

# 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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# 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	<b>Associations/ Memberships</b>	– Language Competencies
– Research Appointments	– Technical Papers	– Awards	<b>Other</b>
– Research Experience	– Selected Presentations	– Affiliations	– Dossier
– Research Interests	– Research Awards	– Memberships	– Credentials
– Research Overview	– Research Grants	– Professional Memberships	– Placement File
	– Funded Projects	– Memberships in Scholarly Societies	– Portfolio
<b>Presentations/ Publications</b>	– Grants and Contracts	– Professional Organizations	– Recommendations
– Abstracts	– Patents	– Professional Certifications	– References
– Articles/Monographs	– Exhibits/Exhibitions	– Honorary Societies	
– 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/>

**Thomas Cooper Library, Level 5**  
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