

## RESUMES

(in this handout, bold indicates sample text)

☐ Try to imagine yourself hiring someone for the job you are applying for. What would you look for? What would you want to know? What would you be concerned about? Doing some research about the company/ agency / lab you want to be hired by and about the position will help you answer these questions.

☐ Carefully read the job listing and add phrases and terms from the listing to your application and/or resume. This may help get your application through the automated searches that may be doing first cut of applications. These words and phrases may also help your application get through a cut done by human resources personnel unfamiliar with specific jobs.

☐ Transcripts are unreadable: too different among universities (e.g., UT may be the only one to use the first number of a course for hours instead of level), too many abbreviations (*int* means international? introductory? intensive?), on hard-to-read patterned backgrounds. You cannot rely on your transcript to communicate anything, even if someone takes time to read it. It is up to you to identify what people need to know from the information buried in your transcript.

☐ Obtain/create

(1) a professional email address (NOT kittycatgirl, misterbeer, etc.!) separate from your personal email address

(2) a LinkedIn account with the core information from your resume on it

(3) a completely scrubbed personal presence on the web. Make your Facebook, cloud picture accounts, chatroom, etc. identities as private as you can - use ALL available privacy settings. Try to completely remove all potentially embarrassing pictures, posts, etc., even if they are “private”. Best is never to post anything, even anonymously, that you really don’t want your employer to see.

(4) not required, but can be helpful: a simple web page with work-related stuff: pictures from your field trips? brief description of your research project? linked pdf of the poster you made presenting your research? intermittent posts about field trips you have made, birds seen, trails constructed, etc.? Note that this web page should be quite separate from any personal web page(s) you may have. And you can use it to add **web page construction** to your list of skills, below.

☐ Resumes should be no more than one page long. Links to documents on your web site save space.

☐ Your professional email address, your professional web page address, and a phone number should be at the beginning of your resume, perhaps under your name in the heading.

**Myfirstname Mylastname**

**email: firstlastname@utexas.edu**

**phone: 111-111-1111**

**webpage: www.mywebpage@ourserver.com**

☐ Once you are launched on a career, a list of jobs held, each with a description of your duties and accomplishments there, is very important. But when you are still entry-level, your previous jobs may be barely relevant.

### **Employment**

- **2015-2018. Salesperson, WeSellStuff. 10-20 hrs/wk, ~ 40 wks/yr.**

*[this job proves you were reliable enough to be kept on staff, and that's about it. Keep entries minimal for unrelated jobs]*

- **June-Aug 2017. Technician, University of Texas. Bee identification; data entry; assisted in curation of bee collection.**

*[note "assisted in": you were not a full-fledge curator. Moral: don't oversell or undersell yourself]*

- **June-July 2016. Crew manager, WeLoveAustin. Supervised 10-person crew that gave tours of downtown Austin.**

*[leadership or supervisory experience is worth briefly mentioning, even if unrelated to job you are applying for]*

☐ One section should summarize your education, beginning with college (not high school), something like this

### **Education**

- **BS in Environmental Science. May 2018. University of Texas at Austin.**

- **Biology track curriculum of this degree**

- **Dean's Honors, 2016-2017 and 2017-2018. [great!]**

- **GPA 3.52 on a 4-point scale**

- **research project: "Effects of a pollutant on frog behaviors" (copy available).**

*[better than "copy available," include a link to it, or a link to a poster about it]*

- **current CPR, first aid, and wilderness first aid certificates**

☐ At entry-level, your best strategy may be to have the largest section be called

## Skills and Experience

which culls relevant information from your courses, jobs, and volunteer experiences.

☐ Because different skills are relevant for different jobs, this section will need to be re-done for different types of jobs.

☐ examples of possibly relevant skills

- **ArcGIS, including map construction and analysis (2 GIS courses)**

*[almost always relevant to any conservation-related job]*

- **water quality analysis (part of three courses in Environmental Science and Geology)**

- **field identification skills: birds (Biology of Birds course and hobby bird-watching); bees (part of lab tech job above); other insects (Entomology course)**

*[very important for many jobs with environmental consulting firms]*

- **field first aid (current CPR, first aid, and wilderness first aid certificates, available on request)**

*[relevant to any job with field work]*

- **current driver's license**

*[relevant for field work jobs]*

- **identifying, locating, understanding, and synthesizing scientific and government documents related to ecology and conservation biology (individual library research project in Conservation Biology course; writing sample available on request)**

*[I don't recommend offering your essay or annotated bibliography as a writing sample unless you got an A on it.]*

- **growing plants: volunteer at university micro-farm, ~ 5 hr/wk, ~ 15 wk/semester for 4 semesters. planting, weeding, watering, etc.**

*[could be relevant for consulting firm that has contracts to re-vegetate spoil piles]*

- **trail maintenance: volunteer with Austin Parks Foundation, ~5 days/yr. participated in construction of new trail at CoolNewPark, participated in re-grading and re-rocking trails, removed trash, removed invasive plants**

*[may or may not be relevant, depending on job you are applying for - could be very useful if you want to work for a park]*

- **outreach to children: informal assistant on 8 camping trips with Girl Scouts 10-12 yrs old; volunteered at Austin Nature and Science Center ~ 5 hr/wk for 3 mos in summer 2016; volunteer at Wildflower Center event for families, April 2018; assistant at Explore UT**

**event for families, March 2017.**

*[relevant if and only if the job involves interacting with children to some extent]*

*and so on - what have you done that has given you skills or experiences useful to this potential employer?*

You may also want to add a section on ‘teamwork’ and a section on ‘leadership’, or perhaps combine them into one section.

