Requesting Letters of Recommendation

Keep in mind that faculty decisions about writing letters of recommendation are personal. Faculty members are not obligated to write a letter of recommendation for any particular student.

When a faculty member has agreed to write a letter, you should provide the faculty member with an organized packet of the following information:

- Addresses of schools and deadlines (Please be sure to give us plenty of time.)
- The type(s) of programs for which you are applying
- For each school, a list of potential faculty mentors and their research interests
- Indicate whether the letters should be returned to you or sent directly to the school
- Unofficial transcript
- Courses you have had with the professor
- Description of any particularly successful projects you have completed
- Summary of research experience
- Summary of internship experience
- Your personal statement(s)
- Vita (resume)

The college will provide the envelopes. If the faculty member sends the letter directly, the college will pay for the postage.

Many graduate programs will have a form for the professor to complete in addition to the letter. This form will allow you to indicate your choice regarding your right to see the letter. You should always waive your right to see the letter. If you do not waive your right, the admissions committees might not take your letters seriously.