

Dear Student—

I consider writing recommendations an important component of my teaching, and I take this responsibility seriously. You can help me prepare an effective letter for you by following the guidelines on this handout.

I will be happy to write a letter of recommendation for you if you do the following:

- Provide all of the information listed here, either in print or, if applicable, in electronic form:
 - 1) A detailed description of what the letter is for, including the name and address of the person to whom the letter should be addressed.
 - 2) Specific instructions regarding what I should do with the letter after I complete it. (Should I mail it directly, submit it to an online service, or make it available for you to pick up? Keep in mind that most graduate schools will want letters submitted directly to them, so allow sufficient mailing time for the letter to reach its destination.)
 - 3) *For a recommendation I should send directly to the recipient:* an addressed envelope.
 - 4) A clear indication of the deadline for the letter.
 - 5) A formal résumé or an informal list of your academic accomplishments. This document might include:
 - your year in school and number of hours of coursework you have completed
 - your GPA, both overall and in your major
 - any special awards or accomplishments you have earned (Dean’s List, etc.)
 - your extracurricular and volunteer activities
 - a brief description of a paper or a project you completed for a class you took with me and the course number and semester of that class
 - *if applying for study abroad programs and scholarships:* a description of any previous international travel and/or language study, whether it seems directly relevant or not
 - anything else you would like me to consider mentioning in the letter
 - 6) A copy of the recommendation form, with your release information completed and signed (if one is required).
 - Prior to completing your release information, carefully consider whether or not you will waive your right to see the letter—if you are not sure how to handle this issue, please consult either with me or with your advisor.

- Give me at least two weeks to write the letter (That means two weeks *from the time when I receive everything that I need to write the letter*—please see above list—not two weeks from the first time that you vaguely mention the letter to me in the hall.)

- Send me an e-mail reminder once a week. You can just put “letter of rec” as the subject heading and mention the deadline in the text of the message. If you haven’t heard from me by ***three days before the final due date***, you should e-mail me a final reminder.

Please remember: If I agree to write a letter for you by a certain date, I promise that I will follow through. However, because I receive so many requests to write recommendations, I can only guarantee that I will complete the letter on time if you abide by all of the guidelines on this page.

P.S. Keep me posted on your application’s status—I always appreciate hearing about students’ successes!