Letter of Recommendation Instructions for Applicants

1) Who to Ask

- Select 3-6 individuals to serve as individual writers of letters of recommendation. **Two must be science faculty who taught you in class and one must be a faculty member in your major.**
- These individuals should be able to give specific, detailed examples of your academic and intellectual ability, coursework, personal attributes, motivation for helping others, interpersonal skills, interest in and exposure to the health professions, personal attributes, and experiences that make you suited to a medical or dental career.
- Examples of suitable individuals include: faculty members (not TAs), research or lab supervisors, physicians *that can speak about your work personally*, individuals that have supervised you in work, volunteer, or internship experiences, coaches (at the college level), etc.
- *Note for Osteopathic Medical School applicants: most, if not all, DO programs require or strongly recommend having a letter from a DO.*

2) What to Give Letter Writers

- Give each letter writer a copy of the **Letter Guidelines** found on the Application Process page at (you will need to print or save multiple copies). Please note that this is *not optional* – letter writers must have the guidelines in order to write a letter that will help us write your composite letter, help medical or dental schools have a strong picture of your suitability for the profession, and, importantly, make it to my office by the deadline.
- Explain that you will request the letter through **Interfolio**. You must register an account using the following link. [https://account.interfolio.com/dossier/signup?selected_institution=23343](https://account.interfolio.com/dossier/signup?selected_institution=23343) Your letter writers will receive the letter request via email from Interfolio with instructions on how to upload. Once your letters uploaded to Interfolio, I will have access to them.
- Give each letter writer a copy of your resume or CV, and a copy of your personal statement or a short (half-to-one page) narrative detailing your experiences and motivations for pursuing a medical or dental career. This can be very helpful for faculty or other who might not know much about your reasons for pursuing this career.
- Whenever possible, meet with your letter writers in person to go over the Letter Guidelines, discuss your reasons for applying to professional school, and answer and questions or concerns they may have.

- **Tip:** try to get a sense of how willing and enthusiastic someone is about writing you a letter. If you get a polite, but lukewarm, response, consider whether or not that person is really willing or able to write a strong letter of recommendation.
3) When to Ask

- Meet with letter writers to request letters in the fall semester. You should plan to request letters a minimum of two months ahead of the deadline to give writers time.
- Letters of recommendation must be sent directly by letter writers and are due by Friday, February 5, 2016.

4) Other reminders

- Thank you notes: Always send a hand-written note thanking anyone who writes you a letter of recommendation.

- Confidentiality: When you open your file with our office, you will be asked whether or not you waive your right to read any letters received by our office on your behalf. You are strongly advised to waive this right, as professional schools give much less weight to non-confidential letters. Your letter writers will be notified if you do not waive this right.

- Letters of recommendation for medical or dental school received by our office cannot be used for other purposes, such as other graduate school applications.