



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER

Research Statements for Faculty Position Applications

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- Chaired faculty search committees hiring 8 faculty
- Served on faculty search committees hiring 6 faculty
- Several graduate students and postdocs who have become faculty
- Have mentored several other trainees as they apply for faculty positions
- Presented workshops on these topics at international conferences



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Application materials

Specific requirements can vary but can include:

- 1) Cover letter
- 2) CV
- 3) Research accomplishments
- 4) Research statement**
- 5) Teaching statement
- 6) References/Reprints
- 7) Letters of reference

All materials should complement each other to illustrate what makes you an ideal candidate for that specific position.



What is a Research Statement?

A key component of academic job applications that summarizes a candidate's research accomplishments, ongoing projects, as well as the direction and potential of their future work. It can include:

- How your research contributes to your field
- Your funding history and potential for growth
- Potential academic and industry collaborations
- Your requirements for research resources
- The future direction of your research



What is the reason they ask for a Research Statement?

- Shows the review committee what you have accomplished in your research and your plans for the future
- Places your work in the context of your field and what you will bring into their department
- How your research will be independent, innovative and impactful within your field
- In some fields, they will want to know the potential you will get extramural funding



Understand your audience

- Remember that reviewers will only spend a few minutes on each application (there will be 100+ applications to all faculty jobs)
 - Make their jobs as easy as you can with summaries and formatting
 - You need to make sure your applications stands out
- Understand the composition of a faculty search committee
 - Don't assume that everyone who will be reading your materials will be an expert in your specific discipline
 - Avoid using too much jargon or disciplines specific information
 - Make the impact and significance of your work clear
- Consider who in the department/institution would be a potential collaborator and include that in your Research Statement
- **Seek advice from current faculty (and especially recently hired faculty) about the conventions of your discipline and ask them to review your statement**



The type of institution you are applying to makes a difference

- Be aware of the different academic institutions and their expectations
 - Research intensive vs. Teaching focused
 - Public vs. Private
 - Large universities vs. small colleges
- Notice the type of job advertisements
 - broad = best candidate available
 - narrow = department has a specific need
- Research the department and the institutions



Follow the instructions

- Pay close attention to the job posting
- Prepare all of the requested documents
- Respect the page limitations provided
- Submit materials in the manner listed (email to the appropriate contact or submit to the indicated online portal)
- Be aware of any specific requirements for the research statements that can vary by discipline
 - Research statements are usually requested from researchers in engineering, social, physical, and life sciences.
 - Humanities disciplines may want this in the cover letter instead. Check with the job posting or your faculty advisor.



Goals of a Research Statement

- Guide the members of the search committee through your research from where you started until now
- Highlight your research accomplishments (publications, awards, grants, presentations, etc.) without fully replicating your CV
- Describe your plans for your research program over the next three to five years
- Explain how your research will benefit the department and/or institution where you are applying
 - Collaboration with current faculty
 - Obtaining extramural grant funding (if relevant to your field)
 - Providing research opportunities for students
 - Developing new courses related to your research topic(s)



Questions to consider when working on your Research Statement

- What got you interested in this research?
- What was the burning question that you set out to answer?
- What challenges did you encounter along the way, and how did you overcome these challenges?
- How can your research be applied?
- Why is your research important within your field?
- What direction will your research take you in next, and what new questions do you have?



Structure of a Research Statement

- First discuss the importance of your previous research
 - Include how you became involved in that research
 - Emphasize your most recent research projects and outputs
 - This can be research done with your mentor or collaborators
- Next provide the importance of your field of study
 - How is your research unique and significant to the field?
 - What is the impact of your research?
 - What are the specific results and outcomes of your work?
- What is the future of your research program?
 - Provide plans for first 3-5 of years of your faculty position
 - Show how your research will be independent of your current mentor
 - Address feasibility of your research at that institution
 - Indicate what will be your research outputs
 - How will this lead to funding? (if that is relevant to your discipline)



Tips for the Research Statement

- These are short (1-4 pages) so be concise!
 - If there isn't guidance on the length, keep it as short as possible (2-3 pages or less unless specifically requested)
- **Provide a short summary at the beginning**
- Refer to your own work in the first person (I found...)
- Express your excitement about your research
- Use formatting that assists the reviewers:
 - Subheadings that highlight main points
 - Make use of bullets and selective 'highlighting' of text
 - Have at least a little white space, use 11-12 point consistent font
- Use figures if that is helpful to present your work
 - Summary figures are particularly helpful to include
- Include a timeline (Gantt chart) of your plans



Tailor your Research Statement for specific departments/institutions

- Customization will make the statement more effective
- Familiarize yourself with the faculty and research resources at your target institution
 - Explains why your future research will be possible at each institution
- How will your research be beneficial to that institution, or to the students at that institution
 - For a primarily undergraduate institution be sure to show how you research will include undergrad students
 - Make sure you know the details about any graduate programs
- If faculty at your target contributed to your field be sure to include mention of that in your statement



Research Statement Online Resources

1. General guides to writing research statements:

- <https://www.sciencemag.org/careers/2002/07/writing-research-plan>
- <https://gradschool.cornell.edu/career-and-professional-development/pathways-to-success/prepare-for-your-career/take-action/research-statement/>
- https://serc.carleton.edu/NAGTWorkshops/careerprep/jobsearch/research_statement.html
- <https://career.ucsf.edu/sites/g/files/tkssra2771/f/wysiwyg/ResearcherResearchStatementTips.pdf>
- <https://career.ucsf.edu/sites/g/files/tkssra2771/f/wysiwyg/ResearcherResearchStatementChecklist.pdf>
- <https://career.ucla.edu/grad/academic-job-search>

2. Blogs on writing research statements:

- <https://theprofessorisin.com/2016/09/16/dr-karens-rules-of-the-research-statement/>
- <https://chemistry-blog.com/2013/04/20/get-a-job-ken/>



Research Statement Online Resources

3. Samples of faculty position application research statements:

- <https://career.ucsf.edu/phds/academic-careers/academic-samples#Samples>
- https://gwc.psu.edu/files/2017/10/2017_Reserach-Plan-and-Personal-Statements-1-1ckpsea.pdf
- https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/annika_m_mueller/files/research_statement_annika_mueller.pdf
- <https://www.mcw.edu/-/media/MCW/Education/Graduate-School/Documents/UCLA-Research-Statement-Template.pdf>
- http://www.umass.edu/landeco/research/research_statement.pdf
- http://humsci.auburn.edu/research/pdf/Teaching_and_Research_Statements.pdf



Additional Resources for Application Materials

- Ask your advisor/mentor/others in your field for example research statements
- Talk to new faculty – may be willing to share their statement/experiences with you
- Ask about the search committee point of view concerning selection process, expectations and potential red flags!
- Consider forming a peer writing group and/or work with the Writing Center (<https://cstw.osu.edu/>)



Questions?



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