



COLLEGE OF NATURAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
Health Careers Advisement Office (HCAO)

To: Evaluators of CSULA Health Professional School Applicants
From: CSULA Health Careers Advisement Office (HCAO)

Subject: Letter of Recommendation Format

The HCAO provides a mailing service for letters of recommendation for currently-enrolled students. This service is also extended to recent CSULA graduates for up to two years after their graduation date. Recommendation letters are photocopied and mailed to health professional schools.

Each recommendation letter submitted to the HCAO must be accompanied by the Buckley Amendment Waiver form signed by the student who requested the letter. Recommendation letters that are received without the required Buckley form are returned to the sender. Students should present a signed form to each person from whom they request a recommendation at the time they make their request. Individuals who feel they cannot write a positive recommendation letter for a particular student can refuse the request.

We ask that individuals who are submitting recommendation letters to the HCAO for distribution to health professional schools through our mailing service follow the suggestions listed below:

- **Use official letterhead.**
- **Sign the letter.**
- Date the letter and address it to the Admissions Committee for the type of program to which the student is applying. Example: **Medical School Admissions Committee** or **Dental School Admissions Committee**. Please note that it is not necessary to leave any space between the date and the salutation because the letter will not be modified in any way.
- **Avoid “form letter” styles.** The most valuable letter is one that reflects some familiarity with the student and contains pertinent observations about the candidate’s abilities and performance. Useful information includes comments about academic performance relative to past and present peers, laboratory skills, nonacademic skills, maturity, social characteristics, leadership potential, ability to cope with stress, imagination, initiative, enthusiasm, sincerity, compassion, etc. The professional schools will have a complete record of all applicants’ grades, so please do not simply repeat what is evident from an applicant’s record. Rather, your comments should amplify this information. Health professions schools request letters after applicants have passed preliminary screens that involve GPA and standardized test (e.g. MCAT, DAT, etc) considerations.
- **All letters must be sent by mail or walked in personally by the letter writer.** To ensure confidentiality, hand-delivered letters from students are not accepted. Mail or walk over your recommendation letter, with the required Buckley form to:

Health Careers Advisement Office
California State University, Los Angeles
c/o Elba Muñoz Biological Sciences 174
5151 State University Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90032-8201