

International Students and the Job Search



This handout is designed to assist you, the international student, with the job search process, given that your immigration status presents a few unique challenges. This guide is in particular targeted towards students in F-1 or J-1 visa status. However, other foreign nationals or those with newly acquired American citizenship may find some of the information included to be both relevant and useful. In addition to this handout, you should feel free to schedule an appointment with a UCS career counselor by calling 434-924-8900.

Department of Homeland Security Employment Regulations for F-1 and J-1 Students

On-Grounds Employment - F-1 and J-1 students are eligible to work on-Grounds for U.Va. part-time (20 hours/week) during the spring and fall semesters and full-time (40 hours/week) during school breaks. J-1 students must first obtain permission from the International Studies Office (ISO) before beginning any employment on-Grounds.

Optional Practical Training (OPT) - Students in F-1 visa status have the opportunity to gain work experience related to their field of study for up to an aggregate of 12 months at the bachelor's degree level. F-1 students may apply for and receive full-time OPT during school breaks following the first year of university study and/or after the program/course requirements are met. Students wishing to apply for OPT should begin the process with the ISO at least three months before they expect to begin working.

Curricular Practical Training (CPT) - If employment is a necessary component of the degree program, or if employment will be a credit-bearing, integral component of the degree program, Curricular Practical Training may be an option. If possible, we recommend that F-1 students use CPT instead of OPT school breaks. Unfortunately, CPT is often not possible.

Academic Training - J-1 bachelor's degree students may be approved to engage in up to 18 months of academic training outside of U.Va. or a period of training equal to the time in J-1 status, whichever is shorter. The employment must be directly related to their major field of study.

Non-Immigrant Temporary Work Visa (H-1B) - Some F-1 and J-1 visa holders may be eligible to change their status in the U.S. and acquire H-1B status. In order to qualify for H-1B visa status, the student must first have a job offer with an employer who is willing to file an H-1B petition on his or her behalf with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. H-1B visa status is reserved for individuals in "specialty occupations" which are jobs requiring at least a bachelor's degree. An attorney is usually hired by the employer, in order to file the H-1B petition on the student's behalf. J-1 visa holders who are subject to the two year home country residency requirement are not eligible to change to H-1B status without first receiving a waiver of the requirement.

Bulletin: Fiscal Year 2008 H-1B Situation - Every fiscal year, the U.S. government allows about 64,000 new foreign nationals from around the world to gain H-1B status in the U.S. This limit on new H-1B holders is known as the "H-1B cap". There are a separate 20,000 H-1B numbers available for foreign nationals who earn at least a Master's degree from a U.S. institution. Also some employers are exempt from the H-1B cap such as institutions of higher education and non-profit research organizations associated with those institutions. New H-1B petitions may be filed as early as April 1 with requested start dates of the following October 1, which is the first day of the new fiscal year. In April 2007, the H-1B cap was reached as quickly as possible, and about double the allotted number of petitions were filed. Petitions were then randomly selected for adjudication.

What we learn from the FY 2008 experience is that if the laws and regulations do not change, there is almost no chance that U.Va students graduating in May will receive an H-1B number the year they graduate, and that it is far from a sure bet to obtain an H-1B number the year after graduation.

TN, H-1B1 and E-3 classifications - Citizens of Canada, Mexico, Singapore, Chile and Australia can often find relief in these classifications. If you will work in a specific occupation and are Canadian or Mexican, you may qualify for TN status. Citizens of Singapore and Chile are given an allotment of H-1B numbers that is separate from other foreign nationals and has never been exhausted. Australians who qualify for H-1B status also qualify for E-3 status and this quota has also never been exhausted.

Employers such as non-governmental organizations and specific employers from treaty countries may be able to sponsor foreign nationals for alternative visa statuses such as G-4, E-1 or E-2. Other options may also be available such as B-1 in lieu of H-1B for students whose income will be paid from an affiliate, subsidiary or parent of the U.S. company abroad, and J-1 status for students who will engage in specific training.

