

Letters of Recommendation

**PRE-PROFESSIONAL ADVISING OFFICE
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GOALS OF THIS SESSION:

- Understanding how to create key relationships
- Understanding what schools are looking for
- How to ask
- Helping your recommenders create strong letters

CREATING AND MAINTAINING

Key Relationships



RELATIONSHIP BUILDING:

- Create direct and meaningful interactions with recommenders. This is not a chore, but a relationship!
 - Academia
 - Professional Area
 - Other Experience

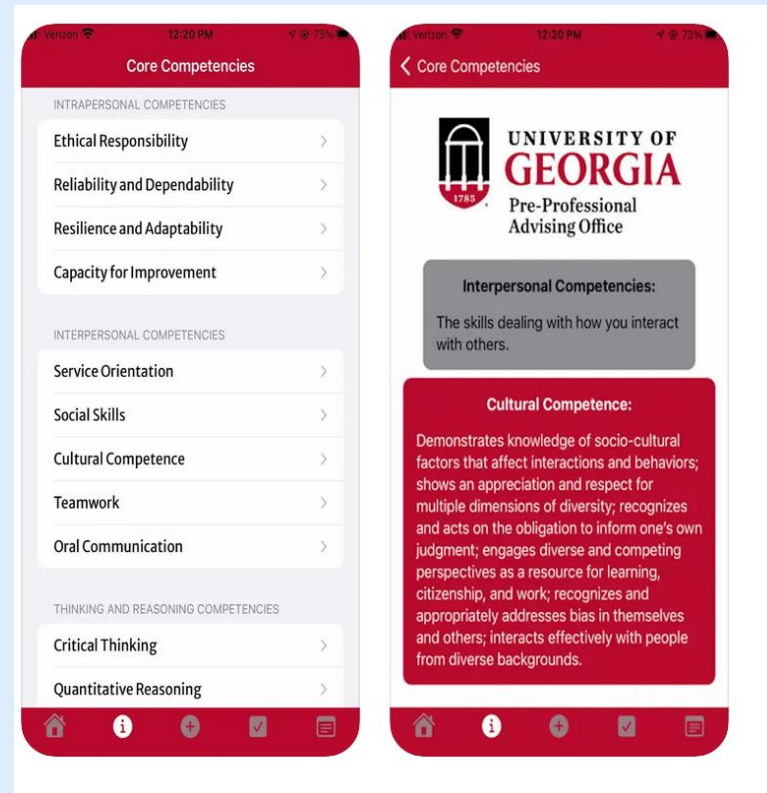
RELATIONSHIP BUILDING IN ACADEMIA

- Introduce yourself early in the semester.
- Attending office hours is a smart way to talk to professors in a small setting.
 - Come prepared with topics, questions, ideas, etc.
- Serving as a peer lab assistant keeps you in their radar after class.
- Connect with their research, publications, etc. and how it relates to your field
- Be prepared and participate in class
- Make sure you always show gratitude for their time!

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING IN THE HEALTHCARE FIELD

- Be inquisitive and show interest in growing in the field
 - Take notes
- Demonstrate the qualities of a good health professional
 - Empathetic, problem solving, patient, humble
- Remember to act professionally – punctuality, dress, manners, and show initiative!
 - Stay off your phone!
- Send a thank you note/email after shadowing

***TIP: You can use the Pre-Professional planner app to see the core competencies for your profession from your profession's application.**



RELATIONSHIP BUILDING IN OTHER EXPERIENCES

- Be consistent and reliable
- Demonstrate professionalism - punctuality, dress, manners, on-task, initiative, etc.
- Show enthusiasm
 - Greet others
 - Find “value” in your work
- Be a team player

Examples:

Employment Supervisor
Volunteer Coordinator
Research PI
Study Abroad Faculty
Member
Advisor
Mentor

