

COVER LETTER WORKSHOP

GRFX-4503

MENU

tips

- Cover letters give you a chance to sell yourself to a specific job and show how you are a good fit for the position. **Your ultimate goal is to convey this simple point: "You need it, I have it."** Showing overall passion for the company is important too, but job specifics are crucial.
- Cover letters give you a chance to speak on behalf of your resumé and experiences, because the things that you've done might not speak for themselves or be an exact fit. Your job is to show the employer why your past experience is transferable and relevant to the job you're applying for. Tell them why your experience should matter to them.
- Don't be too personal. Don't be too bland. ...Figure it out.

COVER LETTER

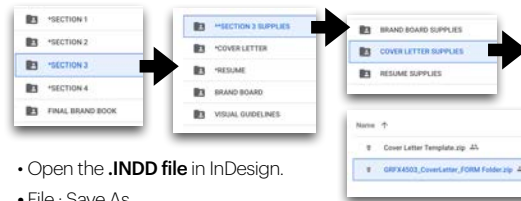
A cover letter is a one-page message sent with a resumé/application that provides information about the position you're applying for, your qualifications in relation to the position, and why you're interested in working for the company. **A well-written cover letter can help you stand out from the rest of the competition.**

For this project, students will be supplied with a template instead of being asked to write from scratch (as has been done in all previous semesters). However, it will be informed by lectures explaining how to write inquiry cover letters in the future. *A cover letter is also the first chance to use your letterhead!*

CONTENT

LET'S START BUILDING!

- Download the **GRFX4503_CoverLetter_FORM FOLDER** from your Google shared folder.



- Open the **.INDD** file in InDesign.
- File : Save As
YOUR LAST NAME_CoverLetter_FORM.INDD
- Start filling it out in class! :)

COVER LETTER

You will receive a template to use with this information.

NAME:
Replace all of this blue text with your name as it will be on your resumé.

MENU

template

For the decade+ I have taught this class here and at other institutions, students were required to write a cover letter with only the previous section's general skeleton and the goal to obtain a meeting with a creative director just for an **"informational interview"**. This means their letter didn't just answer a job post, but was meant to grow a network and be part of that town's design/advertising/UI/UX group. **A network is grown by writing people and asking for a bit of their time and advice via a quick chat over coffee and a glance at your portfolio.** New designers can quickly increase their chances at a future job.

However, the subtleties of the sell are hard even before COVID precautions made this near impossible. For the sake of time and reality of expectations amongst the other demands of this class, **a template will be provided instead that simply answers an imaginary job that is posted.** Students are still responsible for all grammar and spelling and the information required still demands research from the job Hunt Journal.

Today's Date:

Creative Director's Name and Last Name
441 Company Address
Company City, State, Zip

Dear Mr./Ms. Director's Last Name:

I am writing this letter to express my interest in the [job title](https://www.linkedin.com/jobs/view/3456789) advertised on <https://www.linkedin.com/jobs/view/3456789> (or other).

From day one, before I can make valuable contributions to the design team at Company Name, I possess a wide range of abilities that combine innovative art and design principles after comprehensive study for my Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design, obtained at Arkansas State University. Furthermore, my expert knowledge of Adobe Creative Suite, HTML, and CSS for user skills like photography on Instagram will allow me to play a crucial role in the implementation of your design and marketing initiatives.

The following are highlights of my skills and accomplishments:

- Lead a team of five designers to develop and implement the graphics, layout, and production communication materials while managing clients (at three costs) by an average of 15%.
- Oversee the efficient use of production project budgets ranging from \$2,000 - \$10,000.
- Spearheaded successful marketing programs (blogs, brochures, newsletters, video/podcast, presentations, and advertisements) that have improved client transactions by an average of 40%.
- Three Management Skills: Manage up to 2 projects or tasks at a given time while under pressure to meet strict weekly deadlines.

Enclosed to my resumé and references for your review. You may also view my portfolio of work at www.linkedin.com/in/yourname. I welcome the opportunity to discuss with you personally how my skills and strengths can best serve your company. I will contact you this week. You may email me at yourname@company.com or please feel free to reach me at (555) 555-5555 or [email@yourname.com](mailto:yourname@company.com). I look forward to speaking with you and appreciate your valuable time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sign your name:
Type your First and Last Name:

COVER LETTER

You will receive a template to use with this information.

NAME:
Replace all of this blue text with how your name will be on your resumé.

ADDRESSEE:
Use your job hunt journal research to fill in the following research:

NAME OF BUSINESS
Replace with your answer.

