

EY Center for Careers in Accounting and Information Systems
Orientation for the Career Planning and Recruiting Process:
for Accounting and IS Freshmen, Sophomores and Transfer Students

Welcome to the
EY Center for Careers in Accounting and Information Systems

When you first begin your college career at, or transfer into CSUN from another college or university, there is a period of acclimation and learning curve, and often students do not feel ready to take on the additional effort of focusing on career planning and starting the recruiting process.

As a freshman, you have some luxury to slowly learn about career options, but even freshmen have programs available to introduce them to the public accounting field with Big 4 firms, so those who are interested and motivated can start very early.

However, as a transfer student, and most of you are transfer students, the time to delve into your career planning process starts the day you land at CSUN. There are already job opportunities offered in the Fall semester with a variety of employers, so recruiting begins immediately. Then in the Spring semester, many large public accounting firms recruit for Summer Leadership Programs (SLPs) and some firms and corporations hire for summer internships and full-time positions. Those transfer students who put their toes in the water in the fall, join clubs, attend meetings and workshops and go to their first Meet the Firms (career fair for accounting and IS students) are usually much better prepared than those who wait until January to begin their exploration and recruiting process. And then there are still many other students who wait even longer to start their recruiting process. The longer one waits, the more challenging becomes the process.

Many students who started the recruiting process in the fall, while they felt nervous going to Meet the Firms, and did not know how to start a conversation with a professional, admitted later that they were so glad they struggled their way through the event, and felt so much better prepared when they attended again in February. The added benefit is that they knew the firms better and the firms knew them better as well. One Big 4 recruiter

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commented that she met students in the spring that were of great interest to the firm, students who had not presented as well in the previous fall; so, these students had obviously learned and grown in their confidence and networking skills, made a much better impression in the spring and ultimately landed an offer. So, the key point is that the sooner you start with career planning, networking and recruiting, the sooner you will get prepared, and the greater your opportunities for success.

One of your primary resources as an accounting or IS student is the EY Center for Careers in Accounting and Information Systems.

What is the EY Center for Careers (EYCC)?

- The EYCC is uniquely dedicated in providing a broad range of career and job-search related services to Accounting, Information Systems (IS) and Computer Information Technology (CIT) students and alumni.
- The EYCC is managed by Stuart Fried, Director, who has more than 30 years experience in Recruiting, Career Coaching, Corporate Human Resources, Counseling and Workshop Facilitation.
- The EYCC also has a staff of student assistants who are experienced with resume and cover letter preparation as well as the recruiting process.
- The EYCC's services are free.
- The EYCC is located in Bookstein Hall (BB), Room 2224 (2nd floor). You can call the EYCC at 818.677.2979.
- EYCC Office Hours during the Fall & Spring semesters are: Monday/Tuesday, 9 am to 5 pm; Wednesday/Thursday, 9 am to 7 pm; Friday, 9 am to 5 pm. During the breaks and summer, the EYCC closes at 5 pm, unless a student needs to meet after 5 pm on Wednesday or Thursday.
- Students can make appointments (except for resume and cover letter reviews) to meet with the EYCC Director, or come in on a walk-in basis to meet with the Director or student assistants.

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- The EYCC website - <http://csun.edu/acctis/ey-center> - contains a vast array of written resources, information about upcoming events and workshops, a calendar of key dates for the upcoming semester, and links to the student organizations, AIS Department, Meet the Firms and Awards Banquet websites.

What services does the EYCC provide?

- **Career Planning** - The first step in the career planning and job search process is to do a self-evaluation: Who are you? What are you looking for? What are your long-term goals?
 - Who are you consists of identifying your personality type, the values that provide the primary motivations within a work setting, the work activities you enjoy doing and the skills you possess and can develop. It also includes your “resume” - education, GPA, work experience, professional development, volunteer activities, and any other related experience and skills.
 - To determine what you are looking for, begin to identify the factors (related to your values above) that are most important to you in a job and career path (examples include: challenge, teamwork, helping others, recognition, growth, independence, creativity, income, variety, work/life balance, etc.).
 - Then prioritize the list of factors, and determine if any of the factors are requirements (vs. preferences). Begin to research the market (career paths, industries, companies, geography, and the long-term outlook) and compare career options with your prioritized list of factors.
 - Finally, weigh the feasibility of each choice with your level of desire (passion) to pursue a specific path. Your choice(s) will depend on the feasibility and your level of risk tolerance. In other words, the more you can handle risk, the more likely you will seek your ideal path; whereas, the less you can handle risk, the more likely you will seek a realistic (more feasible) path.
 - Career planning is like creating a map or set of directions to get from Point A to Point B and beyond. You have a starting

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point and you need to pursue a destination. Career planning is an on-going and ever-changing process as you learn more about yourself, learn more about the market, and the market itself continues to change.

