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SCHOLAR VITAE

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What is a better approach?

A Scholar Vitae. Start by listing all activities, hobbies, interests, awards, employment, summer experiences, etc. According to this list, you then might follow one of two paths. The first path is organizing a Scholar Vitae into several categories. Students who are involved in a variety of activities should take this path. Here are some examples. Access College America suggest:

- Extracurricular Activities (including athletics) Awards and Honors
- Hobbies and Special Interests Summer Activities
- Work Experiences and Internships Community Involvement

Now, here are some other categories used by recent clients in preparation of their Scholar Vitae:

Student A: Student B: Student C:

- Music Activities Publications School Sponsored Activities
- Academic Enrichment Activities Leadership Employment
- Work Experiences Athletics Athletic Activities
- Community Service Community Service Activities Beyond School
- Athletics Religion

PREPARING A SCHOLAR VITAE

1. After forming categories, place them in order of importance.
2. Then arrange a chart which includes:
 - Activity
 - Years of involvement, including number of hours per week
 - Position(s) held
 - Brief description of activity

3. Be selective in choosing activities:

- Include only activities participated in during high school. If your high school includes grades 9-to 12, an activity that was participated in during 9th grade may also be included, especially if it was an interest built on throughout high school.
- List activities in order of importance. If involvement in an activity was only for a short period of time, leave it out.
- A long list, which includes several activities with minor participation, is unhelpful.

4. Preparing a description of an activity:

- Concentrate on giving an informative, succinct description of key activities. Use clear terminology that admissions counselors will understand. Use everyday vocabulary, and spell out abbreviations.
- Describe the activity briefly, unless it is something that is common knowledge. Then, write a concise description of your personal contribution to the activity, especially if you played a
- Substantial role in developing or leading it. Use active verbs to describe these contributions. In addition include any awards or honors earned in the activity (you may want to include a separate category for awards/honors).
- Don't repeat your essay. Both the Scholar Vitae and essay offer a chance to highlight accomplishments. However, try not to repeat information. If a lot of time is spent talking about activities in your essay, then there is no need to describe them deeply in the Activity List (and vice versa). It is okay to mention something in both places, but there is no need to go into great detail more than once.

What if I have very few school or community activities?

Sometimes, the need to work or family responsibilities make it difficult to become very involved in activities. Employment can be turned to a student's advantage.

What if I focused on only one main activity or interest?

There is another approach to describing activities or interests. Let's say you are involved in several activities, but one clearly stands out. You have been deeply committed to it for many years, and your accomplishments are particularly noteworthy. In this situation, you could focus the admissions staff's attention largely on this one activity. At many very competitive colleges, one exceptionally well developed talent can lead to an acceptance. An entire activity part of the application can be filled with this approach. An interest, let's say music, can also be mentioned with reference to the attached Activity Sheet. In *Making It Into A Top College* by Howard and Matthew Greene, the authors describe the main categories for a student with extensive music-related experience:

TRAINING

- Voice Lessons
- Piano Lessons

DANCE

- School Singing Groups
- Musical State Productions
- Music in the Community

As described above, the years of involvement, hours per week/month and description of the activities for each of the categories could then be added. In this case, the student might briefly describe her objectives in studying music at the college.

This type of Scholar Vitae is also appropriate for a student who wants to play intercollegiate athletics in a college. Because this type of Scholar Vitae can also be sent to coaches, a brief academic profile can also be added including the nature of curriculum, GPA and class rank.

Please note: A Scholar Vitae does not replace completing the activities section of an application, including the Common Application. Rather, briefly fill in the activities section, and at the end state “please see attached Scholar Vitae.” Or, if you apply online, indicate that you will send a paper copy to the admissions office.

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS

1. Put your name at the top of each page.
2. Be selective when including activities in the Scholar Vitae. Only an extraordinary background calls for more than two pages--strive to be compact and neat.
3. If an application gives sufficient room to name and describe activities, a Scholar Vitae is not needed.
4. If an application is submitted online, a Scholar Vitae should be sent by mail. Ask that it be included in your file. Increasingly, these materials will be electronically scanned to be read by an admissions officer.
5. Do NOT use colored paper for a Scholar Vitae. (In fact, completely avoid the use of colored paper in any materials. They may be scanned for computer reading and will not be picked up well.)

