

A Letter From Dr. Lane Bove

Assuming that students at Loyola Marymount University enjoy long, fruitful lives, their four years on this campus amount to only about five percent of their chronological lives.

Five percent.

For those of us who pour so much of our energy into guiding, teaching, mentoring, and advising students, that five percent figure can be rather astounding in just how little time, overall, the university has to encourage students to be men and women for and with others. It also underscores the importance of the university's efforts to help students find fulfilling career paths.

As you will see in the pages that follow, the Division of Student Affairs is committed to providing students and graduates the resources, knowledge, and motivation to pursue their dreams. While the most prominent example is Career Development Services, it is important to recognize that all departments in the division participate in career development in some form or another.

I, like many of you, view my work here not as a job but as a calling. I sincerely believe that one of the best rewards we can bestow upon the students who give us "five percent" of their lives is to aid them in finding their own calling.



Lane Bove
Vice President of Student Affairs

A Career Move

Encouraging students to make the most of educational opportunities inside and outside the classroom can help them discover a career that matters to them.

Loyola Marymount University's Mission Statement states that "the university is always to measure and judge its success with students by their lives as alumni—the quality of their personal lives, of their careers, of their influence and leadership, and of their accomplishments."

To that end, the Division of Student Affairs strives to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and work experience outside of the classroom to complement the education they receive from their academic curricula.

At the forefront of the division's effort in this regard is Career Development Services (CDS), which supports current students and alumni in discovering their professional skills, interests, and values. "Through our programs and services," reports Elizabeth Atilano, director of CDS, "we provide students with opportunities to explore employment and lifelong learning options that allow them to find and follow their passions and to intentionally dedicate their professional selves to making a difference in the lives of others."

Each semester, CDS places nearly 2,500 LMU undergraduate students into work-study jobs, according to Carol Lingrosso, assistant director of CDS. "The work study program provides students with an opportunity to develop some basic employment skills that will prepare them to be more competitive candidates as



they apply for professional positions," Lingrosso says. "We offer positions to suit almost every major and interest."

While internships and work-study jobs are probably the best-known facet of its offerings, CDS provides much more. Examples include:

- Career counselors who promote self-exploration (through the use of career interest and personality assessment tools) and critical decision-making skills (by encouraging students to develop an individual four-year development plan)
- The Etiquette Dinner, which provides students with the opportunity to gain self-confidence in social, business, and employment situations
- "Reality Bites!," an alumni

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'What Am I Going to Do for the Rest of My Life?'

Tips on a better transition from college life to real life.

According to Student Psychological Services director, Dr. Jonathon Sack, change for anyone can be stressful, even if the change appears to be positive in nature. For this reason, stress and anxiety are not all that uncommon among seniors as they prepare to leave the familiarity of the university's structure, support, security, and resources.

It is also not unusual for seniors to be ambivalent about graduating and leaving college. On the one hand, they are excited by the prospect of "real life" and venturing forth to make their way in the world; on the other hand, they are struggling with the notion of leaving everything that is familiar, breaking the bonds of friendship and community, and facing a new and uncharted future.

Uncertainty and the unknown are central issues for seniors as they face the challenges of the "real world." Some seniors feel unprepared for life after college, unprepared for the job market, and uncertain about their career goals. They may be concerned about where to live, how to pay for living expenses, and possibly having to consider moving back home with their parents. Transitions may also include changes in friendships and romantic relationships, and the possibility of losing some of these relationships.

All of the above issues and concerns are taking place while the seniors still need to focus on their current academic demands and commit-

ments. This may leave some students feeling overwhelmed and anxious.

Anxiety symptoms

Typical symptoms of anxiety include restlessness, feeling "keyed up" and "on edge," irritability, difficulty concentrating or one's mind going blank, being easily fatigued, muscle tension, and sleep disturbance (difficulty falling or staying asleep, or restless, unsatisfying sleep).

Examples of more overt signs of stress and anxiety could be:

- A decline in academic performance, failure to complete assignments, and missing classes.
- Short-temperedness and over-reacting is often associated with stress, and "flying off the handle" is not uncommon in response to feeling stressed and overwhelmed.
- Being over-emotional could also be reactions to stress and anxiety.
- Inattention and/or hyperactivity could also be signs of distress and/or anxiety.

• Evidence of substance abuse or an increase in use could be indications of an attempt to "self medicate" the anxiety or stress the student is experiencing.

