COVER LETTERS

The cover letter is used to introduce yourself and to briefly explain your qualifications to a prospective employer. The purpose of the cover letter is to arouse the employer’s interest and gain his/her attention to your application for employment. A cover letter should always accompany your resume when applying for a position.

The cover letter should highlight the information included on your resume. It should not duplicate information on your resume word for word.

Tips for Cover Letters and Professional e-mails:

- Be brief, relevant and concise.

- Always address your letter or email to the person hiring for the position and use Mr. or Ms. If you are not able to, then send to “Dear Human Resources Director,” or “Dear Members of the Search Committee,” or “Dear Hiring Manager.” Any of these are preferred over “To Whom It May Concern.”

- Proofread your cover letter or email, just as you would your resume. It should be free of typos and grammatical errors.

- Mix up how you start each sentence and avoid beginning every sentence or paragraph with the word “I.”

- Keep the cover letter to one page with three to four paragraphs.

- Always sign your letter. If sending electronically, make sure you type “Sincerely” and print your name. An electronic signature is not expected.
Cover Letter Guidelines:

Your Present Address
City, State, Zip Code
Date of Letter

Individual’s Name
Title
Employer
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. ______________________________: or
Dear Recruiting Manager:

First Paragraph—ATTENTION In your initial paragraph, indicate the reason for writing, the specific position or type of work for which you are applying, and how you learned of the opening. (Include prior contact with an employer or employees of the organization you are applying to, Careerolina, the internet, a networking contact, etc.) It is also acceptable to mention here your year at UNC and that you will graduate with a degree Journalism and Mass Communication.

Second Paragraph—INTEREST Mention why you are interested in the position, the organization, its products or services. This is the number one item that most students leave out of the cover letter. Show the reader that you have done your research and know what makes them unique and/or standout from their competitors. Make it clear that you are interested in the position for more than just a J-O-B. You can combine this paragraph with the first paragraph if you prefer.

Third Paragraph—FIT If you are a recent graduate, explain how your academic background makes you a qualified candidate for the position. If you have related work or internship experience, point this out by mentioning specific achievements or unique qualifications gained through this experience. Do not repeat information word for word as it appears in the resume. Above all, indicate the skills that you have gained and what you can do for the employer.

Fourth Paragraph—FOLLOW-UP In the closing paragraph, indicate that you are very interested in an interview. Finally, thank the employer for his/her time and consideration.

Sincerely,

(Your Handwritten Signature)

(Your Name Typed)