6. Use 10pt font or above. Remember an admissions counselor may be reading your list at night. Use margins. White space is appealing.
7. Avoid organizing Scholar Vitae by grades. Also, in most cases the chart form is a better format than long paragraphs to present activities.
8. Have someone proofread the Scholar Vitae for misspellings, grammar, or even an activity that may have been left out.

Here is a sample Scholar Vitae. They do not represent the activities of one individual.

FORMAT OF A SCHOLAR VITAE – EXAMPLES

**Location, awards, names, student(s), dates have all been edited..*

Example 1

SCHOOL SPONSORED (NOT ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES)	YEARS ACTIVE	POSITION	DESCRIPTION
AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE CLUB	11th grade 1 hour per week	Co-founder, Vice President, Secretary	My friends and I founded this club after realizing that our only exposure to sign language was during class. We decided to form this club for more practice.
STUDENT COUNCIL	Grade 12	Senior Representative	Student Council organizes student focused school activities such as: Community Service Projects, school dances, pep-fests and...this year as a senior representative, I am the voice of my grade. I am the leader of developing enthusiasm in this student body. We speak with administration and plan events that fit within the boundaries of school regulations but are also fun enough to encourage student participation.
WINDIGO	12 10 hr/week	Layout Staff	Windigo, our school yearbook committee meets everyday to work on our publications. Although I am on layout staff, I contribute in other ways such as taking pictures or interviewing people. Being on layout is very time consuming and a large responsibility because often I have to stay after school to finish the layout in time for the deadline.
KEY CLUB INTERNATIONAL	11 1-2 hr/week	Senior Class Representative	Key Club International is sponsored by the local Kiwanis Club and was started at Edina High School five years ago. It encourages students to help the community through service projects and fundraisers. As senior class representative, it was my responsibility to communicate projects and volunteer opportunities to students in my grade. Throughout the year, we did various fundraisers and service projects.
CHAMBER SINGERS	Senior: Leader Junior: Member	Singer, key leader	Chamber Singers is an elite, madrigal ensemble formed from members of the Concert Choir at Westlake High School. When I was selected my junior year, only two other juniors were chosen. Composed of eighteen voices, of which most are seniors, we rehearse twice a week during our off-season, taking one night for our concert music, and one day for our carols. During the holiday season, we perform everyday, and most days more than once until Christmas is over.

Example 2

ATHLETICS	YEARS ACTIVE	POSITION	DESCRIPTION
TRACK AND FIELD TEAM	10-12 15 hr/week	Captain	I have been on varsity for three years running the 300-meter hurdles. My best time is 48.6 seconds. I was sixth in conference and qualified for section finals. I also am a triple jumper. I have lettered twice, was voted Most Improved last year and was elected one of the captains of the team.
LACROSSE	2019-2020	Center, Third Home, and Attack Wing. Captain	Lettered three years. Named captain for the 2019-20 season. Won third in state in 2019 and won second in state in 2020.
VARSITY COMPETITION CHEERLEADING TEAM	10th-12th (20 hr/wk, Aug.- Mar.)	Captain	Voted captain senior year – duties include choreography of routines, organization of apparel and fundraisers, team motivation and enthusiasm, decision-making and problem solving. I am a liaison between coach, team members and parents.
KEY CLUB INTERNATIONAL	11 1-2 hr/week	Founder and Team Member	Founder and co-leader of Cen Tex's Ultimate Frisbee, supported by Youth Development/Youth Service. Participants meet weekly for informal games. Organizing Ultimate Frisbee taught me the importance of careful planning and marketing to attract participants.

