Applicants seeking institutional submission of collected letters of evaluation (also known as a Health Professions Committee Packet) will:

1. Provide Pre-Professional Health Careers (PPHC) with a complete evaluator list prior to receipt of letters.
2. Indicate which letters are to be submitted to which application service(s) and/or institution(s).
3. Contact PPHC no earlier than 7 business days after the requested letter return date when verifying receipt of letters.
4. Complete and return to PPHC the Applicant Information Sheet and Profile Questionnaire before requesting final submission.
5. Provide PPHC with all application service pin or identification numbers (TMDSAS, AMCAS, AADSAS, etc.) before requesting final submission.
6. Provide PPHC with any additional documents, forms, and/or information unique to an application service and/or institution (e.g., AMCAS Letter Request Form) before requesting final submission.
7. Request final submission.

PLEASE NOTE: PPHC will not submit letters without a documentable request from the applicant. Only when all letters have been received may applicants request final submission. Emailed requests for final submission are preferred.

COLLECTION OF LETTERS OF EVALUATION
the Health Professions Committee Packet

When PPHC approves collection of letters of evaluation for an applicant, a summary cover letter signed by PPHC Assistant Director Ryan Scheckel will be created, copied, and submitted with the applicant’s letters of evaluation to the service(s) and/or institution(s) requested. The packet’s cover letter supports evaluator letters and reinforces an applicant’s status as a candidate for admission to the specified health professions program(s).

Reproductions of the summary form and letters of evaluation are submitted as a packet to the application service(s) and/or institution(s) specified by the applicant. Original copies of all documents remain in the possession of PPHC and are retained for approximately 2 years, as storage space permits.

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

I, ____________________________________________, have read, discussed with a PPHC representative, understand, and agree to the above set of expectations.

_________________________________________________________  _____________________________
applicant signature                                      date
## Applicant Information Sheet

**Applying to:**
- Medical
- Dental
- Optometry

| **Full Name:** | ____________________________________________________________ |
| **R#:** | ____________________________________________________________ |
| **Contact #:** | ____________________________________________________________ |
| **Email:** | ____________________________________________________________ |
| **Major:** | ____________________________________________________________ |
| **Cumulative GPA:** | ____________________________________________________________ |
| **Year of Matriculation:** | ____________________________________________________________ |

Is this your first time applying to a health professions program?  **YES**  **NO**

If No, when did you last apply and to which program(s)?

| ____________________________________________________________ |
| ____________________________________________________________ |
| ____________________________________________________________ |
| ____________________________________________________________ |
| ____________________________________________________________ |

**TMDSAS ID:**  __________________________  **AMCAS ID:**  __________________________

**AACOMAS ID:**  __________________________  **AADSAS ID:**  __________________________

**Other:**  __________________________

**Evaluators:**

1. __________________________
2. __________________________
3. __________________________
4. __________________________
5. __________________________

If you have any specific or special requests or instructions about letters, programs, evaluators, etc., please include on the back of this page or via email to your PPHC advisor.
Name: _______________________________                  Date: _______________

**PLEASE NOTE:** Information provided here will be kept strictly confidential and will only be used to assist with the preparation of a Health Professions Committee Packet.

1. Briefly (750 characters maximum) list any honors, scholarships or academic awards you have received while attending college.

2. Briefly (750 characters maximum) list organizations in which you have held membership. Designate ones in which you have served in a leadership capacity.

3. Do you have any research experience? If so, describe in brief. If not, briefly describe your plans to acquire research experience. (750 characters maximum)
4. List your volunteer, shadowing or clinical experience in addition to the names of the clinicians whom you observed/worked with to gain this experience. (750 characters maximum)

5. List your primary reasons for wanting a career in this health care. (750 characters maximum)

6. List any service projects in non-health care areas in which you participated during your high schools and your college years. (750 characters maximum)

7. Are you currently employed? If so, where, and approximately how many hours per week do you work? (750 characters maximum)
8. What are your hobbies? (750 characters maximum)

9. List anything else you feel is important for your advisor to know about you with regard to your application to medical or dental school. (750 characters maximum)
Letters of Evaluation Dos and Don’ts:

1. **DO choose a professor, healthcare professional, and/or employer who is well-acquainted with you both as a student, volunteer, or employee, and as a person.** Choosing a professor with whom you have only taken one class is not sufficient.

2. **DO inform your letter writers if you will be applying to multiple institutions.** Letter writers may be unaware of the process of applying to more than one health professions program. They may find it helpful to know in advance to address their letters generally (as opposed to writing to a specific institution only) or to generate unique drafts for each health professions program.

3. **DON’T wait until the last minute to ask for a letter.**
   Potential letter writers are busy with life, teaching, service, work, and research. Give them enough time that they can take the care required to write a letter that will get you accepted. We recommend at least a month.

4. **DON’T wait to provide supporting documents.**
   Have your resume, committee packet forms, and any other support documentation with you when you request your letter, or follow up within a day or two.

5. **DON’T misinterpret a faculty member or physician's response to your request.**
   When you've asked someone to write you a letter of evaluation, pay close attention their response. Often they provide subtle cues that indicate how supportive of a letter they will write. Not all letters of recommendation are helpful. In fact, a lukewarm letter and even somewhat neutral letters will do more harm than good.

6. **DON’T forget to write a thank you note or card afterward.**
   Your writer took the time to write for you, at minimum an hour of their life. The professional thing to do is to thank them for their support.
Who Should Write Your Letters of Evaluation?

