

## **Instructions for Getting a Letter of Recommendation from**

**Dr. Diana T. Sanchez**

**\*based on Dr. Lee Jussim's instructions\***

**GENERAL PRINCIPLE: I AM HAPPY TO WRITE YOU A LETTER IF YOU HAVE WORKED IN MY LABORATORY OR BEEN AN HONORS THESIS STUDENT. IT IS YOUR JOB TO MAKE THAT AS EASY FOR ME AS POSSIBLE. YOU CAN DO THAT BY:**

- 1. Carefully following the instructions below.**
- 2. Getting me EVERYTHING listed below.**

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**I MUST HAVE YOUR REQUEST FOR A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION NO LATER THAN ONE MONTH PRIOR TO THE DATE THAT THE FIRST LETTER MUST BE SENT. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

**Things to get me and/or remember when I write you a letter of recommendation:**

**BE sure to state EXACTLY what type of program you are applying to. DO NOT ASSUME that I know what your interests and plans are. Clinical psychology? Social psychology? School psychology? Counseling psychology? Law school? Medical school? Master's or PhD? Please please please say so explicitly in a place where I can't miss it.**

- 1. College Transcript (unofficial ok)**  
**-- Remind me, did you take any courses with me? If so, which ones? What year?**
- 2. GRE scores (LSATs, MCATs, or whatever is relevant)**
- 3. Resume or Curriculum Vitae (if you do not have one, make one). Your telephone and address should appear on your resume. If they do not, please be sure to include them somewhere.**
- 4. Copy of your personal statement included with your application**
- 5. Summary of the work you did with me.**
  - Remind me -- which study(ies?) did you work on, what were they about? What year?**
  - Especially, describe what work you did on that/those studies.**
  - What was your position(s)?**

- Research in psych/indep. study for course credit?
- Work study
- Unpaid volunteer
- Aresty Scholar
- Honors Student
- Etc.

**6. List of anything and everything that you did that I might talk about in a letter (and you might be surprised what I can use to make you look good – use common sense here so keep it academic, professional)**

**7. List all schools that will be receiving recs. List them in DUE DATE order. (e.g., 12/15 first, 1/1 next, etc.). Explicitly state the due date.**

**Include clear instructions**

- Where does it get sent? (e.g., the school, or you?)
- Any weird requirements for the rec?

**8. SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPES FOR EVERY RECC YOU WANT ME TO WRITE**

**-- If I am to send them back to you, be sure you label the envelopes so that YOU can tell which ones go to which schools. NOTE: Failure to include these risks delaying my ability to send in your letters on time.**

**9. Many schools or fellowship agencies have official letter of recommendation forms. If your's does, please complete as much as possible. For example, you can enter your name, my name, your and my address, your and my phone number, etc. My title, address, and phone number is listed at the end for you to put on these forms.**

**10. Online submission. Some universities now permit online submission of letters or recommendation. Some do not. For me, you must inform me up front with your packet whether you want:**

- a. All your letters submitted online
- b. All your letters submitted by hardcopy in an envelope.

**The one option that is NOT an option, is for me to send in some of your letters hardcopy and others online. This makes my job inordinately more difficult. It creates dramatically increased potential for foulup and confusion.**

**If you choose option a. then you must also include, with your packet, a set of simple and clear instructions about how to submit online for each school.**

**11. In addition, please waive your right to view this recommendation letter. This is standard practice and looks odd to others if you do not waive your right to see the**

**letter. I only write confidential letters so I will not provide a recommendation for you if it is not confidential.**

**WARNING I:** Please DO NOT include anything with this packet OTHER than the stuff necessary for me to write your letter. DO NOT give me reminders about our research, your grades, papers, etc. DO NOT give me long stories regarding how difficult it was for you to find me and so you left it in my mailbox instead of giving it to me. DO NOT GIVE ME ANYTHING OTHER THAN THE ITEMS DIRECTLY RELEVANT TO WRITING THIS LETTER. **BASIC PRINCIPLE:** I am glad to write you a letter, but I do not want to spend 20 minutes poring over three pages of comments, questions, and explanations in order to find the half-page worth of stuff I need to write your letter.

**WARNING II:** DO NOT give me anything unless you actually want me to write and mail your letters. DO NOT give me materials "just to be sure I have it" or "to give me a chance to work on your letter" or "to give me a chance to look everything over". DO NOT give me materials with instructions NOT to mail them. If you do not want me to mail it, DON'T GIVE IT TO ME.

**WARNING III:** Please provide me with ALL the information and ALL the forms necessary for writing ALL of your letters, ALL AT THE SAME TIME. DO NOT give me letters for 2 schools on Friday, for three schools next Thursday, and for 4 more schools next month. You eliminate any potential problems by requesting all materials from the schools 4-6 months prior to their deadlines.

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### **CHECKLIST INSTRUCTIONS:**

You must copy this checklist to your own file, and include it in the materials you provide to me. You must either: 1) Write the word "yes" next to each one, if you have done it; or 2) Write the word "explanation" next to one, if you have not done it. If you opt for 2, then you must also provide me with a clear explanation for why that thing was not included.

### **CHECKLIST.**

0. Have you gotten me everything at least 1 month in advance?

#### **Have you included:**

1. Clear instructions to me (indicating, but not necessarily restricted to, things like addresses, program types [e.g., clinical psych, medicine, law, etc.], deadlines, whether or not the place your applying to has its own form)

- 1a. Does any school have a deadline earlier than January? If so:
    - A) Is this highlighted somehow (boldface, all caps, etc.)?
    - B) Will you periodically remind me (e.g., via email) about this early deadline?
  2. transcript
  3. Resume
  4. GRE (or other test) scores
  5. Personal statement
  - 6a. Addressed (including both my address and the receiver's address) stamped envelopes for each letter?
  - 6b. If any letter(s) are coming back to you, have you written each school's name on the envelope? If not, how will you know which school it is for?!!
  7. Description of your work with me, if any.
  8. Other supporting materials
  9. Forms completed as much as possible (i.e., have you entered my name, title, address, phone, etc. in every place such information is requested on the form?)
  10. Your contact info? Your email address(es); your RU and home phone numbers, etc.
  11. Have you waived your right to view this letter in the future?
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The following information is probably required on most forms:

**Title: Assistant Professor**  
**Name: Diana T. Sanchez**

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