Social Sciences Career Exploration Day and Resume Workshop

A SENIOR PROJECT

By

Lauren Cook
Danielle Gillett
Shari Worthington

Advised By

Professor Benjamin Timms

SocS 461, 462
Senior Project
Social Sciences Department
College of Liberal Arts
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY
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Introduction

Each year the Social Science Department at Cal Poly has held a Career Exploration Day to provide an opportunity for students to explore future careers and develop skills that they will use to find a job post-graduation. The Career Exploration Day successfully provides a forum where students can discuss careers with working professionals and determine which career path is right for them. Also, younger college undergraduates are able to plan which concentration they would like to declare based on their future career goals while the graduating upperclassmen are met with options for internships, jobs, or ideas in where they should start their life after Cal Poly. Accompanied with the Resume Workshop, students have the chance to become better prepared and well informed in not only their options after college but in the successful ways of achieving their goals as well. Student planning committees, along with a faculty advisor, have led all events in the past due to the fact that the Social Sciences Career Exploration Day and Resume Workshop are no easy task to plan and execute. Thus, with great responsibility and determination, we decided to make this year’s event the best yet. We began meeting in Spring of 2009 to discuss goals that we might accomplish over the summer vacation. This proved to be futile in the brainstorming portion of this project. Subsequently, with the beginning of the school year, we accomplished most of our goals during a weekly meeting in which we could develop ideas, discuss what we should do by the next week, and tackle any problems or concerns at the present time. Using calendars and deadlines we broke up the responsibilities for the event day and resume workshop in order to be most efficient.

The process of planning a major event on a college campus, advertising and executing the event, and documenting each step along the way can be managed only by the good
organization skills and productive efficiency of a group. While using multiple advertising techniques we brought awareness to our campus. Networking to multiple business’ and organizations along the Central Coast of California provided a large group of prospective careers for students, as well as, presented a cushion for those who could not attend the event. Lastly, punctuality, specifically in making decisions regarding reservations, proved to relieve stress and last minute issues during the planning process. With a positive attitude and a strong group of students being led by a skilled advisor we began our endeavor in planning the best Career Exploration Day Yet.

In this project we have outlined the specifics for planning the event, successes and failures, and future recommendations for the upcoming Career Exploration Days. We can only hope that with the knowledge of our hard work and goals, set and achieved, the senior project groups that follow us will keep improving and developing the Social Science Career Exploration Day and Resume Workshop. While planning the event is the bulk of the hard work that goes into the event day, we have dedicated three major sections solely to reservations, advertising, and networking. Then, in chronological order, we discuss the Resume Workshop and the Event Day with a focus on each of its separate sub-events. Lastly, we provide an analysis on the data that we collected through a student survey on event day. Important documents and records associated with the event are incorporated as well to provide a complete narrative of that which we accomplished while planning and executing this senior project.
Reservations

To begin making any reservations it was imperative that we declare a date and time for the Career Exploration Day. The Psychology Department at Cal Poly was preparing to hold their own discussion panel the same week that the Social Sciences Department Advisory Board was meeting on campus providing an opportunity for both collaboration with another Liberal Arts Department and additional help, if needed, from board members. Thus, we decided on Thursday, October 22, 2009 for this year’s annual Career Exploration Day and Tuesday, October 23, 2009 for the Resume Workshop. We chose to have the Resume Workshop before the event day so that students could prepare their interests and goals in their resumes before attending our booth fair, graduation panel session, or professional panel session. Also included in this process of date and time selection was the scheduling of each sub-event on Career Exploration Day. As the Psychology Department was holding their panel session from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., we found that the most successful way of running our event would be to hold each sub-event after 1 p.m. in order refrain from splitting up our booth fair and panel sessions.

Subsequently on the list was choosing a location. We discussed multiple locations including Dexter Lawn, Chumash Auditorium, and the Performing Arts Center Pavilion. As Chumash Auditorium was already reserved on the date of our event, and Dexter Lawn could have the possibility of weather conflicts, we eventually decided the PAC Pavilion would best suit our needs. We immediately reserved the room on the decided time and date. Cal Poly provided tables and chairs and set them up according to our designated floor plan. As a convenience for our guests, we provided food and beverages on event day. A simple menu of coffee, tea, water and a tray of brownies was made available to our guests by way of Cal Poly Catering (see page 5). Additionally, bottled water was distributed to the professionals upon arrival. We also thought it
fitting to supply complimentary parking passes to participating organizations. This simply involved confirming the number of attendees with the secretary of the Social Sciences Department. Parking passes were made available an hour prior to the event and were picked up at the Information Booth on Grand Avenue.

The main amount of money spent in this year’s senior project budget was on room reservation and set up. While campus catering took up a large portion of the budget as well, we had no other option for an event held on campus; they did provide adequate and punctual service however. Overall, we successfully completed our event and advertisement of our event with a pretty simple and well-managed budget.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior Project Budget</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Room Reservations, Tables, Chairs, Set Up Fees</td>
<td>$122.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Catering</td>
<td>$78.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement</td>
<td>$30.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking Passes</td>
<td>$30.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water and Name Tags</td>
<td>$20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$281.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This section of the preparation turned out to be generally uneventful in the way of successes and failures. The only “failure” per say we experienced was the location of the event itself. When preparation began, we had decided that ideally we would like to hold the Booth Fair outdoors. We ultimately decided however that this would be too risky, considering the weather could change at a moment’s notice. Other than this, all segments related to reservation making ran smoothly.
Above is the Cal Poly Catering receipt for Career Exploration Day.
Advertising

The success of any event can be measured by the size of the crowd in attendance. For this reason, we determined that our main focus from the beginning would be in advertisement. This meant utilizing media of all kinds from social networking sites to hand-made posters and flyers. In the past, participation from the Cal Poly student body was minimal, and thus, our creativity in this area was crucial.

We began with the basics- an originally designed flyer containing the event day schedule (see below). We posted this flyer on billboards around campus and passed it out at club meetings and Social Science classes. This proved to be a great way to give students concrete information.
Next, we created an event page on Facebook, a popular social networking site among college students, to spread the word (see Facebook event page on the right). We invited over 200 people using this form of networking. Included in the event description was a comprehensive list of professional attendees. We also incorporated the date, time, and schedule of the event. Since this invitation was sent out a month in advance, students had ample time before event day to invite their friends and plan their schedules accordingly. Another aspect of the Facebook event page we found helpful was the ability to send out mass messages to student invitees reminding and updating them regarding Career Exploration Day.
In addition, we contacted professors from the Social Science Department to request their assistance in our endeavor. We asked them to send an email to their current students urging them to attend the Career Fair and Resume Workshop, as well as asking for a moment of their lecture time so that we could personally address their students (see below for a list of classes covered).

Lastly, in the week leading up to the event day, we created large posters detailing the schedule of events and participating organizations; we obtained materials to do this from the Craft Center on campus. The location of these posters was key in order to inform, specifically, the current Social Science majors at Cal Poly of the upcoming events. Using these different
forms of advertisement proved to be a successful way to garner the attention of hundreds of students and ensure an abundant event day turnout.

As with any event preparation, we encountered both successes and failures throughout the process. Our main successes included the impressive turnout we garnered by speaking at classes and handing out flyers. Additionally, the support we received from teachers in the Social Sciences Department was invaluable – by offering extra credit to their students for attending Career Exploration Day, students were more motivated to attend. However, for as many successes as had, we also had our share of problems. One issue we repeatedly dealt with was our tight budget. Because we could not afford to advertise as extensively as we would have liked, we attempted to reach out into our community and find some local sponsors. Working with bigger corporations proved difficult for a small-scale operation like ours, as we learned we needed to make corporate contact months in advance to even be considered for sponsorship. We also looked into resources on-campus, like our school newspaper *The Mustang Daily*. We had hoped the newspaper would write an article on our event to inform the student body; unfortunately we were told that unless we were a club of special interest, the Career Fair would not be something the Mustang was interested in covering. Overall, we feel as though we did a more than sufficient job in drawing the attention of Social Sciences students. In the future though, we would work to attract students from all backgrounds.

**Networking**

It is safe to say the main component of this year’s Career Exploration Day was the Professional Booth Fair. We wanted attending students to have a large variety of organizations to meet with so as to best explore every aspect of their possible future careers. To begin the
process, we analyzed past lists of participating professionals to determine what types of careers we wanted to be represented at our event. Once we established a general direction, we began our research for specific organizations. We attained a directory of local, non-profit organizations off of an Internet search engine and proceeded to contact each group via phone and e-mail. To further our contacts, we also attended a regional Job Fair located in Paso Robles and personally invited several organizations. Throughout this process we made sure to keep a Master List of Invitees chronicling the accepted or denied status of each party (see Appendix A). In addition to selecting professionals for the booth fair, we contacted qualified specialists to discuss their careers during our Panel Session and Graduate School Session. Once we had ascertained our final list of professional participants, we sent a formal invitation detailing the schedule and accommodations for event day (see page 11). The entire networking process proved to be extensive as it involved daily communication, constant research and decision-making, and continual updates of the Master List of Invitees.

