



Guidelines for requesting a letter of evaluation:

Ask your reference if he/she will be able to provide a good, supportive letter of evaluation, or recommendation, for you. Provide your reference with some basic information about the 'who, what, when, where, how, and why' associated with your request.

Credential File for Confidential Letters of Evaluation: Credential files are often used to hold letters, recommendations, and unofficial transcripts for candidates applying to graduate/professional schools or seeking employment in the field of education. Documents kept in your file will be sent out upon your request. This process allows the person recommending you to write one letter and have it submitted for you to send to anyone upon request.

MSU has partnered with the credentials management service *Interfolio*, Inc., in order to provide you a more efficient and effective way to manage your credential file. Apply for and open a Credential File through Interfolio.com. For assistance, contact the Career Development Center at (517) 355-9510 x140.

It is advisable to establish a credential file well in advance of submitting the application, to allow those individuals writing on your behalf, to file letters early. Some of the centralized application systems collect letters directly into the application system, but at this point most do not. Each school will ask for a different set of letters from you as the applicant. While **you must pay careful attention to the guidelines of each school that requests your letters**, we suggest you have the following letters in your folder:

- Two science faculty who know you from a class or research experience
- One non-science faculty
- One individual working in the profession you wish to pursue (example: a physician, dentist, physical therapist, pharmacist, etc)
- One or two additional individuals who know you well from a work or volunteer experience

Confidential letters of evaluation are letters that you will never be able to view. Many graduate and professional schools require this type of recommendation letter. In creating your credential file, you can choose whether your letters/documents are "Confidential" or not. If applying to any professional school, it is highly recommended that all letters are confidential.

Provide the following information in a nice neat packet for your reference:

- Information about the purpose of the letter... scholarship, honor or award, graduate/professional school, etc...
- The full name (including title) and mailing address of recipient on a pre-addressed, stamped envelope **OR** a completed “*Confidential Rights Waiver Form*” from [Interfolio.com](http://interfolio.com) which includes your six digit document identification code (*only applies to students who are applying to multiple graduate or professional programs*).
- Your requested timeline (you should provide a minimum of 3 weeks for processing).
- A copy of your STUINFO “*Courses by Term*” (or a transcript).
<http://stuinfo.msu.edu>
- A copy of your personal statement (i.e. AMCAS, AADSAS etc...) if available.
- A *current* resume and list of activities, involvement, and accomplishments if not listed on resume.
- A summary of the ways in which you and your reference have interacted. (This will cause you to reflect on your interactions with your reference and thus bring more meaning to the letter)
- Entrance examination scores (GRE, MCAT, DAT, LSAT, etc...) if available.

ALSO:

- Make sure you send a note of appreciation to your reference for taking the time to write a letter or evaluation for you.