Guidelines for Recommendation Letters

Please print this page and give it to those from whom you are requesting recommendations.

A Minimum of Three Recommendations is Required

You should request recommendations from individuals who are familiar with your academic achievement and potential. If you have been out of school for a number of years and are unable to contact former professors, letters from other individuals who can address your achievement and potential will be accepted. At least two or more of the references should be from people who have seen you do social work or related work. If you have been a paid social worker, at least one of the two references should be completed by your supervisor or director.

Recommendations can be typed on the letterhead stationery of the person sending the recommendation; however, the Graduate School recommendation form indicating your choice in waiving the right to see the reference should be completed and should accompany the letter. The form can be downloaded from the School of Social Work web site. Completed recommendations should be sent to the School of Social Work MSW Admissions Office in a sealed envelope with the signature across the seal. Applicants should suggest to the persons writing the reference letter that they use the following guidelines when writing the recommendation letters:

- How long and in what capacity have you known the applicant?
- What is your judgment of the applicant's maturity and emotional stability?
- What is your evaluation of the applicant's capabilities and suitability for graduate education?
- What is your evaluation of the applicant's capabilities and suitability for subsequent practice in the social work profession (i.e., ethical standards, appreciation for a wide range of people, commitment to social and economic equity)?
- Identify leadership ability and personal characteristics that you believe might either help or hinder the applicant's development as an effective social worker.
- Identify work performance and workload management abilities that you believe might either help or hinder the applicant's development as an effective social worker.
- Speak to the applicant's capacity to work with diverse populations.
- Other comments.

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