



UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS  
AMHERST  
200 Hicks Way  
934 Thompson Hall  
Amherst, MA 01003-9277

Department of Sociology  
Computational Social Science Institute  
email: mpachucki@umass.edu  
phone: 413-545-7526  
fax: 413-545-3204

## LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION POLICY

I am always happy (and honored!) to write letters of recommendation for jobs or fellowships for students. As a general rule, the better I know you, the easier it is for me to write a letter that is tailored to your aspirations and your fit for a given opportunity. I believe it is *far better* for you to have a strong letter from faculty who know you well and who can speak to your personal qualities, interests, and strengths. If I am not able to write you a strong letter, I will tell you this upfront.

If I have never written a letter on your behalf before, I ask for it at least one month in advance. Your request should be accompanied by 5 items:

- 1) A **brief paragraph about yourself** summarizing why your background is great preparation for the particular fellowship or opportunity you have in mind;
- 2) The **personal statement** you crafted/are crafting for the submission (a draft is fine if you're not finished - but I do need something to give me a sense for why you're applying for the submission),
- 3) **Current C.V. or résumé;**
- 4) **Academic transcript** – unofficial is fine;
- 5) **Specific information** about where the letter is to be sent, and whether an electronic version or hard copy letter is most appropriate.

The more information you can give me about why you think you are a good fit for a particular opportunity, the stronger of a letter I will be able to write for you. In addition, *you must meet with me to discuss your interests when you ask for a letter; contact me to set up a time.* If you have taken a class with me, it is very helpful when you send your request if you include what it was in particular that you connected with about the class.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark C. Pachucki".

Mark C. Pachucki PhD  
Associate Professor