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**What is the Office of Career Development?**

Rockefeller College of Public Affairs & Policy Office of Career Development is a resource for students to help with career and professional services. The office can assist with career development services exclusively for Political Science and Public Policy majors and minors. The Office is comprised of the Director of Internships and Career Services as well as the Undergraduate Internship Coordinator. Undergraduate students can meet with either staff, but are recommended to contact the Undergraduate Internship Coordinator for assistance.

Services offered by the Office of Career Development

- Career counseling
- Résumé and cover letter writing
- Job and internship searches
- Graduate and law school application materials
- Interview strategies
- Networking opportunities with alumni and local employers
- Career seminars and workshops

**Uptown Campus Office**

Undergraduate Internship Coordinator
Phone: (518) 442-3112
E-mail: rockefeller.careers@albany.edu
Humanities B-16
1400 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12222

**Downtown Campus Office**

Rockefeller College Office of Career Development
Phone: (518) 442-5253
E-mail: rockefeller.careers@albany.edu
Milne 105
135 Western Avenue
Albany, NY 12222
An undergraduate degree in political science or public policy is good preparation for graduate or professional study in areas such as political science, public administration, foreign policy, law, business, and more. There are many opportunities for both majors, and it is advised to do your research in your interested area as well as focus your academics and internship experience in that concentrated area.

**General tips and strategies**

- Maintain a high grade point average to ensure admission into a graduate or law program and/or a position within the government.
- Expect keen competition for federal positions. Prepare yourself with a strong academic background and good experience. Many government jobs have strict guidelines and want to carefully match candidates' knowledge, skills, and abilities to the job description. Research this first and seek the classes and experiences that will best prepare you.
- Explore application to government internship programs specifically for college students, such as the Pathways Program at the federal level.
- Join related professional organizations such as the American Society of for Public Administration (ASPA) or the American Political Science Association.
- Develop strong leadership skills; run for office in clubs and organizations in school or community. Volunteer to organize or lead an event or project.
- Join related social and/or professional organizations.
- Expect keen competition for federal positions. Prepare yourself with a strong academic background and good experience. Seek the classes and experiences that will best prepare you.
- Develop patience, persistence, and drive in obtaining government positions.
- Build a strong personal network through informal contacts.
- Consider military experience and training as an entryway into government jobs and public service.
- The Peace Corps or AmeriCorps is also a good way to enter a career in government.
- Plan on following a flexible career path to higher positions. Many people begin on the clerical or entry level in order to gain experience and network.
### Specific Areas of Interest for Political Science and Public Policy Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREAS</th>
<th>EMPLOYERS</th>
<th>STRATEGIES</th>
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| **LOCAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT** | • Counties  
• Cities  
• Municipalities  
• Townships  
• School districts  
• Departments of state government  
• Legislative Agencies  
• Court systems | • Research your local and/or state government.  
• Employment opportunities in local government tend to follow population trends in terms of growth and decline in availability of positions. Check statistics on growing communities to find the most opportunities. Be prepared to relocate.  
• Develop a network of contacts through referrals and informational interviews.  
• Conduct research, e.g. education, homelessness, etc. that could be useful to your community.  
• Get involved in civic organizations and events.  
• Complete an internship in a government agency.  
• Participate in local or national election campaigns.  
• Familiarize self with government application process. |
| • Public Policy  
• Regional Planning  
• City or Town Management  
• Legislative, Executive, or Judicial Services  
• Program Administration  
• General Services  
• Community Affairs  
• Social Services  
• Law Enforcement | **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT** | • Take courses or minor in applicable interest area(s).  
• Seek leadership roles in relevant campus organizations such as model United Nations, student government, and cross-cultural organizations.  
• Write for campus publications focused on national and international affairs.  
• Develop skills in computers, statistics, and data analysis.  
• Acquire foreign language competency and travel experience for international positions.  
• There are a large number of specialized agencies within the federal government. Do extensive research in order to find the area that best fits your interests.  
• Become familiar with the government application process. Utilize applicable websites and seek assistance from the Office of Career Development.  
• Obtain an internship in a federal agency or department.  
• Conduct informational interviews with government employees.  
• Build a strong personal network. |
| **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT** | • Public Policy Research  
• Intelligence  
• Foreign Service  
• Law Enforcement  
• General Services  
• Legislative, Executive, or Judicial Services  
• Program Administration  
There are over 170 federal departments and agencies in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches. |
### LAW

| • Prosecution       | • Law firms                     | • Visit LSAC.org for information on degrees |
| • Defense           | • Federal, state,               | • Develop strong research skills and attention to detail. |
| • Contractual       | and local government           | • Participate in debate or forensic team to hone communication skills. |
| • Corporate         | • Private practice             | • Choose courses or a minor to specialize in a particular area of law, e.g., a minor in business for a career in corporate law. |
| • Nonprofit or Public Interest | • Corporations     | • Find part-time or summer work in a law firm. |
| • Government        | • Special interest groups      | • Shadow an attorney to learn more about the field and various specialties. |
| • Mediation         | • Universities and colleges    | • Get involved in pre-law organizations. |
| • Other Specialties | • Legal aid societies          | • Plan to attend law school and earn a law degree. |
| • Law Assistance    | • Nonprofit and public interest organizations | • Maintain a high grade point average and secure strong faculty recommendations. Prepare for the LSAT (Law School Admission Test). |
|                     | • Legal clinics                | • Obtain specialized certification for paralegal positions. |
|                     | • Other private legal services |                     |

### POLITICS

| • Elected or Appointed Leadership | • Legislative, executive, or judicial officials | • Volunteer for national or local campaigns. |
| • Campaign Management            | • National, state, or local government          | • Be prepared to begin a political career as a volunteer before moving to paid positions. Many elected public officials begin careers in other fields (law, medicine, business) before campaigning for office. |
| • Staff Administration            | • Political action committees                   | • Gain experience through internships with government agencies or legislatures. |
| • Special Interest                | • Political parties                            | • Obtain leadership roles in campus organizations. |
| • Advocacy                        | • Campaigns: national, state, or local          | • Become involved in campus political groups, student government, publications, or community service projects. |
| • Political Advising              | • Industrial, educational, and public interest groups | • Take courses in statistics, public policy, or other specific interest areas. |
| • Lobbying                        | • Lobbying organizations                        | • Get involved with a political party/group and develop a personal network. The ability to build networks, coalitions and alliances with other associations is highly valued. |
|                                  | • Large business firms                         | • Develop excellent public relations, interpersonal, and communication skills. |
### BUSINESS
- Sales
- Human Resources
- Management
- Public Relations
- Market Research

| Product and service organizations | - Retail stores  
|                                  | - Hotels  
|                                  | - Restaurants  
|                                  | - Manufacturers  
|                                  | - Insurance companies  
|                                  | - Print and electronic media  
|                                  | - Consulting firms |

- Develop strong analytical, verbal, writing, and leadership skills.
- Acquire a business minor or add business as a double major.
- Gain experience in an area of interest through internships or other employment.
- Obtain leadership roles in campus organizations.
- Demonstrate excellent interpersonal skills.
- Hone computer skills and learn software packages such as databases, spreadsheets and presentations.
- Become knowledgeable about corporate social responsibility.

### INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
- Governance
- Policy Making and Analysis
- Public Sector Reform
- Poverty-Reduction Strategy
- Ethics and Anti-Corruption
- Human Rights
- Public Law
- Organization and Management Development
- Resource Development
- Public-Private Partnerships
- Media/Communication
- Policy and Practice Education

| Intergovernmental agencies, e.g. World Bank  
|                                  | - United Nations, etc.  
|                                  | - National governments  
|                                  | - Non-profit agencies  
|                                  | - Religious organizations  
|                                  | - Foundations  
|                                  | - Policy and research organizations  
|                                  | - Private businesses  
|                                  | - Contracting and consulting firms |

- Earn a double major or minor in order to gain additional skills or knowledge, e.g. Africana studies. Asian studies, business, psychology.
- Spend time studying or working abroad. Make and maintain contacts in foreign countries.
- Seek cultural experiences on campus.
- Obtain internships or volunteer to gain valuable experience in areas of interest.
- Participate in overseas mission trips or study abroad.
- Research the history and culture of countries or geographic areas of interest.
- Become proficient in at least one foreign language.
- Take steps towards obtaining work or study visas for various locations.
- Plan to earn a graduate degree in international affairs, foreign policy, or other speciality areas. Consider entering the Peace Corps.
| NONPROFIT | • Administration  
| Management  
| Public Relations  
| Fund Raising/Development  
| Policy Analysis  
| Research  
| Grant Writing  
| Direct Service | • Local and national nonprofit agencies  
| Foundations  
| Charitable organizations  
| Trade or professional associations  
| Special interest groups  
| Labor unions  
| Libraries  
| Museums  
| Historic sites/historical societies  
| Research organizations and think tanks  
| Educational institutions | • Gain experience through volunteering or completing an internship.  
| Supplement curriculum with courses in business, psychology, sociology, or social work.  
| Obtain leadership roles in relevant campus and community organizations.  
| Develop strong communication and research skills.  
| Learn how to write grants.  
| Demonstrate knowledge and experience in a specialty area, e.g. public health, environment, urban issues.  
| Research organizations’ values to find a good fit with yours. It is critical that you are knowledgeable about and committed to the work you’re going to do.  
| Investigate term of service or service corps positions as a way to gain entry into the field.  
| Consider earning a graduate degree for more job opportunities and advancement. |

_the opportunities for political science and public policy majors are endless! It is just a combination of determining what your interests are, what skills you have, and the opportunities you choose to take._
What is an internship?

An internship refers to professional experiences outside the classroom that enable students to develop skills related to their academic or career interests. This type of experience is also called experiential learning. Internships are offered as part of academic programs in a broad array of settings in the areas of public policy and political science. The University at Albany offers both credit bearing and non-credit bearing internships. The work can be full or part-time, paid or unpaid, and offered during the regular fall and spring semesters or during the summer.

Why participate in an internship?

- For the student, internships offer the potential for valuable learning opportunities outside the standard classroom setting.
- The internship can also serve as a bridge between the traditional academic setting and the professional world to which the student aspires.
- Internships offer the opportunity for the beginning of lifelong learning for students.
- An internship allows you to develop skills that are necessary for any work environment, such as communication, time management, teamwork and interpersonal skills.
- Gaining these skills will help your resume stand out when you start your job search.
- Internships allow you to test out potential career options. You may be thinking about a career in the legislature and have read about it or spoken to people who work in the legislature, but you’ll really be able to find out if it’s the right job for you through a legislative internship.
- An internship also helps you build a professional network which can open doors for you in the future and prepare you for the job search.
- An internship may give you the opportunity to make money while in school.

Here’s how to get the process started.

**Step 1: Self Evaluation** – if you’re thinking about an internship there are a few questions you should ask yourself:

a. Why do you want to do an internship? Do you want to test out a particular career or develop and enhance certain skills?

b. Do you want to stay in the Capital Region or are you looking to explore other areas such as Washington, DC or New York City?

c. Do you want a part-time or full-time internship?

d. Do you need to be paid? Do you need housing?
Step 2: Explore Your Options – once you have answered the self-evaluation questions it’s time to explore and identify internship opportunities. Look online, talk to friends and faculty, and sign onto Rockefeller College’s RockefellerCareers career management service to see what options may be available. If you need additional help with the search process, Rockefeller College’s Undergraduate Internship Coordinator or Director of Career & Alumni Programs can assist you. To schedule an appointment please email Rockefeller.Careers@albany.edu.

Step 3: Student Eligibility and Preparation – to be eligible for an internship, students must meet all institutional and degree requirements.

- Usually, programs require students to be in their junior or senior year.
- Specific course requirements, determined by the supervising academic department as well as by internship sites, may require students to have specific academic and professional skills.
- The University at Albany and Rockefeller College require a minimum cumulative grade-point average of 2.50, although some internships may require higher averages.
- Students and their parents should be informed that receiving credit for an internship requires payment of tuition, as with any other course.

