

How & Why to Write a Curriculum Vitae (CV)

What is a CV? Meaning “course of one’s life,” a curriculum vitae is a document similar to a resume that focuses on one’s academic and professional accomplishments.

The jargon of the curriculum vitae:

- “Curriculum vitae” is the singular form; “curricula vitae” is plural.
- A curriculum vitae may be informally referred to as vita/vitae (vitae being plural) or as CV or CVs.

A curriculum vitae may be used for:

- Admission to graduate school as part of an application packet.
- Grant proposals.
- Teaching, research, and upper-level administrative positions in higher education.
- Academic departmental and tenure reviews.
- Speaking engagements.
- Publishing editorial review boards.
- School administration positions at the superintendent, principal, or department head level.

While most resumes are limited at one page, a CV will almost always be at least two pages, and can be upwards of five or more pages long, depending on the amount of academic, research, or publication experience is to be included. Common lengths for curricula vitae are one to three pages for bachelors and master’s degree candidates, two to five pages for doctoral candidates, and five or more pages for an experienced academician or researcher.

Curricula vitae include, in a detailed, yet concise manner, information regarding professional publications, presentations, committee work, grants received, and other academic experience. This includes:

Education, Master’s thesis or project, Course highlights, Teaching experience & interests, Consulting experience, Internships or graduate practica, Publications, Grants received, Special training, Academic awards & scholarships, Foreign study & travel abroad, Technical & computer skills, Language competencies, etc.

Sections to include in your CV: “Education,” “Honors/Affiliations,” “Research/Teaching Interests,” “Publications,” “Abstracts,” “Languages,” “Presentations,” and many more...

The main difference between a CV and a resume is the area of emphasis. A CV, which still includes relevant work experience, will focus much more on responsibilities such as writing, researching, and teaching, rather than administrative duties and skills.

For more information visit Career Services for a resume critique, check out our resource library, or visit one of the many online resources dedicated to resume and curriculum vitae writing.