



Letter of recommendation

HOW TO REQUEST LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

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WHAT WE WILL COVER

- **Who to Ask**
- **When to Ask**
- **Materials Needed**
- **Resources Available**



LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

- A recommendation letter is a detailed discussion, from a faculty member or a supervisor, of the personal qualities, accomplishments, and experiences that make you unique and perfect for the programs to which you are applying
- Most graduate programs usually ask for 2-3 letters
 - 2 from professors
 - 1 employer-ideally & depending on program



WHO TO ASK

- **Professors/Faculty**

- Professors provide insight into your academic competencies and aptitude
 - personality characteristics that may contribute to your potential to succeed in graduate school

- **Employers/Supervisors**

- Letters from employers are useful if you are working in a field that is related to that which you intend to study.



WHO TO ASK (CONT'D)

THE CRITERIA

- Knows your work
- Be able to write a positive letter
- Is able to evaluate your academic performance, discuss personal characteristics and capacity to work with others
- Someone who has supervised you in a job or internship aligned with the graduate program you are pursuing and/or has earned the degree which you are seeking.
- Knows where you are applying
- Knows your educational and career goals



WHO TO ASK (CONT'D)

- Take the time and make the effort to consider all of the possibilities:
 - Each professor you have had
 - All individuals you have come in contact with; employers, internship supervisors, supervisors from volunteer settings


After you have created your list, rule out those who you think may not give you a positive recommendation

- Then, set up an appointment to discuss your request.
- Be prepared to articulate your interest and reasons for attending graduate school

WHEN TO ASK

- **Faculty are especially busy during the months of November and December or towards the end of each term.**
- **Be considerate of your letter writers' time and approach them two months before you need the letter.**
- **Ask AT LEAST 6-8 weeks before you need them**
 - **Send friendly reminders 1-2 weeks before you need them**





HOW TO OBTAIN A POSITIVE LETTER

- Make an effort to get to know your professors and/supervisors
 - Speak up in class
 - Take more than one class from a professor
 - Do research for a professor
 - Take on optional projects
 - Regularly attend office hours
- Provide your letter writer with ample information about you



MATERIALS TO GIVE TO YOUR RECOMMENDER

Requesting the Letter

- Thank the professor for their time
- Provide information on how to get in touch with you in case they need to reach you
- What you would like emphasized in each letter
- A lists of schools/programs you are applying, due dates,
 - **Earliest due date at the top**
- Highlighting salient details of your academic life
 - Which of my courses did you take, and when?
 - What grades did you receive in each class?
 - What is your overall GPA?
 - What is your GPA in your major field?
 - Did you take a minor, and if so, how will it enhance your graduate studies?



MATERIALS (CONT'D)

- Unofficial transcripts
- Copy of your best work in the course (with instructor comments on it), lab evaluations, projects, etc.
- Copy of your resume
- Copy of Statement of Purpose or Personal Essay
- Professional Goals



MATERIALS CONT'D

Organizing Your Requests

Prepare a well-organized series of files, one for each graduate school where you will be applying with:

- Recommendation forms from each school

- To make it easy for your letter writer to complete forms in a timely manner, complete the following:

- Applicant information typed in

- Recommenders name, title, contact information

- For each file dedicated to one of the schools where you're applying, make it clear how that graduate program differs from the others.

- More and more schools are requesting online recommendations.

- Give the proper URL to your recommender

- Know **where & how to** submit the letter (cite individual names, titles, if you can), and what the deadline is (provide a soft deadline)



SOME TIPS

- Try to arrange it so that the **letters compliment rather than merely echo one another.**
- Make sure your references fully understand your career goals and aim your letter writers towards that.



DO'S

- Arrange for an appointment, explaining that you wish to discuss your plans to apply to graduate school.
 - This gives professor a heads up and a chance to think about whether they can write a helpful letter on your behalf.
- **Prepare**
 - To discuss the type of degree you seek
 - Programs to which you applying
 - How you arrived at your choice
 - Goals for graduate study and future aspirations
 - Why you believe the faculty member is a good candidate to write a letter of your behalf
- Give the faculty enough time to write a glowing letter.
- Send friendly reminders around 1 or 2 weeks before letter is needed.
- Give the professor what they need to write the letter



DO'S

Provide complete supporting documentation

- Don't make a professor have to ask you for basic documentation (transcripts, resume etc.)

