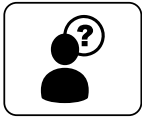


Research Statement Template



What is it?

A research statement is usually a single-spaced 1-2 page document that describes your research trajectory as a scholar, highlighting growth: from where you began to where you envision going in the next few years. Ultimately, research productivity, focus and future are the most highly scrutinized in academic faculty appointments, particularly at research-intensive universities. Tailor your research statement to the institution to which you are applying – if a university has a strong research focus, emphasize publications; if a university values teaching and research equally, consider ending with a paragraph about how your research complements your teaching and vice versa.

When is it Used?

A research statement is used when applying for academic faculty positions, and sometimes for research-intensive positions in think tanks or government. Because the academic job market is increasingly competitive, a common trend for hiring committees is to ask only for a cover letter and CV. If this is the case, you will need to condense your research statement to 1-2 paragraphs to include in the cover letter. [Visit page 44](#) to see more tips on condensing the research statement.

Structure One: Varies by Discipline

Introduction The first paragraph should introduce your research topic and interests in the context of your field. A version of the introduction to your dissertation/thesis abstract could be adapted, but here it should set up a framework for future research.

Summary Of Dissertation/Thesis This paragraph should give more detailed information about your doctoral

Research Statement Template Continued

Structure Two:

(This model relies on proportions, so create paragraph structures as you see fit)

25 % Previous Research Experience Describe your early work and how it solidified your interest in your field. How did these formative experiences influence your approach to research? Explain how this earlier work led to your interest in your current project.

25% Current Projects Describe your dissertation/thesis project – consider using the first paragraph from your dissertation or thesis abstract since it covers all your bases: context, methodology, findings, significance. You could also mention grants/fellowships that funded the project, publications derived from this research, and publications that are currently being developed.

50% Future Work Transition to how your current work informs your future research. Describe your next major project as you did in structure one and a realistic plan for accomplishing it. What publications do you imagine stemming from it? The last part of the research statement should be customized to demonstrate the fit of your research agenda with the institution.



Helpful Tip

Keep in mind that future projects have to be feasible for the institution to which you are applying. Does it have the resources, funding, and equipment you will need? If not, you aren't a good fit for the position (and it isn't for you).

Tips for Combining your Research and Teaching Statements

- i Research the department and university priorities
- i Based on their priorities, determine how best to combine the two statements
- i For a teaching-focused position, emphasize your teaching and end by relating your teaching to your research
- i For a research-focused position, emphasize your research and end by describing how your teaching complements your research
- i For a position that values both equally, create a statement that weaves the two together. For instance, your introduction can describe how your teaching and research inform each other. The following paragraphs depend on what you want to emphasize first, but one or two paragraphs on teaching and one or two on research can work, depending on length requirements. Conclude by reiterating the centrality of teaching to research and vice versa, based on your teaching and research philosophies.
- i Ultimately, you want to create a narrative through-line that can 1) demonstrate how teaching makes your research relevant (and vice versa) and/or 2) why your work is a relevant teaching topic

When Applying

- i Read the instructions for materials required carefully – postdoc positions often will ask for a “personal statement” that's actually a research statement. They'll want to know about completed work, work in progress, future work, professional goals, publication plans, etc.
- i The research statement is NOT the same as the research proposal required by many postdoc applications. Research proposals vary widely in length and have their own specific requirements¹.

¹ For more on the research proposal, see Karen Kelsky, “Dr. Karen’s Foolproof Grant Template.” The Professor Is In.