

# DARTMOUTH

Health Professions Program

## Med/Vet/Dental Application Newsletter REMINDERS! What You Should be Finalizing Now! 2024-2025 Cycle January 2024

Hello all!

As we start the new year, this is a good time to refresh your knowledge of the Composite Letter of Evaluation Process. Winter and Spring will pass quickly, so it is important to make sure you're on track with your tasks ahead. We've outlined in this newsletter the steps you should be preparing for and finalizing now to ensure your letter process moves forward in a timely fashion. We want you to have the best process possible! Additionally, we've included helpful information about writing the Autobiographical Sketch.

We highly recommend that you read this newsletter carefully and in its entirety to make sure you're on track. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, feel free to schedule an appointment via Calendly with [Sarah Berger](#) and [Nicole Roeper](#) or reach out to Rae Stokes at [Health.Professions.Program@dartmouth.edu](mailto:Health.Professions.Program@dartmouth.edu) or 603-646-3377.

Wishing you a wonderful start to the new year!  
Sarah, Nicole, and Rae

### Contents

- The Composite Letter of Evaluation** ..... 2
- What You Should be Finalizing Now**..... 2
  - Composite & Support Writers** ..... 2
  - PrivateFolio**..... 2
  - The Autobiographical Sketch** ..... 2
- Information About PrivateFolio**..... 3
- Information About The Autobiographical Sketch** ..... 3
  - Self-Reflection and Questions to Consider:** ..... 3
- Where Can I find HPP Application Resources?**..... 4

## The Composite Letter of Evaluation

Please review the [Overview of the Composite Letter Process](#) for more detailed instructions about the composite letter process. **Do this ASAP if you have only recently decided to apply! It is YOUR responsibility to understand the process.** Be sure to review the [Composite Process Timeline](#) and [Application Timeline](#) for information about tasks and deadlines.

Additionally, HPP does have resources to help your composite and support writers with the writing process. If any of your writers would like to see those resources, please let them know they can reach out to HPP directly.

## What You Should be Finalizing Now

### Composite & Support Writers

1. Your choices and requests for composite and support writers.
2. Agree on letter deadlines with your composite and support writers.
3. Inform your support writers that you will send them a Letter of Recommendation Request (which includes an upload link) from PrivateFolio, our letter dossier service.
4. Inform your support writers that you will also send them your autobiographical sketch and resume (and transcript if they request it).

**Remember!** You can continue to maintain and enhance your relationships with your writers throughout the year ahead. We highly recommend that you reach out to all your writers to ask if they'd like to meet and discuss your application and goals.

### PrivateFolio

1. Create your [PrivateFolio](#) account.
2. Waive your confidentiality (this is very important to medical schools).
3. Send your support writers (NOT your composite writer) a Letter of Recommendation Request. This will prompt PrivateFolio to send your writers an upload link so they can submit their letters to your account.
  - **The letter request can sometimes end up in junk/spam folders.** If any of your writers can't find the email, let them know to check there first. If they still have issues, let them know they can contact either HPP directly or PrivateFolio at [help@privatefolio.com](mailto:help@privatefolio.com) (they are very responsive!).

### The Autobiographical Sketch

1. Finish writing your autobiographical sketch and send it directly to your support writers at least 4 weeks prior to your agreed deadlines.
2. Upload your autobiographical sketch, along with your resume and transcript, to PrivateFolio.

**Please note!** Sarah and Nicole are happy to help you review your autobiographical sketch before you send it to your support writers. Feel free to reach out to HPP directly or schedule a meeting through Calendly (see links at the beginning of this newsletter).

## Information About PrivateFolio

- [PrivateFolio](#) is where ONLY YOUR SUPPORT WRITERS upload their letters. **Your composite writer will send their composite directly to HPP.** After we've reviewed and finalized it, HPP will upload your Composite Letter of Evaluation Packet to PrivateFolio.
- You DO NEED to upload your autobiographical sketch, resume, and transcript to PrivateFolio. **HPP will include these in your letter file which we send to your composite writer.** It is also helpful for HPP to have these materials as a reference when reviewing your composite letter.
- When all your support letters are uploaded to PrivateFolio, you will submit the [Release to Composite Writer Form](#). This will prompt HPP to compile your letter file (plus your autobiographical sketch, resume, and transcript) and send it to your composite writer.

## Information About The Autobiographical Sketch

While you will send your autobiographical sketch to all your support writers, it is especially useful for your composite writer. The composite writer is responsible for synthesizing their experiences with you, along with the information shared by you and your support writers. Overall, the composite writer provides context to your abilities, experiences, and who you are as a person. As such, your autobiographical sketch is an important resource for achieving this goal.

The self-reflection involved in this project is a great way to begin the reflection that is essential for the application itself. The format is flexible. Write your sketch as an essay or in sections. You can choose your own relevant sections (ex. family influences, growing up, before college, academics, highlight experiences that were especially meaningful/relevant to your goals, highlight other experiences meaningful to you personally, why medicine, etc.).

Highlighting a few of your more meaningful and relevant experiences is very valuable. A resume doesn't give much detail as to how engaged or involved you were with something, or what meaning, value, or growth you gained from it. You can weave this information into your autobiographical sketch, or include it in a page attached to your sketch. This will also prepare you to write more deeply about your experiences for your application.

The autobiographical sketch is also a place to share any unique challenges you may have experienced. If you don't wish to share that with all your writers, add it for your composite writer, or have a thoughtful discussion with them. The context provided by the composite writer can be very beneficial in some circumstances. Feel free to discuss this with an advisor. Questions to consider for your autobiographical sketch (and ultimately for your application), are below.

### Self-Reflection and Questions to Consider:

Self-reflection is vital for the autobiographical sketch and for an excellent application. Consider the following questions:

- What were your formative experiences/values with your family, education, or community before college?
- What experiences/interests have you had over the years that have been meaningful to you? How have they shaped you?
- How have you grown academically and personally? Do you have any academic challenges to discuss?
- Have any classes you've taken had a significant impact on you? If so, in what way?
- Have you conducted research? How has it been meaningful to you?
- What extracurriculars or passions (music, athletics, etc.) are you involved in? How have they inspired or surprised you? What do you find meaningful about them?
- Have you engaged in certain themes in your studies or experiences (ex. working with children, the elderly, disadvantaged communities, etc., or researching autism, dementia, oncology, etc.)? If so, how did you become interested in this area? Why has this been such a significant part of your experience/studies? Why is this meaningful to you?
- What kind of service and/or health-related experiences have you had?
- Why do you want to study medicine/dentistry? What has influenced and affirmed this choice? Who has influenced or inspired you?

### Where Can I find HPP Application Resources?

As we move through the application cycle, we'll post links to our newsletters, resources, and forms to the HPP website, see <https://www.dartmouth.edu/prehealth/applying/>. Additionally, you can find recordings of our application workshops and medical school admissions webinars here, [https://www.dartmouth.edu/prehealth/applying/app\\_podcasts.html](https://www.dartmouth.edu/prehealth/applying/app_podcasts.html). **We strongly encourage you to bookmark these pages for your ease of reference.**



