

Career Mentor Weekly Staff Meeting

# Academic CV Writing

for UNR Graduate Students

A Guide for Mentoring PhD and Master's Students



Academic  
Careers



Industry Transition



Best Practices



University of Nevada, Reno

**Nevada Career Studio**

The University's Central Career Services Office

## FRIDAY MORNING ICE BREAKER

**If given the choice, who would you prefer working with as a walk-in client:**

- (a) An Honors College freshman assigned to prepare a resume;
- (b) A junior seeking guidance on gaining experience and earning money while studying;
- (c) A senior seeking permanent employment following their graduation in three months; or
- (d) A graduate student seeking assistance with the preparation of an academic *curriculum vitae* for
  - (i) a post doctorate fellowship or university teaching position, (ii) employment in their field of study, or
  - (iii) entering private industry to pay-off student loans?

**Show of hands for (a), (b), (c) or (d). Why?**

What we will discuss and learn together

# Workshop Objectives

01

## Understanding the Difference

CV vs Resume: Key distinctions, when to use each document, and geographic variations in expectations

02

## Academic CV Essentials

Essential sections, publications formatting, and professional presentation standards

03

## Industry CV/Resume Strategies

Translating academic experience, highlighting transferable skills, and structuring for impact

04

## Common Mistakes to Avoid

Critical errors, quality control checklists, and final review strategies



**Pro Tip:** **Understand the client's goals and objectives** and then help them tailor every document to their specific audience—academic committees value comprehensive credentials, while industry recruiters prioritize relevant skills and quantifiable achievements.

What's a Curriculum Vitae?



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# Understanding the Difference

CV vs Resume: Key Distinctions for UNR Graduate Students



Document Types



Audience Analysis

# CV vs Resume: Fundamental Differences

Understanding when and how to use each document type



## Academic CV

### Length



No restrictions – can be 1-10+ pages depending on experience



### Content

Comprehensive record of all academic achievements, publications, presentations, grants



### Purpose

Establish scholarly credibility and demonstrate research trajectory



### Audience

Hiring committees, admissions panels, grant reviewers

**Best for:** PhD applications, postdoc positions, faculty roles, research grants, fellowships



## Industry Resume



### Length

Strictly 1-3 pages maximum – conciseness is critical



### Content

Curated selection of relevant skills and experiences tailored to specific role



### Purpose

Marketing tool demonstrating value and fit for specific position



### Audience

Recruiters, hiring managers, HR professionals (often non-academic)

**Best for:** Industry jobs, consulting, non-profits, government, tech companies



**Reassurances:** You are each experts on mentoring all students on their preparation of strong resumes. Academic *curriculum vitae* (fancy Latin for “course of life”) is simply a variation on the theme, like a resume on steroids. You’ve got this. Do not be intimidated by any over-bearing or needy graduate student.

# When to Use Each Document

Strategic document selection is based on career goals and application context



## Use a CV For:



### Graduate School Applications

PhD and Master's program admissions require comprehensive academic history



### Research Positions

Postdoctoral fellowships, research scientist roles, lab positions



### Academic Faculty Roles

Tenure-track professor positions, lecturer appointments, visiting scholar roles



### Grants & Fellowships

NSF, NIH, Fulbright, and other competitive funding applications



### Academic Conferences

Speaker submissions, panel applications, workshop proposals



## Use a Resume For:



### Industry Positions

Corporate R&D, tech companies, pharmaceutical industry, engineering firms



### Non-Profit Organizations

Research institutes, policy think tanks, advocacy organizations



### Government & Public Sector

Federal agencies, state departments, policy analysis roles



### Consulting & Business

Management consulting, data analytics, market research firms



### Startups & Entrepreneurship

Early-stage companies, venture capital, innovation roles



**Pro Tip:** When in doubt, review and discuss the application instructions with the client. If they request a "CV" in a non-academic context outside the US, they likely mean a resume. When the client is applying for an international position, direct them to research country-specific expectations.