We consider the networking portion of our project to be one of our greatest successes. At the beginning of our venture, we set a goal of having 15 organizations at our Booth Fair; to ensure that this goal was reached, we invited over 30 non-profits and local agencies. When Event Day rolled around, we had exactly 15 organizations in attendance. We felt our extensive efforts in networking ultimately paid off, and would recommend to any future projects to invite at least double the amount of professionals you would like to see attend your event. One thing we would have done differently however, is to make sure we sent out thank you notes to participating organizations - it didn’t occur to us to do so until it was entirely too late, and we feel that the professionals who volunteered their time truly did deserve a proper “thank you”.
Dear Professional,

Hello! And thank you for agreeing to participate in Cal Poly Social Sciences annual Career Exploration Day. We look forward to working with you and are confident that your attendance will ensure a successful and beneficial experience for all involved.

Career Exploration Day will be an event tailored to the needs of Cal Poly students discovering possible career and internship opportunities, and broadening their knowledge of Social Sciences, Psychology, and Child Development related employment fields. Student participation in this event is not necessarily focused on attaining a job at this point in time, but rather a forum for networking, advising, and exploration.

As a participating organization, Cal Poly will provide a number of services in exchange for your commitment.

➤ Complimentary parking passes will be provided for event day and can be picked up at the Information Booth located at the intersection of Grand and Slack.
➤ Setup time begins at 12:30 pm on Thursday, October 22, 2009; breakout of booths will commence at 2:30, with a meet and greet session shortly thereafter. We will provide tables and chairs to display information about your organization.
➤ Booth fair is being held inside the Pavilion of the Christopher Cohan Center. General parking can be found in the structure on Grand Ave.
➤ Refreshments, including coffee, tea, water and cookies, will be provided for your convenience.

We invite you to bring any brochures, pamphlets, handouts, displays, photos, and other relevant information to represent your organization; there will be a table reserved to accommodate your needs. We suggest you bring enough media to provide for between 50 and 100 students, along with any signage you may have to advertise your organization.

Again we would like to thank you in advance for your participation in Career Exploration Day. If you have questions, comments, or concerns, please feel free to contact us by email or phone at any time. You can expect to hear from us a week before the event to confirm and finalize the details.

We hope you are as excited to participate in this information event as we are to host you – See you there!

Danielle Gillett – 408.644.4155; dngillet@calpoly.edu
Shari Worthington – 775.772.3995; sworthin@calpoly.edu
Lauren Cook – 909.908.5030; lcoack@calpoly.edu
Resume Workshop

This workshop was an event planned for October 20th, 2009, the Tuesday before the Career Fair (on Thursday), in order to help students begin and elaborate upon their personal resumes. Charlotte Rinaldi of the Career Services Center helped immensely in coordinating this event. After we decided on a date and time to hold the workshop, Charlotte provided a thorough presentation that covered the basics and beyond of formulating a successful resume. Packets and various handouts were distributed to all interested students, who gathered in the Career Center where many related resources are located. This is the main reason we chose this spot for the discussion, but also because of its availability and accessibility to students on campus. The general idea was to help students obtain the tools they need to create a resume with a solid foundation. Through Charlotte’s presentation this was accomplished, and she then went on to help teach how to modify these resumes for specific situations; to tailor the document to have the best features for whatever position the person is applying for. Overall, the Resume Workshop was well attended and highly informative.

The major successes in the workshop seem to lie in the planning and the actual presentation. Preparation for this discussion involved meeting with Charlotte Rinaldi a few times, beginning about a month in advance, to plan out the technicalities and what should be covered during the talk. Charlotte suggested the conference room that we ended up using and reserved it as well, and also prepared the documents for handouts and files used for slides in the lecture. Since she had done similar presentations previously, the one used for our Career Exploration Day was well rounded, suited perfectly for our hour time frame, and a perfect guideline for students still needing a decent resume. The workshop was very well attended, and from student feedback was also well received.
As far as failures go for this event, there was nothing major. The biggest problem we encountered was the fact that attendance was greater than expected. The conference room the workshop was held in was slightly too small to comfortably fit all of the students that showed up. We could have used a little more space in general, and also more chairs. We had planned on having between forty and fifty students, and ended up with probably closer to sixty or seventy. The large number of people made the room crowded and posed a problem for passing out handouts, not having enough hard copies to go around. This problem was solved by obtaining the e-mail addresses from students who wanted the packets but did not receive them, and sending the information electronically. While sitting may have been less than ideal for some students at the workshop, problems remained miniscule and the lecture ran smoothly.

**Event Day**

The months of preparation work we had put in all finally came to a head on Event Day – Thursday, October 22\(^{nd}\), 2009. We began the day by meeting in our advisor’s office for one last run down of the timeline of events. We confirmed the Booth Fair for 1pm, the Career Panel for 3pm, and the Graduate School Panel for 4pm. After setting up an easel outside the PAC Pavilion to direct attendees inside, we set about perfecting the last minute details (including modifying the seating chart, (see page 15), and drafting nametags for professional participants). As the professionals arrived, we led them to their tables, handed out nametags, and helped them with set up of their materials. By the time the organizations were situated, students had began filing into the auditorium. We made sure to greet each student as they arrived, and handed them a questionnaire pertaining to their opinion of the event as they were on their way out; attached to this questionnaire were brief biographies of the professionals in attendance, as well as a timeline
of the day’s events (See Appendix C). Throughout the Booth Fair, we circulated the floor to make sure that things were running smoothly and our participant’s needs and questions were attended to. Approximately an hour and a half after the event started, professionals began to pack up their materials and head home. We thanked them for coming and began to prepare for the next segment of the event. The provided two hours for the booth fair proved to be an efficient and productive amount of time for this part of Career Exploration Day.
The second event for Career Exploration Day was the Panel of Professionals. On this panel we included Susan Harney, a social worker from Family Care Network, Barry Price of Applied Earthworks, and Elise Wheeler representing California State Parks. We had confirmed that Eric Paolinelli of Kerman High School would be in attendance, however when the time came and Eric was nowhere to be found, we had to find a quick substitution. We replaced Eric with Andrew Vasquez, a local educator. We facilitated discussion with a brief introduction, as well as an opening question to get conversation started. We let the panelists respond as they felt necessary, and encouraged the students in the audience to ask questions of their own. When we noticed a lull in discussion, we were prepared with several questions of our own to ask the professionals. The entire panel lasted about an hour, which proved to be a sufficient enough amount of time to cover a wide range of questions related to these careers in Social Sciences.

The final event of our day was also the smallest – Graduate School Panel. The format for discussion was casual, as we made a circle of chairs for students and featured professors to engage in a dialogue. The professors began by relating their own experiences in grad school, as well as detailing exactly what it takes to become a graduate school student. Because of the relaxed environment, discussion was uninhibited - students appeared comfortable enough to express their concerns and queries related to graduate school, and no facilitation was required on our part. In fact, discussion was still going strong when the hour was up, and several students stayed after time to continue with their questions. Even though this event had the least number of attendees, we would consider it the most successful and informative part of the day.
**Data Analysis**

In analyzing the data from the 2009 Career Exploration Day, we used questionnaires to survey students on their thoughts of the event. While many more students participated in the various activities related to our project, fifty-eight were surveyed and will be used for this purpose of gathering information. Therefore, the answers we have obtained to these questions are not of the full range of students who participated in one or more events, but rather a sample that will hopefully convey the feelings of the larger group.

The first question asked of the student was what major they were. There was an overwhelming majority of Social Science students (46 of the 58), which makes sense as this Career Day was focused on that field. There were a few students present from Earth Science, Child Development, and Psychology, and some majors that only had one representative in our sample.

The next question inquired of how long the student had been attending school. Over half the students present were first years (31 of 58), around ten were second years, and the numbers dwindle as the year goes up. In other words, the number of attendees was inversely related to the year they were in college. This may be because they younger students wanted to see more of what the major has to offer career-wise than older students who have begun following a route towards something specific already. Many 100 and 200 level Social Science Classes offered extra credit to attend events of the Career Fair, so there was encouragement for younger students to attend. We needed to have a way to attract a larger number of older students.

The following question dealt with how informative the students found the event ranking from 5 (high) to 1 (low). The highest response at around 60% was found to be 4, meaning that participants were overall happy with the Career Exploration Day. The next most frequent
response was a 5, which had almost a quarter of the answers. When students were asked why they responded as such, they said that they found the event informative overall, well organized, and offering a wide range of career options for Social Science students.

Next we asked students which aspects of the Career Day they had chosen to attend or were planning on going to. There was the Resume Workshop, the Psychology Symposium, the Booth Fair, the Professional Panel, and the Graduate Panel. Since we conducted this survey at the Booth Fair, we got the most responses for having been a part of that. Almost 100% of students taking the questionnaire came to the Booth Fair at some point, followed by 38% that attended the resume workshop. While some only came to one event, an overwhelming majority of students had attended at least two sections of the Career Day. The Psych Symposium and Professional Panel each captured only about a sixth of our representatives, although these numbers were in actuality higher since not every attendee completed our questioning. The Graduate Panel was the event with the smallest attendance, for it was pretty specific to seniors thinking of graduating soon and going directly to grad school.