NOTE: If you hold F-1 or J-1 visa status, it is extremely important that you connect with the International Studies Office (Minor Hall, 208) before you begin to seek any form of employment

to ensure that you are aware of all applicable restrictions, requirements and deadlines. Plan ahead! For instance, OPT approval may take anywhere from 30-120 days.

Permanent residents (green card holders) are eligible to work in the United States without restriction. The application process for permanent residence is time-consuming and complicated. If you believe you are eligible to apply for permanent residence, contact an immigration attorney for a consultation. J-1 visa holders with a two year home country residency requirement are not eligible to apply for permanent residence without having first received a waiver of the requirement.

Challenges

Work in the U.S. is not guaranteed, nor promised, to foreign nationals entering the country on a student visa. However, in addition to the quotas set on the number of skilled foreign workers legally permitted in the country, these factors contribute to the difficulty you may experience trying to find employment in the U.S.

Hiring Complexities: Employers are unfamiliar with the process of hiring an international student and therefore believe it to be complicated and expensive.

Lack of Commitment to the Job: Employers fear that foreign nationals will return to their home country after a year or two and are therefore reluctant to invest time and resources into training them.

Communication: Employers are concerned about foreign nationals' ability to communicate effectively in verbal and written English with their clients and internal personnel.

Employment Restrictions: In general, as a foreign national you cannot work for the U.S. federal government, for most U.S. state and local government agencies or for private companies contracted by the government. Your visa status will be less of an absolute barrier with other industries and employers.

Recommendations

Strong employment prospects for you as an international student may be with organizations that have an international focus, such as the World Trade Organization, World Health Organization, World Bank or African Development Fund. Likewise, you may have more success with U.S. companies that have an international presence. Your international experience, language and cultural fluency make you very attractive to these organizations. In addition, if your U.S. work authorization is delayed, you may be able to continue to work at one of their branches outside of the U.S. (ie: in your home country). The UCS library includes several print resources that name American companies with divisions throughout the world. Here are a few:

- ❖ *Directory of American Firms Operating in Foreign Countries*
- ❖ *Directory of Foreign Firms Operating in the U.S.*

Finally, as an international student you may find the job search process less difficult if you study technical subjects. High tech firms in the U.S. are desperate to hire skilled workers, particularly in the areas of *Systems Analysis and Programming, Engineering and Accounting*. If you are not majoring in one of these areas, at least consider developing **computer skills** (programming, word processing and spreadsheet design), **quantitative skills** (accounting, statistics and economics) and/or **scientific skills** (lab research) through elective classes, independent studies or extracurricular activities to make yourself more marketable.

Here is a partial list of companies that hired international students who graduated from the College of Arts and Sciences 2004-2007:

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ❖ Wachovia | ❖ Ernst and Young |
| ❖ Citibank | ❖ Xerox |
| ❖ Deloitte | ❖ Conservation International |
| ❖ JP Morgan | ❖ MTV World |
| ❖ T-Mobile | ❖ IT Convergence |
| ❖ Lehman Brothers | ❖ Institute of International Finance |

U.S. Employment System

The first step in designing an effective job search strategy which will lead to employment in the United States is to clearly understand the setting in which you are operating. As a student, you may not have had much experience job-hunting in your home country. Even if you have, you are likely to find job-hunting in the U.S. a different process.

The differences are culturally based and, therefore, you may have to work very hard at overcoming the natural inclination to conduct yourself as you would if you were looking for a job in your home country. Different cultures have different sensibilities. Be aware of the setting in which you are interviewing.

UCS has several books in the library to introduce you to the American job search process. Take time to read some of this material before you begin your search. The *Enhanced Occupational Outlook Handbook* is a great resource with which to start.

