



APPING GUIDE

NON-CORE DOMAIN

A go-to guide to understand the
basics of apping



Resources

Here are some resources to help you out with the different aspects of apping. Some of them are accessible only by using your LDAP enabled G-Suite account. Click on the text or folder icon to be redirected to the respective pages.



Internship Resume Repository



Resume Making and Apping
Session '22



Resume Making Session '22
(for 3rd year students)



Internship Preparation Resources



Core Apping Guide

Preface

Dear Students,

We at UGAC aim to help undergraduate students find and pursue career and higher education opportunities after their time at the Institute that is best suited to their abilities and liking. We wish to help you at every step of your journey at IIT Bombay and beyond! We recognize that many students choose to pursue internships and projects under the guidance of a professor or in a corporate setting, and applying to them is a process that can be pretty confusing to navigate. Thus, we intend to ease this crucial process with this booklet and help you prepare for it. Here, we provide you with general information about applying to Universities and Companies right from deciding to pursue apping to writing emails and SOPs and what is required for it. We hope this booklet provides you with answers to your questions. Feel free to contact us for any other assistance you may need.

All the best for your future endeavours!

Regards,
Devina Agarwal
Institute Secretary, Academic Affairs (UG)
Head, Career Cell
2022-23

Contributors

Career Cell Team 2020-21

Kirti Agrawal

Institute Secretary Academic Affairs (UG)
Head, Career Cell

Academic Coordinators

Aarushi Chaudhary
Divyashree Tambade
Dwij Kabra
Vishwarajsinh Gohil

Career Cell Team 2021-22

Aarushi Chaudhary

Institute Secretary Academic Affairs (UG)
Head, Career Cell

Academic Coordinators

Anagh Purkar
Devina Agarwal
Mohit Kedia
Saksham Zanjari

Contributors

Career Cell Team 2022-23

Devina Agarwal

Institute Secretary Academic Affairs (UG)

Head, Career Cell

Academic Coordinators

Arnav Pandit

Himank Gupta

Manali Manjarekar

Rishab Rao

Acknowledgements

To all the generous seniors who contributed, completing this booklet would not have been possible without the participation and help of all of you. Your contributions are sincerely appreciated and acknowledged. Thank you so much for your valuable inputs and insights into the "Apping Guide" and for sharing beneficial resources.

To the people who reviewed this booklet, we are grateful to you for taking the time. Your suggestions and advice helped us refine our ideas and approach throughout the process.

To UG Academic Council Members, we'd like to express our gratitude for your constant guidance and support. We must extend a special thanks to previous council members, Kirti Agarwal [ISAA(UG) and Head, Career Cell 2020-21] and Divyashree Tambade, Dwij Kabra, and Vishwarajsinh Gohil [Academic Coordinators 2020-21] and Aarushi Chaudhary [ISAA(UG) and Head, Career Cell 2021-22] and Anagh Purkar, Mohit Kedia, Saksham Zanjari [Academic Coordinators 2021-22] for setting the entire process in motion.

To you, all the readers of this booklet, for their constant support and motivation. Any suggestions for further improvement of this booklet are welcome.

We apologize if we have missed anyone.

Non-Core Engineering

Overview

If it's that time of the year again when everyone is scrambling for interns, and you, for one, are not sure what you want to pursue. Don't worry; we have got you covered. In the second edition of the Apping Guide, we bring you a detailed procedure for applying for internships in the non-core domain. The booklet will cover what non-core engineering is and answer your queries about university and corporate internships in the said field. It'll help you get started with the process of apping which includes databasing, resume making, mailing, reminders, and whatnot. Towards the end, the booklet entails the tips and suggestions from senior students and alumni from IIT Bombay. Let's get started with this exciting journey ahead!

What is Apping?

Apping is a term that originated as slang or lingo and is used to describe the tedious, confusing and demanding process of applying to institutions. Apping is an extremely widespread but personal process wherein one discovers new ways to unravel the knots of confusion regarding what career to pursue or gets experience in different domains by applying to universities or companies for opportunities such as internships.

What is Non-Core Engineering?

Buzzwords like finance, consult, marketing and data analytics have taken the institute by storm.

Have you ever wondered how stock markets work or how companies decide on policies? Have you ever wondered how corporate structures make the most crucial decisions, such as expansions, M&As, and operations or how they compile all the data that everyday operations generate?

