



# LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

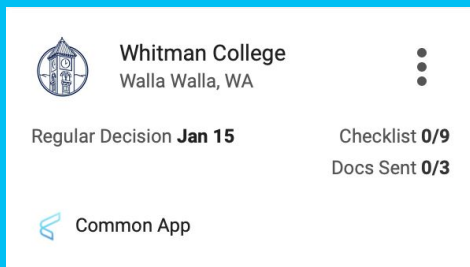
All information on [shorewood.ssd412.org/programs-services/college-career](https://shorewood.ssd412.org/programs-services/college-career)

> [College Applications](#) > Letters of Recommendation (open in accordion list to find steps and Q&A)

# DO YOU NEED LETTERS?

## In Scoir:

Click on a college's tile in *My Colleges &* scroll down to *Recommenders*



The screenshot shows a college tile for Whitman College, Walla Walla, WA. It includes the college's logo, a three-dot menu icon, and application details: Regular Decision Jan 15, Checklist 0/9, and Docs Sent 0/3. At the bottom, there is a 'Common App' logo with a blue arrow pointing left.

## On a college's website:

Search for *application checklist* or *application requirements*

### Required:

- [Common Application](#)
- Early Decision agreement (if applying Early Decision I or II, available through the Common App)
- [FAFSA](#) (if applying for need-based financial aid)
- [CSS Profile](#) (for U.S. residents seeking need-based financial aid)
- \$50 application fee (\$0 if you apply Regular Decision by Dec. 1)

You must also ask your school or counselor to submit the following materials:

- Secondary school report
- Counselor recommendation
- Official transcript
- Midyear report
- Teacher evaluation

**Note about terms:**  
*recommendation*,  
*evaluation*, and *letter*  
are interchangeable;  
don't worry about the  
various terms

### Optional:

- Official SAT or ACT score report ([more testing policy information here](#))
- Interview with Admission Officer ([recommended](#))

# HOW IT WORKS

**-You ask teacher/ counselor, then**

- **fill out brag sheet**
- **send to teacher/counselor**



**-You create portal on Scoir**

**-Teachers/ counselor write letter & send via Scoir**



# DETAILED HOW- TO ON WEBSITE

+ links to brag sheets

College Applications	
+	Letters of Recommendation
+	Documents and Links
+	Essays
+	Common Application
+	FAQs

## College Applications

### Letters of Recommendation

#### Counselor Brag Sheet Deadlines

The following fall 2023 deadlines are for Counselor Letters, but you should give teachers at least this much lead time as well.

It is NOT your recommender's job to track you down! It is up to you to submit brag sheets and to do all steps below properly.

- App Deadline November 1? Brag sheet to counselor by October 6.
- App Deadline November 15? Brag sheet to counselor by October 20.
- App Deadline December 1? Brag sheet to counselor by November 9.
- App Deadline January 1 - 9? Brag sheet to counselor by December 1.

**Letter of Recommendation Process: Expand each step below for detailed instructions.**

Rising Seniors can do up to Step 3 in spring/ summer. Wait until fall to complete Steps 4-8.

#### Letters of Recommendation Steps

- + Step 1: Find Out if You Need Letters
- + Step 2: Ask Your Teacher and Counselor
- + Step 3: Complete a Teacher Brag Sheet (and, if needed, a Counselor Brag Sheet)
- + Step 4: Complete FERPA in Scoir (all students) and Common App (if using)
- + Step 5: Formalize the Request in Scoir (only for Teacher Letters)
- + Step 6: Follow Up With Your Teacher & Counselor
- + Step 7: Thank your Teacher & Counselor
- + Letter Writer Isn't a Shorewood Teacher? Read This

How to find: [shorewood.ssd412.org/programs-services/college-career](https://shorewood.ssd412.org/programs-services/college-career)

> [College Applications](#) > Letters of Recommendation section or [Letters of Rec](#) page

# ABOUT PRIVACY & RIGHTS

- FERPA applies to your educational record
- *Release*: Shorewood/ electronic platforms cannot share items in your record without your permission
- *Waiver*: you are asked to waive your right to see letters of recommendation
- FERPA documents in Scoir (all students) & in Common App (if using) must be completed

# FERPA



## Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act

# ABOUT BRAG SHEETS

- Answer the questions in a new Google document then share w/ your teacher(s)
- Put thought & care into your answers. Skip any that do not apply and add more if you wish
- Colleges want to know what kind of student you are; this letter will cover your academic abilities
- If there are qualities you want the teacher to highlight, ask them
- You must also request teacher letter(s) in Scoir
- The care with which you complete the brag sheet & handle the process conveys an impression to the teacher. Make sure it is a good impression!

