

COVER LETTER GUIDE

An Outline for Students Seeking Internships or Employment

NAME

Physical address

Phone Number (make sure your voicemail recording is professional)

Email / Website / Portfolio Link / LinkedIn Page

Date

Name of Employer

Title/Department

Company Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr.:

OPENING PARAGRAPH: Introduce yourself and your course of study. State the position or type of work for which you are applying. Identify how you heard about the opportunity, how you obtained the contact's name, and how you developed an interest in the firm/organization. Showcase your enthusiasm by mentioning specific examples of the employer's work that appeal to you. Refer to any contact you have had with the organization, providing names of people with whom you have spoken.

SECOND PARAGRAPH: Seque into your skillset. Indicate that you understand the requirements for the position, and demonstrate that you are a good match. Emphasize your key qualifications by expanding on relevant information in your resume and by providing concrete examples of your experience. If necessary, this may be expanded into two paragraphs.

CLOSING PARAGRAPH: Offer specific suggestions about how and when a meeting/discussion can take place. ("I will be in New York during the week of March 18-22 and will contact you in a few weeks to arrange a convenient time to visit your office.") Demonstrate initiative by stating that you will follow up rather than asking for them to contact you. Mention you have attached PDFs of your application materials. Thank the employer for his or her consideration.

Sincerely,

Your name (signed electronically or by hand)

Your name (typed)

The job search today allows you to submit your resume, cover letter, and work samples/portfolio PDFs via email or by uploading them to the employer's website.

Employers specifically requesting a cover letter in their application requirements will expect a PDF.

If you plan to include your cover letter within the body of your email, keep it concise - no one likes to read long emails, especially if they pull it up on their cell phone!

Create a cohesive, polished presentation by using the same font and graphics within all of your application materials. Your cover letter, resume, and portfolio should all appear to be part of a uniform package.

It is not as effective to use: "Dear Sir or Madame" or "To Whom it May Concern." It's always best to direct your letter to a specific person.

Tailor your cover letter to the employer. Blanket letters are easily identified and often ignored.

It is crucial that you have your materials proofread by others to avoid typos and mistakes.

You are encouraged to send your resume and cover letter drafts to the Career Services for review and guidance! Contact us at utsoa-careers@utexas.edu.