

English 105

Instructor: Ben Bolling, Ph.D.

Fall 2016

Unit 1: Business First Impressions

In our first foray into academic discourse communities, the business unit will challenge you to combine concise interpersonal communication using empirical data with a thorough awareness of audience. In this unit we will learn to communicate effectively in a business environment while building skills necessary to navigating a wide range of professional communities.

Though the fall semester has just begun, it's time to strategically plan for future opportunities. Throughout the semester I will emphasize long-term planning and the *hustle* involved with staying focused on future goals. For this unit, you will first need to identify an academic or professional opportunity that is a good fit for your interests and that you think will benefit your personal development. IRL. Summer jobs, scholarships, internships, study-abroad programs, and honors programs are all solid examples of opportunities you may seek out. Keep in mind that you will develop materials to apply for the opportunity that you select for all of our work in Unit 1, so choose wisely—and try to choose an opportunity that you believe will *genuinely* benefit you.

First, use the diverse resources offered by UNC's Career Services (<https://careers.unc.edu/>), Office of Scholarships and Student Aid (<http://studentaid.unc.edu/>), Study Abroad Programs (<http://studyabroad.unc.edu/studyabroad.cfm>) as well as online job search engines, funding databases, and information on company/government websites to help you find opportunities that fit your interests.

Some of the opportunities to which you want to apply may not require a resume, cover letter, or interview, per se. However, generating these standard documents will help you prepare the materials that *are* required for the opportunity you want to pursue.

Genre	Purpose	Audience	Writer's Role	Rhetorical Situation
Interview, Resume, Cover Letter	To clearly describe your experiences, expectations, and goals as they apply to your chosen opportunity	Ben Bolling	UNC student applying for an academic/professional opportunity	Prepare materials to apply for a future opportunity and practice interviewing with Ben Bolling

Feeder 1.1

Resume

**One-Page Resume Tailored to the Opportunity for Which You Apply
First Draft Due Tuesday, August 30th In Class
Final Draft Submitted to Sakai before 9AM on Thursday, September 1st**

This assignment is designed to give you practice putting together one of the most basic and vital pieces of business writing you will ever do: your resume. No matter what academic or professional opportunity you choose to pursue for this unit, you'll need this document to get your foot in the door.

You will need to conduct some research to complete this assignment effectively.

- You must address the opportunity's basic requirements to be considered a promising candidate
- Research the general culture and values of the company or institution providing your opportunity. This work will help you anticipate some of the skills, qualities, and work styles best suited to the opportunity.

Using this information, you should then compose **a one-page resume** tailored specifically to the opportunity you are seeking. In class we will discuss how to prepare an effective resume and how you may describe your past experiences to highlight relevant *skills*.

A successful resume will:

- Target a specific opportunity such as a job, internship, scholarship, honors program, or study abroad opportunity
- Describe skills (acquired via experiences) that are relevant to that opportunity
- Be confined to one page
- Be free of surface errors
- Be clear and easy to read: no weird fonts or graphics
- Be accompanied by 300-500 words, on a separate page, detailing:
 - the research you did on the opportunity,
 - the purpose and core values of the institution providing the opportunity
 - why you think you would be a good fit for this opportunity
- Be accompanied by the advertisement for or description of the opportunity

Feeder 2.2

Cover Letter

**One-Page Cover Letter Tailored to the Opportunity for Which You Apply
Draft Due In Class on Tuesday, September 6th
Final Draft Submitted to Sakai before 9AM on Thursday, September 8th**

The cover letter is a short space in which you make a big first impression. Among other things, you must convey that you are capable, engaged, and professional. You want to convince the recruiter, human resources associate, administrator, or your future supervisor that you are a great candidate for the opportunity and that it will be worth that person's time to interview you.

The two most common missteps I've seen students make in this assignment are surface errors (grammar mistakes, misspellings) and bragging. Keep in mind that the person reviewing your materials likely sorts through hundreds of applications. You can be sure that person will not give you a second look if you misspell words, no matter how "detail-oriented" you claim to be in your letter. Also keep in mind that a cover letter is not the place for you to brag about how indispensable you would be *or* about how great you think the opportunity is. It's also not a personal statement of the kind you wrote for college admissions.

Some students find a film analogy helpful. If your interview is the feature film detailing your professional/academic life, your cover letter is the trailer and your resume is the movie poster. So, a successful cover letter will flesh out the information provided in your resume. Use brief, memorable anecdotes to *show* how previous experiences built applicable skills that will benefit you in future opportunities.

A successful cover letter will:

- Target the same audience as your resume
- Build upon your resume to illustrate relevant skills you have acquired via specific experiences
- Follow the "6 Cs" of business communication (clear, concise, courteous, correct, consistent, complete)
- Be free of surface errors (grammar and spelling mistakes)
- Not exceed one page in length
- Please consult the UNC-CH Writing Center's handout on business letters for information on correct formatting
(<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/business-letters/>)

Unit 1 Project

Interview

5-Minute Oral Interview

Interview Practice in Class on Tuesday, September 13th

Interviews Will Be Conducted in Class on Thursday, September 15th and Tuesday, September 20th

Congratulations; you've landed an interview for your opportunity! This is only the beginning. The interview may be your only chance to make a good personal impression. Therefore, it's important to conduct yourself professionally and communicate clearly, concisely, and effectively.

*Note: No need to “dress up” on the day of your interview. We *will* discuss appropriate interview attire in class, however.

A successful interview candidate will

- Indicate a thorough knowledge of the opportunity for which you are applying
- Have given some thought to frequently asked interview questions
 - You may review the UNC-CH Career Services information on frequently asked interview questions here:
<https://careers.unc.edu/students/interviewing/interview-questions>
- Follow basic interview etiquette
 - You may review the UNC-CH Career Services information on basic interview expectations here:
<https://careers.unc.edu/students/interviewing/interviewing-basics>