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# **Advice for Letter of Recommendation Writers**

The letter you have been asked to provide will become a critical component of the student's application for admission to a professional school. This evaluation will supplement the student's academic record and assist the health professions admissions committees in making difficult choices regarding the selection of the most capable student for their programs. Your thorough and candid evaluation of this student are greatly appreciated.

## **Preparing Your Letter**

Please type/print your letter on your **letterhead stationery**. **Please include your name, title, date, and signature.** You may address the letter "To whom it may concern" or "Dear Admissions Committee". The letter will be placed in the student's recommendation file online and later combined with other letters and forwarded to the professional schools to which the student is applying.

It is important that you clearly indicate if you directly taught or supervised the student. Consider the student as your future physician, etc., and evaluate them in that context.

- **Length of time you have known the student**
- **Character and personality traits observed:** initiative, integrity, dependability, perseverance toward goals, ability to multi-task, maturity, ability to criticize and accept criticism, ability to be self-critical, emotional stability.
- **Interpersonal/Communication skills:** articulation and clarity of expression, manner of relating to others, leadership skills, interest in people, sensitivity to the needs of others, ability to exchange ideas.
- **Intellectual traits:** native intelligence, curiosity, abilities in creative and independent thinking, ability to write and speak, interest in complex ideas and concepts, problem solving ability.
- **Distinguishing characteristics:** both positive and negative.
- **Evaluation of candidate's performance:** if the applicant has worked under your supervision, an evaluation of their performance in that situation is appreciated.
- **A candid opinion of the likelihood of the student's success** in their designated health profession is appreciated.

## **What to Avoid**

**Applicants should not be asked to write their own letters of recommendation.** Having a conversation with an applicant to discuss what information you might highlight based on your work with them is appropriate, but asking them to draft their own letter is not.

If you have any questions, please contact PreProfessional Advising at [ppa@advising.utah.edu](mailto:ppa@advising.utah.edu).