

## Department of Allied Health Sciences Information for Letter of Recommendations

### Instructions / considerations for student:

#### DO's

- 1) Do your homework before asking for recommendations.
  - a. Be clear in the type and number of recommendations you are requesting.
  - b. It is advisable to include all institutions in the same request. While the intent of the recommendation is the same, each one will take time to personalize. Do not continually send new program requests over the course of weeks or months.
  - c. Consider your submission deadline dates and be sure to give your recommender ample time to complete a recommendation; at least 4 weeks advance notice of the deadline is customary. Asking a recommender to write a recommendation within one week of the deadline is not recommended.
- 2) Please consider your recommender carefully. Be sure the recommender knows you well enough to write positively about you and your career goals. Remember, this person is influencing an admissions committee.
- 3) Be sure to read admission instructions and recommendation forms carefully. Make sure the recommender you ask is qualified (by the program requirements) to write a letter of recommendation. For example, some programs want a reference from a professional in the discipline; others require at least one faculty member.
- 4) Be sure your recommender is a professional reference (not known to you on a personal basis such as a family member or close friend).
- 5) Please visit your potential recommender *in person* whenever possible. If they do not know you particularly well, discuss your career goals and why you are applying to the particular program.
- 6) It is okay to ask your recommender to address certain points (such as participation, leadership, explanation of an activity in which you were a key contributor, etc.) when requesting a recommendation.
- 7) If you are asking a recommender to write a *new* recommendation, be sure to submit an updated resume and statement about what is different from the first time the recommendation was written (e.g. more experience, job, courses, etc.). Using the same letter in a subsequent admission cycle that is not updated is not recommended.

#### DON'T's

- 1) Do NOT identify a recommender on an application without first obtaining confirmation that the person is able and/or willing to write a recommendation. Most recommenders will not write recommendations for requests that come in without prior communications from the student. Recommendation requests left unwritten are a reflection on the student and will be seen by admissions committees; they may question why a recommender did not submit a letter.
- 2) Do NOT assume because you ask a recommender to write a letter that they can or will write one.
- 3) Do NOT assume because a recommender agrees to write a recommendation today that they are able to repeatedly send recommendations tomorrow, next month, or next year. Each application cycle should be treated as a new request. It is proper etiquette to request new recommendations if applying in a new application cycle (i.e. reapplying one, two or more years beyond the initial request).

## Information needed when requesting a letter of recommendation:

- 1) **Resume:** It is customary to include a resume (and/or a list of activities, etc) to the recommender. They should know you but may not be aware of your activities, jobs, volunteer, and community service activities outside the classroom, program or institution. A short description of activities, reflections from internships, etc. is also helpful. (Please include hours of observation, shadowing, and/or patient contact as appropriate).
- 2) **Personal statement:** It is helpful to include a copy of your admission essay or personal statement. This allows your recommender to understand in greater detail your career plans.
- 3) **FERPA Letters of Recommendation Release form (UCONN students only):** Federal law mandates that recommenders have permission to include personally identifiable information about the person requesting the recommendation. To this end, students are required to submit along with other information requested, the *Letters of Recommendation Release form* indicating what information can be shared with recipients of the recommendation. This form can be downloaded at: <https://ferpa.uconn.edu/share-my-information/> and should accompany your request; email requests from your *UConn* email are also acceptable.
- 4) **Program list:** Provide your recommender with a list of the programs for which you wish recommendations. As a suggestion, use the table below when supplying your recommender with a list of your institutions.
  - a. Letter format may be different. Some programs accept an open letter; others will have a form to complete, and still others will have an on-line recommendation site (e.g. PTCAS, CASPA, etc.). If a form is required, submission to the recommender can be by mail, hand delivery or email. Do not forget to sign the form prior to submission. Institutions will not accept a form without the student's signature.
  - b. While some forms instruct a student to submit a return envelope with the recommendation form, most recommenders will use department letterhead and envelopes. Ask. Don't waste an envelope or stamp if not needed. Also be sure to indicate if the sealed letter/form is returned to you or sent directly to the institution.

## Example of information to submit to the recommender

Name of institution	Mailing address of institution (include the name of the contact person if known)	Name of program	Deadline of application	Deadline for recommender	Format (i.e. open letter, form, or on-line system)	How to submit (return to student, mail)
University of Connecticut	University of Connecticut 438 Whitney Road Ext., Unit 1152 Storrs, CT 06269-1152	Doctorate in Physical Therapy program	January 15, 2019	December 31, 2018	UConn Graduate School on-line application	On-line submission
Sacred Heart University	Sacred Heart University 5151 Park Avenue Fairfield, CT 06825	Doctorate in Physical Therapy program	December 3, 2018	November 15, 2018	PTCAS	On-line submission