

Developing a Medical School Curriculum Vitae (CV)

A *Curriculum Vitae* (literally, “the course of one’s life”) offers a comprehensive overview of those accomplishments that are relevant to residencies, teaching, and research positions, as well as to fellowship, internship, and grant applications. While a resume is usually limited to a page in length, the CV of a graduate student may be three or more pages long, and that of a tenured faculty member as many as twenty. Content, however, rather than length is the real distinguishing factor.

It’s always important to think about our readers in terms of both organization and readability. We want to make sure our readers see the most relevant, impressive info first (and this changes reader to reader), and we want to make sure that the information is easily readable and accessible.

General Guidelines

- Enlarge or bold name on first page
 - May include “*curriculum vitae*” on first page beneath name
- Include name and page number starting on second page
- Avoid stating a career objective
- Use reverse chronological order for dates within each section
 - Experiences beginning in undergrad and moving forward are all appropriate for your CV
- Focus on being concise
 - Be selective about lengthy narratives or explanation
 - Use incomplete sentences if necessary and start with strong verbs:
 - Coordinated with faculty...
 - Developed individualized lessons...
 - Facilitated trainings and organized teams...

Clerkship rotations and VSLO (audition rotations): Your focus should be on brevity, so you’ll want to limit descriptions to only those places that might be confusing without one (e.g., research). Your reader is looking to skim your CV and access the information quickly and easily, and having lengthy descriptions after each item may make that more difficult.

- For 3rd and 4th years, your readers may also be looking for **Leadership** and **Honors & Awards** categories, as well as **Scholarly Activity** (often includes *Research, Publications, Presentations*).

ERAS (residency applications): ERAS won’t let you upload your CV; rather, it will give you text boxes and fields to populate and it will generate its own CV. You’ll have less flexibility with categories and organization, but it will ask you for descriptions of every single item you enter.

ERAS categories: **General Information** (contact info., etc.), **Medical Licensure** (ACLS, BLS), **Medical Education**, **Medical School Honors/Awards**, **Membership in Honorary/Professional Societies**, **Education, Experience** (divided into *Work, Volunteer, and Research*), **Publications**, **Language Fluency**, **Hobbies & Interests**, and **Other Awards/Accomplishments**.

- Volunteer will become your catchall category for experiences that aren’t Research or Work.

Categories

CVs begin with Education, but other rules around organization are flexible. Categories should be chosen and arranged in order of their relevance to the position for which you are applying. Residency or fellowship CVs might highlight Teaching & Leadership, Scholarly Activity, or Awards & Honors. Within each category details should be listed in reverse chronological order (starting with the most recent).

Common Categories (these can be modified or eliminated based on your experiences)

Education

- Degrees and Dates: list the degree, the date received or expected, and the institution
 - Include honors only if listed on your transcript
 - Designations like *magna cum laude* or *summa cum laude* should be in italics and lowercase
- Thesis or Dissertation: give the title of project and the name of your Chair or Director
- Comprehensive Exams: list titles and provide the status (proposed, scheduled, passed)

Teaching & Leadership

- Oftentimes combined, but can also be separate, distinct categories
- Tutoring positions, peer mentorship, fellowships, officer positions, etc.
- May include honors tracks or fellowships

Scholarly Activity

- Often divided into subcategories of Research, Publications, and/or Presentations
- May also include things like fellowships, track participation, tutoring, or teaching assistantships if not listed in Teaching & Leadership
- Research should include the name of the institution, the name of your PI/faculty mentor, a brief description of the objectives of your research, and a brief description of your role and responsibilities
 - Can include research that did not result in publication or presentation
- Publications and presentations should appear as citations with your name in **bold**

Honors & Awards

- Scholarships, grants, preclinical courses and clerkship rotations you honored in at RVU
- May include honors tracks or fellowships, but avoid listing twice

Professional Development

- Events like Surgery Week, special tracks training or workshops, Ultrasound workshops, skills labs, or any extracurricular trainings (Trauma Informed Care, IUD insertion, etc.)
- May also include elective rotations

University Involvement

- student chapters of national organizations or clubs in which you were a member
 - Officer positions should appear in Leadership and not again in University Involvement
 - May also include elective courses

Community Outreach

- Volunteer experiences
 - Can include number of hours if your commitment was significant
- May want to select the most impactful or significant experiences if you have a lot of one-offs or extensive volunteering in undergrad

Languages

- Any languages you know beyond English
 - Make sure to include level of proficiency

Certifications

- ALS/BCLS certifications
- Any additional certifications or licensure
 - Include expiration dates where applicable
 - Do not need to include license numbers

Professional Memberships

- Organizations related to your field in which you hold a membership
 - Demonstrates your involvement in your field

Professional Employment/ Clinical Experience

- Employment held prior to medical school
 - Adjust the name of the category based on whether your included experience is all clinical or not
- Only include descriptions if warranted (your audience knows what a scribe does)

Hobbies & Interests

- Pick 3-5 of your quirkiest or most interesting hobbies
- Be as specific as possible
- Avoid “spending time with friends and family”

Formatting

If you’re not using a CV template or you want to create your own, it can be very useful to use tables in each category to hold your formatting and make it easier to move, add, and delete information. You’re going to want to use the *insert* tab at the top and select *table*. For example, if you were to do this for your education section:

Rocky Vista University College of Medicine Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, Class of 2024	2019-present
Arizona State University Bachelor of Science; Biology (Neurological and behavioral science) <i>summa cum laude</i>	2016-2018

From there, you can click on the table and remove the borders at the top just to the left of the styles section (looks like a square separated into quadrants).

