

COVER LETTER RUBRIC

NDSU

CAREER AND ADVISING CENTER

COVER LETTER LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Produce a compelling cover letter that summarizes interest and qualifications for a targeted position in a particular organization.
- Demonstrate writing competency, which follows accepted writing conventions for the cover letter genre.

	1 - Needs Improvement	3 - Average	5 - Effective	Comments
Presentation and Format Visually appealing, proper grammar and spelling, and standardized cover letter format	☐ Does not use business letter format ☐ Letter is not addressed properly ☐ Letter's header does not match resume's header ☐ Does not use appropriate language/grammar for the position ☐ Multiple grammatical and/or spelling errors ☐ Visually unappealing	☐ Uses business letter format, but elements are incorrect with date and/or employer address and signature/address sections ☐ Uses a greeting and addresses a person, but some elements need editing ☐ Name and contact information are included in header, but header does not match the resume ☐ Some of the language and grammar is inappropriate for the position and needs editing ☐ A few errors ☐ Some parts are visually appealing, but other parts can be enhanced	☐ Uses correct business letter format with date and employer address at the top and job seeker signature/address at the bottom ☐ Uses an appropriate greeting and addresses the correct person and department ☐ Header matches resume and includes name and contact information ☐ Uses appropriate language and grammar for the position ☐ Error free ☐ Visually appealing	
Opening Paragraph Why you are writing and why the organization should take interest in you	☐ Does not identify position, organization and purpose for writing ☐ Does not describe interest in, and brief qualifications for, position and/or organization being targeted ☐ Does not use transition sentence to introduce second paragraph	☐ Vague in describing position, organization and/or purpose for writing ☐ Inadequately describes interest in, and brief qualifications for, position and/or organization being pursued ☐ Weak transition into second paragraph	☐ Identifies positions, organization and purpose for writing ☐ Describes interest in, and brief qualifications for, position and organization being pursued ☐ Uses a transition sentence to effectively introduce second paragraph	
Middle Paragraph(s) Present relevant qualifications, experience and skills related to the position/organizations	☐ Does not describe ways to contribute to the position/organization based on relevant experience and qualifications ☐ Does not illustrate contributions referenced in opening paragraph in a relevant and/or measurable way	☐ Inadequately describes one to three ways to contribute to the position/organization based on relevant experience and qualifications ☐ Illustrations of contributions referenced in opening paragraph are not relevant enough or measurable enough	☐ Describes two to three ways to contribute to the position/organization based on relevant experience and qualifications ☐ Illustrates—using examples—relevant, measurable contributions to organizations referenced in opening paragraph	
Closing Paragraph Wrap-up/action	☐ Does not thank reader ☐ Does not express interest in a meeting or conversation	☐ Thank you statement and/or expression of interest for a meeting or conversation needs editing	☐ Thanks reader for considering him/her ☐ Expresses interest in a meeting or conversation	

This rubric was created using guidelines from the NACE (National Association of Colleges and Employers) community. NACE is a consortium of more than 3,000 university relations, recruiting professionals and business affiliates. It is the leading source of information on the employment of the college educated, and forecasts hiring and trends in the job market; tracks starting salaries, recruiting and hiring practices, and student attitudes and outcomes; and identifies best practices and benchmarks.