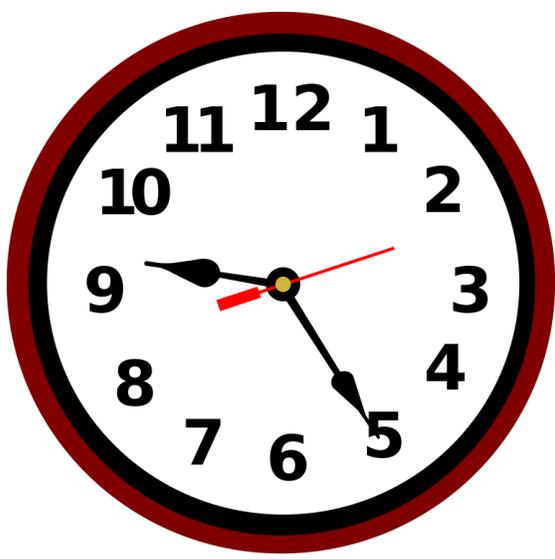


Applying to Research Labs

Presented By: Nikita Thareja and Joann Shih

10/26/16



Timeline

Give yourself 4-5 Weeks to Apply:

- ▶ 1 Week of Background Reading
- ▶ 1-2 Weeks of Reading Papers
- ▶ 1 Week of Interviews
- ▶ 1 Week to Decide

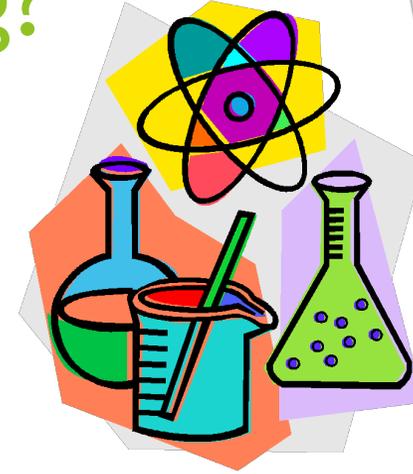
When Should I Apply?



- ▶ Try to apply by end of 2nd year at the latest
 - ▶ 1 year of meaningful experience
- ▶ Apply earlier in the quarter
 - ▶ Time-consuming process and will give you more flexibility for interviews
- ▶ Best to apply in Spring Quarter
 - ▶ Many labs are filling places left by graduating seniors or students going elsewhere over the summer
 - ▶ If ready, don't wait
 - ▶ Another option: attend UCLA poster day
- ▶ If looking for labs at other campuses, apply by early Winter Quarter

Okay... so how do I start applying?

- ▶ Find your PASSION
- ▶ Start vague and narrow/focus in on your interest
- ▶ My recommendation:
 - ▶ Pick an organ
 - ▶ Pick a state of the organ (developing, healthy, degenerating/repair)
- ▶ Start reading articles/watching videos about your topic of interest
- ▶ Make sure you are comfortable with the basics of the field
 - ▶ i.e. Neural tissue repair - cell types involved, basics about neurogenic zones, jargon





Looking up labs/Reading papers

- ▶ Time-consuming: Plan for 2 hours per lab you apply to
- ▶ Read background info for lab (may be divided up into projects)
- ▶ If you find projects you like, proceed to finding papers from lab
 - ▶ Pubmed is your best friend
 - ▶ Skim through abstracts to get basic idea. If you like the topic, actually read the paper!!
 - ▶ Understand hypothesis, experimental methods, and results (important in particularly intense lab interviews)

Cover Letter



Three Paragraph Format:

- ▶ First paragraph: Introduce yourself, what you are emailing about, and the timeline for when
- ▶ Second paragraph: Talk about research interest
 - ▶ Show them that you have an understanding of their lab and include a little bit about the paper(s) you read
- ▶ Third paragraph: Restate your interest in joining the lab and provide contact times/interest in interviewing
- ▶ ALWAYS end your email with a thank you

Attach CV or Resume

CV

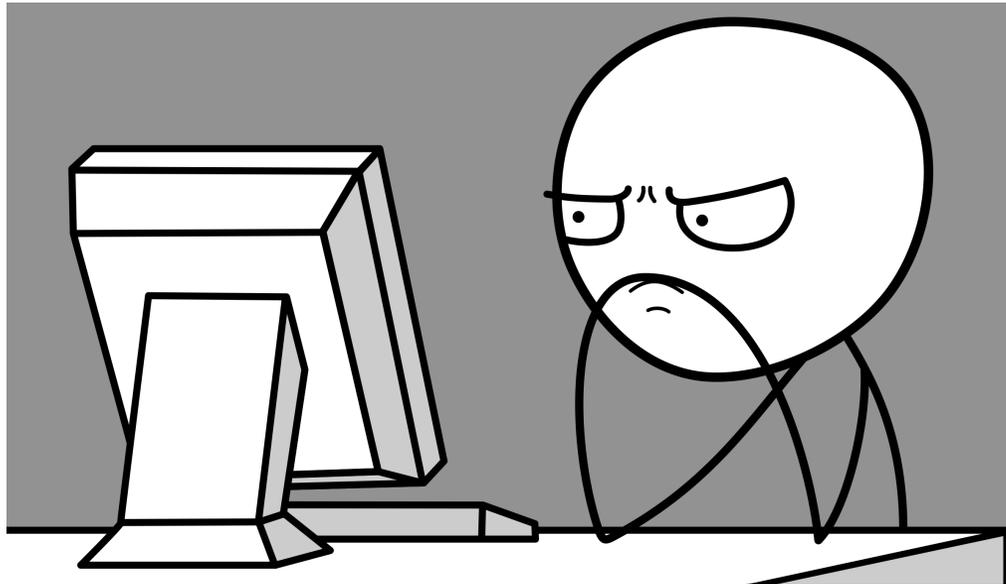
- ▶ Academician
- ▶ No page limit
- ▶ Position/Accomplishment Based
- ▶ Include Publications, Poster Presentations
- ▶ Include scholarship or professional memberships and grants received
- ▶ Include teaching experience

Resume

- ▶ All professionals
- ▶ Restricted to 1 page
- ▶ Experience Based
- ▶ Include work positions

So now what?

- ▶ Send out those emails (double check the names and email address)
- ▶ Wait for interviews



Preparing for the Interview:

- ▶ Dress nicely but still casual (Lab appropriate so no open-toed shoes and wear long pants)
- ▶ Know the following things:
 - ▶ How much time you can commit to (i.e . Can you do summers, hours per week)
 - ▶ What you want to get out of the experience
 - ▶ If you're willing to get additional training for more advanced techniques
 - ▶ Why this lab/this topic
- ▶ Have questions for the person interviewing you
 - ▶ Good time to ask about opportunities to take on more responsibility in future
 - ▶ Can ask for details on project you might be working on
 - ▶ Ask about how independently you are expected to work (how much teaching time do they have)
 - ▶ Ask about how long the PI plans to retain his/her position at the institution
- ▶ No matter how the interview goes, always thank them for their time at the end

I've gotten into labs, now how do I pick?

- ▶ Go based off of people
- ▶ Then go based off opportunity
- ▶ Finally, go based off of research interest
- ▶ If you are seriously considering a career in research, then you should put research interest into consideration
 - ▶ People tend to continue in the field of research they start in and build off of that (expensive and time-consuming to get more training)



The End!

If you have any questions, email us at cureatucla@gmail.com