• Depression is often associated with anxiety and/or chronic stress.

Six tips

As faculty and staff, you may notice students in distress, or they may communicate their stress and anxiety directly to you.

While some seniors may only need your support, reassurance, guidance, and suggestions to help them on their way, others may be in more serious distress and may require more than you may feel you can offer them.

In the latter case, here are six general recommendations to consider:

1. Listen carefully to what is being said or not said.
2. Be non-judgmental and calm.
3. Express your concern and that you care. Be direct in talking about your concerns

and your observations ("I have noticed that you appear stressed ... you seem to be having difficulty concentrating in class and...")

4. Validate the students' feelings by affirming the difficulties and concerns the students are expressing.

5. Do not dismiss the students' concerns as something that will pass or diminish their concerns by suggesting that many students experience stress and anxiety.

6. Offer options for more support, encourage problem solving, prioritizing and taking step-by-step constructive action. Offer to meet with them again to check in with them about their progress and how they are managing.

Some on-campus resources for students include Student Psychological Services (SPS), Career Development Services (CDS), the Learning Resource Center (LRC), Ethnic & Intercultural Services (EIS), and Campus Ministry.

If you feel the students' concerns, stress and/or anxiety are more serious and need more specialized attention, encourage them to seek help as soon as possible by calling Student Psychological Services at 310.338.2868 for a consultation.

Jonathan Sack, PhD, is a psychologist at Student Psychological Services. He can be reached at jsack@lmu.edu or 310.338.2868.



What I Did on My Summer Vacation

For some LMU students, it's not all fun and sun.

Life@LMU asked several LMU students who recently completed internships to reflect on their experiences. Excerpts of their reflections appear below.

* Kirsta Lofton, medical center intern

Throughout my life, I have acquired a profound interest and an extreme appreciation for medicine and all that it entails, not only focusing on the scientific perspective but most importantly on the direct interaction with patients and their lives. A great deal of this is because seven years ago, my step father had surgery to remove tumors attached to his spine and was left paralyzed by the surgery. Three years ago, he was again diagnosed with the tumors, which had spread to the brain. He died one week after the second diagnosis.

At the medical center, I experienced health care directly from a more clinically interactive standpoint. Through patient contact, I have been able to experience what the world of medicine really has to offer and, at the same time, have also been able to see and better understand what it is that I can offer it. Through this experience, I have been able to make my academic experience "whole."

* Rachelle Nadal, television station intern

Looking back on my internship experience, I would honestly say that I hadn't expected to get so much out of it and learn so much about myself. I can remember applying and being nervous and anxious about what my responsibilities would be and what exactly this internship entailed.

I feel that I was challenged as an individual and that, many times, I was uncomfortable because I was being stretched outside of my comfort zones, but I quickly got over that. One thing I learned is that you have to love your job in order to do it 100 percent and to fulfill your potential. I have learned that an internship can give you so much insight into what you want to do or whether a career path is right for you.

* Andrew Thompson, publishing company intern

One of the most beneficial parts of the internship was seeing firsthand the dynamics of a company and the work that goes into keeping a positive culture in the workplace. A lot of the theories about company culture and horizontal integration that I had learned about in my management classes were unfolding right in front of me.

"THROUGH THIS EXPERIENCE, I HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MAKE MY ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE 'WHOLE.' "

- Kirsta Lofton, medical center intern

My internship was an unbelievable learning experience, and I am very grateful for the opportunity I was given. No amount of summer school classes could have taught me as much as I learned about small business environment and culture.

* Grace Lauron, television show intern

Although I feel fortunate enough to have gained a great deal of knowledge from studying here at LMU, I don't think there's any amount of studying that I've done in my four years here that would have prepared me for the real world and job market as much as the past few months at my internship.

I learned that to be an intern is basically to be a volunteer for a cause. If you don't believe in the cause and don't believe it's worth it, then you're never going to push yourself to reach your full potential. I was offered another internship position from the same company, and I'm taking advantage of that. I've managed to get my foot in the door, and there is no way I'm leaving now. Interning has been such a worthwhile experience for me, and I would definitely recommend it to other LMU students.



* Eric Rivera, music industry intern

As the old saying goes, you never know until you try. Through my internship, I learned that many positions combine several different aspects that I find enjoyable; it need not be one or the other. In addition, I gained further insight to the type of work environment or "corporate culture" that I would enjoy being a part of.

