Student Information Worksheet for Letter of Recommendation

Name *(as it appears on applications)* _____

Address _____ ZIP Code _____

Birthplace _____ First language _____

Relevant family history _____

Most significant experiences in your life _____

_____

Greatest challenges in your life *(hurdles you have overcome)* _____

_____

Individual accomplishments *(academic and school-related: give grade levels and offices held, if any)* ____

_____

_____

Community activities *(church, charity, community service)* _____

_____

Employment experiences *(include grade level)* _____

_____

If employed, how many hours a week do/did you work? _____

Advanced classes you have completed or in which you are currently enrolled _____

_____

Awards or honors you have received *(include the year)* _____

_____

College and career plans _____

_____

Possible majors (in order of preference) _____

_____

Personal and professional goals _____

_____

Three words that best describe you _____

If there is something special or unique about you which might interest other or help you to get accepted, please include it here. _____

_____

Anything else that will help to make this letter as specific and as convincing as possible in describing you and your accomplishments _____

_____

Letter is for _____ and is due _____

Letter is for _____ and is due _____

Letter is for _____ and is due _____

Letter is for _____ and is due _____

Letter is for _____ and is due _____

The Letter of Recommendation

• Most private colleges, competitive college major departments, and some employers will request a letter of recommendation.

• Colleges are looking for personal insights about student applicants, not a reiteration of grades and test scores. The most effective letters are usually obtained from teachers who know the student very well.

• The most competitive colleges usually prefer letters from teachers of college prep courses (i.e., English, lab science, advanced math, and foreign language). These faculty members have witnessed strengths in the classroom. These teachers are often better able to promote admission than, for instance, an administrator who has not had such extended personal interaction.

• In selecting people to write your recommendations, consider that you may want these letters to illustrate a balance of your interests. For instance, recommendations from an English teacher, a math teacher, and a coach would give a broader picture than recommendations from three math teachers.

• When requesting a letter of recommendation, allow the teacher 10–14 days for completion. Requesting the letter of recommendation early will help both you and the teacher to avoid the last-minute rush to meet a critical deadline.

• Make personal contact with the teacher. DO NOT assume the letter will be completed if you send a request by mail.

• Be sure to give the teacher an addressed, stamped envelope. It would help if you would also leave the following information on a sheet of paper:
— the name of the individual/office to receive the letter
— why you are interested in this particular college or position
— a summary of your career goals and plans for college
— a few words about your involvement in any of the following:
    clubs and service organizations
    non-school activities (church, community, employment)
    student government
    athletics
    hobbies, special interests, talents
    awards, honors
— a short statement describing your strengths, attitudes, and/or skills which may help you to be successful

• Write a short thank-you to the individual who has taken the time to support you in this way.

When requesting a letter of recommendation from a teacher, be sure to:

• Fill out the student information worksheet as completely as possible; not all sections may apply.

• Think of a teacher who knows you well.

• Make an appointment to ask the teacher to write a letter or recommendation for you. Plan ahead to meet your timeline, and allow the teacher 10–14 days for the completion of the letter. DO NOT assume the letter will be completed if you leave the request in the teacher's mailbox; make sure you make personal contact with the teacher.

• At the time of the appointment, give the teacher an addressed, stamped envelope for each school that requires a letter and your completed information worksheet.

• Write a short thank-you to the teacher who has supported you in this way.