Helpful Information for Recommendation Letter Writers

Ask for recommendation letters several weeks to months in advance of the deadline. Complete information helps a letter writer pen the strongest recommendation possible.

Provide a list of addresses and deadlines for the letter. Indicate if the letter will be submitted online or needs to be mailed via U.S. Postal Service. If you prefer the letter writer to give you a copy of the letter, you must discuss whether that is a possibility with the letter writer. Recommendation letters are typically sealed in a signed envelope.

1) Provide general information so your letter writer doesn’t have to spend time looking it up and knows that they have it correct.
   a) Full name
   b) UWSP Student ID Number
   c) Major/Minor
   d) Graduation date (planned or actual)

2) Tell the letter writer the goal of the letter (name specific graduate or professional program(s), scholarship, employment, etc., for which you are applying).

3) How long have you known the letter writer (since what month and year)?

4) In what capacity do you know the letter writer? If you had a class/laboratory with them, name the class and give the semester in which you took it.

5) If you did well on a particular aspect of the letter writer’s course (laboratory, or a paper, poster, or oral presentation), state that you enjoyed that particular part of the class and give the topic and/or title of your project (if applicable).

6) Briefly address why you want the position for which you are applying. Why do you think it is a good fit for you at this time?

7) Briefly list work, shadowing, extracurricular, athletic, and/or volunteer activities that you’ve done while in college. List any awards, honors, or positions of responsibility (team captain, club secretary, etc.).

The following information may also be helpful:

8) What do you think are your key academic strengths and your key weaknesses?

9) Do you have any special skills, activities or goals that you would like profiled in the letter? Do you have any deficiencies you’d like help explaining?

10) Is there anything else that you’d like the letter writer and/or people who will read the letter to know about you?