UNDERSTANDING WHAT

Health Professional Schools are Looking For



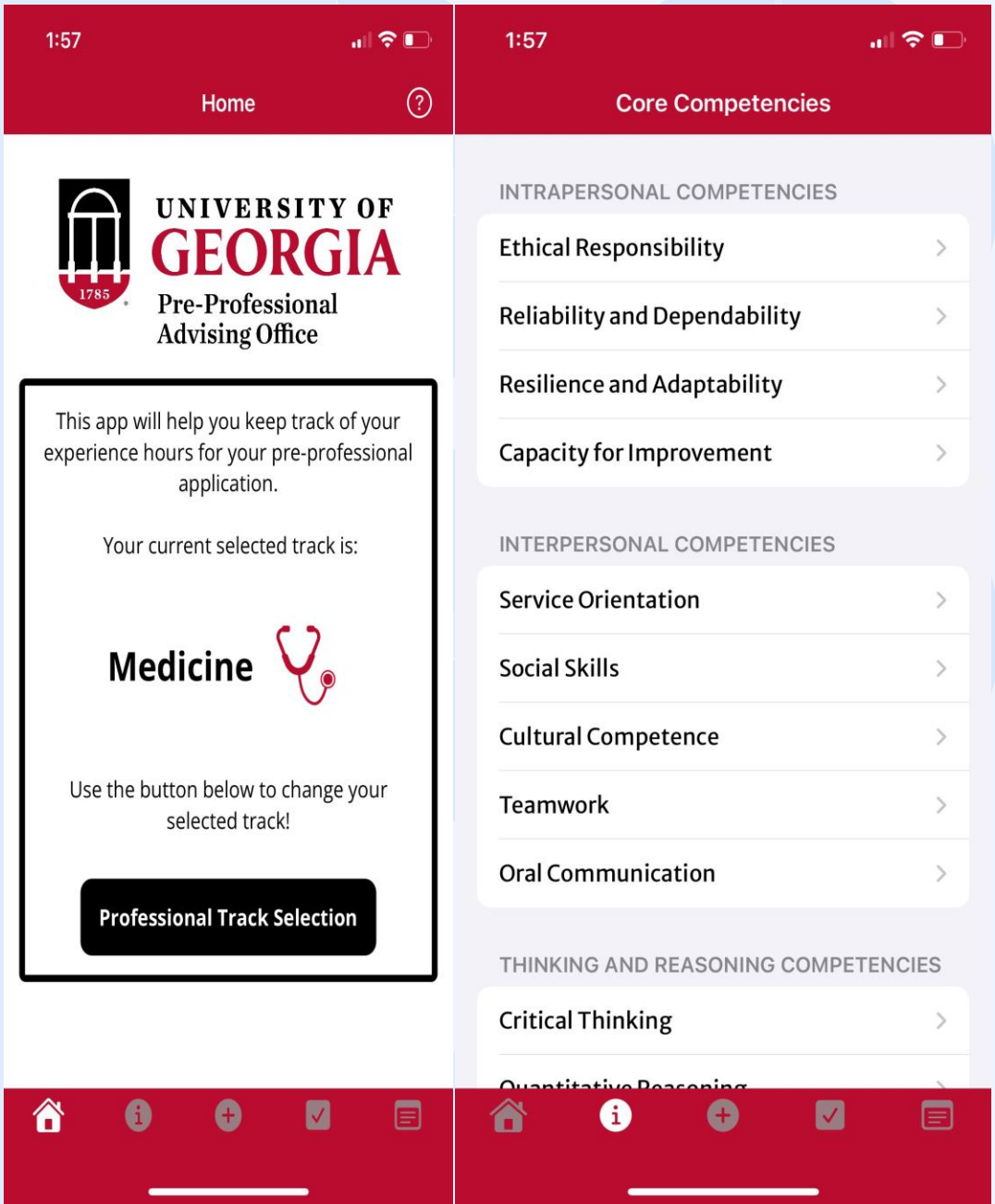
HOLISTIC REVIEW

- Academic Credentials
 - Overall GPA
 - Science GPA
 - Biology/Chemistry/Physics(BCP) GPA or Biology/Chemistry/Math/Physics (BCMP)
- Non-Academic Credentials
 - Experiences
 - Leadership
 - Letters of Recommendation
 - Volunteering
 - Essays



PREMED COMPETENCIES

- Developed by the American Academy of Medical Colleges
- Expectations for medical students
 - Professional Competencies (Split between Intrapersonal & Interpersonal categories)
 - Science Competencies (Living Systems & Human Behavior)
 - Thinking and Reasoning Competencies (Critical Thinking, Quantitative Reasoning, Scientific Inquiry, & Written Communication)
- Medical schools & *all health schools* use competencies to evaluate applicants' readiness. This is just an example for Pre-Med. Please see our Pre-Professional Planner app for your track's competencies.



