

Letter Writer Instructions

Thank you for agreeing to write a letter of recommendation (LoR) for an aspiring health professional. We realize that you are taking valuable time from your busy schedule to contribute. We wanted to give you information about the process and some guidelines to help make this task more manageable. The student will provide you with a deadline to submit your LoR.

What are Graduate Health Profession Programs looking for from faculty evaluators?

Recommendations from individuals who know the student are an important and essential part of the evaluation process. Please provide a candid evaluation of the student's qualities as they pertain to his/her application to a graduate health professional program. Admissions committees rely heavily on information provided by the student's letters of recommendation. They are looking for specific evaluations of the applicant's abilities in the area in which you supervised his/her work. When you comment on these abilities, please be specific. For example, citing the topic of a student's seminar paper or the subjects on which s/he was most vocal in class discussion helps to make a recommendation more convincing. We have found that the most useful letters include the following:

- 1) Explanation of relationship between applicant and reference
- 2) Information on applicant's personal characteristics (i.e., integrity, reliability, determination, motivation, honesty, professionalism, leadership, character, maturity, etc.)
- 3) Information regarding applicant's social skills (i.e., interpersonal skills, ability to interact with others in groups, ability to establish peer relationships)
- 4) Comparative information: How does this student compare to others whom you have taught or with whom you have worked?
- 5) Assessment of applicant's academic potential: (if applicable to relationship) – Is this student ready for the rigors of their intended program of study? Do they have good critical thinking and problem-solving skills?

To whom should the letter be addressed?

Letters should be addressed to Admissions Committee or "To Whom it May Concern". As students may apply to several different programs, please do not refer to a single school or individual writing the letter.

Format of Letter:

Letters should be typed on company/institution formal letter

southalabama.edu