

Letters of Recommendation: How to

1. The first step is to ask your professor **whether they would be willing to write you a letter** of recommendation. It is always up to the faculty member's discretion whether they feel comfortable recommending you. When you ask them, it is helpful if you remind them which course(s) you took with them and the grades you earned in those courses.

NOTE: Always be sure to contact the professor about a month ahead of time in order to give them sufficient time to write and revise your letters while still getting them in by your program's deadline.

2. If the faculty member agrees to write the letter, be prepared to send them the following:
 1. The name and a short description of the program you're applying to
 2. A short paragraph explaining why you want to attend the program
 - a. E.g., is there a particular faculty member whose research interests you, a particular practicum site, etc.
 3. The date of when your letter of rec is due
 4. How the professor should turn in the letter of rec
 - a. If the program requires the letter to be mailed, please provide a stamped and pre-addressed envelope
 - b. If it's to be turned in online, please include or send a copy of the link
 5. A list of classes and projects you've taken with that professor and the grades you received
 6. A list of other experiences you have had that could be helpful in the field (volunteer work, outside research, related jobs, study abroad, etc.)
 7. Other information you would like the professor to consider when writing the letter
 - a. Specific skill sets you think they should highlight
 - b. Your professional and long term goals in the field of psychology

Other materials you may want to include:

1. Your unofficial transcripts
2. A resume/CV
3. A copy of research you've done
4. A copy of your general cover letter

Note: These are general suggestions. Be sure to ask your professor if they would like anything else.

Some helpful links:

- Writing the vita (CV): <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/641/01/>
 - And: <http://theprofessorisin.com/2012/01/12/dr-karens-rules-of-the-academic-cv/>

- Writing the personal statement:
http://web.clas.ufl.edu/users/msscha/psych/personal_statement.html
 - And: <http://theprofessorisin.com/2013/10/25/when-i-say-be-specific-what-do-i-mean/>
 - And: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/642/04/>
- Extra info about making the choice to go to Grad School: <http://chronicle.com/article/If-You-Must-Go-to-Grad-School/45269/>
- Extra info about areas of psychology: <http://www.apa.org/about/division/index.aspx> Some examples of information formats to submit to your professor:

1.

Rec Due Date	School	Degree/Program	Rec Type	Address & Info	Comments
12/1/2013	UCLA	Doctorate in Cognitive Psychology	Online, You will get an email prompt	UCLA, Department of Psychology 405 Hilgard Ave 1285 Franz Hall Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563 Phone: (310) 825-2961, Fax: (310) 206-589	*Top Choice* At UCLA I'm interested in working with Dr. Ladan Shams. She studies sensory integration, which is one of my favorite areas in cognitive psychology.
12/16/2013	Florida State	Doctorate in Cognitive Psychology	Snail mail	DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY 1107 W. CALL STREET TALLAHASSEE, FL 32306-4301 MAIN: (850) 644-2040 · FAX: (850) 644-7739	*Safety Choice* At FSU I'm interested in working with Dr. Kaschak. I'd like to also collaborate with Dr. Rick Hyson in the Neuroscience program.

2.

Alliant University: California School of Professional Psychology

Due date: October 30

Format: email link to be sent to you

What attracted me to Alliant was ...

Loyola Marymount University

Due date: November 2

Format: Email link sent to you

LMU's mission fits with my personal goals...

Chapman University

Due Date: November 16

Format: hard copy; form and stamped, self-addressed envelope are in your box

Attending Chapman would provide me with...