

Letters of Recommendation FAQs

Here are some common questions about letters of recommendation that we get from students during the college application cycle. This same information is communicated to students and parents in our college information nights, college advising meetings, and during collaboration periods. We thought it may be useful to have this information in a cohesive and easily accessible document for your reference.

How do I get a letter of recommendation from my counselor?

Letters of recommendation can be an extremely important part of any private university application.

1. Counselors write letters of recommendation for each student who indicates that they will be applying through the Common Application or some other application portal that requests a letter of recommendation.
2. **Students need to inform counselors of their intent to apply to a university in a timely manner (please refer to the application request deadline grid below).** This is especially important as many institutions require a counselor letter to complete the application file.
3. Seniors must turn in their **College Document Request Form** with the required documents submitted in Naviance Student (the Student Brag Sheet, Parent Brag Sheet, Resume) **before** a counselor can begin working on their college application documents.
4. **IMPORTANT:** Once you have personally asked your counselor/teacher for a recommendation, you **MUST add your counselor/teacher to your list of recommenders in the Common App or application portal.** Furthermore, you **MUST** add your counselor/teacher to the Common App **PRIOR** to the deadlines stated below in order to have your materials transmitted to your colleges of choice in time.

If application is due in:	Request recommendation by:
November or December (early action/decision)	September 15
All Application Deadlines	October 13

Please note that teachers must be afforded the same deadlines and they may ask for additional information from you; this is separate from the counselor process.

How many letters of recommendation do I need?

Every college and university will specify the number of required letters (please check each school's website or Common App) but the general practice is one letter from your counselor and one teacher letter. Jesuit students are asked to limit your letter requests to only one teacher unless you have a school that requires two (these are rare).

Which teacher should I ask?

Teacher letters of recommendation are accepted from Junior or Senior level teachers in either English, Math, Science, Social Science, or World Language. Students should ask a teacher who knows you well; can speak to your academic growth (not just grades); one who taught you multiple years, etc..

How do I add teachers and counselors to my application for their letters of recommendation?

- In order to add a counselor and teacher to your list of recommenders once you have completed the "Current or Most Recent Secondary/High School" field in the "Education" section of the Common Application and add at least one college or university to your list.
- Select one of the universities you are applying to under the "My Colleges" tab
- Click on "Recommenders and FERPA"
 - Complete the FERPA Waiver
 - Click on "Invite and Manage Recommenders"
 - Add both your teacher and counselor recommenders (**make sure that you use the firstname.lastname@jesuithighschool.org email address**)
 - An email will be sent to all of your recommenders

We are strongly urging you to complete this task in the Common Application immediately after personally asking your teachers for a letter, so that there is no delay in getting your recommendations completed and submitted by your earliest deadline.

What happens if I don't get all of my letter of recommendation requests in on time, or if I don't submit all of my materials to my counselor?

Counselors strive to write the best possible letters for their students in every situation. If documents are not submitted in a timely manner or turned in at all, that will severely impact the counselor's ability to write a standout letter of recommendation. Additionally, this may impede the recommender's ability to submit your application materials (including the letter of recommendation) on time. However, as long as counselors have at least some form of written communication that you have a pending

application, they will submit the official documents regardless of whether or not forms are actually turned in.

Should I wait until the counselor/teacher submits their materials before I send my application?

No! Your application should be submitted by your deadline regardless of teacher or counselor submissions; your completed application is the priority.

How do I request transcripts?

Transcript requests are not needed if you are applying to a CSU, UC or through Common App. All other schools, transcripts are requested through Naviance Student as we send them electronically. Transcripts can be requested through Naviance Student by going to the “**Colleges**” tab, selecting “**Colleges I’m Applying to**” and requesting transcripts on the right hand side of the screen. Naviance will instruct you to select which transcript you’ll need, during the fall semester you’ll always select “**Initial Transcript**”.