Thinking about Grad School, our next question asked students if they were going on for a further degree after their Bachelor’s from Cal Poly. Either “yes,” “no,” or “unsure” were the possible responses. “Unsure” took the majority, just over 50% of the replies. This makes sense, as we saw that the majority of our participants were freshman, with ample time to decide on Graduate School. Thirty-eight percent said that yes, they would be going on for their Master’s Degree, and only about 10% replied with “no.” While many students are still questioning the prospect, it seems that for a final decision more students are looking at grad school than are not.

Taking this question of future plans in a different direction, we then asked students if they knew which field they would like to work in. Using “yes,” “no,” and “unsure” again, once again
a majority (just under half) responded that they did not know for sure which field they would like to end up in. Thirty-six percent of respondents said that they did know, and only about 12% said they did not. This is very revealing, and we hope that with events such as the Career Day these students who have not found exactly what they want to do will be exposed to new jobs and fields dealing with the Social Sciences that they may become interested in.

After asking the basic question of whether students knew what they wanted to do, we went further to see what kinds of things they were actually interested in. Social work, public health, and other jobs in the fields of sociology, anthropology, and geography were very popular. Criminal justice was a common response, as was working with non-profit organizations. Environmental law and protection was also frequent, as well as law enforcement within a social setting (policeman, sheriff, etc.). Some students wanted to work with archaeology, and others wished to go into the medical field or hospice care. A wide range of interests were represented in these students, and we therefore tried to have a wide range of participants for the Career Exploration Day.

When we asked what they would like to see of future Career Exploration Days, we found that students would like to get information for more opportunities to work or volunteer abroad in the field. They would also like to possibly get involved with more non-profit organizations and NGOs. Many students wanted to know more about the Peace Corps and Ameri Corps, and students also requested a larger variety in the field of social work.

For the last segment of our questionnaire, we asked for any extra comments that didn’t apply to the previous questions. In this section, we found what really stood out to students as either being very good or needing improvement. Some students wrote about how useful the resume workshop was, others very much enjoyed the ESRI GIS booth set up during the Fair
portion. We got good feedback on the variety present at the event, and had students that liked the internship opportunities offered by some companies. There was a request to have actual job offerings from attending companies, although this is extremely difficult to coordinate at any given time. While we would like to offer Social Science students jobs at the events, we believe that the focus remains as a Career Exploration Day, to inquire into the field but not necessarily jump into a career right away. Overall, student feedback ranks the event as an overall success.
Conclusion

Developing the skills to plan an event is most sufficiently accomplished through the act of actually planning an event; with practice one can come close to perfect, in other words. As we have discussed our successes and failures in each part of the planning process, we have consequent recommendations for Future Career Days. These include: exploring further options in advertisement, developing a clear-cut and extensive list of things to do before each weekly-held meeting, researching and inviting even more organizations to participate in the event, expanding opportunities for internships for Cal Poly students, and making sure to provide an adequate thank you to professionals, participants, and volunteers involved in making Career Exploration Day successful. Overall, the success of the event is largely the responsibility of those planning the event, and, therefore, it should not be taken lightly. We feel that we achieved our goals that we set from the beginning in providing a greater amount of options for students, as well as, achieving a larger amount of involvement than year’s past. With participation as our indicator, we achieved great success and accomplished the great task that we set out to accomplish—planning and executing the most successful Career Exploration Day for the Social Science Department to date.
Appendix A

MASTER LIST OF INVITEES

Human Kind - Fair Trade Non Profit
805.594.1220
www.humankindslo.com

EcoSLO
805.544.1777
www.ecoslo.org

Andre, Morris, and Buttery, Professional Law Corporation
805.543.4171
amb@amblaw.com

Housing Authority of the City of San Luis Obispo
805.543.4478

The Nature Corps
800.774.PARK
www.thenaturecorps.org

SLO County Administrative Office
805.781.5011
http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/admin.htm

Gerald T. Shea - SLO County District Attorney
805.781.5800
http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/DA.htm

Social Sciences Club
Cal Poly

Student Community Services
Cal Poly

Raechelle Bowlay - With Wings and a Halo - R.E.A.C.H. A Child!
877.992.2422
www.withwingsandahaloc.org/raechelle@reachachild.org

Jesse Torrey - Americorps, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
805.756.5338
jtorrey@calpoly.edu

Cheryl Andrus - University Police Department
805.756.1116
candrus@calpoly.edu

Officer Chad Reilly

PENDING
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DENIED
CONFIRMED
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CONFIRMED

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Gary Joralemon - SLO County Probation Department
805.781.5378
gjoralemon@co.slo.ca.us

Peace Corps Cal Poly
www.peacecorps.gov

Lindsay Bruinsma - UNICEF
elleb2@yahoo.com 310.292.6982

Transitions Mental Health Association
805.541.5144
info@t-mha.org

Family Care Network, Inc
805.781.3535
adorn@fcni.org

Department of Social Services
805.781.1705
http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/dss.htm

CALPIRG
www.calpirg.org

California Regional Environmental Education Community
805.782.7265
www.creec.org/region8

Woods Humane Society
805.543.9316
www.woodshumanesociety.org

Shirley Wu - Sexual Assault Recovery and Prevention - SARP
805.545.8888
swu@sarpcenter.org/www.sarpcenter.org

Food Bank Coalition of SLO
805.481.4652
www.slofoodbank.org

El Camino Homeless Organization - ECHO
805.462.3663

Megan Prendeville - Central Coast Hospice Partners
805.782.8608
hpccinfo@wilshirehcs.org
Student Conservation Association
(603) 543-1700
oncampus@thesca.org

Crystal Durham - California Student Sustainability Coalition
(310) 487-8049
Crystal.durham@gmail.com

Casa Pacifica
(805) 937-2474
Casapacifica.org

Affordable Housing Associates
(510) 649-8500
www.ahainc.org

Institute for Human and Social Development
(650) 589-5710

Krysti Jerdin - CASA
(805) 541-6542
kjerdin@slocasa.org

Federal Bureau of Prisons
(209) 956-9715
rxxlujan@bop.gov

Jenny Cobb - OPTIONS Community Disability Services
(805) 772-6066

Mike Ridland - ESRI GIS
mridland@esri.com

Jenny Pong - Economic Opportunity Commission of San Luis Obispo
jpong@capslo.org/www.eocslo.org
805.544.4355

Therapies to Grow On
805.547.1755

Community Action
805.544.4355

Cuesta College Independent Living Program
805.781.1700

Theresa Lee - County Office of Education
805.543.7732
Appendix B

your best resume...ever

1st: Create Master List of Experiences
- Paid Work
- Volunteer Work
- Academic Projects
- Clubs, Student Groups, Sorority/Fraternity
- Classes & Workshops
- Others?

Sample History
Analyze target opportunity

- Identify
  - Skills Required
  - Environment/Setting
  - Mission
  - Qualifications

Tip: If job description is unavailable, look online for similar positions.

Sample Categorized description

How are you similar?

- Skills or Functional Areas
- Environment or Setting
- Ideology
Skills or Functional Areas

- Customer Service
- Instruction
- Management
- Event Planning
- News Reporting
- Performance

Environment or Setting

- Non-Profit
- Government
- Business
- Educational
- Wildlife Reserve
- National Forest
- Upscale Dining
Ideals, Mission, Values

- Sustainability
- Commitment to Equity
- Global Information Delivery
- Creating Social Change
- Human Rights/Civil Rights/GLBT Rights
- Higher Education
- Wealth
- Advocacy
- Arts Education Promotion
- International Ministry

3rd

List out categories (SEI) and under each write in related experiences

4th

Create a comparison sheet

Sample quadrants
5th Determine Key Categories
- Start with most relevant and work backward
- Allocate more space to more relevant experience

6th Create Action-oriented descriptions for each entry

Sample Resumes by Objective
- Preschool Teacher
- Staff Writer for Alternative Paper
- Program Associate with Sadie Nash Leadership Project
- Campaign Assistant
- Health Educator
- Science Teacher
The Social Science Department at Cal Poly welcomes you to the annual Career Exploration Day!
Social Science Career Exploration Day Schedule:

11:00-1:00  PSY & CD Fall Career Symposium (PAC Lobby)
Will have 7 presentations from PSY&CD alumni representing a broad range of career options.

1:00-2:30  Social Sciences Career Booth Fair (PAC Pavilion)
Consist of employers and professionals with booths to receive resumes, hand out career information, and answer questions.

2:30-3:00  Meet and Greet Reception (PAC Pavilion)
Networking opportunity to have some refreshments and mingle with career professionals.

3:00-4:00  Career Professionals Panel Session (PAC Pavilion)
Five career professionals will interact with students in discussing career paths, advice, and options.

4:00-5:00  Graduate School Panel Session (PAC Pavilion)
Several faculty members will explain and discuss the process of choosing, applying to, and attending graduate schools.
Professional Panel Participants

Susan Harney of Family Care Network
The Family Care Network is a progressive organization serving foster and high-needs children, youth, and families on the Central Coast. Programs include Intensive Therapeutic Foster Care, Wraparound Services, Transitional Age Youth Housing Programs and Services, Therapeutic Behavioral Services, and School-Based and Delinquency Prevention Programs. This institute assists over 2000 children and families per year through seventeen programs, has served the area for over twenty years, and is now the region’s largest private accredited child and family services provider.

