Cover Letters

Cover Letters…
- introduce you as an employment candidate to hiring committees
- are typically one page long
- often follow this organization structure: statement of intent, explanation of qualifications, and restatement of intent

Before Writing: Ask Questions
- What are the key responsibilities of this position, as outlined in the job description?
- What kind of experience or skillset is the potential employer most interested in?
- How does your work, volunteering, or academic experience align with these interests?

Part 1: Statement of Intent
- The first paragraph of the letter, often 2-3 sentences long
- State the position for which you are applying
- Briefly explain any relevant connection you have to the position ("[person who works for the company/is respected in a related field] recommended me to this position," "I connect with [specific part of job description/company mission statement] because…")
- Briefly list any experience that makes you qualified for the position (this usually means summarizing information on your resumé)

Part 2: Explanation of Qualifications
- The bulk of the letter, can be 1-3 paragraphs long
- Expands, contextualizes, and humanizes the qualifying experiences outlined in Part 1
- Highlight important skills and expertise you displayed in/gained from these experiences
- When explaining your relevant experience, it can be advantageous to keep in mind key words from the job application and to use the hiring committee's own language

Part 3: Restatement of Intent
- The final paragraph of the letter, often 2-3 sentences long
- Briefly re-summarize the skills outlined in Part 1 which make you qualified for the job ("A, B, and C position me well for the role of…")
- Leave your contact information (phone number/email at which you are easily reachable), thank the hiring committee for their time, and indicate that you look forward to hearing from them
- End your letter with an appropriate closing ("Sincerely," "Best regards") followed by your first and last name