Curriculum Vitae

# Academic CV Essentials

Building a Strong Academic Curriculum  
Vitae



Essential Sections



Publications



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# Essential CV Sections & Structure

Help organize the Client's academic credentials in reverse chronological order with strategic section placement

## 1 Contact Information

Full name, professional email, phone number, institutional affiliation, LinkedIn profile, personal website (if applicable)

## 2 Education

List degrees in reverse chronological order. Include: institution name, degree title, dates, dissertation/thesis title, advisor name (particularly if well-known), relevant coursework (optional, keep brief)

## 3 Research Experience

Lab positions, research assistantships, independent projects. Include: institution/lab name, position title, dates, brief description of project, your specific contributions, methods used, key findings

## 4 Publications

Separate peer-reviewed articles from conference papers. List all authors in publication order, bold your name. Include: full citation, publication status (submitted, under review, accepted)

## 5 Teaching Experience

Courses taught, TA positions, guest lectures, mentoring. Include: course name, institution, your role, dates, brief description of responsibilities, number of students (if significant)

## 6 Presentations

Conference talks, poster sessions, invited lectures. Include: presentation title, conference name, location, date, format (oral/poster)

## 7 Awards & Honors

Fellowships, scholarships, prizes, dean's list. Include: award name, granting institution, date, brief description if not self-explanatory

## 8 Grants & Funding

Research funding secured, travel grants, equipment grants. Include: funding source, amount (optional), dates, project title

## 9 Professional Service

Journal reviewing, conference organizing, committee work, student group leadership

### Section Order Strategy

Prioritize sections based on the client's strengths and the position. For research positions, put publications early. For teaching-focused roles, emphasize teaching experience.

This should all look and feel familiar to each CM. Some different categories, but the same rules for presenting data.

# Publications & Research Presentation

Professional formatting standards for showcasing scholarly output

## Journal Articles

### Format:

Author, A. A., **Client's Name**, & Author, C. C. (Year). Title of article. Journal Name, Volume(Issue), pages. DOI

- ✓ List ALL authors in publication order—no "et al."
- ✓ **Client's name bolded** for easy identification
- ✓ Include DOI (digital object identifier) when available
- ✓ Indicate status: submitted, under review, accepted

## Conference Papers

### Format:

**Client's Name**, & Co-author, B. (Year, Month). Title of presentation. Paper presented at Conference Name, Location.

- ✓ Separate from journal articles—different section
- ✓ Specify format: oral presentation, poster session
- ✓ Include acceptance rate if prestigious (e.g., "15% acceptance")

## Works in Progress

### For Early-Stage Researchers:

If the client has limited publications, include a separate "Manuscripts in Preparation" section with realistic, defensible entries.

### Important Caveat:

The client should only list manuscripts where experimental work and analysis are complete, and they are actively drafting. Be prepared to discuss progress in interviews.

- ✗ **Don't:** List vague "planned" publications
- ✗ **Don't:** Include works where you haven't started writing
- ✗ **Don't:** Exaggerate status—be honest about progress

## Best Practices

1. Reverse chronological order (most recent first)
2. Use discipline-appropriate citation style (APA, MLA, Chicago)
3. Include link to Google Scholar or ORCID profile
4. Avoid listing journal impact factors—focus on quality
5. Mark equal co-authorship with asterisk if applicable

# CV Formatting Best Practices

Ensure clarity, professionalism, and scannability in your academic document



## Typography & Fonts

### Recommended:

- 11-12pt for body text
- 14-16pt for headings
- Professional fonts: Garamond, Cambria, Times New Roman

### Avoid:

- Fonts smaller than 10pt
- Decorative or script fonts
- Multiple font families



## Layout & Spacing

### Margins:

- Minimum 0.5-1 inch all around
- Consistent throughout

### Spacing:

- Line spacing: 1.15-1.5
- Space between sections
- Avoid dense text blocks



## Section Headings

Use clear, bold section headings for easy navigation. Standard headings include:

Education

Research Experience

Publications

Teaching

Presentations

Awards



## File Format & Naming

### Format:

- Save as PDF (unless specified otherwise)
- Preserves formatting across devices

### File Name:

- LastName\_CV.pdf
- LastName\_CV\_2025.pdf
- Avoid: CV.pdf or MyCV.pdf

## Consistency Checklist

- ✓ Same font family throughout
- ✓ Consistent date formatting (MM/YYYY or Month Year)
- ✓ Uniform bullet point style
- ✓ Same indentation levels
- ✓ Page numbers on every page (except first)
- ✓ Header with last name on each page

