

BASIC OVERVIEW AND TIPS

- Formatting
 - o 12-point font, 2 pages maximum (recommended 1.5 minimum) single-spaced, smallest margins must be 1"
 - o Date, space, snail mail address of person/committee, space, Dear Professor X/members of Search Committee, space
 - o Letterhead from your department
- Specify publication plans
- Present yourself as a colleague
- Research the place you're applying to!
 - o Tailor your letter to the position you're applying to (is the course load 3/3 or 4/4? Is it a research position? Is it a position partially funded by grants?)

Outline of Information to include:

- 1) Paragraph on you: I am writing to apply for the [INSERT POSITION] in [INSERT POSITION SPECIFICS] announced in [WHERE DID YOU FIND IT]. I am currently a Postdoctoral Fellow in [PI's LAB/HOME INSTITUTION] where I work on [YOUR BROAD TOPIC]. Briefly describe dissertation [USE A DESCRIPTIVE WORKING TITLE] and how your current research deviates/builds upon previous research. I am a good fit for this position because [INSERT GENUINE REASON HERE].
- 2) Paragraph on Current Research: My project [SUMMARY SENTENCE]. [HISTORICAL/SOCIAL/POLITICAL/SCIENTIFIC CONTEXT]. [Detail sentence 1]. [Detail sentence 2]. [Detail sentence 3]. [Probably include one sentence per paper].
- 3) Paragraph on Other Scholarly Interests: Additional/parallel project I work on/am interested in is [plans for future research].
- 4) Paragraph on Teaching: My teaching experience includes [five to seven-word summary]. I have taught [range of classes, including topics and types, e.g. online, lecture, big lecture] and include role in course [recitation leader, instructor-of-record, etc.].
- 5) Paragraph on Grants/Fellowships: Within STEM be sure to list any travel grants, young researcher grants, internal and external grants, and currently submitted and pending grants and collaborations. Some positions (especially self-funded labs) will seek substantial grant-writing and application experience, as well as collaborations with other researchers within home institutions and at other institutions.
- 6) Paragraph on Professional Development and Service: I am a productive member of my field/department/university, which shows in my dedication to [insert workshops, volunteer work, service here, mentorship, educational outreach].
- 7) Paragraph on fit: [optional – how do you fit into the university you're applying to?]

Resources, Sample Letters, and Works Cited

- <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/639/01/>
- <http://www.cgu.edu/pages/923.asp>
- <http://theprofessorisin.com/2016/08/26/why-your-job-cover-letter-sucks/>
- <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2013/11/04/essay-cover-letter-academic-jobs>
- <https://career.berkeley.edu/PhDs/PhDcover>
- <http://www.grad.illinois.edu/sites/default/files/pdfs/academiccoverletters.pdf>
- <https://www.thebalance.com/how-to-write-an-academic-cover-letter-2060155>