Common Cultural Barriers in the U.S. Job Search

(Note: These conflicting values represent a cross-section from various cultures and not one specific culture)

	Expectations in U.S.	Possible Conflicting Values of Another Culture
Self promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Assertiveness, openly discussing accomplishments ❖ Follow-up with employers (telephone inquiries, thank you notes, etc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Unless presented as part of a group activity, citing achieved goals, accomplishments and skills is viewed as boastful, self-serving, and too individualistic ❖ Asking employers directly about status of application may be viewed as rude
Directness in communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Open and direct responses to questions ❖ Eye contact with interviewer, relaxed posture, and other appropriate nonverbal behavior ❖ Discussion of salary and benefits only when initiated by interviewer or at time of job offer ❖ Candidate asks questions about the job at the end of the interview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Eye contact, especially with persons of higher status (e.g., employer/interviewer), is disrespectful ❖ Appearance of criticism must be avoided to save face ❖ Asking open-ended questions about the job may be seen as rude and inappropriately direct
Self Disclosure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Personal descriptions of experiences, hobbies, strengths and weaknesses ❖ Answers to questions related to personality (e.g., leadership style and problem solving abilities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Personal questions about likes, dislikes, etc. are considered an invasion of privacy and are discussed only with close friends and family ❖ Or, these kinds of questions sometimes are seen as totally irrelevant to a candidate's job qualifications ❖ Revealing outside interests may be considered a threat to the time, energy and other resources invested by a candidate into the job

<p>Career Self-Awareness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Demonstration of knowledge of self, career goals and how they relate to job ❖ Discussion of long-range career plans ❖ Ability to be self-directed in one's career development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Questions about role in company indicate potential disloyalty ❖ Jobs are assigned by government or family or determined by school or test score ❖ Individual must be flexible to accept whatever job becomes available without regard to their own career goals
<p>Individual Responsibility in Finding Employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Use of a wide variety of resources in identifying jobs (e.g. friends, family, contacts, associations, career services, academic mentors, etc.) ❖ Networking by candidates; personal referrals can carry great weight in evaluating a candidate's potential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Jobs are found for the individual by government, school or family ❖ Dependency relationships in job search are fostered. One resource (e.g. academic advisor or employment agent) will find work for job seeker with little proactive action on the part of the individual
<p>Informality in the Interview Process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Congenial interviewing environment that encourages openness, some joking and exchange of information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Sitting with a person of higher status requires deference. The job applicant is very polite and does not ask questions or provide information that may indicate lack of respect for interviewer's position. Handshaking, touching, using first name, crossing legs, etc., are inappropriate
<p>Punctuality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Arrive 5-15 minutes before appointment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Personal relationships are more than time. Anywhere from 15 minutes to 2 hours lateness from agreed meeting time is not insulting

<p>Effective Letters of Application and Resumes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ One page, error-free, concise and attractive outline of relevant job experience, skills, accomplishments and academic credentials ❖ Personalized to reflect each individual's strengths and capabilities ❖ Resumes are a detailed chronology of academic and formal work experiences and not a tool for self-promotion
<p>Individual Equality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Race, sex, and age are legally not supposed to affect the interview process ❖ Politeness and respect are shown to all employees a candidate meets, whether receptionist or CEO ❖ Males and older persons may expect to assume dominance in interactions with females and younger persons ❖ Level of organizational hierarchy may determine the amount of respect an individual is given ❖ Attitudes on gender, race, and other individual characteristics and how they impact hiring decisions vary from culture to culture
<p>Knowledge of Organization Prior to Interview</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Obtain as much information as possible about the company before the interview. Demonstrate awareness of organization in letter of application and during the interview ❖ Research about organization may indicate excessive and undesirable initiative or independence

(Source: "International Students and the Job Search." Goodman, A.P., J.A. Hartt, M.K. Pennington and K.P. Terrell *Journal of Career Planning & Employment*, Summer 1988).

