BOSTON
ARCHITECTURAL
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SINCE 1889

CAREER SERVICES
HANDBOOK

ABOUT CAREER SERVICES

Hello from Career Services! We are housed in the Practice Department on the 5th Floor on 320 Newbury St. At the Boston Architectural College, we strive in providing you a range of resources to help you on your career journey. We have dedicated staff who offer one-on-one career advising, résumé and cover letter review, interview preparation, and portfolio guidance. When you meet with Career Services, we make a point of getting to know your interests in design, what inspires you, finding out what is your dream firm, and what skills you bring to the job market. Based on your feedback, we will help you discover what makes you stand out as a design professional. Together, we will help you define your career goals, short-term and long-term. We believe in your success and trust that you will utilize this handbook to learn (a few more) ways on how to put your best professional foot forward!

Maria I. Sardinas
Associate Director of Career Services

CAREER SERVICES HANDBOOK

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GETTING STARTED IN PRACTICE

The Practice Department and the Learning Resource Center (LRC) are available to help you enter, and move through, the design workforce. Of course no two BAC students' paths into Practice are the same, but here is a checklist for those of you just starting out.

SEMESTER 1: Ready...

- Get adjusted to your design education, do well in all your classes, and establish a strong reputation for yourself amongst your growing design community network. What will your classmates say about your design skills? What will your teachers say about your work habits? What will your advisor say about your ability to meet administrative deadlines?
- Start to build your network by regularly communicating with your instructors, advisors, and dean about your job search. Let them know your interests. Check in with them via email or face to face at least once every semester. This way you both can see how your interests AND skills evolve. This information will be important when you start to look for jobs.
- Complete CityLab.
- Using the BAC Career Services documents as a guide, create a design résumé, sample cover letter, and references page. Have them reviewed by the LRC and/or Practice.
- Guided by your design studios, start to create a portfolio and work samples pages. Have them reviewed by the LRC and/or Practice.
- Is English not your first language? Would you like some practice? If so, sign up for Conversation Partners in the LRC. You can receive Practice Hours for this!
- Is English your first language? Are you willing to help non-native English speakers? Do you want to help them learn about Boston, United States/BAC culture? If so, sign up for Conversation Partners in the LRC. You can receive Practice Hours for this, too!
- Make an appointment with Career Services in the Practice Department.

SEMESTER 2: Set...

- Complete Community Practice.
- Revise résumé, sample cover letter, and references page. Have them reviewed again by the LRC and/or Practice. The résumé is always being updated. Get into a habit of editing it every semester.
- Guided by your design studios and/or Community Practice class, revise your portfolio and work samples pages. Have them reviewed by the LRC and/or Practice.

- Begin checking job listings on PracticeLab, the BSA website, and design firms' websites ("Jobs," "Employment," or "Careers" pages). Even if you're not yet applying, begin to familiarize yourself with the types of positions, their requirements, and the design job search process and language.
- Create a positive and professional online identity: LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, etc.
- Get involved with one or more of these organizations: BSA, AIAS, ASID, IIDA, BSLA, SASLA, Atelier, etc.
- Read design magazines and blogs. Ask a librarian on the 6th Floor where to find these.
- Network, network, network: BAC and non-BAC related events, lectures, gallery openings; your "unrelated" job (restaurants, retail, etc.); family, friends, parties, weddings; etc.

SEMESTER 3 and beyond: GO!

- Revise portfolio and work samples pages. Have them reviewed again by the LRC and/or Practice. Revise further, and finalize.
- Continue learning new skills (update your résumé as you do). The more you know, the more quickly you'll find a job in a design firm.
- Continue networking. This is how the vast majority of BAC students find work!
- Begin applying and interviewing for jobs in design firms while you...
    - Get a job in a related field.
    - Participate in a Gateway Project.
    - Participate in a design competition.
    - Do an independent Practice opportunity.
    - Volunteer.
- Once you begin any Practice credit-earning opportunity, be sure to submit a Practice Registration Form.

JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES

There are additional ways to earn Practice Hours besides Gateway projects, Independent Practice, and design competitions. BAC students mostly learn about design and earn Practice hours by working in design firms, usually on a paid, full-time basis. Whether it's an architecture, interior design, landscape architecture, or multi-disciplinary firm, working in a design office setting can be the most educational and rewarding experience of a BAC student's design education. As in any industry, getting that first job in an office is never easy, but those who go about it diligently and persistently do eventually find that first job. Here's how.

First and foremost, you'll need to create a plan and establish a routine. Finding a job is not something you do all at once, but a little bit each day, five or more days a week. Set goals that are daily, weekly, and monthly, and maintain a calendar, task list, and job search log. All of this will help you stay focused, organized, and motivated.

Networking is social, educational, or professional activity where you create connections that may lead to a job opportunity. You begin networking the day you arrive, making connections with classmates, teachers, and administrators. It is very likely that one of these people will be involved in you getting hired into your first, second, and/or third design job. Therefore it is important that you establish a strong reputation for yourself amongst your growing design community network.

About half of all employed BAC students found their current job through networking. Additionally, one hour of networking is roughly equal to 10 hours of online job searching. Besides everyday academic life, networking opportunities also include BAC and other colleges' events, lectures, gallery openings (check the BAC Student Development Blog and ProArts Connect); meetings and social gatherings of BAC student organizations; your "unrelated" job (restaurants, retail, temping, etc.) or volunteer opportunities; career services workshops/panel discussions and career fair; and family, friends, parties, weddings, etc.

VERY IMPORTANT: approach networking as an opportunity to help other people, not yourself. Listen to the needs of others before discussing your own. Use this opportunity to expand your knowledge, learn more about your field of interest or learn from others. Practice the art of asking questions based on what you are hearing. Be friendly and helpful. Don't go into networking opportunities expecting anything. And don't reach out to people only when you need something. However, if you find yourself heading to a networking opportunity, be prepared. Once they're drafted, reviewed, and perfected, have your résumé and work samples on you at all times. Be ready to give these

things out should someone be interested. If possible, give out your business cards. Yes, you can still have business cards as a student. Consider investing in these.

Online Resources

PracticeLab is the BAC's own internal job board where you can view job listings online exclusive to BAC students, link to dozens of other design-related online job boards, and post your résumé for potential employers to see. The jobs you'll find posted on PracticeLab are often times posted by BAC alumni or by someone who already knows about the BAC and wants to specifically hire a BAC student. Visit PracticeLab, bookmark it, and visit again and again. Make searching jobs in PracticeLab part of your daily or weekly routine.

