

CURRICULUM VITAE (CV) PREPARATION GUIDE



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Getting Started

Before you begin your CV, it is important to know what a CV is, how it differs from a resume, and how to create one that best reflects your accomplishments.

What is a curriculum vita?

A curriculum vitae (CV), or vita, is a written summary of educational and professional experience that is generally required as part of the graduate school application process. The CV is a document that allows you to show a university that your education, skills and experiences make you a qualified applicant. The CV may be used by university search committees as a screening device to select top applicants for interviews.

What distinguishes a CV from a resume?

Think of the CV as an academic version of a resume. A resume summarizes the qualifications, education, experiences, skills, and achievements of job applicants in most fields. The CV is used in the academic community to showcase earned degrees, teaching and research experience, publications, presentations, and related service and activities. You may use a CV to apply for a graduate or PhD program or a research position, whereas resumes are usually requested for other types of employment. Resumes are often one or two pages in length. The CV may have many pages.

What should you include in a CV?

Every CV should include your name, contact information, education, and relevant experience. The choices for other categories are practically limitless. Brainstorm. Write down everything you can think of that would be important to academics in your field. Ask professors in your major what they would consider important. Take a look at any specific recommendations or guidelines put forth by the institution you are applying to. This guide will provide ideas for what to include and how to format a CV.

Should I use a template?

No! Much like a resume, it is highly suggested that you create your CV in a blank Word document rather than a template. There are several reasons for this: they can cause issues when applying online and be difficult to edit or add information. Most importantly for CVs, templates often suggest categories or organizational styles that are not ideal for students/academics.

Components of a CV

There are 4 basic components of a CV:

- Contact information
- Education
- Relevant Experience (jobs, internships, volunteering, etc.)
- Academic Experiences (research, teaching, involvement, etc.)

The possibilities for CV categories are extensive. Here are just a few options:

- Related courses
- Employment in your field
- Research experience
- Publications
- Capstone/thesis
- Grants, fellowships, scholarships
- Languages
- Presentations
- Related skills/certifications
- Study abroad
- Related campus involvement
- Volunteer work in field
- Exhibits, shows, lectures
- Honors and awards
- Projects
- Teaching experience

What components should I include?

Think about what best reflects your experience, and what is most relevant to the position or graduate program you are seeking. If you feel that you do not have much experience outside of class, there are other ways of demonstrating your expertise. Projects, related courses, extra-curriculars in your field, and even volunteer work is acceptable—as long as you are demonstrating your knowledge and ability to succeed academically. If your application does not state otherwise, you might list your references on your CV also.

Contact Information

The contact information section of your CV should include: name, address (optional), phone number and email address. Place these items at the top of the first page. Note: be sure that the email address you have listed is current, updated, and professional. See example below:

Victor E. Viking
1 Louie B Nunn Dr | Highland Heights, KY 41099
Vikingv1@nku.edu | (111) 111-1111

Education

Because CVs are academically centered, Education should be at the top of the page.

- List education in reverse chronological order with the highest degree earned, or anticipated, first.
- List the institution, degree, date degree was conferred or is anticipated, major(s), minor(s) and area of specialization (if applicable). Either the institution or the degree can be listed first, depending on what you choose to emphasize. (List only postsecondary schooling.)
- Master degree students may list their thesis title.
- Grade point averages are optional.
- List graduation with distinction or honors.
- Additional coursework or private study may be included in the education section after formal studies are listed. You may also list Related Courses. List only a few, as you will most likely be sending in your transcript to the institution you are applying.
- Listing qualifying, comprehensive, or preliminary examinations passed is optional.

Example:

EDUCATION

Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, KY
Bachelor of Arts, May 20XX
Majors in History and Political Science
Minor in Organizational Leadership
Honor's College
GPA: 3.6/4.0

Relevant Experience

- List teaching, research, and other work experiences. Include graduate assistantships, internships, and even projects.
- Provide a brief description of your responsibilities if the job title of a position does not convey the extent or value of your experience.
- Use short phrases that begin with action verbs to describe your experience.
- If your mentor has national or international recognition, you may want to note on this. However, only your qualifications will get you a job. Your mentor's professional status may only help garner attention.

See the following Relevant Experience example for a History major:

RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Cincinnati Historical Society

Archival Processing Intern

Cincinnati, OH
September 20XX-Present

- Survey boxed materials and cull out items not meeting collection guidelines
- List box contents and write folder lists
- Write finding aids for small collections
- Learn different levels of archival processing and the overall policies and resources of the society

Lee G. Eagle, Attorney at Law

Legal Clerk and Assistant

Newport, KY
March 20XX-August 20XX

- Organized office filing system and calendar
 - Maintained office bankruptcy software and records
 - Researched wills and deeds at county courthouses
-

Academic Experiences

There are many options when it comes to academic experiences for a CV. You should choose ones that best demonstrate your achievements in your field.