Finding Opportunities and Applying to Jobs

Looking for a job while working hard to finish a degree can be rather overwhelming. The best way to approach this dilemma is to start organizing and utilizing your resources the year before you graduate. Your job search strategy should include:

- ❖ Exploring Resources

- ❖ Gaining Experience
- ❖ Networking Your Way to a Job
- ❖ Preparing Country-Specific Resumes and Cover Letters

Exploring Resources

University Career Services is a great place to start your research. UCS has a large number of resources online to assist you in researching various industries, generating a list of prospective employers and finding actual job listings. Come to UCS during walk-in hours; Monday-Friday 12:30 pm - 3:15 pm or make an appointment with a counselor for an orientation to any of the following:

CAVLink - Service which includes externship, internship, part-time and full-time job postings and provides access to On Grounds Interviewing (OGI). Use the advanced search option under the Jobs/Internships/Externships tab to identify positions for which you are eligible to apply based on your work authorization.

H1base.com - Tool which allows one to search databases of “international student friendly” organizations. Identify the names and contact information for hiring managers with companies that have a history of sponsoring employees on a H-1B visa. (Contact Saskia Campbell at scampbell@virginia.edu for log-in information).

My UCS - Portal from UCS homepage (www.career.virginia.edu) to the following protected resources:

- ❖ *Vault*- Includes an internship database which lists opportunities open to international students. Also a great resource for industry overviews, profiles of top career paths and tips on resumes/cover letters and interviewing.
- ❖ *Going Global*- Provides information on domestic as well as international employment opportunities, to include guides for working in over 25 countries and 40 major U.S. cities. Also provides list of top H-1B employers by U.S state.

Career Search- Comprehensive directory of 1.7 million potential employers, which provides a description, the history, size, major competitors and contact information for each company. Narrow your search to find companies that meet your criteria.

UCAN (University Career Assistance Network) - Searchable database of 25,000 U.Va. alumni available for advice, networking and informational interviewing. The alumni contacts represent various career fields and are searchable by location, major while at U.Va., industry and company name.

Gaining Experience

Gaining relevant work experience, in addition to your degree, will make you a more competitive job candidate. **Internships** during the summer are a great way to build skills and augment your classroom experience. Your internship should be related to your declared major or your principal field of study. If you plan to work in the U.S. after graduating and decide to use some of your OPT to do an internship in the U.S. while still a student, you should seek out internship

opportunities with companies that have a history of sponsoring employees who are on a work visa. That way, you will be building a relationship with an organization that is more likely to hire you for a full-time position upon graduating. Many employers favor applicants for their entry-level positions who went through their internship programs.

UCS has extensive resources for researching internship opportunities. Internship opportunities vary tremendously depending on your area of interest, and may be paid or unpaid. For more information on obtaining an internship, see the UCS handout called “Internships, Externships, Summer Jobs and Other Ways of Gaining Experience.” Please note that Ferguson’s *Career Resource Guide to Internships and Summer Jobs* is extremely helpful and *Princeton’s Internship Bible*, which is also available in the UCS library, includes an index of internships open to international students.

Externships are short-term job shadowing experiences (one day to three weeks in length) which enable students to clarify their career goals, gain “real world” experience and get their foot in the door for competitive internships and jobs. Students participating in externships are not paid by the employer and must supply their own housing, food and transportation; however, the networking opportunities provided by this kind of experience make them highly valuable. More information on the Jefferson Extern Program is available on the UCS website, www.career.virginia.edu.

Faculty may be in a position to provide work opportunities during the academic year and summer months through grants or their departmental budgets. Check with your faculty advisor to see if there are any opportunities in your department.

NOTE: In exploring any of the opportunities mentioned above, always check with the International Student Advisor to confirm your eligibility for work authorization. Unlawful employment can also include engaging in unpaid work.

Networking Your Way To a Job

In seeking advice from any career counselor in the United States, you will undoubtedly be advised about the benefits of interviewing for information and networking as a means to finding a suitable job. Indeed, it is common to find employment as a result of having the right connections. The ability to make connections with people, or *network*, is a skill you can begin developing while on Grounds (refer to the UCS handout on “Networking and Informational Interviewing” for a more in-depth discussion of the process).

