Is your resume missing experience? Are you ready for a job or internship?

Build career readiness through experiential learning opportunities (ELOs)

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An in-depth, typically semester-long experience related to your major(s) that builds your real-world problem solving skills under the supervision of an experienced practitioner. Examples include:

- **Internship** – part or full time during any semester
- **Externship** – job shadowing
- **Preceptorship or clinical**
- **Co-op** – full-time employment that alternates non-summer semesters of work and school
- **Professional practice** – full time, single-semester, non-summer employment
- **Apprenticeship**
- **Fieldwork**
- **Research or independent study**
- **Student teaching**
- **Study abroad**
Why internships or other ELOs?

**Recruiters want experience**

**Employers need:**
- New talent ready for potential employment
- Branding and name recognition with a new generation who can be excellent campus ambassadors following a positive experience
- Top talent in a competitive recruiting environment

**Students need:**
- Clarity on academic and career goals
- Realistic expectations before committing to full-time employment
- Industry contacts, job references, performance feedback in a trial setting
- A successful work history that leads to permanent job offers

Experience (experiential learning) will build your career readiness competencies so that you are ready for hire by the time you graduate.
What do employers expect in college graduates?

Career readiness through 7 key competencies

1. **Critical thinking/problem solving**: Make decisions with sound reasoning, originality, and inventiveness

2. **Professionalism/work ethic**: Demonstrate personal accountability, effective work habits (punctuality, productivity, time management, work image), learn from mistakes

3. **Teamwork/Collaboration**: Work well within a team structure of diverse colleagues and customers; negotiate and manage conflict

4. **Oral/written communication**: Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside the organization

5. **Information technology application**: Select and use appropriate technology to accomplish tasks and solve problems

6. **Leadership**: Leverage strengths of others to achieve common goals, use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others, assess and manage emotions; guide and motivate with empathy; organize, prioritize, and delegate work

7. **Career management / Initiative**: Identify and articulate relevant skills, strengths/areas for growth, knowledge, and experiences; take necessary steps to self-advocate and pursue opportunities in the workplace
What are pre-internship and alternate options for me to get experience now?

Visit the Career Center for individual recommendations

- **Related job**
  - [https://career.sa.ua.edu](https://career.sa.ua.edu)
  - [http://www.uastudentjobs.ua.edu](http://www.uastudentjobs.ua.edu)

- **Internship, externship/job shadowing, leadership programs, short-term projects**
  - [http://www.idealist.org](http://www.idealist.org)
  - [http://thewashingtonexperience.com](http://thewashingtonexperience.com)
  - [http://www.twc.edu/internships](http://www.twc.edu/internships)
  - [https://www.usajobs.gov](https://www.usajobs.gov)

- **Go abroad**
  - [https://studyabroad.ua.edu](https://studyabroad.ua.edu)
  - [http://www.goabroad.com](http://www.goabroad.com)
  - [http://www.transitionsabroad.com](http://www.transitionsabroad.com)

- **Research**
  - [https://www.glassdoor.com](https://www.glassdoor.com)
  - [http://www.bls.gov/ooh](http://www.bls.gov/ooh)
Staying local?  
Find campus and area options

What resources do you have here?

- Freshman Forum leadership development program  
  http://fye.ua.edu/freshforum.cfm
- Student organizations  
  https://ua.collegiatelink.net/organizations
- Student involvement & volunteerism  
  http://studentinvolvement.ua.edu/, http://volunteer.ua.edu/
- Center for Community-Based Partnerships  
  http://ccbp.ua.edu/
- Creative Campus  
  http://creativecampus.ua.edu/
- Intercollegiate athletics marketing  
  http://www.rolltide.com/ot/marketing.html
- Spanish Outreach  
  http://mlc.ua.edu/spanish/spanish-outreach/
- Center for Ethics & Social Responsibility  
  http://cesr.ua.edu/about-us/service-learning-opportunities/
- Crossing Points  
  http://crossingpoints.ua.edu/
How can I find internships & other ELOs?

Start with the obvious, and use every available resource

- **CrimsonCareers**
  Activate your account in UA’s online recruiting system with a resume at career.ua.edu so that you can search and apply for the internships posted

- **Career Fairs**
  Held in fall and spring with 200+ employers in attendance who are seeking to hire interns as well as graduates for full-time employment. Many internships are offered year-round

- **Career Center**
  Schedule an appointment so that we can meet about your specific options. Bring a hard-copy resume

- **Academic departments, employer websites, LinkedIn, personal contacts and networking**
How can I find internships & other ELOs?

Network, act, follow up

- Talk to advisors early about internship/ELO academic credit options and benefits
- Extend your thinking beyond college
- Keep an open mind when researching internships/ELOs
- Take action and follow up on chance events
- Take advantage of your student status and networks

- Focus on building skills and competencies that will make you more competitive for future opportunities
- Don’t slack – maintain a good GPA
How can I network to find ELOs?

Networking or prospecting conversations, letters

- Good starting points for networking include career fair attendees, LinkedIn, campus and community partners, and hometown contacts.
- You should primarily communicate your desire to gain experience and then offer ideas for how to partner once you get buy-in from an individual.
- To encourage a positive response, inquire about “summer jobs,” “seasonal projects,” “part-time work,” OR “internships” (lastly) to convey the idea that you are seeking relevant experience.
- Leading out with “internships” may deter a potential employer if they know that their company or organization does not already have a formal program.
How can I create my own ELO?

Nothing established? Get creative

- If the organization in which you want to work has a formal student leadership, volunteer, or internship program at its headquarters or home office, use that position description and tailor it for the office in your location.

- Find a competitor’s job description to use as a template.

