

Tools for the Academic Job Search

You will need to create several documents in preparation for your academic job search. They include: a curriculum vitae (also referred to as a “c.v.”); cover letter(s); design sheets; references/letters of recommendation; teaching statements and research interests; and a portfolio. We can offer you several tips to help you get started on these materials. Please refer to the following suggestions as you begin your rough drafts.

Preparing a Curriculum Vitae

Candidates for academic positions will be asked for a curriculum vitae instead of a resume. The c.v. places primary emphasis on the details of your education. A curriculum vitae:

- Can be from 2-4 pages (young professional), 4-7 (more experienced professional)
- Stresses academic achievements, including teaching experience, publications, research papers/interests, presentations and exhibitions, awards and honors
- Lists references including name, title, phone numbers, address and email
- Can include a doctoral dissertation abstract and a statement of research or scholarly interests
- Follows a more traditional format than commonly used for resumes
- Personal data may be appropriate *if* it demonstrates your experience and expertise

Similar to the resume, your c.v. needs to be clear, grammatically correct, and organized to encourage the reader to contact you for an interview. Ideally, the curriculum vita emphasizes your accomplishments to your maximum advantage.

The c.v. generally begins with detailed information about your academic training. Next, list all of your relevant teaching and research experiences. Provide lots of details in these sections. Make your categories broad enough to cover a variety of experiences (teaching assistant, Career Discovery instructor, BAC instructor, etc).

Review and organize your educational and professional history by the following categories:

- Name and contact information
- Education: Discuss your graduate and undergraduate work in detail. List each institution, degree, field of concentration and date of graduation in reverse chronological order. Include the title of your thesis or dissertation and the name of your advisor and critics (if their inclusion would be of help). List additional research projects and activities related to your training.
- Honors/Awards: List separately or grouped depending on the number you need to include.
- Academic Experience: Categorize as teaching, writing or research if you have substantial experience; utilize one heading if you have limited experience in the academic world.
- Professional Experience: Practice experience is highly valued for most academic positions.
- Licensure/Registration/Certification: List any credentials here.
- Publications/Presentations: List in standard bibliographic form. You can create subcategories if the list is long. Pay close attention to your most important work. Emphasize the credibility of presentations at established societies and associations or articles in referenced journals.
- Grants: List funding agencies and projects for which they were awarded, along with dates.

- Scholarly and Professional Membership/Leadership: Your membership or committee work for professional organizations can be a big plus on a c.v.
- Skills: Foreign language skills and computer skills can be listed here.
- Personal: Include travel, resident status if you are not a U.S. citizen, and interests that you feel are important. This section is completely optional.

Cover Letters

Create a sample letter that you can use as a template and tailor each letter to a specific job/institution. Be certain that you double check each letter for spelling and accuracy, and remember that this letter demonstrates your writing ability. You may want to save all your correspondence to refer back to later.

Ensure that the letter addresses how well you fit with the institution and the contributions you will make to this specific department. Address the cover letter to the contact person, or if none is available, to the department chair. If you cannot locate the name of a person, you may address the letter to "Members of the Search Committee".

The first paragraph will serve to introduce you. Include your education level, graduation date, and years of experience. State how you learned about the job. The second and third paragraphs demonstrate how your research and qualifications fit the institution's needs, as well as courses you are willing to teach or develop. The closing paragraph reiterates your interest in and enthusiasm for the position.

Portfolio

Depending on the school, you may need to send a portfolio of work up front or later in the application process. Be sure to solicit feedback on your portfolio from faculty and colleagues at the GSD. You may also want to have a more flexible portfolio that you can tailor to specific schools.

Statement of Research and Scholarly Interests

This document is a focused two page representation of where your work is heading. Discuss your thoughts about the direction of your future work. This document should spark questions that the committee will pose to you about your work.

Teaching Materials/Teaching Portfolio/Teaching Philosophy

Your statement of teaching philosophy may discuss approaches you have taken in the past and how students have responded to them. Teaching materials may include student work and syllabi from past courses. You may also develop a syllabus for a course you would like to teach in the future.

Please refer to curriculum vitae samples on the GSD Career Services website.

Resources

Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, Harvard University www.bokcenter.fas.harvard.edu
Extensive services, advice, videos and books are available related to the academic search.

Check the following books in the GSD Career Services Office for more information:

"Cover Letters that Knock 'em Dead" by Martin Yate, Adams Media, 2004.

"Prepare Your Curriculum Vitae" by Acy Jackson & C. Kathleen Geckeis, VGM Career Books, 2003.

"Dynamic Cover Letters" by Katherine Hansen and Randall Hansen, PhD, Ten Speed Press, 2001.