Creating Better Biographical Sketches

Thomas Orr Consulting, LLP updated May 30, 2016

A biographical sketch (also called a bio or biosketch) is a short professional introduction. It is used on university, company, and conference websites or in formal documents, such as at the end of conference proceedings papers or journal articles, to introduce one's academic or professional identity to others.

Possible Content

Although biographical sketches vary considerably in style and content, we recommend that you include all or most of the following content (whenever relevant) in the order listed below.

1. Name (with degrees - optional)
2. Academic status and major or job title
3. Department, school, and university or division and company
4. Work responsibilities, research area, and professional interests
5. Publications, patents, awards, and other accomplishments
6. Leadership positions in professional organizations and professional memberships
7. Future plans (if you are a university student and want to tell your career goal)

Special Features

- Biosketches are written with third person pronouns (he, she) so that they read as if the person is being introduced by someone else (e.g., the journal editors, conference committee, university, or company).
- Biosketches must contain objective, factual information about one's career and avoid subjective praise, personal comment, or information about one's family, hobbies, or other information that is not directly connected to one's career.

Useful Template for Creating a Biosketch at the Master's Level for Beginners

Name earned a Degree Name at University Name and currently is a master's student, majoring in major name, in the Department or School Name at University Name, where he (or she) is researching (or investigating) topic name. Name's other interests include list of other professional interests. Name has presented "Title" at Conference Name and published the paper in the conference proceedings. He (or She) published Title in *Name of Journal*, and won the Award Name given by the Sponsor. Name is also a member of the Professional Society, Leadership Title of the Organization Name, and has worked as a Job Title at Organization Name. After graduation, he (or she) plans to future plan.

Hiroshi Okada earned a B.S. in Computer Science at the University of Tokyo and currently is a master's student, majoring in control and dynamical systems, in the Graduate School of Engineering and Applied Sciences at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech), where he is researching nonlinear systems. Mr. Okada's other interests include programming, advanced mathematics, and statistics. Mr. Okada has presented "An overview of control laws for uncertain nonlinear systems" at the IEEE 2015 International Conference on Control Systems and published the paper in the conference proceedings. He has also published "Improving transient responses in adaptive control of nonlinear systems" in the *IEEE Transactions on Control Systems*, and won the 2015 Most Promising Graduate Student Award given by the IEEE Control Systems Society. Mr. Okada is a member of the IEEE Control Systems Student Branch, President of the CalTech Students in Computer Science Club, and has worked as a Research Intern at Google. After graduation, Mr. Okada plans to pursue further studies in his field at the doctoral level before seeking employment in the research and development division of a major international company.

By Thomas Orr and some of his research interns at Thomas Orr Consulting, LLP (see list on the last page)

Examples

The following are examples of biographical sketches that introduce graduate students, university faculty, researchers, and other working professionals. The graduate student examples are based on real bios but have been slightly altered to respect privacy and improved to make them more worthy of imitation; however, the university faculty, researcher, and working professional bios have been posted in their original form, since they are well-written.

Master's Student Examples

Taavetti Chilles obtained a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from California State Polytechnic University in Pomana in 2015 and is currently working on an M.S. in Materials Science and Engineering and a Ph.D. in Bioengineering at the University of California in Riverside, where he seeks to develop surface treatments to control the degradation of biodegradable metallic biomaterials for orthopedic implant applications. His most recent research results have been published in the *Journal of Biomedical Nanotechnology*.

Jabari Sampath earned a BS in Mechanical Engineering from Anna University in Chennai, India, in 2015 and is currently pursuing an MS in Solid Mechanics in the Department of Applied Mechanics at the Indian Institute of Technology in Madras. His main research interests are finite element modeling, smart materials, material characterization, and coupled-field problems.

Denice Anston studied anthropology at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville as an undergraduate student and became very passionate about the development of urban communities from her interdisciplinary work with the Geography and Africana Studies Departments. Presently a graduate research assistant with Dr. Thomas Billings in the Center for Land Use and Environmental Responsibilities, she is a now pursuing a master's degree in Urban Planning with a focus on housing and community development. Her research interests include urban community development, inner-city revitalization, neighborhood change, and urban poverty eradication.