Student preparation for internship applications should include development of such materials and skills as:

- cover letters
- résumés
- registration for RockefellerCareers online career management system
- mock interviews
- research to acquire advance knowledge of each company or other internship site
- student statement of learning goals
- student statement of proposed internship duties
- student statement of career goals

Student Health Insurance and Financial Aid:

- Students serving in internships should check with their health insurers to determine whether insurance coverage applies to the internship.
- Students should also check with their financial aid advisors to determine whether their eligibility for financial aid will be affected by the internship.

Step 4: Secure an Internship – It is recommended that you begin the internship search process at least six months before you plan to work. As some state agencies and federal employers have application deadlines that may be months prior to the intended start date, you will want to start your search with these types of deadlines in mind. As you probably know many internships are competitive. The likelihood of being hired increases dramatically when you present a professional cover letter and resume that show you are the right candidate for the position. Likewise, an interview gives you the opportunity to prove yourself to an employer.
Learning Agreement

A learning agreement is an arrangement between the college and the field site to identify the learning activities that will be part of the internship. A learning agreement must be completed between the department faculty or internship coordinator and the site representative prior to course registration and commencement of the internship. As with more traditional face-to-face methods of classroom instruction, the internship learning outcomes should be designed, supervised and evaluated by appropriate and qualified faculty in the discipline. Internship activities should be designed to help accomplish stated learning outcomes. The learning agreement will include at a minimum:

- necessary course registration information (e.g., course title and number, number of credit hours, name of faculty supervisor, date and semester of participation)
- the required number of hours in the workplace
- a clear description of both the site requirements and the required academic components (e.g., log, journal, paper, oral presentation)
- a clear description of intended learning outcomes and activities
- signatures by the appropriate parties, which must include a site representative and the appropriate departmental supervisors. Student signatures are also required on this form to indicate understanding and acceptance of course requirements

Undergraduate Internship Policy

Two general opportunities exist for students to participate in internships during their academic career. They are most easily distinguished by the amount of time spent at the internship.

**Part-time Internships** are those associated with the 3 credit course POS/PUB Internship in Public Affairs. If students are interested in taking this class they must make an appointment to meet with the Rockefeller College Internship Coordinator who will help them find a placement and provide them with a permission number (SKN#) so they can register for the course. Students do not need a faculty advisor, the instructor of the Internship in Public Affairs course will act as their faculty advisor.

**Full-time Internships** are those in which students are seeking more than 3 academic credits for their experience (Senate, Assembly or self-designed). Students should make an appointment with the Rockefeller College Internship Coordinator if they have questions about the Senate and Assembly internships or need help finding a placement for a self-designed internship. Students are required to have a faculty advisor for these internships and will receive their permission numbers (SKN#) from the Undergraduate Education Office.
UNDERGRADUATE INTERNSHIP FAQ’S

1. I am interested in participating in an internship. What are my options?
   There are 4 basic internship options:
   - The full-time Assembly and Senate internship offered each spring;
   - The full-time “self-designed” internship worth up to 15 credits (UNI 390);
   - The part-time internship associated with POS/PAD Internship in Public Affairs;
   - The Washington Semester Program.

2. I am interested in the full-time Assembly/Senate internship. Can you give some information about it?
   The Senate and Assembly Assistants Internship is a comprehensive academic program that offers students the chance to participate in state government and the legislative process. Assembly interns enroll in a course taught by the Professors-in-Residence, attend weekly Issue Policy Forums and are assigned research and administrative responsibilities in an Assembly office. Senate interns are assigned to a specific office and function as a regular staff member in addition to attending weekly seminars and participating in a model legislative session. Students accepted to the program will receive 15 credits through UNI 391 or UNI 392. Some of those credits may be used to fulfill requirements in the Political Science or Public Policy major or minor.
   - Senate and Assembly Internships take place during the spring semester.
   - In addition to course credit, Senate and Assembly internships provide a stipend.

3. How do I apply to the full-time Assembly or Senate internship?
   You must pick up an application in LC-30. Please note that in addition to the application there are other forms the University at Albany requires you fill out in order to apply and receive credit. Also, the university deadline is earlier than the one stated on materials from the Assembly and Senate so make certain to confirm the application timeline. If you have additional questions the on-campus liaison is Karen Acosta McNeill who can be reached at 518.442.3950.

4. I want to do a full-time internship but not with the Assembly or Senate. How do I receive credit for it?
   Through UNI 390 you can receive up to 15 credits but typically students only receive 9 – 12 credits. Some of those credits may be used to fulfill requirements in the Political Science or Public Policy major or minor. Here is some basic information:
   - The internship must include work experience and an appropriate academic component to qualify for credit.
   - Students need to have a faculty sponsor to supervise the academic component of the internship.
   - A proposal must be approved by the Interdisciplinary Studies Committee in order to receive credit.
5. **How do I apply for UNI 390?**
   You can pick up an application in LC-30. The due date for spring is typically December 1\(^{st}\) and the deadline for summer and fall is typically May 1\(^{st}\). If you have additional questions or want more information you can speak with the coordinator Karen Acosta McNeill at 518.442.3950.

6. **I want to do an internship but not necessarily full-time. Can I receive credit?**
   Yes. You can receive 3 credits for an internship through either **POS/PAD Internship in Public Affairs**. In order to successfully earn credit you need to do the following:
   - Work a minimum of **140 hours** at your internship.
   - Attend all **class sessions** and complete all required **coursework**.
   - Turn in a **Work-Learning Agreement** by the 2\(^{nd}\) class session.
   - Submit a **Final Evaluation** of your internship site.
   - Submit a **Final Evaluation** from your **supervisor**.

7. **How do I register for POS/PAD Internship in Public Affairs?**
   In order to register you need to do the following:
   - Turn in a completed **Internship Placement Contract** with your supervisor’s signature. You should contact the Undergraduate Internship Coordinator to hand in the form.
   - Once you have turned in a completed contract you will receive a permission number via email.

8. **Will I be assigned an internship?**
   No. We do not “place” students in internships. The Rockefeller College Internship Coordinator is able to assist students in the fields of political science and public policy in locating an internship in their field of interest. The three basic mechanisms for finding an internship include:
   - Do it on your own through networking, websites, etc.
   - Apply to an internship posting on **RockefellerCareers**

9. **What is the Semester in Washington Program?**
   The Semester in Washington Program is run out of the Political Science Department providing students with the opportunity to work and learn in Washington DC while earning **15 credits**. The program:
   - Is open to Political Science majors and non-majors.

10. **How do I apply to the Semester in Washington Program?**
    Please contact the Rockefeller Office of Career and Alumni Programs to apply at Rockefeller.careers@albany.edu, contact Professor Anne Hildreth or call 518-442-5253 and ask for Jennifer Maclaughlin, Director of Internships & Career Programs.
11. I am interested in the full-time Assembly/Senate internship. Can you give some information about it?
The Senate and Assembly Assistants Internship is a comprehensive academic program that offers students the chance to participate in state government and the legislative process. Assembly interns enroll in a course taught by the Professors-in-Residence, attend weekly Issue Policy Forums and are assigned research and administrative responsibilities in an Assembly office. Senate interns are assigned to a specific office and function as a regular staff member in addition to attending weekly seminars and participating in a model legislative session. Students accepted to the program will receive 15 credits through UNI 391 or UNI 392. Some of those credits may be used to fulfill requirements in the Political Science or Public Policy major or minor.

- Senate and Assembly Internships take place during the spring semester.
- In addition to course credit, Senate and Assembly internships provide a stipend.

12. How do I apply to the full-time Assembly or Senate internship?
You must pick up an application in LC-30. Please note that in addition to the application there are other forms the University at Albany requires you fill out in order to apply and receive credit. Also, the university deadline is earlier than the one stated on materials from the Assembly and Senate so make certain to confirm the application timeline. If you have additional questions the on-campus liaison is Karen Acosta McNeill who can be reached at 518.442.3950.

13. I want to do a full-time internship but not with the Assembly or Senate. How do I receive credit for it?
Through UNI 390 you can receive up to 15 credits but typically students only receive 9 – 12 credits. Some of those credits may be used to fulfill requirements in the Political Science or Public Policy major or minor. Here is some basic information:

- The internship must include work experience and an appropriate academic component to qualify for credit.
- Students need to have a faculty sponsor to supervise the academic component of the internship.
- A proposal must be approved by the Interdisciplinary Studies Committee in order to receive credit.
**SAMPLE UNDERGRADUATE INTERNSHIP SITES AND LINKS**

**State Government**
- NYS Civil Service
- NYS Office of General Services
- NYS Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Services
- NYS Education Department

**Local Government**
- Local Board of Legislators
- Local Town and City Offices
- County Office and Comptroller’s Office
- Albany Bicycle Coalition

**Politics**
- NYS Green Party
- U.S. Senator’s Offices
- U.S. Congress member’s Office
- NYS Democratic Committee

**Law**
- City Supreme Court
- Legal Aid
- Attorney General’s Office
- Public Defender’s Office
- NYS Unified Court System
- ACLU/NYCLU

**Public Policy**
- Alliance for Quality Education
- NY StateWatch
- NYS Psychological Association
- Fight Crime, Invest in Kids

**Nonprofit Organizations**
- Interfaith Partnership for the Homeless
- American Red Cross
- Big Brothers Big Sisters
- American Cancer Society
- Make a Wish Foundation
- Northern Rivers Family Services

**Federal Government**
- U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs
- Social Security Administration
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Secret Service

**Lobbying**
- Capitol Group
- District Council 37
- CSEA
- NY Public Interest Group

**Sample Internship Links**
- New York State Internships: [www.nysinternships.com](http://www.nysinternships.com)
- Federal Internships: [www.usajobs.gov/StudentsAndGrads](http://www.usajobs.gov/StudentsAndGrads)
- Public Sector Internships
  - Idealist.org: [www.idealist.org](http://www.idealist.org)
  - Public Service Careers: [www.publicservicecareers.org](http://www.publicservicecareers.org)
  - Volunteer Match: [www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org)
  - Common Good Careers: [www.cgcareers.org/find-a-job](http://www.cgcareers.org/find-a-job)
- General Internships:
  - Indeed: [www.ldeed.com](http://www.ldeed.com)
  - Internships.com: [www.internships.com](http://www.internships.com)
**How to Write a Resume**

A resume is a summary of your education, experience, and skills. Its main purpose is to convince potential employers to invite you for an interview – to make them want to learn more about you.

**A Few Quick Points to Ponder**

*Make it user-friendly.* Most employers only spend 12-20 seconds reviewing a resume so make sure it’s easy to read and concise.

*Use details whenever possible.* Emphasize and quantify accomplishments. Use the question words like *who, what, where, when, why, how,* and *how many* to provide specifics.

*Incorporate transferrable skills.* Although not directly related to the position, most skills are transferrable to many positions. Be sure to include examples of skills such as: communication, teamwork, interpersonal, organization, etc. in a resume.

**Resume…**

**DOs**

- Have The Rockefeller Office of Career and Alumni Programs approve your resume for clarity, consistency, and cohesiveness.

- Be consistent with formatting.

- Organize your resume in reverse chronological order (ordering the most recent information first).

- Pay close attention to verb tenses in your bullet statements. Present jobs use present tense verbs, past work uses past tenses usually ending in -ed.

- Unless you have significant work experience, your resume should be no longer than one page.

**DON’Ts**

- Use resume templates from word processing programs such as Word.

- Include personal information like your birth date, marital status or social security number.

- List unrelated, minor duties, such as “opened mail” or “filed documents”.

- Limit yourself by only including paid experiences.

