

The last sheet in this packet is a signed waiver; it needs to be returned with your letter. Thanks.

TO: Faculty and Professional Recommenders

FROM: Mary F. Engel, Ph.D.
Director of Medical School Placement
Chair, Health Professions Evaluation Committee

DATE: October 2011

RE: Content and format of letters

This memo outlines the evaluation procedure used at The University of Scranton to evaluate applicants to health professions schools. This procedure includes a twenty-three member, University-wide Health Professions Evaluation Committee (HPEC).^{*} Your letter will become a part of the student's file, along with other materials submitted by the student. When the student is interviewed by two members of the committee, your letter will be available to the interviewers. The information you provide will be very useful to the interviewing team as well as to the Professional School Selection Committees.

Based on information contained in the student's file, and on information obtained during the interview process, a composite letter will be drafted by committee members. The committee letter will be sent to each health professions school. In addition, **your letter will be reproduced and will be sent to the admissions committees of the health professions schools.** We request that you send your letter on your professional or department letterhead, and we ask that you sign your letter.

This evaluation procedure was enacted in response to requests from admission committees of many health professions schools that the evaluation package contains information beyond grades and academic achievements. We are told that the most useful evaluation letters contain narrative descriptions that address such issues as those listed on the attached page.

Although letters are not due until March 2nd, you may send them to me at any time before that date.

***2011-2012 members of HPEC:** Fr. T. Cadigan, Fr. R. McKinney; Drs. T. Cannon, D. Carpenter, S. Casey, P. Clark, J. Dreisbach, K. Dwyer, M. Engel, P. Fahey, T. Foley, D. Germeroth, M. Hardisky, T. Hogan, S. Hudacek, R. Klonoski, C. Lovecchio, K. Nordberg, D. Pellegrino, D. Rusak, R. Smith, R. Waldeck, C. Zakzewski

Possible topics to be covered in letters of reference to support Health Professions Applications

Relationship with the applicant

- ◆ How well (and in what context) the student is known to the recommender, the length of time known

Evaluation of Academic Performance

- ◆ Comparisons of this student with similar pre-professional students that you have taught
- ◆ Oral and written communication skills
- ◆ Motivation for a career in the health professions
- ◆ Work, research, and other experiences related to health professions
- ◆ The degree to which student chose challenging courses over courses which would have made it easier to get a higher grade (also, participation in Honors Program, SJLA, Business Leadership)
- ◆ Discussion of foreign language skills, if applicable

Evaluation of Student Preparation for the Health Professions

- ◆ How does the student relate to faculty and to other students?
- ◆ How does the student work with others (team assignments, laboratory partners, etc.)?
- ◆ Does the student have the ability to work independently?
- ◆ Self motivation for a career in medicine: Does the student know what he/she is “getting into”?
- ◆ Leadership qualities, personal integrity, honesty
- ◆ Sense of humor

It is not likely that you will be able to comment on all, or even most, of the above attributes. They are listed to share with you the information most often requested from admissions committees. Where possible, please provide concrete examples.

Finally, remember that your letter will be reproduced and will become part of the official package forwarded to each professional school. **Please send your letter on department or professional stationery, and please date and sign the letter.** Your comments are a critical component of the evaluation process.

In order for your letter to be processed in time for student interviews, **we request that you send this letter by March 2, 2012. Letters received after that time will be included in the evaluation package, but for technical reasons, it is impossible to include any letters received after June 15, 2012.**

Please mail your letter to:
Health Professions Evaluation Committee
c/o Dr. Mary F. Engel
312 St. Thomas Hall
The University of Scranton
Scranton, PA 18510

HEALTH PROFESSIONS EVALUATION REQUEST

Applicant's Name _____

Applicant: please fill out one of the following two descriptions

____ The recommender, _____ was my instructor in
_____ class in the _____ semester of _____.

____ The recommender, _____ was my professional preceptor
during _____.

To the Applicant: Personally present this form to your recommender, along with a copy of your completed questionnaire.

Right to Access: Public law 93-380, Education Amendment Act of 1974, grants enrolled students the right to inspect letters of recommendation unless this right is waived in writing. Please check one line and sign below:

____ I waive my right of access to this letter, and I understand that the contents of this letter will remain confidential and will not be available to me now or in the future.

____ I do NOT waive my right of access to this letter.

Signature _____ Date _____

To the faculty recommender:

Thank you for agreeing to write a letter of evaluation. **Please send it to Dr. Mary F. Engel by March 2, 2012.**

IMPORTANT:

Attach this signed form to your letter of evaluation. Even if the student has waived right of access, I must provide student access to your letter unless I have this written proof that the student has waived his/her right to access.

Please take a moment to review the evaluation process detailed on the attached memorandum.

Please do not throw this sheet away – it must accompany the letter you write; it needs to be retained in the student's file.