



RECOMMENDATION COMMITTEE

PROCEDURAL MANUAL

MATRICULATION: 2025

Priority Deadline: March 8, 2024

Krista Motschieder- Recommendation Committee Chair

A service of the
Office of Pre-Health Professions
Sierra Vista Hall
PH: 951.785.2535

- Please read contents carefully.
- Manual is designed to guide students on filling out the Forms Packet for Recommendation Committee.
- This is not an application to professional school.
- Please do not submit Procedural Manual with Forms Packet.
- All materials need to be submitted online.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
RECOMMENDATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS.....	4
IMPORTANCE OF DEADLINES	5
RECOMMENDATION COMMITTEE PROCESS	6
POLICY REQUIREMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION.....	7
LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION	8
RELEASING INFORMATION TO YOUR PRE-HEALTH ADVISOR	10
PAYMENT.....	11
THE RECOMMENDATION COMMITTEE FORMS.....	12
FORM A DEMOGRAPHICS	12
FORM B PERSONAL STATEMENT, RECOMMENDATION COMMITTEE SPECIFIC	
QUESTIONS AND RESUME	14
FORM C(a) and C(b) COURSEWORK and BCPM PRINTOUT.....	15
FORM D PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS and RECOMMENDATION REFERENCE LIST.....	16
FORM E CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT and FERPA STUDENT RELEASE.....	17
FORM F(a) and F(b) ACADEMIC INCIDENT RELEASE and CITIZENSHIP REPORT	18
FORM G ADMISSION TEST SCORES	18
FORM H (a-d) RECOMMENDATION LETTER REQUEST.....	19
FORM I SELF-ASSESSMENT (ADAPTED FROM UC BERKELEY CAREER CENTER).....	19

INTRODUCTION

As you begin this application process, the questions you must ask yourself are 1) Why am I applying to professional school? and, 2) Why do I want to become a healthcare professional? You really need to take the time to understand your motivation and ‘professional calling’.

Students who have a less than stellar cumulative and science GPA have a greater challenge in being accepted. Has there been an upward trajectory in your grades? Have you taken upper division biology courses and done well in them? These are things to take into consideration.

This **Procedural Manual** is intended to serve as a guide as you navigate the process of applying to professional school. The submission materials for the Recommendation Committee are referred to as the “Recommendation Packet”. This manual accompanies the Recommendation Packet, which is the official application to the La Sierra University Pre-Health Professions Recommendation Committee (also referred to as the Recommendation Committee, Committee, or PRC). *The Recommendation Committee letter is a required part of the application process for students applying to Loma Linda University Schools of Medicine and Pharmacy. It is recommended for the LLU School of Dentistry.*

The purpose of the Recommendation Committee is to provide a comprehensive letter of evaluation, called the committee letter, which is sent to the professional school(s) designated. The Committee aids in the application process by interviewing each applicant and reviewing all parts of the Recommendation Packet including individual letters of recommendation submitted on behalf of the applicant, the personal statement, resume, and answers to specific questions. **Although the information submitted to the Committee is extensive, the Recommendation Packet *does not* replace the mandatory application to professional school.**

Students must apply to professional school through the discipline-specific central application service listed here, and should carefully follow the admissions instructions outlined on the website, or other official sources of information for the professional program to which you are applying.

Application Portals for various Pre-Health Professions:

- **AMERICAN MEDICAL COLLEGE APPLICATION SERVICE (AMCAS)** Allopathic Medicine [MD]: All MD medical schools in the US participate in AMCAS except those in Texas. They participate in *Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service (TMDSAS)*.
- **ASSOCIATED AMERICAN DENTAL SCHOOLS APPLICATION SERVICE (AADSAS)** Dentistry [DDS OR DMD]: *Texas residents participate in TMDSAS.*
- **OPTOMETRY CENTRALIZED APPLICATION SERVICE (OptomCAS)** Optometry [OD]
- **AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE APPLICATION SERVICE (AACOMAS)** Osteopathic Medicine [DO]: Most DO schools participate.
- **PHARMACY CENTRALIZED APPLICATION SERVICE (PharmCAS)** Pharmacy [PHARMD]
- **VETERINARY MEDICAL CENTRALIZED APPLICATION SERVICE (VMCAS)** Veterinary Medicine [DVM]:

APPLICANT

- **First time applicants:** The packet is most appropriate for students applying to professional programs for the first time, including juniors, seniors and post-baccalaureate pre-health students. All student applicants must meet the minimum GPA established by the Recommendation Committee. The minimum accepted GPA and/or BCPM is 2.70.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- All of the information provided in your packet is confidential and is reviewed by the PRC for interview and letter writing purposes only. Acceptance data is gathered and maintained for statistical purposes only.