Find the brag sheets in your [2023-2024 College Application Packet](#)

## SHOREWOOD HIGH SCHOOL COLLEGE APPLICATIONS

### Teacher Brag Sheet for Letter of Recommendation

Students:

- Type your answers in an email or a Google document to share with your teacher(s) several weeks before your first deadline
- See the [Letters of Recommendation](#) page for more information
- Naviance must be set up properly and your teacher must be added to the system in order for us to send letters in support of your application
- See the [College Applications](#) page for particular instructions
- Be sure that you thank your teacher.

**one version for teacher,  
another for counselor**

**Email your answers to your teacher at least 4 school weeks before your first deadline.**

1. Name
2. Preferred pronouns
3. Email address & phone
4. GPA & SAT/ ACT score (optional)
5. Purpose of letter: It is for a scholarship? college applications? List where you are applying and **be sure that these colleges need letters since many do not!**
6. Date the letter is needed.
7. What is your intended college major and career? Do you have any particular long-range goals? Have any classes or outside events influenced these interests and goals?
8. What do you hope to get out of your college experience?
9. What are some of your academic strengths and weaknesses?
10. How did your work in my class impact your academic skills?
11. What do you think you have demonstrated in my class(es) that I should praise or recognize? Consider your contributions during critiques, class discussions, presentations, and workdays. How have your contributions made the class community better?
12. How have you demonstrated independence, initiative, responsibility, and maturity in my class?
13. Was anything in my class particularly challenging? Eye-opening? How did that impact you?
14. What was your favorite project/ topic/ concept in class, and why?
15. Is there anything specific you would like me to address in my letter?
16. What, if any, particular challenges have you overcome?

# LOR PREFERENCE

Who to ask? Someone who knows you well as a student, taught you recently, and teaches a core academic subject\*

- 1 JUNIOR YEAR CORE ACADEMIC TEACHER/ PROFESSOR
- 2 SOPHOMORE OR SENIOR CORE ACADEMIC TEACHER/ PROFESSOR
- 3 JUNIOR YEAR OTHER TEACHER/ PROFESSOR
- 4 SOPHOMORE OR SENIOR OTHER TEACHER/ PROFESSOR
- 5 OTHER MENTOR

# CONSIDERATIONS

- Ask AT LEAST 4 weeks in advance.
- Mostly, follow the college's instructions; they may have particular parameters.
- Applying to a STEM program? Ask a STEM teacher.
- Continuing music but not a music major? Consider music teacher for any *optional* letter.
- Need not be a class in which you got the best grade; colleges want to know how you handle struggle.
- Choose contrasting teachers or perspectives.



# COMMON APP

**DO NOT** request Shorewood or Shorecrest teachers/ counselors on the Common App!

We use Scoir for letters requests, **NOT** Common App



*credit: Mayuri Raja, UT Austin*

It is okay to put the teacher/ counselor **NAME ONLY**, but **NOT** their email address in the Common App

# DETAIL for COMMON APP RECOMMENDERS SECTION

✕ Invite Teacher

Email Address

LEAVE BLANK

Subject \*

- Choose an option -

Prefix

- Choose an option -

First Name \*

Last Name \*

Would you like this teacher to complete an evaluation for your application? \*

Yes

No

Common App only requires the *Names* of your Counselor/ Teacher Recommenders

- Since we do letters and other school materials via Scoir, you do not need to fill all fields in Common App. Do just enough (enter names) to satisfy the system
- Ignore any notices in your Common App about downloading PDFs for recommendations
- Check the status of letters and school materials in Scoir; status of materials will not show up in the Common App

More info: [Using Common App with Scoir](#); Shorewood [College Application Packet](#)

# Letters of Recommendation

List your Teacher Recommenders' names but NOT their email addresses in the Common App!!



Credit: Mayuri Raja, UT Austin

What happens if you do request teachers/ counselor in Common App? Glitchy electronic tangle...

