

Sample Cover Letter When No Position Has Been Advertised

Candidate's Address
Candidate's Phone number
Date

Dr. Name
Department of English
Eastern State College
Address

Dear Name:

I am currently completing my Ph.D. in Linguistics at the University of X. I expect to complete my thesis by August of 2001 and plan to move to the area at the end of August. Although I understand that there are currently no open faculty positions in the English Department at Eastern State College, I am very much interested in your department, and would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you.

While at the University of X, I developed, promoted and taught a course on English grammar and composition. I had sole responsibility for this course; I designed the curriculum, created all lectures, assignments and exams, and taught all sections of the class offered between May and August. With input from faculty on their vision of the course and input from the students on their interests, I developed a curriculum that is a strong combination of linguistic theory and traditional grammar and composition. Students learn not only the rules of grammar and guidelines for composition, but also the linguistic theory behind them; for instance, rather than just telling students to avoid dangling participles, we look at the syntactic structures that underlie participial phrases and the questions of pronoun reference that can arise. Once students understand what a dangling participle is and why it's problematic, they are better able to spot one in their own writing and correct it appropriately.

This course was very successful; during the time that I taught the class, interest in and enrollment for LING 010 increased significantly, and the course was even added to a small set of courses offered at an off-campus site for the University of X's continuing education program. Several of my students became Linguistics majors or minors as a result of my class, and many expressed relief at finally understanding how to improve their writing. My course evaluations have been consistently very positive, and one student even wrote an unsolicited letter of recommendation for my file.

I believe that adding a faculty member with a strong background in linguistics and language at Eastern State College would be of enormous benefit to your program. First, it is my experience that any student who learns how to analyze languages comes away with a better understanding of the language and the ability to use it more consciously and effectively. Second, linguistics is a rapidly growing field with close connections to many other fields, such as education, English language, foreign languages, ESL, cognitive science, computer science and psychology.

Undergraduate students who have taken courses in linguistics will have the benefit of a new perspective on language and the mind, and a stronger foundation with which to pursue jobs or graduate work in any of these related fields. By its very nature, linguistics, as the study of human language, is of great relevance to anyone interested in studying a language, teaching a language, or studying the mind. General linguistics courses should be an important part of the well-rounded liberal arts education that students receive at Eastern State College.

As a doctoral student at the University of X, which emphasizes a broad approach to linguistics and language, I have received a solid background in a large number of subfields, including phonology, historical linguistics, the history of Spanish, syntax, discourse, and child language acquisition. I have presented conference papers in several areas of linguistics, on such topics as Spanish stress, language acquisition, and the history of negation patterns in Spanish from the 12th to 17th centuries. I have also been involved in current linguistics research on the parsing of English sentences, pronunciation in English and Spanish, the Spanish verb system, and dialect variation in Spanish. I am therefore able to offer courses in a number of different linguistic areas, depending on the needs and interests of your department and the students. For instance, in addition to courses on English grammar, composition, and the history of English, I could offer courses on morphology and etymology, phonology and dialect variation, discourse structure, language acquisition, and comparative grammar.

Enclosed please find a copy of my CV, a statement of teaching philosophy, and a list of references. Letters of reference, copies of syllabi, writing samples, and other materials are available on request. I am in the area regularly and would be happy to meet with you at your convenience. I can be reached at the above address and phone number or at e-mail address.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Nell Aspirant