RESEARCH STATEMENTS
(AND JOB TALKS)

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Teaching & Research Statements

- Supplement the cover letter and CV for most academic searches.
- Research statements are more common in STEM fields and social sciences.
- Teaching statements are increasingly common for most academic fields.
- Writing with a tone appropriate for your anticipated audience is essential.
RESEARCH STATEMENTS
• Departments are seeking to complement and/or enhance their current and future scholarly endeavors, so…

• Statements should reflect some institution- and department-specificity.
HOW ARE THEY FORMATTED?

• Typically 2-3 pages, max of 5

• Use sub-headings, white space, bullets

• Use only effective graphics, but sparingly
WHAT DO THEY INCLUDE?

- Introduction
- Prior and current research projects
- Future plans
  - Future research goals
  - Student involvement in your research
  - Possible collaborations
  - Funding for future research
INTRODUCTION

What is your research story?

An abstract

Elevator talk (why should we care about your research)
INTRODUCTION

• “Secretary Arne Duncan recently stated, “I believe that education is the civil rights issue of our generation. And that is why great teaching is about more than education—it is a daily fight for social justice.” My research work embodies his sentiment. The focus of my research looks at how a teacher exemplifies their sense of responsibility in the classroom. Responsibility as defined for my research work has been divided into three categories; responsibility of commitment, responsibility of knowledge, and the responsibility of action.”
PRIOR AND CURRENT PROJECTS

How current research contributes to field

Its relevance, distinctiveness, & importance (avoid obvious hype)

Use appropriate amount of detail (be specific but accessible)

Methodologies used

Include preliminary data sparingly
FUTURE RESEARCH GOALS

Include research questions (if you have them)

Short term vs. long term goals

Consider plans for a 3-5 year period

Potential outcomes

Your excitement about your agenda

Its relevance, distinctiveness, & importance

How your research is related to others’
Ability to advise graduate students on publishable research

Incorporating undergraduates
- lab work
- courses on research
- independent study
“In addition to mentoring undergraduates with their more independently inspired research projects, I welcome the opportunity to involve students in my own research. Most of the questions that I am interested in pursuing next lend themselves to a collaborative effort. For example, […]. As I collaborate with students on my research, I plan on encouraging them to investigate their own side questions. To me, the most exciting part about science is thinking creatively about new avenues of investigation. I am eager for students to experience this for themselves.”
POSSIBLE COLLABORATIONS

- Industry
- Community
- Academy
  - Universities
  - Faculty
  - Interdisciplinary partnerships w/ other departments
POSSIBLE COLLABORATIONS
• “While focusing on the publication of my study based on the vulnerability and resilience framework, my foremost interest would be to develop a strong community partnership and compassion by collaborating with local agencies in [city] on behalf of underrepresented populations. This will include seeking funding opportunities in federal and local levels to conduct an art-based action research plan to...
Potential funding partners

Experience with writing grants

Facilities needed to conduct the research
FUNDING FUTURE RESEARCH

• “I would like to mention that not only are my study subjects readily available throughout the state, but it is also incredibly cost effective. For $3,328, I have been able to establish my own research program and shift a 30-year old paradigm in the communication literature that took millions of dollars in funds from NIMH to establish! While I plan to apply for extensive grant funding to allow me to take high-tech approaches, such […], my research record to date demonstrates that with modest funding, I am able to address important questions in my field.
WHAT ELSE COULD I INCLUDE?

- Alternative projects
- Incorporating research in the classroom
- Scholarship on Teaching & Learning (SOTL)
"The best plans usually build on the prior experience of the applicant but are not direct extensions of their doctoral work."

Jim Austin, Writing a Research Plan, 2002

- Have creative new directions for the research
- Carve out your own research niche within the larger research effort
- Get advisors to emphasize your independence in recommendation letters
Teaching Statements
TEACHING STATEMENT

• Other names:
  • Statement of Teaching Philosophy
  • Philosophy of Teaching
  • Teaching Interest Statement

• General Description/Purpose:
  • Part of Teaching Portfolio
  • Always a document in progress
GENERAL FORMATTING SUGGESTIONS

- No required content or set format
- Generally 1-2 pages
- Present tense, first-person
- Avoid technical terms
- Paint a picture of who you are in the classroom
Main 3-4 values/principles
THREE MAJOR QUESTIONS