The Boston Society of Architects (BSA) website is full of job search resources and opportunities, and is often the go-to place for design firm professionals looking to hire. BAC students can become members, join committees (Emerging Professionals, Women in Design, etc.), receive email alerts (BSA Job Notification, BSA Currents, etc.), view job listings, post résumés (at a cost), and search the database of all architecture firms in Massachusetts. If you're a design student in the city of Boston, you simply must use the BSA website.

Additional Online Resources

Firms' websites often serve as a valuable job search resource. When you learn about a firm, go to their website. Chances are they have a page dedicated to "Employment," "Jobs," or "Careers." Sometimes it lists current openings, sometimes it says that the firm "is always accepting applications from talented people." Either way, it usually describes also how to go about applying.

Other online job boards and resources include:

Architecture*	Landscape Architecture
AIA	ASLA
Archinect	BSLA
ArchitectJobs	
ArchitectureCrossing	
ArchNewsNow	**General**
ArchVoices	Boston.com/jobs
	issuu
Interior Architecture	Glassdoor
ASID	idealist
IDEC	Indeed
IIDA	Monster
Interior Design Jobs	SimplyHired

*Architecture-based sites often include interior architecture and/or landscape architecture job postings as well.

Please remember that despite the vast array of online job search options, networking is still critical in the design firm job search.

Lastly, be sure to track all of your job search activity; an Excel spreadsheet might work best:
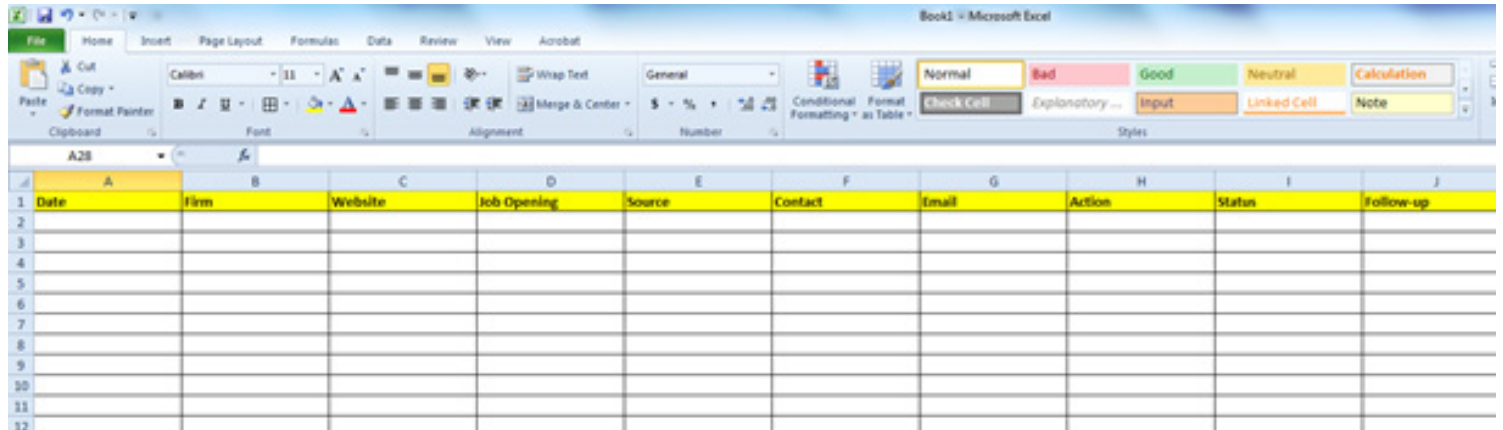
Keep record of the firms you're interested in/applying to, their website and other contact info, the position you're applying to, the date you applied, the contact person at the firm, his/her contact info, any response you received, and follow-up activity. Tracking your activity is essential to stay organized and efficient.

JOB SEARCH DOCUMENTS – General Info

Students who get hired in design firms do so because their skill set, work ethic, and personality are aligned with a particular job opening at a particular moment in time. Yes, networking is the best way to put yourself into a position to find work. However being in the right place at the right time is only part of the equation. Before you get there you need to make sure you are ready. With that in mind, you'll need to create each of the following job search documents:

1. **Résumé:** a marketing device that summarizes your skill set and/or background. Depending on your skill level and professional background, your résumé may be in one of three different formats (chronological, functional, or hybrid).
2. **References page:** a list of people who will endorse you as an employee.
3. **Cover letter:** a formal business letter introducing your job application.
4. **Portfolio:** a robust display of your design, graphic, and written communication skills as well as critical and conceptual thinking ability.
5. **Work samples:** a very brief display of your design and graphic communication skills. This document offers no process, just "eye candy" sent as part of the initial job application.
6. **LinkedIn:** an online networking site with which you can build and share your professional profile with contacts you make in person and online.

For each of these documents, here are important things to keep in mind:

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Creation of them takes time and dedication. Embrace the job search process as part of your routine. Set goals, create a task list, make a work schedule, and stick to it. While the actual sequence may vary from student to student, it's perhaps most common to create a résumé first, then references page, sample cover letter, interview portfolio, and work samples page. Like any design project, you'll want to create a version of each, get feedback, and revise. It may take three or four iterations of each document to get them to the quality they need to be. You should budget time for making these revisions.

Tailor each document to a specific job opportunity at the specific design firm to which you're applying. Sending a bunch of résumés all at once to many firms simply does not work. Each opening you find must be diligently researched (the firm, key personnel, projects, awards, etc.) and your documents must be thoughtfully crafted with that opening and that firm in mind.

Understand your audience and value their time. These documents are not an autobiography. They are marketing tools designed to get you an interview. [The interview is what gets you the job.] Design professionals and HR people are very busy; the average résumé gets looked at for 30 to 60 seconds initially. No cover letter or résumé should be more than one page. Provide only the necessary information, quickly, but at the same time don't omit important information, especially design or relevant professional skills unless you have 10 years of design experience.

All documents must be well-designed. This does not mean fancy or flashy. Instead, make documents that are clean, clear, and easy to navigate. Do not use templates and, early on, do not use unnecessary graphics, logos, or colors. These things can cause formatting problems and are often looked upon as cover-ups for lack of substance. Start with blank pages and add raw content. A minimal amount of formatting at the end should suffice. And be sure to leave some white space so as not to visually overload your reader. Early on, use one font throughout (cover letter, résumé, and references page). Use a professional font such as Calibri, Times New Roman, Garamond, Georgia, Arial, or Verdana. Do not use funky fonts such as Bauhaus, Brush Script, Charlemagne, Giddyup, or Lucida. Use a consistent and professional font size scheme throughout (e.g. your name: 14 point, all other text: 10 point).

