Information for Psychology students
seeking letters of recommendation

Professors want to be able to write the strongest, most informed letter of recommendation possible. They therefore need students seeking letters of all kinds (including letters for graduate school, study abroad programs, residence life, jobs, internships, honor societies, etc.) to prepare a **Recommendation Request Form** (attached) that includes pertinent information about your background, grades, honors, and interests. You should also consult this webpage regarding advice on letters of recommendation: http://www.socialpsychology.org/rectips.htm .

You should provide the professor with a neat and organized package containing all the information needed. This makes a good impression and makes the job easier for him/her in writing the letter. Please provide him/her with ONE organized package instead of supplying forms, envelopes, emails, and pieces of paper on many separate occasions. Make sure you sign the form(s) if required.

It is easier for the professor to do letters online but he/she is happy to complete letters either by snail-mail or online. Make sure you give him/her the correct deadlines. Many schools want you to include the letter with your application so you need to calculate additional days for you to receive the letter. Also, many schools only allow online letters after they have received your application (which for many students makes the snail-mail letter of recommendation more feasible than the online option).

Writing good letters of recommendation takes time. Please be sure to give the professor **at least 3 weeks** advance notice before the recommendation is due. Finally, *waive your rights to read the letter or form*. Recipients place more credence on letters which are not read by students. If you are in doubt about the kind of recommendation the referee will write, ask.

Recommendation Request Form

Name: _____   e-mail: _____

Telephone: _____

    I request that Professor _____ provide recommendations for me. I consent to the release of any and all information about me in this professor's possession. I give my permission for him/her to provide a candid recommendation based on her overall knowledge of me from formal and informal observations, formal and informal records, personal and second-hand knowledge, and all other sources and I waive my right to read the final recommendation letter or form. I give this professor permission to provide a recommendation for me to any and all sources that may request it until such a time as I notify him/her in writing or by email that this permission has been revoked.

Signature: _____   Date: _____

To enable your professor to provide a complete and thorough recommendation, you must create a packet of information containing the items listed below. As you collect each piece of information, check the line next to the item. Once everything is collected, provide all of it, along with this form, in a large envelope or folder to that professor. You may also need to schedule an individual meeting with that professor the first time you request a letter.

_____ Recommendation Request Form

_____ List of all psychology courses taken or enrolled in, current GPA, and expected year of graduation (see next page). Rather than listing courses, you can provide a printout of your academic history from the Portal.

_____ A brief written statement summarizing what you believe your strengths and weaknesses are as they apply to the jobs/programs to which you are applying. (Be honest with this.)   It would also be helpful for you to note any particular experiences you have had with the professor or in his/her classes that you think would be specifically helpful for the readers of your application to know about (e.g., if he/she is the only person you have done research with, or if the employer is looking for skills that you have learned or practiced in his/her classes).

_____ If you must submit a personal statement with your application, provide a copy of that statement.

_____ If you have a résumé, provide a copy of that résumé. If you do not have a resume, provide a written statement summarizing your activities, interests, honors/awards, and past employment history (paid and volunteer work). The resume/statement should include: (1) Any honors and awards that you have received; briefly (i.e., in a few words) describe any that are not obvious. (2) Organizations/activities (including service or social organizations, student government, other campus activities); again, briefly describe. (3) Any employment or job experience, including paid work as well as volunteer work and internships; include a brief description of your duties and/or responsibilities. (4) Your hobbies and interests (i.e., what you do in your spare time). (5) A brief description of your future goals and plans.

_____ Specific information about the program/job you are applying for; this is absolutely critical! In addition to due dates and a description of the program, state very specifically <u>why</u> you are interested in the program and why you make a good candidate (e.g., if you are going abroad, explain why you want to go to that particular country, what traits you have that make you qualified, what you expect to get out of your trip, why you think you'll adjust well to living abroad, etc.). This will help the professor to tailor letters to specific jobs or graduate programs (particularly those you favor) or to support information that you have provided in your applications.

_____ An addressed and stamped (if necessary) envelope for each recommendation requested

_____ If there are forms from that must be completed and mailed with the letters of recommendation, provide each form with all the pertinent information, including your signature, completed.

_____ A list of schools, employers, etc., to whom you would like a written recommendation sent. It is recommended that you use the attached form and include addresses and due dates.

Name: _____

You may attach a printout of your academic history from the Portal, rather than this chart, if you prefer. In either case, please highlight or note any courses that you took with the professor who is writing the letter.

Psychology Courses Taken	Grade Earned	Semester taken

Psychology GPA: _____

Overall GPA: _____

Expected Graduation Date: _____

PROGRAM/JOB INFORMATION (please sort by order of due date, beginning with the earliest due date)

In the "Notes" field, list what you especially like about the particularly program/job or any specific notes about the program that would be helpful to the person writing the recommendation.

Name: _____

Address	
Name of organization or program to which you are applying	
Program/Job Notes	
Due Date	

☐ Send directly to the above address in stamped, address envelope I have provided OR
☐ Return to me in self-addressed envelope I have provided

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