- Include References on your resume, they should be provided in a separate document.
SECTIONS OF THE RESUME

Heading
Include your current address, e-mail and phone (home and/or cell); be sure your voicemail and e-mail addresses are professional

Objective (optional)
Objectives are usually recommended because they help define what you’re looking for; if appropriate, add special interests or skills that you offer, such as communication or technical abilities. Remember that “objective” is another word for goal, so you should briefly state what type of position you are seeking, reflecting what you have to offer, not what you want. Usually an objective is one line. Objectives are particularly helpful if you are attending a career fair or other networking event where recruiters might be speaking with numerous candidates.

Education
School, location, degree, expected date of graduation, major, minor, concentration
Overall GPA if higher than 3.0; include your major GPA if higher than overall GPA
Previous college, degree, dates of attendance or graduation, major and GPA (if applicable)

Honors, Awards and Accomplishments
Any academic, extracurricular or job-related achievements (can also be listed under Experience)
For example: scholarships, Dean’s List, etc.

Relevant Courses
List 4 to 8 courses related to your major and/or objective

Special/Related Academic Projects
Any significant projects (class or outside activities) that relate to your major and/or career objective

Computer Skills
Hardware, software, programs, languages, operating systems and internet applications

Experience/Employment History
Full-time or part-time jobs, internships, consulting, self-employment, entrepreneurial ventures
Volunteer work (include in this section or list as separate category)

Extracurricular Activities/Volunteer/Leadership Activities
Clubs (indicate role if other than member, e.g. Treasurer) where appropriate describe involvement
Professional Association memberships
Community organizations
Tutoring (include in this section or under “Experience” section)
Fraternity/Sorority or Athletic Groups

Interests (optional)
Any genuine interest, expertise, or unique hobby (do not include general areas such as “reading”)
Language(s)
Fluency, proficiency or knowledge of a language(s) other than English

Military Experience
Military service or ROTC or Reserves

Certification(s)/Licensure(s)/Trainings & Workshops
An entry that could substantiate your professional development.

General Résumé/C.V. Guidelines

- Font should be in a readable, professional format between 10-12 point size, the heading may be larger
- Margins should be between 0.5-1.0 inches all around
- Use **bold**, *italics*, *underlining*, and CAPITALS to highlight important information
- Be consistent! Everything should match!
- Avoid abbreviations, unless it is a universally known abbreviation, such as the NAACP. If an abbreviation is necessary, then write out the phrase once, with the abbreviation in parentheses after. For example: New York State (NYS)
- Do not include references on your résumé or C.V.; they should be included on a separate page
- Sell yourself by highlighting the skills/experiences most relevant to the job you are seeking
- Every sentence should start with an action verb; do not use “responsible for” or “responsibilities included”
- Verbs should be in the correct tense according to when you performed the work – if you are still working for the company, your verbs should be in the present tense, if you finished the job, your verbs should be in the past tense
- Use the question words: who, what, where, when, why, how, and how many to expand upon your job descriptions – emphasize your accomplishments and actions
- Do not use any personal pronouns, such as I, me, or my
- Do not include any personal information, such as age, race, marital status, religion, etc.
- Do NOT lie or exaggerate
- Use jargon and language appropriate for the job to which you are applying
- Avoid too much white space on your résumé – fill up the spaces, but don’t overcrowd your résumé
- Proofread your document for errors, typos, and grammatical mistakes. All documents MUST be approved before students can start to apply for internships and jobs.
- If emailing your resume, send it preferably as a PDF in order to retain the format. If you save it as a Word Doc or RTF, then the formatting may not stay the same when the employer opens it.
- When emailing your resume, save the title as your name. For example, “Dane Rockefeller Resume”.
# Action Verbs

You should always begin your bullet points with action verbs, never with “I.” Below is a list of verbs that may be useful in describing the duties, skills and special projects of previous jobs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Verb</th>
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<th>Action Verb</th>
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<th>Action Verb</th>
<th>Action Verb</th>
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<td>Operated</td>
<td>Remodeled</td>
<td>Wrote</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SAMPLE TEMPLATE #1

Sara Smith
135 Western Avenue • Albany, NY 12203 • (518) 442-5253 • SaraSmith@albany.edu

Education
Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy, University at Albany, Albany, NY
Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, May 20xx
Concentration: American Politics
GPA: 3.46 • Honors: Honors College, Dean’s List

Professional Experience
Office of Mayor Bill de Blasio, New York, NY
Intern for Mayor Bill de Blasio, September 20xx-December 20xx
• Promoted special events, such as town hall meetings, as part of the public relations team
• Facilitated communication by translating for Spanish speaking constituents
• Oversaw office operations in absence of head secretary

Greg Seabury, State Representative Campaign, Danbury, CT
Assistant to Campaign Manager, September 20xx-November 20xx
• Aided with creation of campaign slogan and publicity materials
• Translated campaign messages into Portuguese and Spanish
• Assisted in production and made guest appearance on local TV show, “Celebrating Danbury”

Additional Experience
Banana Republic Inc., Albany, NY
Sales Representative, February 20xx-Present
• Assist customers with clothing selection and merchandise returns
• Perform as one of the top merchandise sellers with sales reaching $2000 per day

Extra-Curricular Activities
New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG), Albany, NY
Vice President, January 20xx-Present
• Coordinate activities for students involved in the group
• Invite guest speakers to meetings to discuss issues relevant to state and local government, nonprofit management, and the private sector
• Organized members to participate in community service and political events

Skills
Computers: MS (Word, Excel and PowerPoint); completed course in Information Systems
Languages: Fluent in Portuguese, proficient in Spanish and French; knowledge of Italian
DANE ROCKEFELLER
1400 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12203
Cell: (518) 442-5253 • Home: (518) 123-4567 • Email: Dane@albany.edu

OBJECTIVE
To obtain an internship in governmental finance utilizing demonstrated budgeting and computer skills

EDUCATION
Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy, University at Albany
Bachelor of Arts in Public Policy and Management  May 20xx
Concentrations: Public Economics & Finance
GPA: 3.61

HONORS, AWARDS, & ACCOMPLISHMENTS
Dean’s List, Fall 20xx-Spring 20xx
Rockefeller Scholarship for Outstanding Academic Achievement
President, Pre-Law Association

COURSEWORK
Law & Policy                      Systems Thinking and Strategy Development
Topics in American Policy History Policy Analysis in Public Administration

PROJECTS
Institutional Foundations of Public Administration
▪ Participated as member of 6 person team to evaluate institutional foundations of public service
▪ Conducted extensive research to examine characteristics of institutional settings, history of field, environmental context, and functions, roles, behaviors, and structures
▪ Presented results to a class of 35 using PowerPoint, earning an “A” on the assignment

WORK EXPERIENCE
New York State Assembly  Albany, NY
Legislative Intern  May 20xx – July 20xx
▪ Worked in the office of the Assembly Minority Leader
▪ Tracked pending legislation and researched position statements
▪ Performed constituent services

St. Sebastian Softball League  Latham, NY
Little League Umpire  June 20xx – August 20xx
▪ Umpired two games per week for teams varying in ages from 6-12
▪ Attended training in order to be updated regularly on all rules and regulations

COMPUTER SKILLS
Proficient in MS Office (Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint), knowledge of HTML
Laura McCarthy
1400 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12222
518.555.5555 • LM@albany.edu

Education
Rockefeller College of Public Affairs & Policy, University at Albany, Albany, NY
Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, expected May 20xx
Concentration: International Relations; Environmental Policy

Hudson Valley Community College, Troy, NY
Associate of Arts in Liberal Studies, May 20xx
Concentration: Political Science

Experience
New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG), Albany, NY
Environmental Analyst, (January 20xx – Present)
- Research the administration of the Pesticide Neighbor Notification Law.
- Perform Freedom of Information Law requests.
- Compile scientific information regarding the expected effects of climate change.
- Transcribe public hearing testimony for presentation by NYPIRG’s Senior Environmental Associate regarding support of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation’s proposed Burn Barrel Ban.

Legislative Intern, (May 20xx – September 20xx)
- Organized a press conference commemorating the 25th anniversary of the New York State Recyclable Container Act and promoting the passage of the Bigger Better Bottle Bill.
- Designed visual aids for press conferences and events advocating for the Bigger Better Bottle Bill.
- Conducted two independent research projects regarding the cost-benefit of recycling bins in hotel rooms and health safety standards for public water fountains, respectively.

United University Professions (UUP), Latham, NY
John M. Reilly Legislative Intern, (January 20xx – May 20xx)
- Assisted in organizing regional and statewide legislative meetings on union issues.
- Organized UUP Outreach Committee events in cooperation with the UUP Research & Legislation Department.
- Prepared legislative newsletters and bulletins distributed monthly to 5000 constituents.
- Conducted research, both quantitative and qualitative, on related union issues for the Research Department.

Leadership Experience
Model United Nations, Albany, NY
President (September 20xx – March 20xx)
General Member (September 20xx – March 20xx)
- Attended conferences and debated global warming topics
- Communicated effectively with group members and fellow executive board members
- Participated in planning for special events and trainings

Skills
Computer Skills: Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
Languages: Fluency in French, Conversational Spanish
**COVER LETTERS**

**What is a cover letter?**
A cover letter is a letter that accompanies your résumé that serves as an introduction of your skills and qualifications. The most important thing about a cover letter is that it matches your experience and skills to the position criteria. Therefore, it’s necessary to write a specific cover letter for each position to which you apply. **DO NOT WRITE A GENERIC COVER LETTER.** Review the position, and determine the most important elements of the job, and try to match the skills and experience you possess to that specific job. You want to cite specific instances when you have used that experience on the job, rather than just providing a laundry list of your accomplishments. If you can prove your experience, rather than just state your experience, you will stand out to potential employers.

A cover letter should always be sent if you are applying to a full-time job, regardless of if the job announcement cites the need for a cover letter; for an internship, a cover letter may not always be necessary, so check the posting. If you are applying through RockefellerCareers, all cover letters need to be approved by the Rockefeller College Office of Career & Alumni Programs.

In certain cases, you may not be applying to a specific position, but instead, inquiring if there are any available positions. If that is the situation, then you should focus on the organization’s mission or services and how you could contribute to their goals.

**Cover Letter Guidelines**

- Limit your cover letter to 1 page, single spaced.
- Always personalize your cover letter for a specific job – **DO NOT WRITE A GENERIC COVER LETTER.**
- Proofread your cover letter before sending it out! Any mistake or grammatical error can result in rejection.
- If you are emailing your cover letter, attach your cover letter and résumé to the email. Do not use the cover letter as the body of your email. Instead, write a brief message stating that your cover letter and résumé are attached.
- Address your cover letter to a specific person, whenever possible. Contact the organization and request the name of the appropriate contact person. If you absolutely cannot identify a person, use “Dear Hiring Manager” or “Dear Internship Coordinator”.
- Do not focus on what you would like to gain out of the internship, instead focus on what you have to offer to the organization and position.
- Use the active, not the passive tense.
- Demonstrate your skills and qualifications through concrete examples. Use the STAR method (Situation, Task, Action, Result) to discuss specific times when you have used that skill.
- Vary your sentence structure – avoid starting too many sentences with “I”.
- Sign your letters in blue or black ink if sending via postal mail.
- Include information about why you would want to work for that specific organization or in that specific position.
- Highlight the fit between your skills and the position requirements.
- Format your cover letter so that it matches your résumé – use the same font, headings, margins, etc.
- **Proofread your document and have the Rockefeller College Office of Career & Alumni Programs approve a copy before sending it out to employers.**
Sample Cover Letter Format

Street Address
City, State ZIP
Phone Number
Email Address
Date

Dear [Employer’s Name],

The first sentence should address why you are writing to them – in other words, that you are applying to a specific position. Next, address how you found the position (if you were referred by someone, mention that here) and your interest and enthusiasm in that specific position and the organization as a whole. Indicate your degree and expected graduation date – explicitly mentioning that you are a student at Rockefeller College of Public Affairs & Policy at the University at Albany. The last sentence of your cover letter should be your thesis statement. In other words, what you are going to address in the rest of your letter. Remember that you need to focus on what you have to offer to the organization, not what you hope to gain out of the organization or position.

