government are reserved for U.S. citizens. Many off-campus programs funded by the National Institute of Health (NIH) or National Science Foundation (NSF) may also legally say you are ineligible to participate. Because your eligibility for off-campus research opportunities is limited, you are strongly encouraged to seek on-campus research opportunities helping with ongoing projects. Please reach out to the CNS Career & Professional Development Center early in your college years, so we can best help you find positions that fit your interests. Make an appointment on Handshake to meet with a Career Advisor: https://umass.joinhandshake.com/edu.

PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES & LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

You will always need professional references when applying for any position, program or graduate school. Start considering now who you will ask. Many times, you will not need to provide the names of these references until you reach the interview stage of an internship, co-op or job search, but some highly competitive research opportunities may ask you to provide references in advance. In addition, some online applications ask for references during the application period. Unless you are instructed to do so, there is no need to provide professional references with your initial application. Also, do not take space on your resume to write: "Professional References Furnished Upon Request". It is not needed. Employers know they will receive references from you when asked. Use that extra space on your resume to showcase some additional skill you have.

If you are a finalist for a position, you will usually be asked to provide references at that time. Provide a typed page with the name, title and complete contact information for each of your references, including email and phone. Also include a line about how you are connected to this person. Examples include: "Former Supervisor in the Babbett Lab", or "Internship Supervisor at Foundation Medicine", "Professor in my Introduction to Psychology course", "Supervisor at my job at the Blue Wall".

Whether you plan on attending graduate school or not, you will always need references, and sometimes letters of recommendation to apply. These letters should come from 2 or more people with the ability to evaluate your work -- your faculty, lab PIs, internship supervisors, etc. Most positions will want 2 references to be from your academic professors, with extra letters accepted from other job supervisors. Knowing this moment will come, you should prepare now by making sure that your faculty know who you are. Don't underestimate the importance of doing this. Work all 4 years on making yourself known to professors and supervisors, always leaving a good impression. Faculty and staff are often asked in letters of recommendations and in online skills' surveys (from major Boston hospitals for jobs such as Research Coordinators, Clinical Care Coordinators, Research Technicians or Associates) to rate your Academic Curiosity, Ability to Complete Work, Ability to Work on a Team, and How You Compare to Other Students. Help them to learn your name and face and how you stand out from other students. If they don't really know who you are and what your interests and expertise are, they will not be able to write a strong letter. It is your job to become known to your future letter writers.

There are companies that will offer to store and send your recommendation letters for a fee. We recommend that you avoid these services as they don't really help and may be out of business by the time you need them. The best recommendation letters are freshly written and are customized with knowledge of both the applicant and the specific opportunity to which they apply. Before graduating, you should establish who your letter writers will be, get their contact information, get them to accept this future role, and draft their letter now before you graduate. Once you are no longer in their classroom or lab, it will be difficult for them to remember all the great details about you.

By junior year, you should start finding the people who will agree to write you recommendation letters in the future. It's easier for a letter writer to say "yes" if they don't have to write the letter right away. If you can get their "yes" in writing by email, you can also email them in the future referring to their previous agreement to write. Connecting on LinkedIn is another good way to stay in touch with future

letter writers. Also, ask your potential recommender, "If they would be comfortable writing an excellent letter of recommendation for you?" This will easily allow them to back out for any reason. Better to know this in advance, than to have a mediocre letter sent on your behalf.

When the time comes that you need a letter, you will contact your letter writers and provide them with your updated resume, your cover letter or personal statement, and full information about the place to which you are applying. *Make this as easy as possible for your letter writers*, by providing a description of the position, the full contact info of the person who will receive the letter, and a deadline that is a minimum of 1 month away. Remember that faculty are busy, and you are asking them to fit this letter into their existing workload. Rarely these days will letters be sent by mail, but if so, you must provide a stamped and pre-addressed envelope to each writer. Most times, recommendation letters will be sent to an email address, or uploaded into an application system. You will get better letters by completing your own part of the application process well before the deadline, so that you can provide your letter writers with full information and plenty of time to work on it.

Recommendation letters should be sent directly from the writer to the search committee. It is standard to "waive your right" to see such letters, which enhances the credibility of the letters themselves. If asked to sign such a waiver, you should sign it. If you don't sign the waiver, it can imply that you wrote the letter yourself or otherwise had control over its contents. It is better to trust your professional references to write truthful and effective letters on your behalf.

Preparing for an Interview

Getting an interview for a job or internship to which you've applied for means that you are one of the top few finalists for that position. While this may make you nervous, take a moment to realize that you have achieved 90% of your goal already! Here's what to expect from the interview process and how to best prepare for it.

