COVER LETTER WRITING

The cover letter is a companion document to your resume, which addresses your interest in the company and most relevant skills for a job/internship (indicates why you are specifically interested in this company, this particular position, and why you think you would be a good match for the role). The Career Management Center recommends writing a targeted cover letter for each company to which you apply. When the employer requests a cover letter, they expect a well-written, grammatically correct document that clearly identifies how you meet the position requirements and provides specific examples of your skills and experiences.

FORMATTING GUIDELINES

- 1 brief page for cover letter (no more than 3 – 4 paragraphs maximum) is strongly recommended
- Font size of 10, 11, or 12 point type using font styles such as Arial or Calibri (font style should match resume)
- Address the cover letter to a specific individual or department whenever possible; when in doubt, send to the HR Department (research the employer website or review LinkedIn for potential contact names)

INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH (3-5 sentences)

- Reference the employer and opportunity (job title) and how you learned about the position (website, networking contact, industry forum, employer information session, career expo, LinkedIn)
- Explain your interest and motivation for the opportunity (tip: review the position description, employer’s website and Careers webpage)
- Describe how your education, experiences, and goals/interests are connected to the employer (awareness and understanding of company culture is very important in the hiring process; identify and specify how you are a match for this opportunity - reference company products and services or community involvement, etc.)
- If you are applying for an internship, identify your learning objectives/goals for the experience

MIDDLE PARAGRAPH(S) (3-5 sentences)

- Write 1-2 brief paragraphs describing your specific skills and/or experience that relate to the requirements for this position (do not repeat all of the information on your resume)
- Experiences can be paid or unpaid work, volunteer, internships, academic projects, leadership roles, study abroad, military, or community involvement that relate to the company and the position
- Provide specific and detailed examples which describe your work or academic project accomplishments (tip: complete a SWOT Analysis to identify your most powerful strengths and relevant professional goals)
- Connect your experiences to the job/internship of interest (tip: consider transferability of your skills to the needs of the company)

CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH (2-3 sentences)

- Affirm your interest in the company and their opportunity and include a follow-up statement/interview request
- Conclude with a thank you sentence (for consideration of your resume and candidacy)