The body paragraphs (one or two paragraphs) should focus on the qualifications that you possess that match the specific position requirements or the mission of the organization. How can your background and experiences contribute to the organization’s goals and objectives? Read through the job description carefully to pinpoint the skill sets that the employer consistently mentions (i.e. analyzing data, lobbying, policy writing, researching, etc.). Select the skills you feel most confident of and match your skills and qualifications to those qualities.

When describing your specific skill sets, do not just reiterate what is on your résumé – give more in-depth detail. Target what they are seeking in a candidate and back it up with specific examples of times when you have used those skills. If you can prove your experience that is much more convincing than just stating that you have those skills. To give specific examples, use the STAR technique (Situation, Task, Action, and Result) to describe the context of the example.

The closing paragraph should again summarize your strengths in the position. You should also discuss some actions towards moving forward in the application process, such as your interest in interviewing with them, or you will be in DC over the summer, or that you would like to hear from them soon, or you will contact them in 2 weeks to follow up. You should thank the employer for their time and consideration.

Sincerely, (you can also use Best Regards, Sincere Regards, or some other closing)

Your full name, signed  (if you are sending your letter electronically, type in a script font)
Your full name, typed

Résumé Attached  (if you are sending via postal mail, include Résumé Enclosed)
Sample Cover Letter #1

1400 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12222
NelsonRockefeller@albany.edu
518-442-5253

Date

Ms. Kathleen McCarty
Director
New York State Assembly Intern Committee
Legislative Office Building - Room 104A
Albany, New York 12248

Dear Ms. McCarty:

I am writing to express my interest in the New York State Assembly Undergraduate Intern program. I learned about the position through Dr. Helen Desfosses and also through a posting on Rockefeller College's online RockefellerCareers site. Currently, I am pursuing my Bachelor's degree in Public Administration with a concentration in Local Government Management and will graduate in May 20xx. Growing up in New York, I have a strong interest in state politics, and have followed the Assembly's legislation for quite some time. I believe I would be a good candidate for the Graduate Intern program, as I have substantial research and policy experience.

As part of my degree, I have taken several classes in policy writing, development, and analysis. In my "introduction to Policy Analysis" course, I completed a group project on higher education policy from 1960-2000. To accomplish the task, the group divided up the project, and each group member selected a decade. For my part of the project, I researched higher education policy from 1980-1990, including conducting research using Lexis-Nexis on Pell Grant initiatives. I found 10 articles on Pell Grants, and compiled a summary of the rulings and the implications on higher education loan assistance. As a team, we created a PowerPoint presentation comparing and contrasting the legislation in each of the decades; we presented it to a class of approximately 40 students. As a result, I feel confident that I could utilize my research skills in the Assembly Internship.

In addition to my research skills, I believe that I could contribute my experience in policy. During the spring semester, I completed a policy internship with the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) in Albany. In this role, I prepared legislative alerts, action alerts, updates, and communications with other local mental health service provider staff. Specifically, I researched and wrote documents about the recent health care bill passed by President Obama, and sent letters to local Congress and Senate representatives to voice NAMI's support of the bills.

Thank you very much for your consideration for the Undergraduate Intern position with the New York State Assembly. I can be reached at the contact information listed above, and would welcome the opportunity to discuss the position in more depth in an interview.

Sincerely,

Nelson Rockefeller
Nelson Rockefeller
Résumé Attached
Sample Cover Letter #2

135 Western Avenue
Albany, NY 12203
(518) 442-5253
Youremail@albany.edu
Date

Ms. Lisa Tovar
Attn: Research Fellow, Energy and Policy Analysis
Pew Center on Global Climate Change
2101 Wilson Blvd., Suite 550
Arlington, VA 22201

Dear Ms. Tovar:

Please accept this letter and résumé in application for the Research Fellowship in Energy and Policy Analysis. I believe Pew serves the critical function of helping maintain the credibility of expertise and empiricism in civic discourses and the making of public policy. Given the urgency of taking steps to respond to climate change, the dual role of Pew as objective researcher and facilitator is an indispensable one. I have a deep academic and personal commitment to innovative environmental governance and the mitigation of climate change, and feel I am uniquely prepared to make the needed contributions at the Pew Center on Global Climate Change. I believe I would be an asset to your organization because of my ability to research and evaluate data and manage programs.

Currently, I am preparing my senior thesis, which addresses the theoretical and empirical dimensions of climate change mitigation and adaptation policies in the United States. For my thesis, I have critically examined and synthesized the scholarly literatures on U.S. environmental policy history, environmental federalism, rational choice theory and environmental policy, and future directions for environmental governance. This knowledge is readily applicable to the Research Fellow position, as I can synthesize and evaluate the data necessary to write legislation.

I will also bring to Pew the administrative and evaluative skills sets needed for a high level of job performance. I am currently the Research Associate for the Center for Change in Government (CCG) at the University at Albany. My roles and responsibilities have grown during my time at CCG, and I am now intimately involved in all phases of our projects and workshops. At CCG, I am involved with research logistics and support staff, building and managing data sets, and coordinating seminars for state employees. My extensive training in analytic and evaluative methods – policy and cost-benefit analysis, program evaluation, statistical and econometric analysis, and qualitative research – have enabled me to bring a high level of rigor and precision to my various job tasks.

Thank you very much for your consideration, and for the work of your organization. I hope to have an opportunity to discuss this position in more depth in an interview, as I believe my core values and experience meet the position requirements. Please feel free to contact me to further discuss my qualifications.

Sincere Regards,

Barney Nelson
Barney Nelson

Enclosure: Résumé
Interviewing can be an intimidating experience, especially for individuals with limited experience. However, there are a couple of things to remember, which should make the interview process a little bit easier.

- **PREPARE!** Preparation is the key to a good interview – you never want to “wing it”. Instead, prepare yourself with the knowledge to succeed in the interview, which includes knowledge about you and about the organization.

- Consider the interview to be a time when you get to sell yourself to the company. Think of the interview as an opportunity to talk about yourself, and explain why you are the best candidate. If there is something that makes you qualified for the job, be sure to mention it in the interview – regardless if the employer asks you a question about that experience. Assume that the interviewer knows nothing about you (i.e. they have not read your résumé and cover letter), and if you do not tell them important information about your application, then they will not know.

- The interview is a two-way process: you are trying to impress them as much as they are trying to impress you. You need to present yourself in an honest, straightforward manner, and you need to evaluate potential job opportunities. After the interview, you may decide that the organization is not the right fit for you, and you should indicate that you wish to withdraw your application in your thank you note.

**STEP 1: ANALYZE YOURSELF**

This is the most critical stage in the interview process, but it is also the most overlooked stage. The interview is a time for you to talk about your skills and experiences, which on the surface sounds pretty easy – after all, you talk about yourself every day, right? Well, an interview is different, because you are trying to communicate skill sets and experiences that you probably don’t relay in day to day life – such as an example of your organizational skills or a time that you encountered a difficult team member. Therefore, it is essential that you prepare yourself for the interview. Does this mean that you should memorize some answers? Absolutely not! In fact, you should never memorize any of your answers – first, you don’t want to sound rehearsed, and second, if you forget what you memorized, then you will focus on trying to remember the exact wording of the answer rather than coming up with an alternate response.

The first step in understanding the skills you can offer to an organization is to take an inventory of your different personal characteristics. There are 3 types of skills:

1. **Work Content Skills**: those which relate specifically to being able to do a certain job. These skills are gained through work, education, and personal experience. Typically, these will be specific to a particular career field and will be noted in a position description. For students interested in Public Administration/Policy and Political Science, some examples may be:
   - Researching using open sources
   - Writing policy memos
   - Analyzing data sets to make policy decisions
2. **Self-Management Skills**: those personal characteristics related to your personality and to how you work within an organization or perform tasks. For example:
   - Creative
   - Accurate
   - Responsible
3. **Transferable Skills**: those general skills that can be applied to a wide variety of settings and have been developed naturally or through education, training, and experience.
   - Communication skills
   - Leadership skills
   - Interpersonal skills
**Self-Management Skills:**

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**Transferable Skills:**

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<td>Calculate</td>
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<td>Observe</td>
<td>Set priorities</td>
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<td>Clarify</td>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td>Organize</td>
<td>Speak</td>
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<tr>
<td>Collaborate</td>
<td>Explain</td>
<td>Persuade</td>
<td>Summarize</td>
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<td>Communicate</td>
<td>Facilitate</td>
<td>Plan</td>
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<td>Compile</td>
<td>Forecast</td>
<td>Prepare</td>
<td>Systematize</td>
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<td>Compute</td>
<td>Illustrate</td>
<td>Present</td>
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<td>Converse</td>
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<td>Cooperate</td>
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<td>Question</td>
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<td>Coordinate</td>
<td>Initiate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Counsel</td>
<td>Innovate</td>
<td>Reason</td>
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**Top 10 Qualities Employers Seek in Job/Internship Candidates:**

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<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Leadership</th>
<th>Analytical</th>
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<tr>
<td>Team Work</td>
<td></td>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>Academic Record</td>
<td>Honesty/Integrity/Ethics</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td>Motivation/Initiative</td>
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The next step is to take your skills/characteristics and relate them to the position to which you are applying. The best way to do that is to read through the position description and pick out the skills that are mentioned, especially those that are mentioned multiple times. Let’s take this job description as an example:

Seeking an Intergovernmental Affairs Liaison to be part of an energetic, collaborative and innovative team to implement a shared vision of progressive policies and community-based planning. Prospective staff members must be committed to seeking out new and better ways for the Manhattan Borough President’s Office (MBPO) to connect with, and deliver to, the borough’s diverse neighborhoods, communities, and constituents.

Major responsibilities of this position will include, but are not limited to:

- Assist in advancing the Borough President’s policy and legislative priorities throughout all levels of government with special emphasis on the City Council;
- Represent the Borough President and communicate the goals of the office with key stakeholders as well as act as an intergovernmental liaison to all elected officials and government agencies at the city, state and federal level;
- Monitor relevant pending legislation and government regulations on City, State and Federal levels, and conduct research to develop the Borough President’s legislative priorities and recommendations that will be presented to other governmental entities for partnership and support;
- Strategize on outreach to government entities for office events, mailings, and the upkeep of databases;
- Help monitor and stay informed of all office staffs’ projects and interactions that involve elected officials and government agencies, and assist all staff with the navigation at all levels of government to ensure quality service delivery and government accountability;
- Assist the Deputy Chief of Staff with administrative duties as needed, such as outreach to government entities and mailings.

Specific job requirements include:

- Familiarity with the inner-workings of government and the legislative process at the city, state, and federal levels;
- Familiarity with policy and legislative issues facing New Yorkers;
- Comfortable with flexible, sometimes long work hours;
- Possess exceptional research, writing, interpersonal and organizational skills; and
- Work well under pressure and deadlines.

The relevant skill sets (work-content, self-management, and transferable) are highlighted. More than likely, there would be some interview questions surrounding these skills, and it would be best to provide examples of some times when you have used these skills. For example, you might have taken the course “State & Local Government” and this would be a great example to prove your knowledge of government and the legislative process on the city, state, and federal levels.

When preparing for an interview, it is best to think of times when you have used a particular skill set. Your responses do not need to be all work based; actually, most employers like to hire candidates who take part in extra-curricular activities, volunteer work, and academic projects, so you should vary your responses.
Please use these charts which can help you to brainstorm some examples of relevant skills and experiences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Papers, Exams, Presentations, Projects</th>
<th>Extracurricular Activities</th>
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<th>Internships</th>
<th>Summer Jobs/Work Experience</th>
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<tr>
<th>Hobbies/General Life</th>
<th>Other</th>
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</table>
STEP 2: RESEARCHING THE EMPLOYER

Ideally, you should know something about the organization before you submit your application. Upon interviewing, you need to have more in-depth knowledge of the employer and how you can fit in with the organization. Again, knowing how you can fit in with the organization will help you to feel confident and prepared for the interview.