• **leadership: supervised 10-person crew (WeLoveAustin employment, above); captain of intramural soccer team 2016-2017.**

• **teamwork: member of two research groups during employment as bee laboratory technician and during 3 semesters of capstone research project on frogs; team member at university micro-farm and on Austin Parks Foundation trail crew; choir member for 3 years.**

☐ This is not a college application, and a long list of activities unrelated to the job you are applying for is not appropriate. Some companies may want to see that you have a life outside of work; grad schools may see that as a potential conflict with research time. Some activities may be appropriate for listing in the ‘leadership’ or ‘teamwork’ sections. Otherwise, no matter how personally meaningful other activities are to you, either keep the list of additional personal activities very short (no more than 1 line) or omit completely.

This has changed over time; once upon a time it was quite the thing to say “married; two children; deacon of xxx church” (white and male went without saying!) - but not any more.

👉 👉 👉 ***It is no longer legal to ask in a job interview about your marital status, children, sexual orientation, religion, or similar personal information.***

☐ You may want to add a final item to your resume called **References** with the names, job titles, affiliations, and contact information for people who have already agreed to provide references. Alternatively, you might instead say **References available upon request.**

## CURRICULUM VITAE

*A CV (curriculum vitae) is part of an academic job application, although for a lab tech position a resume may be an acceptable substitute. A CV is more appropriate than a resume for an application to graduate school. The format of a CV is quite standardized in our field.*

**Curriculum vitae**  
**Myfirstname Mylastname**

**email: firstlastname@utexas.edu**

**phone: 111-111-1111**

**webpage: www.mywebpage@ourserver.edu**

### Education

- **BS in Environmental Science. May 2018. University of Texas at Austin.**
  - **Biology track curriculum of this degree**
  - **GPA 3.52; science and math courses GPA 3.66**
  - **research project: “Effects of a pollutant on frog behaviors” (copy available).**
- **current CPR, first aid, and wilderness first aid certificates**

### Honors

- **Dean’s Honors, 2016-2017 and 2017-2018.**
- **NamedScholarship (merit-based), University of Texas at Austin, 2016-2017 and 2017-2018.**
- **second-place award for best student poster at the annual meeting of the Localsociety, May 2017, San Antonio, TX.**

### Publications and presentations

• **M. Mylastname, A. B. Apostdoc, and E. F. Ourprofessor. 2017. Effects of obscurechemicalname on *Rana wierdus*. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Localsociety, May 2017, San Antonio, TX.**

• **Apostdoc, A. B., C. D. Agradstudent, M. Mylastname, and E. F. Ourprofessor. 2017. First evidence of hormonal effects of obscurechemicalname. *Journal of Small Results* 22:33-44.**

*[as a lab member who contributed to the project in some way, you got added into the author list of this paper, albeit in the lowest position in the author list]*

• **M. Mylastname, A. B. Apostdoc, and E. F. Ourprofessor. 2018. Effects of a pollutant on a Texas frog. Poster presented at the UT College of Natural Sciences Undergraduate Research Forum, April 2018, Austin, TX**

*The next section would be Grants and other research funding awards, but you probably won’t*

*have these. Merit-based fellowships and scholarships appear under Honors.*

*When you have enough relevant employment, the Employment section will go after Education and before Honors.*

## **Employment**

- **2015-2018. Salesperson, WeSellStuff. 10-20 hrs/wk, ~ 40 wks/yr.**
- **June-Aug 2017. Technician, University of Texas, in Myprofessor's research group. Bee identification; data entry; assisted in curation of bee collection.**
- **June-July 2016. Crew manager, WeLoveAustin. Supervised 10-person crew that gave tours of downtown Austin.**

*A skills section is still appropriate, but limit it to skills and experiences relevant to your expected future research and/or to a TAship.*

## **Relevant skills and experience**

- **ArcGIS, including map construction and analysis (2 GIS courses)**  
*[almost always useful to any ecologist or conservation biologist]*
- **Other relevant college courses**
  - **biology: Ecology, Ecology Lab (3 hrs/wk), Evolution, Conservation Biology, Entomology, Biology of Birds**
  - **Biostatistics**
  - **Hydrology; 3 other Geology courses**

*[if you expect your research to involve field work, the following two items are relevant, because they show that you can probably collect data in the field in the rain, heat, etc.]*

- **field work: volunteer with Austin Parks Foundation, ~5 days/yr (trail maintenance, trail construction, etc.); frog collection for my undergraduate research project; collected bees during bee lab job.**

- **current CPR, first aid, and wilderness first aid certificates; driver's license**

*[If you expect your research to involve growing plants, the following item is relevant]*

- **growing plants: volunteer at university micro-farm, ~ 5 hr/wk, ~ 15 wk/semester for 4 semesters. planting, weeding, watering, etc.**

*[other skills directly related to your future research and/or teaching: PCR? DNA extraction?*

*other lab techniques? programming? dissection? raising frogs? - and so on.]*

This is usual the end of a CV. Teamwork and leadership, if mentioned at all, appear in the personal essay that is part of an application to graduate school. This personal essay should also include

1. A summary of your undergraduate research project on frogs
2. A description of your tasks in your bee lab job and what you learned there
3. A statement of your research goals and interests
4. A statement of your career goals
5. And finally, if you want, a brief description of other experiences that show you can work in a team, take initiative, and [if appropriate] be a leader. But don't make it sound like you are going to spend your time in grad school perfecting your rock-climbing skills / choir singing / etc etc. Grad school is a more-than-full-time job!

A graduate school application will have a place to list people who will provide letters of recommendation, so there is no need to list them in your CV.

Letters from people who can evaluate you as a future scientist are the most valuable. The more experience the letter-writer has with graduate students the better, as long as he or she is also familiar with you and your work.

Letters from non-academic employers usually evaluate you as an employee, which does not really address your likely performance in graduate school. For this reason, these letters are usually not as helpful as letters from professors.