All documents should have consistency and look good together as a package. Use consistent organizational structure and page layouts including margins, tabs, bullets, etc. as well as font types, effects (bold, underlining, etc.), and sizes. Be consistent in the ways you represent certain things. For example, are you abbreviating months and/or states in your résumé? (Are you abbreviating them correctly?) What size dash are you using (- or –)? Are you using the serial comma? Do your dates line up on the right margin?... along an inner tab? Consistency shows careful attention to detail far better than a Skill bullet saying "Attentive to detail."

Every document must be 100% free of spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors. This is without question the quickest and easiest way to get eliminated from consideration for a job opportunity. [Some HR people are actually grateful for résumés with typos because they reduce the applicant pool right away.] Almost every document that comes into the LRC has one to 10 mistakes/typos on it. Therefore every document that does not come into the LRC gets sent to firms with one to 10 mistakes/typos on it. Don't let that happen to you. Once you have a document drafted, proofread it several times, spell- and grammar-check it, and show it to a family member/friend who's a really strong writer. Once that's done, make an appointment with one or more of the following departments/people:

First-year students:
a LRC writing consultant,
writingcenter@the-bac.edu

a LRC writing consultant,
writingcenter@the-bac.edu
Maria Sardinas, practice@the-bac.edu

RESUMES

FUNCTIONAL RESUME

A resume is a summary of your skills and background designed to get you a job interview. A one-page, 8.5" by 11" marketing device with no more than two colors that is necessary for entry into any area of Practice (Internship, Job, Practice Assessment). It is a well-crafted piece of design that showcases your abilities to put together a clear, readable, consistent document. It is not an autobiography. Before you start, ask yourself, "Who is my audience? What do they need to know in order to consider me for an interview? And how can I best frame my prior skills and experience?"

The functional resume is recommended for students with no design or professional (office) experience as it highlights your design, technical, organizational, communication, and professional skills rather than unrelated work experience.

Heading
- Your name, complete mailing address, phone number, one email address … consistent with your cover letter.
- You do not need to write "Email: (your address)" or "Phone: (your number)." Just list your address and number.
- List one phone number, the one you'd want prospective employers to reach you at. Answer it professionally, and be sure you have a professional outgoing voicemail message.
- Use a professional email address, e.g. BAC email.

Education
- List colleges in reverse chronological order, most recent (BAC) first.
- Format your Education section identically to your Experience section. For example:
  School, City, State   Month Year – Month Year
  Degree
- For each college, list the dates you attended and the degree you received. For BAC, write: "Candidate for [Degree]"
- Make sure your degree is written correctly:
  - Bachelor of Architecture, Bachelor of Interior Architecture, Bachelor of Landscape Architecture, Bachelor of Design Studies, Bachelor of Science in Architecture, Master of Architecture, Master of Interior Architecture, Master of Landscape Architecture, Master of Science in Interior Architecture, Master of Design Studies in Design for Human Health, Master of Design Studies in Sustainable Design, or Master of Design in Historic Preservation.
- Include your expected graduation date if you are a semester or two from graduating. Otherwise, write: "[Month Year Started] – present."
- Optional: include GPA if 3.5 or higher.
- Do not list individual classes. Communicate such knowledge in your cover letter and/or Skills section.

Skills
- The main focus of your résumé: it calls attention to the skills you have to offer (rather than unrelated experience).
- Skills sections may be labeled Design, Technical, Professional, Communication, Organizational, Management, Construction, Customer Service… whatever is most relevant to your particular skill set and the job you're applying for.
- Draw on all of your experience: academic, professional, volunteer, extracurricular, etc. One of the biggest mistakes BAC students make is not fully cataloguing their entire skill set.
- Professional skills gained in unrelated settings will be applicable to the design setting if re-framed and presented correctly.
- Select and order your skills in accordance with the needs of the position you're applying for.

Design Skills
- Write down each course you've taken at the BAC (or previous design school). List projects or assignments from each course. Write the skills that you needed to do these. Think: what can you do now that you couldn't before?
- Create a list of ALL of these. You need not start each line with an action verb.
- Be thorough and specific! Don't just list "Drafting," list "Drafting: plans, sections, elevations, axonometrics, perspectives.

Professional Skills
- Write down every job, volunteer opportunity, and extracurricular activity you've been a part of. List the responsibilities associated with each, and the skills you needed to execute these responsibilities. For example: "Managed high-volume inventory in busy retail environment." AGAIN, BE THOROUGH AND SPECIFIC!
- Write these out more fully, and link them directly to experience in that section. For example: "Created analysis reports of sales, trends, and recaps of historical figures."
- Start each professional skill with an action verb: answered, composed, created, designed, guided, managed, oversaw, presented, etc. Vary your action verbs. For a helpful list of verbs, visit www.quintcareers.com/action_skills.html.

Experience

- In Functional format, this information is less relevant. Minimize, place it lower on the page (below Skills).
- List your jobs in reverse chronological order, most recent first.
- Company, location, dates, and title only. Tranfer all responsibilities and achievements to the Professional Skills section. Re-framing them this way makes them seem related to design even if they're not.
- Format your Experience section identically to your Education section. For example:

Company, City, State   **Month Year – Month Year**
*Title*

Additional Skills/Interests

- Use this last section of your résumé to provide a complete picture of who you are as a person.
  - Professional memberships (e.g. BSA Student Member)
  - School organizations (an Atelier committee)
  - Volunteerism, community-based activities
  - Languages (highly valued these days!) … in Functional format, languages can go in Professional Skills section
  - Travel, sports, outdoor activities, hobbies, interests

Please note:

- The use of an Objective is not recommended for any format. Your objective should be clearly stated in your cover letter.
- Don't say "References Available Upon Request." It's assumed that references (and work samples) are available at any time.

