

# Post Graduate Planning

*Olin's resource for internships, summer research, jobs, graduate school and more...*

## Guide to Curriculum Vitae Writing

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This guide is based on How to Prepare Your Curriculum Vitae, Acy L. Jackson and C. Kathleen Geckeis, The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 2003.

**Guide to Curriculum Vitae Writing**  
**Olin College, Office of Post Graduate Planning**

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Version 2, September 27, 2005, L. Frusztajer

## **I. What is a Curriculum Vitae?**

A curriculum vitae, also referred to as a CV, Vita or Vitae, is a detailed biographical description of your educational and work background. It differs from a resume, a one page description of your work experience and educational background, not only in length, but also in detail.

Though much of the information that you include in a CV is similar to what you would put in your resume, a CV goes into more detail to characterize your experiences and interests so that the reader has a fuller picture of who you are.

The term *curriculum vitae* means “the course of one’s life or career.” Traditionally used among higher education professionals, the CV is now increasingly applicable for under-graduates applying to graduate schools, fellowships, as well as for applicants seeking employment in research, teaching and management.

## **II. The Document: What are the major components of a CV?**

The major components of a CV, described in more detail in Section IV, below, include:

- professional / career / research objectives
- education
- coursework
- honors / achievements / awards
- research
- instrumentation experience
- specialized experience
- publications / presentations / works in progress
- work experience
- background
- community service
- co-curricular experience
- interests
- travel

### **III. Process: How to develop the content of your CV**

#### **Identify Competencies and Skills**

Competencies are what you do well. They include all of the things that you have learned as a result of acquiring a skill through education, training and experience. A skill defines the level at which you can perform a competency.

The competencies and skills that you have learned as a result of formal training and education are not only transferable to other settings, but are also valuable tools in developing an effective CV.

#### **Step 1: Identify your competencies**

A competency is what you know as a result of your education and training. It reflects content and knowledge. Some examples of competencies include:

- accounting
- communication
- economics
- humanities
- language
- mathematics
- natural sciences
- physical sciences
- quantitative reasoning
- social sciences

#### **Step 2: Identify your skills**

Skills reflect what you do with what you know, or the degree to which you perform a competency, technique or craft. For example:

- written or spoken language
- information procession
- observation
- research
- analysis
- organization
- problem solving
- logical reasoning
- evaluation

#### **Step 3: Determine levels of proficiency**

When you include a skill, you should describe the levels or degrees of proficiency you have achieved in using it.

##### **Example 1**

Skill: improvisation (music composition)

Level / Degree of Proficiency: Gifted trombonist; expert in creating extemporaneous jazz idioms using folk elements indigenous to southeastern United States; master in use of counterpoint rhythms

##### **Example 2**

Skill: foreign language

Level / Degree of Proficiency: Conversant in Latin; proficient reading Swahili and French

## **IV. The Components: What to include in your CV and how to state information**

The components included in a CV should reflect your own experiences and aspirations. Your CV need not include entries for all of the components listed below. These should serve as a guiding framework for creating a full picture that fits your own situation.

The order in which these components appear should reflect the significance that you attribute to them. Arrange them so that the most important information appears at the beginning and the least important at the end of your CV.

**Professional / Career / Vocational / Research Objectives:** The first component of a CV states your objectives or the reasons that you are distributing your CV. Connect your goals, which should be logically and clearly stated, to those of the program or position for which you are applying. Be specific in stating what it is you would like to do.

**Education:** This component should provide graduate and professional schools and prospective employers with a brief but thorough understanding of your academic background. You should indicate the following:

- graduation dates
- degrees and the dates they were received
- diplomas
- certificates
- names of universities, colleges, professional schools or other institutions that you have attended
- your majors and minors along with your grade point average for each
- your cumulative grade point average for each institution attended as well as for each degree

Highlight significant academic achievements, such as strong grades in specific courses, as well as any extensive background you have in areas outside your major / minor. If you are an undergraduate and a candidate for honors or high honors in your major, include that information in the education component.

**Coursework:** Provide complete course titles, with brief descriptions where appropriate, so that prospective employers have a clear indication that the coursework matches the job requirement. Mention grades that you have received to highlight academic performance.

