



# AUGUSTA UNIVERSITY MEDICAL COLLEGE OF GEORGIA

## GUIDELINES FOR REQUESTING LETTERS OF REFERENCE

### PURPOSE

These guidelines are designed to assist the student in securing a letter of reference from faculty at the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University

### PROCEDURE

- The student should request a letter of reference from faculty whom he/she feels are best able to give a current description of his/her abilities.
- Approach the faculty member by explaining your situation for needing a reference letter and inquiring whether he or she knows you well enough to write a helpful letter. Listen carefully to the response. If the faculty member seems reluctant, you might want to consider asking someone else. **Always ask the faculty member in person.** Do not leave a request for a reference letter in the faculty member's mailbox or email account and expect him or her to willingly write the letter. If you cannot appear personally, at least phone to find out if the faculty member is willing.
- The student is required to complete the **"Release Form for Written Letters of Reference"** on which the student indicates whether or not he/she waives his/her right to view the reference. If the student checks the section "right to access reference is waived" (recommended) this indicates that the student gives up his/her right to view the reference. If the student checks the section "not waived" this indicates that the student has the right to request to see the written reference. Even though you have the right to access your educational record (Buckley Amendment), most authorities advise students to waive their rights because the recipient will then know that the information provided by the faculty member is more candid.
- The student should give the faculty member a minimum of **three weeks (15 working days)** to complete the reference. Requests submitted after this time interval may well be denied.
- The faculty member may know little about your academic record and accomplishments. To provide the most informative, well-rounded letter, most faculty would like additional information about you. Therefore, you should provide the faculty member with the following information as well as a **recent photograph of yourself**:
  - A statement of purpose describing what you are applying for and why you think you are a competitive candidate.
  - A resume/curriculum vitae including your GPA and as well as USMLE Step 1 and Step 2 scores if available. Obtain a copy of your transcript if applicable. Volunteer experience, research accomplishments, participation in medical and community extracurricular activities and other noteworthy activities, i.e. student government, school committees, etc. should be included. List any honors you have received.
  - A completed "Release Form for Written Letters of Reference" (attached).



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- Any other information or material that would assist the reference in providing the best letter for you, i.e. brochure or internet link explaining the position you are applying for.
- The delivery of the completed reference to the intended recipient must be secure.
  - It is recommended that all letters of reference be written on official school stationary (or an official reference form as supplied by the recipient).
  - The preferred method of delivery is for the faculty member to write the reference letter and send it directly to the recipient listed on the release form or upload it to a secure link provided by the recipient.
  - If the student requests to deliver the reference letter (as in the case where the student is required to submit all forms together in one packet to the recipient), the faculty member should write the reference letter on official stationary and seal it in an official school envelope with the faculty member's signature written across the seal to indicate that the reference letter is official.
- If you have a deadline approaching and the contact person has not received the letter of recommendation, a very gentle reminder is appropriate. This is not the time when you want to upset someone who is volunteering time to you. Repetitive emails and phone calls are not effective and are not positive ways to facilitate the process.

Please adhere to the process described above. Writing letters of recommendation is a huge task for faculty. Take a moment and send a hand written **thank you note** once the faculty member has submitted your reference letter. These guidelines are an attempt to make the process more manageable and thus more successful for you!



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**RELEASE FORM FOR WRITTEN LETTERS OF REFERENCE**

**REFERENCE REQUEST**

I request \_\_\_\_\_ to write a letter of reference on my behalf. In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (PL 93-380), you may be shown reference letters upon request unless your right is waived.

I waive my right to access the reference letter. \_\_\_\_\_ (your signature)

**OR**

I do not waive my right to access the reference letter. \_\_\_\_\_ (your signature)

**Purpose of reference letter:**

- Scholarship application to \_\_\_\_\_
- Research position with \_\_\_\_\_
- Employment by \_\_\_\_\_
- Volunteer activity with \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Recipient of Reference Letter:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Student (print name):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of request for reference letter:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date reference letter is needed by recipient:** \_\_\_\_\_



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## **Policy Notice Regarding Requests for Letters From The Office of Student & Multicultural Affairs:**

As you enter the profession of medicine you will have many occasions in which letters attesting to your worthiness for various opportunities are required. It is laudable and expected that you should seek scholarships, research opportunities, clinical experiences etc. There are several types of letters which you may at some point in your medical school career need to request.

Frequently, applications require a letter from an administrative official, oftentimes a Dean, verifying your status in “good standing”. Requests for “verification of your status” are very simple and may be requested from the staff of the Office of Student and Multicultural Affairs. The letter will be signed by the Associate Dean for Student and Multicultural Affairs.

Simple scholarship applications, such as the Ty Cobb scholarship, may be requested from your either your class dean or your clinical faculty advisor who also serves as your physical diagnosis preceptor for ECM. Your advisor will require advance notice to prepare the letter.

When scheduling “away” rotations for fourth year, you will need a letter verifying your status as a student and including documentation of your HIPPA training, OSHA training, your immunizations status, and malpractice insurance coverage by MCG. This letter is generated by the Curriculum Office for Visiting Student Application Service (VSAS) and other away rotation applications.

Yearlong programs, national organization scholarships, and some international programs do specifically require a letter of recommendation from the Student and Multicultural Affairs Dean. If you require a letter of this nature from the Associate Dean, please be advised that it is the policy of this office that requests are received a minimum of two weeks prior to the deadline. In addition, an updated CV and a personal statement indicating your interest in the opportunity and why you consider yourself to be a good candidate for the opportunity must accompany all requests. This information should be emailed to her assistant, Alise Vega at [avega@augusta.edu](mailto:avega@augusta.edu) in advance of any meeting with her that you might schedule to discuss the letter of recommendation.

**By my electronic signature below, I affirm that I have read and agree to abide by the policy as stated above.**

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Electronic Signature

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Date