

**HEALTH PROFESSIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HPAC)
SKIDMORE COLLEGE**

Letter of Recommendation form for Medical, Dental, or Veterinary School

To the Applicant: (Please fill out this top portion prior to giving this form to your reference)

Name of Applicant _____ Class _____

Address _____

E-mail Address _____

Applying to (check):

Medical School _____ (M.D. Programs _____ D.O. Programs _____)

Dental School: _____

Veterinary School _____

Name of Recommender _____

Recommender's Address _____

To the Applicant: You must check either (A) or (B) below. *The Federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 provides students with the right of access to educational records.*

____ (A) *I hereby waive my right to examine this recommendation.*

____ (B) *I retain my right to examine this recommendation.*

Signature of Applicant

Date

To the Recommender:

Thank you for agreeing to write a letter on behalf of one of our Skidmore College students.

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR LETTER TO HPAC BY APRIL 17th.

Please note that, in addition to going to the HPAC, **your individual letter will also be sent to the schools to which the student is applying.** After receiving all the student's individual letters of recommendation, the HPAC will write a committee letter on behalf of the student. The committee letters, *"provide an integrated and institutional perspective on an applicant's readiness for medical school. They provide a comprehensive evaluation of applicants based on direct observation and the synthesis of information provided by faculty and others at an institution"* (Association of American Medical Colleges [AAMC] Letter Writing Guidelines). **Your comments may be incorporated verbatim, or in a paraphrased form, into HPAC's committee letter of recommendation.**

Please keep in mind the following AAMC* (*italicized below*) and HPAC (non-italics) guidelines when preparing your letter:

- Print on **institutional letterhead.**
- **Address letter to:** The Health Professions Advisory Committee (HPAC).
- Be sure to incorporate reference to **type of program** for which you are recommending the student (medical, dental, veterinary, etc.).

- *Provide an accurate assessment of the applicant's suitability for medical (dental, veterinary) school rather than advocate for the applicant.*
- *Briefly explain your relationship with the applicant: how long you have known the applicant; in what capacity you have interacted (e.g., faculty, pre-medical advisor, supervisor, etc.); and whether you are writing based on direct or indirect observations.*
- **Quality** is more important than letter length. Focus on the applicant rather than details about the lab, course, assignment, job or institution.
- **Only** include information on grades, GPA **if** you are providing context to help interpret them. Grades, and GPA are available within the application.
- Focus on behaviors that you have **observed directly** when describing applicants' suitability for medical school. Consider describing: the situation or context of the behavior; the actual behavior(s) you observed; any consequences of that behavior. (If you include any indirect observations, please make that clear in your letter.) Review the attached AAMC competency descriptions and incorporate into your letter information on those competencies to which you can speak directly.
- **Medical schools do not expect any one letter writer to provide information about every characteristic of an applicant.** In fact, they require multiple letters specifically because no one letter writer is expected to know everything about an applicant.
- *Admissions committees and comparison information helpful. If you make comparisons, be sure to provide context. Include information about: the comparison group (e.g., students in a class you taught, students in your department, co-workers, etc.); your rationale for the comparison.* If the applicant has been your student, it is helpful to have your comments on the student's academic performance, especially in comparison to others in the class or to other pre-health students you have previously recommended for medical school or other health profession programs. References to lab work, exam scores, and class participation are pertinent.
- The student will not have access to your letter if the student checked (A) above.

(*AAMC guidelines retrieved from, <https://www.aamc.org/download/349990/data/lettersguidelinesbrochure.pdf>)

Recommender Signature _____

Date _____

Sign and attach this waiver form with your letter and email to the HPAC Administrative Assistant, Ellen Grandy, at egrandy@skidmore.edu.

PLEASE SUBMIT LETTERS BY APRIL 17th

Pre-Professional Competencies

- **Service Orientation:** *Demonstrates a desire to help others and sensitivity to others' needs and feelings; demonstrates a desire to alleviate others' distress; recognizes and acts on his/her responsibilities to society; locally, nationally, and globally.*
- **Social Skills:** *Demonstrates an awareness of others' needs, goals, feelings, and the ways that social and behavioral cues affect peoples' interactions and behaviors; adjusts behaviors appropriately in response to these cues; treats others with respect.*
- **Cultural Competence:** *Demonstrates knowledge of socio-cultural factors that affect interactions and behaviors; shows an appreciation and respect for multiple dimensions of diversity; recognizes and acts on the obligation to inform one's own judgment; engages diverse and competing perspectives as a resource for learning, citizenship, and work; recognizes and appropriately addresses bias in themselves and others; interacts effectively with people from diverse backgrounds.*
- **Teamwork:** *Works collaboratively with others to achieve shared goals; shares information and knowledge with others and provides feedback; puts team goals ahead of individual goals.*
- **Oral Communication:** *Effectively conveys information to others using spoken words and sentences; listens effectively; recognizes potential communication barriers and adjusts approach or clarifies information as needed.*
- **Ethical Responsibility to Self and Others:** *Behaves in an honest and ethical manner; cultivates personal and academic integrity; adheres to ethical principles and follows rules and procedures; resists peer pressure to engage in unethical behavior and encourages others to behave in honest and ethical ways; develops and demonstrates ethical and moral reasoning.*
- **Reliability and Dependability:** *Consistently fulfills obligations in a timely and satisfactory manner; takes responsibility for personal actions and performance.*
- **Resilience and Adaptability:** *Demonstrates tolerance of stressful or changing environments or situations and adapts effectively to them; is persistent, even under difficult situations; recovers from setbacks.*
- **Capacity for Improvement:** *Sets goals for continuous improvement and for learning new concepts and skills; engages in reflective practice for improvement; solicits and responds appropriately to feedback.*

Thinking and Reasoning Competencies

- **Critical Thinking:** *Uses logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions, or approaches to problems.*
- **Quantitative Reasoning:** *Applies quantitative reasoning and appropriate mathematics to describe or explain phenomena in the natural world.*
- **Scientific Inquiry:** *Applies knowledge of the scientific process to integrate and synthesize information, solve problems and formulate research questions and hypotheses; is facile in the language of the sciences and uses it to participate in the discourse of science and explain how scientific knowledge is discovered and validated.*
- **Written Communication:** *Effectively conveys information to others using written words and sentences.*

Science Competencies

- **Living Systems:** *Applies knowledge and skill in the natural sciences to solve problems related to molecular and macro systems including biomolecules, molecules, cells, and organs.*
- **Human Behavior:** *Applies knowledge of the self, others, and social systems to solve problems related to the psychological, socio-cultural, and biological factors that influence health and well-being.*

Retrieved from, <https://students-residents.aame.org/applying-medical-school/article/core-competencies/>