Purpose of the Interview:

By interviewing their final 3 to 5 candidates, all employers are seeking answers to 3 over-arching questions:

- Does the interview confirm what we saw on paper, that this person is capable of doing this job? Having an honest resume, and being prepared for likely interview questions is the best approach to providing this confirmation.
- Of the candidates who can do the job, which one wants the job most? Candidates who demonstrate passion and motivation tend to put in the most effort and produce the best results for employers.
- Does the candidate fit our company culture? Some company cultures are more collaborative and in others, colleagues work more independently. An employee that "fits in" to the company culture is desirable.

Clean Up Your Digital Dirt

- Check your privacy settings on social media.
- Sign out of your account, then test how much of your content is actually visible to members of the public like your future employer.
- Google your name in quotations marks "Firstname Lastname" and know what employers are going to find when they perform the same search.
- 75% of recruiters are now required to look for your social media presence.
- If you have a LinkedIn page (which you should), update it in regard to the type of position you are seeking. Employers may be looking at your page in the days before the interview occurs.

Study Up on "Professional YOU"

Your interview is a chance to pitch your professional identity. Having a ready-to-go index of stories about your professional self -- the skills and experiences you bring to the table -- takes practice. Your resume and cover letter are already an index of your skills and experience as they relate to this position. Reprint and study them as if there will be an exam about you.

Study the Organization and Have Good Questions to Ask

- Be extremely familiar with the specifics of the job description.
- Read the organization's entire website, starting with the "About" page that should have information about the company's identity, purpose, and mission.
- Google the name of the organization and click the News filter at the top to find and read recent news articles to become as knowledgeable as you can about the company.

- From this material, type up some questions to ask the employer. These can be genuine questions you have, but they should also be strategic – designed to show the interviewer that you have done your homework to be knowledgeable about the company.

Some examples:

"I see that your company is expanding to sell water filters in the commercial market even though you started in the residential market. What is the biggest challenge the company faces during this transition?"

"Because I'm interested in continuing to improve my skills with data analysis software, I'd like to know what kind of professional development the company expects from its employees, and what resources the employer provides to facilitate this?"

Predict Some Interview Questions:

Many interview questions are based on the desired skills listed in the position description. If the description says that you need "intermediate proficiency with Excel," you can reasonably predict that one of the interview questions might be "Tell me about a project you completed using Excel?"

When they ask the Excel question, refer to notes you wrote about your experience with using Excel, for example, maybe you can talk about the "insect collection database" you created for a lab.

Tell Stories Using the S.T.A.R. Method

Human brains are wired to remember narrative stories more than direct claims. If an interviewer starts a question with "Tell me about a time when…" or "Share and example of a situation where…" you should be able to quickly recall and provide a very brief and specific story.

The outline for the short story you can tell is:

- Situation - Describe the **situational context**: a job, a group lab project, an assignment
- Task – Next, explain a **task** that was your responsibility
- Action - Explain the specific **action** you took
- Result - and its positive **result**

See this example:

"I led a group project in which one member frustrated the others by not doing his part. It was my responsibility to both keep the peace and meet our project deadlines. So, I set up a separate meeting with this peer, learned that he was struggling due to under-developed Excel skills needed to graph our data, and gave him a quick tutorial to bring him up to speed. He returned to our group the following Monday with not only the Excel charts due, but also some color posters displaying graphs for our team presentation."

Practice Online with Big Interview:

With your umass.edu email address, you can also activate your free subscription to *Big Interview,* available 24/7 at https://umass.biginterview.com

Big Interview is a video training system that lets you practice your answers to pre-recorded questions asked by actual interviewers. Browse thousands of interview questions, organized by industry, and learn what is sought in your response. Then turn on your web cam so you can play back and assess your own responses. There is a Quick Start Guide to Big Interview if you need it, on the CNS Career & Professional Development Center webpage: https://umass.biginterview.com/

Schedule a Practice Interview at the CNS Career Center

While you practice verbalizing your responses, it's important to remember that 75% of what you communicate comes across non-verbally. While Big Interview lets you do some self-evaluations of your eye contact and body language, you can also make an appointment with a professional CNS Career Center advisor at http://www.cns.umass.edu/careers

Our professional advisors are experienced in addressing both the verbal and non-verbal aspects of your interview. For the appointment, bring prints of your resume and the job description, and your advisor will conduct a short mock interview based on these materials. Your advisor will discuss both your interviewing strengths and areas for improvement. You'll also have a chance to ask any questions and address any concerns you have about an upcoming interview.

