

TOOLKIT FOR M.S. INFORMATION SYSTEMS STUDENTS

Use this toolkit as a specialized, convenient resource with updated business and career information relevant to your graduate business degree, education, skills and ongoing career management.

Start here: [Quinlan Graduate Business Individual Career Progression Plan](#)

Get a quick overview of the career picture and customize it by setting timely SMART goals for yourself!

SCROLL DOWN for high-impact details in this multi-page toolkit including:

- ✓ Important career resources (online and accessible)
- ✓ Key components of a cover letter and sample correspondence (great for emails also!)
- ✓ Key components of a professional resume and sample resumes to get you moving
- ✓ Relevant job titles and key professional organizations
- ✓ Interview preparation tips and questions for virtual and in-person interviews and calls

Your Top Key Quinlan Career Resources

[Handshake](#) – Start with Loyola University Chicago’s interactive career management tool that connects students and alumni to employers. Read descriptions of job and internship opportunities and apply your marketable knowledge, skills, and experience. You may also sign up for events and schedule your individual, customized career coaching appointments with an experienced career management professional by using the self-schedule “Career Appointment” feature in Handshake.

[MBA-Exchange.com Premium Services](#)- Specifically offered to Quinlan MBA and MS students who are currently enrolled in MBA-and/or MS-seeking programs and accessible through six months post-degree completion. Access local, national and international MBA- level jobs and internships and career information: Start in your first quarter and use your LUC.edu e-mail address to register for your account here: <https://www.mba-exchange.com/candidates/mba-candidates.php>.

[GoInGlobal](#) – Offers a variety of resources for those interested in gaining experience abroad. Research career guides that are city, state, and country specific; or take a look at lists of companies that have submitted H1B applications within the past 12 months in your area. You can also perform a targeted global internship or job search using several criteria.

[Loyola Linked](#)- Access professional and alumni mentors through Quinlan’s mentoring platform.

[Firsthand](#) - Relevant and timely career resources to research industries, companies, professions, opportunities providing in-depth intelligence on industry, company, or professional roles. Login with your LUC user ID and password to access online content through Loyola University Libraries.

[Crain’s Chicago Business](#) – Login with your LUC user ID and password to access online content through Loyola University Libraries.

[Wall Street Journal](#) – The Wall Street Journal is the world’s leading business publication with coverage of the last 90 days and search abilities back 4 years. Login with your LUC user ID and password to access online content through Loyola University Libraries.

[O*NET Online](#) – Online tool for career exploration and job analysis.

Key Components of a Cover Letter

A cover letter is your customized written introduction of yourself relevant to your job search interests (it may also be a digital email message) and it may be read before, and/or after, you and/or your resume has received a hiring professional's attention. The cover letter is concise and should complement the resume by specifically highlighting your qualifications and experience relevant to why you are a match for the specific position and company/opportunity.

Be particularly responsive to the job or internship description requirements.

Your cover letter may also be read and re-read before, during and after your interview(s) by a number of individuals involved in the selection and hiring process.

Also, you may type the key components of a cover letter, into an email message body and attach a resume PDF, as mentioned in the cover letter/email message.

Visit [here](#) for the **Business Career Services cover letter guide**.

From the top:

Your Heading: This usually includes your first and last name (middle initial optional). Your street address, city, state and zip code serves as the mailing address included in all business letters. You may also format it similarly to the heading on your resume.

Full Date: (Month, Date, Year) This is important as cover letters are not time stamped like email messages.

Employer's heading: This includes Employer's/Recruiter's name (if known*)
Employer's Title, Name of Company/Organization, Street Address, City, State, Zip Code

Salutation: Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. (Last name of contact):

or

Dear Hiring Manager/Recruiter (*If the last name of the contact is unknown):

(Do not write: To Whom It May Concern)

Paragraph 1: Address your specific reason for writing to the individual/company as it relates to the employer's hiring or talent needs. Distinguish yourself in the first paragraph to give them some context:
As a Master of Science in Information Systems student at the Quinlan School of Business with 2+ years of networking and systems experience ...

Paragraph 2 and 3: Describe how your skills, knowledge and experience and other attributes qualify you for the position and demonstrate that you are well-suited for the opportunity. Indicate confidence that you will excel in the role and be an asset to the organization/employer.

Paragraph 4: Show gratitude and mention follow-up or next steps in closing and ending the letter

Signature:

Sincerely,

Full first and last name

Signature as appropriate

If resume is attached or enclosed: mention this.