The quickest and most efficient way to research an organization is to visit their website (a quick Google search should bring up their website). There are a number of places you should visit on their website:

- **Careers** – this section will help you to understand the job opportunities available, as well as the environment and type of people that work in the organization. Information like employee benefits or perks can also be found.
- **About Us** – this section will give you insight about the mission and history of the organization. It may include a staff directory with biographies of the employees.
- **Clients/Services** – this section will allow you to understand what services they provide and who they serve.
- **New/Events/Media** – this section lists any newsworthy information.

Remember that the employer’s website will only detail the information that they want you to know, so it is best to research other sources, such as newspapers.

STEP 3: DRESSING PROFESSIONALLY

The first impression does count, so you should be dressed professionally, but also comfortably. It is best to try to buy professional clothing early in your college career so you can accumulate a wardrobe over time. You should always present yourself in a professional manner, and groom yourself appropriately.

**Image Tips for Women**

- **Suit**: a conservative colored suit (black, grey, navy blue) is always appropriate for an interview, and it is the preferred interview attire of most employers. It is always best to be overdressed than underdressed, and you can never go wrong in a suit. A skirt suit or a pants suit is acceptable, though a skirt suit is considered to be a little bit more formal. If you choose to wear a skirt, it should be knee length, not too tight, and not have any high slits (a moderate slit is appropriate to allow you to walk). Pants should be freshly pressed, and match your blazer.
- **Blouse**: a business-like blouse is appropriate as long as it looks neat under a blazer. Ensure that it fits appropriately and has a conservative neckline. A button-down shirt is preferred, but it should fit appropriately.
- **Shoes**: mid-heel pumps in black, brown, or navy are preferred. Shoes should not be too high or too low. You should be comfortable in your shoes, and they should be well-polished and in good repair. Sandals, sneakers, or boots are not considered professional, and should not be worn during an interview.
- **Hose**: should always be worn under a skirt suit, preferably in a neutral color. Avoid patterns and textures. A pair of knee-high hose are appropriate to wear with a pants suit and pumps. Carry an extra pair of hose in case you get a run or a snag.
- **Accessories**: jewelry can help to accent your features and make you memorable, but you should err on the conservative side. Stick with the rule of one: 1 pair of earrings, 1 necklace, 1 bracelet or watch, etc. Avoid oversized jewelry that can distract employers from what you are saying. In addition, carry a professional looking pocketbook or briefcase, including a portfolio with extra copies of your resume, a notepad, and a pen.
• **Grooming:** you should be well-groomed for every interview, and at the workplace in general. Hair should be clean and brushed, and may be worn either up or down, as long as the employer can clearly see your face. Make-up should be natural looking – avoid heavy make-up that can distract the interviewer. Fingernails should be clean and not too long; polish is acceptable as long as it is conservative. Ensure your clothes are clean and lint-free. Freshen your breath before the interview. Avoid wearing too much perfume.

  **Image Tips for Men**

• **Suit:** a conservative colored suit (black, grey, navy blue) is always appropriate for an interview, and it is the preferred interview attire of most employers. It is always best to be overdressed than underdressed, and you can never go wrong in a suit. A single breasted suit is preferred, in a wool or wool blend. The suit should be tailored to fit appropriately in the shoulders and sleeves. Additionally, you should not button the last button (unless it is a 1 button jacket).

• **Shirt:** long-sleeved button down, collared shirts in white are recommended. The collar and sleeves should fit appropriately – you don’t want to look like you’re wearing your father’s shirt. Ensure it is well-pressed.

• **Ties:** should be a conservative stripe or a small pattern – no bright colors or distracting patterns.

• **Shoes:** laced oxfords or leather dress slip-ons are appropriate in dark colors, like black, brown, or navy blue. Shoes should be polished and in good repair.

• **Socks:** should be solid and dark to match the shoes, and high enough to cover your calf. DO NOT wear white socks!

• **Accessories:** Limit the amount of jewelry you wear – a watch, cufflinks, or a tie pin is acceptable. A leather belt, matching your shoes, should be worn (even if it is not necessary). In addition, carry a professional looking briefcase, including a portfolio with extra copies of your resume, a notepad, and a pen.

• **Grooming:** Make sure your hair is brushed and neat, your nails are clean, and you are polished and professional looking. Clothes should be clean and lint-free. For facial hair, you should follow the rule of all or nothing – that means you are either clean-shaven or you have a full beard/mustache/goatee/soul patch. Freshen your breath before the interview. Do not wear strong smelling cologne.

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**STEP 4: UNDERSTANDING INTERVIEWS**

Once you have a sense of your strengths and weakness, and what you can offer to the organization, you need to understand the different types of interviews. In general, you will probably encounter 6 different types of interviews – but keep in mind that your interview will be dictated by your interviewer, and some interviewers are more comfortable interviewing than others.

Also, remember that your interview begins when you submit your application materials. Ensure that you are professional in all communications, including your email message, which should be grammatically correct and formal (make sure your email address is appropriate; you may want to consider making an email address specifically for job applications – but be sure to check it!). If you receive a call from a number you do not recognize, please make sure that you are in an appropriate location to take the call and that you have the time to talk. If not, let the call go to voicemail (which should be appropriate, and should include your name), and return the call as soon as possible.

When scheduling the interview, ask for a confirmation email with the date, time, location, names, and job titles of all interviewers and contact information of within least one person at the organization. With this information, you can properly prepare for the interview.
The Six types of interviews:

1. **Telephone Interview:** typically, this will be a "screening" interview where you speak with a human resource professional who will determine if you meet the basic qualifications. If so, then you will be recommended to interview with a hiring manager or committee. The phone interview is typically very short – between 15-30 minutes. You will mostly be asked questions about your background – including education, coursework, internships, and extracurricular activities. The nice thing about a phone interview is that you can have all of your materials in front of you, including your résumé, notes, and job description, which should help to answer questions. Here are a couple of tips for phone interviews:
   - If you are not expecting the call, ask if you can call back in five minutes, or at a mutually agreed upon time; you are under no obligation to do a phone interview on the spot.
   - Turn off all external sources of distraction, including music, television, and Facebook – you need to stay focused on the interview.
   - Consider standing while talking, as it improves the quality of your voice, and projects enthusiasm.
   - Smile when you talk! Looking in a mirror also helps.
   - Speak slowly and articulate your ideas clearly. You do not have visual cues to guide the conversation.

2. **Structured/Traditional Interview:** this is the most common format of interview. The discussion is guided by the interviewer, who will ask you questions, and you will answer. At the end of the interview, you will have the opportunity to ask questions about the job or organization.

3. **Behavioral Interview:** this format is very popular, and is being used more, especially for full-time jobs. The premise of this format is that your past behavior will likely predict future behavior. Questions are targeted to reveal details of past performance with specific examples. The employer is looking for specific information about your approach to a situation and the result of your efforts. It is essential that you relay information in a clear, concise manner – the best approach to this is to use the STAR technique, which will be discussed later.

4. **Non-Directive Interview:** this type of interview is unstructured, and more like a conversation. The employer may not ask any questions, or will ask very open-ended questions, like “Tell me about yourself”, and expects the candidate to direct the conversation. A non-directive interview separates those students who have prepared for an interview, and those who have not, as you must be self-assured for this type of interview. You will be expected to lead the conversation for about 75% of the interview.

5. **High-Stress Interview:** this format is designed to determine how you deal with stress. Typically, this type of interview will be used for high-stress types of jobs, and is probably the least common type of interview. You will be evaluated based upon your ability to remain composed in a tense situation; interviewers are often very aggressive and may have unusual questions.

6. **Case-Style Interview:** this type of interview is most common for group interviews, although you may encounter this approach in an individual interview as well. In this method, the employer presents a potential job scenario and you will be evaluated on your ability to analyze, formulate, and present an outcome. Often, there is no “correct” response, but the interviewer is examining the process of how you came to a conclusion.
The Interview Format:

Stage 1: Arrival

- ALWAYS arrive 10-15 minutes early for the interview. Remember that you may have to go through security so leave extra time. If you arrive too early, sit in your car or find a bench or café where you can review your notes. If you have never been to the office location before, you may want to find the building the day before to know where you are going.
- Greet the receptionist in a friendly manner, and let him/her know who you are there to see. While you are waiting, observe the office interactions to determine the environment.

Stage 2: Breaking the Ice

- First impressions count and this is the moment! Convey confidence by standing up, shaking hands with the interviewer, and looking him/her in the eye. You can then gather your belongings to be escorted to your interview location. Express that you are happy to be there.
- Expect some small talk for a couple of minutes – the weather, office locations, news stories, sports victories – it is recommended that you read the newspaper or watch the news a couple of days before your interview.

Stage 3: Information Exchange

- The beginning part of the interview will be an introduction to you and the organization, and you will be asked questions to determine if you have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to effectively perform the job. You need to verbalize your ability to do the job by giving examples using the STAR technique (more information to follow).

Stage 4: Expanding the Focus

- This is really the “sales pitch” portion of the interview – where you are going to narrow in on detailed information about yourself and how you fit in with the job, and the organization. You want to show enthusiasm and interest in the position. Additionally this is the time when you need to address anything that has not been covered thus far in the interview. Remember: if you have not told the interviewer something, then they will not know! Don’t assume that they have read your resume and cover letter. If you have an experience that directly relates to the position or the organization, you need to clearly articulate that message. You do not have to wait for a question regarding that quality; instead, you can bring up the topic and steer the interview in that way. The best time to expand the focus is towards the end of the interview, perhaps when the employer has finished asking questions and wants to know if you have questions. You can reply with: “I do have a couple of questions, but first I wanted to reiterate my interest in the position, and let you know about...”

Stage 5: The Wrap Up

- The last part of the interview allows you to ask questions of the employer (you should have some prepared). State your interest in the position. Ask about the next step in the interview process and when you can anticipate notification regarding an employment decision or a second interview. Obtain a business card from all interviewers. Thank the interviewer(s), shake hands, and state that you enjoyed the meeting. Write a thank you email upon return to your home.
STEP 5: Acing the Interview!

General Interview Tips

Now that you are prepared for the interview, it’s time to ace the interview! Here are a couple of tips to remember during your interview:

- Convey a positive tone of voice. Sound happy to be at the interview - smile. Also, check your volume so you are neither too quiet nor too loud.
- Use correct grammar and a strong vocabulary. Preferably, try to use jargon from your career field.
- Have good posture – your back should be straight, feet on the floor and knees bent at 90˚ angles. Ladies, if you are wearing a skirt, your legs should be together and crossed at the ankle. Hands should be folded in your lap or on the table, though you can use your hands to emphasize specific points.
- Maintain good eye contact with all interviews. If you are interviewing with only 1 person, then you should look at them in the eye about 66% of the time, and the rest of the time you can glance behind them or to either side. Try to avoid looking down if possible. If you are interviewing with multiple interviewers, then you should look around the room at everyone and try to maintain eye contact.
- Avoid "um" and "ahs" and phrases like "okay", "like", and "you know."
- Practice relaxation and breathing techniques to stay calm.
- Ask for clarification if you do not understand a question.
- Answer all parts of the question – especially if there are multiple answers to the question.
- Stop and think about an answer to a question. If you are not sure of a response, then look down at your resume for suggestions, or paraphrase the question before answering. If after careful thought, you cannot answer the question, then admit you don’t know.
- Remain positive, and never volunteer negative information. Avoid negative phrases like "No, I have not" or “No, I cannot.” Try to phrase your answers in a positive manner.
- Don’t discuss salary unless the employer brings it up first.