Remember, every document must be 100% free of spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors. Once you have a résumé drafted, make an appointment with the Learning Resource Center (writingcenter@the-bac. edu).
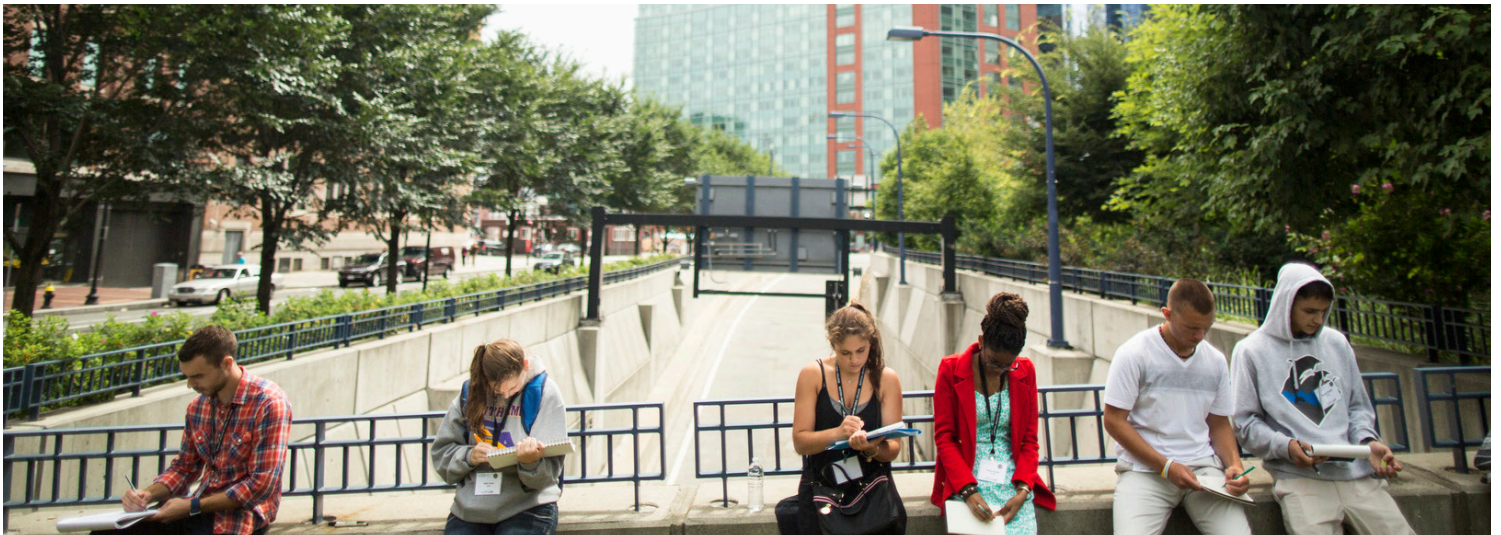
Functional résumé template:

FIRST LAST
123 Fake Street, City, State, Zip
firstname.lastname@the-bac.edu
555-555-5555

EDUCATION

Boston Architectural College, Boston, MA   **Month Year – present**
Candidate for (Degree) of (Discipline)
- GPA: 3.5

Prior College, City, State   **Month Year – Month Year**
(Degree) of (Discipline)
- GPA 3.7
- Semester Abroad: City, Country

SKILLS

Design / Technical Skills
- Design or technical skill
- Design or technical skill
- Design or technical skill
- Design or technical skill
- Design or technical skill
- Design or technical skill

Professional Skills
- Professional skill, written out somewhat fully but short of complete sentences (start with action verb)
- Organizational skill, written out somewhat fully but short of complete sentences (start with action verb)
- Communication skill, written out somewhat fully but short of complete sentences (start with action verb)
- Management skill, written out somewhat fully but short of complete sentences (start with action verb)
- Construction skill, written out somewhat fully but short of complete sentences (start with action verb)
- Customer service skill, written out somewhat fully but short of complete sentences (start with action verb)

EXPERIENCE

Company, City, State   **Month Year – Month Year**
Title

Company, City, State   **Month Year – Month Year**
Title

INTERESTS

Membership: Organization 1, Organization 2, Organization 3

Languages: fluent in (language); working knowledge of (language)

Travel: Country 1, Country 2, Country 3, Country 4, Country 5

Interests: hobbies, outdoor/athletic activity, artistic/musical endeavors, etc.

HYBRID RÉSUMÉ

A résumé is a summary of your skills and background designed to get you a job interview. It is a one-page, 8.5" by 11"marketing device that is no more than two colors that is necessary for entry into any area of Practice (Internship, Job, Practice Assessment). It is a well-crafted piece of design that showcases your abilities to put together a clear, readable, consistent document. It is not an autobiography. Before you start, ask yourself, "Who is my audience? What do they need to know in order to consider me for an interview? And how can I best frame my prior skills and experience?"

The hybrid résumé is recommended for students with minimal (less than two years of) professional design experience and students with significant non-design professional (office) experience as it employs aspects of functional résumé (highlighting skills) and chronological résumé (highlighting usually unrelated, but professional, experience).

Heading

- Your name, complete mailing address, phone number, one email address … consistent with your cover letter.
- You do not need to write "Email: (your address)" or "Phone: (your number)." Just list your address and number.
- List one phone number, the one you'd want prospective employers to reach you at. Answer it professionally, and be sure you have a professional outgoing voicemail message.
- Use a professional email address, e.g. BAC email.

Education

- List colleges in reverse chronological order, most recent (BAC) first.
- Format your Education section identically to your Experience section. For example:

  School, City, State   Month Year – Month Year
  Degree

- For each college, list the dates you attended and the degree you received. For BAC, write: "Candidate for [Degree]"
- Make sure your degree is written correctly:
  - Bachelor of Architecture, Bachelor of Interior Architecture, Bachelor of Landscape Architecture, Bachelor of Design Studies, Bachelor of Science in Architecture, Master of Architecture, Master of Interior Architecture, Master of Landscape Architecture, Master of Science in Interior Architecture, Master of Design Studies in Design for Human Health, Master of Design Studies in Sustainable Design, or Master of Design in Historic Preservation.
- Include your expected graduation date if you are a semester or two from graduating. Otherwise, write: "[Month Year Started] – present."

- Optional: include GPA if 3.5 or higher.
- Do not list individual classes. Communicate such knowledge in your cover letter and/or Skills section.

Design Skills

- Write down each course you've taken at the BAC (or previous design school). List projects or assignments from each course. Write the skills that you needed to do these. Think: what can you do now that you couldn't before?
- Create a list of ALL of these. You need not start each line with an action verb.
- Be thorough and specific! Don't just list "Drafting," list "Drafting: plans, sections, elevations, axonometrics, perspectives."

Experience

- List your jobs in reverse chronological order, most recent first.
- Start each responsibility or achievement with an action verb: answered, composed, created, designed, guided, managed, oversaw, presented, etc. Vary your verbs. For a helpful list of verbs, visit www.quintcareers.com/action_skills.html. If you're still at the job, use present tense. If not, use past tense.
- Don't list the same skills for every job. Try to indicate professional growth. Give more recent jobs greater emphasis.
- Study job posts carefully. Re-order your bullets to draw attention to the skills an employer is most looking for.
- Format your Experience section identically to your Education section. For example:
  Company, City, State   Month Year – Month Year
  Title

Additional Skills/Interests

- Use this last section of your résumé to provide a complete picture of who you are as a person.
  - Professional memberships (e.g. BSA Student Member)
  - School organizations (an Atelier committee)
  - Volunteerism, community-based activities
  - Languages (highly valued these days!)
  - Travel, sports, outdoor activities, hobbies, interests

Please note:

- The use of an Objective is not recommended for any format. Your objective should be clearly stated in your cover letter.
- Don't say "References Available Upon Request." It's assumed that references (and work samples) are available at any time.

