

## CREDENTIAL FILE PACKET

### **This Credential File Packet contains:**

- Common Questions and Answers for the Credential File 2
- Instructions 4
- Credential Folder Agreement 5
- Reference Forms 6
- Guideline for Writing a Reference Letter 9
- Evaluation Release Form (Education Majors) 10
- Reference Writer(s) Checklist 11
- Permission/Request Forms 12

## MEDAILLE COLLEGE

### COMMON QUESTION AND ANSWERS FOR THE CREDENTIAL FOLDER

1. **What is a credential folder?**

A credential folder is a collection of documents used to support your candidacy for a job or graduate school. The folder should include letters of reference from faculty and supervisors and evaluations from internships or student teaching.

2. **Do I need to have a credential folder?**

Education majors must establish a credential folder if they are seeking a teaching position. It will be required at various stages of the job search. All other majors have an option to do one or not.

The credential folder is an easy, organized, effective means of communicating with an employer. At your written request, your references are sent in a professional file to a potential employer. It saves the employer time and energy in trying to telephone your references.

3. **When should I start a credential folder?**

You should begin a credential folder during the end of your junior or beginning of your senior year. It may become difficult to obtain letters of reference if you wait too long after the completion of your internships, work experiences or degree requirements. It is to your advantage to assemble these credentials while faculty members, supervisors and employers are available.

It is important to have the credential folder as complete as possible before making a formal application. An employer may request the credential folder as soon as you apply.

4. **How many references should I have in my file?**

You may have as many references as you want in your file. However, the maximum number of references that can be copied each time your file is sent out is six (6). You should aim for at least three (3). If your file contains more than six, you must indicate what references you want sent to a particular employer.

5. **Who should I ask to write a letter of reference?**

Your goal is to have a diverse file: Letters relating to various aspects of your background, letters saying the same thing can be boring to the reader.

Writers you should consider: Faculty, Student Affairs Administrators, Internship Supervisors, Work Supervisors or Volunteer Coordinators. Ask the person if they would be willing to write a letter for you. They may use the form provided by our office or their own letterhead. **We must receive the letter(s) through the mail.**

6. **Confidential or Non-Confidential?**

A **Confidential** letter of reference means you are not allowed to read that letter. The 1974 Buckley Act requires that you, in writing, waive your right. To do so you must use the form provided by our office. To some employers positive confidential references are more credible, others are not aware of the concept.

**Non-Confidential** means that you have access to that letter and may read it. If your file is non-confidential it will give you the ultimate control over what information an employer reads about you.

7. **What happens if a letter contains non-positive comments?**

If you feel a letter may be doing more harm than good, you may request in writing, that particular letter not be sent out in the future.

8. **What about my transcripts?**

If an employer requests an official copy of your transcripts, you must request that a copy be sent from the Registrar's Office.

9. **How do I request my file to be sent?**

In order for your file to be sent out, you must send us a written request with your signature and complete name and address of where you would like it sent.

Incomplete information will delay your file being sent.

10. **Is there a fee?**

We will send your file to a perspective employer or graduate school free of charge within 24 hours.

At this time there is no charge for the copying and mailing of your file. Abuse of this service could result in an imposition fee of \$5.00 per file.

**What is considered abuse?**

1. Requesting your file be sent out prior to receiving a request from an employer. It may not be to your advantage to give a potential employer more information than they request.
2. Requesting your file be sent more than once per academic year to the same employer without sufficient reason. It is your responsibility to make sure that your file is complete prior to being sent out.

11. **May I have a copy of my credential file?**

If your file is non-confidential, you may request one (1) student copy per academic year.

12. **Can I find out what references have been received for my file?**

It is your responsibility to check your file and verify that references have been received and your file is complete. You may complete the Checklist form in your credential folder package, which identifies who you have requested letters from. If a file is not complete, we will try to contact you by telephone before we mail the file out.

13. **How long will you keep my file?**

The Career Planning and Placement Office reserves the right to discard your file after five (5) years of inactivity. A letter will be sent to your last known address prior to us doing so.

## INSTRUCTIONS

The following form is to be completed and returned to the Career Planning and Placement Office.

### **I. Credential Folder Agreement**

- a. Fill in your name, address and daytime phone number
- b. Read very carefully all parts of the "Policy" for your credential agreement and make sure you understand what your rights are.
- c. Check the appropriate box to indicate the confidential conditions for references.
- d. Having read and understood all sections, sign your name and date it.
- e. Return to the Career Planning and Placement Office.

