



# 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...



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The ability to communicate what a cover letter is and why it is important to your career development



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Identify format and content ideas to implement on your own cover letters



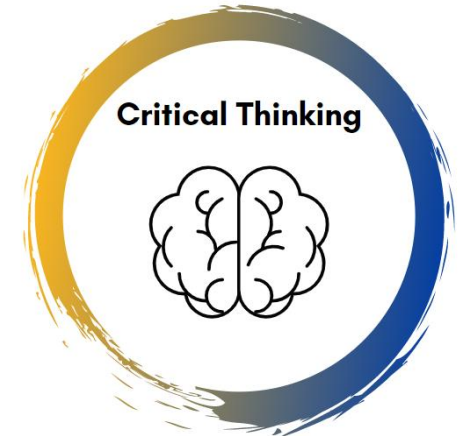
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Understand why and how to use a cover letter to articulate your experiences, strengths and skills





# **NACE CAREER READINESS COMPETENCIES**



*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

Scott Bears  
900 University Avenue #3  
Riverside, CA 92521  
(951) 827-0000  
scottbears@ucr.edu

Same header as resume to "brand" your documents

September 4, 2017

Ms. Christina Brown  
Vice President  
Bright Green Talent  
4500 3rd Street  
Los Angeles, CA 900

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

Dear Ms. Brown:

I was thrilled to come across Bright Green Talent's advertisement for a College Recruiter on Green with a passion for people and positive psychology. I've kept an eye on your company with great presence. I think I'd be a great addition to Bright Green Talent's Marketing Team because of my and passion for environmental science and my proven ability to successfully work independently.

1<sup>st</sup>: Explain why are you writing, state your purpose

The job description requires someone with strong phone skills, an ability to network and an outgoing personality. In my previous work as a marketing intern, I developed my skills in all three areas. I managed clients remotely, coordinated teams of marketing assistants working in our company, doubled my team's number of projects in one year, and was an active engagement in my company's volunteer programs. If possible, I would like to enrich its partnership with Solar Richmond, and expanding the business.

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

I recently graduated from UC Riverside with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science. I wrote my senior thesis on how universities are integrating sustainability issues into traditional academic frameworks, in order to prepare students for the 21st century's resource management challenges. This unique background in training and preparation would translate well to helping talented recent graduates find the first steps in their "green career."

I am aware that Bright Green Talent is a small team, and that each person must operate relatively independently. In my previous intern role, I took a leadership position in each of the project teams I worked with, and operated efficiently on remote teams where I had to self-impose deadlines and goals. I look forward to bringing my ability to take the initiative and be self-motivated to Bright Green Talent.

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

Overall, I'd love to add my skills and perspective to Bright Green Talent's Marketing Team to grow the business. Please contact me if you have other questions. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Scott Bears  
Enclosure: resume



# Header

- Address the letter to a specific person if possible
- Hiring Manager/Committee, Selection Committee/Team can also be used

Your Name

City, State | Phone | Email | LinkedIn (optional)

Date

Name of Contact Person

Title

Organization

Mailing Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear Ms., Mr., Dr., (etc)

OR Hiring Committee/Manager/Team

# Example 1

**Scott Bears**

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

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[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 8<sup>th</sup>, 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?

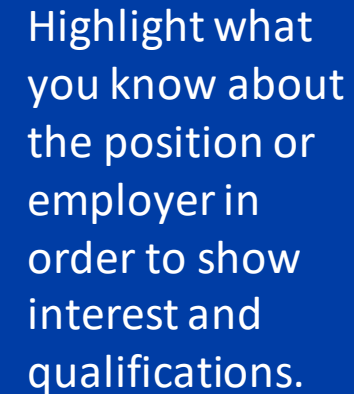
# First Paragraph Example

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.



Explain why are you writing, state your purpose



Highlight what you know about the position or employer in order to show interest and qualifications.



# 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.

Each paragraph highlights a skill/experience you have that the job description states as requirement.

## Skills & Qualifications Mentioned:

- Analytical
- Communication & Interpersonal
- Teamwork
- Follow policies and procedures

Real examples are provided.



# Final Paragraph

Conclude with next step

Provide contact information

## Example

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](tel:951-827-3631) or e-mail me at [scottbears@ucr.edu](mailto: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](mailto: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

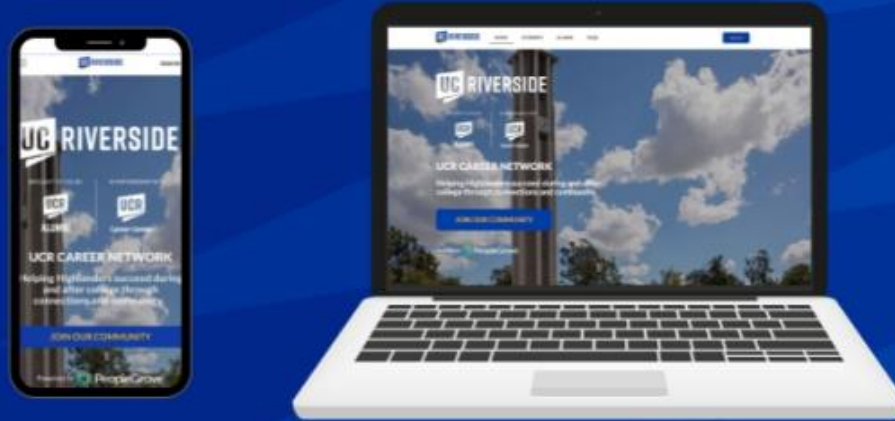
Note: Your format for the reference should be the same as your resume's header format.

## 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



Join the UCR Career Network, an online community for networking, mentoring, and job opportunities for alumni and students.

**MENTORING**

Matching process that connects current students with alumni or alumni with one another.

**JOB SEARCH**

Job board for those currently seeking employment or for alumni looking to hire other Highlanders.

**NETWORKING**

Discussion boards to meet and network with others who have similar career questions.

**REGISTER AT [CAREERNETWORK.UCR.EDU](https://careernetwork.ucr.edu)**

**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

*Individual counseling appointments available  
Schedule on Handshake*

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



## Career Center



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