Remember, every document must be 100% free of spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors.
Once you have a résumé drafted, make an appointment with the Learning Resource Center (writingcenter@the-bac.edu).

Hybrid résumé template:

FIRST LAST
123 Fake Street, City, State, Zip
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EDUCATION

Boston Architectural College, Boston, MA   **Month Year – present**
Candidate for (Degree) of (Discipline)
- GPA: 3.5

Prior College, City, State   **Month Year – Month Year**
(Degree) of (Discipline)
- GPA 3.7
- Semester Abroad: City, Country

SKILLS

Design / Technical Skills
- Design or technical skill
- Design or technical skill
- Design or technical skill
- Design or technical skill
- Design or technical skill
- Design or technical skill

EXPERIENCE

Company, City, State   **Month Year – Month Year**
Title
- Skill/Responsibility, started with an action verb
- Skill/Responsibility, started with an action verb
- Skill/Responsibility, started with an action verb

Company, City, State   **Month Year – Month Year**
Title
- Skill/Responsibility, started with an action verb
- Skill/Responsibility, started with an action verb
- Skill/Responsibility, started with an action verb

Company, City, State   **Month Year – Month Year**
Title
- Skill/Responsibility, started with an action verb
- Skill/Responsibility, started with an action verb

INTERESTS

Membership: Organization 1, Organization 2, Organization 3
Languages: fluent in (language); working knowledge of (language)
Travel: Country 1, Country 2, Country 3, Country 4, Country 5
Interests: hobbies, outdoor/athletic activity, artistic/musical endeavors, etc.

CHRONOLOGICAL RÉSUMÉ

A résumé is a summary of your skills and background designed to get you a job interview. It is a one-page, 8.5" by 11" marketing device that is necessary for entry into any area of Practice (Internship, Job, Practice Assessment). It is a well-crafted piece of design that showcases your abilities to put together a clear, read-able, consistent document. It is not an autobiography. Before you start, ask yourself, "Who is my audience? What do they need to know in order to consider me for an interview? And how can I best frame my prior skills and experience?"

The chronological résumé is recommended for stu-dents with significant (two or more years of) pro-fessional design experience, as it highlights your professional background, responsibilities, and accom-plishments.

Heading
- Your name, complete mailing address, phone number, one email address ... consistent with your cover letter.
- You do not need to write "Email: (your address)" or "Phone: (your number)." Just list your address and number.
- List one phone number, the one you'd want pro-spective employers to reach you at. Answer it professionally, and be sure you have a professional outgoing voicemail message.
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- List colleges in reverse chronological order, most recent (BAC) first.
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Degree
- For each college, list the dates you attended and the degree you received. For BAC, write: "Candi-date for [Degree]"
- Make sure your degree is written correctly:
  - Bachelor of Architecture, Bachelor of Interior Architecture, Bachelor of Landscape Architecture, Bachelor of Design Studies, Bachelor of Science in Architecture, Master of Architecture, Master of Interior Architecture, Master of Landscape Architecture, Master of Science in Interior Architecture, Master of Design Studies in Design for Human Health, Master of Design Studies in Sustainable Design, or Master of Design in Historic Preservation.
- Include your expected graduation date if you are a semester or two from graduating. Otherwise, write: "[Month Year Started] – present."
- Optional: include GPA if 3.5 or higher.
- Do not list individual classes. Communicate such knowledge in your cover letter and/or Skills section.

Experience
- This is the main focus of your résumé, as it calls attention to your background, responsibilities, and achievements.
- List your jobs in reverse chronological order, most recent first.
- Start each bulleted responsibility or achievement with an action verb: answered, composed, created, designed, guided, managed, mediated, oversaw, presented, etc. Vary your action verbs. For a help-ful list of verbs, visit www.quintcareers.com/ac-tion_skills.html. If you're still at the job, use present tense. If not, use past tense.
- Don't list the same skills for every job. Whenever possible, try to indicate professional growth. Give more recent jobs greater emphasis (more bullets).
- Study job posts carefully. Re-order your bullets to draw attention to the skills an employer is most looking for.
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Please note:
- The use of an Objective is not recommended for any format. Your objective should be clearly stated in your cover letter.
- You need not write "References Available Upon Request." For most jobs, it's assumed that refer-ences - and work samples - can be requested at any time.

Remember, every document must be 100% free of spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors. Once you have a résumé drafted, make an appointment with the Learning Resource Center (writingcenter@the-bac. edu).

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EDUCATION

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Prior College, City, State   **Month Year – Month Year**
(Degree) of (Discipline)
   • GPA 3.7
   • Semester Abroad: City, Country

EXPERIENCE

Some Design Firm, City, State   **Month Year – present**
Title
   • Skill/Responsibility, started with an action verb
   • Skill/Responsibility, started with an action verb
   • Skill/Responsibility, started with an action verb
   • Skill/Responsibility, started with an action verb

Some Design Firm, City, State   **Month Year – Month Year**
Title
   • Skill/Responsibility, started with an action verb
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Some Design Firm, City, State   **Month Year – Month Year**
Title
   • Skill/Responsibility, started with an action verb
   • Skill/Responsibility, started with an action verb

INTERESTS

Membership: Organization 1, Organization 2, Organization 3
Languages: fluent in (language); working knowledge of (language)
Travel: Country 1, Country 2, Country 3, Country 4, Country 5
Interests: hobbies, outdoor/athletic activity, artistic/musical endeavors, etc.

COVER LETTER

A cover letter is a formal business letter introducing your application, explaining who you are, what you're applying for, and why. Unless otherwise stated by the prospective employer, a cover letter is always mandatory as part of a job application. That said, it should be no more than one page, about four paragraphs, autobiographical but not a repeat of what's on your résumé. The cover letter should add to the information that is on your résumé.

Most importantly, every cover letter you send out must be customized to the specific firm/organization and position to which you're applying. This of course involves research. The focus of your letter is to demonstrate the research by writing about how and why the firm/organization interests you.

Most firms have web sites; visit them. Learn about the types of projects they do. Read their mission statement, and use this information to your advantage. Make reference to it in your letter; communicate to them that you have made the effort to do some research on them. This initiative should impress them. Do, however, make sure that any references you make are concrete. Empty, flowery praise, may not accomplish anything. A cover letter is clear and to the point. Keep the focus on you and your accomplishments/skills and what, specifically, you can do for the company.

