A good cover letter introduces you to the employer, indicates why you are interested in the role/why you are a good fit, and suggests a meeting or interview. It should not reiterate everything in the resume, but should complement and expand upon the resume and support a position as to why you should be considered further. Remember that the main purpose of a cover letter is to get the reader interested enough to want to read your resume.

Getting started:

- Type your letter on 8 1/2" x 11" paper to match your resume. Use an easily readable font size and type, e.g. Times New Roman 12pt.
- Keep it brief (no more than four paragraphs). You will need to be concise and not ramble.
- Use your own style of writing, i.e. not too formal, but don’t use slang or other words that you would never use in a typical professional email.

Content:

- Address your letter to a specific person (you may need to do some research to find a name). Use Mr., Ms., or a similar title unless directed otherwise.
- 1st paragraph: Tell what position you are applying to and how you heard about it (mention personal tie if you have one). Briefly introduce yourself: area of study and why you applied.
- 2nd/3rd paragraph: Provide detail on why you are a good fit for the role and how you can provide value to the company. Expand on your resume, don’t repeat. Questions to answer:
  - How do your interests and experiences align with the specific qualifications on the job description?
    - Use words and phrases from the job description when possible
  - Why are you interested in this company/job? How do their goals align with yours?
- Last paragraph: Close by thanking them for their time, reiterating your interest, and inviting them to review your resume. Invite further action by including information on how you can be contacted to schedule an interview or phone call.

Additional Tips:

- Proofread your letter for correct spelling, sentence structure, and overall grammar.
- Avoid excessive use of “I,” “my,” and “me”; blend the letter and the resume.
- Never send a form letter. Each letter should be individually composed; however, you should save copies of all of your cover letters. Once a good letter has been developed, it may be used as a model many times with slight revisions.
Dear Mr./Ms. __________,

Your opening paragraph should make the reader want to keep reading. Tell what position you are applying to and how you heard about it (mention personal tie if you have one). Briefly introduce yourself: area of study and why you applied.

Your second and possibly third paragraph should give details of your background that will show the reader why they should consider you as a candidate. Focus on specific qualifications in the job description that match your interests and experience. Expand on information in your resume rather than repeating it. You are telling your story, but be sure to keep it concise and to the point. You can also do more in-depth research and talk about how you can help the company advance their goals and how the company’s goals align with yours. If this paragraph gets too long or if you have multiple points, split the paragraph in two.

In your closing paragraph, invite the reader to review your resume for more information on your qualifications. Reiterate your interest in the position and the company and include information on how you can be contacted (email and phone #) to set up a meeting or interview.

Best regards,

____________