

How to Ask a Faculty Member for a Letter of Recommendation

- Ask at least one month before your deadline.
- Let faculty know to what program you are applying, why, and your ultimate career goals. Are there special selection/admission criteria for the program/scholarship/etc.?
- Provide, preferably in **one** package, whether electronic or hard copy:
 - Copies of evaluations from **all** of your UCSC classes, including those taken with your letter-writer. Also, indicate in what capacity you are known to the faculty (course taken? internship or independent study? research topic?)
 - A copy of your draft statement of purpose, as well as your resume or curriculum vitae. Also, indicate your particular qualifications/strong points for the program/scholarship to which you are applying.
 - Stamped, addressed envelopes
 - Make sure you've clearly indicated the deadline and destination for the letter(s).**

Ask the faculty if there are additional items needed.

- If the recommendation is to go on a pre-printed form, make sure you've completed your portion.
- If you've been out of school for more than a couple of years, reconnect with the faculty by phone, email or in person: refresh their memory about who you are, then ask if they are willing to write a letter for you.
- Note that some faculty may ask you to visit them to discuss your application or letter.
- About confidentiality: You don't have to, but it is generally in your best interest to agree to the letter being confidential. If you are uncomfortable with this, or concerned that the letter will be positive, discuss it with the faculty member.

Please remember

- It is **in your interest** to provide as much information as possible -- the more informed your letter-writer is, the better your letter will be.
- **Keep in mind that the faculty member is doing you a favor -- be considerate by allowing plenty of time and providing all the necessary information.**