

Requesting a letter of recommendation from Dr. Luebbe

If you have been a student in my classes or worked in my lab I am happy to write a letter of recommendation for graduate school, jobs, or other professional or volunteer endeavors.

First, some general unsolicited advice and rules of thumb for reference/recommendation letters:

- Plan ahead and ask early.
- Only ask folks who can give you a **good** recommendation. If you're unsure, it's okay to clarify with potential letter writers.
- Think about your audience. They want to see that you have the skills, experience, goals, and passion that will help you be successful in *their* program, job, or opportunity. Who do you know that can speak to those skills in you? While a letter from a family friend might be gushing or your friendly Senator or State Representative might look impressive, do they *really* know how to evaluate if someone is cut out for graduate school in psychology or a job at a certain company?
- Think about a *team* of letter writers who can speak to your various strengths. If you are using two class professors, for example, you may want to think about a class that involved extensive writing, discussion, or service learning, because that professor can speak to a different set of skills than a professor from a larger lecture class that had to use multiple choice exams. Certainly, think about the different picture that three course instructors might paint versus that of a course instructor, a faculty research mentor, and a faculty service learning instructor.
- Along those lines, employers or supervisors you've had from jobs or volunteer opportunities are fine if they can write about the specific skills that apply to the program or job. If you are applying for grad schools, be aware that employers or supervisors may be less familiar with the whole reference letter thing, whereas faculty members write and read several (hundred?!?) each year.
- This is probably a no-brainer, but no letters from family.

Okay, on to the nitty-gritty of requesting letters from me.

Please request letters **at least 3 weeks** (more time is also better) before they are due. It's also okay to remind me a week or so before they're due. It's not a burden and it will help. Hopefully, I've already done it.

To make the process flow a little smoother for each of us, please use the following checklist:

Letter for Graduate School

- ☐ Send me an e-mail asking me to write the letter and in that e-mail include:
 - A paragraph or two describing the specific capacity in which we worked together and **when**
 - (e.g., you were a student in my class fall semester 2010 and did that awesome project on X,Y, or Z; as a research assistant in my lab from September 2010 to May 2010 you worked on X, Y, and Z in the lab)
 - A paragraph about your career goals. Think short term and longer term.
 - Let me know your GPA (and psych GPA)
 - Anything else that is important that you want included in the letter itself.

- ☐ Attach to the e-mail the following:
 - Any electronic copies of forms required by the prospective graduate schools
 - A copy of your curriculum vita / resume
 - A copy of your personal statement. If you only have a draft, that's fine.
 - A document with a table indicating the instructions regarding to whom to address the letter, where I am sending the letter (e.g., back to you to include in your application packet, directly to the school, via e-mail), and due dates for the letters. See example below.
- ☐ If you only have a hard copy of recommendation forms, you can put those in my mailbox in room 100 of the Psychology Building.
- ☐ Download from my website or from MU's general counsel website the document entitled "FERPA Release: Student Reference Request." Complete the form and put it in my mailbox in room 100 of the Psychology Building

Example of table for addresses, instructions, and due date:

Address Letter to:	Correspondence Address	How/where to send	Due Date
Admissions Committee	Groovy State University Department of Psychology Groovy, ST 12345	e-mail to: admissions@psych.dept.edu	12/1/2010
Prof. Big Name	Bigger Name U. 123 Psychology Ln. Awesome City, ST 12345	USPS to: Prof. Big Name Bigger Name U. 123 Psychology Ln. Awesome City, OH 12345	1/13/2011
Director of Training	Best Grad School Ever U. Room 200 Counseling Department Best City, ST 12345	Give back to applicant	1/7/2011

Letter for Job or Volunteer Opportunity

- ☐ Send me an e-mail asking me to write the letter and in that e-mail include:
 - A paragraph or two describing the specific capacity in which we worked together and **when**
 - (e.g., you were a student in my class fall semester 2010 and did that awesome project on X,Y, or Z; as a research assistant in my lab from September 2010 to May 2010 you worked on X, Y, and Z in the lab)
 - A paragraph about your career goals. Think short term and longer term.
 - Let me know your GPA
 - Anything else that is important that you want included in the letter itself.
- ☐ Attach to the e-mail the following:
 - Any electronic copies of forms required by the job
 - A copy of your resumé
 - A document with a table indicating the instructions regarding to whom to address the letter, where and how to send the letter (e.g., via e-mail or USPS), and due dates for the letters. Adapt the table above.
- ☐ Download from my website or from MU's general counsel website the document entitled "FERPA Release: Student Reference Request. Complete the form and put it in my mailbox in room 100 of the Psychology Building.

Dr. Luebbe's email address is LuebbeA2@muohio.edu