

REQUEST FOR LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION & RELEASE WAIVER

TO THE STUDENT: Complete this section, including checking the appropriate box indicating whether you have waived your right of access to letters of recommendation from this individual. Then give this form to the recommender.

Recommender's Full Name: _____

Recommender's Address: _____

Recommender's Phone Number: _____

Recommender's e-mail Address: _____

I, _____,
(Student's Full Name Please Print)

request you to send a letter of recommendation to the University of Redlands Health Professions Advisor in support of my _____ school applications.
(medical, dental, etc.)

- [] I have waived my right of access to all letters of recommendation or recommendation forms submitted by you to the University of Redlands Health Professions Advisor.
- [] I have NOT waived my right of access to any letters of recommendation or recommendation forms submitted by you to the University of Redlands Health Professions Advisor.

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

TO RECOMMENDER:

Letters of recommendation often play a pivotal role in determining whether a student is accepted by a particular school. It is extremely critical, therefore, that such letters convey that the recommender is truly cognizant of the achievements, attributes, and potential of the student. Although you probably have written such letters before, you may find helpful the attached "Guidelines for Narrative Comments on Applicants".

I have encouraged the student to meet informally with you in order to refresh your memory and/or to give you the opportunity to gather information for a more complete letter. Students who complete their applications early are more likely to be accepted than those who submit late applications. The initial responsibility for applying early rests with the student. My ability to respond promptly to requests from schools for letters of recommendation is dependent, however, on those letters being in the student's file. Therefore, I would appreciate receiving your letter of recommendation as soon as possible.

Please do not address the letter to us. Use whatever salutation you feel is appropriate for a faceless admissions committee. When a school requests letters of recommendation from an applicant, he/she informs me. I will then make a copy of your letter and send it out with others with a cover letter from me. The originals of all letters remain in the student's health professions file here at the University of Redlands.

All letters of recommendation **must** be sent directly by recommenders to either:

Dr. Ben Aronson
Health Professions Advisor
Dept. of Biology, Hedco Hall # 111
University of Redlands
1200 E. Colton Avenue
Redlands, CA 92374

OR

Dr. Lisa Olson
Health Professions Advisor
Dept. of Biology, Hedco Hall # 108
University of Redlands
1200 E. Colton Avenue
Redlands, CA 92374

Along with your letter of recommendation please return this form, with your signature in the space below. (This will provide me with a record indicating that you have seen the student's waiving or not waiving his/her right of access to any letters of recommendation from you.) Your letter will not be placed in the student's health professions file and copies will not be sent out to schools at the student's request unless this form, signed by you, is returned to me.

Recommender's Signature _____ Date _____

If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to call (909) 793-2121, Dr. Ben Aronson, Ext. 8734, or Dr. Lisa Olson, Ext. 8524. Thank you for your assistance.

SOME GUIDELINES FOR NARRATIVE COMMENTS ABOUT APPLICANTS

The following is a composite of suggestions taken from many sources including professional school recommendation forms and publications for pre health advisors.

IN GENERAL

One of the most important things to communicate to an admissions committee is that you do know this applicant well and personally so that your recommendation has validity. As much as possible, please use specific examples of personal experiences with the student.

PERSONAL CONTACT

In what capacity, how well, and for how long have you known the applicant? Examples: instructor (lecture, laboratory, seminar), academic advising, socially, etc.

APPLICANT'S ATTRIBUTES

Please emphasize assets and liabilities, be candid. Frankness if valued by the committees that use these letters. All students are not equal. Admissions committees value most highly those letters which present a fair and balanced picture of the applicant. Those that become unrestrained cheering sections loose credibility. Particularly stress those qualities that indicate promise or problems for medical education.

Areas to keep in mind:

- motivation
- honesty and integrity
- initiative
- intellectual curiosity
- growth potential
- psychological maturity and stability
- cooperation

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Comments should amplify the information on the applicant's transcript, including:

- a. Ability to communicate effectively
- b. Academic achievement relative to current applicants from your college or university or those from previous years, i.e., class rank or distribution of science and other grades at your college. Since the grading situation in all colleges is so unclear, this is crucial information.
- c. Consistency of performance
- d. Extenuating circumstances that might account for atypical grades or course load.
- e. Degree of strenuousness of classes and overall course load (honor sections, etc.)

EMPLOYMENT

Employment, extra-curricular or vocational activities: Since this is given on the application, mention only if you can elaborate meaningfully on them. Any activities, which indicate motivation for medicine or concern of others, are of special interest. If involvement was extensive, what was the effect on academic achievement?

HONORS

Honors received, academic or nonacademic: Again, mention only if you can elaborate meaningfully. Specify the competition or degree of selectivity of such awards; e.g., how many were awarded in what student population.

YOUR EMPLOYMENT OF THE APPLICANT

What would be your attitude toward having this applicant in a responsible position under your direction? Would you use this applicant as your personal physician, etc.?

SUMMARY

Include a final summary statement of your recommendation of the student. This evaluation should be based on all attributes of the applicant, not merely the academic performance. Some commonly used rankings are:

- HIGHLY RECOMMENDED
- RECOMMENDED
- RECOMMEND WITH RESERVATION
- NOT RECOMMEND