

COS Student Guide to Gaining Experience



Why gain work-related experience during college?

Experiences can help you:

- Explore career options
- Gain new skills
- Get familiar with an industry
- Expand your professional network
- Enhance your resume
- Increase future opportunities
- Build your confidence in a field of interest

What are my options?

For-credit Experiences

- Research
- Internships
- Research Honors
- RISE
- Lab work
- Independent study
- Field/Special studies
- Senior Seminar
- Research Design
- Clinical teaching

Co-Curricular Experiences

- Research & Innovation
- Internships
- Leadership Skills Development
- Social & Emotional Skill Development
- Biology Freshman Interest Group
- Health Professions Preparation
- STEM Programs
- UTeachSA
- Study Abroad
- Entrepreneurship & Projects
- Student Organizations/Involvement

How do I get involved?

Visit your department website at the hyperlinks below for available course offerings and information on how to get involved.



Click on the individual links on page 1 for more information on co-curricular experiences. Skip to page 3 for tips on securing these experiences.



COS Departments

Biology

Integrative Biology

- Research

Molecular Microbiology & Immunology

- Research
- STCEID (infectious diseases)

Neuroscience, Developmental, Regenerative

- Research
- Seminars & Institutes

RISE program

Chemistry

- Research
- Independent study/special project
- Required labs
- Professional Associations

Earth & Planetary Sciences

- Research
- Seminars
- Geoscience Pathways Program
- MSEIP
- Centers & Institutes

Computer Science

- Internship elective
- Student opportunities
 - Competitions, events, projects
- Research
- Independent study elective

Mathematics

- Research
- Internship
- San Antonio Virtual Interactive Geometry Lab
- Seminars
- Independent study

Physics & Astronomy

- Research
- Observatory
- Centers & Institutes
- Lab sessions
- Seminars
- Independent study elective

Registering for a Credit Experience

1. Discuss course options with your Academic Advisor.
2. Review your Department website for research/internship opportunities and faculty researcher information.
3. Identify the research/internship that you are interested in participating in and reach out to the faculty member in charge.
4. Connect with the COS Student Success Center and the University Career Center for search and preparation assistance.

When should I start?

Finding and securing an experience is a process, so **start early!** Begin your search at least 6–8 months prior to when you want to participate in the experience. This will give you time to register for the course or apply for the experience if necessary. Remember, the COS Center for Student Success and the University Career Center are available to help you along the way!

Where should I look?

Online Search Engines

- Student Opportunity Center
 - Undergraduate Research
- Handshake
 - Internships, projects
- GoinGlobal
 - International Internships
- Interstride
 - International student support
- LinkedIn
 - Internships, career mentorship
- RowdyLink
 - Leadership, Student Orgs, & Volunteering
- Study Abroad
- Entrepreneurship– competitions
- Micro-internships– paid projects

In-Person Connections

- People you come in contact with
 - Professors
 - Academic Advisors
 - Career Counselors
 - Coaches
 - Mentors
 - Family
 - Friends
- Events
 - Seminars
 - Institutes
 - Expos/Networking events
- UTSA Alumni
 - Roadrunner Network
 - LinkedIn

What are my next steps?

Step 1: Identify an area of interest with: What Can I Do with This Major?

Step 2: Explore your options. Which opportunity best aligns with your interests?

Step 3: Identify any application requirements.

Step 4: Prepare your application materials. Visit the University Career Center for help.

Step 5: Set goals for your experience. What do you hope to gain from it?

How do I successfully secure an experience?

1.If your experience includes an application process, create a competitive resume & cover letter utilizing the Career Center resources:

- Resume samples
- Vmock– instant resume feedback
- Resume review with a career counselor:
 - Virtual Drop-ins via Zoom– Tuesdays & Wednesdays 4–6pm
 - Schedule appointment via Handshake

Tailor your resume and cover letter to each experience description!

2.If your experience requires an interview, prepare for it with the resources below.

- Practice, practice, practice!
 - Interview Stream– virtual interview practice
 - Schedule a Mock Interview with a Career Counselor on Handshake

How can I be successful during my experience?

1. Identify what you want to accomplish during your experience. Do you want to gain skills? Knowledge? Review marketable skills that are beneficial for your major.

2.Set 2–3 SMART goals and share them with your supervisor.

3.Be professional at all times. Confirm attire & communication expectations.

4.Express enthusiasm and passion in your work and go the extra mile by volunteering for projects.

5.Spend time developing professional relationships with colleagues. Experiences can often lead to additional opportunities within your network.

6.Keep track of your activities and accomplishments. Maintain open communication with your supervisor on progress of goals and areas of growth.

7.After your experience, **reflect** on what you learned and add it to your resume. What marketable skills did you gain from your experience? How will you use those skills in the future?

8. Thank your supervisor for their support and stay in touch with network contacts.