Example 3

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT/ VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES	YEARS ACTIVE	POSITION	DESCRIPTION
CONNECTING WITH KIDS: INTERGENERATIONAL DIA- LOGUE BOARD	March 2019- present	Board Member	Connecting With Kids: Intergenerational Dialogue Board is a community board that focuses on how adults of all generations can connect with kids. One of my teachers recommended that I participate in a forum for the board in February 2019. Because of my ideas on creating a community youth board in Austin, they asked me if I would serve on the board. My responsibilities are to assist in implementing 14 actions that will allow adults to better connect with kids in the city of Austin, Texas.
TUTORING AT JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY	10th Grade, 2 hrs week		Jefferson Tutoring is a group of students from Austin High School who went to Jefferson Elementary School in Austin. I helped Spanish speaking children with their school work.
NERO-A ROCK BAND	Grades 9-12		Lead Guitar, Backup Vocals, Songwriter, Concert performances 2-3 a month. Performed at Austin High School, Minneapolis Parks, Red Sea, The Quest, First Avenue, Dinkytownner, Dunn Bros., The Depot, Eclipse Records, Beaners, Triple Rock, The Lab, The Garage, and 7th Street Entry.
AMY KLOBUCHAR SENATORI- AL ELECTION CAMPAIGN	May 2020 - October 2020	Intern	Amy Klobuchar ran her Senate election campaign and needed volunteers and interns to assist her. I was a technology intern for all of the districts. I was responsible for assisting in the setup of office technology and networks. By July 2020, all of the offices had been setup so I moved to coordinating volunteer efforts for get-out-the-vote. Each intern was also responsible for attending parades and speeches. At the parades and speeches, interns were responsible for explaining her policies to constituents.
GREATER TWIN CITIES YOUTH	Grades 11,12, 35 weeks/yr, 3 hour/wk		GTCYS is a group of youth orchestras, each directed by a different conductor. Playing in Concertina West in 11th grade and Philharmonic in 12th grade. The orchestras meet once every week to rehearse together, and perform several times throughout the year.
SOUTHDALE LIBRARY	11,12, 35	Volunteer	Researched and reworked library's PopLinks website ("PopLinks provides a sampling of {...}online sources, covering both popular and classical materials, for literature, music, theater, film, radio and television). Developed PowerPoint presentation, detailing features and use of website. Working on the website, I learned about the different cultural outlets for the myriad interests of library patrons. I improved my ability to create meaningful and informative presentations as I developed the PowerPoint training.

Example 4

EMPLOYMENT	DATES	POSITION	DESCRIPTION
SKIJAMMERS	January 2020 - present	Ski Instructor	SkiJammers is a local ski program that teaches kids how to ski. I participated in SkiJammers from ages 5-14. When I turned 14, they offered me a position as a ski instructor. After training for a year, I started teaching 8 to 10 year olds. I spend 9 hours on every Saturday in January and February teaching.
DEER LAKE APPLE ORCHARD	12th grade-17 hrs/weekend for 6 weekends.	Concessions, manual labor working register, helping customers	While working at Deer Lake Orchard, I worked at the concession stand, sorted and bagged apples, as well as worked at the register and helped customers. The best part of working there was being exposed to so many different jobs at the same time. You are forced to multitask while still being productive.

Example 5

AWARDS/HONORS	YEARS ACTIVE:	DESCRIPTION
COMMUNITY SERVICE LETTER	2019-2020	Community Service Letter awarded for 763.75 hours of community service (120 hours required for letter) and completion of a project demonstrating knowledge and understanding of service. More: A sentence or two on the project would have improved the description.
BOOK AWARD RECIPIENT	Grade 11	Recipient of University of Richmond, Office of Admissions Book Award. Book awards are selected by the Edina High School faculty and are given to juniors who have excelled academically. "This award is given to a high school junior who exhibits extraordinary leadership in the academic arena as well as in extracurricular activities. This student must consistently demonstrate intellectual curiosity within the classroom that promotes discussion and enhances learning of others. In addition, this student has taken an active leadership role in a community service organization."

FILL OUT YOUR OWN SCHOLAR VITAE

SCHOOL SPONSORED (NOT ATHLETIC ACTIVITIES)	YEARS ACTIVE	POSITION	DESCRIPTION

ATHLETICS	YEARS ACTIVE	POSITION	DESCRIPTION

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT/ VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES	YEARS ACTIVE	POSITION	DESCRIPTION

EMPLOYMENT	DATES	POSITION	DESCRIPTION

AWARDS/HONORS	YEARS ACTIVE	DESCRIPTION

**Disclaimer: This document has been edited for Access College America. Content has been used from other sources. Access College America does not take responsibility for creating this resource. In writing this piece, ideas were drawn heavily from Michelle Hernandez's [Acing the College Application](#) (Ballantine, 2002). Suggestions from [Making It Into a Top College](#) (Harper Collins, 2000) by Howard and Matthew Greene, [Admission Matters](#) (Jossey-Bass, 2005) by Sally Springer and Marion Franck and the website, College Center (www.csocollegecenter.org) were also helpful. Also prepared by David Breeden with editorial assistance from Sarah Meller, Edina class of 2007.*