

## SAMPLE UNSOLICITED COVER LETTER FOR POSTDOC

*GSAS Career Services note: The introductory paragraph of this letter is direct and draws attention to the adviser's referral. The second paragraph is especially good at succinctly presenting the topic of the author's dissertation, its significance in the context of the field, and its results. The author also conveys his own interest in this particular lab and his goal of expanding his realm of expertise.*

Dr. John Smart  
Department of Physics  
R1 University  
Big City, USA 123456

October 15, 2006

Dear Professor Smart:

I am writing to inquire about the availability of postdoctoral positions in your laboratory. My dissertation adviser, Professor Smith Jones, who suggested that I write to you, informs me that you are initiating a research program in spin-resolved-photoemission spectroscopy, and I would be interested in participating in this research. I am currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Virginia, and I expect to receive my doctorate in May 2007. My dissertation work is an electron spectroscopic, UHV study of metal interfaces with GaInP.

This work comprised a study of the Schottky barrier formation and morphology of metal overlayers on GaInP. The nature of the metal/GaInP interface is of fundamental interest, as it is a prototypical example of a metal interface to a pseudo-binary alloy for which the two cation-anion bonds differ greatly in stability. Since very little work had previously been done in this area, my dissertation research investigated, in detail, specific interfaces with various metals expected to show a wide range of behavior on GaInP. With this information, I examined trends in interface behavior with respect to the properties of the overlayer metal to gain insight into the driving forces determining interface morphology and surface Fermi level motion for the metal/GaInP interface in general. I found that the weak Hg bond plays a critical role in the interface formation, resulting in drastically non-stoichiometric interface morphologies not seen for such binary semiconductors as GaAs.

As noted in my curriculum vitae, before joining Professor Jones's group, I worked for a short time with magnetic surfaces and interfaces and am especially interested in resuming work on this topic using spin-resolved-photoemission probe. I believe the postdoctoral position in your lab will provide me with the support and challenge I seek as I continue this work.

A copy of my curriculum vitae is enclosed. Letters of recommendation will be forwarded to you under separate cover by the credentials service Interfolio.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Truly yours,

Jefferson Thomas

Enclosure