

UChicagoGRAD C.V. Guide

The Curriculum Vitae (C.V.) describes one's personal history of academic achievement. It remains the central document in most applications for graduate school, academic jobs, fellowships, and awards. It serves as a clear narrative of productivity in research, publishing, teaching and mentoring, presentation, service to one's profession and university, work experience related to education, and references. It evolves over time and may change shape or look throughout a career. But it always paints a *thorough* portrait of an individual, primarily through *accumulation*.

In other words, unlike the résumé, it does not have a page limit. It is not a substitute for a résumé. It is meant to be comprehensive, as opposed to curatorial. It can be tailored in some small but potentially important ways to particular opportunities and for particular audiences. It may look like “just” a list. But it is really telling a story about you as a scholar, building a case about your experience and qualifications.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE: there are no hard and fast rules to writing a C.V. This guide includes best practices for UChicago graduate students and postdocs. It presents conventions—**not laws**. There are exceptions to *every* rule. It is *always* best to have someone review your C.V. before submitting it. Moreover, because the look and feel of a C.V. often varies by discipline, make sure to consult other standout examples from within the field before sending out your C.V.

Four Things to Get Started

- ❑ **Take an Inventory of Your Experience:** gather notes on publication dates, awards, oral exams, research and fieldwork experience, presentations, classes taught (including TA, CA, and preceptor positions), committee service, mentoring opportunities, and references.
- ❑ **Pick Citation Conventions:** the precise format of publication and presentation citations should follow conventions of your discipline. The *most* important thing is to pick a set of rules and remain consistent across the document.
- ❑ **Collect Examples from Scholars:** take a close look at the C.V. of scholars in your field. Many college and university departments allow faculty to post their C.V. Think of these as resources, but be sure to use more than one example as a guide!
- ❑ **Don't Panic or Pad:** it can be a stressful process to take this kind of self-inventory. But this is an opportunity to feel *good* about all you have accomplished. The C.V. is a chance to highlight your success. Be honest with all that you've done and proud of your achievements as a scholar!

Do the “Easy Stuff”

Some quick formatting conventions to keep in mind before rushing to think about sections and specific experiences:

- **FONTS:** use a clear and standard font: something legible, but not Times New Roman, Calibri, or Cambria. These are the *default* fonts. Take just a moment to pick a font that will make your C.V. a bit more visually distinct. Go no smaller than size 11.
Serif or Sans-Serif fonts are acceptable!
- **MARGINS:** keep them sensible. One inch on all sides is a good start. Respect your reader's eyes: don't go below 0.7” on a side.
- **BOLDS, ITALICS, ALL-CAPS:** use these sparingly. Overuse can make the document difficult to read.
- **DATES:** each section should be arranged in reverse chronological order.

Contact Info. on a C.V.

Don't waste space. Your name and contact information should only take two or three lines at the top of the document at a maximum. Pick your department address OR your home address. Either is acceptable.

Education Section:

For graduate students, the Education Section typically comes first. Postdocs or others with teaching roles may lead with “Current Position.” It’s appropriate to include a dissertation title and committee member names. You might consider including oral exam areas to highlight competencies in broad areas. Thesis projects from previous programs can be included. In some cases, it’s appropriate to include university-wide, national, or international awards in this section.

Contact Info.

Keep it short. Don’t waste 4-5 lines on this info.

Degree or Year?

It’s possible to organize the education section by degree or by year – it’s a matter of personal preference. If you have not yet completed your degree, indicate expected completion date.

Exams, Diss, Etc.

Your education section can include your dissertation title, your advisors, and oral exams.

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EDUCATION	
Ph.D.	University of Chicago (Chicago, IL): Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, Expected June 2015. Dissertation: “Ancient Artifacts of the Near East and their Relationship with Germany.” Committee: Professor X (Chair); Professor Y; Professor Z
M.A.	University of Chicago (Chicago, IL): Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, 2010. Thesis: “ <i>Strange Connections between the Third Reich and Ancient Egypt</i> ”
B.A.	Yale University (New Haven, CT): Comparative Literature, 2004 (<i>Phi Beta Kappa</i>)

Publications Section:

Use a citation convention commonly used in an important journal for your field. Be consistent in the use of this convention.

What about Articles Under Review?

Include them, but check with your faculty advisor as to whether it is allowable to include the title of the journal. If you are using the C.V. to apply for jobs or fellowships, you might have good progress to report about these papers at the interview!

Can I Include Papers in Preparation?

Yes, especially if you do not have many completed articles. It’s important to demonstrate progress (and that you have completed work). Indicate in bold which papers are in preparation and separate them from the publications that have been printed.