### **II. Reference Forms (3 Attached)**

You are required to use the forms provided if your letters are confidential (see Question and Answer for more information regarding confidential letters). Complete the information at the top of the form and give it to your writer. **They must return the form to our office through the mail.** If your letters are non-confidential you may use the forms provided or the writer may use his/her letterhead. **All letters must be sent through the mail or hand delivered by college personnel.**

### **III. Guideline for Writing a Reference Letter**

Many times a person is not sure how to write a reference letter and what should be included. You can assist the writer by giving them the guidelines and a copy of your resume. You might also want to give the person a stamped envelope addressed to the Career Planning and Placement Office, Medaille College, 18 Agassiz Circle, Buffalo, NY 14214.

### **IV. Evaluation Release Form**– Education Majors *Only*

Student Teaching Evaluations are a critical part of your credential folder. For the evaluations to become part of your file you must request and give permission for these evaluations to be released to this office. Complete the form provided and submit it to the **Education Department**.

### **V. Letters of Reference Checklist**

This form may be used if you want our office to know whom you have asked to write a letter of reference. If you request your file to be sent out and it is not complete, we will call and advise you.

### **VI. Permission/Request Forms**

All requests for mailing of credential file must be made in writing. Use this form to request your file to be sent to an employer and/or graduate school.

**Career Planning and Placement Office  
Medaille College**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CREDENTIAL FOLDER AGREEMENT**

**POLICY**

In accordance with the provisions of Section 438 of the Family Education Rights Privacy Act, commonly known as the Buckley Amendment, students have the right of access to their credential file. A student may inspect and review the contents of his/her credential file and obtain copies of these records providing the student has not waived his/her right to such file. Students are permitted to add written information clarifying or adding to any item in their credential file by sending it to the Career Planning and Placement Office. A student wishing to inspect and review his/her credential file should make an appointment.

**STUDENT ACCESS TO REFERENCES**

I wish the statements of reference entered in my credential file to be treated as follows:  
(Check appropriate box)

**NON-CONFIDENTIAL** (Open to my inspection)

**CONFIDENTIAL** (Not open to my inspection)

By checking this box, I hereby waive my right of access to confidential statements of reference, which are part of my credential file in the Career Planning and Placement Office. This waiver, which I understand is optional, can only be revoked in writing and only with respect to statements of reference placed in my file following written revocation.

Use Medaille reference form with waiver (3 forms)

**SIGNATURE** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

Once Medaille College releases your credential folder, at your written request, the information may be disseminated by the person(s) or organization receiving the material. This is beyond the control of the Career Planning and Placement Office and Medaille College.

**SIGNATURE** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

THIS FORM **MUST** BE RETURNED TO THE CAREER PLANNING AND PLACEMENT OFFICE

**REFERENCE FORM**

CAREER PLANNING AND PLACEMENT OFFICE  
MEDAILLE COLLEGE

18 AGASSIZ CIRCLE  
BUFFALO, NY 14214

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

MAJOR \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

**TO CANDIDATE:** Type or print the above information. In compliance with the Family Rights and Privacy act of 1974, you have the right to read this reference unless access is waived by completing the following statement:

"I \_\_\_\_\_ waive my rights of access to this reference".

(NAME)

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

**REFERENCE WRITER:** Please type a statement on the candidate's academic and/or work performance, noting specific attributes and strengths including a comment on the candidate's potential. Return to the Career Planning and Placement Office at address above.

---

\_\_\_\_\_  
(SIGNATURE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(NAME) (TITLE) (DEPARTMENT/ORGANIZATION)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(ADDRESS) (CITY) (STATE) (ZIP) (TELEPHONE)

**REFERENCE FORM**

CAREER PLANNING AND PLACEMENT OFFICE  
MEDAILLE COLLEGE

18 AGASSIZ CIRCLE  
BUFFALO, NY 14214

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

MAJOR \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

**TO CANDIDATE:** Type or print the above information. In compliance with the Family Rights and Privacy act of 1974, you have the right to read this reference unless access is waived by completing the following statement:

"I \_\_\_\_\_ waive my rights of access to this reference".

(NAME)

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

**REFERENCE WRITER:** Please type a statement on the candidate's academic and/or work performance, noting specific attributes and strengths including a comment on the candidate's potential. Return to the Career Planning and Placement Office at address above.

