

10 Steps for a Letter of Recommendation (LOR)

1. Check with your prospective colleges and universities to determine how LORs are submitted.
2. Review deadlines and the number of LORs required/accepted at each institution.
3. Fill out the Warhill HS Student Information Worksheet for helping teachers write LORs.
4. Make a list of teachers you think know you well and will be able to write a positive letter of recommendation. (At least one of these MUST be a teacher in a core academic course; English, math, social studies, science, or foreign language teacher).
5. Determine which teachers on your list have seen you:
 - a. Grow intellectually or socially; display leadership skills
 - b. Challenge yourself; set and meet goals
 - c. Express a passion for an area of study or career
 - d. Actively participate, ask questions, utilize outside resources, etc.
 - e. Earn honors, awards, or recognition for your achievements
6. Choose your top choices based on how well those teachers know you, not on the grade you received in their class. Often, a story about serious effort outweighs an average grade and shows the admission office your level of determination and commitment.
7. Ask your chosen teachers to write your LORs
 - a. Consider timing! Your teachers are busy. Do not ask them when there is a large assignment due: midterms, finals, papers, etc. are some large assignments.
 - b. Consider timing again! Writing a LOR takes a lot of effort and time. Review your deadline for the application materials and ask your teacher at LEAST 2-3 weeks in advance. More time would certainly be appreciated.
 - c. Do NOT email, call, or write a note asking your teacher to write a LOR for you.
 - d. Consider making your request after school or during planning periods so your teacher has enough time to listen and provide an answer.
 - e. When you ask your teacher, explain why you have asked him or her, for example how you felt in the class, what you believe you portrayed as a student, what you liked about his/her teaching style, or a class assignment that was memorable. Any of these ideas will show your teacher you have put a lot of thought into the request and will help them when writing your LOR.
 - f. After you have expressed your opinions, ask politely and respectfully if they feel they would be able to write you a strong LOR for your college application.
8. If the teacher says he or she can write a positive LOR, provide him or her with your completed worksheet. MAKE SURE ALL IMPORTANT INFORMATION IS FILLED OUT.
9. When you have received notice from the college/university that the LOR/application is complete, handwrite a thank you note and personally deliver it to your teacher.
10. When you get your acceptance letters be sure to stop by your teachers' rooms and tell them where you've been accepted, and share your excitement once you've made your decision.

WARHILL HIGH SCHOOL LOR STUDENT INFORMATION WORKSHEET

Name : _____ Course and Year Taken: _____

Universities/Colleges:

Intended Major: _____ Application Deadline: _____

Why you are considering this major:

What are your career goals?

Explain your strengths.

Include any story/element of the class you particularly enjoyed or any information that you think will help your teacher write a strong LOR:

If you're a musician, which instrument do you play and how long have you been playing?

If you play sports, how would your coach describe you as an athlete? Are there any sports you plan to continue or pursue in college?

List your other interests and pastimes – be thorough!

What new activities will you pursue your senior year?

Have you held any part-time jobs during the school year? If you have, what have you learned from the working experience?

Explain all leadership experiences you've had during your high school career (this includes school, church, and community activities).

Describe any volunteer work you've participated in. What did you do? What was your level of commitment? What did you learn from the experience?

How are you different from others? What sets you apart from other students?

What do you value most? Explain why this is important to you.

Describe your dream job or career.

Imagine that you are your high school counselor. Write the first few lines of your college recommendation.

What three adjectives best describe you? Explain why.
