Creating a Strong Vita

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
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Sources of Ideas

- My experiences
    - JHU, USC, UNC-CLT
    - University and College RPT Committees
    - Stanford, Emory, SJSU, NSF
- College Requests
    - Dean, RPT Committee
    - Help Outsiders
- Academic Affairs

Some Resources

- *Preparing the Perfect CV*, Rebecca Corfield. London: Kogan, Page. 2007.

- *Federal Resume Guidebook,* Kathryn Kraemer Troutman. Indianapolis, IN: JIST Works. 2007.

- *Chronicle (2010—2011)*

  - http://chronicle.com/article/Tyson-Candidates-CV-Before/124493/

  - http://chronicle.com/article/Tyson-Candidates-CV-After/124496/

Introductory Points

- A vita is not a resume
  - Different content and audiences
- What a vita does
  - ___
- Who uses vitae?
  - ___
- Two general considerations
  - Does it help your case?
  - Would someone wonder about it?

Vita Functions (1)

- Introductions
  - A person (you)
    - Job applications
    - Grant applications
  - An institution
    - Visitors to a department
  - A discipline
- Track career progress
  - Recommenders: RPT committee, dept chair, outsiders
  - Assessors: dean, provost

Vita Functions (2)

- Compare specializations
  - Where faculty fit within a dept, college
  - Identify needs
- Track career origins & destinations
- Summarize units of all sizes

Who Uses Vitae, and Why

- People for whom you have responsibilities
  - Graduate and undergraduate students
  - Collaborators
- People to whom you are responsible
  - Senior colleagues, committees, chair, dean
- Most importantly: You
  - To present yourself
  - To see where you've been and find new opportunities
  - To track your progress
  - Therefore, embrace and polish your vita!

Some Examples

- [Sociology](#) and different disciplines

- Volunteers?

The Form of your Vita (1)

- Date the vita
- How it looks
  - 12-point standard font
  - Open spaces
- Page 1: The Introduction
  - Who you are (briefly)
- Page 2 and succeeding pages
  - Research and writing
  - Grants and contracts

The Form of Your Vita (2)

- Following pages
  - Teaching
    - Courses with descriptions (if needed)
    - Undergraduate and graduate advisees
  - Service
    - Administrative responsibilities
    - Job-relevant community service
- Final page
  - Editorial boards
  - Professional memberships

Content (1)

- Strategic questions
  - What do you want to present?
  - How best to do that?
  - What do you want to omit?
- *Know your audience*
  - What they want to know
  - Their values

Content (2)

- Typical academic vita information
  - Research
  - Teaching
  - Service
- Other information
  - Cosmopolitan involvement
  - Biographical information
    - But not all of it

Creating Page 1

- 48 lines, 60 spaces
  - Including blanks
- Include introductions
  - What do they really need (or want) to know?
- Omit extraneous material
  - What don't they really need to know?
- Jobs, years, impressive accomplishments
  - Promotions occur on July 1
- Review and edit

Listing Grants & Contracts

- The Difference – G & C

- The Difference – Internal/External

- Include
  - Year, Source, Amount, Duration, Collaborators
  - Any special effects for your department or yourself

- Applications, whether or not successful
  - Especially important if grants & contracts are unusual in your discipline

Listing Writing – 1

- Appearance
  - Reverse chronological order
  - Consistent style: MLA (Chicago), APA (ASA, etc.)
- Authorship
  - Explain contributions of co-authors
- Where published?
  - Prestige, acceptance rates

Listing Writing – 2

- Books
  - Scholarly – reviews, citations
  - Texts – reviews, citations, <u>sales</u>
- Categories of papers
  - Published
    - In preparation, under review, in press, in print
    - Peer reviewed?
  - Unpublished
    - Meetings
    - Usually need explanation

Listing Teaching

- Course Titles (explain content if needed)
  - Graduate or undergraduate
  - Enrollment, student and peer evaluations
  - New preparations?
- Transfers: explain previous teaching
- Advising, mentoring, etc.
  - Evidence of success
- Please avoid pleading, defensiveness, etc.

Listing Service

- On Campus – committees and other
  - Department
  - College
  - University
- Off Campus – talks, consultations
  - How does it use your expertise?
  - Were you paid for it?
  - Usually keep it short

Impression Formation

- Your email address

- Remember: Promise or Accomplishment

- Longevity in position
  - Advantageous or disadvantageous
  - Explain if you need to

- Family, Social, and Politics are tricky
  - Do not include them

Creating a Strong Vita (1)

- Use 12-point standard font
  - Arial, Times New Roman, Helvetica, Calibri
- Avoid Clutter
- Overall look
  - Single space and single side
  - Number the pages. Staple them.
  - Make it inviting
- Adopt a factual style

Creating a Strong Vita (2)

- What you offer
  - Promise or accomplishment
  - Energetic
  - Involved and linked
- Impressions of your vita
  - Attractive layout
  - Simple is better – no color or photos
  - Avoid pleading

Avoiding Common Errors (1)

- Avoid preambles, paragraphs

- Organize to permit skimming

- Most important information first

- Degrees and dates
  - You are no longer a student

- Clarify anything unusual

Avoiding Common Errors (2)

- Write for outsiders
  - Sympathetic, intelligent, and ignorant
  - Standards in your discipline
- This is a bad time to irritate readers
  - Don't refer to obscure information or documents
  - Explain what they need to know
  - Learn to take the role of the other
- Clutter obfuscates
  - Irrelevant information
  - Job duties
  - Laboratory descriptions
- Have someone else read it for style and content

Variant vitae

- Different formats

- Administrative

- 2-page, often with specified content

- Separate jobs and publications

- Lecture introductions

- Inform a non-academic audience
  - What would you like Mike Collins to say about you?
  - How about Blair Miller?

Keeping it Current

- When to update
  - Publications, grants
  - Leadership activities
- Change with the times
  - E.g., Internet submissions

Remember...

- Your vita is a work in progress, as you are
  - Update both frequently
- Readers seek themes, accumulation
- Strive for good impressions. Most of the time…
  - This is the first impression
  - Readers are predisposed to be impressed
  - They won't go beyond what you present