



Cover Letter Assignment

Sam Dunn and
Mary McCall
ANSC Fall 2015

[Preview of Lecture]

- Cover letters
 - Purpose, requirements, and common errors
- Preparing cover letters for submission
- Meeting with Sam or Mary
- Assistance

Cover Letters: What is the Purpose?

- Explain your experiences in a story-like format that works with the information provided in your résumé.
- Allow you to go in-depth about important experiences/skills and relate them to job requirements.
- Show the employer that you are individualizing (tailoring) this job application.
- Provide a sample of your written communication skills.

Content Guidelines

A concise **introduction** that

- Mentions what job you're applying for and where you heard about it
- Clearly states two-three qualifications or experiences you have that match the company/position to be the focus of your body paragraphs

The **body** that focuses on 2-3 qualifications or experiences that answer these questions:

- How can I show I am qualified for this position and that I am a good match for the organization?
- What have I done that illustrates these qualifications?

The **conclusion** that

- Closes with a strong reminder of why you are a good match for the job position and the organization
- Thanks the reader and provides contact information

[Design Guidelines]

- **Header**

Your address

Date

Employer's address

- **Greeting and signature**
- **Paragraphs in block style**
- **Does not go over one page**

[Cover Letter Language]

Put the emphasis of the letter on your readers by using the “you” attitude. By using “you” and “your” in the letter, you can discuss your qualifications from your readers’ point of view. To put further emphasis on your readers rather than on yourself, you can change “I” sentences to “my” sentences:

- “Your company would benefit from my mechanical engineering training and hands-on experience as a certified welder.”
- “Your group is one of the fastest growing medical practices in Denver. As a member of your medical unit, I would be reliable and hardworking.”

Common Cover Letter Errors

- ❑ 1. Forgetting to include the cover letter
- ❑ 2. Generic address (e.g. “To Whom It May Concern” or “Dear Sir”)
- ❑ 3. Adding your cover letter as an attachment and writing a brief note in the body of the email.
- ❑ 4. Sending a boring or terse cover letter.
- ❑ 5. Missing an opportunity to make a great connection or to tell an interesting story.
- ❑ 6. Being self-centered
- ❑ 7. Having typos in the letter
- ❑ 8. Not targeting your letter
- ❑ 9. Writing a novel.
- ❑ 10. Using the cover letter to repeat everything in the resume.

Preparing Cover Letters for Submission

- Review this PowerPoint presentation
- Ensure the cover letter meets assignment guidelines
- Add transition words to tie ideas together
- Proofread
- Read your cover letter aloud
- Have a peer read your cover letter
- Go to the Writing Lab
- Visit [the Purdue OWL](#)

[E-mail Submissions]

- The cover letters will be submitted via email to the WAC coordinators.
- Cover letter (due November 17):
 - A-K send to Mary (mccall@purdue.edu)
 - L-Z send to Sam (dunn39@purdue.edu)
- Format reminder:
 - LAST NAME, FIRST NAME, ASSIGNMENT
 - e.g. Doe, Jane, Cover Letter

[For Assistance]

- Meet with Sam (HEAV 443) or Mary (HEAV 307E)
- Visit the Writing Lab (HEAV 226)
 - Tutors are familiar with your assignments
- Visit [the Purdue OWL](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/)
 - <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>