Gather Materials You'll Need:

We recommend using a sturdy folder, padfolio or a double pocket laminated folder in order to keep your interview documents flat and unwrinkled. Inside the folder you should have 5 well-printed copies of your resume that you can provide if you are interviewed by a group, printed copies of the job description and your cover letter for your own reference, any helpful notes or worksheets, such as interview questions and stories using the STAR method. It can also be helpful to bring blank sheets of paper for taking notes during and after the interview, and a pen.

Check Your Interview Outfit and Do a Practice Run

Dressing professionally to make a good first impression is important! Many candidates choose to wear a suit. A few days before your interview, you should try on your interview outfit. If any part of your outfit is torn, stained, or just uncomfortable and no longer fitting you, you want to know about it with time to wash, re-choose, or purchase whatever is needed. Make sure you know how to get to the location of the interview and be sure to arrive early!

What It Means to Dress Professionally:

By dressing professionally for an interview or a job fair you communicate to others that:

- You have the skill, conduct, and polite behavior that is expected from a person who is prepared
- You are organized
- The opportunity you are seeking matters to you
- You are confident in your skills and abilities
- You understand what behaviors are considered "professional"
- You understand what it is to be in a professional setting and fit the organization's culture

The best way for a person of any gender to determine how to dress professionally is to observe the specific workplace and see how other employees are dressed. If you are being interviewed for a

position, dress yourself just a little bit nicer and more conservatively than the employees you've seen. If you can't visit or find photos of a workplace before your interview, you can email or call the employer to ask "What is the level of professional dress in your workplace? It is a fair question, and asking shows them that you care about communicating professionalism in their workplace.

Many workplaces seek "business casual" as the desired level of professional dress. Google "dress codes" and then click "Images" at the top to find several visual examples of how to dress professionally at different levels (e.g. casual, business casual, business, business formal, etc.).

Purchasing Professional Clothing

If you don't own and can't borrow professional clothing from friends, affordable business casual clothing can be found, at several stores near campus:

NEW

- T.J. Maxx (Near Stop and Shop)
- J.C. Penney (Hampshire Mall)
- Marshall's (Mtn Farms Mall)

USED

- Goodwill (Near Big Y)
- Salvation Army (Near Mtn Farms Mall)
- Cancer Connection Store (Northampton)
- Goodwill (Northampton)
- Hospice Shop (on University Drive, Amherst)

Interview Preparation Worksheet

Complete this worksheet to use in the interview as an index of your skills and experience. With a glance at some key words, you can quickly recall and provide a story or example that answers the question asked.

What I Know About the Position and How I Meet the Requirements

Job Requirement:

My Experience and Skills:

Example / S.T.A.R. Story:

Job Requirement:

My Experience and Skills:

Example / S.T.A.R. Story:

Job Requirement:

My Experience and Skills:

Example / S.T.A.R. Story:

Job Requirement:

My Experience and Skills:

Example / S.T.A.R. Story:

Frequently Asked Interview Questions

"Tell me about yourself" Questions:

- Why should I hire you for this position?
- What do you know about this company? What do you know about this industry?
- Why are you interested in working for us?
- What do you think are your strongest assets?
- If we hire you, what's the flaw or weakness that we'll also be getting?
- What 3 courses have you taken that most prepare you for this position, and how?
- What should I know about your past experiences to know that you are right for this position?

Behavioral Questions:

- Tell me about a difficult situation, working relationship, or conflict you had with someone. How did you deal with it?
- Tell me about a mistake that you've learned from.
- Tell me about a time you went "above and beyond" for class, for an internship, or at work.
- Tell me about a time when you failed at what you were trying to do. What did you learn from the failure?
- Tell me about a time you worked in a group. How did the process go? What was your role?
- Tell me about an experience you had with using excellent customer relationship skills an angry customer. How did you handle it? What did you say and do?
- Why is it important to work in an environment that values diversity?

Questions About Your Professional Self:

- What makes you different from other students in your major?
- What makes you a unique candidate?
- Describe something you've done that required good teamwork to accomplish.
- Describe a significant challenge or obstacle that you have overcome.
- What are 3 positive things your last boss, professor or friend would say about you?
- What is your greatest strength? Weakness?
- What skill of yours should be improved next to make you a more valuable employee for our purposes?
- Where do you see yourself professionally five years from now?

Questions About Your Work Style:

- What factors are important to you in a good workplace? What elements would make a job be your "ideal" job?
- What techniques and tools do you use to keep yourself organized?
- Are you more of a visionary or a detail-oriented person? Explain.
- How do you manage or relieve stress?
- What are the qualities of a good leader?
- What did you like best and least about your last work position?
- When are you most satisfied in a job?

