

## **Letter of Recommendation Handout**

Many graduate and health professional programs require applicants to submit letters of recommendation as part of their application. Letters of recommendation are an important aspect of the application process as it provides the Admissions committee additional perspective on the qualifications and qualities of the applicant.

To strengthen your application, it's best to ask people who know you well and can attest that you would be a good candidate for your desired program. Typically, applicants are required to submit three letters of recommendation. It is recommended that you include a letter of recommendation from *at least* one science professor. This can be from any institution, whether it be from UCI or your community college. The other two letters may be from your supervisor at work, the principal investigator in research, your volunteer coordinator, a healthcare professional you did an internship or shadowed under, etc.

You should make sure to give your writers enough time to write you a strong letter of recommendation. Plan to ask your writers at least two to three months before you plan to submit your application. It is recommended that you ask your writers for a letter of recommendation in-person, as opposed to through email. You should set up a time to meet with your writer when you request a letter of recommendation. In your email, you should: introduce yourself, explain your post-graduation plans, and offer your availability to meet with the writer.

If your writer has agreed to write you a strong letter of recommendation, that's great! It's suggested to provide a letter of recommendation packet for all of your writers to help give them insight into your experience, your academics, any important deadlines, etc.

Here is a sample letter of recommendation packet that you can send to your writers after they have agreed to write a letter of recommendation on your behalf:

### **Sample Letter of Recommendation Packet**

#### **Personal Blurb**

This is a great opportunity to give a quick introduction of yourself. It is also recommended to remind the writer what your relationship with them is (ie: you were a student in this professor's CHEM 1A course). Briefly provide a recount of your interactions with your writer. You may also want to give insight to your writer about your future graduation plans and what you plan to pursue.

*Example:*

*My name is [YOUR NAME] and I'm currently a [YOUR YEAR]-year student majoring in Pharmaceutical Sciences at UCI. Throughout the two years that I've been involved in your research lab, I've learned a lot about [TOPIC.] and learned how to apply [TOPIC] to [JOBS, COURSES, ETC.]. Overall, this experience has really encouraged me to apply to [PROGRAM/GRADUATE SCHOOL] and pursue a career in [SUBJECT].*

## **Student Information**

Include your full name, UCI email address, current year, major(s), and any minor(s). This can be bullet pointed.

*Example:*

- *Full Name: Peter The Anteater*
- *UCI Email Address: pharmsci@uci.edu*
- *Current Year: 3rd*
- *Major: Pharmaceutical Sciences*
- *Minor: Management*

## **Important Dates and Instructions**

Include any relevant dates that your writer should know. This should include the date(s) that you want your writer to submit your letter, especially if there are multiple deadlines.

*Example:*

*I will be submitting my [GRADUATE SCHOOL] application on [DATE]. Please expect an email from [APPLICATION SERVICE] around this time. You will also receive an email to complete an evaluation rating to evaluate me based on multiple criteria. The [GRADUATE SCHOOL] application closes on [DATE], so I would greatly appreciate it if you could please submit your letter of recommendation by that deadline! The [APPLICATION SERVICE] will accept .pdf, .doc, .rtf, or .txt.*

## **Personal Statement and Supplemental Essays**

Include a copy of the final draft of your personal statement and, if applicable, any supplemental essays. You should also include the prompts to the personal statement and supplemental essays.

The UCI Writing Centers offers free services to help students brainstorm and revise any writing assignments. Schedule an appointment with a Writing Specialist or a peer tutor to help you

develop your personal statement or receive feedback on a rough draft at:  
<https://www.writingcenter.uci.edu/appointments/>.

### **Resume or Curriculum Vitae**

Include your most recently updated resume or curriculum vitae. This is a great chance to let your writer know your accomplishments, skills, and experiences so that they can discuss them in your letter.

The UCI Division of Career Pathways is a great campus resource if you need guidance with building and revising your resume. Refer to the following guide on how to structure your resume: [https://career.uci.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/QT\\_ResumeHelp.pdf](https://career.uci.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/QT_ResumeHelp.pdf). Find examples of resumes at:

<https://career.uci.edu/undergraduate/develop-a-resume-cover-letter/resume-and-cover-letter-examples/>.

### **Unofficial Transcript**

Include your most recently updated UCI unofficial transcript. You can download a PDF of your unofficial transcript by going to the “Unofficial Transcript” tab of your Student Access.