

Letter of Recommendation Timeline & Guidelines

I put a great deal of thought into each letter of recommendation that I write and I often have a number of letters to write each year. Please follow the timeline and guidelines below in order to ensure that the process runs smoothly.

1. *In the spring of your junior year:*

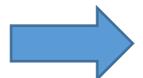
- If you would like me to write a letter of recommendation on your behalf, please ask me during the spring of your junior year. Any time prior to the start of summer break is fine. I will begin working on your letter during the spring or summer, when I will still easily be able to recall specific anecdotes related to your endeavors both in and out of the classroom. While I will still likely accept your request in the fall of your senior year, it will be more difficult for me to recollect those stories and details that make for an effective letter of recommendation.
- If you are assuming a leadership position or engaging in a noteworthy endeavor your senior year, I will still be able to include that information in your letter. Although I will start writing your letter in the spring or summer, I will not finalize it until the fall of your senior year.
- I highly recommend making your request in person.
- You do not need to know where you are applying yet or provide me with any documents when you make your request.

2. *In the fall of your senior year (at least four weeks prior to your earliest deadline):*

- At least four weeks prior to your earliest deadline, please provide me with a completed Teacher Recommendation Request Form. This form can be found in Guidance. It will let me know exactly which colleges you would like me to send your letter to. It will also let me know if any of the colleges you are applying to require that a physical letter be mailed.
- Please note that I cannot electronically send your letter of recommendation to a college until you designate me as a recommender in Naviance and begin the application process for that particular college in Naviance.
- If you would like to add or remove a college from the Teacher Recommendation Request Form after you have given it to me, be sure to notify your guidance counselor and update Naviance accordingly. Then, please come see me to make the appropriate change on your form.
- If any of the colleges you are applying to require that letters of recommendation be sent via mail:
 - Please use a binder clip or paperclip to attach a stamped and addressed envelope to the Teacher Recommendation Request Form for each college that only accepts letters of recommendation via mail.
 - Directions for addressing each envelope can be found at the bottom of the Teacher Recommendation Request Form. Please include the college address and the Northern Highlands return address as indicated on the form. Please also include, "Attn: Mr. D'Elia" as the first line of the return address.

I know how stressful the college application process can be. Please come see me if you have questions (or simply need to vent) about any part of the process.

I will notify you once I have finished and sent your letter of recommendation. Please keep me updated throughout the process and let me know once you have made your decision!



Frequently Asked Questions

Question: “Do I need to give you a resume or “brag sheet” detailing my accomplishments?”

Answer: No. I often write about a student’s extracurricular endeavors and accomplishments, but I do so from an authentic perspective. Some examples include: seeing your active involvement in an extracurricular activity that I advise, attending one or more of your games or performances, reading your articles in the school newspaper, seeing your art on display around the school, seeing your name mentioned in email updates about a particular club or sport, and having conversations with you about your involvement in a particular extracurricular activity.

Question: “School X requires that my letters of recommendation be written by teachers who taught me in “core academic subjects” or “major academic courses.” Does AP Psychology fall into these categories?”

Answer: Yes. Many schools with such a requirement even explicitly identify the social sciences (or psychology in particular) as examples of “core” or “major” academic subjects. AP Psych also counts as a “social studies,” “history,” “college level,” and “honors” course. If you have a question about whether or not AP Psych would fall into a particular category, please do not hesitate to ask me.

Question: “Will you write me a letter for a scholarship or special program?”

Answer: Of course. Once I have written your letter of recommendation, I will keep a digital copy in my records. I can then easily customize your letter based upon the nature of the program or scholarship.