Sample Cover Letter

Mary I. Business
1000 N. State Street
Chicago, IL 60610

February 1, 2020

Ms. Samantha Hanson
Information Systems Manager
XXX Firm, LLP, 122 N. State Street, #3000
Chicago, IL 60603

Dear Ms. Hanson,

It was a pleasure to meet you at the recent Information Systems Symposium hosted at Loyola University Chicago Quinlan School of Business. I appreciated your insightful remarks about emerging information systems, the impact on your business strategy as well as future career opportunities at your firm. I am also writing to express my strong interest in the Information Systems Summer Internship you mentioned. I am confident that my information systems knowledge complemented with strong analytical and leadership skills will enable me to add value to your Information Systems team and clients.

Currently, I am pursuing a Master of Science degree in Information Systems which I expect to complete in May of 2020. I offer experience in database and data warehouse requirement collection and modeling, including ER Diagrams, Relational Model, Star Schemas, database and data warehouse implementation and querying (SQL), data preparation and ETL (extraction/transformation/load), data analysis, data visualization/OLAP/BI, information systems strategies, the system development life cycle and project management. I have gained experience with cutting-edge methodologies, tools, and technologies such as Oracle, Teradata, Python, R and have effectively applied these tools to successfully complete course projects and business simulations.

Additionally, I have a track record for taking initiative and demonstrating strong leadership skills as demonstrated by my successful partnership with my professor and mentor while organizing an inaugural and successful Chicago Information Systems Symposium which attracted over forty faculty, researchers and alumni industry leaders in the Chicago area. I thrive in environments that apply cutting-edge practices along with fellow information systems professionals.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of my qualifications. I have attached my resume and welcome the opportunity to talk with you further or schedule an in-person interview at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Mary I. Business
[Signature]

312-888-2322
mbusiness@luc.edu

Enclosed: Resume

Key Components of a Professional Resume

Heading: This usually includes first and last name (middle initial optional). Your mailing address is not usually needed; city and state is often sufficient. Include one phone number and one email address, as this is required. LinkedIn URL is optional though frequently listed.

Professional Profile or Professional Summary: This can vary in length (2-4 lines) and format, however, aim to make it concise and demonstrative of the overall value you offer as a professional. You may include your unique strengths, skills, year of industry experience in a way that distinguishes you and matches you to the position/role you are seeking.

Core Competencies or Skills: These can be listed in bullet-pointed columns (usually 6-9).

Education: This is listed in reverse chronological order, so the master's degree/university is listed before your bachelor's degree and institution. Always include location, city, state, (country if it is international).

Example:

Loyola University Chicago, Quinlan School of Business	Chicago, IL
Master of Science in Information Systems	Expected Graduation Month, Year

- ✓ Include cumulative GPA if it is 3.5/4.0 or above
- ✓ List names of completed courses and/or courses in progress, though distinguish which they are

Professional Experience: Always include most relevant work and professional experience.

Example:

Name of the Organization	City, State, Country (if international)
Job Title	Start Month, Year – End Month, Year

- Include 3-6 bullet points that convey your challenges, achievements, and results
- Quantify and/or qualify results to offer specific, measurable and memorable accomplishments that convey the value to the organization

Follow this formula when writing bullet points: Action Verb + Task = Impact

- Reflect Challenge, Achievement, Result (CAR)
- Quantify and Qualify Results when appropriate

Professional Affiliations/Associations: It is encouraged to include.

Example:

American Institute of CPAs, Member AICPA	2016-Present
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Leadership: It is encouraged to include.

Community Service/Volunteerism: It is encouraged to include some experience.

Awards and Recognition: It is encouraged to include some examples.

Resume Design

There is quite a bit of variability in resume design and format today, however, there are some basic guidelines shared by many recruiting and career professionals.

Recommended fonts: Arial, Georgia, Garamond, Helvetica, Calibri (10-12-point font size. Your name may be slightly larger than the rest of the content on the resume).

Formatting and Readability: Send as a PDF unless requested in another format. Name the document "Your Full Name_Resume" or something similar.

One page is frequently considered appropriate for graduate students with 1-5 years of experience depending on your scope of experience and accomplishments. If the resume is more than 1 ½ pages, it may be better to condense it to one page, or assure that it is a compelling, full, two pages of content.

Ensure all spacing is correct and leverage white space. Use only text as opposed to symbols or text boxes. Avoid using first person pronouns like "I", and "we".

Customization: Create a basic resume which reflects all your experience and then customize it each time you apply to a new role by being responsive to the job description and requirements. Be sure to match key competencies, qualification, skills, or company values listed in the job description to which you are applying.

