

Guidelines for Recommendation Letters for the UNC Chapel Hill MSW

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

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 engage in social work or related work. If you have been a paid social worker, at least one of the references should be completed by your supervisor or director.

A minimum of three recommendations is required. 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 ability to write and communicate effectively with others in social work?
- If you are BSW faculty member writing a recommendation for an Advanced Standing candidate, please discuss the applicant's undergraduate field placement experience.
- What is your evaluation of the applicant's ability to succeed in a rigorous graduate program?
- What is your evaluation of the applicant's commitment, capabilities and suitability for subsequent practice in the social work profession (eg. ethical standards, appreciation for a wide range of people, commitment to social and economic justice)?
- 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.