

Writing an effective letter of reference takes time and thought. It is a serious undertaking and letters cannot be dashed off. Keep in mind that I receive many requests for letters of reference. Although there are a couple of especially busy letter-writing times in the academic year, I have a running list of requests all year long. As a general rule, please contact me at least one month before deadlines. If I have agreed to write a letter for you, I will do my best to accommodate you regardless. But the more time I have to think about your letter, the better it is likely to be. If your request reaches me right before a deadline, I might have to decline because writing your letter will likely interfere with someone else's long-standing request.

Please prepare the following package of information for me:

- A list of all the programs and schools for which you need a letter of reference. Include the name of the program for which you are applying, the address to which the letter should be sent and the date it is due. If there is a process to submit a letter electronically, that usually works best. Please ensure that you have set up your application so that I can submit my request electronically.
- A copy of your grades – an unofficial copy is fine.
- A statement of purpose or cover letter that explains why you are interested in the program and why you are well suited to it. I am happy to read a draft version. If I can tailor my letter to your statement of purpose, the application is usually more effective.
- A c.v.
- If there are forms that you have to fill out, please do so in advance. If I need to fill out a form and require information from you to do so (like your mailing address) please send me that information too.

Please send me a message one week before a letter is due. I appreciate a reminder and I can let you know when I have sent the letter. If you hear that a letter is missing, or if you are worried about your application, get in touch with me right away.

Good luck with your application!