The STAR Technique

The STAR technique has been mentioned a couple of times already, but it is an essential part of succeeding in a job interview. All interview questions are geared towards understanding your knowledge and experience as it relates to the position, and the best way to do that is to give specific examples. After all, anyone can say that they have good organizational skills, but if you can give an example of a time when you have used that skill, then it demonstrates that you can be organized on the job.

\[ S = \text{Situation} \] (background information)

\[ T= \text{Task} \] (what did you have to do?)

\[ A= \text{Action} \] (what you did, and how you did it)

\[ R= \text{Result} \] (the outcome of your effort)

Here’s an example of how to use the STAR technique:

**Question:** Give me an example of a time when you used your organizational skills?

**Situation:** In my State and Local Government class at the University at Albany,

**Task:** I had to work in a 4 member group on a case study surrounding the proposed closing of a town park.
**Action:** I took the initiative to serve as team leader of the group, so I organized weekly meetings for the team members to discuss the progress of the project. I made a list of all of the necessary components of the case study, and delegated each task. I followed up with each team member to clarify responsibilities and ensure that the task was being completed in a timely fashion. Personally, I managed the budget aspect of the project, which included organizing all of the fiscal information into an Excel spreadsheet, and analyzing the funds to determine where cuts could be made. Lastly, I compiled all of the components into a written report.

**Result:** The group made a presentation of our findings to the class, and we received an “A” on the project.

By providing an example, you clearly demonstrate organizational skills, but we also find other skill sets mentioned as well, such as computer skills, leadership ability, team work skills, analytical skills, and budgeting. The STAR approach can be used to answer all kinds of interview questions, but specifically should be used for behavioral based questions/interviews.

**Commonly Asked Interview Questions**

- **Tell me about yourself.** This is a very open-ended question and you should use it to make a brief statement about your education and professional background, why you’re interested in the position, and how you are qualified for it.

- **Why did you choose this major/career?** Indicate a particular skill or interest. Tell a story about it.

- **What courses/subjects did you like best or least?** Talk about the courses in your major and the ones in which you performed best.

- **What are your long and short term career goals?** You need not be specific but you must show knowledge of career paths and opportunities in the industry.

- **What do you consider your greatest strength?** Pick one that relates to the position and give an example using the STAR method.

- **What do you consider your greatest weakness?** Choose a weakness not related to the position, but indicate that you are working to strengthen it. Avoid personal weaknesses by focusing more on a technical skill or area of knowledge. You could also discuss a negative which the interviewer already knows or one which you have clearly improved upon that was a former weakness.

- **What motivates you?** Tell a story about your accomplishments and what was personally satisfying.

- **Why should we hire you?** Use this question to review the major key points of your interview outline. Stress your strengths.

- **Why do you want to work for our company?** Show your knowledge of the company, what you’ve learned at the interview, and discuss your personal goals and values.

- **What have been your most significant achievements?** Tell a STAR story!

- **What qualities do you possess that make you think you’d be successful in this job/industry?** Use your research to back up the personal qualities that make you their best candidate.

- **What do you do in your free time?** Talk about a hobby, sport, or special interest, but don’t fake it.

- **In what ways do you think you can make a contribution to our organization?** Reiterate contributions made in the past and relate them to this organization.
The following are behavioral based questions, and should be answered using the STAR technique.

- Describe a situation where you had to coordinate the activities of other people.
- Describe a time when you successfully balanced several competing priorities.
- Tell me about a time when you worked the hardest and had the greatest sense of achievement.

- How do you go about organizing your work and scheduling your time?
- Give me an example of a goal you set and how you achieved it.
- Describe a successful project you completed which required long hours.
- Describe a time when you had to work with someone who was uncooperative.
- What is the greatest decision you’ve had to make within the last 6 months?
- Describe a time when you had to adapt to a variety of people or situations.
- Give me an example of where you had difficulty in a course and what steps you took to remedy it.
- Give me an example of a time where you took on a leadership role.
- Tell me about a time you had to handle a difficult situation with a co-worker.
- Tell me about a time when you failed and what you learned from that experience.
- What did you do in your last position to contribute toward team success?

**Sample Questions to Ask in an Interview**

- Could you describe more fully the duties and responsibilities of the position?
- Is this a newly created position or are you filling a vacancy?
- How are new hires trained and developed?
- How many employees are in the department and will I be working as part of a team?
- Who would be my immediate supervisor?
- What is the management style of the organization? The department? The supervisor?
- What new projects or initiatives are planned for the near future?
- What major projects could I expect within the first six months/year on the job?
- How would you describe the work environment?
- Could you describe the career paths of people in this job/department?
- What are the opportunities for advancement or professional growth?
- How and when will my performance be evaluated?
- What do you see as the strengths of this department/division?
- What are the priorities of the organization over the next year?
- What is the greatest challenge currently facing the department/organization?
- Could you describe a typical day for someone in this position?
- What does it take to be highly successful in this organization?
- What percentage of employees pursue advanced degrees?
- What skills are most valuable in performing this job?
- How are important decisions made in this department?
STEP 6: FOLLOW UP

Congratulations! You have gotten through the interview process, but now the hard part comes - waiting. While you are waiting there are a couple of things you should do to assess your interview performance and improve for the next time.

First, you want to analyze your interview. Note your areas of strength and weakness, and determine how you can incorporate your areas of strength into your next interview, and how you can improve upon your weaknesses. Ask yourself: Was I prepared? Which questions were difficult to answer? How would I answer those questions in the future? Did I cover my “selling points”? Did I do enough research about the job and the employer? Create a list of interview questions – if you were asked those questions once, you will probably be asked them again. Next, assess whether you want the job and would like to work for that organization. Think about potential areas of concern, and if you are offered the position, address them with the employer before you accept the offer. Discuss the interview with a staff member from the Rockefeller College Office of Career Development to gain further insight and to determine the next steps.

Next, you should write a thank you letter/email within 24 hours of the interview. A thank you letter should be written regardless of how the interview went. If, after some reflection, you determine that the position and/or the organization is not a right fit for you, then a thank you letter is the appropriate time to withdraw your application (see sample below).

Thank You Letters/Emails

Why do I need a thank you email?

• Expresses appreciation for the interview.
• Reiterates your interest in the position, department, and company.
• Reminds the employer of your relevant skills and qualifications.
• Provides additional information that did not get covered in the interview.
• Failure to provide a thank you letter can be regarded as lack of interest in the position.

Guidelines:

• A thank you email should be sent after every interview.
• Everyone who interviews you or helps you in any way should get a thank you letter.
• Reference the date of when you met.
• Personalize the thank you letter/email, do not write the same email to multiple people. One way to personalize the thank you letter/email is to reference a particular part of the job or discussion that interested you.
• Emphasize additional information that didn't get covered in the interview, such as a project you worked on or a relevant experience that relates to the job. You can also use the email to clarify or expand upon something discussed in the interview.
• Send an email within 24 hours OR a letter within 48 hours; in most cases an email is acceptable, and should be written in the body of the email (not as an attachment).
**Sample Thank You Email**

Dear Ms. McCarty:
Thank you for meeting with me on Thursday, May 29th to discuss the Graduate Internship program at the New York State Assembly. I enjoyed talking with you and Bob Jones about the direction and goals of the program.

As you described, the New York State Assembly is looking for individuals to conduct research and develop policies. I am confident that my experience working with Congressman Tonko’s campaign assisting in writing and revising policy will enable me to fulfill the requirements of the Assembly internship. At the same time, I was happy to learn that there are ample opportunities for me to continue to grow professionally.

Once again, it was a pleasure meeting with you. I look forward to hearing from you soon. If there is additional information you need from me, please do not hesitate to call me at (555) 555-5555.

Sincerely,
John Doe

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**Sample Thank You Email – Withdrawing Application**

Dear Ms. McCarty:
Thank you for meeting with me on Thursday, May 29th to discuss the Graduate Internship program at the New York State Assembly. I enjoyed talking with you and Bob Jones about the direction and goals of the program.

After learning more about the New York State Assembly and the Graduate Internship program, I do not think that the opportunity matches my career goals. Therefore, I would like to withdraw my application.

Once again, it was a pleasure meeting with you and I thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
John Doe

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**Following Up**

After you have written your thank you email, you have to sit back and wait for a response from the employer. During the interview, you should have asked about when you will receive notification regarding employment or a second interview, and you should have a timeline of when you should hear a response from the employer. You should wait to hear from the employer, but you should not wait too long. For example, if the interviewer told you that they should have a decision within 2 weeks, and it has been 3 weeks, then you should send a follow up message. (If you did not ask about the employer’s timeline for hiring, then you should follow up after 2 weeks). Here’s an example of a follow up message:

Dear Ms. McCarty:
Thank you for meeting with me on Thursday, May 29th to discuss the Graduate Internship program at the New York State Assembly. I enjoyed talking with you and Bob Jones about the direction and goals of the program.

I wanted to reiterate my interest in the position, and to determine where you are in the hiring process. Any information you can give me on the status of the position would be appreciated.

Once again, it was a pleasure meeting with you. I look forward to hearing from you soon. If there is additional information you need from me, please do not hesitate to call me at (555) 555-5555.

Sincerely,
John Doe
If you receive a rejection letter, follow up with a note expressing your interest in future positions for which you may qualify. If you are comfortable, ask for feedback on your interview and why you were not selected as a candidate.

**STEP 7: EVALUATING JOB OFFERS, NEGOTIATING, AND ACCEPTING OFFERS**

Congratulations! You have received a job offer, or perhaps several job offers! Do not feel pressured to accept a job on the spot – it’s important that you carefully evaluate the job offer. When you receive a job offer, either over the phone or via email, you should ask for some time to review the offer (even if you know that you will accept). The polite way to ask for time is to state, “Thank you very much for the offer. I would like some time to review the offer – can I get back to you tomorrow (you should ask for no more time than a week)?” Whenever possible, try to get the offer in writing. An offer should typically detail your salary and start date, though it may include information about benefits as well. You should share your offer information with the Rockefeller College Office of Career Development, who will help you to sort out the details of the offer, and determine if it fits in with your long-term career plans.

When evaluating a job offer, you should consider:

- **Job Content:** Do you fully understand the nature of the job? Will you be happy performing this job for an extended period of time (at least 1 year, if not 2). Will this job make you marketable for future opportunities?
- **Your Manager/Supervisor:** When you interviewed for the position, did you meet with your immediate supervisor? What was your impression of him/her? Will s/he serve as a mentor? Does s/he have a management style conducive to a productive work environment?
- **Coworkers:** Even though you will be reporting directly to your supervisor, you will more than likely need to work collaboratively with your coworkers. You will be spending between 30-40 hours at work every week (if not more), and you should get along with those individuals.
- **Time Commitment:** What is a typical work week? Are you required to work overtime? Will you have to travel?
- **Location:** How long is the commute? Is the office in a location where you feel comfortable? Is this an area where you would want to live?
- **Salary and Benefits:** Is the salary competitive? How are individual salary increases determined? When and how are salary/promotions determined? Evaluate vacation time, medical/dental insurance, retirement plans, and other fringe benefits.

**Negotiating**

After reviewing the full job offer, you may decide that you want to negotiate. You will need to prepare a strategy ahead of time and approach the negotiation with a positive attitude. You will also need to provide a reason why you are worthy of an increase in salary or benefits (not just because you think you deserve it). This is very similar to an interview – you must convince the employer that you possess skills or experience that they need. Follow these steps to help you with the negotiation:

- **Assess your budget:** Create a budget of your expenses, and determine if the salary will allow you to live comfortably. Estimate about 28% of your salary will go to taxes.
- **Research:** Determine typical salary ranges for someone of your educational background, experience level, and geographic location. You can find salary information on the NYS Bureau of Labor Statistics,
www.salary.com, or you can ask the Rockefeller College Office of Career Development for the average salary of recent graduates.

