Cover Letter Writing

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(951) 827-3631

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Agenda

Purpose of a Cover Letter
Do Your Research
Formatting
Tailoring your Cover Letter
Cover Letter Content
Additional Tips
References
Next Steps
What You'll Learn Today

At the end of this workshop, you will be able to...

- The ability to communicate what a cover letter is and why it is important to your career development
- Identify format and content ideas to implement on your own cover letters
- Understand why and how to use a cover letter to articulate your experiences, strengths and skills

UC RIVERSIDE Career Center
Obtaining **requisite competencies** that broadly prepare college graduates for a **successful transition** into the workplace.
Purpose of a Cover Letter

• Expresses interest & qualifications for a particular position
• Personal but professional
• Tailored to position/company
• Explains how you fit with organization & how you will help them
• Expands main points from your resume
• “Sells” qualifications to the prospective employer
Do Your Research

**Position/Role**
- General job responsibilities
- Desired qualifications and skills
- Identify key words from job description

**Company/Organization**
- Mission Statement
- Organizational Vision & Goals
- Strengths & Opportunities
- Philanthropy
- Affinity Groups

**Mission**
The University of California, Riverside will transform the lives of the diverse people of California, the nation, and the world through the discovery, communication, translation, application, and preservation of knowledge — thereby enriching the state’s economic, social, cultural, and environmental future.
Tailor Your Cover Letter

Academic Advisor for Student Athletes
Job # 72150

Description
The Academic Advisor for Student-Athletes holds a professional academic advising position in Athletic Department. The Academic Advisor for Student-Athletes works closely with coaching staff, athletic department administrators, faculty, academic advisors, and other campus offices, departments, and staff who are involved with the academic lives of undergraduate student-athletes to ensure that student-athletes are presented with a broad base of opportunities with which to optimize their experience at University of XYZ. The Academic Advisor for Student-Athletes implements and interprets university and department policies, and identifies and resolves complex issues using advanced knowledge requiring independent judgment.

QUALIFICATIONS
• Advanced degree
• 1-2 years of experience in academic advising and coordinating academic programs in a college or university
• Participation as a Student-Athlete, and/or experience working with Division I Student-Athletes

Knowledge & Skills:
• Strong communication skills to clearly and effectively communicate information to Student-Athletes, internal and external audiences, and management.
• Advanced analysis and problem solving skills, including experience with NCAA compliance rules and regulations
• Strong team work and interpersonal skills.
• Advanced customer service skills.
• Relevant computer systems/technology experience.
• Ability to ensure and apply compliance with legal, financial, and university policies and external regulations.
Formatting

Instead of "To Whom it May Concern, use name or Hiring/Selection Committee/Manager"

1st: Explain why are you writing, state your purpose

2nd/3rd: Relevant points on qualifications, why you are a strong candidate. Use student organization, work, volunteer and academic experiences.

4th: Further express your enthusiasm and interest in the position/company.

Same header as resume to "brand" your documents
Address the letter to a specific person if possible

Hiring Manager/Committee, Selection Committee/Team can also be used
Example 1

Scott Bears
900 University Avenue, Riverside, CA 92521
555.555.5555
scott.bears@gmail.com
www.linkedin.com/scottbears

[Month, Day, Year]

Courtney Richardson
University of XYZ
55 University Avenue
Sometown, CA 12345

Example 2

Scott Bears
900 University Ave.
Riverside, CA 92521
951-827-3631

August 8th, 2018

Mr. Will Smith
Superintendent
ABC College
100 University Ave.
Sometown, CA 92521
First Paragraph

Explain purpose of letter

Introduce yourself

Explain why interested in the position and the company

What qualities make you an ideal candidate for the position?
I am very excited to express my interest in the Academic Advisor for Student Athletes position at the University of XYZ. The University of XYZ is a national leader in Division I athletics and is well-respected for emphasizing the holistic development of academic, career and life skills for all student athletes. It would be an honor to be a part of this program. I believe I am an ideal candidate for the position due to my personal experience as a student athlete, my experience serving as an academic advisor for student athletes, and my educational preparation.
Middle Paragraphs

Highlight skills and benefits to the company
Emphasize interest in the company
Provide concrete evidence
Show, don’t tell
Do not include all information from your resume
Body Paragraphs Example

As an athletic academic advisor, I developed the skills to **investigate and analyze information to draw conclusions** about academic concerns regarding at-risk freshmen football athletes. Evaluating grades, course history, and teacher’s comments, I focused my appointments on noticeable behaviors that may have influenced each student’s particular situation.

Making sure I scheduled follow-up appointments, I interpreted and applied **guidelines and procedures for each individual athlete** so they understood what was required of them to remain eligible for current and post seasons.

Successfully witnessing breakthroughs with multiple athletes, we saw as a department student-athletes holding themselves accountable and being educated enough **on the expectations of remaining eligible and compliant with university academic expectations**. Seeing athletes succeed academically motivates me to continue to put in the extra time needed to ensure they are prepared. I fully intend on bringing the same service to the University of XYZ.

Skills & Qualifications Mentioned:
- Analytical
- Communication & Interpersonal
- Teamwork
- Follow policies and procedures

Real examples are provided.
Connecting my personal experiences as a former student athlete with current athletes is something that is extremely important to me. If given the opportunity to use this platform to help students, I assure you that my work ethic and attention to detail will exceed the expectations of the position. If you have any questions, please call me at 951-827-3631 or e-mail me at scottbears@ucr.edu. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.
Closing Formats

Sincerely,

Scott Bears

Scott Bears

Sincerely,

Scott Bears
Scott Bears
900 University Avenue #3
Riverside, CA 92521
951-827-3631
scottbears@ucr.edu
Additional Tips

• TAILOR IT!
• Avoid unprofessional language
• Length – should be one page, depends on industries
• Strongest and most relevant qualifications should be highlighted – limit to a few – ELABORATE!
• Demonstrate enthusiasm and originality
• Proofread for typos, grammar error, and spelling
• For a polished look, use the same header style for your contact information that you used for resume
• Font size 10-12
• Margin 0.5-1 inch
References

• A reference is someone who:
  • knows your work habits
  • has known you for a long time
  • is credible
  • is not just a personal friend or your mother

• Contact your references before
  • Ask if they are willing to give you a positive reference

• Make sure their information is correct
  • Names, job titles and phone numbers
References Format Samples

SCOTT BEARS
City, State | Phone | Email | LinkedIn URL

REFERENCES

Name
Position
Company/Organization
Phone number
Email Address
Professional Relationship

Note: Your format for the reference should be the same as your resume’s header format.
Next Steps

1. Have your cover letter reviewed via appointment or drop-in by a career specialist virtually!
   **Drop-Ins:** (Mon-Thurs 10am-3pm, Fri 10am-12pm)

2. Upload your resume and cover letter to UCR Handshake & complete your UCR Handshake profile
Questions?
Location: We are located in the Career Center Plaza. Our entrance is the University Lecture Hall and the Surge Building, behind the UCR Campus Store.

Hours: 
Mon. - Fri. 8 am to 5 pm except Wed. 9 am to 5 pm

Individual counseling appointments available
Schedule on Handshake

Drop-In Hours: 
Mon. - Thurs. 10 am-3pm
Fri. 10 am-12 pm