ADDRESS OF BUSINESS
Replace with your answer.

SPECIALTY OF BUSINESS
Replace with your answer.

NAME OF CREATIVE DIRECTOR (OR SIMILAR)
Replace with your answer.

TITLE
Replace with your answer.

POSITION:
Make up your dream job that would be at this location. (Make sure that position could really exist at the place, but the job does not need to be open right now.)

COVER LETTER

You will receive a template to use with this information.

NAME:
Replace all of this blue text with how your name will be on your resumé.

ADDRESSEE:
Use your job hunt journal research to fill in the following research:

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Replace with your answer.

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Replace with your answer.

TITLE
Replace with your answer.

POSITION:
Make up your dream job that would be at this location, but the job does not need to be open right now.

AUDIENCE

- **"To Whom It May Concern"** or **"Dear Sir or Madam"** means you don't know someone and they're just getting a default cover letter template for a job. It's not that you can't use these phrases, but that you should try to be more direct so that the reader is immediately more engaged. **Use your Job Hunt Journal research!**

- **Have a specific target.** For this project, use an actual contact from your Job Hunt Journal, so you have an actual name and company. (The job you're applying to can be fictional.)
- **Do not use "Mrs." or "Miss" EVER in any professional communication to a woman.** A woman's marital status is none of your concern, so always use **Ms.** Likewise, be positive a person has not earned a doctorate, as she/he/they should then be referred to as Dr.
- "Drop names" and/or organizations if you can that your target would know. In other words, mention people you both know or groups in which you are both involved. This is why networking helps you. But like references, don't offer this name if you haven't told this person you are doing so. They might not think you're as great as you assume they do.

HIGHLIGHTS OF YOUR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE:

List at least 6 here. Explain them well. Consider the results from these, whether that be experience in managing a team for a large even like A-State AIGA SSGDS or working as an intern when a large project was due, etc. We'll use only 3-4 of these, so don't be shy!

- 1 - SKILL/EXPERIENCE/RESULTS HERE:**
Replace with answer. Try to use only 1-2 sentences.
- 2 - SKILL/EXPERIENCE/RESULTS HERE:**
Replace with answer. Try to use only 1-2 sentences.
- 3 - SKILL/EXPERIENCE/RESULTS HERE:**
Replace with answer. Try to use only 1-2 sentences.
- 4 - SKILL/EXPERIENCE/RESULTS HERE:**
Replace with answer. Try to use only 1-2 sentences.
- 5 - SKILL/EXPERIENCE/RESULTS HERE:**
Replace with answer. Try to use only 1-2 sentences.
- 6 - SKILL/EXPERIENCE/RESULTS HERE:**
Replace with answer. Try to use only 1-2 sentences.

YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION:

If you have not claimed the following, please write what you hope it to be and then add 'TBD'.
(To Be Determined)

- WEBSITE:** www.replace with answer.
INSTAGRAM: @ReplaceWithAnswer.
PHONE NUMBER: (XXX) XXX-XXXX
E-MAIL: Replace with Answer - remember this is an e-mail that responds to your brand

File : Save As **YOUR LAST NAME_CoverLetter_FORM**.INDD.
Then File : Export to a PDF for Slack.

RUN A SPELL CHECK.

1. No text boxes selected.
2. Go to Page 1. Nothing selected, but Select Tool Arrow on tool bar (not Type Tool).
3. Edit : Spelling : Check Spelling

Grammar should also be good because you are required to have at least the free version of Grammarly installed on your computer.

REMOVE ANY BLANK PAGES

SECTION 1 MENU

steps

- RESUME** **COVER LETTER**
- The following are steps as the Cover Letter and Resume projects grow simultaneously. See **Section 3 SCHEDULE** for exact dates.
 - Remember !! though there are multiple rounds listed, it is possible that student could finish all work by Round 2! Round 2 is the first that is designed!
 - Each time something is due, only the correctly named PDF (YOUR LAST NAME_Resume PDF or YOUR LAST NAME_CoverLetter PDF) will be due in Slack. The final file due in Google folders will require packaged in Design file.
- WEEK 1 WEEK OF FEB 14 >> ROUND 1 DUE**
- Resume and Cover Letter Workshops
 - Work on Preliminary Research Form in class.
 - Due by next class. Begin working outside of class.
 - Work on Cover Letter Outline in class.
 - Due by next class. Begin working outside of class.
- WEEK 2 WEEK OF FEB 21 >> ROUND 2 DUE**
- Resume DUE on Slack #4503_sack_resume
 - Cover Letter DUE on Slack #4503_sack_cover_letter
 - All packages should be final level and require only minor edits (if any).
- WEEK 3 WEEK OF FEB 28**
- Resume and Cover Letter additional versions returned to students.
 - Fix any minor edits. Finalize design of resume.

