CET—Crafting a Research Statement for Your Portfolio

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Preliminary arguments

- Your portfolio is sent in response to a position advertisement. Be sure to address key aspects of the position and the institution offering it.

- Research statement will eventually translate into a 3-page maximum section of your portfolio. This will be the second most important element in your job application (portfolio), after your c.v.
Content of the research statement—What the research statement is **NOT**

- A state-of-the-art review of the literature. So do not bother to mention the entire body of literature behind a given topic.
- A research design for proposed research
- A research article
What your research statement SHOULD contain:

- A brief definition of your field/ specialization and how you insert yourself into it.
- A statement that begins with a phrase such as, “I define myself as a (medical, social science, physics) researcher who ....”
- A concise but accessible description of your research interests and accomplishments to date.
Content of Research Statement (Ten Critical Points)

1. State central theme of your research; identify related themes and how they expand on the central theme. Indicate your primary and secondary research interests.

2. What problems does your research address? How important are they?

3. If you are a new scholar (i.e., not many publications beyond your dissertation), focus on your dissertation: summarize the key aspects of your dissertation, explain what makes your dissertation unique, and state its main contributions—either to theory or to methodology, or both. Do not summarize the dissertation chapter by chapter. Indicate how it reflects your interest and how you will expand your focus or shift interests in the future. If you worked with a well-known scholar for your dissertation, mention him or her.
Content of Research Statement (cont’d)

4. List what you have written to date: papers presented at professional conferences, technical reports, articles published in journals. If you have articles already published in journals, indicate the importance of those journals. Identify what articles are likely to emanate from your dissertation and the possible publication venues for them.

5. State the theoretical perspectives used in your research and explain the value you see in them. What concepts do you usually use? Why?

6. Indicate what epistemological assumptions underlie your research perspectives. State your preferred research methodologies for given problems. Argue the advantages of such methodological approaches.
7. State your main contributions to your discipline to date. Locate the impacts of your research (especially of your dissertation) as you see them thus far.
8. If you have conducted funded research, make sure to identify those sources, particularly if they are prestigious such as NSF, Spencer, NIH, NIMH, and NEH.
9. Explain the connections you make between your research and teaching style and course content. How does your research translate into your classroom?
10. Argue the linkages between your research and problem-solving or policy approaches.
Final recommendations

- Produce a condensed, yet crisp research statement.
- Revise your research statement constantly to:
  (1) sharpen your interests and
  (2) update its content.
- Keep your research statement elastic; it must apply fairly tightly to a given job announcement.