

STUDENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Guidelines for teachers in writing college recommendations for seniors.

Two underlying assumptions prompt these guidelines. First, teacher recommendations are not a required service of the teacher, but are a favor granted by the teacher to the student. Second, student requests for recommendations tend to accumulate on the desks of a small number of teachers, causing a very substantial increase in work for these few teachers. Therefore, the purpose of these guidelines is to make this extra work of the teachers proceed as efficiently and simply as possible.

1. The student must supply to the teacher a "request for teacher recommendation".
2. The teacher should consider each request, but not feel in any way obligated to grant each and every request. For example, the student may have chosen inappropriate colleges or an inappropriate major, may have submitted the request much too close to the college deadline date, or may be a senior so new to the teacher that a recommendation is not possible for several more months. The teacher does need to inform the student promptly that the recommendation as requested will or will not be written.
3. Recommendation requests come to the teacher either as a college-designed form for the teacher to complete or as a letter for the teacher to write. When a letter is requested, the teacher may use school stationery to write the recommendation longhand, may type it, or may submit it to the Office for typing at least one week prior to the college's deadline. [It is the preference of Lund Schools that the recommendation be channeled through the Office. The office will then have letters on file if there is call for further documents.]
4. Many teachers ask how to structure a letter of recommendation. It is suggested that emphasis be placed upon concrete details the teacher has actually observed. Here are some general categories to use as a framework:
 - evidence of intellectual ability
 - response to assignments
 - participation in classroom activities/discussions
 - quality of written work
 - organization and promptness
 - evidence of creative work beyond teacher expectations
 - relationships with staff/students
 - leadership style, if applicable

Be aware that principal recommendations view the student against the broad backdrop of the school as a whole, whereas teacher recommendations focus on illuminating details about the student against the backdrop of the classroom (or for the coach, the playing field).