

## Requesting Letters of Recommendation

There are several things you can do to help us produce a recommendation that accurately reflects your history and potential. The first is to keep detailed records of your experience. We suggest that you keep a three-part log for each activity you engage in, in which you record training, leadership experiences, and personal experiences in each activity.

When requesting a recommendation be sure to provide:

1. A detailed history of your involvement in the program, specifying the term, year, and instructor, for each course. For each leadership assignment include the position title (e.g. group leader or assistant leader).
2. A list of all courses you intend to take prior to employment,
3. A summary of relevant personal experiences or related employment history,
4. The job or position title, and as much information as possible about the job or position you are seeking, so we can focus on the appropriate elements of your experience with us,
5. The name and title of the person to whom we should address the letter or form, and
6. An addressed and stamped envelope.
7. A copy both sides of this form. Please remember to date and sign the document on the reverse side.

*We strongly urge you to:*

1. Waive your right of access to your letters of recommendation. Unless this is done, the reference is much less credible, to the extent that it is usually not worth the effort for you, or for us. For this reason, we usually do not agree to write letters of recommendation unless your right of access is waived.
2. Let us review your resumes! We can often help you improve this important document.

Please do all of this well in advance of the date when the reference must be submitted. It's often impossible for us to respond quickly to requests for letters of recommendation, as it takes a good deal of time to research and complete a formal letter, and nearly as much time to complete a "recommendation form". Please allow several weeks for us to respond, especially during winter and spring terms, when we often have many reference requests on our desks.

It is important to understand that we write "ruthlessly honest" letters of recommendation. Prospective employers often ask questions about both "hard" and "soft" leadership skills, punctuality, reliability, trustworthiness, maturity, judgment, common sense, performance under stressful conditions, and professionalism. Feel free to ask us if you are unsure how we feel about your performance in any of the above areas.

From a professional perspective, what we hope to see in each of you is a pattern consistent improvement in knowledge and skill, and increasing quality and maturity in decision making. From a personal perspective, we hope that your involvement in the O.P.P. leaves you with great memories, enough skills and knowledge to safely enjoy many years of outdoor activity, and a lifelong appreciation of and commitment to the natural environment.

Please note that before responding to requests for references we must have on file a signed copy of the "Consent to Release Records and Information" form, which is printed on the reverse side of this page.

**University of Oregon**  
**Student Consent to Release Records and Information**  
**Procedure for Release of Student Education Records**

The University of Oregon Student Records Policy, in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), requires the written consent of the student authorizing the disclosure of non-directory information from his or her records. The authorization to disclose information must include: what specifically is to be released from the students records; to whom the information is to be released; the purpose for the release; the date and the students signature. The Student Consent to Release Records and Information form (below) can be used to assure that faculty and staff meet the legal obligations of FERPA when responding to student requests for letters of recommendation or reference, or any other situation that may require the disclosure of non-directory information (e.g., the form may be used when students participate in activities that require disclosure of non-directory information to third parties with no legitimate educational interest, such as honors groups, social clubs or sports organizations.) You may print this form and present it to any student making a request for reference or recommendation and ask them to complete it. A copy of this form must be retained for the life of the educational record from which information was released.

Full Name ..... UO ID No. ....

1. I hereby give the University of Oregon permission to release the following records (describe the records):
  
2. The records identified in number 1 above may be released to the following person (specify - give name if known - who may receive records, e.g. graduate program admissions director, dean of a college, parent, attorney, potential employer):
  
3. The records identified in number 1 may be released for the following purpose (specify why you want the above person to have the records, e.g. for a job application, to release funds from a trust):
  
4. I understand that I have the right to request, in writing, a copy of all records disclosed under this release. I also understand that the charge of \$.25 per sheet may be assessed for copies of documents.

This consent to release records and information is made freely and voluntarily and shall remain in effect until revoked by me in writing, or until \_\_\_\_\_.

A copy or facsimile of this release shall be as valid and effective as the original.

.....  
Signature Date

This document will be filed in the offices of the Director of the PE & REC Outdoor Pursuits Program.