RECOMMENDATION COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2024-2025

CHAIR: Dr. Krista Motschieder Chemistry & Biochemistry	Coordinator/Member: Vanessa Rodriguez Sanchez -Office of Pre-Health Professions
Dr. In-Kyeong Kim-Psychology	Lovelyn Razzouk--ZSB
Dr. Gary Case--Physics	Heidi Weiss-Krumm—Int'l Students
Nancy Guerpo-- Residential Life	Additional Faculty (To be determined)
Dr. Michael Gutierrez—Chemistry & Biochemistry	

THE IMPORTANCE OF DEADLINES

WHEN TO APPLY

Applicants to professional school should apply **9-14 months** before the start of their desired program. This allows time for the application to be processed by the application service (sometimes as long as six weeks), time for the school to receive the application, send secondary (also called supplemental) applications, assess the applicant's eligibility for acceptance, interview the applicant, and notify the applicant of acceptance or non-acceptance. Many professional application services allow the submission of applications beginning as early as May or June each year; therefore, students are encouraged to apply as early as possible. Submitting your application in the summer rather than the fall may make the difference as to whether or not you are accepted. Aggregate admissions data show there is a higher acceptance rate for students who apply early (June, July, August) than for those who apply late (September, October, November). ...AMCAS

Recommendation Committee Deadline

The Recommendation Packet for the current cycle, matriculation date Fall 2025, is available online at www.lasierra.edu/prehealth. Search under **Forms** in the left-side navigation bar. Prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to complete the Recommendation Packet 14-18 months prior

to the proposed matriculation to professional school. Therefore, the Winter Quarter deadline, **is Friday, March 8, 2024.**

March 8, 2024 is the priority deadline. This means that all completed packets submitted on or before this date will be reviewed by the Recommendation Committee during Spring Quarter 2024. Completed packets are usually processed in the order they are received, and the Recommendation Committee members will only interview students with a completed file. **A completed file is one that has all forms and letters submitted.** Students who are applying to professional schools with admission deadlines in October are strongly encouraged to meet the March 8th deadline.

Pre-Health Professions cannot guarantee that a student's file will be reviewed during Spring Quarter if the completed packet is submitted *after* the priority deadline, or if packets submitted by the priority deadline are incomplete. **It is important that recommenders are informed of the deadline you are attempting to meet.**

Completed packets submitted after March 8, 2024 that are not reviewed in Spring Quarter, will be reviewed Fall Quarter, 2024. The *Recommendation Committee does not meet during the summer months*, therefore, no Recommendation Packets will be reviewed or committee letters written between the last day of Spring Quarter and the beginning of Fall Quarter. If you have an early deadline (e.g. October 2024) you will need to be proactive and complete your packet by the priority deadline. Pre-Health Professions will not be held responsible for missing any deadlines that you may have.

FOR STUDENTS APPLYING TO UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA (UC) SCHOOLS:

Students applying to UC schools should complete and submit their packets by the priority deadline of March 8, 2024 so that the packet may be reviewed by the PRC before October 2024. If your packet is not reviewed during Spring Quarter, the committee letter and individual letters of recommendation will not be received by the UC admissions office on or before the early October deadline.

This information may have been adapted from a variety of sources.

THE RECOMMENDATION COMMITTEE PROCESS

PROTOCOL FOR ONLINE SUBMISSION:

The Recommendation Committee will be requiring all packets and materials to be submitted electronically. Students will submit their packets and materials via this link: <https://forms.gle/nHBn6TdxzTZnPWaN8>

All documents must be titled in the following format: Form number and/or title as well as the students ID number for example, Form B- #####, Form H #####.

A complete Recommendation Packet is ready for review when **all forms** have been submitted to the Office of Pre-Health Professions, and all (minimum of 5) recommendation letters have been received. It is critical that students verify that their packet is complete well before the application deadline. To avoid making the mistakes that frequently delay processing, double check that you included a picture, your standardized test scores (or the date you plan to take them), your list of schools, and receipt.

INTERVIEW

After your packet is complete and reviewed, a member of the Recommendation Committee will contact you to schedule an interview. Please make sure that we have the correct email and / or phone number. We will not be liable if your phone has been disconnected and the committee member is unable to contact you. Please **dress professionally** for this interview and arrive on time.