- **Benefits:** Your salary is not the only compensation you will receive. Most companies will offer a retirement plan, health and dental insurance, and paid vacations. In addition, some organizations may also offer bonuses, increases, stock options, commissions, company cars, pensions, signing bonuses, and relocation expenses. You should factor these perks into your total offer.

After evaluating the total offer, you should then determine what factors you would like to negotiate. Typically, you will negotiate salary, and you should determine how much more you would like. The salary increase should not be much higher than what the original offer was – for example, if you were offered $40,000, then it would be inappropriate to ask for $65,000; instead, you may want to ask for $50,000. Keep in mind that the company may come back with a counter-offer, which will typically be in the middle of the two salaries. Therefore, if your budget is $45,000/year, you should ask for a higher rate, in case the organization counter-offers. After determining the salary amount you will ask for, you should start the salary negotiations by stating something like, “I'm very pleased to receive the offer, but given the responsibilities of the job and my qualifications, I wanted to determine if the salary is negotiable.” It is best to ask if the salary is negotiable first, as you do not want to offend the employer, and also, there may be set pay structures in place that don’t allow for room to negotiate. If the salary is not negotiable, you may want to consider negotiating other benefits, such as working from home/telecommuting, working a reduced schedule, or having the employer pay for transportation costs.

**Accepting a Job Offer**

When accepting a job offer, you should adhere to some ethical considerations.

- If you are not interested in the offer, you should decline as soon as possible.
- If you are waiting to hear back from other organizations regarding employment, be honest with the organization that gave you the offer. Indicate that you are flattered by their offer, but you would like time to consider additional offers. You should then contact the other organizations, and let them know that you have another offer, and inquire when you can anticipate notification regarding the position.
- **Accepting a job offer is a serious commitment.** Once you accept, it is considered proper business ethics to discontinue all job search activities. In fact, you should inform employers that you have accepted an offer and are no longer eligible for consideration. **It is unacceptable to reverse your decision.** Once all negotiation has ended and you’ve agreed upon an offer, obtain written confirmation. Asking for an offer in writing prevents a possible future misunderstanding.
- Please notify the Director of Internships and Career Services when you accept a job offer. The Rockefeller College Office of Career Development keeps statistics on job placements and work related information, and participation by all graduates is necessary to keep statistics as accurate as possible.
Networking

WHAT IS NETWORKING?
Networking is one of the most essential career development and job search tools that is often overlooked by students and job hunters. Networking involves developing and maintaining connections with individuals, then mutually benefitting from this developed relationship. In relation to career development, a well-developed network provides you with a support system of individuals who can provide meaningful assistance to you as it may relate to your career/industry exploration, connections to other individuals and learning about potential job openings. Networking should be approached as an ongoing process that takes time and nurturing, and not something you do just when you are looking for a job. It is important to remember that networking is a two way process in which you provide beneficial support to those in your network as well.

WHY IS NETWORKING IMPORTANT?
Networking provides you with an opportunity to:

- Connect with individuals in your field of interest that can provide beneficial insight
- Gather information pertaining to a particular field or industry
- Increase your chances to find out about job openings otherwise not advertised

CONNECT WITH INDIVIDUALS
One of the best ways to learn about an industry, company or position that you are interested in is to learn about it from someone that is connected to it firsthand. Building your connections will provide you with an invaluable opportunity to best prepare for your career goals. It is important to remember that networking is a mutually beneficial process. You never know when your skills and resources can prove to be beneficial to others in your network. Promoting your skills and interest to an individual in your network can additionally lead to opportunities to collaborate with people on projects in which professional interests are shared.

GATHER INFORMATION
Gaining information about a specific career related topic can be most beneficial and inspiring when it comes from the personal experience of others. Learning about a specific field of interest and the various occupations within it from an individual in the field provides you with an opportunity to gain this knowledge. Participating in an informational interview (see informational interview section) will offer an opportunity to gather this information in a structured manner.

LEARN ABOUT JOB VACANCIES
Ever heard of the phrase “It's not what you know, it's who you know”? It fully applies here. Approximately 66% of job vacancies are never advertised to job seekers and are instead obtained through some form of personal and professional references! Employers prefer to hire candidates that have been referred by a trusted source. They are also inclined to hire recently met job seekers who have effectively demonstrated their qualifications and professional competence. By expanding your network to include individuals that have connections to these unknown positions, you greatly increase your chances of learning about opportunities.

HOW DO I ESTABLISH MY NETWORK?
Networking opportunities occur on a daily basis and can include partaking in a brief conversation with someone on an elevator to an arranged meeting with a professional. There are many ways to develop your list of potential networking contacts. Begin by identifying all the people that you come in contact with through your activities. These can include:

- Your friends, their parents, and family members
- Your relatives and extended family
- Former and current employers and co-workers
- Coaches, clergy
• Classmates, faculty, advisors
• Club and organization members
• Professional Associations
• University at Albany Alumni Association members and/or those of other schools you’ve attended
• UCAN – UAlbany Career Advisory Network

You will have a better chance of talking or meeting with someone when you have been referred by a mutual contact. Begin to develop your networking contacts by asking people if they know someone working in your field of interest. Once you have started to initiate contact, remember to thank and stay in touch with those who assisted. For example, a student that is considering a career in Public Policy might make a list that looks similar to this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RELATION TO YOU</th>
<th>CAREER INDUSTRY</th>
<th>CONNECTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sister</td>
<td>Social Services</td>
<td>Has a best friend that works in state government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>Public Administration</td>
<td>Knows several policy professionals from previous experience in lobbying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Friend</td>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>Has a strong professional relationship with her local mayor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbor</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Works for the NYS Assembly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HOW TO FURTHER DEVELOP YOUR NETWORK

ONLINE SOCIAL NETWORKING

Online social networking has become the fastest growing form of networking amongst professionals. Networking through online resources provides individuals that usually would not have a chance to connect with one another to develop an association on a professional level. Many of these sites serve as a professional networking tool to millions of global users to reconnect with classmates and colleagues, discover new connections through users and obtain answers to industry related questions through both direct contact and discussion boards. It is important to maintain a professional appearance throughout your profile pages when using these social networking sites for career purposes. Some beneficial sites to utilize include:

LinkedIn.com
• LinkedIn is a business-oriented social networking site mainly used for professional networking. As of August 2013, it had more than 225 million registered users.

Meetup.com
• The world’s largest network of local groups that makes it easy for anyone to organize a local group or find one of the thousands already meeting up, face-to-face. More than 2,000 groups get together in local communities daily with the goal of improving themselves or their communities.

Facebook.com
• Facebook is a global social networking website with over 300 million members. In addition to finding friends and updating profile pages accessible to users, members can also join professional groups and connect with other group members.

Twitter.com
• Twitter is a social networking and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read messages. Many organizations post job opportunities and events through these “tweets.”

INTERNSHIPS

Working in an internship related to your field of interest will allow you to work directly with professionals. Building and maintaining strong relationships with employees and supervisors you work directly with will allow you to add to your network individuals who can attest to your work ability. Having connections at a company or knowing someone who can pass your resume along is extremely helpful as you begin your job search.
THE UALBANY CAREER ADVISORY NETWORK (UCAN)
The UAlbany Career Advisory Network (UCAN) allows you to search for UAlbany Alumni who are interested in or have experience in specific fields. You can search for an advisor on a number of criteria – industry, company, region and more. Alumni are available to connect with for informational interviews, advice, and networking. The network includes over 1,800 alumni. To find out more, visit www.albany.edu/alumni/ucan.php.

CAREER EVENTS
Participating in various career related events can provide valuable opportunities to meet new professional contacts. As such, students are encouraged to attend as many events as they are able. Some of these events offered through Rockefeller College include:
- Information Sessions
- Alumni Panels & Presentations
- Speed Networking
- Mock Interviews
- Policy Conversations

WHAT IS INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWING?
Informational interviewing provides a medium to learn about a specific industry firsthand from individuals that have worked in the field. It is the process of conducting exploratory informational conversations with persons who can provide you with career advice and introduce you to others who can assist you with your goals. For some people contacting and speaking to professionals in their field of interest can be intimidating. However, most people like to provide information to those breaking into the field, and enjoy talking about their own work. It is important to realize that the purpose of conducting informational interviews is two-fold.

The first purpose of informational interviews is to gather information to determine whether or not a potential career or company is a good match for your skills and interests. Talking with experienced professionals is the best way to get a realistic picture of the profession, industry or company. They can describe to you the particular culture of their organization, the type of jobs within it, typical career paths of employees and provide a clear description of their own career. These insiders can also serve as key contacts in your future job search. Considering that most job openings never make it to the classified ads, insiders can help lead you to that elusive "hidden" job market.

Making a lasting impression and developing long term relationships is the second goal of informational interviewing. Merely conducting a fifteen minute phone interview will not reap results. Sending thank you notes, maintaining contact, and following up are the keys to maintaining a network with the individuals with whom you conduct informational interviews. The more you build your network and nurture it, the more effective you will be.

MAKING CONTACT
One of the most efficient ways to initiate an informational interview is through email. If you have access to a person’s email address, compose a very brief note of introduction, stating how you obtained their name and outlining a few key issues that you would like to address. Ask the contact to reply with an appropriate time for you to speak with him/her. In some cases, you may not receive a response to your email. Unfortunately, people who are flooded with email each day often don’t open mail from unknown sources.

If you do not receive a response, follow up with a phone call. Whether you are calling a UCAN Career Advisor or a personal contact, prepare in advance what you want to say. This is your first chance to make a positive impression. You want to sound organized, knowledgeable, and professional. Indicate who you are, how you obtained their name, and why you are calling. Express your interest in talking or meeting with the person at their workplace, indicating that you only need twenty minutes of their time. Practice what you want to say beforehand. You may not get through to the person on the initial try, but remember that persistence and congeniality will go a long way.
PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW
Depending upon your initial reasons for meeting with a Career Advisor or personal referral, carefully consider what it is you wish to ask and accomplish in the discussion. Because you have initiated the contact, you must be clear about your agenda. Your questions should be focused around three major categories: career preparation, the content and responsibilities of the person's job, and trends in the industry and profession. If possible, do some initial research on the organization with whom the person is affiliated. Set goals and objectives for your discussion and prepare an outline for the meeting.

CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW
If the interview is being conducted by telephone, call at the agreed upon time. If you are having a face to face meeting, arrive approximately ten minutes early. Be sure to clearly state your purpose for the interview, along with a brief description of who you are, your professional background, and how you were referred to the person. Indicate right away that you are only looking for information and advice. It is not appropriate to ask a networking contact to provide you with a job.

Prepare your questions carefully so you come across sincerely and genuinely interested in the person and the information they are sharing. You will be judged upon the scope of your questions and the way you deliver them. As an introduction, discuss a little about your background, skills, and interests. The goal is to be conversational and relaxed yet professional. Your questions should be broad and very open-ended. Remember that you are there to listen and learn, not impress the person with your qualifications for a job. (See the attached list of questions.)

Bring a resume and ask the person to review it if it seems appropriate. Many people ask for a resume to get a better understanding of you and your background. If the person has critiqued the resume, you can later send a final copy along with a thank you note.

Be enthusiastic and well prepared; it is the key to a successful interview. Contacts want to feel their time was well spent. In addition, the meeting may benefit them as well. If a position opens up in the future, and you have made a positive impression, you may be in line for a job interview.

End the meeting by asking for other contacts in the field who may be of assistance, and if you could use this person's name as a referral. Be sure to express your gratitude for their time and the information you received.

AFTER THE INTERVIEW
Evaluate the success of the discussion. Did it meet your goals and objectives? Did you come away with answers to most of your questions? Did it confirm or change your impressions of the occupation or industry? Did it help prepare you for future plans?

Prepare a brief thank you letter (see attached sample) outlining some specific points covered during your interview. Enclose a resume, if appropriate. Indicate that you will keep the person informed of your progress and any meeting you set up as a result of their referrals.