All of this falls under the purview of Non-engineering roles or more colloquially known as "Non-Core".

Univ vs. Corporate

Let's begin by highlighting the intricacies of a University and a Corporate intern.

University Intern

A university intern offers you research experience on a topic of interest under a preferred professor. This could be a fascinating opportunity if you are genuinely passionate about fields beyond your core domain of study and have a knack for non-core academia. A research internship at a reputed university gives you an excellent opportunity to delve into the intricacies of a topic. The experience gained doesn't just expand your mental faculties but gives you a better state of mind for deciding your plans in the field. It can be a crucial factor in determining your motivation for courses like an MBA. Finally, you also get to build an academic network across the world and develop proficiency in your area of interest.

Corporate Intern

A corporate intern, on the other hand, gives you hands-on experience.

The theory you have learned allows practice and, more importantly, enables you to apply your strategies and methods in the real world. It could be an extremely rewarding experience as you might get to see some of your plans or tactics get implemented and get taken up for good. It offers you a steep learning curve on most occasions and provides invaluable experience that recruiters for companies and universities will look out for. In conclusion, it gives you practice at working in a corporate setting which is beyond the work you do; it also encapsulates your soft skills as, along the way, you will have to collaborate with others and work on your team-working skills and corporate etiquette.

Univ Intern

Why should you consider Apping?

People who consider apping in this domain generally want the experience of completing a university internship and might want to explore more in their research area of interest. Pursuing research is also an excellent experience to have for people who consider applying for higher studies. Hence, apping becomes an excellent option for those who wish to do a university internship of their choice!

What is the best time to start?

The best time to start the process of apping is as soon as you figure out what you want to do and when you feel you have a good enough CV.

The timeline suggested below is just a general suggestion that should give you an edge:

For summer interns: It is advisable to start sooner rather than later. So begin apping by September or October for best results. You can continue all the way till April because many firms/univs do look for interns shortly before the summers, so it's never too late. If you want to do a foreign university internship for the summer, it is highly recommended to start around September-October (around 7 months earlier) because visa and other documents take a lot of time. Apart from this professors usually get many emails and they tend to plan things very early, so it is advised that you plan it months before as well. Also, there are some scholarships for foreign internships and they usually have deadlines around November, and December. So one should plan accordingly to not miss these opportunities. If you're applying in India for non-core univ internships, say in IIMs or ISB, December and January can be a good time.

For winter interns: It is preferable to begin the process by the start of September.

NOTE: The time when you start apping also depends on how your profile looks. As you gain more experience (internships, PoRs), especially in the area you are apping for, the process becomes easier and you might take less time relatively. A person who has less experience generally needs more time to get positive responses.

Databasing is a way to compile all the information about the internships you want to pursue. A database helps you organize all of this information in one place and helps you keep track of your own progress in the apping process. For university internships, it is a way to gather information about professors working in research areas or universities that align with your interests. This includes curating a spreadsheet consisting of information about universities, its professors, their research areas, and Email IDs, and one or two of their papers.

The database is generally prepared on Google Sheets. This sheet can be named as **NON-CORE UNIV**

- **STEP 0:** The basic format should entail the headings like: University Name, Professor's Name, Professor's area of research, Professor's website link, Email ID, Mobile number, his one/two research papers, what you like about the papers, and Status or Comments.

- STEP 1.1: Use the Internet to search for various universities. Try to make an exhaustive list on Google Sheets which contains all the universities you want to apply to.
- STEP 1.2: You can also start by first identifying research areas (Eg: Non-core -> IEOR -> Operations Research) and then find relevant universities.
- STEP 2: Go to the university websites and search for research areas that interest you and look for the list of professors that are involved in that particular research area.
- STEP 3.1: You can then visit the prof's website and look for further details. Take note of all the important details on your google sheet.
- STEP 3.2: Generally, profs who have worked with Indian UG interns before are more likely to give a favorable response. You should also look for the intern hiring policy of the profs and go ahead only if they have not mentioned that new interns are not being taken.
- STEP 4: You can also contact seniors who have interned there to know more about their experience.

