

Carnegie Mellon University

Health Professions Program

Name of Recommender: _____

To Be Completed by Applicant:

Applicant's Name: _____ Andrew ID: _____

Applying to:

Allopathic (MD) ____ Osteopathic (DO) ____ Podiatry ____ MD/Ph.D. ____ Other (specify) _____

I am requesting that a letter of evaluation concerning my qualifications for admittance to the health professional graduate program(s) indicated above. I understand that a candid evaluation is being sought and that a copy of the letter will be sent by the Health Professions Program of Carnegie Mellon University to the programs to which I am applying. I hereby authorize the above referenced Recommender and Carnegie Mellon University to disclose any information relating to my current or former status as a student, including but not limited to any information which may be deemed to be personally identifiable information from my student education records pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 or which may otherwise be protected under applicable privacy laws.

RIGHT TO INSPECT LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Under FERPA, you as an applicant have the right to review your educational records. FERPA further provides that you may waive your right to inspect recommendations. Please indicate whether you wish to waive this right by checking the appropriate box below and signing your name. If you do not select an option below, by default you hereby agree to waive your right of inspection.

- I **waive** my right to inspect any letters of evaluation or other information disclosed pursuant to this release.
- I **do not waive** my right to inspect any letters of evaluation or other information disclosed pursuant to this release.

Applicant's signature: _____ Date: _____

Evaluator:

- Please use a salutation such as "*Dear Members on the Admissions Committee*" in your letter.
- Print your letter on letterhead, if possible.
- Sign your letter, attach it to the first page of this form, and please send to:

Health Professions Program
5000 Forbes Avenue
Doherty Hall – Room 1324
Carnegie Mellon University
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213-3890
hpp-office@andrew.cmu.edu
Tel.: 412-268-8494
Fax: 412-268-5146

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To the Evaluator:

To assist you in writing your letter of evaluation, the Association of American Medical Colleges, in collaboration with medical schools, pre-health advisors, and leaders in the medical field, has created “*Guidelines for writing a letter of evaluation for a medical school applicant*” (outlined below). These guidelines provide direction and specific details about preparing a letter of evaluation that most effectively evaluates an applicant’s suitability for medical school and a career in healthcare.

- 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 have you known the applicant; in what capacity have you interacted; whether you are writing based on direct or indirect observations.
- 3) Quality is more important than letter length: focus on the applicant.
- 4) Only include information on grades, QPA or MCAT scores if you provide context to help interpret these measures. (*Schools will see these #s in the application*)
- 5) Comparison information can be helpful. If you make comparisons, please provide context.
- 6) Focus on behaviors that you have observed directly when describing an applicant’s suitability for medical school. Contrasting strengths and weaknesses is welcomed.

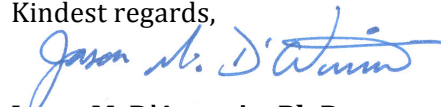
Medical schools are interested in how our applicants will contribute to the incoming medical school class. To get at this, they have provided a list of Core Competencies (*listed below*) that medical schools are looking for you to discuss. I encourage you to review this list to identify characteristics that you have observed directly and therefore can address in your letter. In doing so, please keep in mind no one letter writer can address all of these so focus only on those you can address.

If you taught the applicant in a course, please limit the descriptive detail regarding the course and focus more on emphasizing the applicant’s ability to grasp and apply their knowledge.

Typically, letters of reference are a full page to a page-and-a-half in length, single-spaced; however, recall that quality is more important than length. Unless requested, do not refer to a specific school, by name (application to Pitt medical school) or type (MD or DO) in your letter, but rather refer to schools generically (e.g., “application to medical school”).

Thank you for the time and effort you have invested in writing this letter for one of our students or graduates. I realize that this is an added burden to your professional responsibilities; we greatly appreciate your efforts on behalf of the applicant. Feel free to contact my office with any questions or concerns.

Kindest regards,



Jason M. D'Antonio, Ph.D.

Director, Health Professions Program
Senior Lecturer
Department of Biological Sciences

Carnegie Mellon University

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Core, Entry-level Competencies

(Adapted from the Association of American Medical Colleges)

Describe how the applicant has demonstrated **any** of the following competencies that are viewed as necessary for success in medical school. Please also comment on attributes such as *compassion, integrity, dedication, maturity, commitment, ability to take criticism, and honesty*.

Thinking & Reasoning Competencies

Critical Thinking: Uses logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions, or approaches to problems

Quantitative Reasoning: Applies quantitative reasoning and appropriate mathematics to describe or explain phenomena in the natural world

Scientific Inquiry: Applies knowledge of the scientific process to integrate and synthesize information, solve problems and formulate research questions and hypotheses; is facile in the language of the sciences and uses it to participate in the discourse of science and explain how scientific knowledge is discovered and validated

Written Communication: Effectively conveying information to others using written words and sentences

Science Competencies

Living Systems: Applies knowledge and skill in the natural sciences to solve problems related to molecular and macro systems

Human Behavior: Applies knowledge of the self, others, and social systems to solve problems related to the psychological, social, and biological factors that influence health and well-being

Interpersonal Competencies

Service Orientation: Demonstrates a desire to help others and sensitivity to others' needs and feelings; demonstrates a desire to alleviate others' distress; recognizes and acts on his/ her responsibilities to society, locally, nationally, and globally

Social Skills: Demonstrates awareness of others' needs, goals, feelings, and the ways social and behavioral cues affect peoples' interactions and behaviors; adjusts behaviors appropriately in response to these cues; and treats others with respect

Cultural Competence: Demonstrates knowledge of social and cultural factors that affect interactions and behaviors; shows an appreciation and respect for multiple dimensions of diversity; recognizes and acts on the obligation to inform one's own judgment; engages diverse and competing perspectives as a resource for learning, citizenship, and work; recognizes and appropriately addresses bias in themselves and others; interacts effectively with people from diverse backgrounds

Teamwork: Works collaboratively with others to achieve shared goals; shares information & knowledge with others and provides feedback; puts team goals ahead of individual goals

Oral Communication: Effectively conveys information to others using spoken words and sentences; listens effectively; recognizes potential communication barriers and adjusts approach or clarifies information as needed

Intrapersonal Competencies

Ethical Responsibility to Self and Others: Behaves in an honest and ethical manner; cultivates personal and academic integrity; adheres to ethical principles and follows rules and procedures; resists peer pressure to engage in unethical behavior and encourages others to behave in honest and ethical ways; and develops and demonstrates ethical and moral reasoning

Reliability and Dependability: Consistently fulfills obligations in a timely and satisfactory manner; takes responsibility for personal actions and performance

Resilience and Adaptability: Demonstrates tolerance of stressful or changing environments or situations and adapts effectively to them; is persistent, even under difficult situations; recovers from setbacks

Capacity for Improvement: Sets goals for continuous improvement and for learning new concepts and skills; engages in reflective practice for improvement; solicits and responds appropriately to feedback