

## **IT IS ALL ABOUT THE CLIPS:**

### **How to best present yourself for internships and jobs**

Recruiters often say that the most important part of a student's application is his or her clips or online portfolio. This is a brief guide to help you understand the importance of clips, what kind you need to generate in your internships and work at the Wildcat or UATV, how to select them and present them to recruiters. It is imperative that you have an online portfolio of your work; almost every recruiter and employer is asking for that now. It can be through wordpress.com or Linked In or another free site.

Recruiters will ask for three to ten of your best clips. (Most ask for six.) "Best" can be defined as stories that are well reported with multiple sources, do not rely on email interviews, and have excellent writing. There are three types of clips recruiters want:

- **Breaking news or spot news:** this is defined as a news event covered by reporters as it is occurring. If you have live tweeted this event you will want to highlight that as well.
- **Feature story:** This is defined as a story that analyzes the news, entertains, or describes people places or things in or out of the news. This can and often does include the category of personality profiles.
- **Analysis or trend story:** This is defined as a background or a longer news story that adds meaning to current issues in the news by explaining them further. is all about the stories a reporter digs up on his or her own, what many people call "scoops." *Enterprise* reporting goes beyond merely covering events. It explores the forces shaping those events.

You increase your chance of obtaining a prestigious internship or a good job right out of college if you also have the following in your portfolio:

- **Enterprise:** The definition of an enterprise story is reporting that is not generated by the news or a press release but rather by a reporter or news organization based on develop sources.
- **Investigative:** The definition of this is journalism in which reporters deeply investigate a single topic of interest such as serious crimes, political corruption, or corporate wrongdoing.
- **Visual storytelling samples:** Make sure you are maintaining a portfolio of any multimedia pieces you do and photography that you have shot for your stories

*Please note: No one asks for commentary or column writing – so do not spend all your time at the Wildcat on the Opinion Page.*

### **FAQs about clips:**

#### **1. What if I don't have different types of clips?**

If you've only been on the sports beat or the arts beat at the Wildcat, please select your best stories and explain in your cover letter that while you've only worked on (insert beat name here), you will cover any beat offered on the internship/job.

#### **2. Should I include clips of photos or design work?**

Absolutely if you have them. Anything that you have their shows off your multimedia skills should be highlighted.

### **3. Do blogs count as clips?**

If you have a consistent blog, consider using your best sample with your clip package to show your writing style in a blog. Make sure there are no typos.

### **4. Can I use stories that from journalism classes?**

You can for some of the entry-level internship applications, but you must recognize that you will be competing with students who have clips. It is crucial to spend at least one semester at the Wildcat or UATV to get clips and/broadcast reel for internship applications. Remember: Anything published on Arizona Sonora News, in El-Independiente or on Cat's Eye counts as published work.

## **Presentation of Materials:**

- You absolutely must make your resume and cover letter into PDFs before you send them. If you don't, all the wonderful formatting that you have done with your resume and cover letter will be lost when an editor on the other side of the country opens up your Word document with a Word program that is not the same as when you saved it in. Do not – I repeat do not – send anything without first converting it to a PDF. Make sure you have combined all of your clips into one giant PDF file. If you don't know how to do this, go to any library and asked for help from one of the librarians, or go to a copy shop (such as Kinkos or Fed Ex) and ask for help.
- Most employers and internship recruiters will ask for your clips in a PDF format sent via email. They will also ask for a link to your website/online portfolio where all of your best work – including photographs and video – should be uploaded. You should also have an updated LinkedIn profile. Many newspapers, especially college papers, produce PDF versions of each issue. PDFs are a great way to save your clips. You store them on your computer and they never turn yellow or get torn. And they can be easily e-mailed as attachments.
- Some editors and recruiters like to get an index to go with your clips. This could be a separate sheet in front and it would include the story title, the publication, the date, the page number and brief comments – the story behind the story. The way to find out if this is required is to read the job application or internship application requirements very carefully.
- At Internship or Career fairs, some recruiters will want to see copies of your clips. Print or copy the entire page that includes your printed story on 8.5×11 paper. (Newspaper pages tend to photocopy on the dark side, so you may need to adjust the controls on your copier to make sure your copies are bright enough.) Behind the printed copy, attach an archival printout of the story from the online version of the story. Do not submit double-sided clips. Do not staple your clips together because the recruiter often makes copies for distribution. Do not correct errors that were published. If the error was yours, it's probably best to select another clip. If you are an extremely strong writer, consider putting your clips before your resume and cover letter in your portfolio.
- If your story was only printed online check with the editor who is going to be looking at your application. Some will want e-mail attachments containing PDFs or screenshots of online stories, while others will accept the link to the webpage where the story appeared, and others will ask you to upload through something like [Submittable](#) or a human resources portal. Never sent JPEG files.

## **Tips from actual editors and recruiters:**

**Make resume clean and easy to read.** Include links to your best work. A crisply written bio can't hurt. Unless you're a stellar designer (or you're applying for a design job), no need to develop anything crazily distinctive; an [about.me page](#) or [a nice, simple WordPress.com site](#) is perfectly fine.

**Watch your online presence.** Remember that every recruiter – whether it be for an internship or job – is going to do a Google search of you. So make sure your online presentation (including social media and blogs) is up-to-date and professional. Make sure you have a good LinkedIn profile.

**Tell me a story.** Your cover letter should tell me two things, and both should be fascinating. First, as concisely as you can, tell me the story of how your experiences have shaped you for this position. Then, with similar economy, tell me the story of what you'll do with this position if you land it. And this should go without saying, but please -- please -- proofread.

## **The all-important follow up**

- ❖ If you haven't heard from an employer or internship supervisor a month after you've applied, you can send an email to check up on the status of your application, or asking where the publication is in the process of choosing interns/new hires. If we close the position and you still haven't heard anything, you may again feel free to email.
- ❖ After an interview, send a gracious thank you is always appreciated, especially if you note some ideas that struck you afterward. Show some class and use old-fashioned thank you notes (you can get them and stamps in your college bookstore or post office) and snail-mail the thank you.