



Wellesley College

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LETTERS OF REFERENCE

Dear Students,

I am happy to write letters on your behalf. Please contact me via e-mail to request letters. Please do not assume I have agreed to write the letter until you have received a response from me. That is, a message from you saying you want a letter does not indicate I have agreed to write it. Here are some things to consider when asking me (or another person) to write on your behalf.

- 1) Do I know you well enough to write a strong letter? Have you, for example, taken more than one class with me? Have I had the opportunity to observe you in other contexts (e.g. as a research assistant, course assistant, or departmental assistant; at the French house, at a presentation, or other such event)? It is not simply the grade you got in one class that indicates I might be the best person to write for you.
- 2) For your information, I do not accept to write letters of reference with less than 3 weeks notice if I have a letter on file for you already; four weeks if it is the first time I am writing for you (previous form letters do not count). This time frame applies *upon your providing all the necessary materials* (see 3 below). If the time frame of your request is reasonable and I do not agree to write the letter, it is because I don't think I can give you a strong letter. In this case, please ask someone else as I do not write letters unless I feel I can strongly support the student in question.
- 3) Once you have requested the letter and I have agreed to write it, here is the list of information and materials I will expect from you:
 - a) What classes you took with me; when (exact dates – e.g., Spring 2003); your grade
 - b) A copy of some of the assignments *with my comments* on them, unless you have submitted these at the end of term.
 - c) A reminder of any presentations you might have made.
 - d) A reminder of any other circumstances when we had interactions, which I might cite in the letter.
 - e) A copy of your c.v.
 - f) A copy of your grades (if pertinent)
 - g) A copy of the letter of intent you are submitting with your application even if this is not complete.
 - h) Relevant forms, envelopes, signed waivers, and clear directions regarding how and when the letters are to be dispatched.
 - i) Any other information you think might be pertinent.
- 4) It is entirely appropriate to check on the status of the letter at the time of the due date or to send a polite reminder a few days before.

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I take great pleasure in writing these letters. I like to give each student the best letter I could possibly write. Your help in adhering to the above requests goes a long way in aiding this process.

Thanks!

Anjali Prabhu