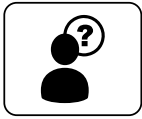


Research Statement Overview



What is it?

A research statement is used when applying for some academic faculty positions and research-intensive positions. 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. Structures of these documents also varies by discipline. See two common structures below.

Structure One

Introduction The first paragraph should introduce your research interests in the context of your field, tying the research you have done so far to a distinct trajectory that will take you well into the future.

Summary Of Dissertation This paragraph should summarize your doctoral research project. Try not to have too much language repetition across documents, such as your abstract or cover letter.

Contribution To Field And Publications Describe the significance of your projects for your field. Detail any publications initiated from your independent doctoral or postdoctoral research. Additionally, include plans for future publications based on your thesis. Be specific about journals to which you would submit or university presses that might be interested in the book you would develop from your dissertation (if your field expects that). If you are writing a two-page research statement, this section would likely be more than one paragraph and cover your future publication plans in greater detail.

Second Project If you are submitting a cover letter along with your research statement, then the committee may already have a paragraph describing your second project. In that case, use this space to discuss your second project in greater depth and the publication plans you envision for this project. Make sure you transition from your dissertation to your second large project smoothly – you want to give a sense of your cohesion as a scholar, but also to demonstrate your capacity to conceptualize innovative research that goes well beyond your dissertation project.

Wider Impact Of Research Agenda Describe the broader significance of your work. What ties your research projects together? What impact do you want to make on your field? If you're applying for a teaching-oriented institution, how would you connect your research with your teaching?

Structure Two

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

25% Current Projects Describe your dissertation/thesis project – this paragraph could be modeled on the first paragraph of your dissertation 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 or projects and a realistic plan for accomplishing this work. What publications do you expect to come out of this research? The last part of the research statement should be customized to demonstrate the fit of your research agenda with the institution.