Eric Paolinelli of Kerman High School
A Social Sciences graduate of Cal Poly in 1998, Eric started teaching high school US History in the fall of 1998 in Fresno, CA. In 2004 he became a middle school vice principal at an inner-city school in Fresno and became a high school vice principal in 2006 at Kerman High School, a small rural community outside of Fresno. Many of the students prepare for trade schools and get jobs immediately after high school. Much of his job is running the athletic program with budgets, schedules, community outreach, fund raising, and overseeing transportation, officials, and athletic events with an annual athletic budget of $265,000. The other part of his job deals with supervision of students, discipline, and supervision of teaching staff and evaluations of staff members.

Barry Price of Applied Earthworks
The field of Cultural Resource Management (CRM) involves the application of anthropological, archaeological, and historical methods and theories to the management of a finite, non-renewable resource. “Cultural resources” is a generic term that encompasses prehistoric and historic archaeological sites, historic buildings and structures, cultural landscapes, and a wide range of other places and things important in the cultural and social fabric of a community. CRM practitioners work in academia, government, and the private sector applying federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and standards to manage, study, and protect these resources.

Elise Wheeler of California State Parks
Elise Wheeler has worked as an archaeologist in California and the Great Basin for over thirty years and has been the District Archaeologist for the California State Parks San Luis Obispo Coast District for the past ten years. Her interests include the archaeology of cultural contact and colonization, historic and prehistoric land use patterns and cultural landscape. Her duties within the Park system focus on cultural resource and project management, Native American liaison, environmental review, public education and outreach, and staff resource training.
Social Science Career Exploration Day
Student Questionnaire

1. What is your major?

2. What year are you in college?
   1st  2nd  3rd  4th  5th  Other

3. How informative did you find this event?
   (high) 5  4  3  2  1 (low)

4. What sessions did you attend today?
   Resume Workshop  Booth Fair  Graduate Panel
   Psych Symposium  Professional Panel

5. Are you planning on attending graduate school?
   Yes  No  Unsure

6. Do you know which field you would like to work in as a professional?
   Yes  No  Unsure

7. If yes, which field?

8. What professions would you like to see present in the future?

9. Please leave any other comments here:
Appendix D

Social Science Career Exploration Day

Graduate School Panel Packet

The Social Science Department at Cal Poly welcomes you to the Graduate School Panel and Discussion October 22nd, 2009
**PROSPECTIVE GRAD STUDENTS:**

Don't be fooled! Make sure you ask these questions during your grad school visit day!

- Will your qualifying exam's procedure utterly destroy my dignity and sense of self-respect?
- Are your health-care plans affordable, or will I end up going to a dentist that operates out of a trailer?
- When you look at me, do you see a young creative mind, or a series of potential journal papers?
- Can you really live comfortably in this major metropolitan area with that stipend, or will I find myself living out of a closet working part-time as a shoe salesman?
- Besides moving up in the "US News" rankings, why do you want me to come to your school?

**GRAD STUDENTS: POINT OUT SOME OF THE STRATEGIES USED BY YOUR DEPARTMENT TO INCREASE YOUR CHANCES OF DETERIORATION.**

**WILL MY TEACHERS TAKE PERSONAL INTEREST IN MY LEARNING, OR WILL I BE SPENDING SEVERAL ALL NIGHTERS WORKING ON PROBLEM SETS MADE BY FRUSTRATED FACULTY WHO WOULD RATHER BE DOING RESEARCH INSTEAD?**

**Jorge Cham © Stanford Daily**

**Piled Higher and Deeper by Jorge Cham**

www.phdcomics.com

"Academic" Salaries

Actual average and median salaries at U.S. Doctoral-granting Universities

Note: Administrative figures are medians; salaries, the rest are averages. All figures in 2006 dollars. Sources: College and University Professional Association for Human Resources 2005 Survey; American Association of University Professors 2007 Survey; The Chronicle of Higher Education 2001 Survey of Graduate Assistants; USA Today Survey of Div. IA College Football Coaches Compensation 2007.

www.phdcomics.com
Resources

Tips for applying to graduate school

1. www.gradschooltips.com

Complete listing of graduate schools

1. General: www.gradschools.com

Professional organizations

American Association of Anthropologist:
http://www.aaanet.org/

American Sociological Association:
http://www.asanet.org/

Association of American Geographers:
http://www.aag.org/

National Association of Social Workers:
http://www.socialworkers.org/
Statement of Purpose

1. Use personal information when it is relevant to your research and teaching interests. But, don't overdo it.
2. Explain why you are a good fit for the department, and how your research interests align with the department's offerings. Be sure to research each department so that you know their specialties. In other words, cater your statement to each school.
3. Discuss the kind of preparation you have had for graduate work. Have you taken any graduate courses? Have you served as a teaching assistant or reader? Do you have any experience in the field?
4. Mention professors with whom you are interested in working. It might even help to talk to them in advance, not about your application, but about their research interests. Don't force it, though. Most importantly, make sure the professors are still in the department. Departments frequently list faculty who are retired and are no longer around.
5. Discuss your research and course trajectory. In other words, describe your research agenda. In this section, describe your interests, goals, career plans after graduate school, and why the school is a good choice to pursue these interests.
6. Explain any aspect of your application that could be viewed as a negative, particularly a low GPA. Only do this if you are certain that the committee will want an explanation.
7. Use the language of the discipline in your application. Don't force it, though.
8. Avoid Clichés: Avoid phrases like, "It is with great enthusiasm that I submit my application to . . ." or "Ever since I was child, I have always wanted to be a geographer."
9. Make sure that your statement is well-organized and well-written. It should have a concise introduction and conclusion. Remember, departments are not only looking for what you say, but how you say it.
Letters of Recommendation

1. Graduate programs usually require three letters of recommendation. It is best to obtain recommendations from professors in your field. For social work, it is sometimes helpful to obtain recommendations from practitioners in the field, especially if you have experience working with them.

2. Ask professors who know you the best, especially if you have served as their teaching assistant and/or research assistant.

3. Remember, all professors, unfortunately, are not created equal. Full professors are often valued by admission committees more than assistant professors, because full professors are usually more established in the field.

4. Ask professors two months before the letters of recommendation are due. Do not wait until the last minute. An angry professor is far more likely to write a substandard letter of recommendation.

5. When asking a professor for a letter of recommendation, be prepared. If possible, provide the professor with a written summary of the work you have done as an undergraduate, any experience you have in the field, and any other relevant information. If possible, provide the professor with a resume and writing samples.

6. Be sure to have all the relevant forms with you when you ask for a letter of recommendation. Universities always have recommendation forms for the professor to fill out. Increasingly, many recommendations are now filled out online.

7. When you ask for a recommendation, don't be afraid to say, "Would you be able to write a STRONG letter of recommendation for graduate school." If they hesitate, ask someone else. If possible, be sure to ask professors in person, not over email.

8. Don't be afraid to send polite reminders. It's best to remind professors two weeks before the recommendation is due.
Anthropology

Physical Anthropology

- The American Association of Physical Anthropology lists graduate programs in Physical (Biological) Anthropology. This list of programs can be found on their website with hyperlinks to each program for more information.
  http://physanth.org/gradprogs/
- The Human Biology Association lists graduate programs in Biological Anthropology and Human Biology.

Cultural Anthropology

- American Association of Anthropology publishes the AAA Guide which lists:
  - Industry and Research Firms specializing in anthropology, hiring anthropologists
  - Government and Non-Profit Agencies employing anthropologists
  - Museums
  - Academic Departments that offer degrees in Anthropology
- A copy of the guide can be found in the Social Sciences main office
- This is a comprehensive list containing information on programs specializing in cultural and other subfields of anthropology

Archaeology

- The Society for American Archaeology has many resources for students, including international graduate programs and background information to consider when applying for graduate school.
  http://saa.org/student/index.html

Applied

- The Society for Applied Anthropology lists graduate programs focusing on applied anthropology. The list of programs can be found on their website with hyperlinks to each program for more information.
  http://www.sfaa.net/sfaaorgs.html
Searching for Graduate Schools in Geography?

Here's How:

1. Think about which specialties of geography you're most interested in.

2. If you're interested in becoming faculty at a university, consider the Ph.D., otherwise, maybe a masters degree is a good place to start.

3. Obtain a copy of the Association of American Geographers' latest “Guide to Programs in Geography/AAG Handbook and Directory of Geographers” from the AAG, a professor, or your library.

4. Use the grid at the end of the program listing in the “Guide” to find schools that meet your interests and that are in the appropriate regions. Write this list down.

5. Narrow down the list by reading each university's self-submitted description, their size, and whether they offer the degree you're interested in.

6. Once you have a short list, explore those departments' web sites and further refine your list.

7. Once you have a manageable number of schools, request program information and applications via mail.

8. Visit the schools you'd probably attend, if accepted.

9. Apply and wait for your acceptance letters. Good luck!

Tips:

1. It's very important to visit the schools you're interested in, even if they don't require interviews.

2. You have a much better chance of being accepted if you have communicated with faculty member at your intended school about your interests. Meeting them is even better.