---

\_\_\_\_\_  
(SIGNATURE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(NAME) (TITLE) (DEPARTMENT/ORGANIZATION)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(ADDRESS) (CITY) (STATE) (ZIP) (TELEPHONE)

**REFERENCE FORM**

CAREER PLANNING AND PLACEMENT OFFICE  
MEDAILLE COLLEGE

18 AGASSIZ CIRCLE  
BUFFALO, NY 14214

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

MAJOR \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

**TO CANDIDATE:** Type or print the above information. In compliance with the Family Rights and Privacy act of 1974, you have the right to read this reference unless access is waived by completing the following statement:

"I \_\_\_\_\_ waive my rights of access to this reference".

(NAME)

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

**REFERENCE WRITER:** Please type a statement on the candidate's academic and/or work performance, noting specific attributes and strengths including a comment on the candidate's potential. Return to the Career Planning and Placement Office at address above.

---

\_\_\_\_\_  
(SIGNATURE)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(NAME) (TITLE) (DEPARTMENT/ORGANIZATION)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(ADDRESS) (CITY) (STATE) (ZIP) (TELEPHONE)

**Career Planning and Placement Office  
Medaille College**

**A GUIDELINE FOR WRITING A REFERENCE LETTER**

**WHAT TO SAY IN A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION:**

You have been asked by a student to write a letter of recommendation, which will be placed in his/her credential folder. Copies will be sent out to prospective employers upon request of the student. This letter plays a vital role in an individual's job search, so we ask you to consider its importance when writing your letter. Some basic guidelines are listed below to help you.

1. Tell the student honestly how you feel about writing a letter for him/her - You are under no obligation to write a letter for anyone, so if you feel uncomfortable, please say so.
2. Explain your relationship with the candidate - Make clear how well you know the person and under what circumstances.
3. Know the candidate's career goals and objectives - Tailor the letter of reference to a specific position or career field based on candidate's goals.
4. You might want to cover specific characteristics of the candidate – Scholarship, Oral and Written Communication, Motivation, Leadership, Sense of Responsibility, Ability to Plan and Organize, Creativity, Tact, Ability to Relate to Others.
5. Volunteer to provide further information on the phone – Indicates that this is a person whom you feel strongly about.
6. End on an upbeat note – You might use a catchy phrase to emphasize your enthusiasm.
7. Keep the letter brief – Experts agree that a page to a page and a half is long enough for most letters.
8. Use your business stationery – The letter is much more impressive when type-written on stationery with your or your organization's letterhead.

**Career Planning and Placement Office  
Medaille College**

**EVALUATION RELEASE FORM**

Please print or type all information except signature on bottom. Return this form to the office of your department or chairperson.

**STUDENT'S NAME** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

**MAJOR** \_\_\_\_\_ **GRADUATION DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

**TO:** Department Chairperson  
**RE:** Student Evaluations

Please release to Career Planning and Placement Office copies of student's field evaluations from placements listed below:

**NAME OF  
AGENCY/SCHOOL/BUSINESS**

**NAME OF  
SUPERVISOR**

**NAME OF  
MEDAILLE COORDINATOR**

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

\_\_\_\_\_

DATE

\_\_\_\_\_

STUDENT'S SIGNATURE

**Career Planning and Placement Office  
Medaille College**

**REFERENCE WRITER(S) CHECKLIST**

I have requested letters of reference from the following individuals:

**RECEIVED**

\_\_\_\_\_

NAME

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NAME

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NAME

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NAME

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NAME

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NAME

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NAME

\_\_\_\_\_

**MEDAILLE COLLEGE  
18 AGASSIZ CIRCLE  
BUFFALO, NY 14214**

**REQUEST TO HAVE CREDENTIALS MAILED**

CANDIDATE'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

CANDIDATE'S ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

CANDIDATE'S TELEPHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL CREDENTIALS TO: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

(COMPLETE NAME & ADDRESS INCLUDING ZIP CODE IS REQUIRED)

REQUESTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

(CANDIDATE'S SIGNATURE)



**REQUEST TO HAVE CREDENTIALS MAILED**

CANDIDATE'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

CANDIDATE'S ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

CANDIDATE'S TELEPHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL CREDENTIALS TO: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

(COMPLETE NAME & ADDRESS INCLUDING ZIP CODE IS REQUIRED)

REQUESTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

(CANDIDATE'S SIGNATURE)