**How to obtain a letter of recommendation (or other reference) from me**

The courses I teach involve a lot of hard work on your part, and I certainly do appreciate the chance to work with you. Indeed, I consider the very best part of my job to be the process of getting to know you, see you progress, excel, gain confidence and skills, and then go on to finish your own majors and enter post-graduate work. If there’s any way I can help you do that, I’m happy to —and of course, writing you a letter of recommendation is one way I can often contribute. *Here’s when/how it’s appropriate*:

**For sudden opportunities** (scholarships, memberships, honors, awards, job opportunities, etc.):

I realize that these sorts of opportunities can come up on fairly short notice—you don’t always know about them far in advance. And it’s OK if I don’t know you that well, but you should have a record of complete, diligent work in my course—and an accept-able average (B- or better, preferably). And I will write a letter as individually tailored as I can—try to be your best advocate—but if I don’t know you that well, please understand that my role will be mainly to verify that you are a student in good standing and with reliable performance in the course; I will not be able to comment in more detail than that. (Of course, if your grade/ performance is outstanding—or if I do know you well—I will emphasize all that I can to help you put your best foot forward.) *For this sort of reference, I need at least 2 weeks’ lead time, if possible. And at the time you request my help, I need you to supply me with all of the materials/information listed below.*

**For post-graduate work, professional schools, etc**:

I really need to have become well-acquainted with you (e.g. you’re a regular in my office hours, you speak up in class, you write in with good questions via e-mail, etc.), and you should have a record of complete, diligent work in my course—and an accept-able average (B- or better, preferably). I can then write a very individually tailored and help you put your best foot forward. *For this sort of reference, I need at least 1 month of lead time. And at the time you request my help, I need you to supply me with all the materials/information listed below.*

What I need from you prior to writing any letter or acting as a reference are all the following:

– Your own written description of the reason for the reference—what you’re applying for.

– All pertinent contact information: who I’m writing to, all their address/phone/email coordinates, and any special instructions.

– The absolute deadline(s)—date and time—when they must have received my letter and materials.

– If any part of the submission is via paper mail, please prepare self-adhesive mailing labels and provide sufficient postage

 stamps, but do not include envelopes (unless certain ones are required); I will use OSU Physics Department envelopes

 (along with my letterhead). *This is the only item that cannot be e-mailed to me—.doc files for the rest are just fine.*

– Your current resume/CV, which chronicles/details all positions of responsibility you’ve held (whether paid or not).

 This is essentially your “professional profile.”

– A current personal statement that helps me know you better: what has led you to the study/career path you’re now on,

 outside interests, important influences (people, experiences, events, ideas), etc. This is essentially your “personal profile.”

– The completed and signed Release/Waiver form that appears on the next page.

What I will then do: No matter sort of remarks/letter requested (and regardless whether I send it electronically or on paper), I always submit a full letter—on this OSU letterhead, whenever possible. And then I keep the .doc file on hand in my permanent records, in case you need a similar letter later for any other reason. I will also answer any specific questions from the committee/ person/ institution. I am familiar with most of the automated online reference services—PharmCAS, VMCAS, PTCAS, etc. —and I work easily with them (and by the way, use the information in my letterhead above to instruct them how to contact me).

Then note: I don’t like to push your deadline too closely, but it can be within 48 hours sometimes; many deserving students make these requests, and I insist on spending quality time with each letter. So I really do need to know what the absolute, “drop-dead” date/time is—and of course, whether it’s via paper or electronic mail. And I don’t mind your checking in with me if you’re concerned as the deadline approaches.

**Release/Waiver for Letter of Recommendation**

**Instructions for OSU Faculty:** School officials may use this form when an OSU student requests them to write a letter of recommendation. A signed release from a student is necessary to obtain written consent from the student. Student consent should include: (1) the data to be disclosed, (2) to whom the data will be disclosed, and (3) the student’s signature and date.

**Non-directory information** should not be included in a letter of recommendation without the student’s written consent. Examples of non-directory information include: birth date, religion, citizenship, disciplinary status, ethnicity, gender, GPA, marital status, OSU ID or social security number, grades/exam scores and standardized test scores.

If a letter of recommendation contains non-directory information:

• **A written authorization is required** for recommendations sent to other educational institutions in which the student seeks to enroll, including professional school admission services.

• **A written authorization is required** for recommendations sent to employers or individuals.

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**Instructions for OSU Students:** Complete, sign and return to the OSU faculty member.

I give my permission to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to write a letter of recommendation to:

 (Name of OSU faculty member)

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(Name of person, business, institution or service)

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(Address)

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(City, State, Zip)

I give my permission to include the following non-directory information in this letter of recommendation:

□ Grades □ GPA □ Other (please identify)

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\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I waive my right to review this recommendation letter:

□ I waive □ I do not waive

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 OSU Student Signature Date