



## Guidelines for Letter Writers for Pre-Law Students

### To Letter Writers:

We thank you for agreeing to write a letter of recommendation for an aspiring lawyer. We realize that you are taking valuable time from your busy schedules to contribute. We would like to offer you some guidelines to help you make this task more manageable. If you have any questions please feel free to contact the Office of Pre-professional Advising at 854-8722.

### What are they looking for?

Law schools request that applicants submit only two and at most three letters of reference. These letters are carefully read and considered in the application process. We have found that the most useful letters include the following:

- 1) Explanation of relationship between applicant and referee**
- 2) Information on applicant's personal characteristics:** (i.e. integrity, reliability, determination, motivation, honesty, professionalism, leadership, character, maturity, etc.)
- 3) Information regarding applicant's social Skills:** (i.e. interpersonal skills, ability to interact with others in groups, ability to establish peer relationships, etc.)
- 4) Comparative information:** How does this student compare to others whom you have taught or with whom you have worked?
- 5) Assessment of applicant's academic potential:** (if applicable to relationship) – Is this student ready for the rigors of their intended program of study? Do they have good critical thinking, problem solving, writing and analytical skills?

### Formatting:

A letter written for a prelaw student will be sent along to the law schools which the student has applied. Please be sure that your letters are written professionally and if possible on official letterhead.

### Where should I send this letter?

All letters should be addressed generally (i.e. Dear Admissions Committee) and should be sent to the following address unless being sent directly to LSDAS:

**Columbia University**  
**Office of Preprofessional Advising**  
**403 Lerner Hall**  
**2920 Broadway, MC1201**  
**NY, NY 10027**

**NEW!** Letter writers may email recommendations to [preprofessional@columbia.edu](mailto:preprofessional@columbia.edu), provided the document (PDF preferred) appears on letterhead with a scanned handwritten signature.