Tips For Endorsers
How To Write An Effective Endorsement For Fellow Status

Under APA rules, Fellow status is an honor bestowed upon members who have made an “unusual and outstanding contribution or performance in the field of psychology.” To achieve Fellow status, members must be recommended by a Division of which they are a member and also be approved by the APA Membership Committee and by Council. The individual thus becomes a Fellow of APA as well as a Fellow of the Division.

The most effective endorsement letters are those that systematically and specifically speak to the APA Fellows criteria on the attached form. It is your job to make clear how the candidate meets these criteria. The candidate’s assembled dossier will be assessed by the Division’s Fellows Committee and the APA Membership Committee based on the documented achievements and accomplishments of the nominee and the endorsement by three Fellows of the APA.

Although several steps are involved in electing Fellows, the most critical aspect will be the supporting letters that are based upon your considered judgment and detailed knowledge of the potential Fellow’s accomplishments. The candidate will need to provide you with a vita and other materials to help you with your assessment. The nature of the “unusual and outstanding contributions or performance in the field of psychology” should be specified in sufficient detail so that Fellow Committee members (both APA and the Division) who may be unacquainted with the candidate’s work can provide an evaluation that speaks to Fellows criteria. This is a challenge to put all understatement aside and really make visible the impact of the candidate’s contributions.

The Division 9 Committee hopes to recognize as many members as possible who deserve to become Fellows of APA. However, because of the detailed inspection that will be made of the endorsers’ justifications, the decision really hinges on your precise statements. The more clearly you can explain the candidate’s unique contributions (to both psychology and to the Division’s mission), the more likely she or he will be supported. So please take the time to be concrete, specific, and operational in your endorsement. Generic statements of support will not be sufficient.

Please also read the APA Fellows Manual, which is available at:


Please submit your evaluation form, worksheet, and any additional materials (e.g., continuation pages) electronically.

1. Seal the signed original and one photocopy of your forms and letter in an envelope, with your signature across the seal, and forward the envelope to the applicant for submission to SPSSI. The absolute deadline for receipt of applicants’ materials is 5:00 pm (Pacific Standard Time) on January 21, 2011. Thus, you should forward the envelope containing copies of your evaluation forms in time to allow the applicant to meet the deadline.

2. In addition, please e-mail the evaluation forms, worksheets, and any other materials to bsickels@spssi.org. Send them as attachments or, if you prefer, you may paste the letter into the body of your e-mail. Please include the applicant’s last name in the e-mail’s subject field. The absolute deadline for receiving your e-mailed evaluation is 5:00 pm (Pacific Standard Time) on January 21, 2011.

Note that January 21 is a real deadline, necessitated by the deadlines set by the APA Fellows Committee for receiving materials and recommendations from the Division.