3. Below is a link to a website that is useful for researching the quality of Geography graduate programs offering doctorates. It is searchable by criteria you select, such as years it takes to earn a degree, quality of faculty, size, prestige, percent of graduates getting a job within one year of graduation, and many more.

http://graduate-school.phds.org/rankings/geography
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**Note:** The website links provided are for the respective universities and may not be active. The table format is designed to list institutions and their respective degree programs. This table is a simplified representation and does not include all details such as specific programs or contact information.
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Master's International
A Program That Combines Peace Corps Service With Graduate Studies

The Master's International program incorporates Peace Corps service into a master's degree program at universities across the United States. As Master's International participants, students spend one to two years completing coursework on campus. Afterward, they serve overseas in the Peace Corps for 27 months, for which they receive academic credit. Generally, students then return to the university for one semester to complete degree requirements.

Benefits
Master's International participants graduate with the combination of an advanced degree and two years of substantive professional experience in an international setting. In addition, the Peace Corps provides:
• language, cross-cultural, and technical training;
• travel costs to and from the country of service;
• overseas living and housing expenses;
• medical and dental coverage;
• vacation time and allowance;
• help with readjustment costs after service; and
• career and transition assistance.

Fields of Study
Master's International participants can choose majors in fields such as those listed below. They are numbered to indicate the broad subject areas offered by the universities listed to the right.

1. Agriculture, agribusiness
2. Business, economics, community development, urban planning, youth development
3. Environment, forestry, natural resources, engineering
4. Education (e.g., math, science, English), writing, English as a second language
5. Administration, international studies, public policy, political science, sociology
6. Public health, international health, nursing, nutrition

Website: www.peacecorps.gov/masters
E-mail: mastersinternational@peacecorps.gov
Phone: 202.692.1812 or 800.424.8580, ext. 1812

Master's International Partner Universities
As of November 2007, the following universities offered Master's International programs—new universities become partners annually.

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Life is calling. How far will you go?
Fellows/USA
A Graduate Studies Program That Follows Peace Corps Service

Fellows/USA is a graduate studies program that offers financial benefits to returned Peace Corps Volunteers who want to earn professional certification, or a master's or doctoral degree. Peace Corps Fellows use the skills they developed working overseas to complete internships in underserved U.S. communities while gaining both academic credit and valuable on-the-job experience.

Lifetime Eligibility
Returned Peace Corps Volunteers have lifetime eligibility for Fellows/USA if they have done one of the following:
• completed the full two-year tour of Peace Corps service, or a full tour minus up to 90 days of emergency leave;
• been granted "early close of service" or "interrupted service" status as a result of circumstances beyond their control; or
• been medically separated and have completed a year of service, including training.

Fields of Study
Peace Corps Fellows can study in a variety of fields, including those listed below. Fields are numbered to indicate the subjects offered by the universities listed to the right. In addition, some universities allow students to tailor degrees to suit their interests.

1 Anthropology, sociology
2 Business, economics, nonprofit management, arts management
3 Community development, urban planning, geography
4 English literature, language, communication
5 Environment, forestry
6 International affairs, development, peace studies
7 Nursing, public health, social work
8 Philosophy, psychology, criminal justice
9 Public policy, public administration, political science
10 Teacher education
11 History, American studies
12 Sciences, information technology, engineering

Website: www.peacecorps.gov/fellows
E-mail: fellows@peacecorps.gov
Phone: 202.692.1440 or 800.424.8580, ext. 1440

Office of Domestic Programs

Life is calling. How far will you go?
SAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL CURRICULUM VITAE AND STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE
Curriculum Vitae

Education
- California Polytechnic State University, Bachelor of Science, Jun 2008
  - Major: Social Sciences
  - Declared Concentration: Human Behavior
  - Minor: Psychology
  - GPA (overall): 3.57
- Cuesta Community College, San Luis Obispo, CA, Associate of Arts Degree, Transfer Studies, May 2006
- Paso Robles High School, Diploma, Jun 2003

Senior Project
"Sleep, Health, Risk and Stress: The behavioral endocrinology of SLO County/Cal Fire firefighters"

Research Interests
Human behavioral endocrinology, evolutionary perspectives on behavior, reproductive ecology, mate choice and mating strategies, evolutionary theories on sleep, and hormones and health.

Relevant Coursework
- Cultural Anthropology
- World Pre-History
- Biological Anthropology
- Sex, Death & Human Nature
- Social Problems
- Women in Cross-Cultural Perspective
- Multicultural Psychology
- Personality
- Social Theory
- Human Impact on the Earth
- Social Data Collection and Analysis
- Native American Cultures
- Human Cultural Adaptations
- Human Behavioral Ecology
- Cultural Geography
- Social Stratification
- Global Geography
- World System and Its Problems
- Abnormal Psychology
- Social Psychology
- American Ethnic Minorities
- Environmental Biology

Student Assistantship
- Grader, Department of Social Sciences, 2008
Awards and Grants
- National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship (NSFGRF) 2009
  (Applied Nov 3, status pending)
- $500 College Based Fees Award for conference presentation of research, Oct 2008
- Annual Award for Exceptional Achievement in Biological Anthropology, from the Department of Social Sciences, Jun 2008
- $500 College Based Fees Award for research, Feb 2008
- Dean’s List, Cal Poly, 2007
- High Honors, 6 Semesters, Cuesta Community College, 2003-2006

Working Paper
Rucas, S., Miller, A., Murphy, R., Roa, A., Muehlenbein, M. Firefighter behavioral ecology: Risk environments and reproduction. Working paper in progress

Fieldwork and Projects
- SLO County Firefighters research project: “Sleep, health, risk and stress: The behavioral endocrinology of San Luis Obispo County Firefighters” Feb 2008-present
  - Topics investigated: Risk inclination, stress evaluation, quality and quantity of sleep and its affects on health and reproductive outcomes
  - Data collection and ethnographic investigation at two California Fire base camps and 19 county fire stations
- Cal Poly Archaeology Field School, Santa Cruz Island, Mar 2008
- Site survey, mapping, research

Conferences Attended
- Upcoming
  - Society for Applied Anthropology (SFAA), Santa Fe, NM Mar 2009
  - Evolution, Ecology, Mind & Behavior Workshop (EMB), Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, CA, Mar 2009
- American Anthropological Association (AAA), San Francisco, CA Nov 2008
- Evolution, Ecology, Mind and Behavior Workshop (EMB), Cal Poly Mar 2008

Presentations
- Abstracts submitted for SFAA poster presentation, upcoming Mar 2009
  2. Miller, A., Rucas, S., Muehlenbein, M. Firefighter ecology and risky behaviors
- American Anthropological Association conference (EAS section), San Francisco, CA Nov 2008
  1. Murphy, R., Rucas, S., Miller, A., Roa, A., Muehlenbein, M. The effects of sleep quality on health outcomes among firefighters.
  3. Miller, A., Rucas, S., Murphy, R., Roa, A., Muehlenbein, M. Sleep, risk and reproduction: The behavioral ecology of firefighters
• Chief Officer Staff Meeting Oct 14, 2008. Sleep, health, risk and stress: The behavioral endocrinology of San Luis Obispo County/Cal Fire firefighters

Professional Memberships
• American Anthropology Association (AAA)
  o Evolutionary Anthropology Society (EAS)
• Society for Applied Anthropology (SFAA)
• Social Sciences Club (2006-2008)

Service
• Annual EMB Cal Poly workshop organizing committee 2008

Additional Information
• Computer Skills: PowerPoint, Word, Excel, SPSS

References

Stacey Rucase, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor of Anthropology  
Department of Social Sciences  
California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly)  
Office Bldg. 47, Room 12B  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407  
Office: (805) 756-1374  
Email: sruca@calpoly.edu  
Web: http://cla.calpoly.edu/~sruca/
For some time, I had a desire to attend college, but no one in my family, or indeed any of my close friends had ever been to a university. I had questions without answers. My family wished to help, but there was little they could do with limited funds and no historical knowledge to aid me in the process. At the time, I was working permanently at a law firm, so I saved a little money and signed up for classes at the community college, thinking this would be a good way to explore the process and possibilities. Being relatively uncertain of what I wanted to do with my future, I enrolled in an assortment of classes spanning a wide variety of topics, and found that I had a great enthusiasm for social sciences and anthropology in particular. This education bestowed upon me a true appreciation for human cultural and biological diversity, and a great desire to see the world; a goal I hope to achieve in the coming years.

It is true that while at Cuesta and Cal Poly, and for the first time in my life, I really thrived as a person. Where high school had been marginally challenging, college was the opposite. My courses and professors at Cal Poly demanded the best and they inspired and encouraged me to explore all of my interests. I found through this process that it was my education in scientific anthropology that ignited my strongest passions, particularly in the areas of behavioral endocrinology and evolutionary theory, principally as they pertained to sleep, hormones, health, and behavior.

Just before entering my senior year at Cal Poly, I accepted an intern position at Cal Fire. My job began at the start of fire season allowing me to witness many devastatingly tired co-workers trying to function as firemen. Thinking back to my anthropology courses, I became quickly interested in the sleeping patterns and ecological implications and health outcomes of my co-workers' frightening sleep habits that summer. As fire season died down, I witnessed their return to station life wherein each firefighter had a unique sleeping environment as a result of many variables particular to each station. With the support of the Unit Chief Officers and under the direction of Dr. Stacey Rucas, I chose to begin a research project that allowed me to work on the aspects of anthropology that I enjoyed most. I was further boosted at the opportunity to understand and share the importance of sleep with firefighters, a group of individuals that tirelessly provides tremendous community service to diverse populations throughout the county. The possibility of giving back to this assorted population of service personnel, by using the skills and education I had garnered from Cal Poly, had irresistible appeal. In this way, I hope to benefit California communities throughout the state.