Do not include the name of the journals to which you have submitted papers.

Should I Include Translations and/or Works in Other Languages?

Depending on the field, these may count toward your publication record. They can be broken out into a separate subsection.

Should I Include Book Reviews and/or articles for non-academic publications?

These may indeed be an asset, though they should be broken into a subsection as well.

ABSTRACTS: *In most disciplines, it is not conventional to include a full dissertation or thesis abstract. Check with your advisor!*

Most Common Sections

A typical C.V. includes the sections below. They can be reordered depending on a candidate’s strengths and the requirements of a particular application or institution.

Education
Publications
Research Experience*
Teaching
Presentations
Awards & Honors
Service
Languages
Professional Affiliations
Technical Skills
References

On Spacing:

UChicagoGRAD recommends putting section titles in all-caps bold and allowing two full spaces between sections.

**mostly for sciences/social sciences*

Other Ideas for Sections:

Make choices for inclusion of sections based on your strengths, your field, and the audience. Some examples:

Administrative Experience; Research or Teaching Interests; Media Appearances; Volunteer Work; Pedagogical Training; Mentoring Experience; Committee Work; Lab Leadership; International Collaborations; Secondary Teaching; Community College Teaching; Related Work Experience

Research and/or Fieldwork Experience Section

A Research Experience and/or Fieldwork Section is more common in the sciences and social sciences than in the humanities (though such a section can be used productively in the humanities, for example to describe long-term international projects or technical/digital methodologies if these are pertinent to discuss in the context of specific positions).

An effective Research and/or Fieldwork Experience section emphasizes:

- **Innovation:** what new knowledge, process, tools, etc. did the research produce?
- **Impact on the Field:** how does your research contribute to or change the focus of the field? Quantify this impact if you can.
- **Collaboration:** demonstrate that your work involves coordination with teams of researchers. It's good to emphasize international collaboration, work across disciplines and fields, etc.
- **Mentoring:** especially in cases where formal teaching opportunities may have been minimal, it can be good to emphasize mentoring responsibilities and relationships.
- **Grant Writing:** show that you are able to successfully win money for your work if possible
- **Skills/Methodologies:** what techniques did you have to use to conduct your research? What technical skills or familiarities did you develop in the course of your research?

Conference and Workshop Presentations Section(s)

The most common mistake that the UChicagoGRAD career team sees in this section is inconsistency. Pick a format and stick to it! If you are thin on publications and/or presentations, you can combine the two into "Publications & Presentations."

No matter how you format the presentations in these sections, you should include the following information for each:

- Date
- Title of Presentation and Conference/Workshop
- Host Venue (university or institution)
- City

Note: It's not advised to summarize (or provide an abstract for) the content of each presentation.

Don't Sell Yourself Short!

We often find out that students and postdocs leave out entirely their presentations at campus workshops.

While you should be clear to distinguish between workshops and conferences, it is acceptable to include both types of presentations in your C.V.

You can also include panels that you moderated or convened underneath subheadings within a "Presentations" section. Depending on the type of conference and your role, you might consider putting such activities in the Service section instead.

Honors and Awards

- Arrange honors and awards in reverse chronological order; make sure dates are clearly visible to show productivity
- Honors and awards may be broken out into "University Awards" and "External Fellowships and Awards" subsections
- It is acceptable to include short descriptions of awards (especially those with which the faculty committee might not be familiar).

University Service

What belongs in the service section can depend upon your specific experience:

- Committee work; student government
- Professional association volunteering
- Mentoring undergraduate students or younger cohorts of graduate students
- Research assistantships and higher education internship positions
- Divisional administrative work

Teaching (It's Always Important)

All institutions value effective teaching. When applying to academic jobs, it is a mistake to downplay or “bury” teaching on a C.V. (even for a tenure-track job at a Research I institution). It is true that some hiring committees will value research, publications, and presentations more highly than others. However, all institutions emphasize the quality of their teaching in materials to prospective undergraduates and expect that new faculty will be motivated instructors.

UChicagoGRAD's Career Development Team heartily endorses the trainings, events, workshops, web materials, and advising provided by the Chicago Center for Teaching when considering how to present teaching in one's jobs materials. Participation in the Center's pedagogy programming can both (a) help you become a more successful teacher and (b) demonstrate your commitment to becoming an effective teacher on your C.V.

Some Observations from UChicagoGRAD Staff About Teaching Sections

- There's no need to include course numbers.
- Teaching at multiple institutions and demonstrating that you have experience teaching students other than those at UChicago can be an asset.
- Especially if your formal classroom experience is limited, you can include mentoring opportunities. Being a BA Preceptor counts as teaching to be sure, but so too can individual tutoring and mentoring of undergraduates.

