

### For the Letter Writer/Recommender:

Thank you for agreeing to write a letter of recommendation for a Marquette University undergraduate student. Letters of recommendation are a critical part of the application process for health professions programs, and we appreciate your time and effort on behalf of our students. If you feel you cannot write a positive letter, please consider not writing one, and let the student know you don't feel you can write one. A negative letter of recommendation can and usually will absolutely keep a student out of their chosen profession, so please keep that in mind as you consider writing a letter. **Please turn in letters for medical or dental school applicants by July 31. If you know you will not meet that deadline, please email [laurie.goll@mu.edu](mailto:laurie.goll@mu.edu).**

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.

Below are some guidelines that may help you in writing your letter:

1. Provide an accurate assessment of the applicant's suitability for medical school rather than advocate for the applicant.
2. Briefly explain your relationship with the applicant, how long you have known the applicant, and in what capacity you have interacted (e.g., professor, advisor, supervisor, etc.)
3. Quality is more important than letter length. Focus on the applicant rather than details about the lab, course, assignment, job, or institution.
4. **Only** include information on grades, GPA, or MCAT scores *if* you are providing context to help interpret them. Grades, GPA, and MCAT scores are available within the application.
5. Focus on behaviors that you have observed directly when describing applicants' suitability for medical school. Consider describing some of the criteria on the Objective Recommendation Form.
6. Admissions committees find comparison information helpful. If you make comparisons, be sure to provide context.
7. Please refer to the objective assessment form, and include any of those competencies at which you feel the student excels, and provide examples if possible. Please make sure that your responses on both the objective and subjective correlate (e.g. if you rate a student as "average" on the objective form but write a glowing subjective letter, that will cause confusion for the admission committees).
8. Think about what you think this student will contribute to the incoming class or program, and include that in your letter.

**If you have any questions or concerns, please contact:**

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