

# DIVISION OF GRADUATE STUDIES

## LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION



### Need advising?

Graduate Studies advisors are here to help you explore our graduate programs, career options, and support your application to SF State.

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## LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION GUIDELINES

**Q: Why are they important?**

**A: GREAT letters can...**

- demonstrate your commitment to your field of study/profession.
- clarify/minimize deficiencies in your application.
- improve the strength of your application.
- may be the deciding factor in your acceptance.

**Q: Who should I ask?**

**A: Preferred recommenders are faculty or supervisors that**

- know you well, view you positively, and have seen you overcome challenges or exceed expectations.
- you have a personal connection and built a rapport with.
- are connected to the field of study/profession you are pursuing.

**Q: How should I ask for a letter of recommendation?**

**A: Best practices for requesting your letter include...**

- Be professional, courteous, and organized.
- Make sure you **ask** for a letter. Don't tell them to write you a letter. They are not obligated to help you. They are doing you a favor.
- Ask for your letter **2 months** before the letter is due.
- Make your request as personal as possible, but pick an appropriate time. Office hours are great. Meet them in person, remind them of who you are, the positive work you've done, and how you were inspired to pursue graduate education.