Curriculum Vitae or "CV"

What is a CV?

A CV, or Curriculum Vitae, is a detailed synopsis of your educational and academic backgrounds as well as teaching and research experience, publications, presentations, awards, honors and affiliations. Typically used in academic or research environments, the CV is essential to selecting candidates for graduate school or initial academic or research interviews. Your CV provides employers and graduate programs with their first impression of you as a candidate and will shape their decisions about your candidacy.

Where do I begin?

1) **Prepare a summary of your experiences:**
    a) Write down all significant experiences and research (paid, volunteer, co-curricular, presentations, research, publication, teaching, etc.) along with corresponding dates.
    b) For each significant experience, describe what you did and any achievements.
    c) Write a list of commonly used CV headings, starting with Education.
    d) Cluster your experiences according to functional categories related to your career direction and list them under relevant headings.
    e) Delete any sections that are left blank and rearrange the headings to highlight your strengths. *Remember!* Always keep Education as the first heading.

2) **Contact your Academic Advisor or a Professor in your discipline for advice:**
    a) CVs differ depending on department and area of interest. Speak with someone who works in that department to learn what you should emphasize to make your CV stand out.

CV Critiques

Once you have prepared a typed draft of your CV, visit your advisor or a professor in your area of interest to have your work critiqued. You are also welcome to visit the Career Planning Center during drop-in hours (Monday through Friday, 1:00 to 4:00 pm) to have a Career Counselor review your CV. Ordinarily, students complete 3-4 drafts before their CVs are ready to be sent to potential graduate schools or employers!

What do I include?

There is no single, proper format for a CV. While it is important to include certain elements, there is much flexibility in the kind of layout and organization you use. Choose a format that will emphasize your strengths. Sample CVs of Holy Cross graduates are available in the Career Planning Center. You may choose to include the following basic types of information:

Heading – Your full name, school and home addresses, email and phone number.

Education – List College of the Holy Cross, year of graduation, major, minor and concentration, GPA. Include Study Abroad experience and any additional schools you attended.

Relevant Coursework – Courses that are relevant to the program or position you are applying to. Do not list all of your courses.

Honors, Awards & Grants – If you have received honors, awards and/or grants, list them along with the date they were received.

Experience – If possible, organize your experience into categories (i.e. Research, Teaching, Professional, Clinical, Internship, Employment, Collegiate, Volunteer). Include your title, name of the organization, dates, city and state.

Publications – Include any published work in bibliographical format.

Presentations – Provide the title, conference location and date for any talks or posters you have presented.

Professional Affiliations – List the names of the associations and membership dates.

Skills – This can be made more specific to accommodate the skills that you have, i.e. Laboratory, Language, Computer, etc.

References- List 3 or 4 references who have agreed to endorse your skills. Include their name, title, organization and relationship to you.

Tip! If a section isn't relevant to your experience, don't use it. Each person is different, thus each CV will reflect different headings and experiences.

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Holy Cross

Additional Considerations

Length & Font

CVs for college students and recent graduates usually range from 2-4 pages, with font sizes between 10-14. Section headings are usually listed in size 14 or 12, with the font size for the section text one size smaller in size 12 or 10.

Neatness Counts!

Your CV must be letter perfect and clearly organized. No typos, grammatical errors or misspellings. Do not rely on a "spell check" function to catch all errors. Make sure that sections are formatted consistently, using the same font sizes and formats in each section. This enhances the appearance of your CV and makes it easier to read. The final copy should be printed on white or off-white bond paper.

What is a Resume? How is it different from a CV?

A resume is a one-page summary of your academic, employment and co-curricular experiences. Along with a cover letter, the resume plays an essential role in applying for internship and employment opportunities.

Formatting Tips

Although CVs are going to vary greatly depending on your area of interest and the type of program or position you are applying for, they all abide by a similar basic set of formatting criteria.

- Be concise. Even though you are not limited to a certain number of pages, this does not mean that you should include everything that you have ever done in your life. Key to making your CV stand out is to clearly highlight the information that is relevant to your target audience. If something is irrelevant and does not fit easily into your CV, then leave it out.

- Use a clear, consistent format: maintain the same font, style, phrasing and heading structure throughout the CV.