Networking is an ongoing process that will continue to demand your time and attention. It means keeping in touch with established contacts, constantly reaching out to new ones, and is essential to your career success.
QUESTIONS FOR NETWORKING AND INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS

Remember, the objective in conducting an informational interview is to gain knowledge about a potential industry and to develop your network. Your questions should be tailored to your personal and career objectives and should not focus directly on obtaining a position with the employer. Here are some possible questions to facilitate your interview.

**Career Preparation**
- What is the best preparation for this profession? (i.e. education, part-time work, training programs, etc.)
- What skills or talents are most important for this field and how can they be acquired?
- How did you become interested in this profession/organization? What are the good and bad points about this profession?
- What was your undergraduate/graduate major? How did it help you prepare for your career? What additional training/education have you had?
- How can students find summer jobs or internships in this field? Are there other ways to get experience?
- Is a graduate/advanced degree important? If so, which areas of study would you recommend?
- What journals, magazines, books, or websites would be helpful for me to learn more about this profession?
- What personal attributes do you think have contributed to your success in this field?
- What professional organizations do you belong to? Would you recommend I join?
- Which of my transferable skills should I emphasize when looking for employment in the field?
- What skills are most valued in this profession/industry?
- What are some good resources for job opportunities and further research?
- Do you have any suggestions regarding my resume?

**Job Content and Responsibilities**
- What services are provided by your organization?
- What is a typical day like? Do you work alone or as part of a group?
- Can you describe the work environment? (i.e. casual/formal, structured/flexible, etc.)
- Which part of the job is most challenging for you?
- What do you like most about your position? The least?
- What are the greatest pressures, strains, or anxieties in your work? What are the toughest problems or decisions with which you must cope?
- What are the time demands related to this field?
- How did you find your job?
- Can you describe your job history?

**Industry/Job Trends and Environment**
- Tell me about the current state of the industry.
- What changes do you foresee in this profession/industry over the next five years?
- What is the outlook for jobs and career growth?
- In what other settings do people in this profession work? (e.g. educational institutions, corporations, non-profits, etc.)
- What are the titles/responsibilities of the people you work for/with?
- To whom do you report?
- What are the typical entry level positions in this field?
- What is the typical career path?
- What are the beginning, mid-range, and top salaries in this profession?
- Where are the best employment prospects? What are employment prospects in your company?

**Do you know anyone else who could share career advice with me?**
SAMPLE EMAIL REQUEST FOR INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

Dear Ms. Smith,
I was referred to you through Professor Bob McEvoy from Rockefeller College of Public Affairs & Policy at the University at Albany. I am writing to introduce myself and request a possible meeting or phone call with you regarding my interest in the field of local government.

Presently, I am in my first year of the MPA program at Rockefeller College, with a concentration in local government management. In the past, I participated in various internships and volunteer experiences surrounding politics, doing campaign work for Senator Schumer. Having completed one semester in the MPA program, I am now considering what my options are in pursuing full-time positions after graduation. If possible, I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you for an informational interview so that I can learn more about your career path, find out about opportunities in the field, and get some advice from you as to how I can best achieve my goals.

I know you are very busy and truly appreciate whatever time you can give me. I look forward to hearing from you and hope that we can set up a meeting. Thank you in advance for considering this request.

Sincerely,
John Doe

SAMPLE THANK YOU EMAIL FOR INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW

Dear Mr. Rogers:
Thank you for spending time with me last Tuesday to discuss your career and the field of public finance. I was extremely appreciative of the tour of your facility as well as the introduction to your colleagues.

The information you provided about your position as a Financial Analyst at the NYS Division of Budget was extremely helpful. Your description of your duties helped to clarify the distinction between public and private finance. I also appreciated your tips on entering into public finance, and will plan to follow up immediately with the contact names you shared with me.

Again, thank you for your assistance. I thoroughly enjoyed our visit, and will keep you posted on my progress.

Sincerely,
Max Evans

SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTER TO NETWORKING REFERRAL SOURCE

Dear Ms. Mertz:
It was a pleasure meeting you at the "Policy Conversation" sponsored by Rockefeller College of Public Affairs & Policy last month. I appreciated your interest in my job search and would like to particularly thank you for putting me in contact with Jane Bryant at the American Red Cross in Boston.

Ms. Bryant was most generous with her time and provided me with a great deal of useful information on job hunting in the Boston area. She made valuable suggestions for strengthening my resume and gave me the names of a few colleagues who might be interested in my background and skills.

Enclosed is a copy of my updated resume. Feel free to make comments or suggestions. Again, thank you for being so helpful. I will keep in touch as my search progresses.

Sincerely,
Lucille Ricardo
**Thinking ahead for Graduate School**

### Why should you go to Graduate School?
- You have a career plan!
- You have done your research and found the right program to fit your needs.
- You have talked to your mentors and/or advisors about your academic and professional goals.
- You have done an internship or held a job, which gave you a clear vision of how graduate school fits into your career path.

### Why you should not go to Graduate School?
- Your parents told you to go.
- You want to stay in college for as long as possible.
- It sounds like fun.
- You think you need to go in order to get a good job.
- You do not know what else to do with your life.

### Things to consider going to graduate school right away

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Keep your momentum</td>
<td>Spending more money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop practical/useful skills</td>
<td>Two to four more years of classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better job placement rate after masters</td>
<td>No guarantee of ideal job afterwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better pay after masters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build your resume</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defer your loans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Things to consider waiting to go to graduate school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Get work experience which makes you a better applicant</td>
<td>Not a great job market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build professional network</td>
<td>May not get a job that you want long-term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarifies your goals and direction</td>
<td>Could lose your momentum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make money before going</td>
<td>Get caught up in life situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get some time to NOT be in school</td>
<td>Have to start paying back your student loans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Types of Graduate School Options:
- **Law School (J.D. Degrees)**
  - Law school prepares students to work as a lawyer. There are many fields of law and depending on each school, you can focus on a certain concentration. Law school does not guarantee a job in government or public policy.
  - In order to apply for law school, you must take the LSAT, perform well in undergraduate, and possibly show applicable work/internship experience.
- **Academic Degree Program**
  - Academic masters (MA or MS) and doctoral programs focus on research and academia. These programs enhance the theoretical components of a subject, and indulge in research.
  - In order to apply to academic programs, you must have strong academic achievement and test scores, as well as a match to the department's research agenda.
- **Professional/Terminal Degree Program**
  - Professional programs focus practical and professional skills applicable to the work environment. Usually these programs focus on professional experiences and knowledge, rather than research.
  - Professional programs can include: Master of Public Health (MPH), Master of Business Administration (MBA), Master of Social Work (MSW), Master of Public Administration (MPA), Master of Public Policy (MPP), and Master of Education.
**Steps for Success When Applying to Graduate School**

1. **Set and Articulate Goals**
   a. Set specific and realistic goals of what you want to get out of graduate school
   b. Know what kind of graduate programs interest you
   c. No need for lifetime goals, but have ideas about what career you want to get out and what kind of knowledge/opportunities come from each program
   d. Have multiple goals! Don’t limit yourself!
   e. Graduate schools are not exploratory opportunities. They expect you to have goals and reasons why you are applying to the program.

2. **Take Classes, Volunteer, Obtain Internships or Part-Time Jobs**
   a. In order to help you formulate and solidify your goals, take classes that interest you, complete internships to get experience, and take on part-time jobs.
   b. Graduate schools admit focused students. Make sure your experiences cater to your interests and goals, and they will help you identify what programs are right for you.

3. **Develop Documentation**
   a. Draft, finalize, and use your resumes, cover letters, personal statements, and other applications materials to the appropriate formatting! Look back on how to write a resume and cover letter.
   b. Make an appointment or email your materials to the Office of Career Development for revision.
   c. Speak to professors about recommendation letters. Ask early! Preferably ask tenured professors!

4. **Identify a “Hit List”**
   a. Start identifying factors that will influence your decision: type of program, location, curriculum, cost, and faculty
   b. Make a list of potential programs, their application requirements and admissions deadlines
   c. Start connecting with other students, faculty, staff and professionals to identify programs for you.
   d. Identify Fellowships and other Post-Graduation Programs as well!
   e. Meet with the Office of Career Development about possible programs and processes

5. **Establish and Use a “Network”**
   a. Contact everyone you know and ask for their advice/suggestions. This includes friends, family, professors, classmates, staff, professionals, and alumni.
   b. Connect with the schools’ admissions offices you are applying to and schedule a meeting or a visit.
   c. Ask to speak with alumni of the program and ask their opinions of the program.

6. **Identify Applications Materials, Admissions Requirements and Mandatory Tests**
   a. Check to see what tests you have to take, and prepare for them!
      - GRE-academic and professional programs: http://www.ets.org/gre
      - LAST- law school: http://www.lsac.org/JD/LSAT/about-the-LSAT.asp
   b. Understand how to apply to the schools. Know their online application steps and processes.
   c. Make sure you complete any courses required for the program in undergrad!

7. **Upload, E-mail and, Finally, Mail Materials**
   a. Complete all application materials and have them looked over by office staff
   b. Connect again with people giving you recommendations to ensure they know deadlines
   c. Make sure you know of financial aid and scholarship applications/deadlines
   d. Apply well before deadline!

8. **Follow Up, Follow Up, Follow Up**

9. **Interview**
   a. Schedule an interview if needed for the program
   b. Read over the proper interviewing strategies and prepare

10. **Receive Offers and Accept One**
    a. Evaluate your offers based on the curriculum, your interests and goals, and financials.
    b. Consult with advisors and office staff about the opportunities you have.
    c. Pick a school and get ready to go!
POST-GRADUATION PROGRAMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

There are many opportunities for students once they graduate that may not be getting a job or going to graduate school. Participating in structured programs such as a fellowship or program, could give you great experience, useful connections, and usually money. Also, these programs may be able to connect you to graduate schools or loan forgiveness programs.

**Fellowship Opportunities**

**Federal Government Fellowships**
Samples Opportunities:
- Pathways Program: [https://www.usajobs.gov/StudentsAndGrads](https://www.usajobs.gov/StudentsAndGrads)
- American Political Science Association Minority Fellows Program [www.apsanet.org/content_3284.cfm](http://www.apsanet.org/content_3284.cfm).

**State Government Fellowships**
Samples Opportunities:
- Capital Fellows Program: [http://www.csus.edu/calst/programs](http://www.csus.edu/calst/programs).

**Local Government Fellowships**
Samples Opportunities:
- International City/County Management Association: [http://icma.org](http://icma.org)

**Other Fellowships:**
- Fulbright: [http://us.fulbrightonline.org](http://us.fulbrightonline.org)

For more information on available fellowships, visit [www.albany.edu/rockefeller/career_postgrad.shtm](http://www.albany.edu/rockefeller/career_postgrad.shtm).

**Some Post-Graduation Programs**
Teach for America: [www.teachforamerica.org](http://www.teachforamerica.org)
Peace Corps: [www.peacecorps.gov](http://www.peacecorps.gov)
AmeriCorps: [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov)
City Year: [www.cityyear.org](http://www.cityyear.org)

**Public Service Loan Forgiveness**
The PSLF Program is intended to encourage individuals to enter and continue to work full-time in public service jobs.

Basically, you make 120 Payments on applicable federal loans, and the balance after that is forgiven!

Qualifying employment is any employment with a federal, state, or local government agency, entity, or organization or a not-for-profit organization that has been designated as tax-exempt by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC). The type or nature of employment with the organization does not matter for PSLF purposes. Additionally, the type of services that these public service organizations provide does not matter for PSLF purposes. Some private employers may count if conducting public services such as emergency services, military service, public safety, law enforcement, public health services, public education, public library services, education services, public interest law services, or public service for individuals with disabilities and/or the elderly. For more information visit: [www.studentaid.ed.gov/repay-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/charts/public-service](http://www.studentaid.ed.gov/repay-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/charts/public-service).