Professional Document Preparation

Resumes, Cover Letters, and References

UW-Superior Career Services, in partnership with faculty, staff, and employers, provides students and alumni with opportunities and resources to identify career goals and develop life-long career management skills.

UW-Superior Career Services strives to be a recognized and valued service to the students, alumni, university, and community as the premier provider of career development expertise and programming.

Career Services
1061 Swenson Hall
715-394-8024 – career@uwsuper.edu

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Introduction/Definitions

A **Resume** is a document used for job applicants to present their backgrounds and skills through highlighting their work experience, education, and other prevalent information. The most important thing to note about a resume is that it is based on relevancy. Resumes should be tailored the jobs and internships someone is applying to. These documents are normally 1-2 pages long. Overall, a good resume gives the potential employer enough information to move the applicant to the interview portion of the hiring process.

A **Cover Letter** is a letter written to the organization or employer offering the job you have applied or are applying for. This letter introduces you to said employer and encourages them to read your resume and to motivate them to interview you. This is often the first contact that you have with your prospective employer.

A **Reference Page** is a list of people who can vouch for your skills and qualification before the employer makes their final hiring choice.

Resume Guide

Below are some of the most commonly seen categories found on résumés of college students. Choose the categories that fit your experiences and go from there.

Order of categories: Your name block always comes first. Generally, Education comes next.

Style: An eye-catching, readable résumé has some elements of style. Career Services is here to help you with style. Remember that whatever you choose, you need to be consistent throughout your document.

Reverse chronological order: In each category, list your entries from most recent to least recent.

Tense: Use present tense for work you are doing now, and past tense for work you have done.

AVOID: Templates; fonts in colors other than black; italics (unless needed to properly cite a scientific name or a publication); changing fonts; hard to read fonts like script (stick to easy, professional fonts); having all of your text line up either in the middle or to one side of the page; writing in full sentences (no periods at the end of your entries)

NAME BLOCK
- Typically, the name block is centered or right-aligned on the page.
- Your name should be the largest size font on your résumé; size 14-16 point font works well. **NOTE**: The rest of your font should be no smaller than size 11.
- It is ok to put your address on one line and your email and phone number on their own line – this conserves space as long as it is neatly done. **NOTE:** You are not required to put your physical address on your resume. You can skip it, or just put the city and state.
- A box around your name block or some sort of line directly below your name block helps it stand out and separates it from your other categories.
- If you have a LinkedIn profile, blog, e-portfolio, or website that is current and consistently updated, include it in your name block.

SUMMARY OF SKILLS
Summary of Skills: Along the same lines of the objective, this section is only effective if you are writing about specific, quantified, easily demonstrable skills that are backed up by your experience. Otherwise, address them in your cover letter and interview.

EDUCATION
- You don't need to include your high school unless you are frequently referring to experiences during your time in high school.
- If you have transferred, gone to another school of higher education, or have other degrees, you should list them using one of the formatting options below. **NOTE:** You don't need to list your graduation date for prior schools.
- List your GPA if it is required in your field or by the job announcement, no matter what. Otherwise, only include it if you have a 3.0 or higher. Make sure you list as such: 3.0/4.0
- If you did any Study Away or exchanges, list that in your education section using one of the formats below.

There are 2 ways to format your Education section. How you do this depends mostly on space.

If conserving space is not a concern for you, use this format:

Bachelor of Science	Expected Graduation: May 2018
Major: Biology Minor/Concentration: Fishery Sciences	GPA: 3.2/4.0
University of Wisconsin-Superior	Superior, WI

If conserving space IS a concern for you, use this format:

B.S. University of Wisconsin-Superior; Superior, WI	Expected Graduation: May 2018
Major: Biology Minor/Concentration: Fishery Sciences	GPA: 3.2/4.0

WORK EXPERIENCE or PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE or RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

- Include anything work did for at least 5 hrs/week for at least 6 weeks, whether it was paid or volunteer. If you dropped everything and volunteered for a month, it goes here.
- Only go back 10 years, and only include relevant experience.

Format:
Title; Name of employer; City, stat
Dates
  - Duties: List your duties in a bulleted list, with each entry beginning with a power verb. Try for 2-3 bullets/entry.