The screenshot shows the Google Sheets interface. The menu bar includes File, Edit, View, Insert, Format, Data, Tools, Extensions, and Help. The first row of data is highlighted in green and contains the following text: SERIAL NO, UNIVERSITY, PROFESSOR, AREA OF RESEARCH, WEBSITE LINK, EMAIL-ID, CONTACT, RESEARCH PAPERS, COMMENTS, STATUS. The second row is empty.

All About Databasing

Things To Keep In Mind While Making a Database:

- The research topic is the foremost important thing. Research is not passive work, it requires active involvement with you being enthusiastic about learning more about that domain. If you are not interested in the topic, you will have a very tough time sailing through the internship phase.
- The professor is an important factor as well, but you can't get to know a lot about it since you are applying remotely. Just a thing that if the professor seems too strict, it might not be a good idea to do a project under him. But this is something you can't gauge from emails or just one or two interview calls.
- Also, University might also be an important factor but not as much as the former ones. If it's an Ivy league, you might think to compromise on the first two, otherwise, you can prefer the professor and research topic over the university.
- There may be a trade-off between a good univ offering an average project and an average univ offering a great project. The choice is entirely up to you, but the latter might be a lot more rewarding.
- It's preferable to look for University first which is known to have acted in your field and then look for Professor according to research topics of your interest.
- While making a database, you can make a list of universities according to ranking, though rankings should not matter that much. Mostly the USA has top-ranked universities but they have low chances of acceptance.

#IMPORTANT TIP

Remember to start early!!!

Keep your database ready well before you start contacting and also remember to keep extra options in your database!

Mails and SOPs

Who do you generally address mails to?

Mails are generally addressed to the professors under whom you want an internship. Greet them by writing Dear Professor <name> and then write the body of the email.

What should be included in the Cover Letter and SoP?

- It is strongly advised to personalize the mail/cover letter/SOP. Sending blanket generic emails to everyone for the sake of efficiency might lead to inefficiency because you will have to send a lot of such generic emails to actually get a response. Instead, you should focus on personalizing the email for better results. This can be done by highlighting some of the research done/papers published by the prof which interested you.
- It is advisable to include your resume in the form of a drive link or a site link, you can put it on bighome (<https://bighome.iitb.ac.in/>). You should avoid attaching it as a file because some institutional mailing systems often scrub attachments from external email ids.
- You should include relevant details about your profile. So if you are applying to an univ, write about the relevant courses/projects/interns that you have done, regardless of how trivial you think it may seem. One should majorly emphasize on "relevant". It is advised to not write about your PoR or extracurricular achievements while applying to an univ unless you think it will really matter.
- One should explicitly mention the period in which you are looking to intern. In the case of international univs, you should specify the months too, because their 'summer' or 'winter' break may not coincide with yours.
- One should be as enthusiastic about the domain as possible. You should show that your interest is genuine. It is preferred not to mention that your future goal is to land a job in corporate if that's the case (generally, professors like people who are planning to go deep into that topic in the future, say higher studies, etc.). In an SoP, one should definitely talk about some research paper of that professor. You can praise some points about his paper or you can also ask some questions about his work or papers. This helps you to show that you are interested in the professor and creates a good impression.

Mails and SOPs

Sample Format For SoP/Cover Letter

This can vary according to you, but this is the format one can consider following:

Subject: Application for an undergraduate research opportunity

Salutation,

Para 1: Basic intro, one sentence about your reason for applying and the preferred period/duration of the internship.

Para 2: Answer the following questions, preferably in the same order: Why this subject? Why this professor? What is my experience in this subject/what relevant skills do I possess (programming languages/tools)? Attach your CV as a link at this point. Why should they select me? What am I looking to gain from this internship/ how will it help me in the future?

Para 3: One line that goes along "I look forward to knowing your thoughts on this!"

Signature

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE (SoP)

A Statement of Purpose, is a short essay, usually about 2500 words in length. This is your opportunity to express who you are, and is a way for the admissions committee to screen hundreds of applications in order to select a few of the sharpest, most promising candidates. A SOP consists of who you are, your strengths and weaknesses and why you feel that you are the one for the job/internship.

COVER LETTER

A Cover Letter serves the same purpose as if you were there to introduce yourself in person. Consider it is your first sales pitch. And in this case, you are selling yourself. It identifies your interest in the opportunity that you are seeking, whether it is a job or selection as a candidate for enrollment into an educational institution. The best cover letters will be positive, upbeat, and professional. Try to write it such that it should highlight your resume.

