

# Alfred University

## McComsey Career Development Center

Please return completed form to:  
Career Development Center  
ALFRED UNIVERSITY  
Saxon Drive  
Alfred, NY 14802

To be completed by Candidate

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_ requests that you complete the following recommendation on his/her behalf. Prospective employers or representatives of graduate institutions may review this recommendation.

Candidate's Authorization: In compliance With Public Law 93-380, Section 438. ("Buckley Amendment"):

- I waive my right of access to this recommendation. (i.e. I may NOT review the letter.)  
 I do not waive my right of access to this recommendation (i.e. I may review the letter.)

(Signature) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

.....  
To be completed by writer

Please check the statement(s) that most clearly describes the extent of your relationship with the candidate:

- Have known him/her well as a student  
 Acquainted personally outside of class  
 Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Was his/her major professor  
 Has been in my employ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Position/dates)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Printed) \_\_\_\_\_ Institution \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Institution Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach letter of recommendation. See reverse side of form for additional considerations.

## LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

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These documents are crucial pieces of the application process for education candidates, graduate/professional school applicants, grant/fellowship applicants and more.

### If you are REQUESTING that a letter be written on your behalf:

- Ask the writer if he or she can give you a **positive** recommendation, and be open to the fact that by asking you may receive a "no" as an answer. It's MUCH better to ask someone else than to have a less-than-stellar letter in your file.
- Put your request in writing, including the date by which you would like the letter completed. Last minute requests will probably not be honored - two weeks is more reasonable.
- Provide a copy of the position, or graduate school program, to which you are applying. If you are requesting a general letter, you should describe the type of position or program you're interested in.
- Provide the writer with a current copy of your resume. This will remind the writer of your unique talents, accomplishments and experiences. If there are any qualities you would like emphasized, mention them to the writer so they can be considered.
- Give the writer an addressed envelope (stamped, if it needs to be mailed off campus).
- Make sure that all waivers are signed. Most graduate schools, and the service provided by the CDC, require that you either waive or don't waive your right to see the letter.
- Keep in mind that faculty and employers often have many letters to write. Before you ask that your credential file be sent out, call us at 607-871-2164 to be sure all your letters have been received.
- Thank the writer. He or she has given you a boost toward your career goal!

### If you have been ASKED to write a recommendation letter:

#### **The following items should be included in a written reference:**

- The capacity in which you know or have supervised the person, including his or her job title if applicable, and how long you have known him or her
- The *unique* qualities of the person as they apply to the position or graduate program, including academic ability, research ability, attitude toward study, potential as an original contributor to the field, dedication to the profession, creativity, ability to apply theory to practice, enthusiasm, etc.
- Concrete examples that demonstrate specific skills and achievements.
- Personal qualities of the candidate that indicate suitability for the opportunity, such as responsibility, ability to contribute to class discussions and development of other students, etc.
- Close with a clear sentence stating that you recommend the person for the opportunity and indicating your willingness to be contacted for further discussion.

#### **Other considerations:**

- CDC staff members will not divulge the contents of any letter to which the student has waived his or her right of access. However, we will let the student know if a letter is not suitable for a specific purpose; for example, we may indicate that a letter is targeted toward a fellowship rather than employment.
- If you don't feel you can write a positive letter, let the student know that. From his or her standpoint, it's better to have no letter than an even slightly negative one.
- Talk with the student about the qualities you feel that you can positively comment on, and let him or her know what you don't feel you can write positively about..
- Keep in mind that your letter may be photocopied many times. Use only the best quality printer or typewriter to produce your letter.
- Be sure you know what the student will be using the letter for, so that you can target your comments appropriately.
- Let the student know how long it will be until you complete the letter, and notify him or her when you have completed and mailed your letter.
- Contact the CDC if you would like an example of a letter of recommendation.