

Rubrics: Cover Letters and Resumes

Enhancing and Advancing
Students' Learning Outcome
and Influencing Retention

**Center for Career and Professional Advancement
(CCPA)**

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Using Rubrics in Higher Education

- Supports student learning
- Supports and inform teaching practice
- Supports specific pedagogical strategies

Rubrics: Use & Approach within Higher Education

- Before creation of lesson, assignment or exam
 - Hand out before assignment distribution
 - During completion of in-class assignment
- After assignment was graded, offering better feedback and supporting stronger remediation

CCPA Rubrics Purpose: Resume and Cover Letter Assessment Project

- Student Learning Outcome (SLO) – writing is part of our divisional undertaking
- Writing – language and clarity are specifically assessed and evaluated
 - CCPA staff are undertaking a rubric assessment project that evaluates the quality of students' writing and final product
- Resumes and Cover Letters assessed using constructed rubrics

Cover Letter Rubrics

COVER LETTER	Informing Excellent (Directly Relates to Position) (4)	Moderately Informing (Satisfactory) (Roundabout Relates to Position) (3)	Moderately Clear (Somewhat Associates to Position) (2)	Unclear (Needs Improvement) Does Not Associate to Position (1)
Format and Overall Writing Quality	Cover letter formatting is used. Letter has appropriate salutation and ending. Qualifications are presented logically and flow smoothly from one another, and are linked to position. Letter is logical order and easy to follow. Letter summarizes qualifications and creates compelling employer interest. Satisfactory grammar and spelling errors. Letter and content is specific in relations to position, and direct reasoning for position interest.	Appropriate cover letter formatting is used. Letter has appropriate salutation and ending. Qualifications are presented generally but need to be more clearly linked to position. Letter content is somewhat written in logical order. Letter is adequate in content but needs to develop a more compelling written interest in position. There are minimal grammar and spelling errors. Letter and content are logically arranged and support reasoning for applying and interest in position.	Acceptable cover letter formatting is minimally used. Letter does not appropriate salutation and/or ending. Qualifications and position interest are generally presented, but not logically linked to position. There are multiple grammar and spelling errors. The content of this letter is somewhat clear but needs reorganization. Letter's content does not create compelling qualification for hiring.	Cover letter format not used. Unsuitable font and point size. Numerous spelling and/or grammar errors. Missing greeting and salutation. Qualifications are not presented. Letter is not clear in content and does not convey employer's interest in position. Letter is written as a list, ideas presented randomly, difficult to follow and read.
Section 1: Introduction	Clearly identifies the position you are applying for and describes how you heard about position. Section identifies and compellingly describes why you are interested in position. Wording is convincing and illustrative in showing connections and reason for letter and content.	Section identifies the position you are seeking. Clearly describes, how you heard about position opening, and your interest in the position. Directly addresses the audience. Develops and contains a clear connections to illustrate reason for letter and content.	Does not clearly identify what position being pursued. There is a description of how you heard about the position but no reason for your interest. Vaguely addresses the audience. Provides unclear information or reason for letter.	Does not state the position applying, where position was found or reason for applying. Does not address the audience. Does not provide information to illustrate reason for letter or content. Provide no information or reason for letter.
Section 2: Identification of skills and experiences as related to position	Section pinpoints two to three qualifications related to the position. Clearly describes experience and/or training relating to position. Includes a strong claim/argument regarding position understanding. Illustrates, links previous experience to position and potential contribution, rather than restating resume.	Section describes identifies one to two of your qualifications related to the position. Clearly describes education, or experience, or training relating to position. Includes a claim/argument that allows reader to identify your position qualifications. Slightly interconnects qualifications to position rather than restating resume.	Section restates resume. Section states qualifications not related or relevant to position. Minimally mentions experience, or training connecting to position. Vaguely communicates a claim/argument about position knowledge. Lists qualifications rather than connecting.	Does not state related or transferable skills or qualification for position. In relation to position, does not mention experience, or training. Does not reflect knowledge about the position. Does not state or describe previous or related positions for desired position.
Section 3: Closing	Letter refers the reader to your resume or any other enclosed documents. Letter thanks the reader for time and consideration. Language is self-confident and timely when describing follow up. Clear direction or statements toward conclusion. Includes a statement of appreciation and contact information.	Minimal statements toward conclusion. Includes a statement of appreciation. Letter thanks the reader for taking time to review/read. Includes reference to resume or other corresponding materials. Vaguely refer the reader to your resume or application materials. Does mention contact information and plan for follow-up.	No progress toward conclusion. Includes a statement of appreciation. There is no reference to resume or other corresponding materials. This letter does not mention any plans for follow-up, and assumes employer will initiate follow-up.	No conclusion or statement of appreciation. Closure includes request for interview, rather than follow-up. Letter does not thank the reader for review and consideration. No contact information included.