An Example Teaching Section

UNIVERSITY TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Chicago

Lecturer, Humanities Division

Navigating in Space (Spring 2015)

- Designed and proposed undergraduate-level seminar for 15 students
- Graded all assignments; held regular one-on-one office hours
- Advised 2 undergraduates on thesis projects

Lecturer, Humanities Division

Pluto in Myth and Imagination (Winter 2014, Winter 2013)

- Co-taught undergraduate-level seminar for 8 students per term on history of science
- Integrated guest talks and visits to planetarium and organizations in Chicago
- Planned all assignments and in-class exercises
- Held regular office hours; designed and graded all assignments including Twitter use/blogs

Writing Intern, Collegiate Division

Media Aesthetics (Spring 2012, Winter 2012, Fall 2011, Spring 2011, Winter 2011, Fall 2010)

- Led discussion sections of 4-7 first-year undergraduate students in required humanities courses
- Taught writing, with focus on argument, evidence, clarity of structure
- Collaborated with diverse faculty members to design assignments integrated with syllabus
- Graded papers and provided extensive comments and feedback
- Held regular office hours to provide answers to student questions and provide support
- Advised students on issues related to acclimation to college, academic work, course selection
- Guest lectured and responded to faculty feedback on teaching effectiveness

Pedagogy Training

Little Red Schoolhouse, University of Chicago

Pedagogies of Writing (Summer 2010)

- Completed intensive graduate-level pedagogy training course
- Designed sample syllabi and assignments
- Developed classroom strategies for addressing diverse learning needs and goals

Including Details:

In some contexts, it may be acceptable to include more details about your teaching (for example, in the case of applications to positions that place an emphasis on pedagogy).

This may be helpful if you have not done a lot of teaching, but can emphasize specific achievement and roles within the classroom.

Note:

Do not use bullets or include details for their own sake!

Rather, use details to help hiring committees understand what titles like Preceptor, Writing Intern, or Lecturer mean in specific institutional contexts.

Clarification on Three Final Sections

LANGUAGES: Include languages and levels of proficiency (reading, speaking, conversational, fluent, etc.). You do *not* have to indicate your “native” language, as your nationality or country of origin is not information you are required to reveal in the application process.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS: include any memberships in professional organizations that are affiliated with your field.

REFERENCES: it is still common practice to include contact information of references on your C.V. You should ask individuals whether they would be comfortable being listed on your C.V. You should always include recommendation letter writers, but it is acceptable to include a few more.

Overall C.V. DO's:

1. **Read** other C.V.'s and follow standard formats for your discipline
2. **Tailor** to institutions
3. **Make PAGE ONE** compelling enough for reader to continue
4. **Explain** the significance of your work
5. **Vary** section styles to suit the content and move reader along
6. **Focus** on innovation and impact in each bullet
7. **Be specific** regarding methodologies employed
8. **Quantify** wherever possible
9. **Think a bit more** about font and layout
10. **Proofread** (and invite others to proofread) for consistency and grammar
11. **BONUS:** Keep your C.V. updated on your personal website

Overall C.V. DON'Ts:

1. **Expect** *everyone* to read the whole document
2. **Assume** a publication list replaces the need to include details about your research
3. **Include** a half-page summary of your dissertation/research
4. **Write “Curriculum Vitae”** at the top
5. **List** course numbers without description
6. **Tack on** employment that is not related to research or academia
7. **Use** subjective claims or adjectives: “exceptional,” “ground-breaking,” etc.
8. **Include** photos, birthdate or any other personal biographical information
9. **Make it longer** than your advisor's C.V.
10. **Under-sell** yourself!

One-on-One Feedback at UChicagoGRAD

Every C.V. has a thousand variations. Every discipline has its own conventions. At UChicagoGRAD, we are happy to review drafts at every stage of completion and answer questions specific to your individual case.

We can help you with organization, tailoring, formatting, and the look/feel of your document. We can do *some* proofreading, but we spend the bulk of our time with students and postdocs going over questions about structure and presentation of information.

You can sign up with a Career Development Staff Member at gradcareers.uchicago.edu.

Final Checklist

- Proofread AND Copy-Edit:** make sure that others are reading your C.V. to check for mistakes in copy and content
- PDF:** before submitting or uploading your C.V. anywhere, save it as a PDF and be sure that formatting was not affected in the conversion process
- Review Descriptions:** consider if there are additional ways you might be able to adjust your C.V. for the readers in your audience
- Communication:** print a copy and save the current version in your email or cloud-based storage for easy editing in the future.
- Update** your academia.edu page, your LinkedIn profile, and your personal webpage with your current C.V.!