List courses in groups that support and strengthen your objectives.

**Honors, Achievements, Awards:** List and briefly describe all special recognitions that you have received, including study group participation, community services, departmental awards, athletic awards and / or lists, scholarships, fellowships and memberships in academic organizations.

**Thesis Abstract:** Summarize your thesis in a brief abstract. Include the full title and date or term of completion.

**Research Interests:** Be as specific as possible in stating your research interests. Strike a balance between being specific enough to ensure a match between your objectives and those of the program to which you are applying and being general enough not to preclude options if your research interests are flexible. This is a difficult balancing act.

**Research and / or Laboratory Experience:** Provide detailed descriptions of your work. Be sure to give the title of each project. List the names and titles of professors or others who have supervised your research.

#### IV. The Components -- *continued*

**Instrumentation Experience:** If you have used standard instruments in a laboratory, describe that use. If you have used state-of-the-art instruments, it is appropriate to describe both the instruments and the extent to which you have used them.

**Specialized Skills:** Use the information that you developed on your competencies and skills to include interpersonal, leadership, organizational or analytical skills you have as well as their applications.

**Publications / Presentations / Works-in-Progress:** Provide appropriate bibliographic descriptions. Though classroom presentations would not normally be included here, there are occasions when students are selected to give presentations because of superior classroom performance. These experiences should be listed.

**Work Experience:** List all of your work experiences, including internships, summer jobs and campus employment. Give brief, but detailed descriptions of your responsibilities. Include titles, names of the organizations, locations and dates of employment. For example:

*Coach*, Junior Tennis Teams, Hutto High School, Bainbridge, GA. Summer 1994

*Research Assistant*, Dean of Students Office, Bowdoin College. Wrote computer program for housing lottery. 1994

**Background:** This component might include information regarding citizenship, prolonged residence abroad and / or unusual educational or work experiences.

**Community Service:** Include volunteer work, contributions to a community and / or membership in university-wide committees.

**Co-curricular Activities:** List and describe campus programs and activities in which you have been an *active* participant, such as student government, athletics, academic clubs and language clubs.

**Interests:** This section includes avocations such as bird-watching, stamp collecting, chess, rugby and music.

**Travel:** Include extended international travel as a result of academic study abroad. Do not include brief visits abroad as a tourist. If, on the other hand, you have had extensive domestic travel that is related to your objectives, list that here. When appropriate, list cities, states, regions, or countries alphabetically. For example:

ACADEMIC STUDY ABROAD

**Sea Semester**, Greece, summer of 2000

Semester spent on a schooner to study marine life and to maintain ship

**References / Letters of Recommendation:** This component is optional. If you choose to include references, include only names and titles of people you have asked to write recommendations for you. If appropriate, you may simply indicate the following on your CV:

References available upon request

## ***Curriculum Vitae Sample 1***

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### **SARAH SCHMIDT**

2 Ridgeway Road  
Memphis, TN 45208  
205-555-5555  
[sarah\\_schmidt@yahoo.com](mailto:sarah_schmidt@yahoo.com)

University of Tennessee  
135 Forest Street  
Memphis, TN 02238  
205-555-5555  
[sarah.schmidt@utenn.edu](mailto:sarah.schmidt@utenn.edu)

### **CAREER OBJECTIVE**

Short Range: A mechanical engineering position in product development, including design, testing, and project scheduling

Long Range: M.Sc., Ph.D.

### **EDUCATION**

B.S., 1996, University of Tennessee, Memphis, TN; major in Mechanical Engineering; GPA 3.7; cumulative GPA 3.2

Summer 1992, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL; studied computer science and environmental geology

### **COURSEWORK**

#### **Engineering**

Principles of Engineering  
Mechanical Design  
Vector Calculus  
Materials Science I, II, III  
Non-Linear Dynamic and Chaos  
Design for Manufacturing

#### **Related Coursework**

Entrepreneurship  
Leadership in Organizations  
Science Fiction of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century  
Foundations of Democracy  
Orchestration: The Big Band Era

### **RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

Senior Thesis. "Manufacturability of Cooling Systems for Data Center Server Systems," Department of Mechanical Engineering, University of Tennessee. Thesis Advisor, E. L. Baum, Ph.D. 1995 – 1996

