

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

TIPS AND GUIDELINES

In your academic and professional career, you may be asked to provide letters of recommendation for various reasons. A committee is usually assigned to review applications for an internship, employment or graduate school. Often, these recommendations play a crucial role in decisions regarding applications. Even if you aren't currently applying, it's always great to have letters prepared ahead of time, especially while you have time to attend office hours before you graduate! Here are some helpful tips!

You want to make sure your referee knows you and your academic/professional abilities well, so choose someone you have a personal relationship with. Start early! Visit office hours, ask about internships or research opportunities you can get involved in.

You want to make sure this person is going to write you a positive letter. Be sure to ask if they feel confident in writing a strong letter. If you didn't do well in a course, or this person doesn't feel they can write a strong letter, they will urge you to look elsewhere. Give yourself enough time for this possibility and to ask others.

Before you ask: There are a few documents you should have prepared. Be sure to present the referees with your resume, your most recent transcript (unofficial is ok), along with any work you may have completed in that course or position. If you are applying to graduate schools, please also include a table with the programs in which you are applying and deadlines for those applications.

Referees take time to personalize these letters and they are busy people! So be sure to ask with ample amount of time, most Referees expect a **minimum of four weeks notice**, this includes giving them all your documents!

Actually asking: Visit during office hours, feel free to send an email beforehand so they know to expect you. Come with all the documents prepared, preferably in a folder, ready to hand over. Greet them! Remind them of your relationship, the effect the class had on your, the skills you gained through the internship, or even your interest in their research. Let them know you're beginning your search for graduate school, or law school, or job, whatever the case may be. You may want to include that you believe, due to your relationship, that they can articulate your strengths throughout the application process.