

English 1301

Essay Cover Letters

The goal of a cover letter for any kind of written submission is to prepare the reader for what he or she is about to read. It is your chance to put a personal face on things and to point out specifics that you would like the reader to notice.

For some of your essays you will include a cover letter when you turn it in. Cover letters will be averaged to count as one Essay grade. This letter should be addressed to me, formatted in a traditional full block business format, and discuss your goals for the essay—what’s at the heart of what you want to communicate, your successes—what you feel you did well, and your worries—what most concerns you.

In addition to content and grammar, professionalism, format and design will be included in the grading process.

Your cover letter may be revised for the first two essays. Improvement in the revised version will be reflected in a raise to the grade on the original letter.

Formatting a Business Letter

(Use the Block format)

- [Writing down the Basics](#) pp 137-140
- [Business Letter: Basic Format and Outline](#) (Video)

Keep these key elements in mind:

- Single space your cover letter
- Skip one line between paragraphs and sections; make sure you do **not** have extra space between paragraphs
- Use a standard 12 point font (For this assignment only, you may use 11 to keep it from going to two pages.)
- Once done writing your letter, enter at the top a few times as necessary to center your letter vertically on the page.
- If you use the MS Word tool for your letters, remember that **nothing** should be in bold—you’ll need to fix that in your letter.

Sample Cover Letter

Each cover letter should be specific about the essay you are submitting. That means you should vary your wording and the issues you address in the letter for each essay. However, you should always discuss your goals, strengths, concerns, and provide a concluding paragraph.

Cover Letter Sample

Once you finish your letter, enter a few times to center it on the page vertically.

123 Your Address
Your Town, ST 12345
Date

- Begin with your address and the date.
- Format the date as follows: July 19, 2012 * DO NOT use the slash version of the date
- Skip one line between all paragraphs.
- Use a standard 12 point font.

Kelli Wood
9570 Gateway Blvd. North
El Paso, TX 79924

Include my name and address (Who it's to)

Dear Ms. Wood:

Make sure to use a colon after the opening address.

Enclosed is my essay "A Permanence beyond Paper." In writing this essay, I have tried to communicate not simply the importance of the book that my friend Amy gave me, but how deep and consistent our friendship has been.

Paragraph 1:
Share the title of your essay, and explain your overall goal.

Overall, I am pleased with narrative in the essay. There, I feel like I've been able to create a good feel for the moments I tell about. I think that you will see a strong use of description that develops feelings for small movements and moments. One of my favorite moments of description is "At first touch, the woven texture of cloth covering revealed the bag's contents. Before I had pulled the book out, I seemed to smell the dustiness that comes with sitting on a shelf for so long." I think this description works as it uses tactile and aromatic description to give more than just a visual description of the book. One of the things I love about old books, even though it's weird, is that old, dusty smell.

Paragraph 2:
Explain the things you feel good about. Be specific and use at least one example.

On the other hand, I am a bit worried about the depth of my discussion. I'm not sure if I fully communicated how Amy and I have grown apart yet we still remain close. I know that I've said this in the essay, but want to know if I should perhaps include some narrative that better shows this or some discussion that goes deeper into this. I'd like to know what you think about this.

Paragraph 3:
Discuss what you want specific feedback on in terms of content. Be specific.

I've really worked to do a good job on this essay, and while I'd like you to say it's perfect, I also want to get better, so I look forward to your help with that.

Sincerely,

Sign your letter!

Sign Here

20 points will be deducted from your letter's grade if you do not "sign" your letter.

Your Name Typed

You can simply put [I'd sign here] there to show me you know you'd sign there! ;-)

Paragraph 4:
Closing lines. Courtesy in every business letter. Includes final requests, and/or thanks.

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Cover Letter Grading Rubric

Your cover letters will be graded based on this rubric. Remember that the grades you receive for them will be averaged and count the same as one essay.

Format, Design & Professionalism

- Is the letter turned in/uploaded in the correct file format? (Word, doc/docx)
- Is the letter laid out in standard business format?
- Is the letter centered vertically on the page? ⬆
- Is the font used a business-like font?

Content & Development

- Do you have the required 4 paragraphs?
- Do you give a specific example of things you like about YOUR writing?
- Do you ask for specific advice or feedback?
- Does your writing reflect thoughtful thinking about your writing in the essay presented?

Style: (A professional voice with a conversational tone and style)

- Does the style—voice, tone, sentence style, and word choice—reflect the type of writing expected in this letter? Professional but friendly tone and approach.

Clarity & Grammar

- Does the writing reflect grammatical and mechanical correctness expected at this level?