- Find existing jobs of interest and inquire if those positions need assistants.

- Research the organization and draft a description proposal according to your own goals to develop experience for your resume.

- Accept a part-time job in your industry and network to get a broad overview of potential opportunities.
What variables should I consider?

**Plan ahead (especially for formal internships)**

- **Deadlines** – start early; many high-profile summer internships are filled as early as October. Keep an application list and organize it by dates (application, deadline, follow up)
- **Duration, timing** – check rolling deadlines
- **Qualifications, requirements** – GPA, other requirements?
- **Academic credit** – required for participation, or optional?
- **Location, housing** – will you have guidance on making these arrangements?
- **Orientation, training** – will you have a mentor or supervisor who will structure your work or will you be expected to work independently?
- **Evaluation** – how often will you receive performance feedback? Will supervisors serve as references for your future applications?
## What are some application tips?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cover letter/email</th>
<th>Resume</th>
<th>Interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tailor each one, to a specific person</td>
<td>Know your audience</td>
<td>Research the employer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refer to the position (and how you learned about it) and/or to a mutual acquaintance</td>
<td>Use action verbs</td>
<td>Dress professionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limit it to 1 page of 3-4 paragraphs</td>
<td>Build bullet points with STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result)</td>
<td>Practice mock interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proofread for errors and edit for content</td>
<td>Quantify results for a sense of scale: accomplished [X] as measured by [Y] by doing [Z]</td>
<td>Identify questions to ask the interviewer, including a question about the next step in the selection process</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connect your qualifications to the requirements</td>
<td>Use appropriate tense consistently</td>
<td>Arrive 10-15 minutes early</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish your next step</td>
<td>Have your resume critiqued by the Career Center</td>
<td>Bring a portfolio with supporting materials</td>
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<td>Follow up with a thank-you note</td>
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Forecast a timeline based on the position

*Example:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>June 15&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Allow enough lead time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All last minute details completed</td>
<td>May 15&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1 month prior to starting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finalize all living plans, obtain work permits, visas, credits, and so on</td>
<td>April 15&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>2 months prior to starting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have and accept offer</td>
<td>March 15&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3 months prior to starting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Begin sending out applications</td>
<td>January 15&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>5 months prior to starting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Begin researching opportunities</td>
<td>December 15&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>6 months prior to starting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Get an early start</td>
<td>October - November 15&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>7 - 8 months prior to starting</td>
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Before the ELO – manage expectations

Reflect and evaluate

• What about the experiential learning opportunity interests you?
• How can this experience build your *transferable* skills? Not every experience has a clear connection with academic and career goals, but there is always some connection.
• What is a problem you expect to face during the experience, and how may you try to resolve it? In every situation there are problems, concerns, issues, or difficulties.
• Ongoing semester partnerships should improve with time as supervisors refine projects and processes with you and other students.
During the ELO – be proactive

*Act in anticipation of problems, needs, or changes*

- What surprises or lessons have you discovered so far and what do you still hope to see and do before the position ends?
- How do the lessons you’re learning or the experience as a whole, so far, connect to your major(s) and career path?
- What is the biggest problem you’re experiencing? Let someone know and ask, when in doubt.
- How are you solving this problem, and what is the reaction of others? If the reaction is not as you expected, what will you do next or how will it inform your future directions?
Also during the ELO – communicate

**Take advantage of your opportunity**

- How can your ELO can be improved? Benefit from your own advice.
- Ask for regular supervisor feedback.
- Concentrate on 4-5 of your own learning objectives and take action to meet them.
- Adapt yourself to the work/office culture.
- Add value to your experience by asking to observe and sit in on meetings.
- Notice verbal and non-verbal cues and consider the impression you want to leave.
- Be conscientious; performing well at small tasks will likely garner you more responsibility.
- Professionalism at all times is critical for what may be an interview in progress.
After the ELO – how will I benefit?

• Assuming the experience was positive, you may ask supervisor(s) to connect on LinkedIn and ask for recommendations there.
• Consider questions that future supervisors or potential employers may ask about this ELO.
• How has the ELO helped you to determine work you do or do not want to do?
• Describe the most important lesson you learned and how you will use it, or the overall experience, to advance your academic/career goals.
• What was the biggest problem you faced?
• How did you go about solving this problem, and what was the reaction from others? Again, If the reaction was not as expected, what did you do next?

Update your resume and get supervisor final feedback
Articulating experience on a resume

*Adapted from *How to Create a Winning Resume* by Laszlo Bock of Google

**Accomplished [X] as measured by [Y] by doing [Z]**

Lead with an active verb, numerically measure what you accomplished, provide a baseline for comparison, and detail what you did to achieve your goal.

**Ex. 1  College student who is a leader in her sorority**

- Managed sorority budget
- Managed $30K spring semester budget and invested idle funds in appropriate high-yielding capital notes
- Managed $30K spring semester budget and invested $10K in idle funds in appropriate high-yielding capital notes, returning 5% throughout the year

**Ex. 2  College student participating in a leadership program**

- Member of Management Leadership for Tomorrow (MLT)
- Selected as 1 of 230 for this 18-month professional development program for high-achieving diverse talent
- Selected as 1 of 230 participants nationwide for this 18-month professional development program for high-achieving diverse talent based on leadership potential, ability to contribute to the MLT cohort, and academic success
Questions? Feedback?

Meet with me to discuss your options

Please call (205) 348-5848, email career@ua.edu (include your name, telephone number, and major), or drop by our office in 3400 Ferguson Center.

“I’d love to hear your thoughts....

“Ms. Wheeler-Griffin” or “Kristi”

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