

# STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE: WRITING A CV FOR GRADUATE SCHOOL

## **Introduction:**

This guide will help you write a clear, organized, and compelling academic CV for graduate school applications. A CV (Curriculum Vitae) highlights your academic background, research, relevant experience, and skills. It is different from a job resume. Think academic, not corporate.

## **Start with Your Contact Information**

### **What to Include:**

Full Name

Phone Number

Email Address (professional)

LinkedIn URL or personal portfolio

### **Example:**

*Taylor Morgan*

*(405) 555-8912 · tmorgan@email.com*

*linkedin.com/in/taylormorgan*

*Edmond, OK*

## **Write a Brief Personal Statement**

This is an optional but powerful 2–4 sentence summary. Think of it as your "academic elevator pitch."

Include:

- Your current status (degree/major)
- What program you're applying for
- Relevant skills or experience
- What you hope to contribute

### **Example:**

Psychology graduate with a 3.8 GPA and 200+ hours of research lab experience. Applying to the MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Oklahoma Christian University to develop skills in trauma-informed therapy and support underserved populations.

## **List Your Education (Most Recent First)**

### **Include:**

- Degree type and field
- Institution name
- Graduation date or expected date
- GPA (if 3.5 or higher)
- Relevant coursework or thesis/capstone

### **Example:**

*B.S. in Biology, Oklahoma Christian University*

*Expected May 2025 | GPA: 3.74*

*Relevant coursework: Genetics, Organic Chemistry, Molecular Biology*

*Senior Research: "The Role of CRISPR in Hereditary Disease Prevention"*

## **Include Research, Teaching, or Relevant Experience**

Label this section based on your background: "Research Experience," "Relevant Experience," or "Teaching Experience."

### **Example:**

Undergraduate Research Assistant

OC Biology Department | Jan 2023 – Present

- Assisted with gene expression studies using PCR and gel electrophoresis
- Recorded and analyzed data using RStudio
- Co-authored research presented at the OC Undergraduate Research Symposium

## **Add Skills**

Include technical, research, lab, language, or clinical skills that match your intended field.

### **Example:**

- SPSS, RStudio, EHR Systems, Microsoft Office
- Spanish (Intermediate)
- Clinical observation (HIPAA-compliant)

## **Awards, Honors, and Scholarships**

Highlight academic achievements relevant to your application.

### **Example:**

- *President's Honor Roll (6 semesters)*
- *OC Undergraduate Research Grant Recipient, 2024*
- *Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society*

## **Optional Sections to Stand Out**

- Presentations & Conferences
- Publications
- Volunteer Work & Leadership
- Professional Memberships

## **Tailored Guidance by Program**

### **Nursing Applicants**

- Emphasize clinical hours, patient care experience, and certifications like CNA or CPR.
- Include volunteer work or leadership in healthcare settings.
- Mention EHR familiarity and soft skills like communication and teamwork.

### **Medical School Applicants**

- Include shadowing experience, MCAT score (if requested), and research involvement.
- Volunteer or service hours matter—highlight them.
- Make sure your personal statement reflects your motivation and compassion.

### **Counseling or Psychology Programs**

- Focus on internships, volunteer roles in mental health, or peer support programs.
- Research labs and case study coursework are a plus.
- Reflect empathy, communication, and commitment to ethical practice.

### **Law School Applicants**

- Highlight writing-intensive courses, mock trial/debate involvement, or legal internships.
- Show leadership, critical thinking, and research experience.
- Include LSAT score only if requested.

## To truly maximize acceptance chances, students should pair this CV with:

### **A Strong Personal Statement or Statement of Purpose**

- This is often *more important* than the CV.
- It should be specific, personal, and show alignment with the program's mission.

### **Relevant Experience**

- The CV alone can't fix a lack of hands-on experience (e.g., clinical hours, research, shadowing).
- You must have *substance* behind what they're listing.

### **Strong Letters of Recommendation**

- Professors or professionals who know you well and can speak to your abilities.

### **Academic Performance**

- GPA, standardized test scores (MCAT, LSAT, GRE if required), and rigor of coursework.

### **Tailored Applications**

- The CV should be **tweaked slightly for each program** to emphasize what each school values (e.g., research vs. practice-heavy, faith-based vs. clinical focus).

# Graduate School CV Template

YOUR FULL NAME

Phone Number · Email Address

LinkedIn URL or Personal Website

City, State

## **PERSONAL STATEMENT**

2–4 sentences about your academic goals, background, and what you bring to the program

Example: Recent BS Biology graduate, 3.7 GPA, seeking admission to the Master's in Molecular Genetics at XYZ University. Offering hands-on experience in DNA extraction and data analysis to support lab research and publication efforts.

## **EDUCATION**

Year – Year

Degree Earned, Institution Name

GPA:

Relevant Coursework:

Thesis or Capstone: "Title"

## **RESEARCH EXPERIENCE or CLINICAL EXPERIENCE (Be sure to add in those hours)**

Position Title, Institution or Lab Name — Month Year – Month Year

- Responsibility or achievement
- Method or tool used, outcome or result
- Collaborated with/Presented at...

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

Teaching Assistant or Instructor Role, Course Name, Institution — Year–Year

- Type of teaching: lab, discussion, grading, tutoring
- Number of students or courses handled
- Any innovation, feedback, or improvements made



# Graduate School CV Template (Continued)

## **SKILLS (add what applies to you)**

Technical:

Lab:

Languages:

Soft Skills:

## **AWARDS & HONORS**

Award Title — Institution or Organization, Date

Brief description or criteria if helpful

## **GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS**

Grant or Fellowship Name, Institution — Year

Amount Awarded

Purpose or project supported

## **PRESENTATIONS & CONFERENCES**

Presentation Title — Conference/Event Name, Date

Type: Poster/Oral/Panel

## **PUBLICATIONS**

Author(s). Year. Title of article. Journal Name, Volume(Issue), pages. DOI

## **VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE & LEADERSHIP**

Role, Organization — Year–Year

- What you did and impact made
- Relevant to field or shows leadership, initiative, or values

## **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

Name of organization — Member Since Year

Any offices held, committees, or participation

## **TIPS**

- Keep font easy to read: Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman, 11–12pt
- Maintain consistent formatting
- Keep it to 2–3 pages max unless otherwise specified
- Save as PDF when submitting unless a different format is requested

