Sample LL.M. Cover Letter Template

1416 Snowcrest Trail
Durham, NC 27707

October 2, 2008

Margaret Johnson, Esq.
Johnson & Mason
15 Main Street
Durham, NC 27702

Dear Ms. Johnson:

Introduce yourself. Specifically, tell the reader that you are an LL.M. at Duke, why you are writing and what you are seeking¹. If someone has recommended that you contact the reader, or if you and the reader share some particular background, you should use it here². The last sentence of this first paragraph should be a “thesis”, in the sense that it sets out 2-4 qualifications that you will discuss in the body of the letter (e.g., “Because I am … … and have … …, I will be an asset to your firm.” Or, if seeking informational meeting, “I would appreciate your advice on opportunity for someone with my qualifications.”)

The middle two paragraphs should explain how you learned of the employer and why you are interested in the employer. Is there a connection between the employer and your home country? Here you should also expand upon your thesis from paragraph one by pointing out concrete examples of how your educational and/or professional experience makes you an attractive candidate. Some LL.M.s without much work experience will list some of the courses they will take at Duke in order to identify a particular area of interest. These paragraphs are an opportunity to give more explanation of or emphasize particular skills, interests, and experiences on your resume.

Indicate your desire for an interview. Suggest alternative times and dates or indicate your flexibility³. Final sentence should request response⁴.

Sincerely,

Your typed name

¹ Do not write “My Name is…” because your name will be on the letterhead and signature line.
² For example, “Professor Steven Schwarcz suggested that I contact you.” or “I note that you are a graduate of University of Chile, as am I.”
³ For example, “I will be in New York between December 15, 2008 and January 4, 2009 and could meet any day during that time.”
⁴ For example, “I look forward to hearing from you.”