



Cornell University

**Health Careers Evaluation Committee**  
210 Barnes Hall  
Ithaca, NY 14853-1601  
t. 607.255.0546  
hcec@cornell.edu  
scl.cornell.edu/get-involved/career-services

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:  
(name of recommender)

Schools of human medicine are interested in candidates who demonstrate professionalism, humanitarian personal traits, and academic excellence. Here are some guidelines for a useful letter of recommendation.

Extent of your relationship with the applicant:

- ✓ Length of time known
- ✓ Depth of knowledge about the applicant

Non-academic attributes:

- ✓ Integrity: ethics, honesty, social responsibility
- ✓ Service orientation: altruism, sensitivity, responsiveness to needs of others
- ✓ Professionalism: reliability, dependability, cultural competence
- ✓ Social and interpersonal skills: teamwork, independence, leadership
- ✓ Personal qualities: compassion, resilience, adaptability, self-reliance, sense of humor, stamina
- ✓ Fit with and understanding of a career in human medicine

Academic competencies:

- ✓ Desire to learn: intellectual curiosity
- ✓ Distinctive contributions to an academic enterprise
- ✓ Attitude toward course activities in and outside of class
- ✓ Writing skills
- ✓ Group or teamwork skills
- ✓ Research competencies
- ✓ Overall academic excellence and ability, particularly if at variance with academic performance

Your conclusion/overall recommendation:

Letters of recommendation are a critical component of the admissions process for applicants to professional schools of human medicine. The Health Careers Evaluation Committee often quotes directly from your letter when preparing the narrative evaluation of each applicant. We use your comments to illustrate the impressions we otherwise draw from applicants' written materials and interview (if conducted).

**Please submit your letter on official letterhead, dated, and signed.** Your letter will be attached to the HCEC letter of evaluation and sent through secure electronic transmission to the medical or dental school application service(s).

Thank you for writing on behalf of this applicant.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Graeme Bailey'.

Graeme Bailey, Professor  
Chair, Health Careers Evaluation Committee

## HCEC Letters of Recommendation (LORs)

### Submission Directions and FERPA Intent Form

LORs must be on **letterhead, dated,** and **signed** by the writer, as required by medical school admissions offices.

**Letter Writers - How to submit the LOR and this form:** The HCEC prefers to receive the LOR electronically as a .PDF or Word document via one of the secure delivery methods listed below. If the HCEC registrant has completed the FERPA Intent Form below, please include a copy of it along with your LOR.

- *Cornell faculty or staff members:* Please log in to Cornell Secure File Transfer (sft.cornell.edu) using your Cornell NetID and password. Upload the letter to “hcec\_letters”.
- *Those unaffiliated with Cornell, or for Weill Cornell staff without Cornell NetIDs:* The HCEC strongly encourages letter writers without Cornell NetIDs to upload documents using the HCEC’s Secure Guest Portal. **So that we may authenticate the origin of your letter, please email hcec\_letters@cornell.edu from your institutional email address,** and include the full name of the HCEC registrant. Please do not attach the letter in your email. **You will receive a link via email to upload your letter through the Secure Guest Portal, usually within one business day.** For letters originating from private email addresses such as gmail.com. please email the HCEC at [hcec@cornell.edu](mailto:hcec@cornell.edu) for special prior approval.
- A hard copy of a letter to the HCEC may be sent via postal service or campus mail to this address:  
HCEC Records Coordinator, 210 Barnes Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853

---

### FERPA Intent Form

(to be completed by the HCEC Registrant, not the letter writer)

**Letter writer contact information:**

Writer Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Due date:** Registrant and writer agree that this letter will be submitted by (enter date): \_\_\_\_\_

Note: For **undergraduates** applying through HCEC, the letter due date is **March 8, 2021.**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) provides individuals the right to review their education records, which include letters of recommendation. Each registrant has the option to waive his/her FERPA right to view a letter of recommendation.

The HCEC will assume that the registrant has **retained** FERPA rights to view this letter **unless:** 1) the **letter writer’s name** is included above, 2) the **HCEC registrant's name** is printed below, 3) this form is **signed** by the HCEC registrant with the “waive” box **checked**, and 4) this form is **returned** to the HCEC (email, postal mail, or hand-delivered to 210 Barnes Hall).

Registrant name, printed: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby  **waive** my right, under FERPA, to access this letter. (Signature required)

Registrant signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I  **do not waive** my right, under FERPA, to access this letter. (No signature required)

---