- **Resume and Cover Letter Reviews** - The EYCC staff reviews resumes and cover letters and provides feedback to students to improve the layout and content for both the resume and cover letter(s).
 - The EYCC provides two Resume Templates - one for Accounting and one for IS and IT (and Resume Guidelines). We recommend that you use the EYCC Resume Template as it is designed for a CSUN student and firms support the use of this template. It presents the information that the firms are looking for, and in a format that is easy and quick to review.
 - The EYCC provides two cover letter templates as well. One is for the larger public accounting firms, but can be tailored for other employers who hire from CSUN. It explains why you are interested in the firm and position, and shares your unique story including providing one or more examples of your experience that demonstrate the skills that firms are seeking. The second template is for online applications, and it easily demonstrates to an employer that you customized the cover letter for that specific company and position, as well as matched the requirements as closely as possible.
 - Students are encouraged to come to the EYCC and work with the EYCC Director and student assistants for in-person assistance. Resume and cover letter reviews are done on a walk-in basis only (no appointments).
 - The EYCC staff also reviews resumes that are uploaded to Handshake (the online job system), and provide feedback, time permitting. **All accounting and IS resumes uploaded to Handshake require approval by the EYCC.**
 - **** Do not use the Handshake VMOC resume review tool.**
- **Networking** - Networking is the process of building and maintaining relationships with professionals and firms. Networking is a very key

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component to exploring and selecting a career path as well as landing in a career position with an employer of your choice.

Networking is a process of learning about career options, employers, industries, positions, and the career paths and decisions that professionals have made. Networking provides you with the opportunity to conduct direct research. Employers want to know that you have some ideas about what you would like to do with your career, and what is important to you. It is in both your and the employer's best interest that you match your career goals with who is the employer and what do they offer. You are more likely to enjoy your work and co-workers, perform better, stay longer, and grow into more responsible roles, a win-win for you and the employer.

In addition to learning how to network with professionals, it is very important to know how to use LinkedIn, the largest professional online networking site. Recruiters and professionals will look for you on LinkedIn, so it is essential that you have a profile and that your profile is filled in thoroughly and correctly. In addition, there is great benefit to building your LinkedIn network with students, professionals and others you know, and to learn how to use LinkedIn to find professionals and leverage your contacts for introductions.

- Networking Guide - There is a one page Networking guide on the EYCC website to provide an overview and some tips about networking.
- LinkedIn Guide - There is a one page LinkedIn guide on the EYCC website that has detailed steps to complete your LinkedIn profile, grow your network, and search for and connect with professionals, especially CSUN alumni. The EYCC Director also delivers LinkedIn workshops each semester during which he demonstrates the actual use of LinkedIn as he navigates through the profile, discusses building your network, and shows how to find professionals using the search function.
- Coffee Chat Guide - There is a detailed step-by-step Coffee Chat guide on the EYCC website. A "coffee chat" is a phone

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conversation or face-to-face meeting/discussion with a professional. You or the professional may initiate the “coffee chat”. Obviously, you do not need to drink coffee! The guide takes you through each step of planning and coordinating the discussion. It can occur on the phone (do not reject phone “coffee chats” as they can lead to follow-up in-person meetings and/or introductions to other professionals with whom to network as well). Also included are sample questions to ask of all professionals, staff/seniors, and managers and above. Students often ask, “what questions should I ask?” - ask what is important to you that you want to know about the professional, their background and experience, their career decisions, the firm, the work, various aspects of culture, etc.

- **Job Search** - Whether looking for a part-time, internship or full-time position, the EYCC can help you use the on-campus job sites (Handshake and SUNlink) as well as online sites such as Indeed.com. While searching on sites like Indeed.com appears to be easy and straightforward, you will save a lot of time and effort learning how to use the Advanced Job Search functionality with targeted search strings, and use Filters to narrow down the search results list. In addition to working with an EYCC staff, there is a one-page Job Search guide on the EYCC website with step-by-step instructions to help you navigate these sites.
- **Interview Prep** - After your resume and cover letters are ready, and you have networked successfully, resulting in one or more interviews, it is important to be as prepared for your interview(s) as possible. While you have successfully navigated step one, the next step is just as competitive. You should be prepared:
 - To be confident, but not cocky - learn how to share your experiences and accomplishments in a factual and humble manner without “selling”
 - To answer challenging questions including the dreaded behavioral questions - there are specific questions and certain types of questions that you can anticipate (“Why are you interested in our firm?” “Why are you interested in - audit, tax,