After you create an updated draft of your resume, login to [Handshake](#) to schedule a personalized resume review appointment. During your appointment you will receive strategic resume customization recommendations that will be based on your unique career goals from your Graduate Career Coach.

Sample Resume

MARY I. BUSINESS

Chicago, IL | mbusiness@luc.edu | 312-888-2322 | LinkedIn/URL

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE: Results-driven business professional and M.S. Information Systems Management student with 3+ years of experience in multinational sales and marketing driven businesses. Strong creative and analytic skills accompanied by outstanding customer relationship management and service resulting in winning new business and growing client relationships.

CORE COMPETENCIES:

Database Modeling and Management • Data Presentation • Data Analysis and Mining
Data Warehousing and Visualization • Information Systems Strategies • Project Management

EDUCATION:

Loyola University of Chicago, Quinlan Graduate School of Business
Master of Science in Information Systems

Chicago, IL
Expected May 2020

Cumulative GPA: 3.8/4.0

Highlighted courses completed:

Miami University, Farmer School of Business
Bachelor of Science in Business Economics, Minor in Spanish

Oxford, OH
May 2017

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Multinational Corporation

Chicago, IL

Operations Development Associate

Start Month, Year – End Month, Year

- Supported leadership team and effectively identified operational and technical processes to assure accuracy in effective daily operations of business enterprises and consistently exceeded the quality target goals
- Selected by manager to train 3 new employees in overall department onboarding and operations and was chosen for Company's Future Leaders Development Program based on strong performance and leadership potential
- Researched, reviewed, wrote and edited new policies and procedures as assigned by operations leadership team resulting in achieving goals ahead of schedule and earning favorable reviews from operations director
- Analyzed reports and assured accuracy and compliance with regulatory requirements

ABC International Corporation
Business Analyst

Chicago, IL

Start Month, Year, - End Month, Year

- Applied Microsoft Project and SharePoint to effectively assist team of operational managers with planning and allocating resources for a large-scale software conversion that was successfully implemented 2 days before the deadline
- Analyzed large data sets and reported on trends that impacted quarterly costing reports and monitored division expenditure variance
- Selected by manager to lead a new project management software review and trial that resulted in presentation to managers and recommendations for successful produce purchase
- Assisted manager in generating budget proposals and monitoring projects that ensured accuracy

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:

Association of Information Systems Professional, Member

2016-Present

Professional Organizations

Connect with Loyola and Quinlan Business Leadership HUB resources, programs, events, and networks for continuous learning and professional development

[Loyola Business Leadership Hub](#) – The Loyola Business Leadership Hub draws on expertise of Loyola students, faculty, staff, and global connections to help organizations succeed. The Loyola Business Leadership Hub has broad business knowledge and insights with centers specializing in [social enterprise and responsibility](#), [family business](#), [supply chain](#), [risk management](#), [professional development](#), [student-run business](#) and [innovation](#).

[Ignite Lab](#) – The Ignite Lab enables students, staff, and faculty at Loyola University Chicago to turn their entrepreneurial ideas into reality.

[Loyola's 1871 membership](#) – 1871 connects early-stage startups with educational resources, potential investors, and a community of like-minded individuals and companies. Loyola's 1871 membership is available to current students, faculty, and staff from any area of the university, who can demonstrate that they are engaged in entrepreneurial pursuits that would be advanced by accessing 1871.

Connect with national associations and resources; conferences, programs, events, networks, and webinars for continuous learning and professional development

[American Society for Information Science \(ASIS&T\)](#)

[International Association for Computer Information Systems \(IASCIS\)](#)

[International Information Systems Security Certification Consortium \(ISC\)](#)

[Association for Computing Machinery \(ACM\)](#)

[Association for Information Systems \(AIS\)](#)

[Association for Women in Computing](#)

[Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility](#)

[Information Systems Security Association \(ISSA\)](#)

[Society for Information Management \(SIM\)](#)

[ISACA](#)

Connect with Professional Multicultural National Associations and Resources that support Diversity, Equity and Inclusion;

[Careers and Identities Resources](#)

[Ascend Pan-Asian Leaders](#)

[National Black MBA Association](#)

[Prospanica](#)

[MBA Veterans](#)

[Jesuit MBA Network](#)

[Jesuit Career Consortium for Students](#)

Interview Preparation

[How to Ace the 50 Most Common Interview Questions](#)

[Preparing for a Skype Interview](#)

[5-Minute Interview Review](#)

[Behavioral Interviewing](#)

Relevant Job Titles

- Information Systems Manager
- Business Systems Analyst
- Information Data Specialist
- Information Systems Management Development Associate
- Project Manager