COMMITTEE LETTER

After the interview, the Committee member will write a letter of recommendation on the applicant's behalf and present it to the RC for discussion and approval. The Committee votes on the letter and the letter must be approved by majority vote. Sometimes the letter writer may need to rewrite portions of the letter and resubmit it to the Committee for approval. If this occurs, the letter will be delayed.

After Committee approval, the letter signed by the letter writer/ interviewer and the Committee chair is now ready for processing.

LETTER SUBMISSION TO APPLICATION SERVICE

Recommendation letters (individual and committee) are submitted to a discipline-specific centralized application service. For students who are interviewed during Spring quarter, please note that letters **cannot** be submitted before the opening date of the application service, which is usually in June. Additionally, all recommendation letters submitted to professional schools must have an identifying number (i.e., the application ID) which is provided by the centralized application service. The Office of Pre-Health Professions must receive application ID numbers, used to identify and match applicants to their documents, before letters are sent to professional schools.

POLICY REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

The following requirements have been set as minimum standards for the La Sierra University Pre-Health Professions Recommendation Committee (PRC). The requirements are in place to ensure that sufficient information is available to adequately evaluate the applicant and provide a comprehensive recommendation. All minimum requirements must be met in order for a file to be considered “complete”. Only completed files are submitted for committee consideration. Submission deadlines are for completed files.

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS

- Matriculation at La Sierra University for a minimum of three quarters before applying to the committee is required. Summer classes are not included. If a student transferred to La Sierra University in Fall 2023, maintained enrollment through Winter 2024 and is registered for Spring 2024, then the residency requirement has been met for the deadline. However, the committee may want to see Spring Quarter grades before a letter can be written for a marginal applicant.
- Students who have completed a degree at La Sierra and are returning for a committee letter, **MUST** contact Pre-Health Office or chair to verify eligibility for committee consideration if more than 2 years have passed since enrolling in a course.
- Additional requirements may result for certain circumstances.

PREREQUISITE REQUIREMENTS

- Students must have completed the General Biology **AND** General Chemistry sequences.
- (For the Spring term) Students must be enrolled or plan to enroll in a third science sequence whether that be the second course of Organic Chemistry or General Physics ***IF they have not already completed a third sequence of prerequisite science courses.***
- For questions/exceptions on eligibility requirements please contact Committee chair or Pre-Health Office directly.

BCPM

All students applying to the Recommendation Committee must meet the minimum GPA and BCPM requirements 2.70.

- To calculate your overall and science GPA, Google **GPA Calculator** and select the website of your choice.
- **Enter each course taken**, number of units for the class, and grade received.
- Include courses taken at other universities.
- **Include all repeated courses.**
- **YOUR FILE IS NOT COMPLETE WITHOUT YOUR BCPM PRINTOUT. See FORM Db in FORMS.**

PLEASE NOTE:

If your overall GPA or BCPM is less than 3.0, please:

- Submit an explanation for current GPA and/or BCPM and an explanation for why recent success should be considered over previous academic challenges. What have you learned?
- Consider visiting the Pre-Health office to create a plan for improvement and decide whether it is the right time to apply to professional school.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Professional schools prefer a comprehensive view of the student. They want students who are not only academically qualified, but also well-rounded and able to handle the rigors of a professional program. Admission committees also look for attributes such as commitment to service and passion for the profession, which may be demonstrated by shadowing, volunteering and leadership. It is very important that students request letters from people who will attest to their ability to make a strong health professional.

Potential letter writers should be approached early and asked if they feel comfortable writing you a good letter of recommendation. Many of your recommenders are faculty members with various responsibilities, including teaching, research, committees, etc. Therefore, contact prospective recommenders well in advance of your preferred deadline. It is the responsibility of the applicant to request letters of recommendation and to follow up with the recommender until the letter is received by the Office of Pre-Health Professions.

Letters written by faculty members are of particular importance to your file and health professional schools. A detailed letter can be of great benefit for a student. The point of writing a letter is to “assess the student intellectually and personally as a potential contributor” to health professions. If you ask a faculty member to write a letter for you and you do not know the faculty person well, you should make an appointment to talk with him or her, and provide your personal statement and resume.

LETTER SUBMISSION

The Recommendation Committee uses the individual letters (which have been submitted on your behalf) in composing your committee letter. You really want to have letters from persons who know you well and can evaluate you objectively. Please do not submit letters from friends of the family as these do not speak well of the applicant.