WEEK OF FEB 14

MON FEB 14

- Job Hunt Journal DUE by 11:00am [Section 1 complete! Self-Evaluation due by Friday]
- Resume and Cover Letter workshops

WED FEB 16

- Resume and Cover Letter outlines DUE
- Resume and Cover Letter workshops (cont.)
- Begin Website(s)

WEEK OF FEB 21

MON FEB 21

- Logo DUE
- Resume RD 1 DUE

WED FEB 23

- Visual Identity DUE
- Cover Letter RD 1 DUE

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TO DISCUSS ON WEDNESDAY

DESIGN

OVERVIEW

Cover letter uses letterhead.

Resumé can use a relative form.



- Create a new document in InDesign with your Letterhead art if it is not built in that program. (Placed .AI file if built there.)
Draw text box where your letter will go.

- Download the **Cover Letter Template FOLDER**.
- Open the file in InDesign.

- Copy the text on to your Letterhead.
File : Save As **YOUR LAST NAME_CoverLetter_1**.INDD
- Start refining the text with the answers from your form.

Today's Date

Creative Director's First and Last Name
841 Company Address
Company City, State, Zip

Dear Mr. Mr. Director's Last Name:

I am writing this letter to express my interest in the job. This opening is advertised on <https://www.linkedin.com/jobs/> (or other).

From day one, I believe I can make valuable contributions to the design team at Company Name. I possess a wide range of abilities that combine innovative art and design principles after comprehensive study for my Bachelor of Fine Arts in Graphic Design, degree obtained at Arkansas State University. Furthermore, my expert knowledge of Adobe Creative Suite, Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign for senior roles. My photography and videography will allow me to play a crucial role in the implementation of your design and marketing initiatives.

The following are highlights of my skills and accomplishments:

- Used a team of five designers to develop and implement the graphic, layout, and production communication materials while helping identify cost savings by an average of 12%.
- Decreased the efficiency cost of production project budgets ranging from \$2,000 - \$25,000.
- Developed business marketing programs, blogs, brochures, newsletters, digital graphics, presentations, and advertisements that have improved client transactions by an average of 45%.
- Used Management Skills: Manage up to 5 projects or tasks at a given time while under pressure to meet strict weekly deadlines.

Enclosed is my resume and references for your review. You may also view my portfolio of work at www.linkedin.com/in/yourname or learn more about me on Instagram ([@yourname](https://www.instagram.com/yourname), [yourname](https://www.instagram.com/yourname)). I welcome the opportunity to discuss with you personally how my skills and strengths can best serve your company. I will contact you this week. This would involve your call to my phone (XXX-XXX-XXXX) or please feel free to reach me at XXX-XXX-XXXX or email@email.com. I look forward to speaking with you and appreciate your valuable time and consideration.

Sincerely,
(Sign your name)
Type your first and last name

Download support files from the your SECTION 3 folder. Locate and decompress the **Cover Letter TEMPLATE.INDDO** file.

- Open in InDesign and start working
- Paste the words into your letterhead to test your Visual Guidelines and help you keep your verbiage concise.
- Select all text and remove the ability to hyphenate using the Paragraph palette. See bottom of box, uncheck Hyphenate. **Hyphenate**
- Replace cyan text with your words.
- Make all text whatever your Visual Guidelines call for.
- Check grammar and spelling with Grammarly Premium (or other paid version of an app?)

FORMAT

- No more than 1 page.**
Get used to the amount of text that would be on a letter-sized sheet and consider this as the amount that would be contained in an email. Eventually, the words for a cover letter will also be placed within an email using your required email sign-off. This will be finalized in Section 4.
- Use your letterhead. Letters are the purpose of letterhead, hence, the name.
- Three to four paragraphs.** Think of the first and last paragraphs as your shortest.
- Follow Visual Guidelines and the "voice" of your brand. Do this on EVERYTHING
- Include the address of the person at the top of the letter in the same text.
But do not worry about your street address, even if you don't have it on your letterhead.