Research Assistant. Bonney Center for Mechanical Engineering, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL. Summer 1992

Supervisor, Dr. James L. Lee, Received NSF Grant  
Examined materials properties of high temperature tolerant resins

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Young Engineers Society, American Engineering Association 1995

### HONORS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Stella Florence Pettypiece Memorial Price in mechanical engineering for outstanding performance in first year engineering 1992

Clarence Charles Zess Mathematics Price for Excellence in Calculus 1992

*Captain*, National Championship Swim Team 1991

*All-America*, high school swimming 1990, 1991

Deborah Wingert Athletic Scholarship (swimming), University of Tennessee 1992 – 1994

### COCURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Varsity Swim Team, University of Tennessee 1994 – 1996

Big Brother / Big Sister, University of Tennessee 1994 – 1996

*Tutor*, Mechanical Engineering Department, University of Tennessee, Fall 1995; assisted students in Design for Manufacturing

### OTHER EXPERIENCE

*Assistant to the Manager*, Welsh Electric Company, Tuscaloosa, AL

Coordinated warehouse inventory with showroom inventory, Summer 1996

*Coach*, Tuscaloosa Swim Club, Tuscaloosa, AL, Summer 1995

*Coach*, United Swimming Clinics, Mercersburg, PA, Summer 1993, 1994

## ***Curriculum Vitae Sample 2***

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### **MARIA VALESQUEZ COLON**

(permanent)  
2723 Willow Park Drive  
Golden, CO 80401  
(303) 555-5555

(until June 20, 2006)  
University of Rhode Island, Box 8028  
Kingston, RI 02881  
(401) 555-5555

### **EDUCATION**

B.A., June 2006, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI  
Major in geology (GPA 3.4) with primary interest in oceanography.  
Cumulative GPA 3.3.

### **COURSEWORK**

#### **Geology**

Physical Geology  
Oceanography  
Mineralogy  
Geology  
Coastal Geology  
Structural Geology

#### **Related Sciences**

Chemical Principles I  
Chemical Principles II  
Calculus I  
Computer Science II  
Physics I  
Physics II

#### **Other**

Economic Principles  
Introduction to Philosophy  
Psychology  
Intermediate Portuguese  
History of Egypt  
Mass Media

### **HONORS**

Dean's Award, six of six semesters  
Phi Eta Sigma, honor society for first-year students, 1993  
*Recipient*, The Camille and Henry Dreyfus Foundation Scholarship for  
National Merit Finalist studying chemistry or related science

### **SPECIAL SKILLS**

Language: Fluent in Spanish; conversant in French and Portuguese  
Computer: Languages: C, C++, DB2, Visual Basic, Java, COBOL



### **LABORATORY EXPERIENCE**

*Researcher*: The Sediment History of the Pettaquamscutt River and Its Relation to the Narrangansett Bay, RI. Dr. J. King, advisor. Fall 2004

*Research Assistant*, Lake Ontario Coastal Survey, Colgate University, Department of Geology. Dr. C. McClennen and Dr. P. Pinet, advisors. Fall 2005

*Researcher*, Coastal Geomorphology, cuspidal beach formations and their relation to rip currents. Dr. C. McClennen, advisor. Summer 2004

*Teaching Assistant*, Mineralogy, University of Rhode Island, Department of Geology. Dr. J. Novacek, instructor. Fall 2003

### **INSTRUMENT EXPERIENCE**

- Coulter Counter/Elzone
- Freeze Drier
- S.E.M.

### **OTHER EXPERIENCE**

*Tour Guide*, Enviro Tours, Everglades, FL. Conducted environmental tours of Central America. Summer 2005

### **COCURRICULAR**

- *Certified*, NAUI Openwater I SCUBA diver
- Position #1, Women's Cross-Country Ski Team, 2003 – present; Captain, 2002
- Latin American Student Association, 2003 – present
- Pi Beta Fraternity for Women, 2003 – present
- Cycling Team, 2005
- Geology Club, 2003 – present

### **TRAVEL**

Extensively throughout Spain, Portugal, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, and Norway; resided in Oslo, Norway for two years (2001 – 2003)