Research

Research experience shows expertise and commitment to your field of study. You might think about creating a Research heading in your CV. For each research experience, list the name of the project, your position, and then the name of your research supervisor if applicable. You might include a short description of the project, your findings, and/or your responsibilities. If you have been published, include pertinent information in this section or a separate Publications section. Follow similar guidelines for Presentations.

Involvement

You might be a part of an organization or other extracurricular that shows your academic development. In this case, you might create an Involvement or Extracurricular section, where you list the name of the organization and dates involved. If you have a leadership position, or want to explain your experience further, you may do so in a similar way to the Experience section.

Honors and Awards/Grants/Scholarships

Honors can be included within your Education section, but you might want to highlight a scholarship or award by creating a separate section. You should list the name of the honor/award/grant, as well as the month and year received. You might also offer a brief explanation.

Projects

You can include projects in the Relevant Experience section or create another section. To list projects, include the title along with the name of the class (or indicate that the project was independent). Note the month/year or semester the project was active, as well as a brief description of your responsibilities.

Teaching Experience

Some students have experience teaching or assistant teaching. This may be included in Relevant Experience or have its own section. List the course you taught/assistant taught, as well as your position, dates involved, and a brief description of your responsibilities.

Skills/Certifications

If you have any field-specific skills/certifications that might improve your candidacy, think about creating an extra section to highlight them. This can be listed in simple bullet point format beneath a heading.

Study Abroad

If you had an important study abroad experience, specifically one centering around your field of study, you might create a section for this. Include location, semester, and the titles of any classes you took. A brief description might also be fitting.

Layout and Formatting

You want to consider the visual appeal of your CV: readability, style, and layout. Keep in mind that a traditional approach is generally best when it comes to formatting. Most importantly—pay attention to detail. Your document should be consistent and error free.

Margins: Normal or Narrow

Font: Black, 10-12pt (name slightly larger), Arial or Times New Roman

Highlights and Emphasis: All caps, boldface type, italics, and underline can make pertinent information stand out—be consistent and do not overuse.

Style: Avoid color, graphics, and bold layout choices unless you are going into a more creative field such as digital design—it would be wise to consult an expert in your field for artistic guidance in that regard.

Emily Landrum

Highland Heights, KY

Vikingv2@nku.edu

(222) 222-2222

Education

Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, KY | May 20XX

Bachelor of Arts in English | Literature Track

Minor in Spanish

Relevant Coursework:

Literature of Inclusion

Diverse Voices in English

Editing & Publishing

Traditional Grammar

American Literature

British Literature

Projects

Rhetorical Analysis, English Capstone

Fall 20XX - Present

- Completing a 50-page, comprehensive rhetorical analysis of 18th century British literature with a focus on female novelists
- Utilize library database to compile a catalogue of reliable resources
- Collaborate with Dr. Erikson to create two-semester plan to complete assignment
- Participate in peer-review workshops to edit for content, grammar, and layout

E-Book Project, Digital Publishing Class

Fall 20XX

- Obtained proper copy-right permissions
- Converted physical copy of a novel to digital format
- Collaborated with art department to source digital illustrations

Spanish to English Literature Translation, Independent Study

Spring 20XX

- Helped translate classmate's book of poetry to Spanish

Related Experience

Loch Norse | Literary Magazine

Poetry Editor

Fall 20XX - Present

- Review poetry pieces submitted by NKU students
- Send acceptance and rejection letters via email
- Help Editor-in-Chief organize final edition for publication

NKU Learning PLUS | Writing Center

Writing Consultant

Spring 20XX - Present

- Clarify assignment requirements/teacher instructions
- Discuss grammar rules, writing conventions, and research techniques
- Proof-read and help students create outlines
- Encourage students to reach their full writing potential

The Northerner | Campus Newspaper

Columnist

Fall 20XX - Fall 20XX

- Wrote four opinion pieces a year, working with editors to refine end product
- Covered topics pertaining to NKU students, such as sports and university news
- Routinely met deadlines and received positive feedback from peers

Study Abroad

Survey of British Literature, London, UK

Fall 20XX

- Read and analyzed British classics
- Introduced to modern British writing
- Explored historically significant sites

Skills

Spanish (fluent)

Adobe InDesign

WordPress

VICTORIA NORSE

12345 Forest Rd. | Newport, KY 41071
norsev1@nku.edu | (555) 555-5555

EDUCATION

Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, KY
Master of Science in Industrial Organizational Psychology Expected Dec. 20XX

Notable Courses:

Advanced Research in Psychology
Multivariate Statistics
Cognition in the Workplace
Training and Development