The Office of Pre-Health Professions will **not** accept letters of recommendation written by relatives and prefer not to accept letters that are hand delivered by the applicant, even if they are sealed. Should a letter writer fail to sign the letter, the applicant may be contacted to ask the letter writer to resubmit an acceptable (signed) letter. All letters of recommendation should be written on the official letterhead, if applicable. ***Remind your recommenders that the Recommendation Letter Request Form must accompany the letter of recommendation and both must be signed.***

- **Two letters from science professors.** The pertinent information that should be addressed in these letters are your abilities as a student: scores on major exams, whether your grades match your potential, your level of intellectual curiosity, interest in learning, level of class participation, etc.
- **One letter from a work/volunteer supervisor.** The main information that should be addressed in this letter is how well you perform in a position of responsibility: are you punctual, do you get along well with supervisors, co-workers and clients/patients, are you honest and trustworthy, are you able to complete assigned tasks on a deadline, are you a self-starter who can see things that need to be done and do them without being told, etc.

- This letter does not have to be from a professional in the field you are applying for. Unless you had an extended position that included actual work responsibilities with that person, they would not be able to address the areas above. So, if you shadowed somebody a few times but only observed, did minor tasks, etc., then please do not ask for a letter from that person to fulfill this category.
- **One letter from a religious leader or spiritual advisor. This is required for those applying to Loma Linda University.** The person needs to be able to write about your involvement in your faith tradition and whether your personal values align with Loma Linda's mission and lifestyle expectations.
- **One letter from a person of your choice** who you think may be able to address issues that your other recommenders may not be able to.

ONLINE SUBMISSION

Recommenders can submit their **SIGNED** letter of recommendation via a google form that will be available on the website and in the packet. The student must send the link and FORM H to the recommender to ensure they submit via the google form. The recommender must submit the student's name, Form H, and the signed letter. If the recommender has issues they can email our office at prehealth@lasierra.edu.

Recommenders can submit letters via this link: <https://forms.gle/DFaQtPqpfsv1yAHr9>

We encourage students to send this link to their recommenders when requesting a letter of recommendation.

MAILING LETTERS

Recommenders can send letters to the Pre-Health Office by mailing them to:

**La Sierra University
Pre-Health Professions Recommendation Committee
Sierra Vista Hall
4500 Riverwalk Pkway, Riverside, CA 92515**

Let your recommenders know we have to receive the letters by the posted deadline, therefore if they plan on mailing the letter, please do so with anticipation.

NOTE: The Pre-Health Professions Office is not a clearing house for individual letters of recommendation. **Individual recommendation letters may not be released to a school without a committee letter.** A student may choose not to go through the committee, but letters received on the student's behalf may not be sent without a committee letter. All letters received are the property of La Sierra University and will not be released to the student or forwarded to any other institution.

RELEASING INFORMATION TO YOUR PRE-HEALTH ADVISOR

A. RELEASE OF TEST SCORES: When registering for the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT), Dental Admission Test (DAT), Pharmacy College Admission Test (PCAT) etc., please release your scores to your pre-health professions advisor (i.e., our office). This is strongly recommended for all La Sierra University students applying to professional programs, whether or not they choose to use the services of the Recommendation Committee. The University requires the Office of Pre-Health Professions to maintain statistics of student performance on standardized tests. Additionally, our office must be able to verify test scores submitted to the Recommendation Committee. Applicants releasing their scores to the pre-health advisor facilitate online data collection, verification and allows for better advising.

- MCAT (Medical College Admission Test) is the professional standardized exam required by all medical schools in the US. You are eligible to take the MCAT exam only if you are planning to apply to a health professions school for allopathic, osteopathic, podiatric or veterinary medicine. When you register for the exam, you will be required to sign a statement verifying your intention to apply to a health professions school. The AMCAS schools receive your test scores unless you cancel your scores at the end of your test session. You will be able to access your scores about 30-35 days after your exam. The MCAT is given several times during the year and when you sit for the MCAT, you should specify that you wish to release your score to your advisor.
- The MCAT tests:
 - Biological and biochemical foundations of living systems
 - Chemical and physical foundations of biological systems
 - Psychological, social, and biological foundations of behavior
 - Critical analysis and reasoning skills
 - Info taken from: <https://www.princetonreview.com/medical/mcat-information>
- **DAT** (Dental Admission Test) is the professional standardized exam required by all dental schools in the US. You are eligible to take the DAT if you are planning to apply to a dental education program. This exam is administered several times throughout the year at Prometric Test Centers. When you sit for your exam, you should select your pre-dental advisor to receive your scores.
 - Survey of the Natural Sciences—biology, general and organic chemistry
 - Perceptual Ability—Apertures, view recognition, angle discrimination, paper folding, cube counting and 3D form development
 - Reading Comprehension—three reading passages on various scientific topics; tests the ability to read, comprehend, and analyze basic scientific information.
 - Quantitative Reasoning—Math: A basic four function calculator is available on the screen of the test.
 - Information taken from the [dat_eeaminee_guide-1.pdf](#)

B. RELEASE OF APPLICATION: When applying to professional schools, students should release their application to the LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY pre-health advisor. The University requires our office to maintain statistics on student applications: e.g., how many students apply, which schools they apply to, acceptance status, etc.

