

## Letters of Recommendation

*As part of their application for admission into the MA in Theology or the MA in Pastoral Theology in the Department of Theological Studies at Loyola Marymount University, prospective students are required to seek two letters of recommendation which directly address their capacity for the academic study of theology at the graduate level.*

To the Writers of these Recommendations:

The Faculty of the Theological Studies Department at Loyola Marymount University is deeply committed to both the academic integrity of the study of Theology and the success and wellbeing of our students. Your candid sharing and advice is, therefore, very important to us as we welcome and assess the application materials of all students who apply to our programs.

It is critical that the Admissions Committee understand the prospective student's preparation, motivation, and readiness for graduate study. It would be most helpful to the committee if your letter could address the following:

1. How long and in what capacity have you known the prospective student? How well do you know them? How does your relationship with the prospective student qualify you to offer an assessment of their capacity for graduate level work? (i.e., Were you, their professor? Which courses did you teach this prospective student? Were you their work supervisor?)
2. To the best of your knowledge, what is this prospective student's motivation for studying theology? Why do you think they are they seeking this graduate degree?
3. Please identify at least three (3) competencies, or qualities that you have observed in this prospective student that indicate the student's capacity and readiness for the academic study of theology. What is the nature of your observations of these competencies? How will these skills or competencies enable this prospective student to excel and/or flourish in the academic study of theology? It will help the committee if your description of these skills and competencies comprises the largest portion of your letter.
4. If possible, please conclude by commenting on your impression of this applicant's intellectual, emotional, and/or spiritual maturity as a measure of their readiness for graduate studies. Feel free to offer other information that you believe speaks to their maturity and values.
5. Finally, it would be helpful to know how strongly you recommend this prospective student (i.e., "without reservations", or "with some reservations", etc.). If there are any reasons why you may be cautious or concerned about this application, it would be helpful for us to understand something of those reasons. This information may be useful not only in determining our decision on admission, but also in our thinking about our care of this prospective student and how we can help to make their academic journey successful – and even joyful.