Robert Wang is an assistant lecturer at Queensland University of Technology and a senior technician in the university's Photometric Laboratory, where he supports research in intensity and distribution photometry, reflectance and transmission testing, and the calibration of meters and lamps. Mr. Wang has a bachelor's degree in physics and is completing a master's in physics, with a research focus on daylight simulation in urban environments.

Karen Hasegawa received her Bachelor of Science in Natural Resource Management from Michigan State University and is now working toward a Master of Science degree in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Michigan. An outdoor enthusiast and avid backpacker, she was Vice President of the Backpacking Club at Michigan State and has been involved in conservation work throughout her undergraduate career, serving as a member of the Soil and Water Conservation Society, a member of the Student Environmental Coalition, and a Crew Leader for the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps. Her studies now focus on wildlife research and conservation, environmental education, and scientific outreach programs, with particular research interest in primatology, genetics, and bioacoustics.

Doctoral Student Examples

Yasser Mahmoud Ahmed obtained his B.S. and M.S. from the Department of Mechanical Engineering at Assiut University in Egypt in 2014 and is presently working on a doctorate in Materials Science and Engineering in the field of biomaterials at the Egypt-Japan University of Science & Technology (E-Just) in Egypt. His research has been published in the *Journal of Tribology*, and his current research objective is to develop new low-cost biomaterials for biomedical applications.

Deepak Roy completed his MSc in Organic Chemistry and his MPhil in Nano-science and Nano-technology from the University of Mumbai, and he is currently pursuing a PhD in Nano-science and Nano-technology under the guidance of Dr. T. R. Dahwan. He has recently published a paper in the *Journal of Material Sciences and Surface Engineering*, presented two papers at national conferences, and presented two papers at international conferences.

Kumar Kohli is working on his PhD in bioscience at the University of Nottingham in the UK, in collaboration with the Crops For the Future project (CFF) in Malaysia. He completed his bachelor of technology degree in biotechnology from Anna University in India and his master's in ecology and conservation from Lancaster University in the UK. His doctoral research addresses carbon cycling and soil microbial diversity in different cropping systems for different forest and agricultural sites in Malaysia. His research is funded by CFF and the Government of Malaysia.

University Faculty Examples

Jerold Kayden is the Frank Backus Williams Professor of Urban Planning and Design at the Harvard University Graduate School of Design. He previously served as Co-Chair of the Department of Urban Planning and Design and as Director of the Master in Urban Planning Degree Program. His research and teaching focus on the relationship between law and the built environment and public-private urban development. His books include *Privately Owned Public Space: The New York City Experience*; *Landmark Justice: The Influence of William J. Brennan on America's Communities*; and *Zoning and the American Dream: Promises Still To Keep*. He has also authored numerous articles on such subjects as property rights, smart growth, design codes, historic preservation, and market-based regulatory instruments.

Reid Ewing, **Ph.D.**, is a Professor of City and Metropolitan Planning at the University of Utah, associate editor of the *Journal of the American Planning Association*, and columnist for *Planning* magazine, writing the bi-monthly column Research You Can Use. Earlier in his career, he was director of the Voorhees Transportation Center at Rutgers University, research professor at the National Center for Smart Growth, state representative from northwest Tucson, and analyst at the Congressional Budget Office. He holds master's degrees in Engineering and City Planning from Harvard University, and a Ph.D. in Urban Planning and Transportation Systems from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Ewing's work is aimed at planning practitioners. His eight books include *Pedestrian and Transit Oriented Design*, just co-published by the Urban Land Institute and American Planning Association; *Growing Cooler – Evidence on Urban Development and Climate Change*, published by the Urban Land Institute; and *Best Development Practices*, listed by the American Planning Association (APA) as one of the 100 "essential" books in planning over the past 100 years. His 90 peer reviewed articles include "Travel and the Built Environment:

A Meta-Analysis," given the 2010 Best Article of the Year award by APA; "Relationship Between Urban Sprawl and Physical Activity, Obesity, and Morbidity," the most widely cited academic paper in the Social Sciences as of late 2005, according to Essential Science Indicators; and "Is Los Angeles-Style Sprawl Desirable?" listed by APA as a Classic Article in urban planning. A recent citation analysis by Virginia Tech found that Ewing's work is the tenth most highly cited among more than 850 planning academics in the U.S.