Admissions committees expect to see letters from the following people:

1) A science professor, upper-level preferred
2) A supervisor from clinical or research experience
3) A professor from your undergraduate major
4) A professional with whom you have shadowed
5) Your supervisor, if you are currently employed

Schools differ in the number of letters they require and accept, with most requiring two or three, some accepting no more than five.

A substantive letter of evaluation has three important features:

- The author knows the required intellectual ability and professional effectiveness necessary to succeed in health professions program specified.
- The author knows the applicant well enough to evaluate his or her relevant qualifications.
- The writer provides not only an overall assessment of the applicant, but enough supporting detail to validate his or her conclusions.

Avoid sending letters from teaching assistants, friends, school alumni, relatives, clergy, or politicians, UNLESS they personally supervised your professional work and can comment on the specific attributes being evaluated in the admissions process.

Schools are looking for an honest appraisal of your character from someone with extensive experience in the field. In academia, this includes the tenured faculty.

Adapted from: http://www.ivyleagueadmission.com/medreftips.html
Tips for Writing a Strong Personal Statement

Adapted from: http://www.unm.edu/~pre/law/archuleta.htm

Through a personal statement, you introduce yourself to the university or medical school; it reflects your personality and intellect.

1. Understand and Explain Yourself
One of the main problems when writing is that applicants fail to take a thorough and analytical look at themselves and their objectives. Admission committee members are looking for interesting, insightful, revealing, and non-generic essays that suggest you have successfully gone through a process of careful reflection and self-examination.

2. Set Yourself Apart
Committees are looking for something PERSONAL and ANALYTICAL. This means sharing information you rarely share with others and assessing your life more critically than usual. This approach is key to a successful personal statement.

Exercise: In order to begin writing your personal statement – your story—you’ll need to answer some basic questions to prepare yourself.

Questions:

- What is special, unique, distinctive, or impressive about you or your life story? What details of your life (personal or family problems/ history, any genuinely notable accomplishments, people or events that have shaped you or influenced your goals) might help the committee better understand you or help set you apart from other applicants?

- When did you originally become interested in this field and what have you since learned about it—and about yourself—that has further stimulated your interest and reinforced your conviction that you are well suited to this field? This does not mean that you should write, “Why I want to be a....” Instead, tell what insights you have gained from certain experiences that reinforce your decision to obtain a medical degree.

- How have you learned about this field—through classes, readings, seminars, work or other experiences, internships, or conversations with people already in the field.

- If work experiences have consumed significant periods of time during your college years, what have you learned, and how has the work contributed to your personal growth?

- What are your career goals?

- Are there any gaps or discrepancies in your academic record that you should explain (great grades and mediocre exam scores, for example, or a distinct improvement in you GPA if it was only average in the beginning)?

- Have you had to overcome any unusual obstacles or hardships (e.g., economic, familial, physical) in your life?

- What personal characteristic (integrity, compassion, persistence, for example) do you possess that would enhance your prospects for success in the field or profession? Is there a way to demonstrate or document that you have these characteristics?

- What skills (leadership, communicative, analytical, for example) do you possess?

- What are the most compelling reasons you can give for the admissions committee to be interested in you?
Tell a Story
Be truthful and stick to the facts; yet, think of your personal statement in the terms of writing a story. You want to write something that is fresh, lively, and different, to put yourself ahead of the other applicants. A personal statement MUST be MEMORABLE. One of the worst things you can do with your personal statement is to bore the admissions committee, yet that is exactly what most applicants do. Review your life very carefully (get help from family or friends if necessary) for facets or experiences that reveal an unusual dimension related to your professional goals.

Find an Angle
If you are like most people, your life story might well lack significant drama, so figuring out a way to make it interesting becomes the big challenge. Finding an angle is vital. Brainstorm for ideas that emphasize your exceptional qualities, goals, past performances.

Concentrate on Your Opening Paragraph
Keep in mind when composing your statement that the lead or OPENING PARAGRAPH IS generally the MOST IMPORTANT. Here you either GRAB the reader’s attention or lose it.

Tell Who You Are
The committee needs to get a sense of who you are, what makes you tick, and how you are different from other applicants. They should be interested in you, eager to hear more, impressed that what you are saying to them is not what they have read a thousand times before.

Remember, what is most important about your personal statement is what you say and how you say it! Be selective about what you tell the admissions committee.

Other Things to Consider
- Determine what you would tell an admission committee member if you had five minutes to answer the question “What is most important for us to know about you?” This exercise will force you to do the type of thinking that must precede the preparation of an effective personal statement.
- Do not make the mistake of trying to guess what the admissions committee is looking for, and do not just write what you think the committee wants to hear. Such ploys are highly obvious to admissions people and can be detrimental to your cause.
- Be selective. Don’t introduce inappropriate material or get into so much detail that your judgment can be called into question.
- Try to maintain a positive and upbeat tone. Overall, you want to project confidence and enthusiasm.
- Be specific when appropriate and use details.
- Adhere to stated word limits. Do not give them reason to toss your application packet.
- Be meticulous (type and proof read your essay carefully and have others read it too).
- If a school wants to know why you are applying to it rather than another school, do a bit of research if necessary to find out what sets your choice apart from other universities or programs. If the school setting would provide an important geographical or cultural change for you, this might be a factor to mention.
- Are you avoiding obvious clichés? For example, a medical school applicant who writes that he is good at science and wants to help other people is not exactly expressing an original thought.