Begin talking with faculty members and fellow students. Many faculty members have worked outside of the university context and maintain professional contacts with their former colleagues. In addition, start building relationships with upperclassmen and attend networking functions where alumni will be in attendance. It will prove to be helpful for you to connect with people who have already successfully found employment here in the U.S. and can provide you with insight about the process. The best way to find companies that are willing to hire international students is to talk to other international students and alumni, since companies who have hired international students in the past are likely to continue to do so.

Joining a professional association related to your field of interest is also a wonderful way to make connections with those who can provide you with sound advice about how to find jobs in a particular field. Visit the websites of these organizations to request information on their publications, student rates, chapters and conferences. For the names of professional associations, speak with a faculty member in your department.

Many international students are discouraged because they believe that they have no network in the United States, as their connections are with people in their home countries. It is important to understand that in the U.S. a network is actively developed and does not connote long-standing, life-long relationships based on family ties or status in the community. Anyone can develop a network with some knowledge of the process. Be as creative as possible in developing your network. Do you have a community host or language partner who can provide you with information or a referral? Have you joined a student organization related to your field of interest? Have you attended a career fair or alumni panel discussion put on by UCS and an employer/alumnus for his business card?

Preparing Resumes and Cover Letters

A well-prepared resume and cover letter are essential to getting a job interview. For a U.S. job search, your resume and cover letter must conform to basic, generally accepted standards. The U.S. resume is succinct, including only information which is relevant to an employer's needs. Personal information is usually excluded. The resume is also limited to one page in most cases.

UCS has several resources, which can assist you. If you are creating a resume for the first time, begin by using *Optimal Resume*, an online tool designed to help you organize information on your academic background, accomplishments and skills into American-style resume format. You can also see the UCS handouts on "Writing Resumes" and "Cover Letters and Other Correspondence." Finally, the library maintains a collection of books on the subject, as well as, sample resumes and cover letters (see resource list at the end of this guide).

Remember, it is your responsibility to ease the concerns that employers may have about hiring you. This means you should provide the following information on your resume and/or cover letter:

- ❖ Test scores (TOEFL and/or SATs, particularly verbal or writing scores)
- ❖ Writing and English courses completed
- ❖ Descriptions highlighting your communication skills (where applicable)
 - "Translated written and spoken English daily for 2 years"
 - "Tutored other international students in reading, writing and speaking English,"
 - "Gave 15 minute PowerPoint presentation on paper entitled _____ before an audience of 50"
- ❖ Frame of reference for foreign employers and schools:
 - # 1 research institution in India

- Second largest technology manufacturer in Europe
- A \$10 million marketing firm

On the other hand, it is also your responsibility to highlight the qualities that make you unique.

- ❖ International experience
 - “Lived in Ghana for 10 years and U.K. for 7 years”
 - “Traveled extensively throughout South and Latin America”
 - “Developed a solid understanding and appreciation for Russian culture and customs”
- ❖ Language skills
 - Fluent in English, native speaker of Chinese and proficient in French

Your resume should be free of spelling and grammatical errors. After you have developed a resume, bring it to UCS to have a career counselor review it with you. You should also have your cover letters reviewed by a counselor to ensure that the writing style, as well as, the content conforms to employers' expectations.

Preparing for an Interview

The interview is your opportunity to convince the employer that you are the right person for the job. In most instances, an employer is expecting you to articulate your future career goals and past accomplishments. The interviewer is assessing you according to values such as self-confidence, initiative, directness, and individualism. You must learn to become comfortable with the idea of marketing yourself to an employer.

Non-verbal behavior may also be a barrier to successful communication with an interviewer. Eye contact, physical distance, personal appearance and manner of dress all communicate things about you to an interviewer. It is important that you understand exactly what you are communicating.