All of this experience, along with the textbook skills I was able to sharpen at a real work environment, provided me with an educational experience that I could not have attained in a classroom. There seems to be one word for this semester's internship experience: invaluable.

* Katie Gilbertson, investment company intern

My experience taught me a lot about myself, and what my own strengths, weaknesses, interests, and career values are. I realized that I am a fast learner and am able to grasp complex concepts rather easily, but that I need to be more aggressive and confident. I realized that I like working in an office that fosters a friendly, outgoing, productive, and motivated environment.

I have learned more from this internship than I could ever learn in a classroom. It was an excellent opportunity that allowed me to apply what I learned at LMU to the real world.

Dear Sir or Madam...

10 tips on writing a letter of reference for students.

Staff and faculty at Loyola Marymount University are often asked to serve as personal, academic, and professional references for students.

While each letter is sure to be different depending on variables such as the nature of the student's relationship with you and the quality of his or her work, there are some general guidelines to follow that can be helpful.

The National Association of Colleges and Employers, the leading source of information about the college job market, provided Life@LMU with 10 important points for faculty and staff to consider as well as two sample letters of reference (see below and page 5).

1 Discuss the type of reference that you will provide with the person who asks you to be a reference. If you cannot provide a good reference, be honest with the individual. Don't promise a "glowing reference" and then provide merely a "glimmer."

2 Relate references to the specific position for which the person applied and to the work that the applicant will perform.

3 Respond to the specific inquiry about the student or job applicant. Direct the response to the particular person who requested the information.

4 Informal lunch discussions or "off the record" telephone conversations with prospective employers regarding a person's performance should be avoided. There is no such thing as "off the record"

when it comes to references.

5 Information given should be factual, based upon personal knowledge/observation of the person through direct contact with the person or obtained from the person's personnel record or student record.

6 Avoid giving personal opinions or feelings. If you make subjective statements or give opinions because they are requested, clearly identify them as opinions and not as fact. If you give an opinion explain the incident or circumstances on which you base the opinion.

7 Don't guess or speculate if someone asks you questions regarding personal characteristics about which you have no knowledge; state that you have no knowledge.

8 State in a reference letter, "This information is confidential, should be treated as such, and is provided at the request of (name of student or applicant), who has asked me to serve as a reference." Statements such as these give justification for the communication and leave no doubt that the information was not given to hurt a person's reputation.

9 Do not include information that might indicate an individual's race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, citizenship status, sex (unless by the individual's name it is obvious), or marital status. Do not base an opinion of performance on stereotypes about an individuals, for instance "for a woman, she excels in math."

10 Document all information you release.

Tips provided from NACE website (www.nacweb.org), with permission of the National Association of Colleges and Employers, copyright holder

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A SAMPLE LETTER FOR STAFF

Dear *[Name of Employer]*:

This reference letter is provided at the written request of *[name of student]*, who has asked me to serve as a reference on *[his/her]* behalf. It is my understanding that *[name of student]* is being considered by your organization for the position of *[job title]*. Please be advised that the information contained in this letter is confidential and should be treated as such. The information should not be disclosed to *[name of student, if student has waived access]* or anyone in your organization who would not be involved in the hiring decision regarding this individual. Additionally, the information should not be disclosed to anyone outside of your organization without the consent of the student.

I have known *[name of student]* for the past *[number of months, semesters, years]* as *[he/she]* has worked for me in the following capacity *[list brief experience of work history]*. As *[his/her]* supervisor, I have had an opportunity to observe the student's participation and interaction in a work setting outside the classroom and to evaluate the student's performance. I would rate the student's overall performance as *[insert evaluation here]*. This is evidenced by *[insert additional information]*.

[One or two specific examples of the student's job performance may be appropriate.] As part of *[his/her]* work, the student was required to *[insert specific work details if appropriate]*. Based upon this, I rate the student's skills as *[insert evaluation]*.

I believe the student would perform *[insert evaluation here]* with your organization. If you would like to discuss this further, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,
[Signature]

More Than Just a Paycheck

Interesting student jobs available via Career Development Services.

