

## International Students - Cover Letters

A well-written cover letter is an important partner to your resume for an internship or job application in the US. It is your opportunity to show that you are an ideal candidate for the position by expanding on select experiences on your resume, making connections to the position, showing passion and interest in the position, career field and company, and demonstrating your clear and concise written communication skills.

### How to Write a Cover Letter

Start by using the [Cover Letter Guide](#). This guide provides helpful hints, a guide of what information to include in each paragraph, and sample letters.

A cover letter is a business letter for individuals to express interest to prospective employers about the job and their qualifications for the position that they are applying to obtain. It accompanies your resume and serves as an introduction to you. You will point out the most important and relevant information on your cover letter that you want the employer to know about your knowledge, skills, and abilities that make you a “standout” candidate for the job.

### Common Mistakes

- **Writing a generic cover letter** - Be sure to customize your letter to the position. Your letter may be very different if you are applying for an internship or job in your field as opposed to an on-campus role. Use the job advertisement as a guide of the skills you should include in your letter.
- **Avoid using online templates**- online templates may be easy, but they will not help you explain your unique qualifications and fit for the specific job. Using a template also does not demonstrate your ability to write and communicate well.
- **Avoid being redundant and repetitive**-In some cases people tend to repeat the same information in the entire resume.
- **Keep it short and simple**- Recruiters look through hundreds of resumes each day, so be sure to get clear, concise, and straight to the point in a professional manner
- **Do not include negative information**- Don't include any information that is negative, whether it is about yourself and your skills (or lack of); a previous employer; the organization, or a position you're currently applying for.
- **Including personal information**- Your cover letter should NEVER contain any information about your personal, non-work life. Do not include photos, birthdates, hobbies, religion, interests, etc. on your resume or cover letter.

### Writing Support

Every Cover Letter you submit should be free of spelling or grammatical errors. In addition to having the Career Development Center staff review your resume, make sure to seek writing support from the University Writing Center, your friends, classmates and your support network who are native speakers of English. Make an appointment with the [University Writing Center](#).