Viking State College, Cincinnati, OH
Bachelor of Science in Psychological Science May 20XX
Minor in Sociology
Graduated magna cum laude

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Proctor & Gamble, Cincinnati, OH Jan. 20XX-Present
Human Resources Intern

- Assist HR director in developing recruitment initiatives
- Edit and improve employee training policies
- Process job applications

Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Covington, KY May 20XX-Sept. 20XX
Volunteer Coordinator

- Recruited and trained new volunteers
- Built and distributed schedule for food pantry locations across Northern Kentucky
- Responsible for staffing fundraising volunteer events
- Communicated with volunteers and created initiatives to improve experience

RESEARCH

Applied Research, Dr. Leon Erikson Aug. 20XX-May 20XX
Mental Health in the Workplace

- Collaborated with Dr. Erikson to design a research study
- Conducted preliminary research and drafted proposal
- Received funding from NKU Psychology Department
- Collected data from more than 12 workplaces on employee mental health status, after provided consent
- Implemented experimental strategies to improve productivity and level of happiness, job satisfaction
- Analyzed data and wrote report on findings, presented at two national conferences

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Viking Phonathon, Viking State College Feb. 20XX-May 20XX
Student Philanthropy Ambassador

- Communicated with alumni over the phone regarding donations
- Operated secure payment processing system
- Consistently met fundraising goals, contributing to scholarship funds

VOLUNTEER WORK

Brighton Center, *Educational Assistant* Dec. 20XX-Present
Campbell Country Public Schools, *Tutor* Oct. 20XX-Feb. 20XX

HONORS AND AWARDS

Outstanding Student Research Award Jan. 20XX
Alumni Grant for Mental Health Research May 20XX

INVOLVEMENT

Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee Aug. 20XX-Present
Psi Chi Member Jan. 20XX-Present

PUBLICATIONS

Norse, V., Erikson, L. (20XX). Mental Health in the Workplace. *Journal of Psychology*, 160-170.

Robert Smith

Highland Heights, KY 41099
859-123-4567
smithr1@nku.edu

EDUCATION

Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, KY
Bachelor of Science, Major: Biology, Minor: Chemistry
GPA 3.5/4.0

May 20XX

CERTIFICATIONS

Certified Pharmacy Technician, Pharmacy Technician Certification Board
American Heart Association, First Aid CPR AED

EXPERIENCE

Department of Chemistry, Northern Kentucky University
Assistant Researcher

Aug 20XX - present

- Accomplishments and accountability listed here
- This formula: action verb + accomplishments/accountability + results
- Examined and categorized nanoparticles on electron and atomic force microscopes resulting in journal articles in three national publications

Neighborhood Pharmacy, Highland Heights, KY
Pharmacy Technician, Cashier

June 20XX - present

- Promoted to Pharmacy Technician after 6 months of employment
- Provided friendly customer service at the Pharmacy counter which helped retain customers despite fierce competition in the industry
- Assisted with customer questions on insurance co-pays and researched discrepancies as needed
- Accurately and quickly prepared prescriptions for review by Staff Pharmacist
- Cash handling and credit-card processing, consistently balancing cash drawer to the penny

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Basic Biology Lab, Northern Kentucky University, KY
Teaching Assistant

Aug 20XX

- Set up laboratory experiment stations prior to start of class

- Assisted lab students with experiments and troubleshoot issues
- Graded lab reports and class presentations
- Proctored multiple examinations for Biology department

SCHOLARSHIP

Publications

U Timothy Dunn[§], Thuy Do[§], Quintin Hauser[§], KC Russell and *Robert Smith*. "An efficient one-step synthesis of isoflavanone compounds under microwave irradiation". *Tetrahedron*. (submitted to American Chemistry Journal, Aug 20XX)

Presentations

Use Department approved citation format
Use Department approved citation format

Use Department approved citation format
Use Department approved citation format

SERVICE

Charitable Pharmacy, Florence, KY June 20XX - present
Volunteer

- Volunteered over 30 hours at non-profit pharmacy serving the uninsured
- Sorted and organized donated medications
- Ensured stock was labeled correctly and located in correct location

Race for the Cure, Cincinnati, OH May 20XX - Aug 20XX
Volunteer Coordinator

- Distributed race volunteer materials in efforts to increase Race for the Cure volunteer involvement
- Served as a volunteer coordinator for refreshment tables leading a group of 20 volunteers
- Aided with clean up at conclusion of the race
- Sent and analyzed evaluations to volunteers with hopes to increase and improve volunteer experience

ACTIVITIES/HONORS

Student Affiliates of the American Chemical Society
Gamma Sigma Epsilon Chemistry Honor Society
NKU Bowling Club, founding member
William H. Greaves Undergraduate Scholarship
Dean's List, multiple semesters