Write a thank you note or card afterward

Don't forget to tell faculty about the status of your application



You want the most updated letter of recommendation

Ask if they can write a generic letter and if they are willing to keep a copy or willing to give you a copy

Ask your professor if they are willing to update their letter

Give the professor ample information about you when you ask them to update the letter

Keep any work you've done for a class/project



HOW TO REQUEST A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION IN A VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENT

- Make a list of faculty that you have a relationship with to determine who is a good fit as a recommender for you
- Write out what you want them to include in your letter
- Set up a virtual meeting to discuss your graduate school applications
 - Ask directly if they can write a letter for you
 - If a virtual meeting is not possible ask via e-mail

Letter of recommendation request sample

Here is a sample recommendation letter request that you might submit to a teacher, coworker or friend.

Dear [Mr., Ms., Dr., etc.] Chambers,

I hope you are well! I am in the process of submitting an application to [institution or company name]. Part of my application requires a letter of recommendation from someone who can effectively elaborate on my work habits and achievements. Based on our years of experience together, I believe you can help provide an effective, highly detailed letter on my behalf.

I would greatly appreciate it if you could write a letter of recommendation for me that can help emphasize the work habits I've shown since we've known each other. The deadline for submitting the letter is [date]. If this date is too soon and you are unable to provide a letter by that time, please let me know as soon as possible. Additionally, if you have any information I can provide that will help you write the letter in more detail, I would be happy to submit it to you.

Thank you for your time and efforts on my behalf.

Sincerely,

Simon Brown

SAMPLE REQUESTS



Source:

<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/finding-a-job/asking-for-a-letter-of-recommendation>

Requesting Recommendation Letters

Asking Via E-mail

Dear Dr. X,
Hope all is well with you. {Your course/working in your lab} was one of my favorite experiences throughout my collegiate career. I am delighted to announce that I am currently applying to Graduate Programs in [Subject]. In preparation for my applications, I wanted to ask you if you would consider writing a letter of recommendation for me. I would be happy to meet to discuss further if needed. I greatly appreciate your consideration.
Sincerely,
[Name]

Source: [GradLifeGrind](#)



Sample Request for Letter of Recommendation

Dear (Professor, Dr., Mr., or Ms.) Higgins,

As part of the prerequisites for acceptance to (graduate school, the IUP honors track, etc.), I have been asked to provide a letter of recommendation. Would you be so kind as to write such a letter, with particular comments in regard to our past association in (the honors program, an internship, coursework, conference, etc.)?

The deadline for submitting the letter is (date), and if you are unable to provide a letter, please let me know by (one week from the date of this letter).

Thank you in advance for your time.

Regards,

Eliza Doolittle

RESOURCES

Additional Questions?

- Visit the Graduate Studies Center and Career Center websites

www.csuci.edu/gsc

www.csuci.edu/careerdevelopment/services/graduate-school

- Make an appointment with the Graduate School Specialist for more information on graduate school - via Navigate
- Meet with your professors

Grad School **PREP**



How to Prepare for Graduate School During a Gap Year

WEDNESDAY, MAR. 6 at 2 p.m.
(VIRTUAL) VIA ZOOM



Writing your Personal Statement

TUESDAY, MAR. 12 at 2 p.m.
(HYBRID) Broome 2680 & VIA ZOOM



How to Request Letters of Recommendation for Graduate School Admission

THURSDAY, MAR. 28 at 11 a.m.
(VIRTUAL) VIA ZOOM



How to Prepare for Graduate School

THURSDAY, APR. 25 at NOON
(IN PERSON) BT 1568



SCAN TO REGISTER

OR VISIT: [GO.CSUCI.EDU/GSC24](https://go.csuci.edu/gsc24)
(My CI login required)

Need help preparing for graduate school?



