

# How to Write a Curriculum Vitae

## USC CAREER CENTER

### WHAT IS A CURRICULUM VITAE (CV):

A CV or vita is a comprehensive biographical statement, preferred in these specific industries:

- Academic
- Scientific
- Research
- Teaching
- Medical
- Graduate program application
- Grant & fellowship application
- International applications

It is usually three or more pages in length and emphasizes an individual's qualifications and activities. The term, Curriculum Vitae, in Latin means the course of one's life.

A CV is a living document which should be updated frequently.

#### Difference Between a Resume and a CV

The most noticeable difference between most CVs and most resumes is the length. Entry-level resumes are usually limited to a page.

### GETTING STARTED:

There is no standard format for a CV, however formatting makes your CV look more professional and easier to read.

Begin by brainstorming. List everything that you think could be included – both your educational and professional history – being careful not to overlook anything. Once you feel you have covered everything, you will decide what to include and what to exclude. Write a draft and experiment with format and relevant information.

Depending on your reader, your CV will change somewhat. It is important to keep up-to-date

#### Essential when putting together a CV

- Clear: Well-organized and logical
- Concise: Relevant and necessary
- Complete: Includes everything you need
- Consistent: Don't mix styles or fonts
- Current: Up-to-date

information on hand so you may adapt your CV to fit various needs. It is suggested that you update your information at least once a year,

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Experience it.

Decide it.

# GENERAL FORMATING:

## Form and Style

- Use 10-12 font size
- Times New Roman and Arial are standard fonts
- Use bolding, italics, all CAPS, underlining, etc.
- Use lines to separate heading/sections
- Use bulleted statements with action-oriented verbs
- ½-1-inch margins on all 4 sides are standard
- Balance white space and text
- List all information in chronological order within each section
- Use subheadings wherever necessary to make key information easier to identify
- Your name should appear on each page of your CV
- Proof to ensure your CV is error free

### Tip

A CV should not include: gender, age, height, weight, marital status, dependents, race, ethnic background, or religion, except when appropriate when applying for some international positions.

## CATEGORIES:

### Contact Information

- Name
- Mailing Address
- Email Address
- Phone Number(s)

### Academic Preparation

- Academic Background
- Academic Preparation
- Academic Training
- Comprehensive Areas
- Degrees
- Dissertation
- Dissertation Title
- Dissertation Topic
- Educational Background
- Educational Overview
- Formal Education
- Master's Project
- Principal Teachers
- Professional Studies
- Thesis

### Experience

- Academic Appointments

### Academic Interests

- Academic Service
- Administrative Experience
- Advising
- Advisory Boards
- Advisory Committees
- Appointments
- Areas of Concentration
- Areas of Experience
- Areas of Expertise
- Areas of Knowledge
- Assistantships
- Background
- Career Achievements
- Career Highlights
- Committee Leadership
- Conference Leadership
- Conference Participation
- Conference Presentations
- Conferences Attended
- Consulting Experience
- Continuing Education

### Convention Addresses

- Course Highlights
- Departmental Leadership
- Educational Highlights
- Educational Interests
- Experience
- Experience Highlights
- Experience Summary
- Faculty Leadership
- Graduate Fieldwork
- Graduate Practica
- Graduate Study
- Internships
- Invited Addresses
- Invited Lectures
- Lectures and Colloquia
- Major Committees
- Major University Assignments
- National Boards
- Scholarly Presentations
- Service
- Specialized Training
- Teaching Experience

### Teaching Interests

- Teaching Overview
- Teaching/Research
- University Involvement
- Workshop Presentations
- Outreach
- Postdoctoral Experience
- Professional Achievements
- Professional Activities
- Professional Associations
- Professional Background
- Professional Competencies
- Professional Development
- Professional Experience
- Professional Interests
- Professional Overview
- Professional Service
- Professional Summary
- Proficiencies

## CATAGORIES CONTINUED:

- |                                    |                             |                                      |                          |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| - Programs and Workshops           | - Refereed Journal Articles | - Prizes                             | - Travel Abroad          |
| - Related Experiences              | - Scholarly Publications    | - College Activities                 | - International Projects |
| - Related Professional Experience  | - Scholarly Works           |                                      | - Language Competencies  |
| - Research Appointments            | - Technical Papers          | <b>Associations/ Memberships</b>     |                          |
| - Research Experience              | - Selected Presentations    | - Awards                             | <b>Other</b>             |
| - Research Interests               | - Research Awards           | - Affiliations                       | - Dossier                |
| - Research Overview                | - Research Grants           | - Memberships                        | - Credentials            |
|                                    | - Funded Projects           | - Professional Memberships           | - Placement File         |
| <b>Presentations/ Publications</b> | - Grants and Contracts      | - Memberships in Scholarly Societies | - Portfolio              |
| - Abstracts                        | - Patents                   | - Professional Organizations         | - Recommendations        |
| - Articles/Monographs              | - Exhibits/Exhibitions      | - Honorary Societies                 | - References             |
| - Bibliography                     | - Arrangements/Scores       | - Professional Certifications        |                          |
| - Books                            | - Performances              | - Certification                      |                          |
| - Chapters                         | - Recitals                  | - Licensure                          |                          |
| - Editorial Appointments           | <b>Scholarships</b>         | - Endorsements                       |                          |
| - Editorial Boards                 | - Fellowships               | - Special Training                   |                          |
| - Presentations and Publications   | - Academic Awards           |                                      |                          |
| - Professional Papers              | - Honors                    | <b>International</b>                 |                          |
| - Publications                     | - Distinctions              | - Study Abroad                       |                          |
|                                    | - Professional Recognition  |                                      |                          |

### Tip

Not all categories will apply, only include what is necessary.

## OUTSIDE READERS/CRITICS:

Have others proof your CV. Personnel reviewers spend less than one minute reviewing a resume or CV. Impressions are formed quickly. Here are several suggestions for selecting proof readers:

- A Career Center professional
- A professional who knows you well enough to spot any significant information you may have left out
- A professional who does not know you well and will read critically (this is important since most of your readers will be of this nature)
- A hiring manager you know

### Sources:

*Demystifying the Vita*, by R. Anthony and G. Roe  
*Developing a Professional Vita or Resume*, by C. McDaniels  
*The Academic Job Search Handbook*, by M. Heiberger and J. Vick  
*Purdue Online Writing Lab* <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/641/01/>

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