Check the box if you give PharmCAS permission to release selected information regarding your pharmacy admission status to the chief health professions advisor and the health professions advisory committee of the post-secondary institution (s) that you have attended. By releasing your information, we are better able to assist you in the pharmacy admission process, as well as better guide other students in the future. You cannot make changes to this item after you submit your application to PharmCAS.

C. ACCEPTANCE INTO A PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM: As a part of the Recommendation Committee process, you are required to let us know when you are accepted into a professional program. The data collected about student matriculation rates are for assessment purposes only and is a mandate of the University. The data collected is strictly confidential.

PAYMENT INFORMATION:

Additional fees may apply for International Schools.

DEADLINES	TOTAL DUE
MARCH 8, 2024	\$100
JUNE 7, 2024	\$120
SEPTEMBER 6, 2024	\$150
SEPTEMBER 13, 2024	\$200

Payments can be made to Bursars via CashNet.

Students must email bursar@lasierra.edu and ask them to credit payment to Pre-Health Recommendation Committee.

Payments can also be made in person to Bursars located in the Administration building.

MUST TURN IN COPY OF RECEIPT WITH PACKET.

THE RECOMMENDATION COMMITTEE FORMS

Students who meet the minimum overall GPA and BCPM requirement of 2.70 are eligible to receive a committee letter.

This manual helps you quickly process the instructions for submission by explaining how best to proceed. Directions for completion are included here.

PLEASE SUBMIT ALL FORMS. Packets will not be reviewed until all forms have been received.

Online Submission Instructions:

1. Save documents as PDFs, all documents should be fillable.
2. Fill out documents.
3. Save documents to your computer under the correct title. (Form B, ID #)
4. Submit packet and forms here: [Recommendation Committee Packet Submission](#)

*The only items that should be submitted separately are picture, transcript, BCPM calculation, personal statement, resume, and committee questions and answers. The rest of the packet should be submitted as a whole.

The following pages will guide you through the Forms located in the Forms Packet.

FORM A: DEMOGRAPHICS

- **FULL LEGAL NAME, ID AND GENDER**
 - If there is another name that is recognized on or off campus, please put that name in parenthesis.
- **PHOTOGRAPH** We need a small photo for identification. It does not have to be a professional portrait. However, we would like for it to be a clear, **color photo** with you directly facing the camera.
- **PRE-HEALTH PROGRAM**
- **GPA:** Enter your overall GPA, your transfer GPA and your Biology, Chemistry, Physics and Math (BCPM) GPA.
 - To arrive at this GPA, you must “Google” GPA calculator. Pick the site of your choice and enter all of your grades (except pre-college level courses) with these prefixes: BIOL, CHEM, PHYS, and MATH. Enter the course each time it was taken. Include labs. **SUBMIT THE PRINTOUT.**
- **APPLICATION NUMBER** This number is assigned to you by the professional program application service (Example: AADSAS, AMCAS, PharmCAS etc.). Most of the application services “open” in June, so you will not have your application number until then. Also, the “opening” of the application service refers to the date when you may begin your application. It does not refer to the date when the application is sent to each professional school. Please provide us with this number as soon as you receive it. Additionally, we must have this application number **before** we can submit any letters on your behalf.

PRE-MEDICINE STUDENTS: AMCAS Application:

In Section Six: Letters of Evaluation/ Recommendation, please choose the following:

Type of Letter: **Committee Packet:** Letter authored by our pre-health Recommendation Committee.

Creating Letter Entries: Choose Committee Letter

Primary author/ contact information: Ms. **Vanessa Rodriguez Sanchez:** vrodrigu1@lasierra.edu (**the contact person not the author of the letters.**)

Affiliation: La Sierra University, Address: 4500 Riverwalk Parkway, Riverside, CA 92515, Phone Number: 951.785.2490.

PRINT THE LETTER REQUEST FORM or email the information: This form provides the AAMC *and* the Letter ID. Email it to prehealth@lasierra.edu.

PRE-DENTISTRY STUDENTS: ADEA AADSAS Application provides the application number in the email sent to the pre-health advisor.

