

# ACADEMIC COVER LETTERS

*Academic job applications will often require a cover letter in addition to other documents, such as your CV, Teaching and Research Statements, and perhaps a Diversity Statement. In your cover letter, look to highlight your most important experiences and accomplishments, and complement the materials that you are already submitting in your application.*

## 1 Structure

Here are some things to consider when writing your document:

- Academic cover letters can be 1-2 single-spaced pages instead of the 1-page more common for industry job applications.
- Copy and paste your contact information from your CV into your cover letter so your document headings match.
- If you are not given a specific person to whom you should apply, address the letter to the “Search Committee.”
- Use the university’s general address or the department’s address if one is not provided for an electronic submission.

## 2 Content

Academic cover letters are unique because you may have already covered much of the information that is typically included in a cover letter in your other application materials, such as your professional experiences and how they would benefit the prospective department. Be strategic with your content in your letter, providing new new information to complement your other application materials.

- The three most common documents for academic applications are Research, Teaching, and Diversity Statements. If the job application only asks for one or two of those documents, focus on the missing area(s) for your cover letter. For example, if you are asked to include a Research and Teaching Statement, include information on your experience with diversity/equity in your cover letter.
- If you are required to include all three supplemental documents, focus on why the university is the best fit for you professionally, and briefly provide highlights of your current academic career, such as large projects, funding, honors or awards, and future plans.
- After describing your key experiences or major accomplishments, connect those back to the job description and explain how they would benefit the institution and/or department to which you are applying.
- The majority of the content in each cover letter should be tailored to each position and institution.
- Cover letters require you to be brief! Your additional documents will help to tell your professional story.

## 3 Tips

- Know the expectations of your field and write your cover letter accordingly.
- If the application has any writing prompts for the cover letter you will want to make sure you include those topics.
- Follow specific guidelines on content and page length, if provided.
- Write your cover letter so that people both inside and outside of your department can understand it.
- Refrain from using acronyms, as what is common at your institution may not be common where you applying.
- Give yourself time to formulate your ideas and plans, and to write multiple drafts before you need to submit your application.
- Involve others who have experience in your discipline in reading your cover letter and ask for their input.
- Invite others who do not know you well to read your letter and ask them to share what they learned about you.
- Ask several people to proofread your writing.

*Schedule a review of your Diversity Statement by a Career Coach at the Center for Career Development.*

**UConn**

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## Resources

<b>CCD Career Coaching</b>	<a href="https://career.uconn.edu/career-coaching/">https://career.uconn.edu/career-coaching/</a>
<b>CCD Academic Job Search Webpage</b>	<a href="https://career.uconn.edu/graduate-students/academic-job-search-2/">https://career.uconn.edu/graduate-students/academic-job-search-2/</a>
<b>UConn Writing (W) Center</b>	<a href="https://writingcenter.uconn.edu/">https://writingcenter.uconn.edu/</a>