

A curriculum vitae (CV), Latin for “the course of one’s life,” provides a comprehensive overview of your academic and professional history. Primarily used in academic and research settings, CVs highlight education, scholarly achievements, research, teaching, and relevant professional activities. CVs are typically required for academic job applications, fellowship or research opportunities, and graduate school portfolios in place of a resume. While resumes are usually limited to one to two pages, CVs often extend to several pages and expand throughout your career. This handout is a general resource, so always tailor your work to your specific audience, discipline, or position.

Note: Outside the U.S. and for government CVs (also called federal resumes), the term “CV” may refer to a resume or different type of document.

General Guidelines

Since CVs cover the course of your academic career, it is important to keep detailed records. Consider creating a comprehensive document where you track all your academic history, experience, and skills. You can then pull from that document as you draft, update, and tailor your CV for specific positions and opportunities. Expect to expand your CV regularly as you gain more experience and qualifications.

Content

Your CV should be organized into clear, concise sections that highlight your relevant qualifications. The order and content will vary by discipline and experience, so arrange your sections strategically. For example, you might emphasize research experience and publications when applying for a position at a research institution, whereas you might list teaching experience first when applying to a teaching institution. To understand your discipline’s content expectations, seek information and feedback from trusted colleagues, mentors, or advisors in your field. Regardless of discipline or field, your contact information and education are typically included at the beginning of a CV.

Note: Be mindful of including content that may signal that you are a part of a protected class.

Contact Information

Place your name at the top of your CV as a header. Near your name, include your phone number and professional email address. Consider including other contact details such as your city and state, professional social media information, or website, if relevant.

Education

The education section typically follows your contact information. List your most recent degree first, whether you have completed that degree or are in the process of doing so. Do not include information about your high school education or experience unless directly relevant. As applicable, include the following details:

- Major(s) and minor(s)
- Institution where you received your degree, including city and state
- Graduation date (month and year)
- For graduate degrees, include your thesis or dissertation title and advisor or committee chair
- GPA (optional, not typically included past the undergraduate level)

Additional Sections

Typically, CVs will also include the following categories, with the order tailored to the audience and purpose:

- Publications (cited using your discipline's citation style)
- Conference or professional presentations (cited using your discipline's citation style)
- Teaching, leadership, or advising experience (may be individual sections or connected elsewhere)
- Research experience (including the lab or project, location, position, and supervisor)
- Research areas of interest
- Awards, honors, grants

Depending on your experience and goals, you may also include the following categories:

- Employment connected to your academic work or interests
- Volunteer or service experience (e.g., service in academic committees)
- Grants, fellowships, and scholarships (including the amount awarded)
- Courses taught (including course titles and descriptions)
- Relevant coursework (i.e., classes you have taken)
- Student, peer, or professional mentoring
- Professional memberships or affiliations
- Certifications or licenses
- Languages and other relevant skills (e.g., programming languages)
- Invited talks, workshops, or presentations (often listed as a subsection of scholarship)
- References and their contact information (optional, sometimes included in graduate applications)

Format

CVs are essentially a series of detailed lists with entries organized into intentional categories (see above). Since the style and format of those lists may vary by discipline, to understand the conventions of CVs in your field, talk to professors or professionals and review examples online. The length of your CV will depend on the breadth and depth of your experience. For example, an undergraduate student's CV might be 1–3 pages, whereas a professor's CV could easily reach 10+ pages. When formatting, consider the following:

- Organize your CV into clearly labeled sections
- Use bullet lists to provide additional details
- Order sections strategically (e.g., if applying for a research grant, put research toward the top)
- List entries like employment history or degrees in reverse chronological order (most recent first)
- Choose fonts that are easy to read and accessible both online and in print
- Maintain consistent formatting for all headings and body text
- Balance white space and text to increase readability and emphasize important information
- Limit your use of color to avoid scanning or legibility issues
- Label your CV file clearly and professionally before uploading or submitting
- Upload your CV as a PDF to preserve formatting (unless another file type is requested)

Note: This example CV demonstrates general principles, but it is not reflective of all disciplines. Remember to work with your audience, purpose, and context in mind.

First Name Last Name

professionalemail@email.com
801-555-5555

EDUCATION

M.A. Writing and Digital Media Studies

May 2026

Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ

Thesis: A Rhetorical Analysis of Subversion in Contemporary Film

Advisor: Dr. Anna Stone

B.A. English, Literary Studies

May 2024

Utah Valley University, Orem, UT

Dean's List May 2021 – May 2024

Begin bullets with action verbs and include quantifiable results. These lists can be longer and more detailed than a resume.

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Writing Instructor, Northern Arizona University

August 2025 – present

- Teach three intermediate writing courses to ~75 undergraduate students each semester
- Integrate multimedia approaches to teaching writing using film and instructional technology
- Co-teach an introductory, interdisciplinary course on writing and film criticism
- Maintain course materials in accordance with accreditation standards
- Organize and lead faculty reading circle with 15 participants

Research Assistant, Utah Valley University, Orem, UT

August 2023 – May 2024

- Assisted Dr. Anna Stone with research for a forthcoming publication on 20th century Utah authors
- Conducted archival research on Utah literary history for a state-wide digital humanities project
- Proofread and formatted four academic articles for faculty members in the English department

PUBLICATIONS

Format publications and presentations in the preferred citation style of your field or discipline (e.g., MLA for an English literature student).

“Beyond the Hyperreal in Contemporary Film and Literature.” *Pebble Stones Literary Magazine*, vol. 15, no. 2, Fall 2025, pp. 45–58.

“Autofictional Accounts in Modern Television.” *Essais: An Undergraduate Journal for Literary and Cultural Theory and Criticism*, vol. 20, no. 3, Spring 2024, pp. 15–26.

“The Existential Dread of Footnotes: A Post-Structuralist Analysis of Academic Anxiety.” *The International Review of Digital Media Research*, vol. 42, no. 7, Apr. 2022, pp. 676–681.

PRESENTATIONS

“The Curriculum Vitae: A Writing Genre Introduction for Undergraduate Students.” Rocky Mountain Symposium of Prospective Graduate Students, 15 June 2024, Salt Lake City, UT.

“The Sociolinguistics of Imagined Languages.” The Annual Meeting of the Fictional Linguistics Society, 5 May 2023, Flagstaff, AZ.

“Traditional Folk Narrative in Western Film.” North American Folklore Studies Conference, 10 March 2022, Salt Lake City, UT.

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

- Graduate Student Representative, University General Education Committee, Spring 2025
- Program Assistant, English Department Graduate Instruction, Fall 2025–Spring 2026
- Conference Assistant, Rocky Mountain Digital Studies Conference, Spring 2024
- Managing Editor for *Signals: An Undergraduate Journal for Digital Media*, Fall 2023 issue

RELEVANT COURSEWORK

Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ

- Advanced Rhetorical Theory
- Digital Humanities and Education
- Major Developments in Writing and Media Studies

AWARDS & HONORS

- Author Fellowship, Mountain Writing Institute, 2024
- First place 2022 Utah Original Writing Competition: Short Fiction
- Merit Scholarship for Fall 2021, Utah Valley University, Orem, UT

CERTIFICATIONS

- Seal of biliteracy in French
- Adobe Certified Expert (ACE) in Premiere Pro
- College Reading and Learning Association Advanced Tutor Certification
- CITI certification for IRB research

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Association of Writers & Writing Programs
- Writing & Media Studies Association
- National Council of Teachers of English