In the "Evaluators" Section: the applicant indicates: Individual to provide letter: **Vanessa Rodriguez Sanchez**

Vanessa Rodriguez Sanchez is the contact person not the author of the letters.

Format to use: Electronic: LOE : Committee Letter

Email address: vrodrigu1@lasierra.edu

PRE-PHARMACY STUDENTS: Log into your application and use the email address: vrodrigu1@lasierra.edu for your letters. If you apply to Western University, the individual letters writers must submit a separate evaluation form

PRE-VETERINARY MEDICINE STUDENTS:

For 2024: VMCAS will change regarding submission of letters of evaluation. There is a functionality that supports committee letters.

Evaluator's Title, First and Last Name: Dr. Krista Motschieder

Occupation: Professor, Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry

Institution, etc.: La Sierra University, 4500 Riverwalk Parkway, Riverside, CA 92515

OTHER INFORMATION

- **ADDRESS** Please provide your current address.
- **CELL PHONE NUMBER** Verify that the number is written correctly.
- **EMAIL** Provide your La Sierra email and an additional email address that you check frequently.
- **BIRTHDATE**
- **MARITAL STATUS** Optional
- **ETHNICITY**
- **UNDERGRADUATE MAJOR** Please enter your major here. If you have already finished college, put the major that you studied in college. ("Pre-Medicine" is not a major.)
- **CURRENT ADVISOR**

- **PREVIOUS SCHOOL** This refers to the school that you attended *before* you attended La Sierra University
- **DEGREE RECEIVED:** What is the degree with which you will graduate? Ex. BS Biochemistry
- **PASTOR'S NAME** Loma Linda University (LLU) is especially interested in persons who can follow the teaching and healing ministry of Jesus Christ. Therefore, please provide the name of your spiritual leader or someone from your congregation who knows you well.
- **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION** Enter the religious group with which you most closely identify.

FORM B (a): PERSONAL STATEMENT

I. **The personal statement** is an essay you write about what is important to you and perhaps explain why there may be discrepancies in your academic record. Admission committees are not only looking for why you want to become a health professional but also what is your motivation. This may not be the exact personal statement that you send to your application service, but will serve as the basis for it. However, please make sure that the document you submit to the Committee is well-thought out and well-written as this may be used to evaluate your written communication skills.

Writing the essay requires some time. To begin with, you have to start by thinking about yourself—what is important to you, what accomplishments have you had that you are proud of, what experiences have you had that help define you? You may want to go to the Writing Center on campus for help in drafting your statement.

Don't let your essay be what you think the admission committees want to read. Tell your story and let it be about something that is not already on your resume. You want the admissions committee to read your statement and conclude that you would make a fine health care professional and a great addition to their professional school.

FORM B (b): COMMITTEE QUESTIONS

II. **Recommendation Committee-specific questions.** Provide the answers to the four (4) committee-specific questions. These questions are only for the Recommendation Committee. Use a separate page for answering these questions.

FORM B (c): RESUME

The resume that you submit for review by the Recommendation Committee should highlight your accomplishments and showcase your preparation for professional school. Students are encouraged to review several online resumes, should you need an example. Cater your resume to the pre-health application process. Below are broad categories that students should consider when compiling their resume.

DO NOT INCLUDE ANY INFORMATION FROM HIGH SCHOOL!

- Involvement in discipline-specific campus clubs, specifically pre-med/pre-dent/pre-pharmacy, etc. societies. This shows passion for your chosen discipline by being involved.

- Any University organization, student government (SALSU, et.), athletics, etc.
- Employment and other related activities such as internships and clinical extenderships.
 - a. Include a brief description of your experience.
 - b. Include dates and hours (if applicable).
- Volunteer and shadowing experiences
 - c. Include supervisor, facility and information learned.
- Research
 - d. Include details of your research (when, where, what and with whom), as well as presentation information (if applicable) a poster, published paper, seminar/oral presentation, etc.
- Awards received
- Other: You may add additional experiences to your resume that you would like the Committee to take note of, which do not fall neatly into the other categories listed above.

FORM C (a): COURSEWORK & TRANSCRIPT

These are the major science courses required by most medical, dental and pharmacy schools.