Mails and SOPs

How to respond to acceptance/ decline mails?

Responding to Declining Mails:

For declined mails, you can reply with a "Thank you for your response." In some cases, the professor might ask for an interview, so you can reply accordingly.

Responding to Acceptance Mails:

You can thank the professor and work out the logistics, such as stipend. It is recommended to mention this indirectly in terms of travel expenses, accommodation charges, etc., rather than mentioning compensation directly in case the professor does not mention these details their self. In some instances, professors could ask about your funding scenario so you can reply with a "Thank you" and let them know soon.

Always make sure that you have a confirmed internship before you decline any opportunities.

How to send reminders ?

Generally, it's best to send reminders after around 2-3 weeks. If the Professor is someone you really want to work with, it is better to send a reminder consisting of sentences like "Gentle Reminder Sir/Mam. Waiting for your reply" after a week on the same mail thread.

How many mails do you need to write?

Applying can be a tedious process requiring a lot of patience to get a successful response. A part of it is also based on luck too. Successful applicants suggest sending at least 100 mails. If you are lucky, you might get a positive response early enough but usually, it is 1-2 positive responses per 100 mails.

Corporate Non-Core

Why should you consider Apping?

You could simply be considering apping because you have a lot of free time in your vacations and are looking to diversify your profile and expand your horizons. Through apping and from internships in general, you gain a lot of valuable experience which can turn out to be very valuable when you walk into your upcoming placement/ internship season.

What is the best time to start?

The most successful applicants suggest starting the process of databasing for summer corporate internships just after the 3rd semester, i.e., around mid-November, and start mailing after that. It is recommended to have a sufficient database of the companies for winter corporate internships by the end of September.

If you're the person who is looking for foreign internships, here are some of the tips that should get you started:

1. The work permit type of temporary visa is relatively easier to obtain in Europe and the USA. Make sure to start apping for the winter internships for it around mid-July.
2. It may be possible that there might not be many internship opportunities during the winter break. But make sure you give your best shot while apping for summers in September and October.
3. Especially for the US, it's always better to start getting in touch with people in September, understanding what they are and what their company policies are. If the company hires foreign interns, apply for the same.

All About Databasing

What is databasing?

Databasing is a way to compile all the contacts you wish to acquire. The corporate sector's databasing should comprise specific profiles and companies you want to gain experience from. Look for well-established companies, start-ups, market leaders, etc., on the internet. Analyze your interests and try to conclude. You may also consider talking to various seniors who have similar interests and have done internships in the past.

Getting Started

The database is generally prepared on spreadsheets.

- Step 1: The basic format should entail the headings like: Company Name, PoC's (Point of Contact) Name, PoC's Designation, Email ID, Mobile Number, Profile Link, and Status/Comments.
- Step 2: Use the Internet to search for companies. Try to make an exhaustive list of companies on the sheet which look for jobs that match your profile.
- Step 3: Search for the company on LinkedIn. Use filters to target the Human Resources (HR) associate/manager.
- Once you get the profile, paste the name of PoC, their designation, and the profile link in the sheet.
- Step 4: Prepare a cover message for a connection request. You can introduce yourself briefly and mention that you are looking for an internship.
- Step 5: Once you send the connection request along with the message, look for the "People Also Viewed" tab in the right corner. These are PoCs with similar profiles.
- Step 6: Go to these profiles and repeat the same procedure. Email IDs cannot be seen on LinkedIn as long as the PoC doesn't accept your request. You may consider using email extractors like Rocket Reach, Clearbit, Email finder, etc.
- Step 7: You can look for job openings in the Job section of LinkedIn. The profiles which match your interests can be seen. You may consider applying through the steps they have mentioned.
- Step 8: A search on Google like 'McKinsey Internship Opportunities' will lead you to their hiring websites.

All About Databasing

There are usually two very effective ways to go about it.

Look for formal internship openings on the company's website and LinkedIn account. (Most companies list various internship opportunities they will be provided in the coming year on their website or LinkedIn page.) Check them out and start applying!

The other approach is to contact IIT alumni (not just IITB, but any IIT). You can reach out to them, let them know that you are interested in what he/she does and want to work with them, or if they can refer you to someone who can help you with a summer/ winter internship. This method generally works, so give your 100% in apping.