Understanding and mastering appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication before an interview is essential. UCS offers programs, books and videos on interviewing. Once you are feeling more comfortable with the process, schedule a mock interview with a counselor. The counselor will make suggestions for improving your technique. Remember, the more practice you have, the more prepared and relaxed you will be when the time comes for an employment interview.

Preparation for an interview always includes doing research about the employer. Also, the interviewer will expect you to have questions about the job or the organization. It is helpful to have those prepared in advance.

Check the UCS library for other resources in preparing for the interview process:

- ❖ UCS handout on “Interviewing for Employment”
- ❖ *Knock 'Em Dead*

- ❖ *Sweaty Palms: The Neglected Art of Being Interviewed*
- ❖ *Interview for Success*

NOTE: Always consult with the International Student Advisor to make sure that you understand the parameters of your visa status. Not only is this essential information for you to have as you determine your goals for employment, but you will have to clearly and accurately explain your status to most employers during the interview process.

Following Up With Employers

After having an interview, it is always appropriate to follow-up with a thank-you note. In this follow-up correspondence, you can reiterate your interest in the position and emphasize the skills and abilities you would be bringing to the employer. This type of correspondence is not considered being pushy. In fact, if an employer does not hear from you after an interview, the assumption may be that you are not sincerely interested in the job. See the UCS handout called “Cover Letters and Other Correspondence” for an example of a thank-you letter.

Frequently Asked Questions

Should I list my visa status on my resume?

Your visa status should not be included on your resume. Your permanent address, educational background and work history will display that you are an international student. Hiring managers will ask the appropriate questions during the recruitment process. You should never lie about your visa status, but given the reservations employers have about hiring an international student, it is not to your advantage to draw attention to it.

Aren't there some illegal questions?

An employer MAY NOT ask:

- ❖ What is your visa type, nationality, place of birth? or, Of which country are you a citizen?
- ❖ What is your native language? or, What language do you most often speak?

An employer MAY ask:

- ❖ Are you legally authorized to work in the United States? or, Will you now or in the future require sponsorship for an employment visa?
- ❖ Which languages do you read, speak or write? (provided that foreign language skills are job related)

How do I answer when I am asked by an employer about my work authorization? (F-1 student)

Start by explaining that you have the legal right to work in the U.S. for twelve months remaining in student status (after your practical training is authorized, of course, or you at least have a

confirmation with receipt number), which requires absolutely no work on their part. Then share that your work authorization can be renewed for another three to six more years with an H-1B work visa. Avoid saying the word “sponsor” when talking about the H-1B application process, instead use the phrase “petition”. You should also explain that it is NOT required for the employer to show that there are no U.S. citizens qualified for the job, only that you meet the minimum requirements. This often unknown fact often opens the door for further conversation.

When in the hiring process do I reveal that I’m an international student?

This is a very sensitive question which needs to be assessed on a case-by-case basis. While some employers adhere to strict policies against hiring foreign nationals, others may *prefer* to hire U.S. citizens, but can be otherwise convinced. Therefore, it should be your goal to get passed the initial screening measures to the interview. On the other hand, you should probably broach the subject before the employer has spent a significant amount of time and money trying to recruit you. It is usually recommended that students address the issue of their work status during the first or second interview, but no later than the time of the job offer.

If a company says they don’t hire international students, should I even apply?

Sure. A lot of times when employers say they don’t hire international students it means that they haven’t hired any international students, *yet*. You may be the first! In order to convince these prospective employers, it is your responsibility to educate them about the process of hiring a foreign national. Be mindful that they still may not hire you, and this can become frustrating. It is recommended that you first target organizations with a history of hiring employees on a work visa.

What can I do to make myself a more attractive candidate?