## Common Pitfalls

- Tables and columns (ATS issues)
- Headers and footers with important info
- Graphics or photos
- Underlining and excessive italics
- Inconsistent spacing
- Orphaned section headers

**Pro Tip:** The client should print their CV to check formatting. Issues invisible on screen often appear in print.

Job Hunt Strategies

# Industry Resume Strategies

Translating Academic Experience for Industry Success



Translation



Transferable Skills



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# Translating Academic Skills to Industry Language

Client should reframe their scholarly achievements using business-appropriate terminology and key words

## ↔ Translation Examples

### Academic Language:

"Conducted independent research on neural network optimization algorithms"

### Industry Translation:

"Led a 3-year R&D initiative developing machine learning solutions that improved computational efficiency by 40% "

### Academic Language:

"Taught undergraduate biochemistry course to 80 students"

### Industry Translation:

"Developed and delivered technical training programs for 80+ professionals, achieving 95% satisfaction ratings"

### Academic Language:

"Presented research findings at international conferences"

### Industry Translation:

"Delivered executive presentations to diverse audiences, translating complex data into actionable business insights"

## 📊 Client to Quantify Their Impact

Numbers provide concrete evidence of the client's capabilities. Translate academic metrics into business-relevant quantifications:



### Budget Management

Grant funding → "Managed \$500K research budget"



### Team Leadership

Lab supervision → "Supervised team of 5 researchers"



### Project Timelines

Dissertation completion → "Delivered complex 4-year project on schedule"



### Publication Impact

Citation count → "Research influenced by 200+ subsequent studies"



## Key Translation Principles

1. Focus on outcomes, not just activities
2. Use industry terminology from job descriptions
3. Emphasize business value and ROI
4. Highlight collaboration and teamwork
5. Demonstrate problem-solving abilities

# Key Transferable Skills for Graduate Students

The client's graduate experience has equipped with valuable competencies—here's how to articulate them



## Project Management

Planning, coordinating, and executing complex initiatives with multiple stakeholders and deadlines.

**Academic Context:** Dissertation research, lab management, conference organization

**Industry Value:** "Managed multi-phase research project with 6-month timeline, coordinating 4 collaborators across 2 institutions"



## Communication

Conveying complex ideas clearly through writing, presentations, and interpersonal interactions.

**Academic Context:** Publications, conference presentations, teaching, grant writing

**Industry Value:** "Authored 5 peer-reviewed publications and presented to 200+ audience members at national conferences"



## Problem-Solving

Identifying challenges, designing innovative solutions, and troubleshooting obstacles.

**Academic Context:** Research design, methodology development, experimental troubleshooting

**Industry Value:** "Developed novel methodology that reduced data collection time by 30% while maintaining accuracy"

Review

# Quality Control & Proofreading

First Impressions are Lasting



Fresh Eyes



Quality Control



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## Testing What We've Learned: Group Pop Quiz

<https://gemini.google.com/share/d61ade6868b4>

**CONCLUDING REMINDERS:  
EVERY CV MUST BE PREPARED WITH THE AUDIENCE IN MIND!**

**Clients must diligently research each opportunity and job description:** Ideally, each CV should be prepared with the target employer or institution in mind. Key words extracted from the position listing should be integrated into the CV. Each CV is a marketing document designed to sell the client's future potential based on their past achievements.

**Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) are quietly watching and screening CVs:** The subscription based **LinkedIn Recruiter®**, **Handshake** and other applications enable recruiters and employers to search CVs and social media profiles for talent. Most medium-to-large companies reportedly use AI enabled software to scan CVs before a human ever sees them.

**Standard Headings:** Stick to "Work Experience," "Education," and "Skills."

**Single Column:** While two-column designs look pretty, some older ATS systems struggle to read them correctly.

**Keywords are King:** CVs should mirror the language and field specific terminology used in the job descriptions.

**Save CV as PDF:** Unless the job post specifically asks for a .docx, always send a PDF to preserve formatting which is standard for OCR.