1. What are your **goals** for teaching?
2. How do you **operationalize** these goals?
3. How do you know you’ve **successfully** met those goals?
1. GOALS

"I value helping my students understand difficult information. I am an expert, and my role is to model for them complex ways of thinking so that they can develop the same habits of mind as professionals in the medical field."
1. GOALS

“My primary goal in both lecture and lab is to help students become confident, independent learners who think critically and communicate clearly.”
2. OPERATIONALIZE GOALS

“I always try to create the kind of classroom where students know I am excited to teach them and an environment in which students feel encouraged to participate. I am genuinely interested in the lives of my students and I try to express this to them. For instance, I like to arrive to class fifteen minutes early and play music while talking to my students about their week.”
2. OPERATIONALIZE GOALS

“Most importantly, students should have a clear understanding of the scientific principle at hand and the appropriate experimental methods to address it. I have students peer teach as well as present their findings orally and in writing to ensure that they truly understand the rationale of an experiment rather than the steps of a protocol.”
3. MEETING GOALS

“In my evaluations, students consistently comment that I am “always smiling,” “very responsive,” and “warm and engaging.” They also often report that they can “tell I care” and that I am the first instructor with whom they have been comfortable enough to come for extra help. The emotional bridge that I build between my students and myself is fundamental to my success as a teacher.
3. MEETING GOALS

“Being demanding yet fair is by far my most difficult task. There are always gifted, self-motivated students who will rise to any challenge I offer. What about those less driven, or less able? [...] Many of my students struggle early. My rules are simple: Don’t panic, don’t quit, come talk to me. [...] Ultimately, most students trust me and buy into the system. My grades are relatively high; not because I give students anything. The grades are earned.”
WAYS TO START WRITING

Make a list of the qualities of an effective teacher.

“Free-write” on a memorable experience in the classroom that you experienced or observed. Consider what went well, what you might do differently, and why.

Begin with concrete details: How would an observer describe your teaching?

Use the Teaching Statement App
https://app.teachingadvantage.org/home

http://teachingcenter.wustl.edu/writing-teaching-philosophy-statement
TALK IT OUT!

Advisor

GTA Supervisor/Coordinator

Recent Alum

Drake Institute for Teaching and Learning
EXAMPLE

• I want students to take responsibility for their own learning
  1. I create a learning environment of high standards
  2. They must come prepared to class
     ➢ They use information in group work & discussions
  3. I provide them with lots of support
     ➢ Many office hours
     ➢ Low stakes quizzes & homework
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMMITTEES LOOK FOR…</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflects on teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoys teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excels at teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fit of teaching style</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing/communication ability</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personality</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
WHEN AND WHAT

ON CAMPUS INTERVIEW

TEACHING DEMO

RESEARCH TALK
WHY?

1. Demonstrate reaching local undergraduates
2. Demonstrate collegiality
3. Give broadest audience access to your visit
WHAT TO PRACTICE

Know your audience!
Imagine it includes students
They do not know as much as you
on this topic

Address topics in Job Ad
Timing
Pace, volume, gestures
STRUCTURE

1. Intro: “Today I will cover points A, B, C.”
2. Use vignette/personal story sparingly. Proceed with caution.
3. Two paragraph intro for total novice.
4. Advance one point in rest of talk.
   • Not every theoretical nuance
   • Not every other scholar. Highlight your work.
5. Provide conclusion that connects to original A,B,C.
Provide slides with simple, helpful visuals.

Consider whether there are detailed figures/quotations that would be more accessible in a printed handout.

Follow rules of PowerPoint design:
- Sans-serif font
- Not too much text
- Align well with text from which you're reading
ACTUALLY GIVING TALK

- Stick to plan
- Leave time for pauses/questions of audience (during talk)
- Be ready to shine in Q&A

Mostly, they want you to have a chance to show off, not trying to "get" you
Chance for you to demonstrate collegiality!
RESOURCES

• *Writing a research plan* [Science Careers]

  http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_magazine/previous_issues/articles/2002_07_26/nodoi.4611149009600202486

• *Writing a philosophy of teaching statement* [UCAT]

  http://ucat.osu.edu/read/teaching-portfolio/philosophy

• *Writing a statement of teaching philosophy for the academic job search* [University of Michigan CRLT]