- ❖ Get your resume and cover letters reviewed by a UCS counselor, employer or alumni
- ❖ Become thoroughly familiar with immigration regulations and benefits attached to your visa status
- ❖ Research the employers and the positions in which you are interested
- ❖ Participate in a mock interview
- ❖ Practice speaking confidently about your skills, interests and career goals
- ❖ Improve your English skills by speaking up in class, making presentations and expanding your circle of native English speaking friends

International Job Search

Given the shortage of U.S. work visas, it would be wise of you to at least consider looking for employment in your home country or another country outside of the U.S. The international job search strategy includes the same elements as the U.S. job search:

- ❖ Exploring Resources
- ❖ Gaining Experience

- ❖ Networking Your Way to a Job
- ❖ Preparing Country-Specific Resumes and Cover Letters

Exploring Resources

The UCS library has a large number of print and electronic resources, which relate to finding a job in the global marketplace. Some of the material is designed for American students who are searching for employment abroad; however, much of the information is just as relevant for an international student seeking employment abroad (see the resource list at the end of this guide for specific titles). UCS also subscribes to **Going Global** which can be accessed through a MyUCS account. **International Employment Weekly** is another great resource, e-mail Saskia Campbell at scampbell@virginia.edu to receive this listing of opportunities abroad.

The **International Studies Office** can provide information on a variety of organizations that assist international students in seeking employment outside the U.S. Stop by the ISO periodically to see if new information is available.

Gaining Work Experience

Use the numerous international resources and directories available through UCS to identify a company with a subsidiary in your home country. The International Division at company headquarters can identify the Regional Manager of the subsidiary who in turn can provide you with information on summer work opportunities or internships. Also, The *Directory of Overseas Summer Jobs* and the *International Directory of Voluntary Work* list information on 50,000 opportunities worldwide.

NOTE: If you are contemplating summer work overseas, it would be to your benefit to check with the International Student Advisor regarding your visa status for re-entry into the United States to continue your academic program.

Networking Your Way To A Job

Begin talking with faculty members about your career plans. Many faculty members have worked or studied abroad and maintain professional contacts with colleagues overseas. In addition, each year U.Va. hosts 200-300 visiting faculty from abroad who arrive with current information and contacts in their home countries.

U.Va. alumni living overseas can be valuable resources for information on employment opportunities. Ask a UCS staff member about accessing the **University Career Assistance Network (UCAN)**. Also, the UVA Alumni Association has developed 20+ alumni chapters overseas. Visit <http://uvaclubs.virginia.edu> for a complete list and contact information. While you should not contact alumni to "ask for a job," it is certainly appropriate to ask for information, advice and/or referrals.

Many professional associations have an international membership. Visit the websites of these organizations to request information on their publications, student rates, and overseas chapters. These links may lead you to knowledgeable people and, possibly, job opportunities.

Finally, don't forget to write home. Not only will your family and friends be happy to hear from you, but you can ask them for information on the job market. Family, friends, and former employers can all provide you with job leads while you are busy studying in the United States. In addition, these contacts may also be in a position to serve as references. References from the U.S., unless internationally known in their field, will not lend as much weight to your application as a well-known figure in your home country.

Preparing Country-Specific Resumes and Cover Letters

A well-written resume and cover letter is critical in any job search. However, when searching for a job in your home country, your resume must conform to the local standards and not reflect U.S. styles and standards in resume writing. Just as American students come to UCS for help in writing an appropriate American-style resume, you may need some advice in designing a resume appropriate for use in your home country or another country. Dr. Frank Klein of the University Placement Center at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale offers the following advice:

"For job searches in the U.S., the resume is most often chronological, functional, or a combination of the two. However, with regard to resume format requirements, differences exist from continent to continent, country to country. *Working in the European Countries: A Guide to Graduate Recruiters and Job Seekers* by A.J. Raban of the University of Cambridge Career Services, makes an excellent case for a country-specific resume. In Denmark, according to Raban, extracurricular activities are defined as work experience rather than student activities and, consequently given much attention by the employer. In Germany, where extracurricular activities are defined as student activities, they receive little attention. If a single resume category, extracurricular activities, is important in Denmark, unimportant in Germany, is secondary to academic performance in Italy, and is given special attention by employers in the United Kingdom, enough cannot be said on the importance of country-specific resumes."