"Tell Us More About You" Questions:

- Describe yourself in 3 words.
- Why did you choose your major?
- What's your favorite class and why?
- What's the most interesting project you've done (or are doing) for a class?
- What is your proudest achievement?
- What's the last book you read that was not for class?
- What interesting talent or skill do you have that is not related to your major, and perhaps not related to this job. What can you do and how did you learn to do that?
- What advice would you give to your younger self about how to approach college and your academic path?

Graduate School

While many students in the College of Natural Sciences will start working full-time after they graduate, many others will choose to continue their education in a graduate or professional program. As you approach your senior year, it is perfectly normal to still be unsure about your next step, and if you are unsure, you can engage in both job searching and graduate school searching until you find the right opportunity for you.

Should you go to graduate school?

There are a number of factors worth considering when you are deciding if graduate school is right for you. Ultimately, this is your decision, but a career advisor can certainly sit down with you and help you talk through your best path forward.

- What career path do you aspire to follow, and do the jobs on that career path generally require an advanced degree? One way to explore this is to use sites like Handshake and Indeed to search for the jobs you want and see if they require a Master's or Doctoral degree. Ultimately, if an advanced degree will help you achieve your career goals, then it may be worth considering.
- Is graduate school feasible for you? Will it fit into your life over the next 2-7 years? This can include personal considerations like family and location, as well as financial considerations. Keep in mind that many graduate programs at the Master's and Doctoral level can offer ways to partially or fully finance your degree.
- Are you motivated to continue your education? Starting a graduate program you don't finish can be a frustrating waste of time and money. Take some time to reflect on whether or not more years of education are something you're up for, and something you need to achieve your goals.

Timeline

It is never too early or too late to start thinking about graduate school as an option, but in general, junior year is a good time to start focusing more seriously on graduate school. The summer after junior year is a great time to research programs, visit schools, and start working on application materials. Applications will usually be due at different times during your senior year, depending on the program.

How do you get started?

Once you decide that you will be applying to graduate school, it makes sense to get started by identifying programs that interest you. You may already know what programs you are considering, but if not, there are a variety of resources you can use to identify programs. Those include online resources, your faculty, and professional organizations in your field. If you are engaging in a broad search for possible programs, one tip is to start by focusing on a specific geographic area. For example, searching for every Master's in School Counseling program in the United States will likely be overwhelming, but starting with searching for programs just in the Boston area can be more manageable as a starting point.

Once you have identified a list of programs that interest you, a good next step is to create a file for yourself to store and manage all of the important information about your search and application process. Note application timelines, materials required, application fees, contact information, and anything else that is important to you. Once you know where you plan to apply, when those applications are due, and what you need to submit, you can start working on your applications.

Application Materials

Most graduate programs will ask for some combination of the following elements:

- Resume/CV
    - Sample resumes for CNS majors can be found here. Some programs will ask for a resume, others will ask for a CV, and others will give you the option of one or the other.
    - A career advisor can help you work on your resume, or get started with a CV.
- Personal Statement
    - Most graduate programs will require some form of personal statement.
    - A career advisor can help you craft your personal statement(s).
    - In general, a personal statement should tell your story, including how you got into the field you are hoping to pursue, what experience and skills you bring to the table, why you are interested in the specific program, and what you hope to do with the degree you will earn.
    - If a program gives you questions to answer, or prompts, make sure your statement is responsive to what they are asking. If they give you a set length for the statement, make sure you stay within that length.
    - Show your personal statement to multiple people for feedback as you work on it. Your personal statement will likely go through many drafts before it is ready.
    - You can start crafting one general personal statement, but then you'll want to use that to create specific personal statements for each program.
    - Proofread any personal statement before submitting it.
- Standardized test scores
    - Medical schools require the MCAT, and law schools require the LSAT. Pre-Med/Pre-Health Advising is another great resource regarding the application process for medical school, as well as nursing school, PA School and Dental School. Pre-Law Advising is an excellent resource for law school applications.
    - Graduate programs may require the GRE, but many programs are moving away from requiring it. This is something you will want to research and note as you are compiling your list of programs. If programs you plan to apply to require GRE scores, you will want to give yourself plenty of time to work on that element. The summer before your senior year is a good time to focus on any studying/preparation you want to do for the GRE, and you would ideally take your GRE during the fall semester of your senior year.
- Recommendations
    - Most graduate programs will ask for contact information for recommendations.
    - Three is the most common number of recommendations required, but different programs can ask for more or less.
    - Faculty are great for recommendations. This is why it's a good idea to get to know your faculty as you go through your time at UMass.
    - Supervisors at internships or jobs can also make good recommendations, as can advisors to student groups you've been involved with.

