

Holy Cross Health Professions Advising Committee
materials required for review
(revised September 2017)

Please read and follow these instructions carefully. We have revised file requirements for Health Professions Advising Committee Review this year (2017-18).

Medical, dental and veterinary school materials

Materials you prepare and submit

The Health Professions Advising Committee seeks to provide applicants with the best possible feedback on their readiness to apply to graduate programs as well as the best possible letters of recommendation. As a result, we require you to submit the following items in the formats described below:

1. A cover sheet with your name, contact information, target type of health professional school (MD/DO, DMD, or DVM) and recent picture (head shot) of yourself. Make sure the picture is professional-looking. You do not have to hire a professional photographer but please don't send in a group party picture with other people cropped out, for example.
2. A list of all the courses you have taken at Holy Cross and elsewhere plus the teachers and grades in these courses, organized by semester. Indicate which professors you asked for recommendation letters. Also on this sheet report all standardized test and entrance exam scores you have taken, e.g. SAT, ACT, MCAT, DAT etc. (but not AP, SATII, IB, etc.). We will use this for advising purposes only, and not to rate you. We will not share this information with any institutions you apply to.
3. An optional academic notation sheet on which you discuss any grades which you feel need to be explained. Use this to tell us about extraordinary circumstances, e.g. illness, family tragedy, etc. that impacted your ability to perform well in classes.
4. A separate sheet listing your extracurricular activities in college, post-college and high school. Please organize them by labeled categories: clinical experience, research experience, volunteer work, other activities, and other professional (work) experience. Indicate the date ranges for all activities, as well as the number of hours per week that you have worked or participated and if appropriate who you worked with. Provide a brief (one sentence) description of your involvement and indicate if you solicited a reference letter. For up to four of the experiences that are most meaningful to you, you may provide a short paragraph explaining why it was an important experience.
5. A personal statement of approximately 7 pages in length in which you introduce yourself to the committee and explain why you are interested in a career in the health professions. Use this to reflect on the important experiences of your life so we understand why you are considering a career in a health profession at this point. You do not have to tell your whole life story. Attend the personal statement workshops if at all possible. Make sure you have worked on the statement with your advisor, well in advance of the deadline.
6. Official copies of transcripts for courses taken away from Holy Cross that do not appear on your Holy Cross transcript. If you still have courses in progress you can send an unofficial transcript now and an official transcript once all grades are in.
7. A copy of your most recent unofficial Holy Cross transcript.

Email a .pdf copy of materials 1-5 in that order to Ms. Kirkorian (healthprofessions@holycross.edu) in a single .pdf file. **The deadline to submit these items to guarantee a review by the committee is February 15th.**

If needed, also supply a sheet that explains how you took a medical school requirement in a non-standard way, for example, meeting the English requirement in a non-English Department course, or biochemistry by working in a lab. Use the form available on the "Key Documents" section of the web page.

Recommendation letters

For a committee review you must have letters from the following individuals completed in your file:

1. A professor from your major department with whom who *completed* at least one class
2. A professor from a laboratory science course outside of your major with whom you *completed* at least one class
3. A professor, coach, advisor, mentor or supervisor who can review your academic, volunteer or professional activities. They should be able to comment critically on your personality, character, academics and/or motivation.

While we require a minimum of three letters to review a file, *more letters are helpful* for a review, and *we need additional letters* to write a strong composite committee letter to your health professional school. We encourage you to solicit *at least* five letters from various people who have seen you in different environments before the winter holidays. Letters from your humanities classes are extremely helpful. *Ask for at least three of the letters that meet the guidelines above to be submitted by February 15th.* However, we will accept additional letters after that date. You may also solicit letters anytime in the spring or early summer to comment on courses or activities during that time. While these letters may not be used in your review, they will be useful in your committee letter. It is your responsibility to check periodically with the office on the status of your letters.

All letters of recommendation on and off-campus should be submitted on signed letterhead and emailed to the office at hpleters@holycross.edu in pdf form. The email should be a FWD of your request via email with the electronic waiver request (see last pages of handout for process of obtaining letters). This waiver will be emailed separately along with being posted online.

For those seeking a second, third or subsequent review

If you have been previously reviewed by the committee and want to be reviewed again, do not submit your original packet; only send in updated information. We have the information you submitted in the past. Instead, please provide the following updates to the items 1-7 listed on the previous page:

1. Provide updated cover sheet; see item 1 above. Mark “addendum” and provide the date.
2. A list of all the courses you have taken since your last review, plus the teachers and grades in these courses, organized by semester. Indicate which professors you asked for recommendation letters and the institutions where you took the courses. Also on this sheet report all entrance exam scores you have taken as in item 2 above.
3. Optional short academic notation sheet as in item 3 above.
4. An addendum to the list of activities as described in item 4 above. List any new activities (and report activities you have continued) in the format described in 4 above.
5. An update and reflection on what you have done since your last review. This should be short, 2-3 pages at most. Use your statement to reflect on the important experiences since you were last reviewed and how these experiences have impacted your decision to apply to a health professional school or have helped you grow. Do not submit your original personal statement/autobiography (or an edited version of your original statement).
6. Official copies of transcripts for new courses taken away from Holy Cross.
7. Your most recent unofficial Holy Cross transcript.

