

LAFAYETTE COLLEGE

Office of Advising & Co-Curricular Programs

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Truman Scholarship Letters of Recommendation Types & Tips

The Truman Scholarship requires **3 letters** of recommendation as follows:

- Leadership Abilities & Potential (“Leadership”)
- Commitment to a Career in Public Service (“Public Service”)
- Intellect & Prospects for Continuing Academic Success (“Academic”)

It is crucial that you select your recommenders appropriately. Only the “Academic” letter needs to come from a faculty member.

For the Leadership letter: Your recommender must be able to address those aspects of your personality (e.g., confidence, persuasiveness, diligence, conviction, vitality, poise, etc.) that contribute to your ability to lead. Your recommender must also be able to speak specifically about the leadership example you write about in response to the “leadership” question on the Truman application.

Recommendation tips: Consider how the student motivates others? How does he/she show initiative? How does she/he deal with challenges or obstacles? What type of leader is the student? (Keep in mind that leadership comes in many forms and does not need to be “positional”.)

For the Public Service letter: Your recommender must be able to address your commitment to public service and describe a significant contribution you have made through one or more of your public, community or government service related activities. The letter should also address your values, interests, goals, and/or ambitions, which represent your commitment to a public service oriented career (broadly defined).

Recommendation tips: How sophisticated is the student’s understanding of public service? Is she/he motivated to make a career addressing a specific social need or problem? Does he/she understand the institutional challenges they may face when addressing that social need/problem? Would she/he be an effective advocate?

For the Academic letter IMPT: Your recommender must be able to comment upon your academic, scholarship, analytical abilities, intellectual capabilities, and prospects for success in graduate/professional school and beyond.

IMPT: Please note, your recommenders MUST email their letters as WORD attachments to Dean Goldberg (goldbeja@lafayette.edu). Truman does not allow them to upload their letters to your application. Only Dean Goldberg may do so.