

Sample Cover Letter Assignments

Cover letters encourage your students to read their own work and take responsibility for their own revision process.

Cover Letter Assignment (from Andrew Albin)

Each time you hand in a revision, you'll hand in a cover letter along with it. For Essay 1, please answer the following questions and discuss any other concerns you have.

- What is your thesis? How has it changed from draft to revision?
 - How has the way you argue your main idea changed from draft to revision?
 - What are you most pleased about in this revision?
 - What would you work on, if you had the chance to keep revising?
 - What was most challenging in your drafting and revisions process? How did you approach those challenges.
 - Choose two “Elements of the Academic Essay” (Gordon Harvey)—one that you think works well, and one that feels less successful—and describe, in each case, why.
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Cover Letter Assignment (from Laura John)

Each time you hand in a revision, you'll hand in a cover letter along with it. For Essay 1, please answer the following questions and discuss any other concerns you have.

- What is your thesis? How has it changed from draft to revision?
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Cover Letter and Revision Letter Assignment (from Bridget Hatch)

Rough Draft and Cover Letter- due Monday 3/12 in class

In your cover letter, please address the following questions:

- What do you see as your main point or idea in the essay?
- What are the biggest problems you are having at this stage in the writing process?
- Which idea or point do you think you've made most successfully?
- Which have you made least successfully?
- What's the number one question about your essay- its thesis, structure, use of evidence, persuasiveness, style, and so on- that you'd like your reader(s) to answer for you?

Revision and Cover Letter- due Monday 3/19 in class

In your cover letter, please address the following questions

- What is your thesis? How has it changed from draft to revision?
- What are you most pleased about in this revision?
- What was the most challenging in your drafting and revision process?

Peer Review Response Letter Assignment (from Shayna Skarf)

Write a two or three page letter to each peer in your group in response to his/her paper. Your response should provide (a) a descriptive summary of the writer's argument (b) a description of how you reacted to the paper (c) what you see as strengths and weaknesses of the paper and suggestions for improving it.

Your response should also answer at least **one** of the following questions:

Which sections somehow seem important or resonant or generative?

What do you want to hear more about?

What are your thoughts on the paper's topic?

What kind of voices do you hear in this writing?

What is going on in your mind as you read this paper?

E-MAIL your responses to peers any time before 8 PM on Sunday night (March 5).

READ the responses that you receive before class on Wednesday (March 6).

PRINT the responses that *you receive* and bring them to class on Wednesday.

Sample Portfolio Review Assignment

Over the course of the semester, you have been asked to rethink the ways you read and write academically, culturally, and personally. You have been tasked with three challenging essays that required you to think hard about difficult texts. As a class, we have explored our notions of what makes a good essay; individually, we have each evaluated our abilities and hopefully grown as writers.

Your final writing task is to reflect briefly, but genuinely, on your UWS 11B work and its development in a **portfolio cover letter**. In a minimum of two double-spaced pages, consider where your growth as a writer, your engagement with the writing process, and your efforts in this class. Some questions you might answer are:

- What is your most accomplished essay? Offer specific details on its merits.
- What are your weaknesses as a writer, and how have you worked to overcome them?
- What writing discoveries have you made? What frustrations did you encounter, and how did you grapple with them?
- What patterns do you see in your portfolio?
- What does your portfolio illustrate about your development as a writer, student, researcher, or critical thinker?

On a separate page, identify and explain one aspect of your personal writing process that you have found essential to your work this semester. This **practical guide to one writing tool or technique** can address something you've learned in class or something you brought to class with you. You can list a series of steps, or write a descriptive paragraph, or draw a flowchart. Include at least one before and after example from your own writing. Your collected guides will be distributed among your classmates as a "tips and tricks handbook" to bring to future courses and writing assignments.

Please turn in your portfolio in a folder to my mailbox in Rabb 144 *by 5pm on Monday, May 7*.

Your portfolio should include the following items with my comments:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medieval Lyric translation | <input type="checkbox"/> Essay 2, Peer Reviews |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Draft 1.1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Essay 2, Revision w/ cover letter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Draft 1.2 | <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Draft 3.1 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Essay 1, Rough Draft w/ cover letter | <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Draft 3.2 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Essay 1, Peer Reviews | <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Draft 3.3 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Essay 1, Revision w/ cover letter | <input type="checkbox"/> Essay 3, Rough Draft w/ cover letter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Draft 2.1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Essay 3, Peer Reviews |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Draft 2.2 | <input type="checkbox"/> Essay 3, Revision w/ cover letter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Draft 2.3 | <input type="checkbox"/> Portfolio cover letter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Essay 2, Rough Draft w/ cover letter | <input type="checkbox"/> Guide to one writing tool/technique |

You may pick up your portfolio on Monday, May 14 from 12-3pm at my office (Rabb 251).

Please email me if you cannot make it during this time.

Be proud of yourselves—you have done amazing work this semester!