Resumes targeted for African and Latin American countries require more personal data than is appropriate in a U.S.-style resume. Birthdate, birthplace, citizenship, passport number and even a photograph may be appropriate. Students from Asian countries should emphasize entrepreneurship. Often employers from these countries are more interested in the applicant's sales ability than in the specific undergraduate or graduate degree. If applying for a job in Europe, you should hand-write your cover letter. Graphologists are regularly used in Europe to screen applicants, and handwriting samples are often required. In many countries, transcripts, with an official university stamp or seal, or even actual photocopies of degrees, are required with the resume. Additionally, a photocopy of your degree may be required if you are applying to a university position.

In addition to the resource mentioned above, two additional publications, *Resumes for Employment in the U.S. and Overseas* and *The Global Resume and CV Guide* (available in the UCS library), outline recommendations for country-specific resumes and cover letters. Use your faculty contacts (especially the visiting faculty) to make sure that you are constructing an appropriate resume. Send a draft of your resume home in correspondence with family and friends. Ask them to critique your resume or find someone in your career field at home who has the knowledge and background to evaluate your resume style and content.

Conclusion

Finding employment can be a long, time-consuming process. The information contained in this handout is meant to get you started in the process. It is important that you begin early to prepare yourself for competing in the job market after graduation. Make use of the many resources mentioned throughout this guide. If you are having difficulty understanding any part of the job search process, make an appointment to speak with an UCS counselor, your faculty advisor, the International Student Advisor, or all three. Don't give up!

UCS Resources

The UCS library has a plethora of print and electronic resources, many of which you will find helpful in conducting your job search. In addition, UCS has developed a series of career guides on a variety of topics (interviewing, writing a resume, writing cover letters and other correspondence, etc). Make it a point to familiarize yourself with these resources as soon as possible. The following abbreviated list of UCS resources will get you started:

- ❖ *10 Things Employers Want You to Learn in College*
- ❖ *The Complete Job-Search Handbook*
- ❖ *175 High-impact Resumes*
- ❖ *Vault Guide to Finance Interviews*
- ❖ *Careers in International Affairs*
- ❖ *Careers in International Business*
- ❖ *Careers for Foreign Language Aficionados and Other Multilingual Types*
- ❖ *The Global Resume and CV Guide*
- ❖ *How to do Business in Sixty Countries: Kiss, Bow or Shake Hands*
- ❖ *International Jobs: Where They Are and How to Get Them*
- ❖ *The Global Etiquette Guide* (series)
- ❖ *Transitions Abroad* (magazine)
- ❖ *The Big Guide to Living and Working Overseas*

Web Resources

- ❖ <http://h1base.com> : Visit this site for U.S. immigration details, H-1B visa information, as well as, employment opportunities in the U.S. for foreign nationals. To obtain the U.Va. log-in information and password, contact Saskia Campbell at scampbell@virginia.edu.
- ❖ <http://h1visajobs.com>
- ❖ <http://www.istudentcity.com>
- ❖ <http://www.iie.org>
- ❖ <http://www.employment.com>
- ❖ <http://globalgateway.monster.com/>
- ❖ <http://www.careerforum.net>
- ❖ <http://www.latpro.com>
- ❖ <http://www.ihispano.com/>
- ❖ <http://www.placementindia.com>
- ❖ <http://www.planetreruit.com/channel/int>
- ❖ <http://www.overseasjobs.com>
- ❖ <http://www.jobpilot.com>
- ❖ <http://www.intercareer.com/japan>
- ❖ <http://www.jobs.cz>
- ❖ <http://www.jobserve.com>
- ❖ <http://www.reed.co.uk>
- ❖ <http://www.mg.co.za>