Writing a Curriculum Vitae

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Purpose of a Curriculum Vitae (CV)

In the United States, the curriculum vitae, also called an academic résumé or CV for short, is a summary of one's personal history and professional qualifications submitted as part of a job, graduate school, or internship application process. In Latin, the term means "the course of one's life." CVs are similar to résumés - they are marketing tools that showcase your skills, experience, knowledge, education, and personal qualities; however, they have a different audience and often include additional categories with more in-depth information.

CVs are most commonly requested for:

- Applying for academic, scientific, medical, legal and research positions
- Applying to some graduate & professional programs
- Grant, fellowship, and scholarship applications
- University and College Faculty departmental/tenure review
- Professional association memberships
- European and Latin American countries

What is the difference between a Résumé and CV?

	CV	Résumé
Audience	Fellow academics in your field of study.	Recruiters and hiring managers who select candidates for a wide variety of positions.
Goal	To present your full academic history — including teaching, research, awards, and service.	To align skills and experiences to each job description conveying fit for each position.
Length	As long as necessary to showcase relevant content.	One or two pages only. In general, a second page is added if you have more than ten years of professional experience.
Focus	Demonstrating your academic achievements and scholarly potential.	Showcasing your experiences — job-related, extracurricular and volunteer. Skills and accomplishments from each are highlighted.
Essential Information	Include teaching experiences, education, publications, presentations, research, honors, and grants.	Skills and experiences you have gained as related to the job you are seeking.
References	Include.	Include as a separate document when requested.

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Length

The length of your CV will vary depending on your unique experiences. As you become more experienced, your CV will expand. Remember - the relevance of the information contained in your CV is more important than the number of the pages filled. Unlike a résumé, a CV can be as long as it needs to be in order to convey relevant information!

Formatting Tips

- Arrange the sections of your CV so the most important and relevant information is first.
- Tailor your CV to your field or a specific employer/position.
- Be selective about the information that you include. The lack of a page limit doesn't mean that a CV should reflect everything you have ever done.
- Use a standard font style (Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri, etc.), action verbs, accomplishment statements, proper grammar and spelling, and consistent headings to help organize content.
- Avoid first-person pronouns ("I"), irrelevant and/or personal information (marital status, health, etc.).
- Include your name and the page number in a header or footer starting with the 2nd page. *Helpful tip*: update your CV every six months to a year.
- Use 10 to 12-point font size with .5"- to 1"-inch margins. Headings should use slightly larger font size.
- Keep dates to the right as opposed to listing them first within your sections. The reader's eye naturally gravitates to the left so begin with your biggest selling points.
- Use **boldface**, *italics*, and spacing to highlight information, but be consistent and sparing in your use. Overuse distracts readers and defeats your purpose.
- A CV should be clean and professional in appearance. Avoid using shading, multiple fonts, images, etc.

Common CV Sections

Begin your CV with a heading that includes your name (in a larger, bolded font), address, telephone number(s), email address, website, and/or LinkedIn URL. The rest of your CV will consist of information under many different headings. Common CV headings include:

- Education
- Dissertation/Thesis
- Teaching Interests/Teaching Experience
- Research
- Service
- Presentations/Publications
- Awards, Fellowships, Honors, Grants
- Memberships/Professional Affiliations

Additional CV Categories

Some of these headings may not be applicable to you or your field - feel free to add additional sections that are appropriate for your field. Faculty and experienced professionals in your field are a helpful resource to decide categories.

- Certifications/Licenses
- Clinical Experience
- Consulting Experience
- Laboratory Experience
- Language Skills
- Leadership (Departmental, Association, Community)
- Practicum Experience
- Professional Summary/Summary of Qualifications
- Technical/Specialized Skills