Example
Fisheries Intern; Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge: US Fish and Wildlife Service; Ashland, WI
  - Sampled local estuary for fish populations using mark-recapture, seining, and electroshock methods
  - Accurately entered over 5,000 records into fisheries database
  - Performed public outreach regarding Great Lakes invasive species to 200-400 people each weekend

CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Include your role, name of the organization and dates
- Format examples:
  President, American Fisheries Society Chapter, University of Wisconsin-Superior
  2016-present
  Goalie, Women's DIII Intercollegiate Hockey, University of Wisconsin-Superior
  2015-present
  Race Day Volunteer, Run For Heroes, UWS Veterans and Nontraditional Student Center
  Fall 2015

SPECIALIZED SKILLS
DON'T

- Don't put soft skills here (communication, problem solving, organized, etc.) These are best leveraged within your work experience, cover letter, and interview.
- Unless a job announcement specifically mentions it, don't list basic Microsoft Office software.

DO

- List proficiency levels for all entries in your Specialized Skills category (proficient, fluent, basic, intermediate, advanced)
- List your language proficiency if you have language ability beyond English (fluent, conversational, writing)
- List any specialized equipment or software specific to your field, especially if it is mentioned in the job announcement – be sure to list proficiency level for each

SCHOLASTIC HONORS AND AWARDS

- Include Dean's list, scholarships, and academically-related distinctions and when received
- You will most likely not include this category unless applying for graduate school, an internship, or an opportunity where academic achievement is stressed as a criterion for selection
- Format:
  Dean's List; University of Wisconsin-Superior
  2016-2017
  Chancellor's Award for Leadership; University of Wisconsin-Superior
  2015-present

LICENSES/CERTIFICATES/CERTIFICATIONS/

- To learn how to list **certificates** earned at UWS through the Continuing Education program, visit [here](#).
- For **certifications**:
  Name of certification; Name of certifying body/organization
  Expiration Date
- For **licenses**:
  Name of license; Name of certifying body/organization
  Expiration Date
NOTE: If your license or certification does not expire, write "Does not expire"

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAININGS

- Include any workshops, seminars, and other professional opportunities you've pursued in your field of study
- Format:
  Your role; Name of Experience; Location
  	Date
  Examples:
  Presenter, Ecological Services Conference; UWS: Superior, WI
  	Date
    Presentation title:
  Participant, Twin Ports Healthy Families Symposium; St. Luke's Health Care; Duluth, MN
  	Date

RESEARCH

- If you've done research as part of a UWS-sponsored program like **SURF** or **McNai**r, list as such:

Student Researcher; McNair Scholars Program; UWS; Superior, WI
	Dates

Faculty mentor: Dr. First name Last name
Project title or purpose:
List your duties in a bulleted list, with each entry beginning with a [power verb](#)

- If you've been hired as a **research assistant** in a department or under the supervision of a UWS professor, you can choose to list in a "Research" category, or as a Professional experience. List as such:

Research Assistant; Biology Department; UWS; Superior, WI
>   Dates
Research supervisor: Dr. First name Last name
Project title or purpose:
List your duties in a bulleted list, with each entry beginning with a [power verb](#)

REFERENCES

- References always go on a separate page from your résumé. Copy the name block from your résumé to the top of the References page.
- **NEVER** write "References available upon request." This is assumed.
- If you are using professors as references and it is summer or they are on sabbatical, be sure to find out what email and phone number they are regularly checking.
- **Format:**   **For example**:

Prefix. First name Last Name	Dr. Rosie Reference
Title, Organization name	Assistant Professor of Awesomeness, University of Wisconsin-Superior
Phone number (s), email address	715-394-1234, referros@uwsuper.edu

Power verbs to include on your Resume

TEACHING
advise
aid
counsel
encourage
guide
instruct
lecture
mentor
support
teach

COMMUNICATION
editing
explaining
influencing
interpreting
listening
mediating
promoting
speaking
translating
writing

PUBLIC RELATIONS
advertise
attend
coordinate
convince
dispense
fundraise
influence
persuade
recruit
seek out

INTERPERSONAL
acclimate
adapt
assist
collaborate
critique
foster
implement

ADMINISTRATIVE
accelerate
achieve
allocate
assess
benchmark
enforce
govern
manage
monitor
officiate

MANAGEMENT
communicating
consulting
coordinating
delegating
directing
evaluating
leading
negotiating
persuading
planning

NUMBERS / FINANCE
account
appraise
calculate
estimate
formulate
inventory
maximize
process
record
quantify

ORGANIZATION
arrange
balance
connect
define
establish
facilitate
modify

RESEARCH
assessing
calculating
collecting
diagnosing
evaluating
examining
extrapolating
interviewing
investigating
synthesizing

GENERATING
activate
compose
conserve
engineer
launch
modify
produce
redesign
shape
unite

GENERAL
apply
contribute
establish
navigate
offer
perform
resolve
select

Try to begin each of your descriptive lines with a Power Verb. Make sure you are always staying consistent with past/present verb tense when listing experiences.