In all, participation in this project has tremendously increased my understanding of Biological Anthropology, and furthered my desire to achieve greater mastery through additional education and work under skilled specialists and mentors. As I near the end of this pilot project, I realize that there are many more questions that need to be answered and more help that needs to be done to improve the lives of firefighters. My ethnographic work at basecamp field sites with Dr. Rucas opened my eyes about the extreme physical and mental stress and pressure that these individuals must endure, and our results indicate that it takes a tremendous toll on their health and personal lives. One important goal for the expanded project is to hold educational seminars for firefighters on the effects of lack of sleep quantity and quality on their health and well-being. In this way, I hope to improve research education. Another major goal of the expanded project is to include female firefighters into the project, which will now be possible since the sample size...
Personal Statement

and geographic scope will be increasing to include several other counties and LA city firefighters. In this way, I will encourage diversity and full participation.

I have had the opportunity to work as a group member with others who are pursuing similar interests, as a leader to other undergraduates and as an individual dedicated to making advancements in science. The year-long process of working on this project has taught me several things about being an effective team member. One thing I have learned is that sometimes your team is down and stressed about deadlines and competing interests, and that maintaining a positive outlook and staying focused pays off with real results. I have also learned patience, because when I first entered this process, I thought it would be over relatively quickly, and now I realize how naïve that position was, because real scientific inquiry never ends. These lessons are valuable experiences that will help me in my future teamworking and leadership roles.

It is my desire to continue to be a resource to my peers who are pursuing future goals in scientific research. Eventually, it is my desire to earn a PhD and become a professor, to fulfill a lifetime of continuing leadership for all of my students. It is important that I am able to broaden interests and advocate the importance of scientific research within anthropology and other areas of evolutionary biology and psychology, especially to women like myself. In this way I hope to give back something back to the educational system that has done so much for me.

The NSF Graduate Research Fellowship will undeniably help me achieve my future goals. It will allow me to focus on increasing my academic knowledge and developing research, which will, in turn, facilitate the scientific and teaching impact I wish to have on others. Focusing will better position me to expand my research to include and impact other underrepresented groups of people. Although male firefighters are an understudied population, female firefighters are even more understudied, possibly due to being far fewer in number. It is imperative that I extend my research to include females and other underrepresented groups, and that I expand the hypotheses to include variables regarding ethnicity as they pertain to health and wellness.

Not only will funding assist in enhancing the diversity of future work, it will assist in making research findings known. For example, I will be able to transition energy from seasonal time-consuming jobs to developing websites for educating firefighters about sleep and health, and advancing scientific knowledge by publishing in journals and writing informational articles for firefighters in popular literature. Also, it will provide more of an opportunity to present the applied implications of this work to undergraduate students in classrooms and to others at major conferences, where travel is required for participation. But more importantly, it will aid me in freeing time to write grants to secure external funding for improving sleeping environments for firefighters.

Finally, I wish to express that while my grades and past academic work indicate that I am bright and exhibit the academic skills to move forward toward a graduate degree, I also have the motivational desire to do so, and the motivational intelligence to achieve those dreams. Indiana University, Dr. Michael Muehlenbein, and his new lab will provide the perfect environment to advance my knowledge of anthropology and human behavioral endocrinology. With the education and guidance provided at IU, combined with further work on the expanded Firefighter Sleep Project, I am certain to become a leader in the science of applied anthropology.
Statement of Purpose

As a sociologist I am intrigued by the ways in which mass media shape and influence American culture and society, and I am eager to pursue this interest within the context of a doctoral program. The undergraduate coursework that I completed at Pomona College has prepared me well for this. As a junior at Pomona enrolled in a postmodernist history course, I analyzed the social history of the public paranoia of youth gangs in Los Angeles. Focusing on the great disconnect between historical crime statistics and those published and exaggerated by mass media, my research revealed that the actual history of youth gangs in Los Angeles had been rewritten and misrepresented to the public. This distortion of youth gang behavior created, and continues to fuel, mass paranoia that has proven to be detrimental to the urban youth of Los Angeles, and to society as a whole.

Captivated by the relationships among the mass media and public opinion, action and policy, I enrolled in courses that examined the intersections of these domains. In the Sociology of Mass Media, I studied the process through which journalists identify, construct, and communicate news to the public. In the Sociology of Documentary Film, I learned about the production and communication of ideas, and the juxtaposition of meaning that is frequently present between a documentary film’s dialogue and its images. I am now keenly aware of how social, economic, and professional factors contribute to the construction and reification of biases, stereotypes, and misconceptions; and how such social forces shape the production of mass media content.

Works I have read since graduating, notably Political Fictions (Didion; 2001), Branded: The Buying and Selling of Teenagers (Quart; 2003), and It’s the Media Stupid! (McChesney, Nichols, Nader & Wellstone; 2000), combined with my own analysis of current news media broadcasts and publications, have raised many questions of interest for me, including: What is the relationship between mass media content and popular beliefs and ideas? Does mass media codify and disseminate existing public opinion or does it shape opinions? Is mass media a vehicle for democratic dialogue or does it discourage dialogue and discussion? In what ways do governmental policies influence the structure and content of mass media? How do mass media interests influence policy? What is the potential for mass media to be a catalyst for social change – particularly in strengthening democracy? Participating in a doctoral program in Sociology will allow me to research and address these questions, and significantly enhance my ability to do so in a compelling and effective manner.

My career as a sociologist began with an interest in urban sociological issues – namely homelessness, urban youth, community development, and the contrast between how urban public space is designed and used. During the summer of 2001, I conducted an independent course in urban sociology, employing ethnographic methods to study the use of public space at Harvard Square in Cambridge, Massachusetts. As this study developed it increasingly focused on observations of street musicians because they dominated the use of public space and the social interaction in these spaces. This research blossomed into what would be my thesis, “Come Out and Play: The Allure and Social Significance of the Street Performer”. Conducted over the course of my senior year, I ultimately received an A with honors for my work.

I am currently revising this work to submit for publication, in either Ethnography or The Journal of Contemporary Ethnography. My findings on the relationship between street performers and social relations and order in the urban public realm are significant and novel because they highlight the impact that street performers have on social relations between strangers in public – an aspect of their presence that had previously not been addressed. My findings speak positively of street performers’ contributions to the construction of safe, enjoyable public space, and to social interaction in urban public settings.

The research I have completed demonstrates my ability to understand and question theory, to link existing theories with my own ideas, and to support these ideas with valid, well documented research.
I am adept at qualitative and quantitative research methods and there is no work I enjoy more than managing my own research. My undergraduate work has strengthened my ability to communicate ideas in a succinct, clear manner. I hold myself to high standards in all aspects of my life and I push myself to create the best work that I can. I am an honest person and I strive to live my life without regret. My training in sociology coupled with my integrity provides a solid foundation for the advanced education that I would like to pursue through completion of a doctoral program.

I am a dedicated and passionate sociologist who is committed to producing quality, thought provoking work that is oriented toward social change. Having been a graduate for a year and a half, I am eager to again be a part of a community that will encourage me to grow as a sociologist. I am confident that my abilities will flourish under the guidance of doctoral instructors, and that my work will contribute significantly to the field and to society. I am a sociologist who is ready and eager for this exhilarating challenge.
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE FOR NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

I know only but fragments of myself, pieces of shattered mirror strewn together recently by my interest in sociological discourses, a reality fortified by the overdetermination of social life. I have come to realize that my earlier desires to be "white" where not an independent figment, but a larger social phenomenon enriched by the immense complexities of historical development. Sociology has given me the intellectual tools with which to confront what I shamefully tried to conceal, that is, vestiges of my "psychological colonization." Indeed, my personal and meaningful relation with the discipline informs my pursuit of a PhD in sociology, and as such, I wish to continue to study at the New York University. This interest is largely inspired by my undergraduate experience as a sociology major which was an environment that fostered my interests, allowed me the opportunity to work closely with eminent scholars, helped my intellectual curiosity about certain topics to develop and, more importantly, aided a fuller understanding of my own social and psychological condition. My interests are in race and ethnicity, culture, social movements, and globalization, in which the department at NYU produces some of the most exciting scholarship. Indeed, this academic environment would facilitate my development as a professional, as a scholar in those particular areas and enable me to achieve my intellectual potential and ultimate goals of becoming a university professor and scholar.

I have had several substantive experiences thus far in my career through which I have demonstrated my commitment to the discipline of sociology. For instance, I have given various guest lectures on Chicano identity, neo-colonialism, and standpoint theory in SOC 144, Chicano Communities, an upper-division course, for which I was also an undergraduate Teaching Assistant responsible for grading papers and assisting students with concepts and paper topics. I was also a course assistant and reader for SOC 185D, Theories of Race and Ethnicity, also an upper-division course, where I read, corrected, and commented on student papers pertaining to theory and the U.S. racial formation. In addition, I was able to engage in independent research on racial identity and constructionist theory under the guidance of Reginald Daniel, an eminent scholar on race and ethnicity. Moreover, I was a research assistant in comparative-historical content analysis of political and social revolutions in Angola for John Foran’s project on Third World revolutions. These experiences have sharpened my academic and intellectual abilities in sociological research, departmental collegiality, and have motivated me to pursue teaching as a complementary endeavor. In this sense, as a graduate student I anticipate bolstering both my research and teaching experience.