Total Score:

Comments:

Resume Rubrics

Resume	Informing (Excellent) (4)	Moderately Informing (Satisfactory) (3)	Moderately Clear (Somewhat of a resume foundation) (2)	Unclear (Needs Improvement) (1)
Format	Resume meets suitable page requirements 1-3 page and content is distinct. Satisfactory in relation to grammar/spelling errors. Resume logically flows and is easily examined. Section headings/format/margins are clearly delineated and properly formatted.	Resume almost fills the page but has <u>some</u> uneven white space. Font and resume spacing are appealing and easily reviewed. Contains a few spelling or grammar errors. Section headings/format/margins are sufficient and acceptable.	The font and spacing of this resume are not appealing and easily scanned. Contains multiple spelling or grammar errors. Headings/format/margins needs adjustment.	Resume is either one-half page or two to three pages long. Font used is inappropriate. There is more white space than words on the page. Contains countless spelling and/ or grammar errors. Inappropriate headings/format/margins.
Education Section	Section is organized, strongly written, <u>and</u> well defined. Conveys educational highlights and pertinent information. This section includes: institution with its location, graduation date, major, degree, GPA, study abroad, and any relevant course work. Information is outlined and in logical order.	Section is organized and easy to read. This section includes: institution with its location, graduation date, major, and degree. Compelling information such as study abroad and course work is mentioned. Information is outlined not in logical order.	Section is not clearly written or organized. Information such as institutional location, graduation date, and major are not holistically included. Degree and GPA are not listed. Information/section is not outlined in logical order.	Section is unclear written and missing crucial information. Institution is listed without a location. Graduation date (intended or actual) is not listed. Major is listed but not degree. No GPA (if applicable) is stated in this section.
Experience & Skills Section	Section is outlined in logical order and strongly written. Previous responsibilities begin with action verbs, but a strong description is provided. Previous employment, location, titles, and dates are included for each position. Descriptions are detailed bulleted and begin with action verbs. Clearly details employment skills attained and/or executed.	Previous responsibilities begin with action verbs, but minimal description is provided. Places of work, location, titles, and dates are included for each position. Section is composed, outlined, and there is a logical order each position. Minimally describes skills attained and/or executed.	Descriptions do not begin with action verbs. Previous positions listed but missing locations, dates, and titles. Section is outlined, but unclear in that no written descriptions about previous positions included. Missing descriptions about skills attained or executed.	Section is unclear clear, and there is no order to the descriptions of each position. No Positions or indication of previous employment listed. No descriptions about experience or detail offered about work responsibility/roles. Employment dates and locations not listed.
Honors & Activities	Section is well written, organized and easy to understand. Activities and honors are listed and	This section includes all necessary <u>information</u> but is difficult to read and follow. Section(s) not in	This section is missing key <u>information</u> such as leaderships positions held or	Section is missing or contains <u>no</u> information. No Organization titles and/or dates
	descriptions include skills gained and leadership roles held. Dates of involvement are listed in chronological order.	chronological order. Leadership roles within organizations are listed but skills are not defined. Dates of involvement are listed.	dates of involvement. Organizations are listed describing the organization, not individual involvement/roles held. Missing descriptions.	of involvement <u>are</u> not listed. No identification or descriptions of honors or activity involvement is listed.

Total Score:

Comments:

CCPA Rubric: Higher Education & Career Center

- Support student learning
 - Teaching tool – WRITTEN
- Evaluation techniques that conveys writing /communication that are transparent and clear to students
 - Strengthen and reinforce writing through feedback
 - Tool in training new staff members
- Collect data for external stakeholders – faculty, staff, peer staff

CCPA Rubric: Function

- Utilized during 1:1 - student appointment
- Post individual 1:1 - student take away, to review and reference, learning tool to modify and enhance future cover letter and resume drafts

Resumes: Scores across colleges

Center for
Career and
Professional
Advancement

Resume	SSHA	Natural Sciences	Engineering
Score 2			17%
Score 3	57%		
Score 4	43%	100%	83%

Cover Letters: Scores Across Schools

Center for
Career and
Professional
Advancement

Cover Letter	SSHA	Natural Sciences	Engineering
Score 3	33%		66%
Score 4	67%	100%	33%

Cover Letter: Across Classification

Cover Letter	SSHA	Natural Sciences	Engineering
Freshman	17%	100%	
Sophomores	17%		
Juniors			33%
Seniors	66%		33% (Scored 2)
Undergraduate Alumni			33%

Resumes: Across Classification

Center for
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Professional
Advancement

Resume	SSHA	Natural Sciences	Engineering
Freshman	14%		
Sophomore			
Junior	43%		
Senior	43%	50%	83%
Graduate		50%	17%

Result Implications

- Important to identify what resume and cover letters levels and preparedness
- Promote writing preparedness at all levels, inside and outside of the classroom
- Develop resume writing and cover letter workshops. (High Attendance)
 - An opportunity to engage students
- We are able to follow a student's progress over time.
 - For example, evaluate a student's resume before a workshop and then encourage them to come back with changes and evaluate it again.
 - Did they improve?
 - Which topics were still difficult to grasp?
 - Might you need to spend more time addressing those during the workshop?

Informing Practice

- Resume Review Training
- Feedback Offered in Resume Review
- Outreach – providing lots of feedback
- Teaching tool
- Stakeholders – informing our institutional partners and peers

Informing Student Learning

- Partner what students are learning outside the classroom to inform how they learn inside the classroom
- Knowing HOW you learn leads to development (writing, etc.)
- Self-aware: oral and written communication
- Increases a willingness to learn from new ways
- Co-curriculum – activities, programs, and learning experiences that complement classroom learning - learning in co-curriculum – connect to academic learning

Advancing Rubrics - Theory

- Piloting rubrics, initially with one career specialist – expanding it out to all Career Specialist –
- Rubrics are under development to include student development theory
 - Transition into a multidimensional phase, taking it to another level
 - Include self-efficacy and student development theory
 - Specifically Cognitive-Structural Theory – address how students perceive and rationalize their experiences
 - Assist in knowledge acquisition
- Evolve to include mock interviews – Oral Communication