Schedule a
**Graduate Studies Center
appointment**

through Dolphin Navigate:

<https://csuci.campus.eab.com/>



Check out **free test
preparation books** at the
Advising front office
(BT 1552)!



Join our new **Canvas
page** to access graduate
school preparation
resources!



[https://cilearn.
csuci.edu/enro
ll/4ADFLB](https://cilearn.csuci.edu/enroll/4ADFLB)



ACADEMIC
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ISLANDS

For more information, contact:
advisement@csuci.edu
(805) 437-8571



GRADUATE
STUDIES
CENTER
CHANNEL
ISLANDS



Fall Semester

Annual Graduate & Professional School Fair Broome Library Plaza

Graduate & Professional School Fair

The Graduate Studies Center hosts a Graduate and Professional School Fair during the fall semester, and offers students and alumni a wide variety of graduate and professional school programs to choose from. This fair is your opportunity to network with local, regional, and national institutions that are actively recruiting for their schools and programs.



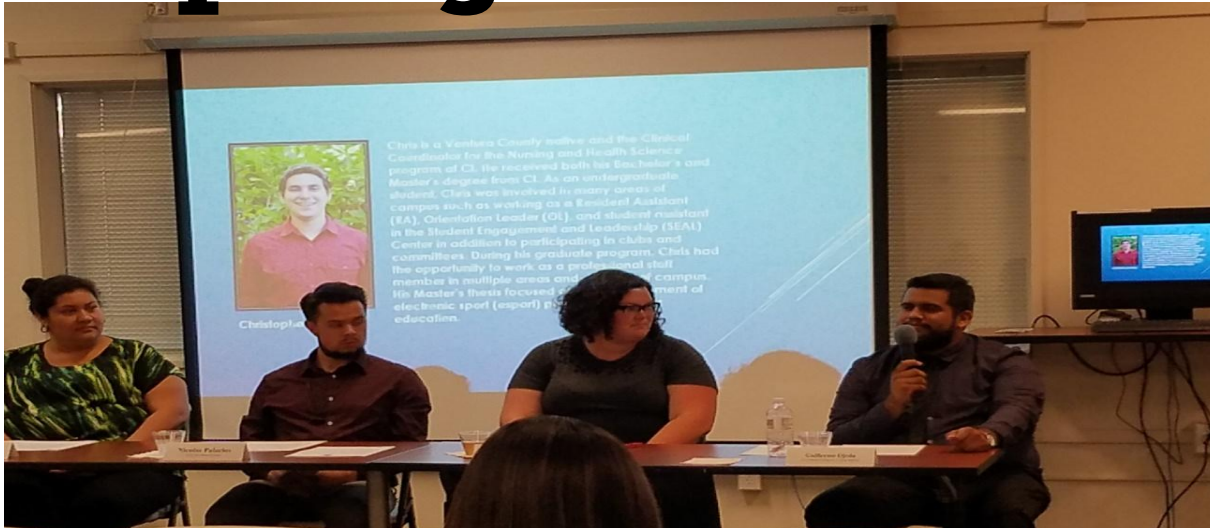
For Students



For Recruiters



Spring Semester



Graduate School Panel Night



ACADEMIC ADVISING



Contact Information:

Phone: (805) 437-8571

e-mail: advisement@csuci.edu

www.csuci.edu/gsc





REFERENCES

Lane, C. (2016). *How to request a letter of recommendation* [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved from

<http://slideplayer.com/slide/4585648/>

REQUESTING
LETTERS
DURING THE
TIME OF
COVID
ADDITIONAL
RESOURCES:

<https://www.scoreatthetop.com/blog/recommendation-letters-in-the-era-of-covid-19>

<https://www.saraharberson.com/blog/ask-teachers-recommendation-letters-quarantine>

<https://www.college.transitions.com/blog/advice-for-college-recommendation-letters>



**Please take a minute to fill out our
workshop survey.
Thanks!**