VERBIAGE

- What you can do for them. Not what they can do for you.
- Re-read your words. **Reduce the time you use "my" or begin a sentence with "I".** Word things differently.
- Don't repeat words. For example, don't write, "I am compelled by your agency's compelling work." Use another word instead of compelling the second time. **USE A THESAURUS. Espouse efficient eloquence.**
- Instead of using "have been designing," you should say "I continue to design." **Verb tenses are important** and they are hard to catch due to continuous misuse in the common vernacular.
See [Purdue Online Writing Lab: Verb Tenses for help](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/grammar/verb_tenses/index.html) > https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/grammar/verb_tenses/index.html
- PROOFREAD.** Many many many times. And then a few more times. Have somebody else proofread it. **Your final grade is discounted every round I find a grammatical error.**


You must use Premium Grammarly (or similar app that isn't the free version). **THIS IS REQUIRED FOR THE COVER LETTER PROJECT AT EACH AND EVERY STEP.** Screenshots of evaluations will be required if student makes mistakes.

Enclosed is my resume and references for your review. You may also view my portfolio of work at www.linkedin.com/in/yourname or learn more about me on Instagram ([@yourname](https://www.instagram.com/yourname), [yourname](https://www.instagram.com/yourname)). I welcome the opportunity to discuss with you personally how my skills and strengths can best serve your company. I will contact you this week. This would involve your call to my phone (XXX-XXX-XXXX) or please feel free to reach me at XXX-XXX-XXXX or email@email.com. I look forward to speaking with you and appreciate your valuable time and consideration.

Sincerely,
(Sign your name)
Type your first and last name

CLOSING THE LETTER

- Include how the person may contact you directly, which should be your **phone number with area code and/or email address.**
- When closing the letter, print and sign your name. These may be the exact same or some slightly more informal version.
For example, I will often use my professional letters in the design world with the example here. (I sign my full name on professional academic letters because the communication is traditionally formal.)

Sincerely,

Nicole L. Amell

WHEN. YOU. WILL. CONTACT. THEM.

That's WHY you have your job Hunt Journal. You must track them down and be slightly aggressive about this. (Not like you're going to stalk them, but not just "oh know...maybe...if you feel like talking to me...I'm really not...") **Go after this or you will get nothing.** THE CREATIVITY FOR HIRE JOB MARKET IS RIDICULOUSLY COMPETITIVE.

FOR FUTURE USE

structure

Though you will use a template for this project, understand the **structure** of any cover letter. See the following guidelines, paragraphed from <https://bit.ly/299W045>

PARAGRAPH #1: INTRODUCTION
Get the employer's attention and interest in the job

- Who are you? Make your name **big and bold** and **bold**
- What are you studying for (what did you study)? No one mentions that you will be graduating soon, but be careful with this. It's honest, but it also implies you aren't experienced
- Why are you applying for this position and why applying here? How can you include how you found the posting and if you were personally referred or have a contact, drop the name here
- Why are you interested in the position? This is so important, companies want to talk to people that really want to talk to them. Be genuine. Do this most difficult one when doesn't answer an email job opening, assume you are expressing interest in a specific, genre of job, to get an interview? It's a challenge? Use creative and write the letter this way.
- Show your industry/company knowledge and excitement to be a part of it. Compliment them. Did the company recently win some awards? Did they just release a new campaign for a well-known client?

PARAGRAPH #2 (1-3) HIGHLIGHT #1: SALES PITCH
Show the employer you're a great fit for the position and get an interview

- This is the happy marriage paragraph. It should mention both you and the employer
- A paragraph that fits in a nice sized relationship, so avoid this. **Remember that it's what you can do for them, not what they can do for you!**
- Track
 - Discuss 3 different skills the employer is requiring and show how you meet these requirements.
 - Use the job description and qualifications of the kind of job to help you.
 - Only need to address 1 and show how these experiences will be helpful to them.

PARAGRAPH #3 (JOB #1): CONCLUSION

- Reiterate in one sentence from your job letter to thank them.
- DO NOT restate everything that is on your resume.** They can read that, think about why these experiences make you a good fit for this position and then make a connection to what they need and what you have
- Show your interest in the company and thank them for their consideration.
- Using your job Hunt Journal pages
- Assuming you have a contact name and can follow up. **Get the person whose you will contact them and then DO IT!** (about 1 week to a point of contact)
- Reference to your job Hunt Journal. This is for a "for the for" cover letter
- If there is not a contact or an email and you have applied through a website, there's not a lot you can do.
- State how they can reach you and encourage them to do so. **Email or if phone number with area code**
- Encourage them to go to your website or contact on your website
- State them again, even if the letterhead has them. If this is an interactive platform (interactive PDF, email, etc.) separate if possible.

WEEK OF FEB 14

MON FEB 14

- Job Hunt Journal DUE by 11:00am (Section 1 complete!)
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