

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR MEDICAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE LETTER
Houghton College Premedical Program**

Dear _____,

Thank you for your willingness to write a *letter of recommendation* to the **HEALTH PROFESSIONS RECOMMENDATION COMMITTEE (HPRC)** for _____.

Houghton prepares a composite committee letter for its medical and other health professional school applicants. The committee extracts entire sections and quotes from the various individual recommendation letters it receives, and crafts a single, cohesive letter of evaluation which includes a “rank recommendation” for the candidate utilizing the following ordinal recommendation system:

- | | | |
|----|------------------------------|--|
| 1. | Highest recommendation | 3.8 GPA + strong experiences & letters |
| 2. | Highly recommend | 3.6 GPA + good experiences & letters |
| 3. | Recommend | 3.3 GPA + adequate experiences & letters |
| 4. | Offer for your consideration | 3.0 GPA + few/weak experiences & letters |
| 5. | Do not recommend | <3.0 |

Rubric for rank is based on these assessment points: GPA, Clinical and Research Experiences, Letters of Recommendation, and MCAT (if applicable). In addition, your **letter of recommendation in its entirety will be included** in the letter packet sent to the respective schools or online service. It is important that your letter of recommendation **include your signature and on official letterhead**. Each letter should be at least 1 page in length and include your personal recommendation for this candidate.

Medical schools, in particular, are moving towards a more holistic approach to evaluation of applicants. Thus admission committees are looking for **descriptive and qualitative** comments about the applicant that are “**evidence-based**”: *how* has the student demonstrated these qualities? Wherever possible, avoid noncommittal expressions such as “seems” when describing an applicant. Some of the areas important to medical and dental school admissions committees are an applicant’s academic capabilities, commitment to and knowledge of the field of medicine, compassion, character (including a tendency toward personal sacrifice) and personality, cultural competence, community service, collaborative tendencies (good “team player”), and leadership qualities. Commenting specifically about these characteristics and citing examples is extremely helpful for the HPRC to compose accurate picture of the student’s potential.

In addition, Houghton College is a small, private college; our strong reputation is not known nationally and by many of the colleges to whom our students apply. If you are a faculty member, we kindly request that you refrain from commenting on the students rank within a class, as this is

irrelevant to the admission committee and often can be determined from the transcript. Please **describe events and observations that demonstrate their qualifications** for medical school.

Please send your recommendation letter along with a copy of this letter *no later than **March 21, 2014*** to:
Health Professions Recommendation Committee

Attention: Mim Case
Houghton College
Paine Science Building
1 Willard Ave
Houghton, NY 14744

In addition, we need a **digital copy** of your letter. This can be sent in lieu of the mailed copy if **BOTH** the letter of recommendation (complete with letterhead and signature) and this request letter in DIGITAL form can be made. If a COMPLETE digital copy cannot be produced, please send the contents of your letter in Word to Mim Case at mim.case@houghton.edu. Again, all letters must be written on official letterhead of your organization and with your signature for inclusion.

These letters are critical for the student to be considered for candidacy and to further their calling to serve in the medical field. We ask that you consider carefully your vital role in this endeavor.

(Date)

(Student's Signature)

(Student's printed name)

- I do waive my right of access to my file and recommendation letters.
- I do not waive my right of access to my file and recommendation letters.