

How to Obtain a Teacher Letter of Recommendation

A. Which teacher(s) do I ask?

Colleges are looking for information about you in a teacher letter of recommendation that does not appear on the transcript or anywhere else in your application. Keeping this in mind, reflect on the following comments to determine who would be the best teacher to write a letter for you.

- Ask a teacher you had in your junior or senior year.
- Ask a math or science teacher if you are planning on majoring in premed, engineering, architecture, or a science major. Business majors may want to consider asking a math teacher also.
- Ask a fine art teacher in your area of discipline if you are planning on majoring in dance, music or fine arts.
- For all other majors including undecided, ask a teacher who knows you well academically and who can answer all the following questions.

What distinguishes you from other students?

What kind of learner are you?

Did you do any special projects for a class?

Were you prepared and did you actively participate in class?

Did you go above and beyond what was required of you?

In short, what did you add to the classroom on a day -to-day basis?

B. After I Determine which Teacher, then what?

Follow the directions outlined below once you've decided which teacher(s) you'd like to ask to write you a letter of recommendation. Teachers write one letter and send it to every college that you designate.

- Ask the teacher if he/she would write a letter of recommendation for you.
- After the teacher agrees, give each teacher a thoroughly completed "Teacher Recommendation Questionnaire" and a "Checklist for Teachers" at least two weeks before the first letter is due.
- Deadline to request a letter of recommendation is Monday, November 12, 2007.

C. What Information does the Teacher want from me?

Teachers are asking you to complete a "Teacher Recommendation Questionnaire" by answering the following statements on a separate piece of paper as it pertains to each teacher who is writing a letter for you.

- A. Discuss two or three favorite or meaningful assignments/projects you completed for the teacher who is writing the letter.
- B. Discuss personal contributions you made in he/her class and how your presence made a difference in the class.
- C. What anecdotal comments did your teacher make about you in his/her class?
- D. What would you like the teacher to say about you? And how can he/she justify it?
- E. What was your biggest challenge in his/her class? How did you address it?

Mention if you have any out of school contact with the teacher such as sports, clubs, community service projects, fine arts performances.

- a. Explain 2 or 3 words that 'capture' you as a person and/or student.

Follow the directions below:

- Type your answers
- Give a copy of your answers to **each** teacher who is writing a recommendation for you. (What you write will be different for each teacher.)
- Give **thoughtful & thorough** responses. The more information you provide, the better your letter will be.
- Remember to include the "Checklist for Teachers" form attached to a manila envelope.
- Send a thank you note to every teacher who writes a letter for you.