Additional Career Development Resources on Campus

The CNS Career & Professional Development Center, located in Morrill II Suite 321, is your primary career resource as a UMass Amherst CNS student. We work closely with students to guide them through all facets of experiential learning & professional development throughout their collegiate career as a CNS student. We offer 1 to 1 student appointments, provide presentations to classes, clubs & societies, & host career fairs in the Fall & Spring semesters. In addition to support via the CNS Career & Professional Development Center, CNS students have full access to programming by UMass Central Career Services, including employer information sessions and networking events, all of which are publicized on Handshake. While classes are in session, the CNS Career & Professional Development Center offers walk-in resume review sessions with a student peer advisor, Monday – Friday from 10AM-5PM. **No appointment is required for a peer drop-in session**.

The Student Employment Office (SEO) is an online portal to find jobs on or near campus. Some available jobs that can be found here include working in dining services, the library, the Campus Center Hotel, driving for PVTA buses, among many more. These jobs will help you earn money as a student and will aid in sharpening transferable skills, but generally don't help build specialized career skills. If you have "Work-Study" as part of your federal financial aid award package, jobs reserved for work-study students can be found here. If you do not have "Work-Study" as part of your federal financial aid award package, use the search filter to see only "Non Work-Study" jobs. For **International Students** whose F-1 or J-1 visa may only allow work on-campus, this is one option to search for opportunities. Popular jobs usually are secured very early at the beginning of each semester, so if there is a particular opportunity you're seeking, it's best to look early but there are usually opportunities available any time of year: https://www.umass.edu/financialaid/student-employment

The **CNS Completed Internship, Co-op and Research Database** provides student reviews of internships they have completed at various companies & locations. The database is searchable by major, keyword and employer. This is a great resource to learn about the quality and quantity of internships that are available. Explore the Internship Database here: https://secure.cns.umass.edu/webforms/internships

Career Advisors at the CNS Career & Professional Development Center can provide lists of resources narrowly tailored to your major. These lists are updated annually and provide links to websites with industry specific job boards. Additionally, we have resources that can outline various career paths based on your major & interests.

The UMass Central Career Services website offers a wealth of information on many career related topics including but not limited to, resumes, career fair preparation, LinkedIn support, experiential learning and negotiating job offers. The website also features multiple career planning tools, including Focus2career, an interactive program that can help you find ways to identify and illustrate your talents, skills and interests as well as link you with occupations that will utilize your talents, skills and interests. To access Focus2career, you will need to create a free account using your UMass Amherst email. https://www.umass.edu/careers/

The Office of Undergraduate Research & Studies (OURS) is a branch of the Learning Resource Center and serves as the centralized research and resource office for UMass Amherst. OURS can help you identify appropriate research opportunities both on and off campus and can provide support in applying

to and accessing research opportunities. Located on the 10th floor (RM:1020) of the W.E.B DuBois Library, OURS provides resources by college and major and offers appointments to meet 1:1 with experienced peer advisors. Use OURS' website to explore their resources or make an appointment. https://www.umass.edu/ours/

The Pre-Med/Pre-Health Advising Office is available to all students interested in pursuing a career in the health professions and can assist in appropriately planning coursework and experiential learning for an eventual application to medical or professional school (PA, Dental) in the health sciences. Located in Shadetree Lab, just behind Morrill II/III, the Pre-Health Advising Office distributes a periodic newsletter and offers 1:1 advisor appointment for juniors/seniors and 1:1 peer advisor appointment for first year/sophomores. Use the Pre-Health Advising Office website to subscribe to the newsletter and to schedule an appointment. https://www.umass.edu/natural-sciences/advising/pre-med-pre-health

The Student Success Workshop Series is organized by the College of Natural Sciences Career and Professional Development Center to provide you with presentations on targeted career development topics throughout the school year. Topics include resume building, cover letter writing, career fair preparation. These workshops can be found in Handshake within the "Events" tab. https://umass.joinhandshake.com/edu/events

Connect UMass is a community of UMass Amherst alumni that are working in the field and are willing to connect with you to provide insight into their collegiate and professional experiences. Many alumni are happy to connect with you and develop a relationship to serve as a mentor for your field of interest. https://www.connectumassalumni.com/

The Writing Center, located in the Lower Level of the W.E.B DuBois library, provides tutoring help with all aspects of academic writing including cover letters and personal statements. This resource is especially valuable for students who speak English as a second language or students seeking to improve their grammar and writing communication skills. https://www.umass.edu/writing-center/