Heading
- Your name, complete mailing address, phone number, one email address … identical to your résumé.
  - Keep it simple. You do not need to write "Email: firstname.lastname@the-bac.edu" or "Phone: 617-555-5555."
  - List one phone number, the one you'd want prospective employers to reach you at. Answer it professionally, and be sure you have a professional outgoing voicemail message.
  - Use a professional email address, e.g. BAC email.
- Company name, complete mailing address
- Address the letter appropriately. Having a contact name is best: "Dear Mr. Smith" or "Dear Ms. Smith" (Never "Miss Smith" or "Mrs. Smith"). If you don't have a contact name, or they ask you to email a generic address: "To Whom it May Concern" or "Dear Sir/Madam" … are acceptable.

Paragraph 1
Introduce yourself and your application to your prospective employer by answering the following questions:
- What are you applying for?
- How did you find out about the position?
- Who are you?
- Why are you applying for the position?

"I am applying for the position of Office Person / Entry Level Drafter listed on the Boston Society of Architects website. I am currently pursuing my master's degree in architecture at the Boston Architectural College, and have completed design studios as well as coursework in drawing, drafting, AutoCAD, model building, and design principles. Additionally, I have two years of experience working as an administrative assistant in a fast-paced, professional environment. I believe that my academic and professional experience make me an excellent candidate for this position."

Paragraphs 2 - 3
The most important part of your letter: this is where you sell yourself to your prospective employer. While a résumé provides a general overview of your skills, in a cover letter you get the chance to drive home your qualifications. Don't just repeat what you say in the résumé: elaborate further. Provide more details and anecdotes that show you have the appropriate skills and accomplishments:
- Expand on your design and professional skills.
- Discuss ways in which those skills are appropriate for the position.
- Discuss ways (two or more) in which you are a good match for the firm… be specific: WHY?
- This is the part of the cover letter you must customize for each job application.

"In my previous position as an Administrative Assistant at Becker & Holmes, I refined my administrative and communication skills. I answered phones, greeted visitors, confirmed meetings, typed correspondence, and prepared materials for meetings and conferences. I was also involved in researching, designing, and creating various client presentations using PowerPoint. I am accustomed to working in a professional, fast-paced environment that has an emphasis on client support.

I am also very interested in your firm's growing emphasis on projects that have a focus on historic preservation, as it is a field that I am interested in learning more about. I have an undergraduate degree in archaeology, as well as experience working in Boston University's archaeological restoration laboratory, that would allow me to contribute a unique perspective to historic renovation projects."

Structurally, make sure you have strong topic sentences. Start off a paragraph by clearly identifying a skill you have to offer. Then as you go deeper into the paragraph elaborate further on that skill and/or additional ones. Readers see the first and last sentences of a paragraph the most clearly, so make sure your most important information is located there.

In addition, try to focus your paragraphs around a central topic, perhaps a particular skill or set of skills. Some students have one paragraph that focuses on

their professional design experience, while the second focuses more on their academic background. Others focus one paragraph on their design skills and the second on their office and communication skills. Regardless of how you organize it, make sure that the ideas in a given paragraph hang together. This letter is a form of communication to a prospective employer. If it is scattered, the prospective employer's first impression of you is as a scattered person. Needless to say, this probably won't get you an interview.

Lastly, many cover letters mention work the firm has done. This can and should be done. However, don't just praise them for the sake of praising. Instead of just writing about how amazing their work is, describe how your background and/or interests are aligned with said amazing work. Meaningless regurgitation of online content tends to annoy prospective employers as much (or more) than evidence of no research at all.

Conclusion

Add a couple of brief closing sentences thanking the person, express a desire to learn more about the position, and indicate the best way to reach you to further discuss the position. Sign off with "Sincerely" or "Best regards," your signature, and your printed name.

"I would value the opportunity to learn more about the Office Person/Entry Level Drafter position and how I might contribute to your company. You may contact me by phone or email at the contact information above. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(signature; signed by hand in hardcopy, embedded as JPEG digitally)

Name"

Remember, every document must be 100% free of spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors.
Once you have a résumé drafted, make an appointment with the Learning Resource Center (writingcenter@the-bac.edu).

INTERVIEWING

At a BAC lecture, a guest speaker who is the head of human resources at a major Boston-based design firm noted, "The cover letter and resume are what get you an interview. The interview is what gets you a job." Expanding on the work of the cover letter and resume, the job interview represents the opportunity to further match your experience and skill set with the needs of the firm, while offering an in-person view of your strong work ethic, willingness to learn, and engaging personality. The prospect of doing all this in one 30 or 60 minute meeting can be daunting, but with diligent research and preparation ahead of time and energy and enthusiasm for the opportunity, you can nail that next job interview. Here's how.

Before the interview, it is an absolute MUST that you thoroughly research the firm. What is the firm's history? What are its goals? What is the scope of work they do? Who are the firm's clients? What specific projects have they done? Are there any that you can visit in person? Who are some key staff? How many employees are there? Have they received any awards or been published in any design journals recently? These are all things you'll need to know to speak intelligently and comfortably during an interview. Beforehand, write answers to these questions and take them with you to the interview.

Also, before the interview, research and make note of the location of the interview. Obtain accurate directions to the office. Arrive 10 to 15 minutes early.

Print and bring...
- a detailed job description of the position you'll be interviewing for.
- extra copies of your cover letter, resume, references, and portfolio.
- the name(s) and title(s) of the people who you'll be interviewed by, if possible.

If you plan to show your portfolio or work samples on a tablet/laptop or digital device, make sure that the links are ready on your browser. Make sure the wallpaper, shortcuts and applications on your desktop are professional and that no embarrassing information is visible.

Prepare for tough questions ahead of time. Before the interview, write answers to the following:
- Questions common to any interview:
  - "What can you tell me about yourself?"
  - "Why do you want to work here?"
  - "What are your strengths and weaknesses?"
  - "Do you work better individually or as part of a team?"
  - "Describe a recent problem or conflict and how you were able to resolve it."
  - "Why did you leave your last job?"

- Questions common to a BAC/design interview:
  - "Why do you want to become an architect/interior designer/landscape architect/etc.?"
  - "Tell me about your skills working with CAD, Photoshop, and/or other software."
  - "How long are you planning to stay with us? Does the BAC encourage students to move around?"
  - "How do you envision balancing work and school?"
  - "Do you work well under pressure?... when faced with tight deadlines?"
  - "How long do you plan to be in this position?"
  - For some: "This is an entry-level job. How do you feel about taking a job that is a step back?"

With each answer, try to strengthen the match between your skills and experience with the position, citing real-life examples from your past, while turning any potential negatives into positives. If you're having trouble answering any of these questions, do not hesitate to meet with someone in the Practice Department or the Learning Resource Center (contact information above). Also, practice presenting your portfolio so the explanations of your work are clear and thoughtful. And practice presenting your portfolio upside-down, as though you're sitting across the table from the interviewer. Mock interviews are great for this!