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business management, forensics, advisory, data analytics, software development, web development, information security, etc.?” “What are your strengths and weaknesses?” “Why should we hire you?” “What are your short and long-term career goals?” “Tell me about a situation when ...” “How would you handle ...?”) We can provide guidance as to how to best prepare for these and similar questions, without your practicing and memorizing 100 or more possible questions! Preparing and remembering (not memorizing) examples (stories) is the key to answering behavioral questions effectively. **** Do not prepare canned answers - you will sound robotic, and not genuine.**

- To ask good questions - don't ask questions you think they want to hear. Ask questions that actually are of interest to you. If you have done your self-exploration (career planning process) and researched the field and company, you will know what you still need to learn and that leads to asking excellent questions. You usually do not have a lot of time to ask questions, so knowing what is most important to you will help you prioritize.
- What will you do if an interviewer sits back and says, “So, what would you like to know?” instead of grilling you for 30 - 45 minutes? Will you freeze? Will you panic? Or, will you be ready to take advantage of the opportunity to ask good questions and learn more about the employer, the position, the professional, the career path, and the expectations?
- The EYCC offers Interview Prep workshops during the week following Meet the Firms and prior to the start of on-campus interviews (OCIs).
- There is also an Interview Prep guide, and a Behavioral Interview guide on the EY Center website.
- **Discussion of Offers** - whether you recruit during the on-campus interview process or through another process (job posting announcement from the EYCC, application through Handshake or SUNlink, networking at Meet the Firms or other events, application through online sites such as Indeed.com, referral, or other), you may

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want to discuss your offer(s) with someone who is objective and will not try to influence you one way or the other. The EYCC Director will listen, ask you questions, discuss your options, brainstorm negotiation strategy (timing, offer, start date, etc.) and help guide you through the decision-making process without leading you toward a specific decision. Whereas, when discussing your offer(s) with others (students, professors, family, friends, professionals), be aware that while they can definitely be helpful, they may have a preference one way or another, and therefore, may not be as objective.

- **Handshake** - All accounting and information systems students should set up a Handshake account and fill in their profile. Handshake is the job site that the EYCC is using, and more and more employers are joining Handshake and posting positions (accounting, IS, IT, other) for CSUN students and alumni. The CSUN career center uses SUNlink, and many employers still post on SUNlink as well. The EYCC staff will help you with your Handshake account. We have two computers for students in our office, so you can setup your account at the EYCC and ask for help directly.

**** Use your CSUN email to activate your Handshake account.**

Key fields to complete in your Handshake Account:

- Under “Account”, fill in the correct School Year
- Under “Profile”, use the box with CSUN David Nazarian College of Business and Economics in the Education section (do not create a separate CSUN listing) - fill in Bachelors or Masters, Major (Accountancy, Pre-Accountancy, Information Systems), and Dates (Started and Expected Graduation)
- To match many job postings, you need these fields filled in.
- Use you’re your EYCC approved resume to complete your profile as employers search Handshake for students and alumni to fill their positions. Include work experience, student organization involvement, volunteer activities, skills, awards, etc.

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With Handshake, you can search for and apply for jobs online. All of the firms who conduct on-campus interviews (OCIs) post open positions on Handshake, and most coordinate the interviews through the system. More and more non-OCI employers are posting as well.

Remember that you need to upload your resume (and other documents) into your Handshake account, and the EYCC needs to review and approve your resume. Once your resume is approved, all other documents will be automatically approved. When you replace your resume, or upload other documents (cover letters, transcripts and DPRs, etc.), they do not need further review and approval. If you make significant changes to your resume or would like your cover letter(s) reviewed, come to the EYCC to meet with one of the staff.

- **Preparation for Summer Leadership Programs (SLPs), Internships and Full-time positions:**
 - **Prior to attending a Summer Leadership Program (SLP), read the Preparation Guide on the EYCC website to learn what to expect, how to perform, and to network effectively to improve your opportunities for internship offers at the end of the summer.**
 - **Prior to starting an internship, it is beneficial to learn about expectations, know how to perform well, and how to network so you get the learning experience you're seeking, and increase the possibility of being assigned the work and clients you desire - read the Preparation Guide on the EYCC website.**
 - **Prior to starting a full-time position, understand expectations, how work is assigned, and how to network throughout your tenure at the employer to improve the opportunities to get assigned the work and clients you desire - read the Preparation Guide on the EYCC website.**
- **Job Postings - the EYCC receives numerous job postings from employers, and the EYCC sends out these postings via email to students and alumni on a regular basis. Most of these positions get filled by CSUN students and alumni.**

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Key Events and Activities:

- **EYCC Recruiting Boot Camp** - Prior to the start of each semester, the EYCC hosts a 2-day Recruiting Boot Camp. Firm professionals from 12 to 14 public accounting firms present on a variety of career planning and recruiting related topics. The 100 or more students who attend get better prepared for the upcoming semester's recruiting process. They have the opportunity to learn more about firms and network with firm professionals and other students. Attending the Recruiting Boot Camp is one of the key steps to recruiting success. The Recruiting Boot Camp is free, includes lunch, and registration opens 2 to 3 weeks prior to the event. Check your CSUN email, Handshake and EYCC website for dates and information.
- **Meet the Firms** - Each semester (in September and February), the Accounting and IS (AIS) Department in conjunction with the EYCC and student organizations, hosts the largest career fair for accounting and IS/IT students in Southern California. 70+ firms and organizations with more than 500+ students attend in September, and 60+ firms and organizations with 400+ students attend in February. Meet the Firms provides a unique opportunity to network with multiple firms to compare firms and build relationships. Attending Meet the Firms is another key component for recruiting success.