- Keep your CV simple: avoid parentheses, underlining, abbreviations, graphics, colors, borders, lines, columns or brackets unless necessary, i.e. listing publications, conferences, etc.

- Use a font size ranging from 10 to 14.

- Left justification only.

- Use a footer to keep your CV in order once printed. Footer should include name, date of CV and page number. It should be placed low at the bottom of each page so as not to interfere with your content.

- **DO NOT** include the following information: social security number, date of birth, gender, marital status, picture.

- Graduate School tip: List Education and educational achievements first, i.e. Honors, Awards, Grants, Skills, and Research.

- Research tip: List Research and Publication experience at the top, after Education.

- *Remember!* Education is always listed first.

Sample CV Format

Grace Graduate School

1 College Street, Box 00, Worcester, MA 01610
678 Main Street, Boston, MA 02110

ggradschool14@g.holycross.edu
617-555-5555

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts, Chemistry, Expected May 2014
College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, MA
3.82 GPA, Dean's List (8/8 semesters)
Thesis Project: List the title and one sentence describing your work.
Committee Members/Advisor: List the name of your Thesis committee members, or the name of your advisor, whichever is appropriate.

RELEVANT COURSEWORK

List the courses you have taken that are most relevant to the graduate program to which you are applying. Do not list every college course that you have taken.

HONORS AND AWARDS

Name of Award, Date received

LABORATORY SKILLS

List the skills that you have gained thus far. This section can be changed to suit the particular skills that you have. If you don't have laboratory skills, you might want to consider including computer skills, language skills or any other skills that might be relevant to the program you are applying to.

Remember! It is important to order the sections in order of importance and relevance to whatever you are applying to. On your CV, this section might be listed at the bottom of your document, or it might not be included at all.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

List your specific research focus, if appropriate. This is particularly helpful if you are applying to Ph.D. programs and/or if you intend to apply for a fellowship or to work in a particular lab.

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Position Title, Name of Organization, Location, Start Date – End Date
Describe your experience in paragraph format, beginning each sentence with a verb. For instance:

Supervised chemistry lab and oversaw 40 first-year chemistry students each semester. Instructed students on proper use of chemistry equipment. Mentored students and served as resource for student questions. Ensured safe and efficient conduct in laboratory setting.

PUBLICATIONS

If you have been published, list the publications in appropriate bibliographical format in reverse chronological order from most recent to farthest past.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

Use the same format as in "Related Experience" above to describe your volunteer experience.

REFERENCES

If required with your application, include 3 or 4 references who have agreed to advocate on your behalf. List their name, title, organization, contact information and their relationship to you. *Remember!* ALWAYS notify your references before you submit your CV to a graduate program.

Action Words

Accomplished	Considered	Encouraged	Instructed	Participated	Respected
Achieved	Consolidated	Engaged	Integrated	Performed	Restored
Acted	Constructed	Engineered	Interpreted	Personalized	Reviewed
Administered	Contemplated	Established	Introduced	Persuaded	Scheduled
Advanced	Contracted	Examined	Inventoried	Piloted	Sorted
Advised	Contributed	Expanded	Investigated	Predicted	Spearheaded
Analyzed	Corresponded	Expedited	Launched	Prepared	Submitted
Applied	Counseled	Explained	Lectured	Presented	Summarized
Appointed	Critiqued	Facilitated	Led	Problem-Solved	Supervised
Assembled	Decided	Founded	Maintained	Processed	Surveyed
Assessed	Defined	Generated	Managed	Produced	Taught
Attained	Delegated	Governed	Manipulated	Proposed	Tested
Attended	Devised	Guided	Mediated	Proved	Trained
Authorized	Directed	Handled	Mentored	Provided	Translated
Awarded	Discovered	Headed	Moderated	Questioned	Troubleshot
Balanced	Displayed	Hypothesized	Modified	Realized	Tutored
Catalogued	Disproved	Implemented	Monitored	Reasoned	Upgraded
Chaired	Drafted	Improved	Motivated	Recommended	Utilized
Collected	Earned	Influenced	Observed	Reconciled	Verified
Compiled	Edited	Inspected	Organized	Reorganized	Won
Conserved	Emphasized	Inspired	Oversaw	Represented	Wrote