

## Information for Recommenders

### Writing & Submitting Letters of Recommendation to HPAO

Health Professions Advising Office (HPAO), Student Access to Science Center, FO5-109

Phone: (562) 985-5720 Email: HPAO@csulb.edu

Thank you for agreeing to write a letter of recommendation/evaluation for your student. Letters of evaluation are a crucial part of an application to professional or graduate schools. The admissions committees rely on recommendations to gain insight into applicant's abilities, personal traits, commitment, and other relevant information that cannot be gleaned from the applicant's numerical profile and personal statement.

**HPAO Letter of Recommendation Service:** Since many students apply to several schools, the Health Professions Advising Office (HPAO) provides a letter of recommendation storage and mailing service to help streamline the application process. HPAO will store original letters, then photocopy and dispatch them to the schools designated by the applicant. Students have been given an option to have a confidential or non-confidential file under the terms of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. The majority of students elect to have a confidential file. If you would like to confirm that a student has a confidential file, please contact HPAO at (562) 985-5720 or ask the student to show you a copy of their signed Waiver of Access form. HPAO will not show your confidential letter to the student or alter the letter in any way. Confidential letters cannot be released to students for any reason and will only be sent to graduate and professional programs. A narrative letter may or may not take the place of an evaluation form required by some graduate and professional schools-- applicants are responsible for contacting prospective schools for admissions procedures and providing you with supplemental forms.

#### Format of Letters

- Letters should be typed on white, departmental or business letterhead
- **Address to the "Committee on Admissions"** (not the CSULB Health Professions Advising Office)
- Include the student's full name on the letter.
- Include an address and phone number on the letter of recommendation (if it does not appear on your letterhead), so that you may be contacted.
- Remember to sign the letter.

**Content:** Admissions committees expect letters of recommendation to provide an evaluation of an applicant's acquisition of special skills and traits required of their chosen profession, including quality of past academic work, potential for future scholarly contributions and requisite personal characteristics. The National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions ([www.naahp.org](http://www.naahp.org)) recommends the following:

- Address Personal Characteristics and Social Skills: Information that faculty obtain by knowing, teaching, advising, and working with the applicant is more helpful than providing lists of the applicant's grades or activities that are readily available from the application materials. Letters that describe *who the person is* receive great consideration.
- Leadership: Applicants ability to direct, organize, and or take charge. Address strengths in this area and examples and any concerns about passivity.
- Ability to work collaboratively
- Problem Solving Ability
- Honesty and Integrity
- Responsibility and Dedication
- Communication Skills
- Exposure to the Profession
- Common Sense and Judgement
- Service To Others/ Altruistic Behavior
- Motivation
- Empathy

#### Submitting Letters to the Service

- A Letter may be hand-delivered by a student provided that it is in a sealed envelope with the author's signature across the seal.
- A Letter may be hand-delivered by the author.
- A Letter may be sent through campus mail or U.S. Mail in a sealed envelope to the address below:

*Health Professions Advising Office*  
*SAS Center; FO5-109; Mailstop 4501*  
*CSU Long Beach*  
*1250 Bellflower Blvd.*  
Long Beach, CA 90840-4501

#### Note to Students:

Provide this sheet to your prospective recommender along with any additional materials or information that may assist them in providing a good reference for you (resume, transcripts, application essay, etc). Some graduate or professional programs require a separate evaluation form, supplied in their application, in place of or in addition to a narrative letter of recommendation. Check with each program of interest to find out if such a form is necessary and have it filled out at the same time you request a letter of recommendation. Please allow recommenders ample time (one month or so) to complete and submit your letter.