**SL6. Requesting a Letter of Recommendation**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Student ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Level: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Sections 1-5 in this SDLA must be completed before meeting with a tutor and receiving a stamp. Write/type all your answers on this handout.**

**After completing this SDLA, you will be able to:**

* Define *letter of recommendation*.
* Select two ESL professors for letters of recommendation.
* Make requests using polite phrases at varying level of directness
* Follow a plan of action to request a letter of recommendation

**Sections 1-5 (approximately 45 minutes):** Read the information. Follow each step below to complete this SDLA. Be prepared to explain your answers when you meet with a tutor.

**Section 1: Letter of Recommendation**

**What is a letter of recommendation?**

A letter of recommendation is an expert testimony or opinion regarding the ability of a person to perform a task. The tasks may include performing a job, succeeding in school, or benefiting from a scholarship. A letter of recommendation helps selection committees decide if the person is right for the job, school, scholarship, experience, etc.

**Section 2: Selecting Recommenders**

A recommender is a person who knows the applicant professionally, academically, and/or personally. For the ESL Scholarship, however, students must select at least two ESL professors to recommend them.

**Write the names of ESL professors you have had in skill and/or level classes. You may not need to use all the spaces provided:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Now, complete the chart below. If possible, choose 3 ESL professors you’ve had and answer the questions. An example is provided.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ESL Professor’s Name** | **How long have you known him/her?** | **What class did you take from this professor?** | **What positive feedback could the professor say about you (list at least 2 things)?** |
| *Tim Duncan* | *4 months* | *Writing C and Level 5* | * *Motivated student* * *Worked well with classmates* |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

**\*Now circle the two ESL professors that you want to ask to recommend you.**

**Section 3: Making Requests**

Now that you’ve selected your ESL professors, you need to ask them to write a recommendation letter for you. How do you ask them? First, you should always use polite language. Then you need to decide how direct you want to be. Here is a diagram of polite phrases you can use to request a letter of recommendation. Even though all the phrases are polite, they show different levels of directness. It is up to you how direct you want to be.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| More Indirect      More Direct | * I would be grateful if you could write …/ I would appreciate if you could write … * Would you be able to write …? * Could you write …, please? * Is it/would it be possible to write…? * Would you mind writing….? * I was wondering if you could write… * Could you write…? / Would you write …? * Please write… |

**Section 4: Planning the Request**

Now that you are familiar with polite phrases, you are ready to plan your request. Follow these **3** steps to ask for a letter of recommendation.

**Step 1:** Decide how you will ask your ESL professor for a letter of recommendation. **Choose only one:**

* In person (verbal request)
* Via email (written request)

**Practice:** When you are requesting a letter of recommendation, you may choose to ask an ESL professor **in person** or **via email**. Use some of the phrases you learned in section 3 to complete the requests for letters of recommendation below. One is an example of an in person request, and the other is an example of an email request. You may choose the phrase you like the best for each request.

**In Person (verbal request):**

**Student:** Hi Mr. Duncan. How are you?

**Mr. Duncan:** Hi Steve. I’m good, thanks. What brings you to my class today?

**Student:** I am applying for the ESL Scholarship, and I need a letter of recommendation. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ one for me.

**Mr. Duncan:** Sure! I’d be glad to help you.

**Via Email (written request):**

To: [tduncan@mtsac.edu](mailto:tduncan@mtsac.edu)

From: [snguyen@yahoo.com](mailto:snguyen@yahoo.com)

Subject: Request Letter of Recommendation

Dear Mr. Duncan,

This is Steve, your student from Writing C and Level 5 this semester. I want to apply for the ESL Scholarship, and I need an ESL professor to write me a letter of recommendation. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_one for me? I appreciate your time and consideration.

Best Regards,

Steve Nguyen

**Step 2:** Have all documents ready to give to the professor in person or attach to a reply email.

* Recommendation Form for ESL Teacher – Please fill in your name and Mt. SAC ID number
* Copy of ESL Scholarship essay
* Résumé (optional)

**Step 3:** Don’t wait until the last minute!

* Give the professor at least 2 weeks to write the recommendation. If asking in person, make sure to see the professor when he or she is not busy.
* Let the professor know the due date of the recommendation.
* Send the professor a reminder (in person or via email) 2 days before the due date.

**Section 5: Student Self-Assessment**

C:\Documents and Settings\wcuser1553\Local Settings\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\Z02HHZPN\MC900072629[1].gif*Complete this self-assessment before meeting with a tutor.* **Now that you’ve completed sections 1 to 4, check the things you can do:**

* I can define *letter of recommendation*.
* I selected two ESL professors for letters of recommendation.
* I can make requests using polite phrases at varying level of directness.
* I can follow a plan of action to request a letter of recommendation.

**DON’T FORGET! Write your name on the clipboard to work with a tutor. The tutor will call your name when he/she is ready.**

**Section 6: Practice with a tutor!**

After completing the self-assessment, meet with a tutor and give this completed SDLA to the tutor. The tutor will review this completed SDLA with you. You may also ask the tutor any questions that you might have.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Area of Focus** | **1 Point** | **3 Points** | **5 Points** |
| **Content** | Not enough information is provided in student’s discussion of letters of recommendation. | Sufficient information is provided in student’s discussion of letters of recommendation. | All necessary information is provided in student’s discussion of letters of recommendation. |
| **Skill: Speaking** | Student’s speech is unclear and requires frequent listener effort. | Student’s speech is generally clear but requires occasional listener effort. | Student’s speech is clear and smooth and requires minimal listener effort. |
| **Oral Fluency** | Speaks in incomplete sentences that do not flow. | Speaks in complete sentences some of the time with frequent pauses. | Speaks in complete sentences with occasional pauses most of the time. |
|  |  |  | **Total points: /15** |

**\*Students must receive at least 10 points to move on.**

**Tutor Recommendations:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * **Congratulations! Move on**   *Student has successfully completed this SDLA and is ready to continue to the next.* | * **Repeat**   *Student hasn’t yet mastered this SDLA. It is recommended that the student complete it again.* |

**Tutor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**