WHAT ALL SHOULD ONE BE PREPARED WITH?

- For the top five dream companies, you should prepare a cover letter telling them about your motivation for the company and the profile. Remember, this is not a requirement. It could include the following points:
 - A. Your introduction, your interest
 - B. Your motivation for the company
 - C. Your motivation for the profile
 - D. Why are you fit for this profile (Include related past experiences)
- For CS or DS-related positions, people usually have a GitHub Portfolio. Some people also use WordPress but usually, GitHub provides much more support. This helps you showcase your background and work in the field that you are applying for.
- Note: Make sure your resume has your email id and phone number at the top. Generally, a one-page resume is suggested for non-core companies.

Mails and SOPs

Who do you generally address mails to?

Mails are generally addressed to the Human Resource (HR) Manager/ Associate of the company. If the company you're looking for is a startup, you can directly write the mail to the Director/CEO. Greet them by saying Hello <name>.

Important Tip #1

It is advisable to use mail tracker widgets and extensions like Streak CRM, which keeps track of views and last time seen and stuff.

How many emails are to be written?

Apping can be a tedious process requiring a lot of patience to get a successful response. A part of it is also based on luck too. Successful applicants suggest sending at least 100 emails. If you are lucky, you might get a positive response early enough, but usually, it is 1-2 positive responses per 100 emails.

What should be included in an SOP and Cover Letter?

Refer to the same in the Univ Section, All that is mentioned there is applicable here as well.

How to attach your resume/ CV?

It is advisable to put your resume on BigHome (<https://bighome.iitb.ac.in/>) or google drive instead of attaching pdfs.

Important Tip #2

Make sure to use a personal Gmail ID for mailing purposes. Avoid using IITB Email ID as the browser may mark your email as spam due to domain issues.

How to send reminders?

Generally, it's best to send reminders after around 2-3 weeks. If the company is one you really want to work with, it is better to send a reminder consisting of sentences like "Gentle Reminder Sir/Ma'am. Waiting for your reply" after a week on the same mail thread.

Some Experiences

"Seniors have found remote internships to be really productive with a lot to learn and given the covid situation, they are a good option to consider. Also, many profs don't have funding options available for on-campus interns. So, they instead agree to remote internships."

"The process was a bit daunting. It does test your patience at times because, in my case, the success rate was low. My internship was a remote internship. It was an amazing experience. I was working closely with two postdocs, and every week we used to discuss our progress in two group meetings with the prof. It was a chilled-out scene. My internship was on speech recognition, and my advisors were keen on getting a research paper with me. The process was really smooth for me. After one reminder, the prof directly accepted the internship. Before I even brought it up, he agreed to give me a generous stipend and cover travel expenses. However, Covid-19 canceled the whole internship for the summer. After some persistent requests, they agreed to have the internship virtually in December. I am currently doing the internship, and it has been quite good."

"Just keep sending emails. It may take really long to get your first positive response so its important to keep patience and just keep sending mails."

"I wanted to work in the area of NLP/Automatic Speech Recognition/ Machine Learning. From my experience, I can tell that it is important to keep sending emails. Many profs will give a downright "NO" or will not reply. In my case, writing prof-specific emails did not work that well. So I clubbed profs working in NLP and created one email that highlighted my NLP projects/courses. Similarly, I created another email highlighting my speech recognition projects/courses etc. And I sent these generic emails. Finding out which professors your seniors have interned with is also helpful. These professors are more likely to accept interns."

"After procrastinating over the entire Autumn semester and getting red flags from seniors stating that I'm already very late for the apping process, I started making a database of the professors in December. I want to convey to my juniors to not shy away from applying to foreign business schools even if you are in your second year and you think that you may be rejected because you don't have a good enough skill set. The topic of my research was Social Media Marketing and the project also had a co-guide from the University. Unfortunately, I had to stay at home and remotely do the project. In the process, I learned how to be patient from my apping days. Other key takeaways were: how to schedule my day properly while taking proper rest and how balancing appropriate social interaction and sufficient productivity can make things easy in tough times."

Some Experiences

"The process of apping or applying externally can be very tiring. Many times it's not because of just the nitty-gritty of the process that you need to keep in mind but also because of seeing people around you get an internship. But not losing patience is the key here. There is no well-defined success rate here. There is not even a definite period that can be defined after which you will get the opportunity you want! But this uncertainty should keep you going. I have seen many seniors and batchmates get their internships as late as March!