WHOM TO ASK - CATEGORIES

- UGA does NOT provide committee letters, or assemble letter packets
 - Review requirements of target schools
 - Know application limits & policy
 - ❖ Number of letters on application
 - ❖ Ability to assign letters
 - ❖ 3rd party letter collection service
- Faculty
 - 2 Science or science + major?
- Experiences
 - Professional you shadowed
 - Supervisor for research, volunteer, employment, etc.

*Some CAS systems allow you to put different recommenders for each school. Others require that your letters go to the CAS system and are shared with every program so you want to make sure who you choose will work for all schools.

WHOM TO ASK - INDIVIDUALS

- Do NOT Ask
 - Relations
 - Personal/character references
 - Those who do not know you well
- Do Ask
 - Professor who taught you in class with letter grade but can talk about more than just the grade you made!
 - Someone who knows you well – (relationship building!)
 - Will speak positively about you & your characteristics, not just from a numbers standpoint

How to Ask



ASK IN PERSON

- Email or call only to set up a meeting
- Have your "Why." Explain why them & what you are looking for.
- Timing
 - End of term for professors
 - Before April of application year
 - ❖ If summer application – check on their availability
- Follow –up
 - Email with instructions by April

Helping
Recommenders
Create Strong
Letters



EMAIL WITH INSTRUCTIONS BY APRIL

- Recent copy of your resume (with picture)
- Detailed instructions for how to submit the letter Brief statement of your educational goals
- Rough draft of your personal statement (if available)
- [Guidelines](#) for how to write a letter of evaluation
- You can remind them of the work/experiences you had with them in and outside of class.

TIPS

- Non-academia evaluators need reminders to...
 - Compose letter on organization's stationary (business letterhead)
 - Hand-sign letter
- Make sure to waive your right to see the letter from all recommenders (academic or non-academic)
- Plan to have a backup in mind if someone doesn't follow through or have multiple of the same "category" since a lot of CAS systems allow more than the required letters.



PRE-PROFESSIONAL STUDENT ALUMNI TIPS:

"One aspect of the whole recommendation process that I swear by is to not be haste with your decision on who you'd like to write the letters. Making sincere and genuine connections with your recommenders is important in order to earn a letter, and it takes time to form that bond. After lots of thought, I chose the 3 recommenders that I believe could speak best on my character and dedication. - **GIANNA, UGA ALUM, (AA)**

In college the best thing you can do for creating connections to receive recommendations is to get to know strong nurses or healthcare professionals on the floor that you are shadowing. Have initiative, because it shows them competency and that you care. If you are doing an externship at a clinical program, get to know the leadership & managers and put yourself out there to them. - **Mallory, UGA Alum,(Nursing)**

"While I don't think it is helpful to ask for a letter or support from a professor or lab mentor on day one, I do think it is important to state your intentions early on. A simple statement like, "I intent to apply to (blank), and I would like to build a meaningful mentorship experience so that you can be one of my strong letter of support." let's a mentor know your expectations without being too forward. Then of course you have to work hard and do your job well." - **Courtney, UGA Alum, (Med)**

**PRE-PROFESSIONAL
STUDENT
AMBASSADORS**

Tips from Peers

PRE-PROFESSIONAL STUDENT AMBASSADOR TIPS

- I made an effort to participate in class by asking questions, going to office hours when needed, etc. However, I made sure to be genuine with my questions and seeking help.
- If you are struggling in a class but you are continually asking questions, seeking help in office hours/after class, and looking for opportunities to improve, this demonstrates that you are putting in effort. Therefore, your professor would be able to testify to your work ethic and willingness to learn.

Thank you

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