I have become interested in sociology because as a discipline with a particular outlook on the social world, it has afforded me the ability to answer questions that are central to my self-understanding and place in the world. I came to sociology with a veritable wound in search for care. After spending several years of my teenage and post-teenage life locked into a desire to be "white"—what some call a sort of "psychological colonization"—and simultaneously dealing with my older brother’s deployment to Iraq as a United States Marine, I was forced to confront several political and ethical questions I could not otherwise ignore and sought sociology as a source for answers. I can say now, after a year and a half of sociological study, that this endeavor has
brought me to a catharsis, and I have been able to come to terms with these social situations in my life. For this reason, sociology is a venture I intend to continue indefinitely.

Of course, my interest in sociology is not merely individualistic but also strengthened by a deep desire for social justice. I am reminded of what Karl Marx once said, "when man confronts himself, he confronts the other man." Indeed, as I have attempted to realize questions particular to my social and psychological condition, I have found my identity embedded in a matrix of interdependence with my fellow companions, or socius, of the world. As such, my efforts have always been a montage of the humanist tradition. For instance, as an effort to bring my brother home from the war, sociology compelled me to become an active participant in the anti-war movement in Santa Barbara where I founded The Mark Twain Anti-Imperialist Forum on campus. In my role as a founder of MTAIF, I organized rallies, talks, and guerilla theatre, networked with other groups on campus, and implemented consciousness-raising about the war. Needless to say, this was a great opportunity to implement my studies in the actual world while at the same time networking with the global justice movement and cultivating critical consciousness about U.S. foreign policy. Moreover, my passion for teaching and community service has been exemplified in my involvement with the Isla Vista Teen Center, a center for the "at risk" middle and high school student population in the neighborhood. There I tutored students with schoolwork and, most importantly, served as a role model. This summer at the Center I conducted several workshops aimed at cultivating critical consciousness in the Paulo Freirean sense. One of these involved a two-month workshop on "Revolution!: The History and Tactics of Revolutionary Heroes," which combined the students' own lived experiences with the lives of revolutionary heroes and critical historical moments. Indeed, pursuing an advanced degree from the NYU will allow me to further my involvement with local communities in the area, especially the booming Latino community in New York city.

Drawing on these experiences, it is no surprise that my interests are in social inequality, race and ethnicity, (neo)Marxist theory, gender studies, social movements and globalization. In fact, I am specifically interested in the development of the global justice movement, punctuated by racial, gender and sexual identity politics, and its dialectical relationship with global capitalism. I am interested in ethnographically examining how the cultural logic of late capitalism intersects with the development of oppositional consciousness, (racial, gender and sexual) identity and network solidarity on a global scale and how this new "movement of movements" is a sharp differentiation, yet new development in Marxist articulations of social change. Moreover, I intend to elaborate further on my study on the global justice movement. Specifically, I would like to analyze the ways in which Indigenous people in Chiapas, Mexico, through the EZLN, transform dominant and oppressive powers and constitute themselves as resistant and oppositional subjects respectful of difference of identity. In this respect, Jeff Goodwin’s work on social movements and culture, Craig Calhoun’s analysis of critical social theory and difference, and Edwin Amenta’s work on social protest would be of tremendous utility in achieving my research goals. In addition, my studies, theoretical approach, and goal of becoming a comprehensive and reflexive sociologist would be furthered by Neil Brenner’s studies on globalization and political sociology, Vivek Chibbers’ theories of sociological Marxism, Dalton Conley’s analysis of race and class, Lynn Haney’s work on gender and global ethnography, Ann Morning’s studies on race/ethnicity and identity and Judith Stacey’s work on sexuality, feminist articulations and ethnography. As such, NYU would be the ideal environment in which to
solidify and strengthen my intellectual and professional goals.

Before I finish, I would like to point out a mitigating circumstance in my academic record. As is apparent, my overall GPA is not of the highest quality. This is because when I entered UCSB I had absolutely no direction, passion, and interest. (Un)fortunately for me, it was not until my brother was sent to war that I began to situate myself solidly. This realization also made me better understand my position in the social world, confront my racial inferiority complex, and face the psychological problems that hindered my success in my early years at UCSB. These combined factors fortified my interest, passion, and direction toward political praxis, the accumulation of knowledge, and understanding the complexity of the human condition. Since I began to approach school with renewed interest and passion, my academic performance has been solid, and in my last 5 quarters at UCSB I attained a 3.91 GPA, with a 3.97 GPA in upper division sociology (15 quarter courses).

With this in mind, I feel there are no obstacles but only expectation and excitement in terms of the horizons ahead. Indeed, NYU is the ideal environment in which to explore these horizons and develop a greater sociological sophistication with which to address my research interests. As a graduate student, I will contribute to the department in the only way I know, that is, with determination, commitment, dedication, and passion to scholarship and the community. For me, this is personal and meaningful. Furthermore, my experiences in public speaking, research, and as a teaching assistant demonstrate my interest in sharing the expertise I will gain through the pursuit of a PhD in sociology. I am definitely not your typical undergraduate going through the motions. Rather, I am developing scholar eager to take advantage of the academic opportunities afforded me by pursuit of graduate study as well as the occasion to enrich the academic community with my scholarship and commitment to social justice.
1. Statement of purpose:

As a person who grew up in South Africa during the height of the apartheid era, I have had a strong awareness of the importance of the issues of race and ethnicity for as long as I can remember. My years at high school and the completion of my Bachelor of Science degree at the University of Natal coincided with a major period of political transformation in South Africa. However, as I observed this process I realized that these political transformations were seldom accompanied by significant structural transformations, and that racial segregation and inequality in areas such as education, economic well-being, residential areas, and everyday intergroup relations, remained largely intact.

Although I had an interest in the academic study of these issues as I began my graduate education, the lack of available faculty members at my university who shared these interests resulted in me choosing to complete my Honors project (senior thesis) and Masters dissertation in a second area of interest for me, namely that of sport psychology. During my first year of my Masters degree, however, I was given the opportunity to participate in a project investigating accusations and denials of racism in the South African media, using a discourse analysis methodology. My participation in this project was an important experience for me, through its effects in both solidifying my interest in issues of race and ethnicity, and in helping me to develop my theoretical orientation as a researcher.

Following the completion of the coursework components of my Masters degree, I was employed as a full-time lecturer at the University of Durban-Westville. During this period, I succeeded in completing my Masters dissertation with distinction, while also working for the entire year of 2002 on a second research project investigating representations of race and racism in the South African media between 1977 and 2001. It was also during this year that I decided to pursue a PhD in the USA, where my wife is originally from. After arriving in California, I worked as a volunteer research assistant in the Psychology Department at UCLA, assisting two PhD students with their dissertation research. After receiving my work permit, I was appointed as a researcher in California State University, Northridge (CSUN’s) Department of Psychology, working on a project investigating intergroup prejudice in educational settings. I expect this employment to lead to at least two further publications, one based on quantitative, survey data, and the other based on qualitative, focus group data, using a discourse analysis methodology.

In addition to my research work at CSUN, I was appointed as a part-time faculty member in the CSUN Department of Psychology in Fall 2003, to teach an upper-level class entitled “Cultural Determinants of Psychological Processes”. I have been re-appointed to teach this class in Spring 2004, as well as to teach a second (lower-level) class entitled “Contemporary Social Issues”.

An important feature of my graduate studies at the University of Natal, and my research work since then, has been the use of a number of approaches to research, including both quantitative and qualitative methods. I am seeking a PhD program that allows similar
flexibility in research approaches, while offering an emphasis in issues around intergroup relations, particularly with respect to race, ethnicity and culture, which are the areas in which I have conducted the majority of my research work for the past 3 years. For this reason, the Sociology program at UCSB would be highly compatible with my objectives. My interest in the communicative and linguistic aspects of intergroup relations and culture, and in the use of qualitative methodologies to study these areas, makes the interdepartmental Language, Interaction, and Social Organization (LISO) emphasis especially attractive to me. I believe that my interests are compatible with those of Dr. Raymond, Dr. Wilson and Dr. Cruz at UCSB, and I would value the opportunity to work with them.

Having already spent almost two years pursuing a career in teaching and research, I am extremely motivated to continue to develop my career in these fields. I believe that the completion of a PhD degree is the next important step for me, and that my motivation, experience and interests make me the type of student that the Sociology program is looking for. I hope that the knowledge and skills that I’ll gain as a result of completing the Sociology PhD program will help me to contribute towards the battle for transformation, both in the US, and in South Africa.
2. Personal Achievements/Contributions:

As my parents could not afford to pay my university tuition, it was necessary for me to receive student loans, as well as working part-time in order to support myself while I was completing my studies. This affected the amount of time I was able to devote to studying, and sometimes resulted in grades that were not as good as I was capable of. However, my grades steadily improved as I learned to successfully manage my work and school schedules, and I received straight A's in my Honours degree (equivalent to 4th year of US bachelors degree), and graduated from both my Honours and Masters degrees cum laude.

