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Guidelines for Students Requesting a Recommendation Letter

I am happy to support outstanding former students with recommendations as they apply for summer research opportunities, graduate school, fellowships, and other opportunities. In practice, this means that I am usually willing to write recommendations for students who received an A, A- or B+ in my courses. If this does not apply to you, or if you are not sure if I am the right person to write for you for some other reason, let's talk about it. Lukewarm letters will not do you much good, and I will let you know if I do not feel like I can write you a strong recommendation.

If you would like me to write a recommendation for you, please give me the following:

1. Plenty of lead time. You should ask me for a letter at least one month before the first deadline that you would like me to meet.

2. Information about you. (Please either print out or attach to a single email)

- A reminder of which courses you took from me and which terms you took them.
- A transcript (unofficial is fine).
- A resume/c.v.
- A draft of your personal statement, essay, or whatever you are producing as your part of the application.
- Copies of any graded work you submitted for the class.
- Information about yourself. Please take this as the chance to remind me how this opportunity relates to your future goals, past experiences, etc. Also feel free to mention relevant things you have accomplished that you think I ought to include. (No need for modesty! I will add my own thoughts, but the more you can help me point out what you think I should highlight the better. Plus you may remember specific details that I've forgotten.)

3. Information about what you are applying for.

- i. A summary table of all of the places you would like me to send a letter. Specifically, you should include all of the following information:**
 - Due date (please sort the table by increasing date).
 - Instructions for submitting the letter (URL for electronic submission, mailing address for paper submission, email address).
 - For graduate schools: the precise degree and name of department.
 - Any special notes about this particular application.
- ii. Hard copies:**
 - If the letter is to be sent as a hard copy, please give me an addressed, stamped envelope, and include any forms that I have to fill out.
 - If there are forms that require basic information (e.g. name of student, etc.), please fill out these fields before you submit them to me.
 - A reminder as the deadline approaches. You should send me an email about a week before the first deadline to make sure that I haven't forgotten.
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Please also **waive your access to the letter**. This is more for the people reading your application than for me: it is important that the people reviewing your application believe that I am writing completely honestly; they may think that a letter without the waiver will be less frank.

Finally, do get in touch once the process is over and let me know how everything went! I'd love to get the update.