Rocky Vista University College of Medicine	2019-present
Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, Class of 2024	
Arizona State University	2016-2018
Bachelor of Science; Biology (Neurological and behavioral science)	
<i>summa cum laude</i>	

Remember that you can left, center, or right justify the text in individual cells, like the dates in the table above. Tables also allow you to move entire sections by dragging the table where you want it and easily add new items by right-clicking on the table, selecting *insert*, and then selecting “insert rows above.” Do this for each section.

On the next page is an example of how you might build your CV.

Student Doctor

Curriculum vitae

Street address City, state, zip	Email address Phone number
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Commented [AH1]: It's pretty conventional for a CV to actually say "curriculum vitae" on the top, but however else you decide to format this part is up to you. You might decide to have all your personal info on one side of the page and your name on the other side, or all your personal info centered under your name, etc.

EDUCATION

Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine—Parker, CO <i>Doctor of Osteopathy</i>	Expected 2019
University of Colorado at Colorado Springs—Colorado Springs, CO <i>Bachelor of Science: Biomedical Sciences magna cum laude</i> Minor: Chemistry	2014

Commented [AH2]: You may decide you don't want to include your address, especially for things like clerkship rotations, but post-residency, it's common to include address when you apply for jobs.

Commented [AH3]: Sometimes people like to get fancy with their fonts and font styles. If you're the fancy type, keep in mind that some fonts get hard to read when they're bold and/or italicized, so it may be best to save the exciting styles for headings and leave the body of the CV a more conventional font.

HONORS & AWARDS

RVUCOM <i>Clinical Honors—Surgery, Internal Medicine</i>	2018
<i>Preclinical Honors (top 10%):</i> Respiratory I, Medical Informatics, Ethics II, Cardiovascular II, Principles of Clinical Medicine II	2015-2017
UCCS <i>Dean's List</i>	2010-2014

Commented [AH4]: You can make your category headings different fonts and sizes, or not. It's often easier for readers to skim if the category headings are a little bit different than the items in the categories, but how you decide to do that is up to you.

Commented [AH5]: Within each category, your items should be listed in reverse chronological order, starting with the most recent and moving backwards in time. This is determined by the end date, not the start date (so, something spanning 2012-2015 would be listed after something spanning 2009-2017).

LEADERSHIP

2016-2017	RVUCOM- Peer Mentor
2011-2014	UCCS- President, class of 2014

Commented [AH6]: You might decide you want your category titles centered, or your dates on the left instead of the right. Those types of stylistic/formatting decisions are up to you, and you should feel free to get a little bit creative.

SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY

Research <i>Undergraduate Researcher, UCCS, Advisor: Jane Smith, PhD</i> Cut and prepared tissue samples for staining. Performed immunohistochemistry on ovarian sections for three genes of interest. Prepared reaction mixtures and performed PCR and Agarose gel electrophoresis	2012-2014
Publications Wald HS, Borkan JM, Taylor JS, Anthony D, Reis SP. Fostering and evaluating reflective capacity in medical education: Developing the REFLECT rubric for assessing reflective writing. <i>Acad. Med.</i> 2012;87:41-50.	
Presentations	

Commented [AH7]: Publications and presentations should appear as citations.

Commented [AH8]: You want to make sure you bold your name in a list of authors so readers can find you easily.

Commented [AH9]: Sometimes people like to include fancy lines on their CVs, but that's up to you. Having lines like this may help readers distinguish between categories, but lines aren't necessary.

UNIVERSITY INVOLVEMENT

Commented [AH10]: How you want to name this type of category depends primarily on the work that you've done. If your experience is all things like scribe, CNA, clinical coordinator, you may want to call this Clinical or Healthcare Experience. Try to keep this section limited to mostly healthcare relevant items unless you have a big gap between undergrad and medical school and need to account for that time.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE/ WORK EXP/ HEALTHCARE/ CLINICAL /TEACHING EXP



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

CERTIFICATIONS

HOBBIES & INTERESTS

Commented [AH11]: This could also be called Volunteer Experience or Service. I personally don't like "community service," but there are several options for how you want to name this.

Commented [AHM12]: I recommend including a table in each category to list your items. This make it easier to move/rearrange categories and add items without messing up your spacing (just insert another row). Once you're satisfied with the info, you can highlight the whole table and select "no borders," which will hide all the lines and still maintain all your formatting within the cells.

Commented [AH13]: This might include things like Surgery Week, special Tracks training or workshops, Ultrasound workshops, skills labs, those types of experiences where you have a relevant take-away. You might also include elective rotations here as well.

Commented [AH14]: Just like on a resume, your categories should be presented in order of relevance/impressiveness/importance, and that my change from reader to reader. The order of your categories is pretty fluid, but usually Professional Memberships are pretty passive memberships and Certifications are often the same as other students (and don't really set you apart), so they're often near the end of the CV.