



American Society for Photobiology

Mentoring and Education Committee

Resources for Writing One's Curriculum Vitae

Prepared by Theresa Busch (Chair, 2008 – 2012), Anna-Liisa Nieminen, Joanna Turner, and Elizabeth Gaillard

What is the difference between curriculum vitae (CV) and a resume?

A CV is a detailed summary of your education and work experience, which includes information on your publications, awards, affiliations, and other professional accomplishments. A CV is generally used when applying for a position in academic research or education. A resume is a short summary of your skills and education, commonly only one or two pages in length. In the United States, it is generally used when applying for positions outside of academia. Notably, however, the CV is the preferred document when applying for any position, academic or business, in many countries outside of the United States, particularly those in Europe, Africa, Asia, or the Middle East.

Tailor your CV to the position

It is important to customize your CV for the position to which you are applying. Although a CV will contain a complete record of your professional experience, including both your research and teaching accomplishments, the presentation of this material should differ based on the type of position that you seek. Some positions will be based in teaching, while others will be more research-intensive. For example, many liberal arts colleges, comprehensive public universities, or community colleges will seek teaching faculty. Doctoral-granting universities could place more emphasis on an applicant's research accomplishments and his or her potential to run a successful research laboratory. Yet other colleges may require some experience in both research and teaching. In this case, faculty may make a major commitment to teaching, but research, especially that which includes university students, is still expected. For each of these positions, your CV should be tailored to best highlight your qualifications for the appointment. As an example, if applying for a teaching position, make certain to construct your CV in such a way that your relevant teaching experience and accomplishments are clearly conveyed. Moreover, this information should be positioned at the beginning of your CV, not buried at the end. If the position is mainly a research position, then you need to place more emphasis on your research accomplishments.

Do I include a written description of my research/teaching interests as a part of my CV?

When submitting materials in response to a search for faculty, you should expect to include a separate page (3/4 of page) to summarize your research or teaching interests, as applicable to the position being advertised. In applying for a research-based position as an Assistant Professor, also be prepared to provide a brief outline of the aims and hypotheses around which you would formulate a grant proposal or other

application for funding. At some universities, a paragraph on your research interests may even be included in the format of a school-defined standard CV. Once you obtain a faculty position, it is therefore important to determine if a mandated format needs to be followed in maintaining your CV for the purposes of reappointment and promotion.

Tips for CV writing

Follow a few basic guidelines to ensure that your CV is both complete in its content and polished in its presentation. First, the importance of proofreading cannot be overstated. CVs can contain many pages of information, it is important to make sure that you present this information in a consistent and easy-to-follow style. Second, seek input from other professionals on the format and content of your CV. Particularly valuable advice may be sought from those who must read large numbers of CVs, such as members of search committees who are reviewing applicants for faculty positions. In general, it is advisable to make the format of your CV as simple to follow as possible. Use subheadings to divide references into smaller groups, such as peer-reviewed articles, symposia proceedings & book chapters, and abstracts. Be concise and use typeface or font style (*e.g.*, bold or italics) to emphasize key details, while taking care not to make the document appear “busy”. Lastly, be sure that your CV is accurate and complete. Don’t forget to include abstracts, which are published material. Make sure to list the title, date and location of invited talks. One of the best ways to ensure that information is accurately entered is to update your CV on a regular basis.

Keep your CV up to date

Job opportunities come along unexpectedly so it is wise to keep your CV up to date. Updating your CV for missing years of information can take some time, which could lead to lost opportunity. Furthermore, the delayed entry of information could lead to inadvertent omissions or errors. Make a habit of updating your CV each time you publish a paper, give a lecture, or have an abstract accepted for presentation.

Online resources:

<http://jobsearch.about.com/cs/curriculumvitae/f/cvresume.htm>

http://gradschool.about.com/od/curriculumvita/Writing_Your_Curriculum_Vitae.htm

<https://career.berkeley.edu/phds/PhDCV.stm>

<http://gradschool.about.com/od/curriculumvita/a/tailorcv.htm>

<http://gradschool.about.com/cs/teaching/a/teachphil.htm>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/639/01/>

<http://www.cgu.edu/pages/842.asp>

