**Research Statements**

**DEFINITION**

* The research statement is a document that describes your research experiences, interests, and plans.
* Research statements are often requested as part of the faculty application process.
* Expectations for research statements vary among disciplines. Ask faculty members in your department about the expectations for your field.

**PURPOSE**

* Departments want to learn more about your:
	+ Academic specialty and interests
	+ Passion for research
	+ Compatibility with departmental, school, and/or university research efforts
	+ Potential to earn grant money
	+ Ability to operate as a professional scholar, independent of your advisor
	+ Writing ability
* Writing a research statement allows you to:
	+ Further reflect on and define your research interests
	+ Gain confidence in your research skills and desire to become a faculty member

 **CONTENT**

* Recent & Current Research
	+ Research statements for current students and recent graduates usually discuss the dissertation and/or other major projects from graduate school.
	+ If you have done several projects, convey the connection among them.
	+ Place your work in a broader context or framework – the big picture.
	+ Discuss how you became interested in your topic and why it continues to interest you.
	+ Answer the “so what?” question. How does your research contribute to the field? Why does your research matter? Why is it important?
	+ Briefly describe any significant recognition your research has received - publications, presentations, grants, awards, etc.
	+ If you discuss projects that you have worked on with a team, be sure to articulate your contribution to the projects.
	+ Acknowledge the work of other scholars in your field, when appropriate.
* Future Research
	+ What are your short-term research goals (2-5 years)?
	+ Discuss 2-3 feasible research ideas that interest you.
	+ Explain how your goals build on (but are not necessarily direct extensions of) your recent work.
	+ Describe your ideas about potential funding sources, collaborative partners, facilities, etc.
	+ Consider detailing how you will involve students in your research and how your research relates to your teaching.
	+ Indicate how your research goals align with departmental goals.
	+ What are your longer term research goals (5+ years)?
* Appropriate Detail
	+ Your plan should be well-considered, realistic, and practical.
	+ Include enough detail to show depth of knowledge but do not go overboard with minutiae.
	+ Consider including some preliminary data – perhaps using tables, graphs, or other illustrations.

**FORMAT**

* Your research statement should be brief and well-organized.
	+ Aim for one to three pages (longer statements are sometimes appropriate).
	+ The introduction should summarize the contents of the research statement and include the information that is most important for departments to know.
	+ The conclusion should also summarize the contents of the research statement.
* Your research statement should be pleasing to the eye and easy to read.
	+ Single-spaced or 1.5 spaced
	+ Concise paragraphs
	+ Short bulleted lists
	+ Clear subject headings
* Your statement should not include grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors!

**GETTING STARTED**

* Contact your home department.
	+ What are the norms for research statements in your field?
	+ What information is known about your potential employers that might help you prepare your research statements?
* Jot down a preliminary outline and some ideas for content.
* Find sample research statements using a search engine, websites of professional organizations, etc.
* Finish a full draft.
* Have somebody proofread your research statement (peer, research team member, faculty member, career counselor, etc.)
* Consider customizing / tailoring your research statement for different job opportunities.

**WRITING SAMPLES**

* Job announcements often request a sample of your scholarly writing.
* You can send one with your application packet even if it is not requested.
* Check with a professor regarding how many samples to send, if an announcement doesn’t specify.
* Examples of samples to send:
	+ Re-prints of your published articles
	+ Copies of book chapters you’ve authored or co-authored
	+ Pre-prints of articles in press
	+ Completed chapters of your dissertation