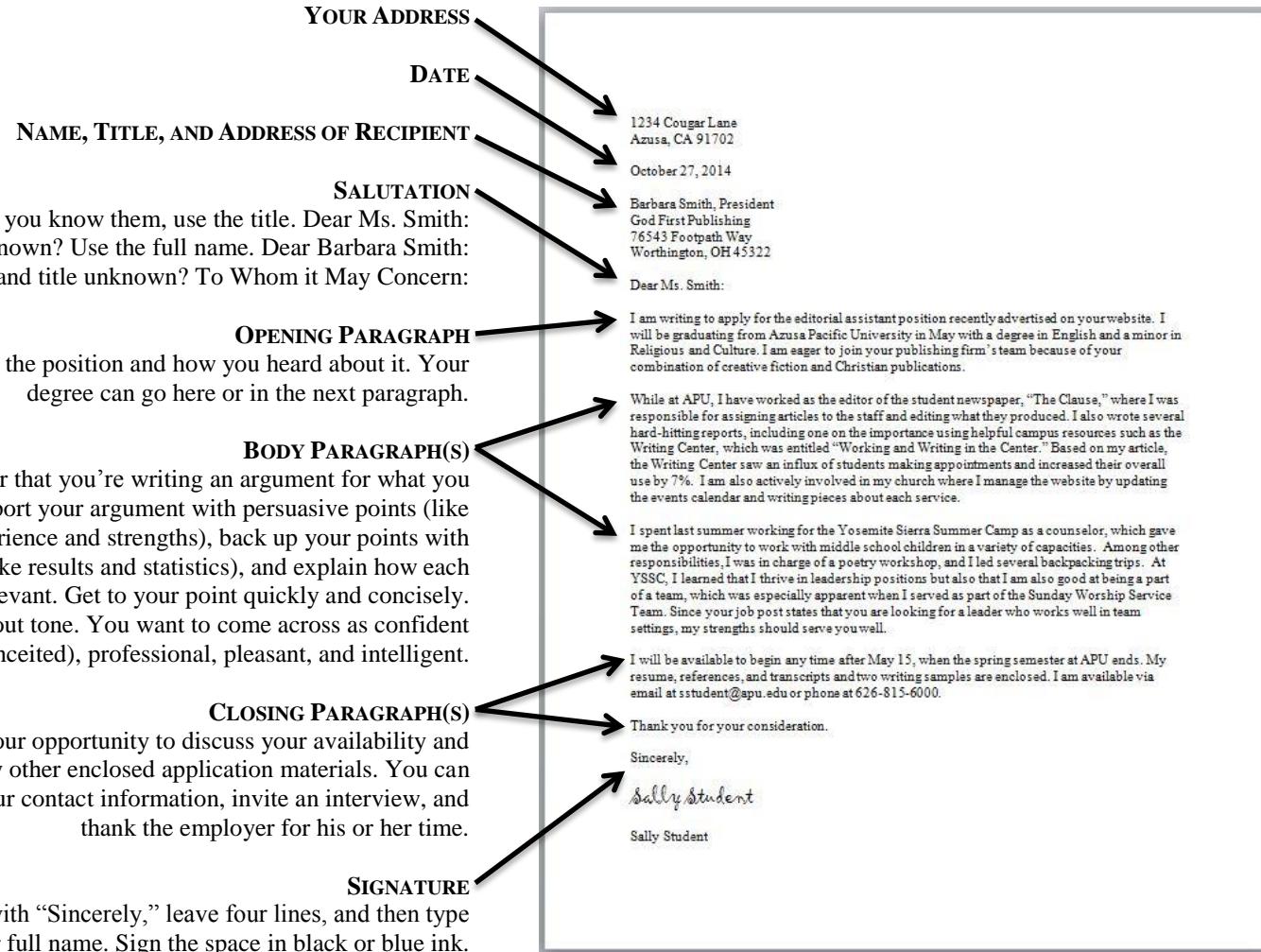


Cover Letters

• APU Writing Center • (626) 815-6000 ext. 3141 • apu.edu/writingcenter • apu.mywconline.com •

A cover letter, also known as an application letter, is a chance to make a great first impression and an opportunity to inform your reader of your achievements, strengths, experience, availability, and contact information. You can also use your letter to request an interview and refer to your résumé and other application materials.

Before you start, think about what you want this letter to accomplish: Do you want an interview, referral, application, more information, or some combination? Make your objective clear.



Tips for Writing an Effective Cover Letter

- Try to find out to whom the letter should be addressed. Visit the company's website. Call them. Do some investigating. Use Ms. instead of Mrs. or Miss. If you aren't sure of the employer's gender, use the first and last name without the courtesy title. For example, Dear Pat Thompson:
- Learn something about the company you're applying to; show them that you've done your homework and understand what they're looking for. Read the job description carefully; consider using its language.
- Edit: Vary your sentence lengths. Replace dull and vague words with active language. Use examples.
- Proofread: Go backwards through your letter one sentence at a time and check each for spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors. Read your letter out loud.
- Write several drafts. Ask friends and mentors to read your letter for you and revise, edit, and proofread until it is something you are proud to send to a potential employer. Ask yourself, would you hire you?