Guidelines for Requesting Letters of Recommendation

1. Ask early. Give faculty/preceptors at least 4-6 weeks notice (ask by early November for residency letters).
2. Be sure to make the request politely. You may want to ask the faculty/preceptor in person rather than by email, if possible. Preceptors and faculty frequently have multiple competing deadlines and may not have the time to spend 2-3 hours writing a letter for you. Be respectful if a faculty tells you that she/he cannot write you the letter.
3. Request letters from a faculty/preceptor who has spent a significant amount of time interacting with you and so can comment on numerous areas of your professional demeanor. Examples include a rotation preceptor, an internship supervisor or a research advisor. Also consider asking faculty liaison to a community outreach project where you were chair (e.g., Operation Diabetes, Operation Immunization), or a professional society where you held a significant office or where chair of a committee. The bottom line is you want to select someone who can give specific examples of such attributes as your leadership, clinical, and communication skills, as well as assess your professionalism, dedication, and ability to work as a team player.
4. Provide the faculty/preceptor with the following (at least 4-6 weeks before the deadline date):
   a. Your updated CV (using our new SSPPS Sample Student CV format)
   b. A short summary or bullet points of what you would like them to highlight as achievements that you are most proud of in the past XXX years as a student pharmacist. (academic, leadership, community service etc.)
   c. What you are applying for, with name, title and address of whom the letter(s) should be addressed to.
   d. Stamped, fully addressed envelopes with names and addresses of where the letters should be mailed to.
   e. Any forms the faculty need to complete, and deadline dates.
   f. Be organized and place items a-e in a folder or envelope so items don’t get easily lost
5. Thank your faculty/preceptor(s) who write your letter(s). Also, consider sending a thank you note after the letters have been written.
6. Let the faculty/preceptor know the outcome when you find out; that you received the scholarship, internship position, residency, etc. Faculty/preceptors are proud of you and would like to share in your accomplishments.