

## Recommendation Letter Directions

The application process can be stressful, but I am happy to help you with your recommendations. First, make sure to chat with me beforehand. If we spoke already before summer, stop by in September to remind me that I'm writing you a letter. I generally write letters in the order that students submit the following materials to me. Try to get everything to me **at least one month before your first due date**. I have to find time to write letters at night and on the weekends and if you have a due date for a college on a particular day, it is likely that many other students do as well. If we have already spoken in the spring or fall, feel free to use my information from the BHS website (phone number, email address, school address) to enter into the Common Application or another school/program- specific reference site.

The following items can be given to me in a folder. I have plenty in my classroom if you do not have one of your own.

1. First, print and attach a "cover sheet" (see example on next page) to the front of a simple, paper folder (manila file folder is fine; I have plenty). This will help so that I know which schools you're applying to and when their deadlines are. This is especially helpful if some of your schools do not use the Common Application.
2. Second, do your best to answer as many of the questions below to help jog my memory (as many as you can; don't stress out over having perfect responses for all of them). This will help me write a more personalized letter. If there are any specific examples to mention, this would be a good time to let me know. Remember how we like specific evidence in your writing! I like to use specific, unique details to describe you to the college/university.
  - a. What topic in American Studies did you most enjoy? Explain.
  - b. What do you remember most about your American Studies experience? Any particular projects, assignments, or novels that got your attention? Why?
  - c. What did you achieve in this class that you are particularly proud of? Explain using specific evidence.
  - d. How would you evaluate your involvement in and contribution to the classroom community? What did you see were your strengths and weaknesses?
  - e. Why do you want to go to college? (I know this may be a loaded question that you have to answer for the college you may be applying to. I would like to hear your honest thoughts. This will help me craft a letter that is truly unique on your behalf.)
  - f. What were some of the extracurricular activities you were involved in during your junior year?
  - g. Anything else you'd like to mention?
3. Third, include a resume or parent brag sheet (counselors often have a parent submit one) or both if you have them. The more info that I receive about you, the better.

**Feel free to send me a reminder one week before the first deadline.**

**Finally, once you know, tell me where you're going!**

## **Sample Rec Folder Cover Sheet**

**(Feel free to type or handwrite in order of deadline dates)**

Student Name

- |                                |                           |                                 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. University of Denver        | November 1 (Early Action) | Common App                      |
| 2. UW Honors<br>receive email) | December 1                | Online form (you will           |
| 3. MIT                         | January 1                 | (forms and directions enclosed) |
| 4. William & Mary              | January 1                 | Common App                      |