Submit the .pdf files to the office as described above. The deadline to submit these items to guarantee a review by the committee is February 15th. **However, if you have applications pending at schools and are concerned you will not be admitted this cycle, you will need to submit these documents by May 1 to receive a committee letter in the next cycle.**

You should also solicit at least one new letter of recommendation (sent to the Health Professions Advising Office as above), as we cannot review your file again without a new letter. If for some reason you cannot obtain a new letter, please speak to Prof. Cahill. We will not change our rating without substantial new information, including letters. See above for new electronic letter procedure.

September 2017

Dear health professions advisee,

Please follow these instructions to request evaluation letters from your professors and others writing on your behalf for your health professions advising office file and committee review. Starting this 2017-2018 year we will only be accepting letters sent electronically so please read the directions carefully.

First, please copy and paste the template below to request your letter via email. Please note, all letters still must be signed and on official letterhead, in the form of a PDF emailed to hpleters@holycross.edu

Second, please reply to this email with a list of the letters you requested using the spreadsheet template attached. The office will use this to create a shared Google Sheets file for you so you can track the status of your letters and add recommenders your list later. You will need to sign on to Google using your g.holycross.edu account to access this file.

Recall that for a committee review you must have at least three of the following letters in your file, but more are helpful for your review and we need several more to write a good composite letter:

1. A professor from your major department with whom who completed at least one class
2. A professor from a laboratory science course outside of your major with whom you completed at least one class
3. A professor, coach, advisor, mentor or supervisor who can review your academic, volunteer or professional activities. They should be able to comment critically on your personality, character, academics and/or motivation

While we require a minimum of three letters to review a file, more letters are helpful for a review, and we need additional letters to write a strong composite committee letter to your health professional school. We encourage you to solicit at least five letters from various people who have seen you in different environments before the winter holidays. Letters from your humanities classes are extremely helpful. Ask for at least three of the letters that meet the guidelines above to be submitted by February 15th. However, we will accept additional letters after that date. You may also solicit letters anytime in the spring or early summer to comment on courses or activities during that time. While these letters may not be used in your review, they will be useful in writing your committee letter. If you are applying to osteopathic (DO) medical school you will need a letter from a DO when you submit your application. You should request this letter be sent to your file in our office so we can submit it on your behalf. (We do not need it for your committee review so you may have it sent it later.) Similarly, if you are applying to dental school you will need a letter from a dentist and should request one be sent to your file before your application. It is your responsibility to check the Google sheet that is shared with you to check on the status of your letters. If you do not have access to your Holy Cross Google account, please contact the office.

Summary:

1. Please fill out and cut and paste the template below to request a letter, and e-mail the request directly to your recommender.
2. Please fill out the attached spreadsheet with the list of requested letters and e-mail it to hpletters@holycross.edu with “[your name] letter list” as the subject
3. Check on the status of letters over time and add additional letters any time you want through the Google Sheet that will be shared with you

Please copy and paste into the body of an e-mail to be sent to your evaluator:



REQUEST FOR EVALUATION

Please return to hpletters@holycross.edu by: _____

_____ is applying to the Holy Cross Health Professions Advising Committee for a recommendation to _____ school. By sending this message, the applicant has waived the right to see your evaluation, and a signed waiver has been received by our office. We would appreciate your evaluation of this student in terms of the following attributes: intellectual potential, academic performance, industry, sensitivity to the needs and concerns of others, emotional stability, maturity, interpersonal relations, and integrity. Please make your letter as explicit and concrete as possible. It is helpful to give examples of how the applicant has demonstrated academic or personal qualifications. If you have taught the applicant, please indicate the approximate rank in class.

We may include portions of your evaluation in a composite letter which will be sent to all schools to which the applicant applies or we may send your letter in its entirety. If there is a confidential statement you would like to make to the committee but do not want to share in the composite letter, please include it as a separate sheet.

We know that writing evaluations are time-consuming and sincerely appreciate your writing on this applicant's behalf.

Please submit your letter of evaluation on official letterhead with your signature, title and affiliation as a PDF to hpletters@holycross.edu. Please use “[applicant name] letter” as the subject of the e-mail. (If you are unable to provide a scanned signature, please note it is electronically signed.) If you do not have access to official letterhead, please explain in the body of the e-mail. Professional schools will generally not accept letters that are not signed (at least electronically) and are on letterhead.