# **Letter Request Guidelines**

# **Catherine L. Drennan**

**Specific Recommendation Guidelines**

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# **Summer Research Program Recommendations**

**NOTE:** Recommendation limit is **five** programs.

**Specific Guidelines:**

1. Make sure I know you well enough to write a letter before asking.
2. If you want me to write you a letter for programs with deadlines in mid-January/early February, you will need to ask me by December 15th. If I say yes, then I will need **electronic** copies of ALL of your information by January 1st. I write letters during the semester break and if I don’t have all the information, I can’t write a letter and you will have to find someone else.
3. Once I have agreed to write a letter, please email me (no paper versions please) by January 1st, the listed items below (preferably in a single email unless short deadlines would make that less useful):
	1. A brief (paragraph-long) description of the kinds of programs you are applying for and what you hope to gain from your summer experience.
	2. A master table of all the programs to which you are applying. Make sure to list the application **chronologically** with the earliest due date listed first.

**Program Master Table Example:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Due Date** | **School** | **Program or Department\*** |
| 12/15 | Harvard | Program in Chemical Biology |
| 1/3 | Berkeley | School of Chemistry |
| 1/15 | Michigan | Department of Chemistry |

\*Indicate if it is a department or program if possible.

# **Graduate School Recommendations**

**Specific Guidelines:**

1. Make sure I know you well enough to write a letter before asking.
2. If you want me to write you a letter, you will need to ask me by November 1st. If I say yes, then I will need **electronic** copies of ALL of your information by November 15th. If I don’t have all the information, I can’t write a letter and you will have to find someone else.
3. Once I have agreed to write a letter, please email me (no paper versions please) before November 15th, the listed items below (preferably in a single email unless short deadlines would make that less useful):
	1. Your C.V.
	2. A transcript with your GPA
	3. Your personal statement (a draft is okay)
	4. A master table of all the schools to which you are applying in the format below. Make sure to list the applications **chronologically** with the earliest due date listed first.

**Program Master Table Example:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Due Date** | **School** | **Program or Department\*** |
| 12/15 | Harvard | Program in Chemical Biology |
| 1/3 | Berkeley | School of Chemistry |
| 1/15 | Michigan | Department of Chemistry |

\*Indicate if it is a department or program if possible.

* 1. All forms. Please fill out your information and type in my contact information.

**Name:** Catherine L. Drennan

**Position:** HHMI Investigator and Professor; MIT Professor of Chemistry and Biology

**Department:** Chemistry and Biology

**Institution:** MIT and HHMI

**Mailing Address:**

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**Phone:** 617 253 5622

**Fax:** 617 258 7847

**Email:** cdrennan [at] mit.edu

# **Medical School Recommendations**

**Specific Guidelines:**

1. Make sure I know you well enough to write a letter before asking.
2. If you want me to write you a letter, you will need to ask me by March 15th. If I say yes, then I will need **electronic** copies of ALL of your information by April 15th. I write letters in April and if I don’t have all the information, I can’t write a letter and you will have to find someone else.
3. Once I have agreed to write a letter, please email me (no paper versions please) before April 15th, the listed items below (preferably in a single email unless short deadlines would make that less useful):
	1. Your C.V.
	2. A transcript with your GPA
	3. Your personal statement (a draft is okay)
4. If you’re using MIT’s Prehealth Credential Service for recommendation letters, there’s no need for a master table of schools. If you’re **not** using that service, (e.g. you’re not an MIT student), please do include a master table.

**Program Master Table Example:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Due Date** | **School** | **Program or Department\*** |
| 12/15 | Harvard | Program in Chemical Biology |
| 1/3 | Berkeley | School of Chemistry |
| 1/15 | Michigan | Department of Chemistry |

\*Indicate if it is a department or program if possible.

# **Faculty Position Recommendations**

**Specific Guidelines:**

1. Make sure I know you well enough to write a letter before asking.
2. If you want me to write you a letter, you will need to ask me by August 15th. If I say yes, then I will need **electronic** copies of ALL of your information by September 15th. If I don’t have all the information, I can’t write a letter and you will have to find someone else.
3. Once I have agreed to write a letter, please email me (no paper versions please) by September 15th, the listed items below (preferably in a single email unless short deadlines would make that less useful). If you are applying to multiple places, please give me **all** requests at once if possible.
	1. Your C.V.
	2. A sample cover letter
	3. Your research proposal (a draft is okay)
	4. Short summaries of past research
	5. A master table of all the schools to which you are applying in the format below. Make sure to list the applications **chronologically** with the earliest due date listed first.

**Master Table Example:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Due Date** | **School** | **Department** | **How letter should be sent** | ***Note\**** |
|  |  |  | Link will be emailed, PDF sent to… |  |

\*Indicate special things about the school.

*Example:* only undergraduates or only master students, teaching no research, research no teaching, etc.

# **Post Doc Recommendations**

**Specific Guidelines:**

1. Make sure I know you well enough to write a letter before asking.
2. If you do want me to write you a letter, you will need to ask me **ONE MONTH IN ADVANCE.**
3. Once I have agreed to write a letter, please email me (no paper versions please) the listed items below (preferably in a single email unless short deadlines would make that less useful). If you are applying to multiple labs or multiple fellowships that are due around the same time, please give me **all** requests at once if possible.
	1. Your C.V.
	2. A sample cover letter for job applications or draft of postdoc fellowship proposal
	3. Short summaries of past research
	4. A master table of fellowships or labs to which you are applying. For fellowships, make sure to list the applications **chronologically** with the earliest due date listed first.

**Master Table Example:**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Due Date** | **Fellowship or Lab** | **Address of PI or link to fellowship info** | **How letter should be sent** | ***Note\**** |
|  |  |  | Link will be emailed, PDF sent to… |  |

\*Indicate if fellowship requires a special form, page limit, or has questions to answer.

# **One-off Letter Recommendations**

**For a specific fellowship, collaboration, acknowledgement, etc.**

Please email all the relevant information **at least two weeks before the due date.**

Depending on the request, relevant information could include:

* Your C.V.
* The description of the fellowship
* Your research summary
* Other materials you feel are relevant