- **Provide unofficial** simplified transcripts from La Sierra University and all other universities you have attended. Print this from SELF-SERVICE. This will give an overall view of you as a candidate and will be especially useful for post-bac students who are seeking to show the upward trajectory in the science coursework.
- Calculate your Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Math (BCPM) GPA. **To calculate BCPM**, do a *Google* search of “**calculate GPA**”, and make a selection. You must **include all retakes** of science courses in the calculations.
- **Submit a copy of the printout.**
- **Transfer GPA.** This information is displayed on your La Sierra University unofficial transcript if you are a transfer student or if you have taken courses at another university during the summer. It is useful especially for students who may have increased their GPA significantly since coming to La Sierra University.
- Indicate each required course (and repeat) you have taken, the grade received (each time), and the professor (if LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY).
- **Additional Courses** You may include other upper division courses (and grades) that you have taken and would like the committee to note. This is especially meaningful for students who are not science majors.

FORM C (b): BCPM PRINTOUT

- Calculate your Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Math (BCPM) GPA. **To calculate BCPM**, do a *Google* search of “**calculate GPA**”, and make a selection. You must **include all retakes** of science courses in the calculations.
- **Submit a copy of the printout.**

FORM D: PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS

- Please list the names and deadlines for each school. If one (or more) of your schools has a deadline during October, it is in your best interest to come through the committee during spring quarter. The Recommendation Committee does not meet during the summer.
- If you are applying for Early Decision, you will have your interview when the LLU School of Medicine comes during Spring Quarter.
- The applicant should apply to more than one professional school. Please use available resources to know the GPA requirements for the school(s) to which you will apply.

Names of recommenders and date asked.

- Request a minimum of 4 letters of recommendation (3 for pre-pharmacy).
- Choose your recommenders carefully. Please request letters of recommendation from persons who will write letters that support your application to pre-health professional school. These may include faculty, administrators, advisors, work/ volunteer supervisors, research directors, residence hall deans, etc. **It is important that the recommenders you choose be able to address your strengths and personal attributes as well as support your reasons for this professional program.** You want people who know you well and can write a strong letter and speak of your academic ability, communication skills, work ethic, etc.

FORM D: RECOMMENDATION REFERENCE LIST

- Ask your recommenders as soon as you receive this packet. You must be prepared for any response: ‘yes’, ‘no’, or ‘later when I have time’. Ask if they will be able to write a **strong** letter, a letter of substance. You should allow time for them to write the letter or, be ready to ask someone else. It is preferred that you ask your recommender in person.
- Once a “yes” response is received, make an appointment with your recommender and provide information about yourself to help make the letter as substantive as possible. Provide a copy of your personal statement, resume, grades (if necessary) and any other information that would be helpful. However, if your recommender is not in academe, he/she should not write about how great of a student you are!

Please request a maximum of four (4) letters of recommendation for all fields except Pharmacy (See below.) A summary is given below.

These letters should consist of:

- **Two letters from science professors.**
- **One letter from a work/volunteer supervisor.**
- **One letter from a religious leader or spiritual advisor. This is required only for those applying to Loma Linda University Schools of Medicine and Pharmacy.**
- **One letter from a person of your choice** who you think may be able to address issues that your other recommenders may not be able to.

For Pre-Pharmacy students, you should request three (3) letters.

- **One letter from a science professors**
- **One letter from a work/volunteer supervisor OR religious leader** (if applying to Loma Linda)
- **One letter from a licensed pharmacist.**

FORM E: CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT AND FERPA

This gives the student the option of having an “open” or “closed” file. Every applicant to the Recommendation Committee is required to read and sign the Confidentiality Statement (**Form G**) and the FERPA Student Release Form (**Form H**). It is essential that students understand their rights and the consequences of waiving and/or retaining their rights. Each form explains a student’s right to access to information contained in the pre-health file. Some students find it difficult to decide whether or not to keep an open or confidential file with the Recommendation Committee. The following excerpt from *Planning a Life in Medicine* by The Princeton Review may help with this decision, and applies to all disciplines—not just medicine:

“YOUR FILE AT THE PREMED OFFICE—CONFIDENTIAL OR OPEN?”

Before you begin soliciting letters of recommendation, you will need to set up a file at the **Premedical Student Office**. (*At La Sierra University, this is the Office of Pre-Health Professions.*) Professors and others will send their letters to the premedical office on your behalf, where they will be kept until it is time to forward them to medical schools.

When you start your file at the premed office, you will have the option of creating a **confidential** or an **open** file. If you choose an **open** file, you will be able to review the letters of recommendation that are written about you. If you choose a **confidential** file, you will not be able to see what the file contains.

Confidential (Closed): Signing this section indicates that you have waived your right to review your letters of recommendation, including the committee letter. I hereby waive my right to review letters of recommendation contained in my file including the Pre-Health Professions Recommendation Committee letter. I understand that all letters of recommendation received by Pre-Health Professions become the property of this office. I may revoke my consent to this release at any time with the understanding that it is not retroactive and does not apply to information that was previously obtained under my former consent.