You might also lose patience in between; you might want to just give up after the string of rejection emails (or even no replies, which is worse) but keep the outcome in mind, how it would help you get an experience which you always wanted. If not the big corporate company you had set your heart on, there will definitely be a startup that can provide you with a unique experience and awesome learning.

Don't be afraid to try out something new. If there is something you feel not a lot of people do, don't be bogged down and decide not to do it.

Talk to seniors about it, connect with suitable alumni if needed (a very effective way to solve doubts and get more information as I have heard) and get to know more about it.

Lastly, put in a sincere effort in whatever you plan to do. It seldom goes to waste - if not something you planned early on, you will definitely get something unique in its way."

"During my second year at IIT Bombay, I wanted to explore various fields like consulting, finance, and analytics. After talking to relevant seniors I understood that the right decision to take about your career is to have some exposure before directly eliminating any particular option. I started learning python and basic machine learning in my 3rd semester since coding is something that takes time to learn. I had a natural inclination towards finance and used to read financial newsletters and blogs. This routine helped develop my interest in Finance and Analytics. To further explore my interest in these fields, I started apping through LinkedIn for a winter intern after my 3rd semester. Since, the winter intern would be the first time I would be seeking some professional experience, I thought it would make sense to app in a decent company i.e. not too big nor too small. (The best way to decide whether a company is small or big is to check it's LinkedIn followers).

You can start sending out follow requests in the following order: alumni/seniors in the company, someone from the HR team, then any specific department where you would like to intern in a specific company.

Some Experiences

Finally, I got two opportunities for internships, Indiabulls Housing Finance and Capri Global Capital. One was a pure finance role at IndiaBulls Housing Finance and the other one was a data analytics role, which was work from home and in-semester (I wouldn't recommend an in-semester intern in an offline semester).

IndiaBulls Housing Finance was my first professional experience in Finance and the internship was very enriching in terms of the learning that I had. On my first day, they handed me a 400 pg annual report to read in order to understand the company and its business better; which was quite scary. Eventually, I started to enjoy learning new terminologies every day. The learning curve for me was quite steep.

Capri had a very small team of 3 when I joined the Analytics team. I never felt that I was an intern over there. They always treated me as an equal. My work mainly involved writing code for a co-lending model that we were building. Besides, I also understood a bit about the process of giving loans and asset securitization. My internship at Capri was quite enriching and was really helpful in shaping my career as a whole.

After having explored Finance and Analytics, I had my mind clear, I would like a role which has a core finance profile but not with Analytics embedded in it. However, there was consulting that was left to be explored. Landing a second-year consulting intern is a tough one.

With some experience of apping in hand, I knew what should be the ideal time to start apping. For the summer of my second year, I decided to app for companies like Deloitte, EY, KPMG, Frost and Sullivan being the consulting companies. There were some finance companies as well in the list like UBS, HDFC Bank and JP Morgan (just in case, consulting does not work out). For summer internships at big firms, it is better to start early. I started apping in the month of February for the internship in summer. The consulting companies like Deloitte, EY have a lot of alumni network of IIT Bombay which will increase your chance of getting an internship.

I was excited to join Deloitte. I was deployed on a real project within days of joining, which was to help India's busiest airport. The project (for me) was pretty Excel and macros heavy. The learning curve was steep and there were times when the work was very challenging, but my ability of analytical skills and problem solving made me realise my career goals and that management consulting overlaps with it."

Contact us

We have put our best efforts in adding to the booklet and presenting the information to you. However, some inadvertent errors might have crept in, we would be glad to be informed about the same. We are open to suggestions and ideas from your side to improve the same. Please feel free to contact any of the UG Academic Council members.



Devina Agarwal

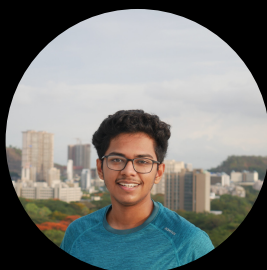
Institute Secretary Academic Affairs (UG)

Head, Career Cell



Arnav Pandit

Academic Coordinator



Himank Gupta

Academic Coordinator



Manali Manjarekar

Academic Coordinator



Rishab Rao

Academic Coordinator