Before leaving South Africa, I was involved in a number of research projects aimed at working for social justice for people who were oppressed under the apartheid system. In addition to this, I lectured full-time for a year at a university (University of Durban-Westville) that was populated predominantly by students from groups that were oppressed under the apartheid system, and as a result are educationally underserved in South African society.

Since arriving in California, I have been working on research projects at CSUN, investigating issues of race and ethnicity, with the aim of contributing towards the promotion of positive intergroup relations and equality in educational settings. I am interested in further exploring these issues during the course of my graduate studies, with the aim of increasing social scientific understanding of how they affect the educational experiences of underrepresented groups in higher education. I also have a particular interest in the issues surrounding affirmative action in higher education. I would like to investigate the justifications for and against affirmative action policies in order to assess their possible impact on educationally underserved groups, and work towards greater equality in higher education.

Since Fall 2003 I have been lecturing at CSUN, which has one of the highest proportions of educationally underrepresented student enrolment in California. I am committed to working with, and for, people who have been unfairly disadvantaged by societal inequalities, and intend to continue conducting research that will contribute to educational and societal transformation. I also plan to continue my teaching career and, after I complete my graduate studies, I will be seeking a faculty position that allows me once again to work on a campus that serves a significant proportion of educationally underrepresented students.

I speak, read and write the Afrikaans language fluently, and I am currently learning to speak Spanish. I have completed a beginner's level Spanish class at Pierce College and intend to enroll for an intermediate level class in Spring 2004.
Social Work and Law School

to run a marathon, and on July 13, 1997, I completed the 26.3 mile San Francisco Marathon. I ran the first seven miles with a Leukemia foundation sponsor named Chris from South Carolina. Chris wore a wristband that bore the name of a leukemia patient, and told me, "When the race gets harder, I will look at this wrist band and know that I'm actually the one who has it easy." Inspired by his efforts, I decided to run another marathon to raise money for something in which I strongly believe: children and our future.

I approached Arnold Chavez, the juvenile court system director of volunteer programs, and expressed my interest in running a marathon to raise educational funds for children. He suggested the funds be donated to Camp Sweeney, which is a residential treatment program that provides individualized treatment plans for boys age 14-18. The focus of the camp is to provide for the specific behavioral and educational needs of the adolescents. Over the next five months, I contacted over 200 colleagues, friends, organizations, and family members requesting their donations. I expanded my outreach potential by designing a web-page and posted my web site with several on-line running magazines.

On April 26, 1998, I ran the Big Sur Marathon and raised over $2,000 in college scholarship money for several boys at Camp Sweeney. At mile 21, when the race became extremely hard, I remembered Chris' words and began to recite "For Kids" over and over in my head, until I crossed the finish line. Ten graduating boys at Camp Sweeney, who achieved academic excellence, received scholarships. Every one of these adolescent boys spent at least a year away from their families, living at Camp Sweeney, while receiving rehabilitation, drug and alcohol counseling, and other services. In June, I was honored to receive a Public Education Service Award from the Alameda County Office of Education for my contribution to the boys at Camp Sweeney. Training for a marathon requires a great deal of time, discipline, strength, perseverance, and motivation. I will apply this kind of dedication to my graduate studies in social work.

My commitment to children and community service began in high school. I volunteered during summers as a camp counselor at Camp Good Counsel, a camp for underprivileged children ages five through ten who live in Silver Spring, Maryland. The majority of these minority children came from dysfunctional, low-income, single-parent households, where violent and abusive environments are a commonplace. The sense of reward and accomplishment I felt by devoting my time and love to these children was immeasurable. I vividly remember the day Child Protective Services (CPS) took my six year old camper from camp, due to child abuse allegations. CPS dropped the case to due insufficient evidence, my camper never returned to camp, and I was extremely disappointed that our legal and social system could not protect this innocent child from abuse. This discontent lead me to explore issues in child welfare and law.
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I am confident and I am ready to meet new academic challenges which await my pursuit of an advanced degree. I graduated with a degree in philosophy and sociology, with magna cum laude honors. Classroom introductions to social trends like the feminization of poverty and contemporary social policies like welfare reform, developed my comprehension of our current and future welfare state. Basic Research Methods and Social Policy developed my analytical skills through statistical and policy analysis of sociology issues. Unfortunately, my GRE score does not fully reflect my analytical and academic abilities because I do not perform as well on standardized tests due to the time constraint. (My LSAT and SAT scores are also inconsistent with my grade point average and academic potential for the same reason.)

As an intern at the Public Defender's office, a CASA volunteer, and Camp Sweeney fund-raiser, I was exposed to a magnitude of diversity. In recognition of the diverse population I hope to serve as a social worker, I decided to live in Guatemala for seven months to immerse myself in the wonderful culture of the Guatemalan people. In January 1999, I will begin an intensive, month and a half Spanish immersion program. Upon completion of this program, I will be interning at a children's organization for four and half months. I hope to develop my understanding of the Guatemalan culture, gain practical social work experience, and greatly advance my ability to speak Spanish.

My compassion for children not only stems from volunteer and educational experiences, but also from my personal experiences. At age 15, I was date raped by my homecoming date and his friend. It took me three years to overcome my depression, self-abusive behaviors, and suicidal tendencies. I lost all motivation to do well in school because I was not sure if I was going to continue living. Fortunately, I have grown a great deal because of this experience. I faced death so many times during this period, that I now better understand what it means to be alive. I feel fortunate to have come to this understanding, and I believe this perspective will allow for great compassion and empathy within the field of social work. Discussion of this very personal experiences is not done to evoke sympathy or pity, instead it is to reveal my motivations to support, help, and facilitate the growth of children.

As a child, we are all told in one way or another to follow our dreams. Growing up we realize how much effort it takes to achieve the objectives which allow dreams to become realities. Yet, it is in striving to achieve these goals that one learns and grows. Every child deserves the right to follow his/her aspirations and dreams. Unfortunately this is more difficult for children who are "delinquent," under-privileged, impoverished, and/or abused and neglected. These children especially need our support and encouragement to persevere, and we must take an active interest in their lives; for they are our future.

We must take action and advocate for those who cannot defend themselves. My combined experiences have lead me to apply to the University of California, Berkeley, seeking
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instruction and research opportunities from family welfare experts, such as Richard Barth and Neil Gilbert, and eagerly pursuing a concentration in Management and Planning and a specialization in Families and Children. By specializing in the management and planning of institutions that serve children and families, I will be able to analyze the purpose, role and practice of these institutions. Courses such as Social Policy: Children and Families and Social Agency Management will foster my understanding of successful child and family programs that address current problems. Field work placements will offer practical experience and the opportunity to apply the knowledge obtained in the classroom.

I am applying for a concurrent degree in social work and law with a concentration in child welfare and public interest law. These advanced degrees offer many career options and directions which I am extremely interested in pursuing. A Juris Doctor degree will offer outstanding knowledge of laws and procedures which will enable me to extend legal advice, counsel, and policy explanations to my social work clients. As a social worker, I would actively address children's issues and advocate for those who cannot defend themselves, possibly by analyzing and developing policies, providing outreach services, and advancing the effectiveness of children's programs. I respectfully request the opportunity to utilize the academic resources available to achieve this goal by allowing me to pursue a social work degree at University of California, Berkeley.
STATEMENT OF INTENT

SUBMITTED BY NAME

Though many of us were unaware, the incoming undergraduate class to the University of California in the Fall of 1997 was the last class to benefit from UC affirmative action policies. For all students attending UCLA during the first few years after the end of affirmative action, the damage quickly became evident. Already, in 1998, underrepresented students were a fraction of what we had been the year before. In the new post-affirmative action-era, the decrease in the number of Latina/o, Chicana/o, African-American, Native-American, and Filipina/o students admitted to the UC had fallen drastically, especially at selective campuses like UCLA and Berkeley. As a Chicana making my way through my undergraduate education, I gained a critical consciousness about the many factors that contributed to certain ethnic groups being underrepresented in higher education. For those of us who actively participated in educating the student community, through information sessions, teach-ins, and later protests, we were forever changed, politicized and instilled with a sense of responsibility to those students who were to come after us. It was because of this that I became committed to a future in higher education.

Like many underrepresented students, I too was the first in my family to attend college. While my parents and family supported my desire to obtain a good education, they did not have the tools to teach me what it would take to get me there. High school was the highest level of education that both of my parents had attained. My father is a painter and my mother works as a receptionist at a dentist office. I grew up in a single-parent household for most of my adolescence, helping my stressed-out and overworked mother take of my care of my younger sister and other familial responsibilities.

After graduating from high school, I was determined to make my way to a university in the quickest manner possible. I enrolled at my local community college and immediately began on my path towards transfer. My independent and determined spirit drove me to shoot for the highest that I could achieve, the University of California at Los Angeles. As a young girl growing up in Santa Barbara County, where resources and encouragement were plentiful, for only a select few, I was definitely an anomaly. I made it to a university, despite the odds. I continue to be amazed that neither in high school nor at my community college was I ever considered for any outreach programs, given any sort of guidance, or encouraged by a counselor.