

## Letters of Recommendation/Evaluation

- I. Each school has their own individual requirements when it comes to letters of recommendation (how many letters, who they are from). Make sure you know the requirements for the schools you plan to apply to.
  - a. Many schools require two letters of recommendation from faculty members in the sciences.
  - b. Schools may require a letter of recommendation from a health professional in the field (e.g. a physician, osteopathic physician, dentist, veterinarian). *Many have waived this requirement for the current application cycle due to COVID, but not all.*
- II. Approach prospective authors during the spring semester of your application year
  - a. They will need **at least** a month to write the letter
  - b. Offer to provide information to aid in their LOR writing, such as
    - i. Personal interview (virtual or in-person)
    - ii. Personal statement
    - iii. Grades/transcripts
    - iv. Resume or list of experiences
    - v. Why you chose them to write you a letter and what you think it can tell the letter reader (i.e. the strengths and/or skills you think they can attest to)
    - vi. You may also wish to provide them with the [AAMC Letter Writer Brochure](#). Although this is for medical schools in particular, the tips can be applied to LORs for all health professional schools.
  - c. Give them an approximate deadline, such as the date you plan to submit 1<sup>o</sup> application
    - i. Note that letters *can* still be submitted after you submit your 1<sup>o</sup> application
- III. Once your application is started (i.e., you have an id # with the application service or school), contact your authors again to remind them about the LOR
  - a. thank them for agreeing to write you a letter
  - b. Reiterate the approximate deadline (around when you plan to submit the 1<sup>o</sup> application)
  - c. Ask if there is any additional information they feel they need
- IV. Additional information for your letter writers, if requested:
  - a. Means of submitting letters
    - i. Allopathic Medical Schools - [AMCAS](#)
    - ii. Osteopathic Medical Schools - [AACOMAS](#)
    - iii. Dental Schools - [AADSAS](#)
    - iv. Physician Assistant Schools - [CASPA](#)
    - v. Pharmacy Schools - [PharmCAS](#)
    - vi. Optometry Schools - [OptomCAS](#)
    - vii. Veterinary Schools - [VMCAS](#)
    - viii. Podiatric Medical Schools – [AACPMAS](#) (Most schools require letters be sent to them directly.)
    - ix. Chiropractic Schools - There is no application service for chiropractic schools. Apply to schools individually.
  - b. Information typically included in a letter of recommendation:
    - i. The relationship to the applicant (i.e., professor, employer, etc.)
    - ii. The length of time the author has known the applicant
    - iii. Your strengths or personal attributes the letter writer can attest to, such as
      1. Problem-solving and decision-making skills
      2. Ability to empathize with others and to the needs of society
      3. Motivation and staying power – health professional school requires maturity, flexibility, dedication, stress management and a number of other qualities
      4. Approach to ethical dilemmas and ability to see multiple sides of an issue
      5. Ability to work effectively and productively in group settings – leader, team player
      6. The author’s overall assessment – this includes all of those qualities they think would make a good physician/health care professional, including honesty, responsibility, communication, cultural competence, etc.
- V. Monitor letter arrivals in your application service and remind authors to submit if necessary
  - a. Remember that they are doing you a favor, so be respectful with your reminders
- VI. Let authors know your final status with a final thank you note (accepted, waitlisted, etc.)