- **Aquarium of the Pacific, Presenter** gives entertaining, accurate, and informative presentations to Aquarium of the Pacific guests at assigned habitats, including behind-glass exhibits touch tanks and Shark Lagoon



- **LMU Children's Center, Teaching Assistant** supervises children indoors and outdoors to ensure their safety and well being; meets the maintenance needs of the individual children; assists in the implementation

of curriculum and activities in individual classrooms; communicates effectively and works cooperatively with other staff members, parents, and children

- **School of Film and Television, Lighting/Grip Technician** prepares light equipment orders for students doing film/TV shoots; checks in equipment when returning; repairs broken lights and stands; oversees cleanliness of soundstage and wood shop

- **Student Housing, Program Assistant** assists the Residence Life staff with establishing, maintaining, and supporting a positive, healthy living-learning environment that is consis-

tent with the goals of Student Housing and LMU

- **Independent Colleges of Southern California, Program Associate** assists with overall planning and implementation of Community Service Intern Corps

- **Theatre Arts, Publicity Assistant** prepares publicity fliers, posters, articles, etc., for display; organizes publicity materials; interacts with off-campus media; assists directors in the creative process; oversees audience development, including surveys and mailing lists

- **Business Affairs, Administrative Assistant IV** works on budget projections, review and analysis of specific operational areas, reconciliation of reports, database management of budget fields, department cash management research

- **Athletics, Student Athletics Trainer** assists in treatment and rehabilitation of student-athletics; helps keep up-to-date records of all athletic injuries and rehabilitation (ability to travel a must)

- **Lula Washington Contemporary Dance Foundation, Public Relations** writes press releases; maintains calendar of activities and events; promotes upcoming concerts such as Gospel Christmas, Annual Recital, Ford Theater concerts, etc.

- **First Year Programs, Program Assistant** plans, coordinates, and reviews First Year Programs with the director and dean of students; monitors First Year student events and researches FYP information; coordinates FYP schedule and activity planner

Dear Sir or Madam... continued from page 4

A SAMPLE LETTER FOR FACULTY

Dear [Name of Employer]:

This reference letter is provided at the written request of [name of student], who has asked me to serve as a reference on [his/her] behalf. It is my understanding that [name of student] is being considered by your organization for the position of [job title]. Please be advised that the information contained in this letter is confidential and should be treated as such. The information should not be disclosed to [name of student, if student has waived access] or anyone in your organization who would not be involved in the hiring decision regarding this individual. Additionally, the information should not be disclosed to anyone outside of your organization without the consent of the student.

I have known [name of student] for the past [number of months, semesters, years] as [he/she] has taken the following courses which I teach: [list courses, give brief description of content of course]. As [his/her] professor, I have had an opportunity to observe the student's participation and interaction in class and to evaluate the student's knowledge of the subject matter. I would rate the student's overall performance in these subjects as [insert evaluation here]. This is evidenced by [his/her] grades—[state the grades].

[One or two specific examples of the student's performance may be appropriate.] As part of [his/her] grade in [name of course], the student was required to prepare a paper. The paper was designed to measure the student's ability to research, to analyze the results of the, research, and to write. [Discuss how the paper submitted by the student indicated to you the student's skills in these areas.] Based upon this, I rate the student's skills as [insert evaluation].

I believe the student would perform [insert evaluation here] with your organization. If you would like to discuss this further, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,
[Signature]

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panel that offers current students a chance to meet and network with recent alumni.

CDS also offers programming for faculty and staff, Atilano says. "We value the opportunity to collaborate with faculty and staff with in-class presentations, mock interviews, and job search skills workshops that support the theoretical learning taking place in the classroom."

CDS recently introduced "Don't Cancel That Class!," a new service aimed at providing relevant career-related content lectures during class times when faculty are off-campus at conferences and symposia or are otherwise unavailable.

All of CDS' programs and services are developed to help students enhance their lives now and in the future, according to Atilano.

"CDS supports Loyola Marymount University's and the Division of Student Affairs' missions to advance student learning by provid-

ing the tools for, and promoting the development of, holistic lifetime goals," says Atilano.

For more information about any of the programs at Career Development Services, call 310.338.2871 or visit the CDS website in the Campus Life section of the LMU home page.



CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

For more information about any of the career programs, services or opportunities offered by the university, contact Career Development Services at (310) 338-2871 or visit the CDS website in the Campus Life section of the LMU home page.

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Student Affairs



Contact the Division of Student Affairs

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Office hours:
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8 am - 5 pm
wed. (extended hours)
8 am - 7 pm