

LAUNCH A CAREER FROM UCSC!



WAYS TO BUILD YOUR RESUME AT UCSC

Undergraduate Research

UCSC is a major public research university. You can work directly with world-class faculty on groundbreaking discoveries, from genomics to humanities. Build analytical skills, stand out on grad school applications, and show employers you can tackle open-ended, complex problems.

Internships

UCSC's proximity to Silicon Valley and the Monterey Bay gives you access to internships at tech giants, biotech startups, marine research centers, and non-profits. Internships can help you try out a career field, build a professional network, and gain hands-on experience that makes your resume stand out.

Field Study Courses

Field study courses allow you to step out of the lecture hall and get hands-on experience in the local community, coastal reserves, or redwood forests for academic credit. Opportunities span across disciplines, from an Agroecology Field Quarter learning on our organic farm to a Psychology Field Quarter working with local clinics and community agencies. This is your chance to put project management, data collection, and community-engagement experience on your resume.

On-Campus Jobs

Working on campus—whether at McHenry Library, recreation facilities, or as a peer mentor—can help you build essential skills like communication, leadership, and time management without ever having to leave campus.

"UC Santa Cruz's location near Silicon Valley meant that opportunity was genuinely close, both geographically and culturally. The tech ecosystem was accessible in a way that shaped how I thought about my career early on. It motivated me."

Allysa Kazhe, Engineering Program Manager at Apple, Class of 2025



RESEARCH & EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AT UCSC

Degree-Defining Experiences Program

Level up your degree with real-world experiences and hands-on projects that stand out in a job interview. Get your scientific diving certification, write cancer-bioinformatics code, go stargazing at Lick Observatory, or develop experimental photographs using native plants and local river water while camping in UC wilderness reserves.

Building Belonging Program

Get paid to build your resume. Through this program, students team up with Social Sciences faculty mentors on paid, real-world research and service-learning projects. It is the ultimate way to secure strong letters of recommendation, gain highly marketable skills, and get paid for your brainpower.

Transforming Futures Program

Land your dream summer internship, fully funded. This program provides students in the Social Sciences with dedicated scholarship funding so you can take on high-impact, career-boosting summer internships without worrying about the costs.

Employing Humanities

Your critical thinking and communication skills are highly valued in the modern job market. This program directly connects Humanities students to paid internships, hands-on community projects, and research opportunities that show future employers exactly how your humanities degree translates to real-world business and social solutions.

Arts Professional Pathways

Fast-track your creative career with access to arts-specific career fairs, network with industry insiders at speaker series, and build an impressive portfolio and resume by leading hands-on creative projects in local schools.

Professional Clubs & Organizations

Find your people and build your network. At UCSC, there are dozens of student-run professional organizations and pre-professional fraternities, from the Google Developer Student Club, to the American Medical Student Association, to the Pre-Law Society. Many travel to national conferences, compete in nationwide challenges, and host speakers to build a powerful network of peers and alumni who are ready to help you land your first job.

PRO TIP: USE HANDSHAKE!

Handshake is the digital platform that UCSC uses to connect students with job search and career coaching resources.



IMPORTANT SKILLS FOR SUCCESS

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) identified the top skills employers are looking for. Whether you're working a job or internship or performing undergraduate research, UC Santa Cruz can connect you with opportunities to build transferrable skills.

NACE Skills	Critical Thinking & Problem Solving	Teamwork & Collaboration	Technology & Data Literacy	Communication
Corporate Internship	Troubleshooting a broken software feature or analyzing a marketing campaign's low click-through rate.	Syncing with cross-functional departments (e.g., product, sales) to launch a project.	Learning proprietary company software or basic Excel modeling.	Presenting end-of-summer slides to internal team members.
UCSC Research Lab	Designing an experiment, isolating variables, or utilizing machine learning to process raw astronomical or genomic data.	Collaborating within a vertically integrated lab structure alongside postdocs, PhD candidates, and principal investigators.	Mastering advanced imaging software, statistical programming languages (like R or Python), and complex lab instrumentation.	Translating highly complex data into accessible formats for peer-reviewed journals, national seminars, or public symposiums.



"I was exposed to diverse research experiences during my time at UC Santa Cruz. This not only helped me decide what kind of career I wanted to pursue, but also taught me invaluable skills that made me a competitive candidate for future prospects."

Owen Moosman, Research Associate at University of California, San Francisco, UCSC Class of 2025



YOUR DEDICATED CAREER NETWORK

Career Success offers 1-on-1 coaching and workshops to help students on their career path: from building stand-out resumes to preparing for interviews. From their very first quarter, the center connects students to top-tier internships, on-campus jobs, and global employers through the Handshake platform. They also provide specialized guidance for students aiming for graduate, law, or medical schools.