✕ Invite Teacher

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Email Address

LEAVE BLANK

Subject \*

- Choose an option -

Prefix

- Choose an option -

First Name \*

Last Name \*

Would you like this teacher to complete an evaluation for your application? \*

Yes

No

Letter of Rec requests will be in Scoir:

- Request teacher letters via *Application Documents* on your *My Colleges* page
- Counselor letters are built into our side; we can tell if a college needs one

For BOTH teacher & counselor letters:

- Only request if they are required by your colleges
- Communicate with your recommenders and provide a brag sheet

More info: [Using Common App with Scoir](#); Shorewood [College Application Packet](#)

# SCOIR FACTORS

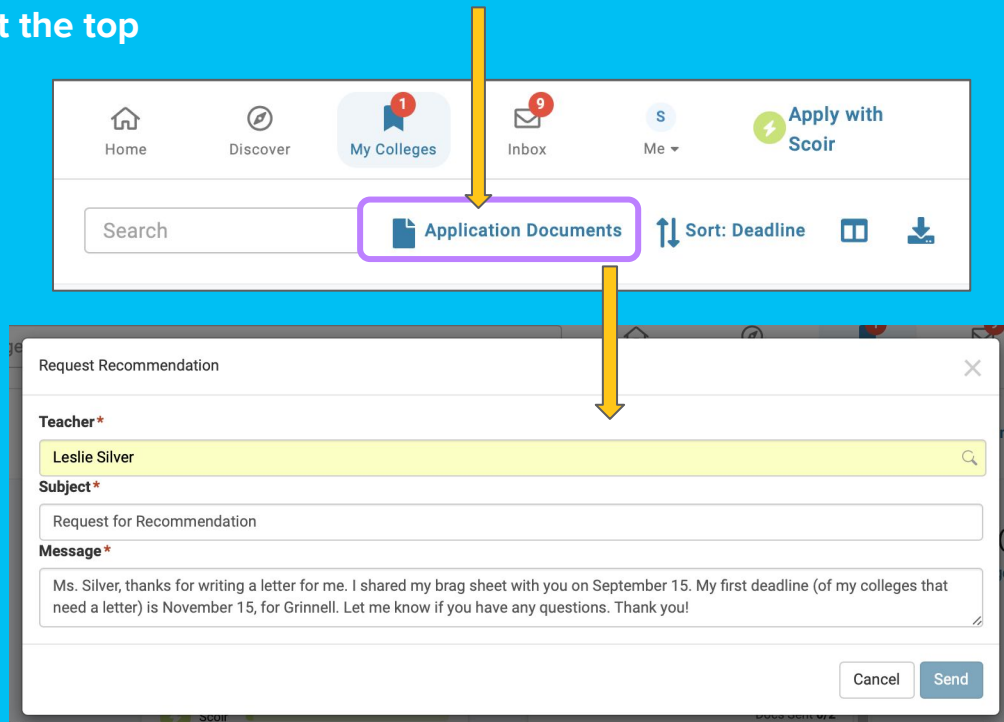
- Wait until a teacher says yes to request in Scoir
- Your request creates the sending portal and acts as confirmation for the teacher that you are going ahead
- You DO NOT have to request the Counselor letter in Scoir, but you DO need to:
  - communicate with your counselor & provide a brag sheet
  - have all of your colleges in Scoir in the *Applying* column
- Scoir will probably know how many letters you need for that college, but **check the fine print on the college website**

# SCOIR LETTER REQUEST

*My Colleges > find Application Documents at the top*

NOTE: Teachers have received Scoir invitations but they may not have started their accounts. Don't panic if they don't get right to it; colleges are fine with letters & school documents coming later than your application.

DO NOT request letters via the Common App. Use Scoir.



