Finding a Summer Internship

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Background

- **Academic path:**
  - B.S. in Computer Science at Zhejiang University, China, 2002
  - M.C.S. at UVA, 2005
  - Pursing Ph.D. at UVA, 4th year

- **Why Ph.D.**?
  - A dream as well as a challenge
  - Interested in research

- **Personal:**
  - Hobbies: Creative writing, art and sports
  - Not married
Story of My Internship Application

How would you reverse a singly linked list?

You can find it!

Nov, 05 → Dec, 05

Dec, 05 → Jan, 06

Jan, 06 → Feb, 06

University of Virginia
Why an Internship and When?

Learn knowledge and skills; Fun and fresh air

Second year
- development and testing intern
  - Ph.D. or Master’s?
  - Help you find a new research topic

After research is settled down
- research intern
  - Advance research
  - Industry or academia?
  - Long term mentor
## Time Table for the Application

*Start early, top companies and research labs usually make offers in February or March*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov, 2006</td>
<td>Which company? Whom to work with?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec, 2006</td>
<td>Application materials good enough?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan, 2007</td>
<td>Submit application and continually check status</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb, 2007</td>
<td>Phone and on-site interviews</td>
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</tbody>
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Where to intern: company, group and person

- Dream research groups
- Recommendations from alumni, classmates and advisors
- Research activities
- Department mailing list
- University career fair
- Professional events: Cohort, Grace Hopper, …
- Monster
- Company web site
“I never know how to choose…”

- Work area is close to your research
- Many resources for learning: computer experts, other interns, presentations
- A tangible and practical project: usually a 3 month internship
- Copyright problems
- Fun place for temporary living
Application: Contact

- Who: Group leader or the person you might work with or a person you know in the company

- Content:
  - Express your interest in their project
  - Ask if internship opportunities exist
  - Ask about current status and future directions of their research project
  - Ask about possible roles for an internship
  - Introduce your work and explain why it matches their project
  - Ask what to do in order to be eligible for their internship position
Application: Prepare Materials

- Resume (1 page) or CV: career center to critique
- Publications and project code organized in a website
- 3 recommendation letters: good recommendation is very important; ask your advisor to reach the group directly
- Prepare an impressive demo or poster
- Prepare a one-hour presentation
Application: Submit and Check Status

- Deadline: often February 1st; submit early
- Big companies require formal application: submit and check status through website
- Some research labs: submit to your contact
- Finding a reference in the company to submit your application is very helpful
- After half a month, write a follow up email to ask about your admission
Interview: A Learning Process

• Motivation and interest
• Logical thinking and problem solving skills
• Matched background
• Coding skills
• Nice personality 😊
Some Other Stories

– “They want me to go and start a research group in my area.”
– “I just keep trying her.”
– “I want to impress them, so I go to work half an hour earlier and leave half an hour later than everybody else.”
– “It is even surprising to me I am graduating.”
Conclusion

• You can find a good position
• Four stages of application: research where to go and whom to work with; prepare material; apply and check status; interview
• Learn and work hard during internship
• Interested to hear what will make a good internship in summer ☺