Mock interviews are simulated interviews in which you practice with a working professional answering the types of questions you would be asked in an interview for a job opportunity. You also practice asking the questions you would ask of the hiring manager or interviewer at the end of the interview. If you have an upcoming interview, reach out to the LRC or the Practice Department, with at least two days advance notice, to schedule a mock interview. Be sure to bring with you a copy of the job posting, tailored resume to the job posting as well as any other documents (i.e. cover letter, work samples) that you would bring to the actual interview.

Interview attire:
- Women: business suit (pant or skirt), shirt/blouse, comfortable dress shoes, professional-style bag (i.e a briefcase, messenger bag).
- Men: business suit, collared shirt (fully-buttoned), professional tie, dress shoes, professional-style bag (i.e a briefcase, messenger bag).
- Cisgender/Transgender/Non-binary all clothing is clean, pressed, and well fitting; hair is groomed and out of your face; use little or no cologne/perfume (some people are intolerant); limited, appropriate jewelry; and do not smoke before going in.

Appearance matters. If you look professional, you'll feel professional.

Your interview starts when you walk in the building's lobby. Be polite to everyone you encounter: security guards, receptionists, fellow elevator passengers, etc. You never know who might be your interviewer, or who might be asked for a report on your conduct. Also, once inside, no gum-chewing or coffee cups, and put phone on silent then tuck it away.

Body language is an essential part of the interview. Stand/sit up straight. Feet flat on the floor. Shake hands firmly, but don't crush. Make eye contact. Smile. Make simple hand gestures. Turn nervousness into excitement for the opportunity. Be positive, enthusiastic, and engaging with your interviewer(s). Also, very important: take notes during your interview!

5 Rules for Interviewing with Authority
1. Be concise with your words; avoid unprofessional language such as "like," "um," "y'know," "you guys."
2. Provide specific, real-life examples when discussing your skills and experience.
3. Be honest. Cast yourself in the best light, but don't lie.
4. Turn potential negatives into positives. For example, when asked, "What's your greatest weakness?" talk about a previous job/responsibility that relied on your "extraordinarily high level of attention to detail."
5. Make a match between you and the firm/position.

A good interview is a dialogue. You are there just as much to learn about the firm (beyond what's available on their website) as they are to learn about you (beyond what's on your resume). Prepare and ask great questions about the firm, position, and/or person interviewing you. Almost every interview concludes with the interviewer(s) asking, "Do you have any questions for me/us?" Your response must ALWAYS be, "Yes..." followed by the amazingly-thoughtful question (or two) you prepared prior to the interview.

Please remember, though they rarely come up during a job interview, topics such as race, sexual orientation, religion, political affiliation, age, national origin, marital status, or family matters are off-limits and/or illegal. If any of these topics do come up, re-direct the conversation back to the position and your skills and experience, and after the interview please inform the BAC Practice Department.

After the interview, within 12 to 24 hours, write a professional thank you note to each of your interviewers. Email is most common, but hand-written notes are a nice touch. It is considered professional courtesy to follow up on the interview with a phone call or email within 5-7 business days. A business day typically does not include Saturday or Sunday. Thank the interviewer (again) for their time and consideration, and ask if there have been any developments in the process of filling the position. If nothing comes of the opportunity, move on. Most BAC student job searches

involve several months of persistent, hard work.

Also, take about 5 minutes to write down all the questions the interviewer asked you. Email this information to the Practice Department, and let them know how you feel the interview went, especially if one of the Practice staff members helped you prepare for the interview. They would enjoy hearing about your progress and can give pointers on what to do next in your job search.

INTERVIEW PORTFOLIOS

The portfolios that you bring to an interview should be no more than 20 to 25 pages. They should show a range of work, demonstrating your skills from the beginning of your design career at the BAC to present. Work samples display your design and graphic communication skills. Usually one to three pages in length, they are your best design examples that you send along with cover letter and résumé as part of a job application. This document offers little to no process. That said, put as much care into its design as you would your portfolio.

Work Samples Content
- Your best work from Studio, including little to no process work or written narrative
- A few additional examples of your graphic capabilities, as page space and file size allow

Always adhere to page or file size limits described in job posting. To do so quickly and easily, many students find it's good to have separate one-page, two-page, and three-page (or more) work samples documents ready to go.

Writing
Text and captions explain content and also demonstrate your writing ability. Be mindful of text and image integration. Can your viewer tell which text goes with which image? How are you representing course names?... project titles?... written narrative?... captions?... page numbers? Establish a consistent scheme for font types, effects (bold, underlining, etc.), and sizes.

Remember, every document must be 100% free of spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors. Once you have a résumé drafted, make an appointment with the Learning Resource Center (writingcenter@the-bac.edu).

Printing should be simple and inexpensive. Print on good, color laser paper (or similar), not on regular copy paper.

Additional Portfolio Resources
- Check ISSUU, a digital publishing website, and search for architecture or design portfolios.
- Check out the award-winning sample BAC student portfolios on reserve in the BAC Library. They're behind the check-out counter. Ask a library clerk to see one (or two... or three). View them critically with an eye for what the students were thinking as they were making them.
- In addition to spelling, grammar, etc., the Learning Resource Center (writingcenter@the-bac.edu) can help with narrative, concept, clarity, structure, layout, readability, software, etc.
- Receive feedback from your program head, Foundation Studio staff, or Studio instructor. Their BAC email address is typically firstname.lastname@the-bac.edu.

REFERENCES PAGE

A references page is a list of people who will endorse you as an employee to a prospective employer. A reference can be a previous employer/supervisor, instructor, mentor, or other person you've had a good, professional relationship with. A reference should not be a family member, friend, or classmate. You MUST professionally ask permission to list anyone as a reference, and you should also let them know if and when you're actively sending out job applications, so they know when they're likely to be contacted.

Heading
- Your name, complete mailing address, phone number, email address ... identical to your résumé and cover letter.
  - Keep it simple. You do not need to write "Email: firstname.lastname@the-bac.edu" or "Phone: 617-555-5555."
  - List one phone number, the one you'd want prospective employers to reach you at. Answer it professionally, and be sure you have a professional outgoing voicemail message.
  - Use a professional email address, e.g. BAC email. Remove all hyperlinks throughout all documents.

Reference* 1
- Name, current title, company name
- Phone number
- Email address
- Your relation to him/her/them and/or duration of acquaintance)

Reference 2
- Name, current title, company name
- Phone number
- Email address
- Your relation to him/her/them and/or duration of acquaintance)

Reference 3
- Name, current title, company name
- Phone number
- Email address
- Your relation to him/her/them and/or duration of acquaintance)

Unless otherwise specified by the prospective employer, three or four references are usually sufficient.