Examples of Researchers and Other Working Professionals

Timothy A. Wise is Director of the Research and Policy Program at the Global Development and Environment Institute at Tufts University, and leads its Globalization and Sustainable Development Program. He is also a Senior Research Fellow at the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. With a background in international development, he specializes in agricultural policy and rural development. He recently completed a fellowship with the Open Society Institute and is working on a book on global responses to the food crisis. He is involved in ongoing research in the areas of sustainable rural development, agricultural subsidies, Mexico under the NAFTA, the World Trade Organization, and global trade. He is the co-author of the book (in English and Spanish), , and *Confronting Globalization: Economic Integration and Popular Resistance in Mexico* and *The Promise and the Perils of Agricultural Trade Liberalization: Lessons from Latin Americ*a. He is the former Executive Director of Grassroots International, a Boston-based international aid organization. He holds a Master's in Public Policy from Tufts' Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning Department.

Dr. Adrian Pollock, Director of the Training Department at PAC, has been a leader in AE technology for more than 30 years. From Ph.D. work in the acoustics group at Imperial College, London, he moved to a career with the leading USA AE instrument company. He has worked in many sides of the AE industry including contract R&D, applications development and field test as well as instrument specification, sales and customer support.In recent years, Dr. Pollock's focus has been AE training, personnel qualification and certification at PAC, where he also serves as Corporate Level III for MISTRAS Group Inc. A national director of the American Society for Nondestructive Testing (ASNT) from 1990 to 1994, Dr. Pollock received the society's Tutorial Citation Award in 1998. He is also a Gold Medal Award Winner of the Acoustic Emission Working Group.

Hartmut Neven, **PhD**, is Director of Engineering at the Quantum AI Lab at Google. Having studied under Valentino Braitenberg and Christoph van der Malsburg, Hartmut started companies for facial recognition and visual search, which were acquired by Google, where he has since managed visual search projects, Google Goggles and Google Glass. In 2006, Neven began to explore quantum computing for combinatorial problems in machine learning, and in collaboration with D-Wave Systems developed the first image recognition and binary classifier based on quantum computing.

Dr. Paul E. Jacobs is executive chairman of Qualcomm Incorporated, where he is responsible for helping guide the development of new technologies and Qualcomm's long-term opportunities. A leader in the field of mobile communications for more than 25 years and a key architect of Qualcomm's strategic vision, Dr. Jacobs spearheaded Qualcomm's efforts to develop and commercialize mobile technology breakthroughs that have significantly contributed to the growth of both the Company and the industry. Important developments which began under Dr. Jacobs include: the first smartphone based on Palm

OS®; inclusion of GPS capabilities in mobile phones; and the BREW® application download system. As an innovative leader of a broad range of technical teams within Qualcomm, Dr. Jacobs has been granted more than 50 patents for his inventions in the areas of wireless technology and devices. Dr. Jacobs is chairman of the US-Korea Business Council and of the Advisory Board of the University of California, Berkeley, College of Engineering; vice chairman and co-owner of the NBA Sacramento Kings; Global eHealth Foundation Ambassador; a member of the International Business Council of the World Economic Forum; a member of the US-India CEO Forum; and serves on the Board of Directors for FIRST®. Dr. Jacobs received his bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees in electrical engineering from the University of California, Berkeley.

Acknowledgements: I would like to thank the following international research interns who contributed to the creation of this training publication: Arisa Nakao, Yuki Higashikawa, Keisuke Kubo, Daiki Shigematsu, Jean Claude Palma Balingit, Teppei Izumi, and Takuya Manabe.