This list is just a beginning to help you get started.

First and Last Name

Phone Number | Email Address | 2222 Address Ave City, ST Zip Code
Your LinkedIn/Personal Website (optional)

Education

Bachelor of Science   Graduation Date: 05/2016
Major: Business Administration Management
University of Wisconsin-Superior

Relevant Work Experience

Career Services Marketing Intern   09/2015 - Present
University of Wisconsin-Superior | Superior, WI
- Provide marketing support to the Career Services office including creating a marketing plan
- Create and promote on campus events
- Present topics such as "how to write a resume" to classes on behalf of Career Services

Campus Life Advertising and Social Media Coordinator   09/2015 - Present
University of Wisconsin-Superior | Superior, WI
- Create a variety of media for campus events via Adobe Photoshop and Indesign
- Market events for student organizations and campus departments

Student Organization Manager   08/2015 – Present
University of Wisconsin-Superior | Superior, WI
- Create and implement online policy training for 160+ student organization leaders
- Assist student organizations with understanding the variety of resources available to them

Career Resources Assistant   08/2014 - Present
University of Wisconsin-Superior | Superior, WI
- Provide resources such as troubleshooting requests and job search advice for students
- Review resumes, cover letters and reference pages
- Provide administrative support for Career Services counselors
- Create promotional material and marketing plans career events
- Answer and transfer phone calls
- Perform basic administrative tasks

Human Resources Office and Administrative Specialist   12/2012 - 11/2013
Minnesota Veterans Homes | Minneapolis, Minneapolis, MN
- Maintained 600+ employee data base
- Reviewed resumes and helped with the hiring process such as interviewing candidates
- Worked with multiple unions and posted jobs for bidding both online and on posting boards
- Helped employees file for Family Medical Leave Act and Workers Compensation
- Answered questions about benefits and insurance
- Developed and implemented the on-campus security identification system
- Created a variety of access levels for each job description and maintained employee data base
- Issued and deactivated badges as needed

Skills

Proficient in Microsoft Office, Adobe Photoshop and various industry-specific programs
Experienced in designing and executing projects such as the Mock Interview Event

First and Last Name

Phone Number | Email Address | 2222 Address Ave City, ST Zip Code
Your LinkedIn/Personal Website (optional)

Date

Name
Title
Organization
Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. Last Name, (Never use 'To whom it may concern!" If there is no specific person listed, try "Dear Hiring Manager," "Dear Search Committee," or even "Dear Human Resources")

First Paragraph: Why You Are Writing? Remember to include the name of a mutual contact, if you have one. Be clear and concise regarding your request. Include what position, where it is located, what website/ad you found it on.

Middle Paragraphs: What Do You Have to Offer? This is your "sales pitch." Convince the readers that they should grant the interview or appointment you requested in the first paragraph. Make connections between your abilities and their needs or your need for information and their ability to provide it. Consider taking key words from the job description and apply them to your own skills set.

Final Paragraph: Thank You! If you intend to follow up personally state that you will do so and provide the professional courtesy of indicating when (one week's time is typical). Make note of an enclosed resume if included in application.

Sincerely (hit Enter x 4 times),

(DON'T FORGET Signature)

Your Typed Name

Enclosure(s)

First and Last Name

Phone Number | Email Address | 2222 Address Ave City, ST Zip Code
Your LinkedIn/Personal Website (optional)

<u>References</u> – NOTE: This header should match the same style as your resume section headers
Mr. Stewart Johns
Store Manager
Quick Photo
763 S 32nd St.
Superior, WI
715-394-8999
Stewart.johns@qckpho.com
Relationship: Supervisor at Quick Photo

Continue utilizing the same format
NOTE: Only include as many references as the company/business requested (usually 3 – 5)

Name
Title
Organization
Address
City, State
Contact Info (email and/or phone – only include how the person would like to be contacted)
Relationship: _____ at _____

Name
Title
Organization
Address
City, State
Contact Info (email and/or phone – only include how the person would like to be contacted)
Relationship: _____ at _____

Name
Title
Organization
Address
City, State
Contact Info (email and/or phone – only include how the person would like to be contacted)
Relationship: _____ at _____