



Educational Studies Newsletter

About that letter . . .

At some point in your college career, you will most likely need to approach a professor to ask for a letter of recommendation. Perhaps you're applying for a scholarship, or maybe there's an amazing job opportunity waiting for you upon graduation (let's hope, right?). Whatever the reason, there is an art to asking for a letter of recommendation (who knew?) and no it does not involve groveling. So, before you make a slight misstep and ask a professor to throw together a five-page letter of recommendation for you by tomorrow at noon, read these handy tips and suggestions.

1. Strong letters of recommendation take quite a while to write. In fact, most professors put in hours of time writing each letter of recommendation because they try to include specific, meaningful examples to support the claims they make in the letter. Describing all the amazing things you've done takes time, so when you request a letter, acknowledge the amount of time and work that goes into writing a strong letter.

2. As noted above, good letters of recommendation take time to write, so give your professors plenty of time to craft a persuasive, detailed letter. A good rule of thumb is to allow about a month between the time of the initial request and the completion of the letter. Yes, a month. To write the letter, your professor will need to carve out time away from other job responsibilities, so allow plenty of time for the professor to get the job done well.

3. When asking for the letter, be as specific as possible. Tell the professor exactly what the letter is for

(e.g., type of job, specific scholarship, internship). If you are applying for a scholarship, include the name of the scholarship, the due date, and the selection criteria. It's a good idea to include a link to a scholarship if there is one. For other jobs, describe the kind of job you hope to secure. Most letters will be written to a general audience (i.e. To Whom It May Concern), but if you know the name of the person who will be reading the letter, be sure to provide that information. It's also helpful to give your professor a copy of your updated resume for reference.

4. Your professors could go on for days about all your amazing qualities, but in the interest of brevity, give your professor some guidance as to which of your stellar qualities you want highlighted in the letter. It also helps to remind your professors of which courses you've taken with them, a particular project or assignment you are proud of, and your most redeeming qualities that you want the letter writer to discuss.

5. Be sure to ask only for

letters that you most definitely need, and ask only those professors who think highly of you. If you skipped a professor's class, did none of the readings, handed in assignments late, and then complained that you didn't get an A in the class, maybe don't ask for a letter from that professor. It's doubtful that the professor would write the letter in the first place, and it's even more doubtful that you would be pleased with the letter if they did.

6. Once you ask for the letter either in person or through a carefully crafted, thorough email, you may need to touch base after a few weeks to see whether the professor needs any further information to finish up. This follow-up is a thoughtful way to support the letter writer (and make sure that your professor hasn't forgotten about your request). Oh, and after you apply for the job, scholarship, or internship, be sure to let the professor know if you got the job, scholarship, or internship. We are here to celebrate or commiserate with you!

Now, about that letter. . .

Mark Your Calendars!

- Academic Advising:** March 22-31
- Inquiries into Teaching and Learning:** April 8, 9:00-noon
- Reading Day:** April 26
- Start of Finals:** April 27
- Graduation Brunch for Graduating Seniors and Their Families:** May 7, 10:00-11:00
- Start of May Term:** May 10



Ya' Gotta' Have Wheels!

Remember: As an Educational Studies student, you have the opportunity to spend a lot of time out in the schools. **Bonus!** However, in order to get to and fro, you need transportation, and your skateboard from high school will probably not suffice. Be sure that you have access to reliable transportation for any class that requires a field placement.



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead

Congratulations, Yesenia!

Yesenia Martinez Calderon will be representing the Ed Studies department this May Term as she travels to **Queretaro, Mexico** for a month-long **internship** at the JFK American School under the direction of IWU Alum **Bob Callahan**. Congratulations, Yesenia! You will be an awesome ambassador!

IT IS NOT HOW YOU START... BUT HOW YOU FINISH. *Finish strong!*

It's almost here!! It's almost here!! (So excited!)

What's so special about **April 8, 2017**? Easy! It's the **TENTH** anniversary of the **Inquiries into Teaching and Learning Conference** sponsored by the Educational Studies department through the John Wesley Powell Undergraduate Research Conference. Quite a mouthful, huh? For ten years, our senior education majors have been conducting and sharing their research with others in the educational community. All junior education majors are required to attend the conference, and all other students are invited as well. Even if you stop by for just thirty minutes, we guarantee that you will learn something new and important for your future career. Don't miss this amazing opportunity! Stop by between **9:00 and 12:00**.

You won't regret it!



It's that time of year again: **ACADEMIC ADVISING**. Yea!

Your advisor will be in touch soon to set up your own personal advising appointment. Be sure to come to the appointment prepared with the following things: a printed copy of your current **degree evaluation**, a **list of courses** you intend to take, access to the **TEP Handbook** (electronic or printed), and a list of **questions**. Also, review the advising memos (found [here](#)) on the Ed Studies website prior to your appointment. If you are not sure who your academic advisor is, check the board in the Ed Studies Commons area in CLA. (Some students have been temporarily re-assigned due to a sabbatical leave.)

Oh, and here's a handy tip: When you get your PIN number, **take a picture** of it with your phone. That way, you won't have to email your advisor at 11:58 PM when you realize that you have two minutes to drop a class before the deadline and you can't find your PIN. Newsflash—your advisor will most likely not email you back at 11:59. *Word to the Wise.*

I'm gonna make it happen!

KEEP CALM AND FINISH STRONG

KAPPA DELTA PI
INTERNATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY IN EDUCATION

She's #1!



So, if you see Meg Stanley out and about, give her a high five or a fist bump. She is now the **first** (yes, the **first**) swimmer in **IWU** history to take **first place** at the **NCAA Swim Championships**! Just imagine how many laps Meg had to swim in practice to get *that* good! Lot, and lots, and lots! And just how fast does Meg swim, you ask? Well, she covers 500 yards in just 4:50.76. (Most of us probably could barely do that on dry land let alone in the water!) Way to go, Meg. We are so proud of you!



Find your strong!

Way to Go, KDP Initiates!

The following students will be inducted into Illinois Wesleyan's Chapter of Kappa Delta Pi, the International Honor Society in Education:

Morgan Houk, Anna Karnick, Emma Lewis, Stephanie Prentice, Sydney Seeman, Amber Stringer, Christopher Cooper, Amy Sanchez

The induction ceremony is scheduled for **Wednesday, March 22 at 4:30**.



Linh Le: World Traveler

Our very own Linh Le has been selected as one of the recipients of the IWU Freeman Asia Internship Grants. Linh is headed to Chiang Mai, Thailand for a two-month stay. Congratulations on this amazing accomplishment, Linh! We can't wait to hear about your adventures!