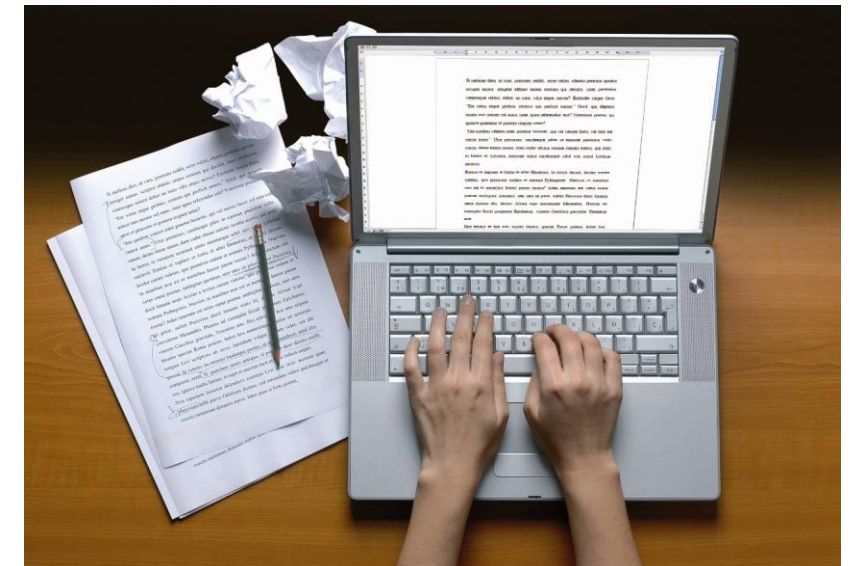# Application Preparation:
Standard Documents for Jobs and Graduate School

8 July 2021

STROBE SURS Career Discernment and Preparation Series

- General Application Tips

- Application documents
  - Resume/CV
  - Cover letter/personal statement
  - Transcripts
  - Letters of recommendation/references

- Questions?

- Consider using self-reflection and self-assessment tools to help you discover and articulate your interests, strengths, and passions

- Read application eligibility and requirements carefully (but don't be afraid to apply anyway!)

- Follow the directions! (file types, statement lengths, how to submit letters, whether transcripts are needed, etc)

- Do some research on the schools or companies to which you are applying

- Consider your entire application package to address gaps and emphasize important skills or experiences

- Ensure everything you submit is professional:

  - Grammatically correct

  - Clearly expressed

  - Well organized

- Keep your files organized and save copies

- Resume/CV

- Cover letter/personal statement

- Transcript (usually only for graduate programs, not jobs)

    - Check whether an official transcript is required, as it can sometimes take a long time to get them

- Letter(s) of recommendation or references

    - Usually 2-3 references are requested

    - Letter writers may ask for your CV and/or personal statement for reference

A concise representation/summary of your education and professional history

At this point in your career, a resume and a CV are likely the same, but there are some differences:

Resume:

- Usually 1-2 pages at most

- Tailored to a specific job or job type

- Typically has more formal formatting

CV (curriculum vita, sometimes just called a "vita"):

- Can be MANY pages long

- Includes EVERYTHING, not edited for specific applications

- Not usually tailored unless an application specifies a page limit or what to include

- Includes academia-specific sections (service, classes taught, etc)

- Tailor your resume to specific job applications (not needed for graduate schools)

- Keep your resume updated, so you don't have to scramble to do so when a deadline comes up

- Should include (order and formatting vary):
  - Contact information (use a permanent, professional email address)
  - Languages spoken
  - Schools attended, dates, and degrees received (sometimes GPA)
  - <u>Relevant</u> coursework
  - <u>Relevant</u> software and programming expertise
  - Work/research experience
  - Presentations and publications
  - Honors and awards
  - Leadership

- A professional network is important, and you've already started building one!

  - Your advisor, mentor, group members

  - Your fellow SURS

  - Other STROBE staff

- Make sure you ask early if they have to submit a letter, and provide information about how to submit the letter (which will often vary between schools)

- Have your resume and statement ready in case a letter writer or references asks for them

- How to choose references and letter writers:

  - Ideal case: a (relevant) work or research supervisor or advisor

  - Someone who can address your aptitude for the position to which you are applying

  - The job title/position of the reference matters, so ask your <u>faculty</u> advisor

- Do NOT put someone down as a reference without asking them

- Be aware that jobs may call previous supervisors even if you have not listed them as an official reference

- Tell a story about **who** you are, and **why** you want the position

    - Do NOT simply re-write your transcript or resume in paragraph form

    - This is an opportunity to add additional information, context, or emphasis to the other materials in your application

- Give specific, concrete examples whenever possible, especially when making claims about a skill or expertise

- Make sure everything is spelled correctly and you do not have copy-paste errors when using the same cover letter or statement for multiple applications

- Get feedback on your writing! Career centers, friends, mentors. This is also one of the options for your final writing assignment, a great opportunity for feedback!

Questions?

- What questions do you have about the application process and documents?

- What would you do if you didn't have any contacts at a school or company you'd like to apply to?

- What would you do if you didn't meet ALL the criteria on a job listing?

- What are some questions you have about networking?