Summer Research Workshop

November 7, 2014
3:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Agenda

• Introduction
• Writing your Personal Statement
  Brett Westbrook
  UTeach

• Finding an Opportunity That’s Right for You
  Lynda Gonzales, Assistant Director, TIDES
  Eman Ghanem, Assistant Director and Research Educator, FRI

• More parts of the package – your letters of reference and your resume (CV)
  Melanie Pearce, Senior Career Coach, Career Design Center

• What happens after you submit...

• Student Testimonials
Writing your Personal Statement: The BIG HURDLE

Dr. Brett Westbrook

UTeach

WRITING THE FIRST PARAGRAPH IN LESS THAN HOUR

IMPOSSIBLE!!!!
Finding an Opportunity that is Right For You

Lynda Gonzales
Eman Ghanem
Different Types of Programs

• Volunteer Positions
• Internships
• Summer Research Fellowships
Volunteer Positions

• Goals:
  – Make contacts
  – Get experience

• Distinguishing Features:
  – Low hourly commitment
  – Local
  – No pay
  – Very often an informal “application” process-more dependent on student motivation
Example Volunteer Position

- **Volunteer at UT** – Fire Research - Vegetation Surveys, Native Grasses and Wildflowers of Central Texas

- **Job description/ requirements**: We are training volunteers to help in our on-site land management studies in which we look at the effects of prescribed fire and mowing on plant communities. *We will be walking from plot to plot and spending a great deal of time kneeling down, often in tall grass.*
  - UT Student
  - Work in small teams
  - Attend one four-hour training class

- **Location**: Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center

- **Application**: Contact volunteer coordinator or survey coordinator to express interest in project.
Keep in mind:

• May lead to more permanent work and possibly a funded position
• Allows you to fine-tune your research interests
• Provides the experience necessary to take next steps
Internships

• Goals:
  – Get experience
  – Make contacts
  – Travel!

• Distinguishing Features:
  – Formal program with application process/firm deadlines
  – Can be paid or not paid
  – Some cover room & board +/- small stipend
  – Often government or industry
  – Significant time commitment
  – Positions may be available for international students
Example Internship

- **Title:** Native Trout Conservation Intern
- **Agency:** National Park Service
- **Location:** Yellowstone National Park, Wyoming
- **Job Description:**
  - 5/18 - 8/9, 2015
  - Participate as a team member for the Native Fish Conservation Program at Yellowstone National Park, assisting with cutthroat trout preservation and restoration, removing nonnative fish, monitoring lakes and streams for fish, macroinvertebrates, and/or water quality. You’ll also conduct applied research aimed at conservation of cutthroat trout, and assist with lab processing of samples, data entry and verification.
• **Qualifications:**
  – **Required**
    • valid driver's license
    • ability and willingness to undergo a required criminal history background check;
    • ability to carry gear in rugged terrain; ability to swim; basic fisheries and aquatic ecology field techniques; basic computer skills.
• **Benefits:**
  – Usually a small stipend
  – Dormitory style housing will be provided
  – Free or low cost health insurance
  – Valuable training & certifications (First Aid/CPR; basic fisheries techniques; basic aquatic ecology field sampling techniques)

• **Application:** Form, personal statement, resume, reference letters, transcript, survey.

  *Review of applications takes place 3 mo. prior to start date.*

• **Source:** The Student Conservation Association
Example Internship - 2

• **Title:** Pasteur Foundation Summer Internship Program
• **Agency:** Institut Pasteur - dedicated to the study of biology, micro-organisms, diseases, and vaccines
• **Location:** Paris, France

*Combine your passion for science with exploration of a new culture!*
• **Distinguishing features:**
  - Travel and live abroad!
  - Highly competitive
  - Limited to third year students; US citizen
  - French not required
  - 5,000 living stipend and a $1,500 housing subsidy

• **Application:** see Pasteur Foundation website for details; includes form, resume, transcript, 2 letter of recommendation

• **Deadline:** early-mid December
Undergraduate Research Fellowships

• Goals:
  – Contacts
  – Research Experience
  – Travel

• Distinguishing Features:
  – Usually significant stipend, often with room, board +/or travel
  – Significant time commitment
  – Highly competitive

• Examples
  – [http://www.mayo.edu/mgs/programs/summer-undergraduate-research-fellowship](http://www.mayo.edu/mgs/programs/summer-undergraduate-research-fellowship)
Undergraduate Research Fellowships

Some international

• Examples
  – NanoJapan IREU-Jan 23, 2015
    • http://nanojapan.rice.edu/
  – DAAD RISE (Germany) – Dec 6, 2014-Jan 15, 2015
    • http://www.daad.de/rise/en/11632/index.html

‘Follow’ the ones you are interested in
Search Resources

• Volunteer Opportunities
  – UT lists- Undergrad-Research Mailing list
  – EUREKA!
  – Personal Connections

• Internships
  – Corporate websites
  – Pre-med, pre-dent: Health Professions Office

• Research Fellowships
  – Texas Institute for Discovery Education in Science (TIDES)
  – Science.gov
  – NSF Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU)
Important Points

SURF – UT Southwestern

• Time Table
  – Due February 9, 2015

• Requirements
  – Application
    • Available online:
      – 2 letters of recommendation
      – Transcripts; official or unofficial

• Contact!
Things to Consider

• Recommendation Requests
  – Ask the right person, personally
  – Ask for positive recommendation
  – Provide necessary materials
  – Allow enough time
  – Waive your right to read the letter
  – Send a thank you note
Things to Consider, cont’d

- Be specific and selective
  - Customize the application
- Understand and adhere to the rules
- Present yourself well and honestly
Ready to submit?

• Make sure your application is complete!
• Make sure it is submitted on time!
  – Be prepared for problems
  – Give yourself time to print and put it all together.
Part IV: What happens after you submit...

• How are applicants selected?
  – Purpose of the program
  – Authenticity – real information

• What are your responsibilities?
  – To accept or decline
  – Go if you accept