Most large, mid-size and local accounting firms and a number of corporations hire students and graduates from the networking that occurs at Meet the Firms. Employers want to meet you, get to know you, and know what you are looking for. Many of these employers do little recruiting via online posting and resumes only.

The event is usually held at the Odyssey in Granada Hills. Tickets go on sale the first Monday of each semester in the Bookstein Hall courtyard (1st floor), and the price increases each week. Membership in one of the four student organizations provides a discount to the ticket price.

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- **On-Campus Interviews (OCIs)** - On-campus interviews occur each semester (in October and March). The initial OCIs take place at the EYCC (Bookstein Hall 2224) - apply via Handshake (and on most firm websites), and generally interview(s) are scheduled in Handshake (with the exception of a couple of firms that schedule directly with students). The EYCC posts (and updates) the OCI schedule at the office and on the website.

- **Fall OCIs** - Big 4 and mid-tier accounting firms (and one or more government entities) hold on-campus interviews in the fall for internship and full-time positions. Internship opportunities may be for the upcoming winter or following summer. To be eligible for most regular internships, a student must have one summer remaining prior to graduation. The Big 4 also offer diversity internship programs for students with 2 summers remaining prior to graduation - check the requirements carefully as they differ amongst Big 4 firms. Recruiting for full-time positions is very competitive as more and more full-time positions are filled through the summer and winter internships.

In addition to the OCIs, many local accounting firms hire for internship and full-time via the fall Meet the Firms.

- **Spring OCIs** - Big 4 and mid-tier accounting firms mostly hire for Summer Leadership Programs (SLPs) with a very few openings for internships and full-time. One or more government entities may hire for full-time as well. For most SLPs, students must have 2 summers remaining prior to graduation to be eligible.

There are local accounting firms still looking to hire for internships and full-time via Meet the Firms.

- **Non-OCIs** - check Handshake and SUNlink for non-OCI job openings - these are posted throughout the semester(s).

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- **Student Organizations** - There are four student organizations within the accounting and IS domains - Accounting Association (AA), Association of Latino Professionals For America (ALPFA), Beta Alpha Psi (BAP) and Management Information Systems Association (MISA) - you can find links on the EYCC website. The first three student org's hold lunch-time meetings, usually in BB 4117, during which employers present about the accounting profession and other professional topics. You are encouraged to join one or more organization, but all students are welcome to attend the lunch meetings (food is provided). MISA holds their weekly meetings on Wednesdays at 5 pm, and you do need to join to attend the meeting (food is provided). MISA invites professionals from the IS/IT profession to educate students about technical topics and career paths and opportunities.

The student organizations also host other activities including alumni panels, workshops, firm tours, technical training, charitable events, and social events (including member only and alumni events).

B.A.A.M. News - the EYCC emails the B.A.A.M. News each week that shows the calendar of meetings and events hosted by the student organizations and the EYCC for the coming week.

The four student organizations participate in table sitting for their membership drives during the first several weeks of each semester in the Bookstein Hall courtyard (1st floor).

Why get involved? Joining a student organization and developing into a leadership role brings you into contact with other students, from whom you will learn about career opportunities, firms, positions, recruiting, etc.; contact with firm professionals for networking and recruiting; skill development (leadership, team work, communication, customer service, networking, and planning and organization - skills that are requisite for career success); and the opportunity to give back and help other students.

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Some of the student organization Directors participate in the committees that plan the Meet the Firms and Awards Banquet events.

Meet the student organizations during table sitting, attend meetings, attend other events and activities, make new friends, and get involved.

- **Awards Banquet - The AIS Department in conjunction with the EYCC and student organizations host an annual Awards Banquet during which students are awarded thousands of dollars in scholarships donated by firms, foundations, trusts, faculty and alumni. More than 400 professionals, students, faculty, staff and community members attend.**

The Awards Banquet is held in April at the Castaway in Burbank. Scholarship applications open in February, and tickets go on sale in March. Students must attend the Awards Banquet to be eligible to receive one of the scholarships awarded at the event. The event includes a dinner, scholarship awards, silent auction and raffle prizes, and networking with professionals and students.