# SCOIR LETTER REQUEST: **GENERAL** or **COLLEGE-SPECIFIC**, not both

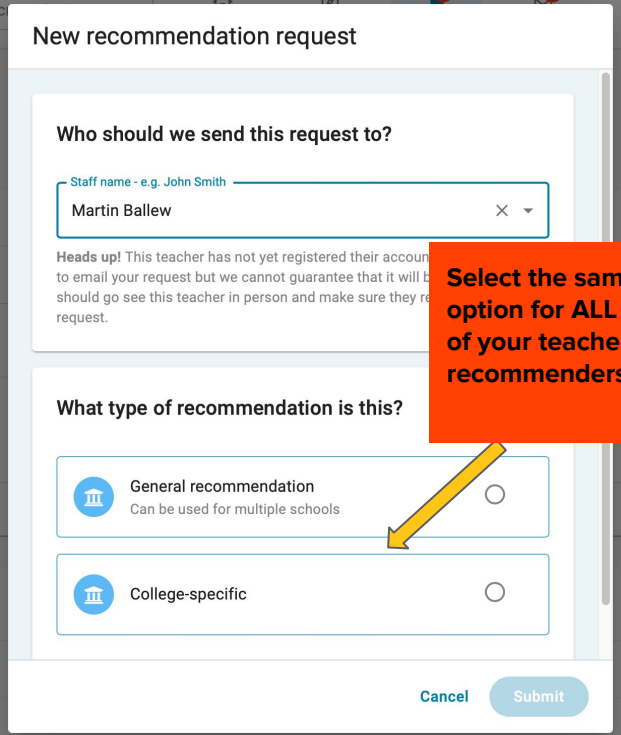
Be mindful of how you request letters:

We suggest that you do either **General recommendation** OR **College-specific** for ALL of your recommenders/letters.

Do NOT select one option for one teacher, and the other option for a different teacher.

**General** = Will fill all letter slots, in order of letter completion, up to max numbers of letters for each college.

**College-specific** = Assign each teacher to particular colleges, does not mean they will write individualized letters to each school. This is how you indicate preferences for specific teacher letter(s) to go to specific colleges.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "New recommendation request". The first section is "Who should we send this request to?" with a search box containing "Martin Ballew". Below this is a warning: "Heads up! This teacher has not yet registered their account...". The second section is "What type of recommendation is this?" with two radio button options: "General recommendation" (with a building icon and subtext "Can be used for multiple schools") and "College-specific" (with a building icon). A red callout box with a yellow arrow points to the "General recommendation" option, containing the text: "Select the same option for ALL of your teacher recommenders". At the bottom right are "Cancel" and "Submit" buttons.

# OUTSIDE TEACHER?

Read detail in the *Letters of Recommendation* section on the [College Applications](#) page or the [Letters of Rec](#) page of [Shorewood College & Career](#)



*Not a  
Shorewood  
Teacher?*

You will have to do more legwork,  
but it is possible!

**DO NOT** send the letter in yourself

# NEED A COUNSELOR LETTER?

- Not all colleges need one—be sure you need it. *Private* Common App colleges may need one.
- Have your colleges in Scoir in the *Applying* column
- Fill out a *Counselor* Brag Sheet and get it to your counselor ASAP and before these deadlines:

<b>Application Deadline</b>	<b>Brag Sheet Deadline</b>
November 1	October 6
November 15	October 20
December 1	November 9
January 1-9	December 1



# COUNSELOR LETTER DETAILS

SCOIR will put the Counselor letter into:

- all **Counselor Recommendation/Letter/Evaluation** spots for your college(s)
- any open **Recommender (Teacher or Counselor)** slots that have not been filled by a teacher recommendation

The image shows two screenshots of the SCOIR Recommendations form. The left screenshot shows the 'Recommendations' section with a checkbox for 'Request 2 to 3 recommendation(s)' and a list of requirements: 'at least: - 1 Teacher - 1 Counselor'. A blue arrow points from a pink callout box to the 'Request 2 to 3 recommendation(s)' checkbox. The pink callout box contains the text: 'this college has designated spots; the counselor letter will go into the Counselor spot'. The right screenshot shows the 'Recommendations' section with a checkbox for 'Request 1 to 3 recommendation(s)'. A blue arrow points from a yellow callout box to the 'Request 1 to 3 recommendation(s)' checkbox. The yellow callout box contains the text: 'this college has flexible spots; the counselor letter will fill a recommender spot if teacher letters have not already filled them'.

To prevent the counselor letter filling into any flexible recommender slots:

- assign *all* of your teachers' letters to specific colleges

# NEED A LETTER FOR A SCHOLARSHIP?

- Okay to ask the same teacher(s) as for your college letters of rec
- Give *plenty* of notice; it takes time to revise for a different purpose/ audience
- Communicate clearly about procedure: provide recommender with instructions & deadline info
  - Might be a link to a portal
  - Might be an email address
- Some smaller organizations do not realize that students do not handle letters of recommendation
- If an organization wants *you* to upload the letter, contact me about it



# IMPORTANT: THANK YOUR RECOMMENDERS

- Paper handwritten thank you notes are best
- If you don't have any notes, come to the Career Center!
- Teachers & your counselor will love follow up with an update on your decision

