
Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Adapted from "CV and Cover Letter Writing for Academic Audiences (2009)," Wendy Perry, Former Director, UVa Graduate and Postdoctoral Professional Development Programs.

What is a CV?

CV stands for Curriculum Vitae or literally "the course of one's life." It is a comprehensive list of academic qualifications, and it is usually several pages in length (roughly 2-4 for graduate students).

While the structure of the document is flexible enough to allow you to focus a reader's attention, keep in mind that its style and norms vary from field to field. Always have someone in your discipline review your CV.

Why do I need a CV?

A CV is a required component of all but a few academic jobs. It is also useful for a number of other purposes, including, among others:

- Awards, fellowships and other application-based programs
- Grant applications
- Consulting
- Publishing
- Merit/tenure review

What types of information does a CV include? The categories of information you include in your CV should emphasize your strengths *and* align with the job description. Here are popular categories found in many CVs. (N.B. The order of sections will vary depending on the position you're applying to.)

Header

The document is commonly titled "Curriculum Vitae," but this is optional. The header should include, however, your identifying information. Place your name prominently at the top and separate it from your addresses (personal and departmental), telephone numbers, email addresses, and webpage.

Do not include an objective statement, your social security number, marital status, or personal photo. Some fields expect you to include your citizenship information, but don't if not customary. Follow the norm.

Education

List your degrees—including postdoctoral work—institutions, and graduation years in reverse chronological order. Include your dissertation title and advisor's name. You can also include a 2-3 sentence dissertation abstract along with your committee members' names, as well as list special recognition awards obtained along with your degrees.

Do not list course work unless relevant to the position.

Honors, Awards, Fellowships, Grants

Include distinctions, bestowing institutions, and year(s) received. Add brief, explanatory information if necessary.

Research Experience (common to natural & social science CVs)

Describe projects, special techniques, and affiliated labs or professors. You should also include big grant-funded projects here.

Publications/Creative Work

Include field-appropriate bibliographic citations of articles, books, book reviews, et cetera in reverse chronological order. Organize the information using sub-categories if you have numerous related articles.

If appropriate in your field, include "works submitted" and "work in progress" under a separate sub-category.

Presentations/Meeting Abstracts

List all professional papers, talks and posters you have given, along with authors' names and conference dates and locations. It's fine to list significant presentations at UVa symposia or workshops.

Other Professional Experience

Only include this category if you have relevant professional experience outside of academe.

Teaching Experience

In this section, list all your full-time, part-time, and adjunct teaching responsibilities. Include your title, the full name of the course, the dates, and the number of enrolled students. You can also briefly describe your responsibilities, e.g. course design, lecturing, discussion leading, and/or grading.

If you have little or no formal teaching experience in areas of your expertise, consider adding general information about your teaching interests. You can also mention significant mentoring situations to help fill out this section.

Discipline-specific Categories

Here you might include things such as patents, fieldwork, performances or other things specific to your discipline.

Languages

List all languages and your level of proficiency.

Special Skills

If you have mastery of special skills or techniques (e.g. discipline-specific computer applications), list them here.

Professional Development/Certification

Things to include in this section include pedagogy courses/programs you've attended, professional seminars, short courses, and IT training.

Professional Affiliations/Memberships

Along with the name of the organization, list your level and years of service. Include both past and present commitments that relate specifically to a given job description.

Academic/Community Service

Highlight your commitment to the academic community by listing departmental-, school-, and university-level service work. Note your level of involvement, especially any leadership roles you took on. List community service similarly.

References

List at least three references in order of importance to your reader(s). Include full names, titles, complete phone numbers, and mail and email addresses.

What categories should I include in my CV?

The information you include – and the order you present that information – will depend on where you'd like to ideally (and realistically) get a job. Consider building a master CV which includes "everything" and then tailor that to different job opportunities. Visiting the websites of the departments you're applying to and viewing the CVs of recent faculty hires will help you fine tune the document.

How can I make my CV stand out in the crowd?

The best way to get your CV noticed is to make it your own. Here are a few ideas on how to do this:

- Don't use templates.
- Choose the categories you include carefully and organize them so that they highlight your strengths and align with the job description.
- Use section headings to guide your audience in assessing your qualifications.
- Break up lengthy sections with sub-headings.
- Although the document reflects your "life's work," aim for a tightly constructed and succinct CV.
- Above all, be honest and don't exaggerate.

How does a CV differ from a résumé?

Résumés, which are introduced with an objective statement or a summary of qualifications, include information targeted for a specific purpose or audience. This one-page document focuses more on your practical skills – what you can do rather than what you know.

Where can I get more information about CVs?

The following resources will answer many of your questions about CVs not covered in this brief handout.

"CV Doctor" series in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (<http://chronicle.com/article/The-CV-Doctor-Is-Back/49086/>. <accessed 9/10/10>):

This advice column began in the fall of 1999. The editors look critically at vitae submitted by readers and point out ways to make the documents more effective

The Academic Job Search Handbook (4 ed., 2008), Julia Miller Vick & Jennifer S. Furlong:

This book covers all aspects of the job search. The chapter devoted to CVs include 50 pages of examples for a wide variety of disciplines.