

### Guidelines for the Recommender

This recommendation letter will become part of the candidate's credentials file in the Career Services Office and will be sent to employers and / or graduate schools at the request of the student. The following information may be helpful to you in fulfilling the candidate's request for a recommendation letter.

#### **Be sure you want to recommend this student – know to what you are committing.**

- Be sure to discuss a student's academic and / or employment plans and preparation before agreeing to write a letter of recommendation.
- Be sure to keep a copy of this letter in your own files for future reference. (Letters of recommendation will be kept on file in the Career Services for five years).
- If you are unable to complete the reference in a timely manner, please let the candidate know.

#### **Get enough data to do write an effective letter of recommendation.**

- The student will be given a *Letter of Recommendation Information Sheet* to allow the candidate to inventory experiences and goals. We strongly encourage students to provide you with a copy of this document to assist you in writing a letter of recommendation. Please ask the student to give you a copy of this *Information Sheet*.
- Request a résumé and/or transcript.
- You may find it helpful to ask for a graded work sample, e.g., paper, capstone, class project
- Academic transcript(s) from all higher education institutions attended.
- Supplemental application from specific graduate school program (if required).

#### **Describe a particularly successful project.**

- Find one or more "above and beyond" stories on which to focus.
- Describe the student's experience as a TA, RA, Peer Counselor, Tutor or other experiences or services that may set this student apart from other applicants.
- Support statements with specific examples, relevant facts and/or concrete reasons which have formed the basis for your opinions.

#### **Get personal when appropriate.**

- Avoid referring to the candidate's age, gender, disability, race, color, national origin, or religious beliefs.
- However, some situations describing adversities overcome by the candidate may be helpful to the applicant. Be judicious in using personal and sensitive information you hold about the student/candidate. If describing adversities overcome by candidate, do ask for permission of the student/candidate about including this type of information in a letter of recommendation.
- Do you enjoy having this student in class, as an intern?

#### **Close by predicting success either in graduate program or profession.**

- Describe why you think the student will succeed in a graduate program or in a profession.
  - "One of the top students that I have worked with in recent years."
  - "Razor sharp mind."
  - "Tremendous potential."

#### **Business Correspondence Tips**

- **PLEASE USE COMPANY, SCHOOL, OR COLLEGE LETTERHEAD!!!** This lends credibility to the letter and to you as a professional.
- **How To Fold a Business Letter:** Use a Number 10 envelope (standard business envelope). Pull the bottom of the letter two thirds of the way up the page and press a crease. The bottom of the letter should be slightly below the address line. Fold the top of the letter so that it's flush with the bottom crease.

Once received in the Career Services Office, no information about the contents of a confidential reference will be released to the candidate. Non-confidential references will be available upon request. Please feel free to contact the Career Services Office, extension 7191 for further information or assistance. Please return letters directly to the Career Services Office.