

Your curriculum vita is probably the most important statement about your professional career. It is typically the first document that job search committees examine. You will also need the curriculum vita (c.v.) to apply for grants and fellowships, and probably to convince book publishers that you are a serious scholar. Unfortunately, most graduate students don't put much effort into making this a presentable and professional document. You should start compiling your c.v. early in your academic career, even if it isn't very long. Here are some helpful hints to get you started.

Collect. There are several different styles of c.v.'s out there, even though they essentially contain the same information. Ask some of your favorite professors for their c.v. and save them in a file. This will give you a great reference source for putting yours together. (Note: After giving this to my POL S 491 class in Fall 2001, not a single person asked for a copy of my c.v. This implies either that (a) they didn't read this sheet or (b) I'm not very popular. Since this paragraph is pretty much near the top of the paper, I fear the latter. Sigh. FYI: a copy of my vita is now located on my website.)

Ordering. The order you put information is very important. It signals to the academic community what you consider to be important. If teaching information comes first, you will be perceived as a person most interested in teaching jobs (usually at small liberal arts colleges or community colleges). Typically, research comes first. Here is a typical ordering for a research-based c.v.:


- *Contact information* – name, professional address, phone, e-mail, website. Home address and phone numbers are optional.
- *Professional Positions/Relevant Employment* – this is usually relevant only after you have an academic appointment. Teaching/research assistantships should be placed further down. Relevant employment may include positions in think tanks or publishing houses. Dishwasher at Pig 'N Pancake doesn't qualify as relevant.
- *Education* – Most recent first (Ph.D. [expected], M.A., B.A.) along with any honors received (magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, etc.). Nobody cares about your high school career at this level.
- *Dissertation* – If you are going out on the job market for the first time, put your dissertation title and committee after education. Some people include a brief (4-5 short sentence) abstract. Don't forget to list your committee members and identify your chair as that tells people more about you than you might think.
- *Publications* – This is important. Many employers look for what and where you have published. For a graduate student, recent Ph.D., this might be thin. Having zero, one or two publications is common. (See separate sheet on publishing.) You can include books, refereed articles, non-refereed articles, book chapters, policy pieces, and book reviews. Some longer, more substantive



magazine or newspaper articles could be included. Keep “letters to the editor” off the c.v.

- *Conference Presentations* – list the name of the paper, conference name and date. You may also list the city it was presented in. Even if your conference paper was eventually published, you should still list it here. People want to know if you are active in conference presentations.
- *Works In Progress* – it is important to communicate that you are an active scholar. List works in progress. “Progress” is a slippery term in that it could include works on the drawing board. If you do put down a “drawing board” project, be prepared to give at least a paragraph discussion of your research plan. Sometimes this section comes before “conference presentations.”
- *Other Conference Activities* – chairing a panel, serving as a discussant, being an organizer.
- *Research Fellowships/Grants/Awards* – telling people that you are successful in grubbing for grants is important. It is common, though not necessary, to list the size (\$) of the grant.
- *Teaching Experience* – list courses that you taught independently or T.A.’d for. Directorships of writing centers, etc. also can be included here. Being a tutor for Kaplan SAT prep courses doesn’t count.
- *Professional Affiliations* – what organizations are you a member of?
- *Professional Travel* – list places and dates for travel you did for fieldwork. This is particularly important for comparativists.
- *Languages Spoken* – list with your degree of proficiency.
- *Personal* – not very important, but you might want to list some hobbies as it may be a point of conversation with someone during an interview. I have always considered it inappropriate to list marital status and number of children, but I have seen this info appear often.
- *References* – include a list of at least three references and contact information. If your Ph.D. committee members are not on this list, that is a problem. (Why wouldn’t you want people to contact the chair of your dissertation?). It is perfectly acceptable to list a wide array of academic references (I encourage it), but ask each person first.

Other Considerations.

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- Single-sided. You can save trees in other ways.
 - Professional font. Times Roman or Century Schoolbook are the most common.
 - Reasonable font. Headings can be bigger font (14-18 point). Text should be 12 point font (or similar). Unlike a business resumé, c.v.’s can be long (often up to 10 pages for seasoned veterans), so don’t feel pressed to get everything on one page.

Don’t Leave Home Without It. When you go to conferences, take several copies, especially when you are looking for a job. Distribute them with your business card to people that you meet. If you don’t promote yourself, no one else will.