Ordinarily, you do not submit a references page right away (along with your cover letter and résumé), rather when it has been requested by the prospective employer. (Along those lines, you do not need to write "References Available Upon Request" on your résumé. It's assumed that references are available at any point.

Remember, every document must be 100% free of spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors. Once you have a résumé drafted, make an appointment with the Learning Resource Center (writingcenter@the-bac.edu).

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Job Search Tips for International Students

I. Types of employment available to F-1 international students.

On-campus vs. off campus
On-campus employment is one of the immigration benefits of F-1 students. Students may work on campus up to 20 hours per week when school is in session and over 20 hours per week during breaks and vacations, as long as they are planning to enroll full time next semester. Full time enrolment of undergraduate students is 12 credits/semester; for graduate students, 9 credits.

Students do not need to apply for work authorization with USCIS to be able to work on campus; however, they must consult with the International Student Advisor if the job is eligible for on-campus employment. On-campus job opportunities are competitive. Please inquire with the relevant department regarding job requirements and application deadlines.

Curriculum Practical Training (CPT)
CPT is one of the benefits of the F-1 non-immigrant status that allows students to engage in practical training in a field directly related to their program of study while earning academic credits. The BAC's curriculum includes a mandatory practice component for most degree programs. Hence, students may participate in CPT as long as they are working to fulfill practice curriculum requirements (practice hours and skill level) necessary to graduate.

Undergraduate students may apply for CPT after they have been maintaining valid F-1 status for one academic year. Graduate students are exempt from the one academic year requirement in cases when the program requires immediate participation in CPT. Eligibility for immediate engagement in practical training is determined via a Practice Assessment.

CPT employment is approved by the Practice Department and is authorized by the school DSO in SEVIS. CPT employment is date and employer specific, which means that students may only work for the approved employer until the end date specified on the second page of the form I-20. If the student decides to change jobs, or continue working past the CPT end date in the following semester, they need to go through the CPT approval process again by submitting the CPT request form to the Practice Department along with an updated employment letter. Please note that CPT requests are processed and approved at the BAC. You do not need an Employment Authorization Document (EAD) to engage in CPT employment. The CPT endorsed form I-20 serves as the EAD.

CPT employment may be approved for part-time or full time opportunities. However, if a student is authorized for part-time CPT employment, then they cannot work over 20 hours per week. Doing so will be a violation of valid F-1 status.

There is no restriction on compensation during CPT. Compensation is not a factor in approving CPT employment requests. Please note, however, that CPT-eligible opportunities may be unpaid internships. Simply because an opportunity is unpaid does not mean F-1 students may accept it without going thought the CPT approval process at the BAC.

Post-Completion OPT (Optional Practical Training)
Post-Completion OPT is another immigration benefit of F-1 students. Upon completion of the academic program, BAC students may apply for practical training directly related to their field of study. Post-Completion OPT is a 12 months extension of the F-1 status. The12 months OPT period is followed by a 60 day grace period, during which students can remain in the U.S.

F-1 students are eligible for 12 months post-completion OPT per academic level, i.e. Bachelor's or Master's. Thus, if a student was approved and used a part of or the entire 12 months of OPT at Bachelor's level, they are only eligible to apply for another 12 months of OPT at Master's level.

Another eligibility criteria for post-completion OPT is the amount of full-time CPT a student was approved for while enrolled in their academic program. F-1 students may not exceed a total of 365 days of full time CPT to be eligible for Post-Completion OPT.

Unlike CPT, OPT requires USCIS adjudication and issuance of Employment Authorization Document (EAD). If you are interested in applying for post-completion OPT you need to schedule a meeting with the ISA in the beginning of your last semester to review your eligibility and request post-completion OPT recommendation in SEVIS.

Volunteering:
Volunteering is a rewarding experience and a great way to engage with your neighborhood and community and meet new friends. F-1 students may engage in volunteering; however, it is important to keep in mind that unpaid work could still be considered employment for F-1 students.

A volunteer is defined as follows by the Department of Labor: "An individual who performs hours of service for a public agency for civic, charitable, or humanitarian reasons, without promise, expectation or receipt of compensation for services rendered". Volunteering services could only be performed for a non-profit organization for public service. Examples of volunteering include donating your time to work in a soup kitchen, or another type of free meal program, becoming a

part of a volunteer program in a hospital, giving your time to mosque, church, synagogue or another religious entity. Any work (paid or unpaid) for a for-profit organization is considered employment. Any employment F-1 students engage in must be authorized. Before accepting on offer of employment, you must consult with the International Student Advisor.

Social Security Number
Social Security Number (SSN) is a form of identification in the U.S. It is used to report earnings to the government and subsequently to file state and federal taxes. Thus, SSN is typically issued to non-residents authorized to work. Once a student has secured an on-campus job offer, or an I-20 endorsed for CPT or OPT by the International Student Advisor, he or she is then eligible to apply for SSN up to 30 days before the start date of employment. To obtain a SSN, the student must apply with the local Social Security Administration Office.

F-1 visa limitations
F-1 (Academic Student) status is granted for pursuing a full-time program of study at an approved institution. As such, it is important to remember that the purpose of an F-1 student being in the U.S. is to study full time. Immigration benefits of F-1 students such as practical training and on-campus employment are always conditional upon full time enrollment and academic standing.

Cultural differences
Job seekers have an array of strategies and resources they could employ while looking for a job. It is important to know, however, that employers in the U.S. may not consider certain details on a resume, such as date of birth or marital status to be professional. The BAC students have access to comprehensive resources when it comes to guidance on resume, portfolio and cover letter writing and formatting from the Practice Department, Learning Resource Center and the International Student Advisor.

Benefits, rights and responsibilities of all employees
International students employed under CPT/OPT provision of immigration regulations are viewed as regular employees by the relevant state and federal regulatory agencies, hence, F-1 students are expected to file federal and state tax returns during tax season (Jan 31 – Apr 15). That also means that international students lawfully employed in the U.S. are subjected to the U.S. labor laws such as the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Massachusetts employers may also be required to provide paid sick leave to international student employees under Earned Sick Time law.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 protects disabled employees from discrimination in employment, hiring, transportation and covers access to public facilities, and services and telecommunications. Employers are required to provide reasonable accommodation to all qualified employees with known disabilities.

The BAC does not condone or tolerate discrimination toward disabled students.

The employer may or may not offer a benefits package to international student employees. However, benefits may include as much as full benefits accrued on an equal basis with other employees in similar positions. Many employers provide some vacation and personal time off. Other benefits such as group life insurance, medical insurance, profit sharing, and bonuses may or may not be available, depending on company policy. Generally, international students are paid a wage comparable to other employees with similar duties. Benefits and compensation package may not be determined by student's visa status.