

How to Request Letters of Recommendation
By Jennifer L. Bloom, Ed.D.
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If you are asking a faculty member to write you a letter(s) of recommendation you must do everything in your power to make the process as simple and easy as possible for that person. Their time is extremely valuable and it takes an enormous amount of time to write a good letter on your behalf.

Your Responsibilities

- a. You must get information about the summer research program, scholarship, and/or award to your letter writer as far in advance of the deadline as possible. In most cases, you will need to give them **at least** two weeks notice.
- b. You will need to give them a copy of your updated resume at the time you ask them for the letter.
- c. You should give them a draft of your essay that you plan to submit so that they can write you the best letter possible.
- d. Remember to thank the letter writer profusely for agreeing to help you out.
- e. Remember to tell the letter writer whether you were selected for the award/summer research program/scholarship.

What You MUST Provide the Letter Writer

- a. The deadline for the letter
- b. The complete name of the award
- c. The web address for the award
- d. Do they require a recommendation form? If so, often you will need to fill out your name and waive your rights to see the letter and then sign your name. You will need to deliver this form with your part filled out to each of your letter writers.
- e. Instructions for what the letter writer should do once they have finished the letter. Do they need to send it directly to the institution? Or do they need to put it in a signed, sealed envelope and return it to you? You should offer to provide the letter writer with a self-addressed stamped envelope if the letter should be sent directly to the institution.
- f. Here is a SAMPLE of what you need to send in an e-mail to each of your letter writers for every program that you are applying to. Please make sure that you put this in deadline order with the closest deadline date first:

**SAMPLE LISTING OF 2003 SUMMER RESEARCH PROGRAMS FOR
JANE E. STUDENT**

#1

a. Deadline: *February 14, 2003*

b. Program Name: Life Sciences Summer Undergraduate Research Program

c. Website: http://www.cbs.umn.edu/summer_research/

d. Address Information:

University of Minnesota - TC

College of Biological Sciences - LSSURP

124 Snyder Hall (Delivery Code 6174)

1475 Gortner Avenue

St. Paul, MN 55108-1095

e. Additional Recommendation Form?: YES – I will bring you the form that you will need to complete.

f. Instructions: The program requires that you submit the original recommendation form and your letter of reference, plus 3 additional copies in a signed, sealed envelope. Please return this envelope to me to submit to the program

#2

Deadline: *March 1, 2003*

Program Name: The UTEP Summer Research Experience For Undergraduates Program In The Biological Sciences

Website: <http://www.utep.edu/mie/reu/index.html>

Address Information:

The UTEP Summer REU Program

Kristine M. Garza

Dept. Of Biological Sciences

The University of Texas at El Paso

500 W. University Ave.

El Paso, TX 79958-0519

Fax: 915-747-5808

Additional Recommendation form?: NO

Instructions: Please return your letter to me in a signed, sealed envelope