Non-Confidential (Open): Signing this section indicates that you have retained your right to review all letters of recommendation contained in your file. Please be aware that recommenders may refuse to write a letter of recommendation on your behalf. The OPHP will inform professional schools of the “open” or “closed” status of your file, but the Recommendation committee will take all letters seriously. I hereby retain my right to review letters of recommendation contained in my file. I understand that the professional programs will be informed when I have retained my right to view my individual and committee letters of recommendation and that admission committee may not regard me as a serious applicant. I further understand that all letters received are the property of the Pre-Health Professions. I further understand that if I revoke my consent to this release at any time, it is not retroactive and does not apply to information that was previously released under my former consent.

Unless you have extremely compelling reasons to do otherwise, you should always choose a confidential file. Medical schools want to feel like the letters of recommendation are unedited, third-party evaluations of your strengths and weaknesses. If you have an open file, this third-party assurance disappears. With an open file, medical schools *know* that you looked through your recommendations and sent only those that are favorable. No medical school that we know

of will consider you a serious candidate if you have read your recommendations before you sent them". (Smart, Nelson and Doherty pp. 166-167)

From: John Smart, Stephen Nelson and Julie Doherty. *Planning a Life in Medicine*. New York, NY: Random House, 2005. Print.

The FERPA Release Form gives the Recommendation Committee permission to send the letters of recommendation to the educational programs of your choice.

FORM F(a) : ACADEMIC INCIDENT RELEASE

This allows Recommendation Committee access to your Academic Integrity files. It is very important that you list any academic disciplinary action taken by the university. You will be asked about this in the centralized application and by individual schools. Failure to disclose is dishonest. You should discuss this with both your advisor and the committee member who will interview you. The La Sierra University Recommendation Committee letter may address any disciplinary action taken.

FORM F(b): CITIZENSHIP REPORT

This allows Recommendation Committee access to your citizenship report. It is very important that you list any disciplinary action taken by the Student Life Office of the university. You will be asked about this in the centralized application and by individual schools. Failure to disclose is dishonest. You should discuss this with both your advisor and the committee member who will interview you. The La Sierra University Recommendation Committee letter may address any disciplinary action taken.

FORM G: ADMISSION TEST SCORES

- Submit a copy of your MCAT, DAT, etc., scores to the Office of Pre-Health Professions. This includes admission tests taken prior to the cycle for which the applicant is applying.
- Standardized test scores may not be available for students coming through the Recommendation Committee during Spring Quarter. Therefore, students applying in Spring Quarter are permitted to interview with the Recommendation Committee *before* the admission test, and/or before official scores are received.
- You are required, however, to submit a copy of your scores when they become available.

FORM H (a-d): RECOMMENDATION LETTER REQUESTS

- The applicant must request a maximum of five letters of recommendation (three for pre-pharmacy students) from persons who know him/her well. No relatives please. Relatives include parents, spouses, siblings, aunts/uncles, cousins, etc. When family friends who speak of your familial relationship write letters of recommendation, it may cast an unfavorable light on the student.
- Note that there are different forms to give to recommenders in various categories (professors, work/ volunteer supervisors, religious leaders, or other/general). Please make sure that you are giving your recommenders the correct form in order for them to know what kind of information they do or do not need to include in their letter.
- Please make copies of these forms as needed and give them directly to your recommender. **You must sign and date each form first, indicating whether you do or do not waive your right to see the letter.**
- Ask your recommender not to reference a professional school by name unless you are only applying to that professional school.
- Your recommender must sign and date the Recommendation Letter Request form, then submit the form and the recommendation letter directly to the Office of Pre-Health Professions. We will not accept letters that are hand-delivered by the student applicant. Please remind the recommender that all letters of recommendation should be written on official letterhead (if applicable) and signed.
- Link to submit letters is: <https://forms.gle/DFaQtPqpfV1yAHR9>

Ask for letters of recommendation well in advance, students will not be reviewed by RC until all letters are received.

FORM I: SELF ASSESSMENT

<https://docs.google.com/a/lasierra.edu/forms/d/1uxj4eJHbILsuG3FkN-szzzq54IEj3gjIMO0COvDsj2w/viewform>

- This form allows you to identify potential areas that may need improvement. This is for your own personal use only.
- **DO NOT SUBMIT THIS FORM TO THE RECOMMENDATION COMMITTEE.**