

CSUCI INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

RECOMMENDATION GUIDE for EXCHANGE

All exchange applicants are required to submit **at least one faculty member recommendation** as part of their exchange program application. If an applicant's GPA is below the 3.0 minimum requirement, we recommend that the student submit TWO faculty recommendations to strengthen and support their application.

How should I choose the person to write my letter of recommendation?

- Recommendations should come from a faculty member with whom you have successfully completed a college-level course.
- The recommender should be a faculty member who knows you well and can speak to your strengths and academic competence.
- Recommendations from high school teachers or academic advisors will *not* be accepted.
- Strong letters of recommendation are a way to “stand out in the crowd.” When deciding on whom to ask for a recommendation, do not simply think of those classes in which you have done well. Instead, think of instructors familiar with your academic and/or personal achievements and strengths and can provide evidence to substantiate their claims.

How should faculty submit their letter of recommendation?

- If submitting a **paper recommendation**, please include the recommendation as part of the application. Please make sure that the recommendation has the signature of the faculty member.
- If submitting an **electronic recommendation**, please have the faculty member email the recommendation to international@csuci.edu (and indicate the student's name in the subject line of the recommendation letter). Faculty are encouraged to sign the recommendation letter.

What are some of the common areas of confusion/misunderstandings about the letter of recommendation?

- Each recommendation should bear the signature of the recommender regardless of whether it is a paper or electronic submission.
- It is between you and the faculty member whether you choose to waive the right to see your recommendation.
- Faculty may address the letter to “Study Abroad Selection Committee”
- It is your responsibility to ensure the faculty member is submitting the recommendation on or before the deadline. Missing or delayed recommendations could result in an incomplete application, preventing the student from being considered for an exchange program.

How and when should you request the recommendation?

- Ask early – give recommenders at least 1 month’s advance notice when requesting a recommendation.
- Give faculty members enough context (ex: type of study abroad program, length of study abroad program) to effectively write the recommendation.
- When appropriate, send copies of work you’ve done in their class to jog the memory of the recommender.
- Be clear about deadlines and format to the recommender from the beginning.
- As the deadline for submission grows closer, kindly remind the recommender of the due date.

How can I thank my recommender?

- Always send your recommender a thank you note after they have submitted the recommendation and within 1-2 weeks of their submission.
- Handwritten thank you notes are preferably to electronic thank you notes.
- Thank you notes help build “good will” with the recommender, especially if you plan on requesting more recommendations in the future.